
Management in sport for development: examining the structure and processes of a sport diplomacy initiative

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Abstract: Sport continues to demonstrate an important role in bolstering the development of diplomatic, peace-building efforts through sport for development and peace (SDP) initiatives. Although many have claimed strong outcomes from their programs, these assessments rely on largely anecdotal evidence to support these claims. In particular, the literature has provided evidence of effectiveness for SDP programs, yet lacked the capacity to link specific active or passive program components to the outcomes and to frame those outcomes both theoretically and practically. Thus, the purpose of this study was to conduct a theoretically guided case study of an SDP program and its activities to help support the analysis of mechanisms and processes toward program effectiveness. Based upon this analysis, theoretical implications and suggestions for future research and practice are discussed.

Keywords: sport for development; sport for development and peace; SDP; case study; management; sport diplomacy.

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1 Design for change: examining the content and processes of a sport diplomacy initiative

Sport continues to demonstrate an important role in bolstering the development of diplomatic, peace-building efforts (Baker and Esherick, 2009; Lyras, 2014; Lyras and Peachey, 2011; Schulenkorf, 2017). Termed sport for development and peace (SDP), these types of initiatives and programs are concerned with "... the international use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific developmental and peace objectives" [Right to Play International, (2008), p.3]. Many have claimed strong outcomes from their programs, yet rely on largely anecdotal evidence to support these claims (Coalter, 2010; Lyras, 2007; Lyras and Peachy, 2011). While many strides have been made, rigorous evaluation of the management processes and structure remains a strong need for SDP programs, both in documenting their successes and in providing insight for the design and implementation of SDP programs that will bring about positive, valued, empowering, and socially relevant individual and social outcomes (e.g., Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Kay, 2009; Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2011; Schulenkorf, 2017; Schulenkorf et al., 2016; Schulenkorf and Spaaij, 2015).

SDP programs have been linked to positive individual and social change by creating environments that foster individual self-efficacy, respect, awareness of others, and reduced stereotyping and bias as well as collective social responsibility, cooperation, and cross-cultural dialogue. The changes created inside the sport program can be transferred beyond sport to the immediate and distal social environment (Kaufman and Wolff, 2010). Given the breadth of program designs, participants, contexts, values, and cultural nuances it remains a daunting endeavour to prove actual causality between sport and social change, but Sport For Development (SFD) and SDP scholars continue to press the need for examining different programs to identify elements of design and implementation within successful ventures, toward determining the mechanisms through which sport can affect personal and social change while avoiding many of the social and cultural pitfalls of well-intentioned, yet poorly designed programs (Coalter, 2010; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Green, 2008; Kidd, 2008; Levermore, 2011; Lyras and Peachy, 2011; Schulenkorf et al., 2016; Schulenkorf and Spaaij, 2015).

Baker et al. (2015a) provided empirical evaluation of the outcomes of a specific SDP program, sports visitors, that is conducted as a partnership between the United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Division of Sports Diplomacy and the Centre for Sport Management at George Mason University. The facilitators of this program bring visitors to the US for an average of 14 days each and arrange for them to engage in activities and experiences that are "structured to facilitate international understanding and cultural tolerance, such as home hospitality dinners, tours of cities, and attendance at a variety of sporting and cultural events" (Baker et al., 2015a). The program, in its stated vision, is guided by two main goals relative to the US visit:

- 1 learn more about US. society and culture, thereby countering negative stereotypes
- 2 improve their leadership skills through activities that introduce team building, conflict resolution, inclusion, and respect for diversity.

This program, which at the time had hosted 36 groups (coaches, athletes, and/or administrators) from 47 countries, has demonstrated effectiveness in creating positive change among the participants in their perceptions of the US, American people and

culture, and familiarity with American sport (Baker et al., 2015a). The participants also indicated a strong willingness to share their experiences with others upon return to their homes. The evaluation provided evidence of effectiveness; in particular, the program, congruent with SDP philosophies, demonstrated great effectiveness in reducing intergroup bias and enhancing positive perceptions of America and Americans.

However, according to Baker and colleagues, their 2015a program evaluation, examined outcomes, yet lacked the capacity to identify specific management practices and process as well as the intentional program components that would be theoretically linked to the outcomes. Thus, they called for a more in-depth analysis of the various program philosophies, components, structures, processes, and activities to be conducted “for the purpose of identifying core elements relative to active or passive engagement directed toward objectives” [Baker et al., (2015a), p.16]. In other words, the managerial structural and process analysis would help identify how the SDP program is able to deliver (or not) its objectives, and help guide and refine future objectives. In fact, Schulenkorf (2017) suggested that this type of analysis is one of the most needed and valuable within the SFD literature base – to examine effective management toward sport and non-sport related outcomes. Theoretical grounding of the managerial analysis will also help in the interpretation and explanation of the outcomes (Lyras and Peachy, 2011; Schulenkorf, 2017; Schulenkorf et al., 2016). The purpose of this study is to conduct a theoretically guided case study analysis of the sports visitors program to examine the content, mechanisms and processes toward program effectiveness. This examination will aid not only in advancing this specific program, but also will provide guidance for future SDP programs in how to design and implement structures and processes that are effective in producing positive change in their participants.

2 Theoretical frame

In conducting such a content analysis, we first asked what areas of the program would be essential for examination, and by what criteria would we examine them. A growing body of literature in the sport-for-development (SFD) realm has established a number of guiding principles and theoretical propositions that help determine if, when, and how SFD and SDP programs are meeting their objectives, especially those in the areas of personal change (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2010; Lyras and Peachey, 2011; Schulenkorf, 2017; Schulenkorf et al., 2016; Peachy et al., 2015). One of the most comprehensive of these is presented by Lyras and Peachy (2011) who provided a theoretical framework for the examination of SFD programming. (Note: while SFD and SDP are viewed by some as distinct entities, within this SFD framework and others, SDP programs would be considered to be a particular sub-set of SFD programs. While SDP may have some particular nuances that we will point out, the overall SFD framework is broader, as to encompass both more general SFD programs and those with more specific aims toward SDP (Lyras and Peachy, 2011; Schulenkorf, 2017; Schulenkorf et al., 2016). Their model contained guidance for examining foundational philosophies, impacts assessment, organisational, sport, educational, and cultural elements of SFD programs that were more likely to impact change in the participants. This framework is utilised to guide the following inquiry and discussion of the sports visitors.

