

Underprivileged Youths' Participation in Nature-Based Outdoor Recreation: Motivations, Constraints, and Barriers

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Abstract: The types of motivations, constraints, and barriers affecting youth participation in nature-based outdoor recreation are researched in this study. Participants represent underprivileged youth affiliated with a free drop-in after-school youth program. Guided by the Constraints Negotiation Theory and following previous leisure and recreation research on perceived motivations, barriers, and constraints, this study utilizes qualitative data collection techniques. The results reveal sets of common motivations and constraints affecting these youths' participation in nature-based outdoor recreation. This information will help public and private local and regional organizations provide more culturally aware nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities for youth and their families.

Keywords: Youth, Nature, Motivations, Barriers, Constraints, Recreation

Introduction

With slight shifts up and down, the overall number of youths in the United States participating in nature-based outdoor recreation (NBOR) has dropped in the past decade (Outdoor Foundation 2016). Cordell (2008, 4) provides an inclusive definition for nature-based outdoor recreation, “as outdoor activities in natural settings or otherwise involving in some direct way elements of nature—terrain, plants, wildlife, water bodies.” A concerning consequence of decreased activity outdoors may be a decline in youths' environmental awareness and connection (Kelly 2005, 2008). Following Constraint Negotiation Theory (Jackson and Rucks 1995) and the Hierarchy of Constraints Model (Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford 1994), this study aims to build on previous constraints and motivations literature by researching a specific population subgroup: underprivileged youth.

This study uses the term “underprivileged youth” to define low-income youth ages twelve to seventeen who have fewer opportunities in education, employment, and social life—a description supported by the program coordinator at the study site (Education, Youth, and Culture Council 2008; Laurel Sanders, pers. comm., Mar. 22, 2011). Research shows that underprivileged youth perceive a unique set of barriers and constraints that affect and impede their participation in NBOR (Hellison 2009; Ries et al. 2008).

The Outdoor Foundation's Outdoor Recreation Participation Reports (ORPR; 2010, 2016) are the comparison tool for this study. The results from the 2016 ORPR are included for comparison with 2010 ORPR results to demonstrate recent and current trends in outdoor participation. Survey responses between the two studies also vary and impact the types of responses provided by survey participants nationwide.

To determine underprivileged youths' motivations, constraints, and barriers affecting their participation in NBOR, this study aims to fulfill two objectives. The first objective is to identify the motivations, constraints, and barriers encountered and/or perceived by a group of underprivileged youth who attend a free drop-in youth program and live in a low-income

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neighborhood in a mid-sized upper Midwest city. Second, this study aims to better understand youths' motivations and efforts to overcome constraints to enable their participation in NBOR.

From a programming perspective, Hultsman (1993), who has conducted research on youth in the outdoors, notes the importance of knowing the characteristics, interests, traits, and constraints of the target audience—in this case, underprivileged youth. Understanding what motivates or prevents underprivileged youth from participating in NBOR can translate to an understanding of how to better develop and deliver effective and engaging programs. Further, family constructs must also be considered. Based on Outley and Floyd's (2002) research, parents in urban and inner-city neighborhoods regularly play the role of gatekeeper for deciding whether a program is acceptable for their children to participate in, despite the child's age. The majority of those engaging in NBOR credit family participation while they were young as a main reason for enjoying such activities later in life (Flett et al. 2010; Hultsman 1993; Outdoor Foundation 2016; Van Velsor and Nilon 2006; West and Merriam 2009). Hultsman (1993) found that Hispanic youth more often cited parental influence than white, black, American Indian, or youth from mixed backgrounds. The role of parents in the decision-making process can be vital to current and future participation in NBOR (Hultsman 1993). Therefore, understanding factors such as interest in certain activities and decision-making power associated with participating in NBOR can influence program development and delivery (Hultsman 1993; Outley and Floyd 2002; Flett et al. 2010).

An awareness of different cultural and racial norms can lead practitioners to be more intentional in the delivery of their programs (Allison 1996; Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez 2006) to encourage and motivate those of all races and ethnicities to participate. Allison (1996) recommends that practitioners use their awareness of ethnic differences as a guide, but not as stereotypes, to help them be culturally competent when working with diverse groups of youth.

