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# CRITICAL SUCCESSION FACTORS FOR SPORTS PROMOTION THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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## Abstract

### AIM

This study wants to give an empirical answer to the question which determinants are most important for intersectoral partnerships in a specific community capacity building program which aims at increasing sports participation.

### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Sports participation is claimed to reduce physical inactivity, improve mental wellbeing and built social capital. These beneficial effects make sports a useful tool for other sectors. However only little is known about how the sport, social and health sectors can work together to promote these shared goals. Sam (2009) indicates that the promotion of sports is a wicked problem, and that the best suited approach to deal with these problems lays in a network approach.

Nonetheless, despite the recognition of the potential of networks to address – wicked – social problems, a lack of insight into the environmental, structural and managerial determinants and how these are interrelated hampers progress of intersectoral partnerships (Lucidarme, Marlier, Cardon, De Bourdeaudhuij, & Willem, 2013) .

### METHODOLOGY, RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA ANALYSIS

This study focused on a capacity building program that promotes sports participation in Antwerp, Belgium. The objective of the community sports program is to increase sports participation for people who experience higher thresholds to engage in sports. The program therefore tries to lower thresholds concerning mobility, financial effort and commitment and targets communities with a lower average income. The program uses the advocated capacity building approach to influence the practitioners-, organizational-, and partnership level (Smith, Tang, &

Nutbeam, 2006)

A qualitative multiple case study design was employed to investigate the different determinants. A total of 6 communities with a similar socio-demographic and socio-economic profile were investigated. Two communities with a 15 year implementation time, two with 5 year and two with no implementation of the program (control communities). In each community the most important sport, social, health and other partners indicated by the coordinator of the program were interviewed. Questions for these semi-structured interviews were based on the determinants of the theoretical framework of Parent and Harvey (2009). A total of 52 persons were interviewed. For triangulation purposes observations and document analysis were also conducted. Program success was measured on the one hand with the outcome on the practitioners, organizational and partnership level, on the other hand with the outcome of sports participation in the community gathered in 2013 (Marlier, Cardon, De Bourdeaudhuij, & Willem, in press). Currently the data is being analysed with Nvivo 10.

## RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS/CONCLUSIONS

For EASM 2014 we will present the key success factors for intersectoral partnerships in this specific capacity building program to promote sports participation and its implications for policy of the sports, social and health sector.

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