2.1 Philosophical foundations

The first guiding principle suggested by Lyras and Peachy (2011) is that the foundation of the SFD program should be grounded in the appropriate philosophy. This is one of the most difficult aspects to address within the SDP literature, especially since there is much debate as to what would be considered an ‘appropriate philosophy’. In fact, there has been an increasing call within the SDP literature to increase attention to the philosophical underpinnings of SDP programs. While previous work in SDP not only assumed that sport was a ‘magic cure’ for a panacea of local personal and social developmental woes, this work also largely presumed to know the needs and wants of local program recipients regardless of where they were situated geographically, politically, socially, or economically (Coalter, 2007, 2013; Schulenkorf and Spaaij, 2015). Thus, there has been a strong shift within the SFD literature overall toward examining the underpinning philosophies of sport programs, with a particular focus on ‘decolonising’ SDP programs (e.g., Darnell, 2010; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Darnell and Kaur, 2015; Hayhurst, 2009; Kay, 2009) and ensuring local input and local sustainability of such programs (e.g., Coalter, 2007; Holmes et al., 2015; Massey et al., 2015; Schulenkorf, 2017; Schulenkorf and Spaaij, 2015).

As a basic beginning point, Lyras and Peachy (2011), along with Baker and Esherick (2009), argued that SFD (and SDP in particular) programs that seek goals of promoting cultural understanding (such as the one in this study) need to be grounded in principles of Theory O and of Allport’s (1954) contact hypothesis, which has provided guidance for how meaningful change between dissimilar groups or individuals can occur. Theory O (Beer and Nohria, 2000) posits that bottom-up change, although it takes longer and costs more to generate an impact, creates more sustainable long-term results in the people who participate in the exchange. This bottom-up change involves impacting perceptions toward people and entities through engagement and interaction. Contact hypothesis argues that meaningful, interactive contact between dissimilar individuals can break down stereotypes, stimulate tolerant attitudes, and change perceptions that people have of each other.

According to contact hypothesis, there are four main conditions for the ‘contact’ to actually bring about the desired changes. While studies have indicated that these four prerequisite conditions are not absolutely necessary for intergroup contact to bring about a reduction in prejudices, they do create optimal conditions that facilitate interaction and a decrease in prejudice (Cunningham et al., 2010; Cunningham and Melton, 2013; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006; Pettigrew et al., 2011).

First, the contact must be between groups or people of equal status. If there is a ranking perceived in the group, it will be difficult for participants to actively engage and perceive the value of their individual contributions. Efforts should be made to equalise status markers such as educational background, wealth, or skill. In the context of this program, we would expect that passive interactions where sport experts disseminate information and expertise would not be likely to meet this interactive condition. However, interactions where foreign participants and US sport experts actively engage in dialogue and exchange of ideas would help facilitate the condition of equal status. Cunningham et al. (2010) determined that equal status among study abroad students was essential for the building of intergroup friendships, and improving perceptions of out-group members.

Second, there should be common goals for the framework and purpose of the contact. In SDP and SFD programs, this principle is not always easy to achieve because there are a number of stakeholders interested in the project, and the goals/interests of these stakeholders are not always well defined or disclosed (Lyras and Peachy, 2011). For example, in the sports visitors program, the US Department of State Division of Sports Diplomacy provides funding for the program and chooses the groups who will attend, without consultation from the program directors. The broad stated goals of the sports visitors program, however, provide at least a basis for agreement between the participants and the providers as to the common goals of the program.

Third, the individuals or groups should be working together toward a mutually beneficial goal. In some SDP programs, this is designed as teams coming together to compete in a sport contest. For example, Peachy et al. (2015) examined a SDP program in which the participants competed on mixed teams (culturally and nationally), which enhanced the salience of the common goals in the project, and ultimately brought about reduction in bias. In other SFD programs, this element is designed as cooperative activities within the program. For example, Cunningham et al. (2010) provided numerous academic activities within their study abroad experience that helped facilitate cooperation.

Fourth, positive change will most likely occur when the contact is supported by societal authorities, structures, or institutions. That is, if the contact is contained within a socially sanctioned program or activity (e.g., school, sports, exchange programs), it is more likely to produce change than those that occur more organically.

Finally, several studies have suggested a fifth condition for reducing intergroup bias, which is that contact should increase 'friendship potential'. This means that individuals and groups need to mingle together informally and be able to interact and converse in ways that would provide meaningful potential for friendship (Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006).

Based on this hypothesis and supporting theories of recategorisation (e.g., Tajfel and Turner, 1979), one would expect that a SFD or SDP program with greater active engagement and cooperation between people of similar status would be more effective at creating change than one where participants passively 'take-in' the others' culture or ideas, or where those elements are imposed by someone of higher status (see also Darnell, 2014; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011). Generally, research in and out of sport supports the theory that well-designed intergroup contact can not only decrease prejudices and stereotypes, but also lead to other positive outcomes such as enhanced empathy, trust and forgiveness, increased knowledge about out-groups, and strengthened social relationships (Cunningham et al., 2010; Cunningham and Melton, 2013; Hewstone, et al., 2006; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006; Pettigrew et al., 2011). Therefore, it is important to examine the content of SDP programs to assess their overall philosophy and their alignment with the tenets of these theoretical principles.

3 Program components

In addition to an appropriately grounded philosophy and the need for an impacts assessment, Lyras and Peachy (2011) argued for the inclusion of well-designed sport, educational, and cultural components for effective SFD experiences. They argued, "It is

not just sport that achieves positive outcomes, for according to the sport-plus model, sport is one pillar in an intervention and should be supplemented with other resources and social supports” [Peachy et al., (2015), p.230].