From a conservation perspective, many organizations believe that concerned and environmentally aware youth may grow up to become concerned and environmentally responsible adults (Van Velsor and Nilon 2006). Thus practitioners may benefit from understanding how to engage underprivileged youth in activities that could lead them to becoming more aware of the environment—ranging from recreation to conservation.

Many researchers and practitioners (e.g. see Allison 1996; Barnett 2006; Edmondson 2006; Mayeno 2000; Rideout and Legg 2000; Shores, Scott, and Floyd 2007) have indicated that low-income ethnic minority NBOR participants perceive a number of barriers, including racial discrimination. Further, the cost to participate or to visit certain recreation sites has also been identified as a barrier (More and Stevens 2000). Among the four diverse populations included in the 2016 ORPR, for the ages of thirteen to seventeen, 42 percent of African American, 63 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander, 63 percent of Caucasian/White/Non-Hispanic, and 59 percent of Hispanic youth report participation in outdoor recreation. Statistics reflecting the American Indian populations were not included in either the 2010 or 2016 ORPR. Awareness of racial and cultural similarities and differences and their impact on participants' perception of an inclusive atmosphere in outdoor activities may assist practitioners and instructors with providing equitable, inviting, and welcoming opportunities to all youth (Allison 1996; Hellison 2009; Ries et al. 2008).

The youth center in this study offers free meals, academic support, and a range of activities in a pro-social environment to low-income youth, thus fitting the study's focus on underprivileged youth (Laurel Sanders, pers. comm.). Due to the small number of participants, this study provides an in-depth snapshot of the motivations, constraints, and barriers a group of underprivileged youth personally identified as affecting their participation in NBOR. It is not assumed that results will be generalized to all youth.

Review of Literature

Underprivileged Youth: Familial and Social Influences

Several compounding factors characterize underprivileged youth, their family settings, and social influences. For example, according to Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez (2006, 108), the term *urban youth* is “a euphemism for underserved, poor, marginalized, ethnic minority youth.” These youths reside in socially isolated neighborhoods where poverty and unemployment or low-paying employment are common (Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez 2006; Outley and Floyd 2002; Van Velsor and Nilon 2006). Extended family units may share responsibility for providing food, supervision, shelter, and the development of children in underprivileged neighborhoods (Outley and Floyd 2002). Safety, transportation, and economic hardships are regular barriers to participating in leisure and NBOR (Jackson and Rucks 1995; Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez 2006; Outdoor Foundation 2010; Outley and Floyd 2002; Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford 1994; Ries et al. 2008; Van Velsor and Nilon 2006). These youths have either experienced for themselves, or internalized secondhand from their parents, the perceived safety concerns that prevent them from recreating outdoors. To be clear, the researchers note that not all youth that live in urban areas are to be considered underprivileged.

Research indicates that knowing your audience will lead to more effective programming (Hellison 2009; Cushman 2009; Barnett 2006; Allison 1996; Floyd, Taylor, and Whitt-Glover 2009; Hultsman 1993). The 2010 ORPR indicated that the top five groups that influenced youth ages six to seventeen to participate in outdoor activities included: parents, friends, other relatives, school programs, and community programs. Cushman (2009) emphasizes the need to approach teaching underprivileged youth based on the cultural values and identities held by these youths. Community-based participatory research as a means of intentionally including community members in programming and activity development can lead to greater participation and community support (Floyd, Taylor, and Whitt-Glover 2009; Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez 2006). Underprivileged youth respond more positively to adult leaders who strive to build authentic relationships and trust through incorporating cultural, racial, and linguistic characteristics into those relationships (Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez 2006; Outley and Floyd 2002). As Hellison (2009) stated, instructors who spend time in low-income neighborhoods, schools, and organizations will have greater success in interacting with lower-income youth. Hultsman's (1993) findings indicated parental influence as being ranked in the top five reasons for why youth do not participate in a new activity. Hultsman also found that boys were more likely to cite parental influence than girls, as were Hispanic students compared to Caucasian, African American, American Indian, or mixed ethnic groups. Girls cited activity leaders for school sports, non-sports activities, and community-based activities as reasons to not join in a new activity. Further, to complement the holistic approach to helping these youths develop, Hellison cited a need for professionals to work across disciplines. Interestingly, based on the Outdoor Foundation's 2010 ORPR, media, mentors, and outdoor education programs ranked lowest among six to seventeen year olds as influential and motivating factors. This finding suggests that while the fields of Outdoor and Environmental Education work to expand their influence and program offerings, the ability to influence and build connections continues to be strongest among family members and established acquaintances (Van Velsor and Nilon 2006; West and Merriam 2009).

Urban sprawl and poor urban development also act as barriers for youth participation in NBOR by increasing distance to natural green spaces thus decreasing the likelihood of an individual being able to conveniently walk to a green space (Maller et al. 2009). As a result, more dependency on motorized transportation also decreases physical activity and inserts a potential structural participation barrier (Strife and Downey 2009; Frumkin 2005; Louv 2005; Crawford and Godbey 1987). Research has shown that there are collectively fewer recreational

opportunities in communities of higher minority populations, leading to yet another correlation of lower physical activity among racial and ethnic minorities. According to Ries et al. (2008, 44), “It is important to identify characteristics that are relevant to minority youth because they may experience their environment differently as a result of age and cultural differences.” Similar to the ORPRs (Outdoor Foundation 2010, 2016) the top three reasons cited by Hultsman (1993) for early adolescents not joining an activity include cost, parental influence, and lack of transportation. While recreation opportunities have evolved overtime, one constraint seems to remain constant—cost. Cost was cited by Hultsman and continues to rank highest among perceived constraints in the ORPRs (Outdoor Foundation 2010, 2016).

Shores, Scott, and Floyd (2007) studied the links between gender, age, socioeconomic status (SES), and race/ethnicity, and found that these constraints are often linked. Further, combinations of statuses as confounding variables can affect constraints to outdoor recreation. Certain status characteristics such as age, race, gender, education, income, and SES can be labeled as diffuse characteristics, which one uses to judge another’s competency or worth, despite these characteristics’ relevance to a specific situation, and result in the creation of a participation barrier (Jagrowsky 1996; Yinger 1993; Szmata et al. 1997). Research indicates a connection between these diffuse characteristics and certain types of behavior including social interactions and achievement (Berger and Fisek 2006).

Guiding Theoretical Frameworks

The Hierarchy of Constraints model (Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey 1991) incorporates intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints. Intrapersonal constraints are psychological and pertain to that one individual; while interpersonal constraints are the result of an interaction or relationship between two or more individuals. Structural constraints stem from “intervening factors” that affect participation such as finances and time (Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford 1994, 102). Negotiation of these constraints can be accomplished through, for example, managing personal emotions and thoughts, having a partner to participate in an activity with, and eliminating financial- and time-related constraints. Based on the Hierarchy of Constraints model (Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey 1991), these constraints can stand alone or compile to create a set of constraints. Additionally, Nyaupane, Morais, and Graefe (2002) add that constraints can also vary for one individual from one activity to another. Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford (1994) investigated the correlations between and among the three levels of constraints and found gender differences as well. According to Raymore, Godbey and Crawford, “People of either gender who have low self-esteem perceive a greater number of interpersonal constraints on leisure” (114).

The Hierarchy of Constraints model suggests a complex web of interwoven constraints that may compound atop one another. If constraints perceived by underprivileged youth related to NBOR are similar to those reported in the research of Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford, then their negotiation strategies may require multipart solutions. However, a leisure constraint must not always result in nonparticipation. According to Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford, “constraints are not considered to be absolute; they can potentially be overcome or reduced, while barriers inhibit participation” (100). Negotiation of constraints is possible and may be facilitated by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Jackson and Rucks 1995). For example, negotiation strategies may include modifications to non-leisure parts of an individual’s life to accommodate the leisure activity (Jackson and Rucks 1995; Kay and Jackson 1991).

Identified Constraints and Barriers

Social issues identified as barriers to underprivileged youths’ NBOR include low income, racial discrimination, and safety (Mayeno 2000; More and Stevens 2000; Outley and Floyd 2002; Ries et al. 2008; Outdoor Foundation 2016; Minnesota Department of Human Services 2014). User

fees are an example of a structural barrier encountered by low-income individuals that often cause them to alter their rate of use or stop recreating in that location altogether (More and Stevens 2000; Manning and Anderson 2012).