Sport/physical activity component. One of the elements about SFD programs (which also includes SDP programs) that makes them both attractive and effective is the sport component. Participation in exciting, hedonic, physically-based activities attract and engage participants in ways that non-physical activities cannot. Typically, SFD programs contain some element of active sport participation that can range from sport clinics to single games or events to full-scale tournaments. Regardless of scale, scholars agree that sport is not a ‘magic bullet’ and the way that sport programming is designed and implemented is critical to the outcomes it produces (Chalip, 2006; Warner and Dixon, 2011, 2013). Lyras and Peachy (2011, p.317), therefore, recommend that sport components utilise several principles to “undergird the sport and physical activity components: (a) an inspiring moral philosophy, (b) educationally oriented engagement of the sport experience, (c) inclusive teams, (d) quality experiences, and (e) linking sport with cultural enrichment activities and active citizenship.” These conditions not only help programs align with principles of contact hypothesis (e.g., equal status, mutual cooperative goals), but also create the foundations for more realistic experiences that have a greater likelihood of transfer.

Educational component. Educationally, these scholars argued that SFD programs should include components where participants were actively engaged in problem-based learning. “The problem-solving/working-together culture can teach youths and instructors how to deal with problems that interest them without being unduly influenced by issues of ethnicity, socioeconomic background, beliefs and gender” [Lyras and Peachy, (2011), p.317]. Engaging fully in such activities, particularly if they are intrinsically rewarding, can enhance buy-in and enduring change for the participants. Educational components and those that are integrated with sport components should focus on promoting changes in collective beliefs. As participants work together to solve problems, they start to leave behind their old beliefs and create a new culture. This process builds a pathway for other barriers to break down and other collective beliefs to form (see also Lyras, 2014).

Cunningham et al. (2010) demonstrated this process with their study abroad program that incorporated group problem-solving activities. Over the course of the program, the participants changed their perceptions and built friendships with those they previously considered to be ‘out-group’ members. The participants credited the cooperative educational assignments and opportunities as beneficial for fostering these changes.

Cultural component. In terms of cultural activities, Lyras and Peachy (2011, p.318) argued that SFD programs should include cultural enrichment activities including sport, but also expansive to “theatre, arts and music workshops and activities, as well as topics and initiatives that speak to human rights issues, the Olympic spirit, conflict management, environmental awareness, health and well-being, and technology, among others.” They argued that building such a variety of cultural activities into the SFD program can help facilitate understanding and awareness of the culture of interest. Interestingly, they did not give specific guidance as to the content or delivery of such cultural activities, but more so directed that they should be a part of the program.

4 Research questions and contribution

Sport For Development and SDP scholars continue to press for the need for better program design, management, and evaluation of programs such that the desired outcomes (e.g., reduction of cultural bias) are more likely to be achieved and so that other programs can learn best practices both in design and implementation of effective SFD and SDP programs (Baker et al., 2015a, 2015b; Coalter, 2010; Lyras, 2007, 2014; Lyras and Peachy, 2011; Schulenkorf, 2017; Schulenkorf et al., 2016). The contribution of this study is to both of these ends – we want to understand what managerial, structural, and process elements of this program align with theoretically guided principles of effective SDP programming and we want to provide specific guidance for improvement of this program. In addition, we want to examine applications for future SDP programs such that we can contribute to the conversation regarding best practices (Schulenkorf, 2017).

Thus, the following research questions directed this inquiry:

- 1 What are the specific program structures, management practices, activities, and philosophies, relative to the program goals?
- 2 What portion of the program time is spent in various types of activity?
- 3 What program activities are over/under-represented according to program goals?
- 4 How do program activities and management practices align with theoretical guidelines for effectiveness?

5 Method

A case study method (Eisenhardt, 1989) guided this inquiry. This method outlines the process for an in-depth examination of the case using multiple data sources to gain a comprehensive understanding in order to draw conclusions or make recommendations regarding this or similar cases. Data sources are examined separately and in concert to gather a full picture, draw conclusions, and make recommendations. Data sources included content analysis of the sports visitors program books, program observation and participation in the program itself, and interviews with the program personnel (who help design, deliver, and evaluate the program).

First, the program directors were interviewed extensively over several dates/occasions to understand the overall goals and philosophy of the program, its structure, management, logistics, and its current successes and challenges. Next, the program directors provided a walk-through of the overall program design as well as the evaluative data collected to date [see Baker et al., (2015a), p.16] that describes and indicates the changes in attitudes toward America and Americans that foreign participants report after attending the sports visitors program. Next, simply to provide context, the lead investigator observed in person several of the groups during their US visit and interacted with them in a sport expert session. This interaction, while not a formal part of the case study, provided an opportunity to contextualise the program, understand participant motivations for attending the program, and gain an overall feel for the pace and duration of each visit.

Finally, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the program coordinator to understand more about the program philosophy, design, logistics, successes and challenges (particularly operationally).

Next, content analysis of the program's actual activities was conducted using a stratified sample of 12 out of the 23 total programs that this sports visitors program has delivered in the past two years. These 12 programs were chosen because they were representative of the overall sports visitors program, in terms of representation across genders, ages, program types (e.g., athlete, coach) and country of origin. Programs were analysed according to time spent overall, time spent in the program introduction and evaluation, and time spent in each of the two program goals as well as the sub-elements of those goals. For example, goal 1 activities included access to sport experts, engagement with elite and non-elite athletes, and participation in sport and non-sport cultural events, whereas goal 2 activities included sessions directed at team building, inclusion, leadership, conflict resolution, and diversity. Appendix A provides the code names, definition, and examples of each sub-element along with a brief description of the activity as indicated in the program. In addition, each activity was coded according to engagement level (active vs. passive), and according to the program components (educational, sport participation, and cultural), suggested by Lyras and Peachy's (2011) broader SFD theory.

Two independent coders analysed each of the 12 documents, and then discussed themes and any content or time coding discrepancies until agreement was reached. Data were entered into Excel spreadsheets and analysed according to frequencies by the various activities, active vs. passive engagement, early vs. middle vs. late program groups, inclusion vs. non-inclusion focused groups, and group composition (e.g., coach-only, athlete-only, coaches and athletes, and administrators).