Race also has been identified as an influential constraint to NBOR participation (Allison 1996; Barnett 2006; Edmondson 2006; Mayeno 2000; Rideout and Legg 2000; Shores, Scott, and Floyd 2007). African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic youth ages six to seventeen who are classified as outdoor participants cited schoolwork as their main reason for not getting outside more often (Outdoor Foundation 2010). In the same report, outdoor non-participants of the same age group identified different reasons for not participating. For example, 31 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander youth reported it was because their parents do not take them outside. Other top reasons included lack of interest, too much schoolwork, and preference for screen media or hanging out with friends instead. Underprivileged African American youth cite a number of barriers that affect their outdoor recreation in parks, natural public spaces, and at community recreation centers, among which include bathrooms in good repair and the natural space being within walking distance from home (Outley and Floyd 2002). Ries et al. (2008) found that females were more likely to cite safety concerns, harassment, fights, and other issues as reasons to not go alone to parks. Witnessing and hearing about crimes leads to primary and secondary experiences and perceptions on the safety of certain recreational facilities and parks for males and females. In concurrence with previous works, based on Flett et al.'s (2010) research of nature-based physical activity, barriers to NBOR mentioned by both youth and their parents include perceptions of safety and a general lack of comfort.

Motivations

In the 2010 ORPR, youth ages six to seventeen cite “fun” as the most common motivation for participating in outdoor activities, while the same age group in the 2016 ORPR cited “Be with family and friends,” as their top motivation for spending time outdoors. The age groups outlined in the ORPRs parallel the three stages of youth development described by Kellert (2005). The stages, which parallel other physical, cognitive, and emotional stages of development are: before age six; ages six to twelve; and ages twelve to eighteen (Kellert 2005; Outdoor Foundation 2010, 2016). Consequently, when comparing Kellert's stages of development to the motivations identified in the ORPRs for general population youth, one can observe that the two are highly synchronized. For example, in the six- to twelve-year-old group, fun, discovery and exploration, and being with family and friends are among the top three participation motivators (Kellert 2005; Outdoor Foundation 2010, 2016). Kellert (2005, 79) describes this age group as ready to explore and experience the natural world and starting to branch out into nature with less adult supervision. During the teenage years, outdoor experiences “offer important opportunities to develop physically and psychologically, to exercise independence and autonomy,” which could support why Kellert's third and final age group—thirteen to seventeen year olds—reporting having fun, relaxing, and breaking up their usual routine as their top three motivators (Outdoor Foundation 2010). Slight variances in the 2016 ORPR report reveal different top motivators for this group to continue to include family and friends and getting exercise—both pro-social, healthy motivators. In Ries et al.'s (2008) research, both males and females cited fun and meeting people as reasons for visiting recreational facilities. Males also preferred to engage in unstructured but competitive sports and would be more likely to go to outdoor recreation areas alone than females. Flett et al. (2010) also showed that youth “preferred” activities that meant they got to be with their friends, rather than meeting new people. In comparing Kellert's stages of development with Hultsman's (1993) findings, one can better understand how program marketing should be developed based on the age of the youth. For example, programming for youth under fourteen years of age should perhaps be targeted at the mothers of those youth, since they are perceived to have a great influence on their children's participation. When youth are

further into adolescence, they seem to report a lower perception of parental influence and instead become more direct consumers, choosing whether or not to participate (Hultsman 1993).

These stages of development and related motivations align with the Recreation Experience Preferences (REP) scale for leisure activities developed by Manfredi, Driver, and Tarrant (1996). The nineteen REP scale domains can be used “to determine motivations for or the psychological outcomes desired from leisure” (204). Among the nineteen domains are themes of spending time with others, enjoying time in nature, risk-taking, and learning and teaching skills. Many responses in the ORPRs (Outdoor Foundation 2010, 2016) could be further categorized into the nineteen REP scale themes for further evaluation of the types of motivations youth identify when discussing their NBOR participation.

Methods

Setting

The setting for this study was a free drop-in after-school program for youth located in a low-income neighborhood in an upper Midwestern United States City that offers ample amounts of outdoor activity opportunities to the region in general. The program was open Monday through Thursday from 4–5:30 p.m. Daily programming included snack, supper, and informal indoor and outdoor onsite activities coordinated by staff and volunteers. For confidentiality and decreased audio interference, interviews occurred in a conference room near the program space.