The data from the content analysis were shared and discussed with the program directors to resolve any discrepancies, and to discuss initial findings and recommendations. This process helped ensure that this portion of the analysis was accurate and that the recommendations were feasible according to the program's design, funding, and capabilities. Results below are based on the comprehensive case study and organised according to Lyras and Peachy's (2011) framework. Within each section, the results and a discussion of practical implications for this and other similarly-focused SFD programs are presented. Following this section is a discussion of broader theoretical implications as well as limitations and future directions for study.

6 Results and practical implications

6.1 Organisational and philosophical foundations

Based on interviews with the sports visitors program directors, participant groups make application to the program through the US embassy in their country. The program groups state their learning goals and articulate their own recruitment processes for individual participants. Participants must show a vested interest in the program and a likelihood of utilising the experience to better their local communities. The Division of Sports Diplomacy vets the applications and chooses program groups to come to the US. They then inform the program directors and coordinator of the visit and work with them to set

potential dates and organise logistics of the program. At the time of this evaluation, the directors and coordinator have not had access to the applications from the participant groups. When interviewing the directors and the program coordinator they said this was a huge barrier to tailoring the design of the program to each group. Thus, the programs were more generally geared to what they thought would be of interest and need to the participants, not what they actually understood as a need.

According to SFD theory, the selection criteria in-country seems to align well. However, not having access to the goals or needs of the participants has strong limitations for program design and delivery. In order to maximise the value and relevance of participant outcomes and to reduce colonialism and top-down implementation of ideas, both participants and coordinators should have input into the program content and desired objectives (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Kay, 2009; Schulenkorf, 2017). This would be consistent with a Theory O approach where both top-down and bottom-up structuring would be achieved (Beer and Nohria, 2000). For example, in the Doves Project reviewed by Lyras and Peachy (2011), the participants and coordinators met for a planning weekend prior to the event. Lyras and Peachy (2011) argued that in this design “participants are included in the planning process in such a way that inclusive decision-making and transformational leadership are facilitated” (p. 321).

In the sports visitors program, developing this kind of protocol for pre-planning would be an excellent revision to their current design. It would align their articulated philosophy with practice (i.e., Theory O and tenets of intergroup contact), and it would help them tailor activities specifically for the groups that are coming, such that the outcomes are valuable to the participants needs and desires. It would also create a foundation for the participants before they come to the US that they will be included in the decision-making process and that their voices are important in their own development and change (Coalter, 2007, 2013; Darnell, 2010; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Kay, 2009; Schulenkorf, 2017). This type of inclusive and collective environment creates fertile ground for cultivating personal and social change (Cunningham et al., 2010; Lyras and Peachy, 2011; Peachy et al., 2015).

Other components of the organisation were also strong relative to SFD theory. For example, each group participated in an orientation, a closing evaluation/debriefing, and an action planning process. The action plan helps the participants articulate what they are learning and their plan for implementing change in their host country, which increases the likelihood for transfer and for becoming ‘visionary change agents’ upon their return home (Lyras and Peachy, 2011). It also could provide the grounds for critical reflection and analysis regarding what they know and want from sport as they move forward (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011). The program directors need to ensure that each program has deliberate, strategically-spaced time structured into the program for this essential activity (i.e., it should not be relegated to participant free time, nor should it take place in one extended block at the end). The evaluation and debriefing serves two purposes. First, it allows the participants as a group to reflect on their experiences and to hear from other group members. This may offer additional insight into the program components and may alter the initial perceptions of the content or value of each experience. Second, it allows the participants to provide feedback to the program coordinator regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the program (which helps with future planning and with deconstruction and critical reflection of the programs’ goals and activities).

6.2 *Analysis of time spent in program activities*

According to interviews with the directors and coordinators, and examination of the program documents, participants in each sports visitors program visited the US for approximately 12 days. Analysis of the program books shows that within each program, participants spent about an hour each in an introduction and evaluation as well as various activities related to goals 1 and 2. On average, participants spent approximately 100 total hours in the sports visitors program planned activities. Thus, participants spent an average of about eight hours in the program per day. They also had some time for free time and shopping outside the scheduled activities.

Table 1 shows the hours spent in each activity across the programs. Approximately 80% of the activities were related to goal 1, and the other 20% were related to goal 2. Within these two goals, 27% of the entire program time had participants engaged passively with sport experts (typically listening to lectures), while the other 63% of the time was spent actively engaged in sport or non-sport cultural activities, and interactions with athletes (almost all of whom were non-elite athletes). Furthermore, the latter four programs had less time spent in passive activities than the earlier programs (see Table 2). Although the goal 2 activities were primarily related to inclusion (11% of total program time), the two disability-focused programs received the bulk of the inclusion programming (accounting for almost 80% of total time spent focused on inclusion). Combined, activities related to leadership, conflict resolution, and team building only occupied 7% of program activities.

Within program groups, administrator-only and coach-only groups spent a greater percentage of their time in goal 2 activities than did the other groups. In fact, the player-only groups spent only 10.8% in goal 2 based activities. This is not to say that the player groups were not active; in fact, when looking at the program content, athletes spent the least percentage of all groups in passive sport expert lectures. However, it appears that the athlete-only groups were more focused on learning more about American culture and sport (goal 1) than they were on developing leadership skills (goal 2).

It is recommended that the program directors continue to enhance the goal 2 components of the sports visitors program. This does not necessarily mean adding more hours, but perhaps integrating the components. For example, building on SFD theory, particular SDP directives, and concepts from contact hypothesis, sport participation activities could be designed where foreign participants mix teams with American participants to compete in intentionally designed mini-contests or team-building activities that include the activity and a debriefing. These activities would allow for equal status, cooperation toward a mutual goal, and opportunities to build friendships (i.e., supporting the conditions for breakdown of negative stereotypes), but would also integrate educational components and opportunities to learn and reflect on leadership skills, team building, conflict resolution, the value and place of sport in each country (Coalter, 2007, 2010; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Lyras, 2007; Lyras and Peachy, 2011; Massey et al., 2015; Peachy et al., 2015). Again, this type of integration helps foster a power-balance and a mutual exchange of ideas, rather than exclusively a one-way movement of information from 'teacher' to 'learner' (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011). Activities that involve competing alongside or in cooperation with disabled athletes would also integrate the inclusion component. For example, creating mixed teams (American wheelchair

athletes and foreign program participants) to compete in a wheelchair basketball game could integrate multiple goal 1 and goal 2 components in the same activity and should achieve greater outcomes than either watching wheelchair basketball or competing only with the program participants.

Table 1 Total hours and percentage of time spent in program activities across all programs

<i>Goal 1</i>					
	<i>Total hours</i>			<i>%</i>	
	989.0			82.5	
	<i>Sport experts</i>	<i>Elite athletes</i>	<i>Non-elite athletes</i>	<i>Sport cultural</i>	<i>Non-sport cultural</i>
Total hours	326.0	21.0	117.5	285.3	239.3
%	27.2	1.8	9.8	23.8	19.9
<i>Goal 2</i>					
	<i>Total hours</i>			<i>%</i>	
	286.5			23.9	
	<i>Team building</i>	<i>Inclusion</i>	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Conflict resolution</i>	<i>Diversity</i>
Total hours	39.0	141.0	22.3	34.0	50.3
%	3.3	11.8	1.9	2.8	4.2
<i>Other</i>					
	<i>Total hours</i>			<i>%</i>	
	40.3			3.4	
	<i>Intro*</i>	<i>Eval*</i>	<i>Action plan</i>		
Total hours	17.8	21.0	1.5		
%	1.5	1.8	0.1		

Note: Intro* = introduction; Eval* = evaluation.

6.3 Sport/physical activity component

While the sport and physical activity component has typically been conceptualised in the SFD and SDP literature as actual competition between or within teams, this program only lends itself to these types of activities for the groups comprised of athletes (i.e., athlete-only and coach/athlete groups). On the other hand, coach-only and administrator-only groups do not necessarily lend themselves to participation in the sport, per say, but rather interactions with elite and non-elite athletes and sport educational opportunities. Thus, the following discussion of the sport component will focus on the sport participation opportunities provided to athlete-only and coach/athlete groups, as well as interactions with elite and non-elite athletes provided across groups. The sport educational opportunities (i.e., sport experts) provided to coach-only and administrator-only groups will be discussed in the educational component section below.

Table 2 Total hours and percentage of time spent in program activities by program time

	Goal 1			Goal 2			Other		
	Total hours	%	Total hours	%	Total hours	%	Total hours	%	
Early	403.8	86.2	132	28.2	14	2.9	14	2.9	
Middle	349.5	87.9	102	25.7	15.3	3.8	15.3	3.8	
Late	235.8	70.7	52.5	15.7	11	3.3	11	3.3	

	Sport experts	Elite athletes	Non-elite athletes	Sport cultural	Non-sport cultural	Team building	Inclusion	Leadership	Conflict resolution	Diversity	Intro*	Eval*	Action plan
Early	146.3	4.0	65.0	94.5	94.0	11.0	78.0	9.3	11.0	22.8	6.0	8.0	0.0
%	31.2	0.9	13.9	20.2	20.1	2.4	16.7	1.9	2.4	4.9	1.3	1.7	0.0
Middle	94.0	17.0	48.0	112.8	77.8	15.0	60	5.5	6.0	15.5	6.8	7.0	1.5
%	23.6	4.3	12.1	28.4	19.6	3.8	15.1	1.4	1.5	3.9	1.7	1.8	0.4
Late	85.8	0.0	4.5	78.0	67.5	13.0	3.0	7.5	17.0	12.0	5.0	6.0	0.0
%	25.7	0.0	1.4	23.4	20.2	3.9	0.9	2.3	5.1	3.6	1.5	1.8	0.0

Note: Intro* = introduction; Eval* = evaluation.

The sport and physical activity component of the sports visitors program allowed participants the opportunity to improve their own sport skills through clinics and practices (rather than competitions or tournaments). Other sport offerings included:

- a observing a youth soccer tryout and evaluating the players
- b attending a swim meet at a school for the blind
- c participating in wheelchair tennis
- d coaching a youth girls' basketball practice
- e meeting professional women's basketball coaches and athletes.

Further, the sport and physical activity opportunities included not only traditional sports (e.g., basketball and soccer), but also sport and physical activities that participants probably had not engaged in prior to this visit (e.g., wheelchair basketball, ultimate frisbee, and/or yoga). For instance, participants were introduced to the sport of futsal and in addition to learning the basic techniques and strategies of the sport, were given the opportunity to interact with American youth futsal players. In addition, the sports visitors program included fun, recreational activities such as a ropes course to encourage team building, ultimate Frisbee, and rock climbing.

Across all programs, approximately 2% and 10% of program time was spent interacting with elite and non-elite athletes, respectively (see Table 1). As seen in Table 2, the exposure to non-elite athletes decreased from almost 14% during the early programs to just over 1% during the late programs. Further, interactions with elite athletes peaked during the middle programs at about 4%, while the early programs spent less than 1% of program time and the late programs provided no opportunities for interactions with elite athletes. Interestingly, coach-only and administrator-only groups received no opportunities for interaction with elite athletes. In addition, athlete-only groups spent a balanced amount of time with elite (8%) and non-elite (9%) athletes, yet coach/athlete mixed groups spent substantially more time with non-elite (11%) than elite athletes (1%) (see Table 3).

Despite the program emphasis in goal 1 to provide enhanced access to and opportunities with elite and non-elite athletes, participants received very little exposure to these athletes in comparison to other aspects of goal 1. Specifically, participants spent less time interacting with American athletes than any other component of goal 1. While access to elite athletes may not be as critical (i.e., they are not equal status nor do they provide opportunity for cooperative engagement), access to non-elite athletes, coaches, and other peers would provide opportunities for fulfilling the conditions of Allport's contact hypothesis, would allow opportunities for building friendships (cf. Cunningham et al., 2010), and would create more optimal conditions for the mutual exchange of ideas and a balance of power within the program structure (Coalter, 2007, 2010; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011).

Thus, future programs should include more opportunities for participants to meet and talk with athletes, coaches and sport managers from the host country to promote dialogue between cultures. Furthermore, it is recommended participants are provided opportunities to participate in multiple sport and physical activities, rather than only their specialty, to provide a greater variety of activities and facilitate inclusive, non-performance oriented participation. Participants from the countries should be provided the opportunity to express what types of sport they would like to learn about and what kinds of sport

activities would be meaningful to them. Finally, this program would benefit from creating inclusive mixed teams during sport participation activities, thereby integrating sport participants based upon ethnicity, gender, and competence level. By creating inclusive teams, the program has the potential to increase the positive impact on participants. That is, breaking down barriers by initiating inter-group contact not only decreases bias, but also creates the foundation for program activities to transfer to real life situations in which groups and teams are comprised of individuals from a variety of backgrounds.

6.4 Educational component

According to interviews with the program directors, and analysis of the program books, the sports visitors program aligns with the educational components recommended by Lyras and Peachy (2011) in several ways. First, participants were provided with opportunities to engage with sport experts in various sport-related disciplines, including strength and conditioning, sport nutrition, and sport psychology. In particular, in most of the sports visitors programs, the participants also had the opportunity to receive a specific introduction to American sports, whereby the lecturer covered the various professional, semi-professional, college, and youth leagues offered in the US. This session also provided information regarding common US sport practices and the popularity of each league.

Second, the sports visitors program provided opportunities to listen to and meet with leaders of successful organisations, such as Coaches Across Continents, Little Friends for Peace, and Playing for Power. These organisations, among others, promote a sport for social impact movement, which provides education to people on issues such as diversity and conflict resolution in an effort to empower all individuals to create an equitable and peaceful culture. For example, Little Friends for Peace empowers children and adults to solve problems non-violently. They provide workshops to demonstrate how their 'peace tools' can be put into action in a variety of situations. By providing participants with the opportunities to see these organisations at work in the local communities, the sports visitors program demonstrates ways to encourage and empowers participants to serve as positive role models and agents of change in their own communities, thereby implementing the components of effective programs outlined by Lyras and Peachy (2011).

In addition to sport educational opportunities provided through a lecture environment, participants also engaged in hands-on clinics to acquire new knowledge and expertise in their field. For example, coaches attended a coaching certification clinic and athletes and coaches attended clinics geared toward their sport specialty (e.g., basketball and soccer). As recommended by Lyras and Peachy (2011), these opportunities created a learner-oriented experience, aligned groups with similar interests, and empowered participants by providing activities based upon their preferences and interests (see also Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011).

Participants attended sessions with sport experts during 27% of their program, which was the largest portion of the program content (see Table 1). Moreover, participants were provided with sessions specifically addressing inclusion (11.8%), leadership (1.9%), conflict resolution (2.8%), and diversity (4.2%). While the early programs (31%) exceeded the program average for time spent with sport experts, the middle (24%) and late programs (26%) remained relatively close to program average (see Table 2). An

examination of the programs over time revealed a stark decrease in the exposure of athletes to activities geared toward inclusion from early (17%) and middle (15%) to late programs (less than 1%). As shown in Table 3, coach-only groups (33%) received more opportunities to engage sport experts as compared to athlete-only (22%), coach/athlete (27%), and administrator-only (25%). Interestingly, coach- and administrator-only groups received largely opportunities focused on inclusion (19% and 20%, respectively) compared to athlete-only (2%) and coach-athlete groups (4%). In addition, each group type spent 5% or less of their program time in experiences focused on leadership, conflict resolution, and diversity (with the exception of coach-only groups spending 7% in diversity experiences).

Based on the content analysis and interviews, it is clear that in some ways the sports visitors program has a strong educational component. It exposes participants to valuable information, and sometimes even helps them gain coaching trainings and certifications they can take back to their home country. In other ways, the sports visitors program falls short of the components suggested by Lyras and Peachy (2011) in two ways. First, it is largely comprised of passive experiences with sport experts in a lecture environment. Future programs would benefit from adding a discussion and cooperative element to these lectures such that participants break off into groups after each lecture and discuss the relevant material and its application to their own lives and practices. This would be particularly helpful if they included dialogue of the problem-solving discussion with the American experts, such that two-way communication is established, more level status is achieved, and there is cooperation toward a common goal. These discussion groups would also foster dialogue and an exchange of ideas for how and what to apply (or not apply) of what they have learned and how sport might be conceptualised differently, based on exposure to sport ideas from both parties. Second, the participants are given little opportunity to voice their own desires and needs for learning. It would likely be helpful if program directors could ask the participants what they would like to learn and how they think their development as athletes or coaches could be developed in the visit (Coalter, 2013; Darnell, 2010; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Hayhurst, 2009).

Furthermore, the educational opportunities directed toward inclusion, leadership, conflict resolution, and diversity were quite sparse despite being the primary aim of goal 2. Although the late programs offered tremendous exposure to sport experts, this was accompanied by a limited exposure (less than 5%) to other areas, including leadership, diversity, and elite and non-elite athletes. While this could speak to the composition of those last four programs, it does reveal the need for more well-rounded educational experience regardless of group type. Future programs need to continue to be deliberate and inclusive regarding exposure to these program sub-elements to provide participants with opportunities to engage in active, problem-based learning.

6.5 Cultural enrichment component

In regard to the cultural enrichment component, this SDP program utilised cultural activities both in and out of sport to provide all participants with access to and knowledge of local and national American cultural experiences. Within these programs, participants have participated in at least the following non-sport cultural experiences:

- a visited historical sites in Washington, DC to better understand the American political process

- b learned about high school and college life by visiting American high schools and colleges
- c participated in hands-on activities such as a cooking group and rock climbing
- d visited historical museums and attended performances of the arts
- e visited American homes to have dinner with a local family and community.

In addition, sport cultural events were designed to help participants gain an appreciation for American sport culture. They also provided an opportunity for participants to make connections between experiences at the sport event and their own sport experiences back in their local community. Such sport activities included

- a attending a variety of amateur and professional sport practices and games
- b serving as athlete escorts in various Special Olympics events
- c observing a wheelchair basketball game
- d learning about collegiate sports by visiting American colleges.

Across the programs, participants were provided with a relatively balanced distribution of opportunities between sport cultural events (24%) and non-sport cultural events (20%) (see Table 1). The later programs contained more cultural activity components than the earlier groups (see Table 2). In addition (see Table 3), athlete-only groups received the most sport cultural opportunities (30%) and the most non-sport cultural opportunities (22%). Coaches and mixed groups received fewer of both (probably because a greater percentage of their time was taken with sport experts).

Overall, these opportunities appear to have enhanced global awareness of various aspects of American culture both in and out of sport. It is recommended that the planners continue to strongly integrate this component into the program for all participant groups. Further, according to Lyras and Peachy (2011), these cultural components can be enhanced with topics and initiatives that focus on the Olympic spirit, environmental awareness, technology and others. Thus, it is recommended that the cultural activity components be creatively designed in concert with other program activities (such as a workshop on peace-building or an interactive session on sustainability), such that program participants have the opportunity to build friendships and understanding that not only decreases barriers, but also creates internal change that can transfer back to the participants' home communities.

It is also recommended that these activities also engage in a critical dialogue and interaction with the program participants about their reflections on American culture and opportunities for them to express ideas about their own culture.

7 Broader theoretical implications

While the main focus of this study was to provide insight and practical guidance for SFD programs utilising Lyras and Peachy's (2011) SFD Theoretical framework, there are several broader theoretical implications for SFD that emerge from the study. First, there are several areas of the Lyras and Peachy framework that could be expanded or clarified. For example, the sport component in current SFD conceptualisations tends to only

address sport participation in terms of active team play (tournaments, practices, events). However, some sport-related groups (e.g., coach-only or administrator-only) or SDP programs do not necessarily lend themselves to these kinds of active sport participation activities. Thus, SFD and specific SDP theory needs to account for these types of groups or programs and provide recommended content and managerial practices for a broader range of participant types and programming aims. These activities could include increased interactions with other coaches or administrators, collaborative problem-solving, and sport educational sessions that are directly applicable to various roles in sport (beyond active athletes).

Second, findings from this study indicate that theoretical framing of SFD programs cannot understate the primary importance of unpacking, critically examining, and clearly stating the underlying philosophy of the program. In this study the sports visitors program was largely cognisant of the most effective and impactful SFD and SDP practices in alignment with Contact Hypothesis and Theory O, yet many times did not create an atmosphere conducive to enacting change according to these theories. For example, in many of the educational or cultural sessions, the program could become more aligned with theories related to contact hypothesis and Theory O (e.g., equal status, interactive groups), which would give more power and voice to the visiting groups and help them not only have a say in their own learning experiences, but also contribute to the dialogue regarding what sport might look like in their own countries as well as how it could be changed or adapted in the US (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011). This would also speak to the need for the 'decolonisation of sport' encouraged by many SFD theorists and critics (Coalter, 2007, 2013; Darnell, 2010, 2014; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Kay 2009). In Lyras and Peachy's model, all components are presumed to be of equal importance, yet it appears that some components may deserve greater weighting or consideration than others.

This study also illumines a number of areas ripe for theoretical advances especially in the area of program philosophy and approach. For example, with regard to decolonisation and local ownership, how can Western or 'Global North' partners help advance sport or development without hurting or becoming imperialistic? (Coalter, 2007; Darnell, 2014; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011) How can SDP programs define and meet real rather than perceived or imposed developmental or sport needs? (Coalter, 2010) How can programs be wise to avoiding unintended negative consequences? (Schulenkorf, 2017) How can SDP programmers continue to functionally evaluate their existing programs according to best practice and theoretically guided principles, while maintaining an open mind toward critical reflection and other epistemological approaches?

8 Limitations and future directions

Clearly, both literature and practice have advanced by increased attention to intentional and theoretically based design and implementation of SFD and SDP programs. Further, many programs are advancing in their impacts assessment and evaluation of the actual outcomes participants' report. The current program is one example. Previous evaluations examined the actual change in attitudes based on program participation (Baker et al., 2015a). This study, though it lacks direct empirical connections between these various recommended program elements and participant outcomes, examined the components that likely 'leveraged positive outcomes' [Lyras and Peachy, (2011), p.314; Schulenkorf,

(2017)]. In addition to a potentially small sample size, the lack of a causal connection is likely the strongest limitation of the current study.

Several methods could be utilised in future studies to strengthen the causal connections between programming elements and participant outcomes. First, future studies could utilise more predictive designs such as experimental or quasi-experimental that would more directly assess relationships (see also Schulenkorf, 2017). Second, qualitative designs that elicit participant feedback regarding program management, components, and outcomes would be helpful in understanding direct linkages. Third, more longitudinal designs are needed. These would help assess actual change in participants' attitudes and behaviours once they return to their home country, and eventually could help assess social change. These methodological advances, in addition to the theoretical advances proposed above, would create rigorous critique and evaluation of SDP programs.

9 Conclusions

The initial results indicate that the sports visitors program is well-aligned with Contact Hypothesis and Theory O principles in terms of its emphasis on active (rather than superficial or passive) engagement. Further, the participants seem mostly to interact with those who are of similar status (i.e., non-elite athletes), and have sufficient institutional support. However, the program would be strengthened with more arenas for participant input, and for exchange of ideas through cooperation or pursuit of mutual goals between foreign participants and the Americans with whom they interact. Further, the objectives of team building, leadership, diversity, and conflict resolution are clearly underrepresented in the program activities, thus it is unclear if participants are gaining sustainable change in those areas. It is recommended that program personnel examine ways that they can continue to provide more initial participant input into program goals, more two-way interactions, and less 'sport expert' passive programming. It is also recommended that program personnel make a conscious effort to include more programming dedicated to goal 2, which would expand the life change aspects of the project, as guided by both program leader and participant input. As SFD programs expand, the regular, theoretically guided evaluation of content, processes, and outcomes will continue to improve the purposes for which they are engaged.

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Appendix

Table A1 Codebook with definitions and examples

Code	Definition	Examples
Introduction	The opening of the program in which participants were given the opportunity to better understand the program components and ask questions.	<p><i>Program opening</i></p> <p>“There will be a review of the program, and we will answer any program related questions and concerns. We will also discuss the administrative and logistical details of the program.”</p>
Evaluation	The ending of the program in which participants were given the opportunity to review the program and identify the strengths and weaknesses of their experience.	<p><i>Program evaluation</i></p> <p>“There will be a review of the program, and we will answer any program related questions and concerns. We will also discuss the administrative and logistical details of the program.”</p>
Action plan	The opportunity to put together an action plan of how to implement that which they have learned and experienced into their lives at home.	<p><i>Action plan session</i></p> <p>“The group will talk about and work on their action plan. This document will be used to put a plan in writing on how each participant will share their experience when returning to their country.”</p>
Sport expert	The opportunity to listen to or participate in an activity instructed by a knowledgeable leader in various sport-related disciplines.	<p><i>Nutrition and injury prevention</i></p> <p>“The group will have the opportunity to learn about nutrition – what to put in your body to get stronger and faster – and injury prevention, including stretching and dealing with minor injuries.”</p> <p><i>Sand volleyball clinic</i></p> <p>“The group will participate in a Sand Volleyball clinic provided by USA Volleyball.”</p>
Elite athletes	The opportunity to observe or interact with accomplished athletes, including collegiate and professional athletes.	<p><i>Soccer Clinic</i></p> <p>“The group will participate in a personalized soccer clinic given by George Washington University women’s soccer coaches and student-athletes.”</p> <p><i>Capitol Hill briefing committee</i></p> <p>“WNBA Mystics Coach and players are also on the panel and participants will have the opportunity to meet them after the panel.”</p>
Non-elite athletes	The opportunity to observe or interact with recreational athletes.	<p><i>Player evaluation</i></p> <p>“The group will have the opportunity to observe a girls’ youth soccer tryout and help with the evaluation of the players.”</p> <p><i>AAU Boys’ Basketball Practice</i></p> <p>“The group will have the opportunity to observe and coach an AAU boys’ basketball practice.”</p>

Table A1 Codebook with definitions and examples (continued)

Code	Definition	Examples
Sport cultural event	The opportunity to attend or interact with a sport practice or game in both elite and non-elite contexts.	<p><i>NBA Basketball Game and Shoot Around</i></p> <p>“The group will have the opportunity to attend a NBA Basketball game between the Washington Wizards and the Dallas Mavericks. The group will be allowed into the Verizon Centre early to watch both teams warm up on the court.”</p> <p><i>NCAA Volleyball Match</i></p> <p>“The group will have the opportunity to attend the semi-finals of the NCAA Women’s Volleyball Championship.”</p> <p><i>Tour of Washington, DC</i></p> <p>“This special tour will introduce you to the nation’s capital, utilising the city’s landmarks to underscore democratic concepts and explain the American political process. You will visit historical sites and experience the diversity of this vibrant and beautiful city.”</p> <p><i>Home Hospitality</i></p> <p>“The group will have the opportunity to visit a traditional American home and have dinner with an American family and community.”</p> <p><i>The EDGE</i></p> <p>“The group will participate in teambuilding exercises through thought provoking, fun team development activities and workshops grounded in cutting edge team and organisational learning theory.”</p> <p><i>Wheelchair Tennis</i></p> <p>“The group will observe and get a chance to participate in wheelchair tennis.”</p> <p><i>Assistive Technology Session</i></p> <p>“The group will visit an American college where they will have the opportunity to learn about Assistive Technology used to help students with disabilities.”</p> <p><i>Positive Coaching and Youth Empowerment Session</i></p> <p>“The group will have the opportunity to talk to an expert. He will discuss how he teaches sport leaders, coaches, athletes, parents, and officials about positive coaching and youth leadership techniques.”</p> <p><i>Leadership through Fitness and Community Centre Tours</i></p> <p>“The expert will demonstrate how he uses fitness to promote leadership within a group or a team. During this time the groups will also have the opportunity to tour community centres in the local area. The group will also have the opportunity to participate in Sherman’s bootcamp class.”</p>
Non-sport cultural event	The opportunity to gain a better understanding of American culture through tours and interactions with Americans outside of sport, including theatre, arts, historical sites, etc.	
Team building	The opportunity to learn about and engage in collaborative tasks with the specific aim of improving social relations among a group of people both in and out of sport.	
Inclusion	The opportunity to learn about or participate in activities geared toward adaptive sports and individuals with disabilities both in and out of sport.	
Leadership	The opportunity to learn about or participate in activities that facilitate effective leadership techniques both in and out of sport.	

Table A1 Codebook with definitions and examples (continued)

Code	Definition	Examples
Conflict resolution	The opportunity to learn about or participate in activities that facilitate peaceful solutions to issues and problems among people both in and out of sport.	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Conflict Resolution Through Sports</i></p> <p>“The participants will learn how to resolve conflicts in their everyday life through sport; they will participate in discussions and activities that will emphasise the theory.”</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Little Friends for Peace “Answer the Violence with Skills for People”</p> <p>“The group will participate in a session with Little Friends for Peace. Little Friends for Peace’s mission is to empower children and adults to solve problems non-violently, build relationships through compassion and empathy, and create a culture of peace. Little Friends for Peace offer a variety of programs that share their peace toolbox which empowers individuals to build compassion, empathy, and love.”</p>
Diversity	The opportunity to learn about or participate in activities that are geared toward individuals of diverse populations both in and out of sport.	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Youth Sport Development</i></p> <p>“Global Game Changers is an independent consulting firm based in DC that provides sports based development solutions for at-risk youth. The group will have the opportunity to meet with Global Game Changers staff and participate in activities highlighting proven techniques that use coaching as a development tool to achieve positive outcomes.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Boys and Girls Club Meeting and Tour</i></p> <p>“The group will visit and American organisation designed to give youth a safe, positive place to spend time after school. The group will tour the facility, interact with kids that are there for the after school program, and meet with faculty and staff.”</p>