Observation and Researcher Acculturation

Prior to data collection, the primary researcher volunteered at least one afternoon per week for four weeks at the youth program. Leading up to formal interviews, participant observation occurred. At times, the researcher joined in an activity or discussion for a short period of time when it appeared doing so would benefit data collection without detracting from the activity or discussion. Field notes were recorded shortly after the interaction occurred. As recommended by Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez (2006), this enabled the researcher to begin to establish a consistent schedule, develop positive interactions with the youth, and familiarize herself with program routines in order to conduct convenient and welcoming formal interviews with the youth and program coordinator (Turner 2010).

Participants

The city in which the youth program is located was characterized by a 90.4 percent Caucasian population. Ethnic minority demographics for the city were: 2.5 percent American Indian and Alaska Native 2.3 percent African American, and 1.5 percent Asian (US Census Bureau 2010). These statistics represent self-identified race and do not account for individuals who identify with more than one racial or ethnic group.

Compared to city-wide Census data (US Census Bureau 2010), racial demographics at the youth program were nearly inversed. According to the youth program’s Annual Report, of the 426 youth registered, 35 percent identified as American Indian, 20 percent as African American, 16 percent as Caucasian, 1 percent as Asian, 1 percent as Latino, 17 percent identified with two or more races, and 10 percent were unknown or undisclosed. The gender was a near even split—49 percent male and 51 percent female (Laurel Sanders, pers. comm.). Based on data from Minnesota Compass (2013), 70 percent of families residing in the neighborhood where the study took place report incomes less than \$35,000. Nearly one-third of these households do not own a vehicle, while the city average is 12.6 percent, thus limiting access to all resources: basic needs, healthy food, leisure, good-paying employment, social services, and schools. And more than 45 percent of residents in this neighborhood report living below the poverty level. The poverty

guidelines updated periodically in the Federal Register by the US Department of Health and Human Services (ASPE 2016) under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2) indicate a poverty threshold for a family of four is \$24,300.

Participants for this study were seven underprivileged youth and one program coordinator. To be eligible to participate, youth must have been between the ages of twelve and seventeen. Participants were selected based on recommendation by the program coordinator based on age and willingness to participate. Program protocol requires youth to have a signed permission slip on file, which included consent for program participation and data collection. Prior to data collection, youth participants were provided and read aloud a Child Assent Form to confirm that they: a) understood the nature of the research; b) were given opportunity to ask questions; c) understood they may choose to not participate without any negative consequences; and d) they could discontinue the study at any time without any negative consequences. A similar Adult Consent form was provided to the program coordinator.

The seven youth participants ranged from thirteen to sixteen years old with a median age of fourteen. Five youth self-identified as American Indian, one as Caucasian, and one self-disclosed that she and her family had immigrated from Ecuador. Four youth participants were female and three were male. The program coordinator was female, Caucasian, in the age range of fifty-five to sixty-five, and was a long-time employee of the program.

Data Collection

In line with Patton (1990), formal semi-structured interviews were used to collect data to identify the perceived motivations, barriers, and constraints related to underprivileged youths' participation in NBOR. In total, seven interviews with eight participants—seven youth and one adult program coordinator—were conducted. These interviews lasted up to thirty minutes for youth participants and sixty minutes for the program coordinator. The researcher used a list of guiding questions that allowed for multiple prompts during all interviews. Informal interviews with the youth participants and the program coordinator were conducted when appropriate and when time allowed.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using standard interpretive methods following Goetz and Le Compte (1984). All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Analytical induction was employed whereby data was coded one line at a time. Coding was guided by the constructs within the Constraint Negotiation Theory (Jackson and Rucks 1995), the Hierarchy of Constraints (Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey 1991), the ORPR (Outdoor Foundation 2010), and the REP Scale (Manfredo, Driver, and Tarrant 1996), as well as pre-identified concepts in barriers, constraints, and motivations literature.

Constructs from the Hierarchy of Constraints model and the Constraint Negotiation Theory guided the development of thirty-six constraints/barriers codes. The thirty-six codes were sorted into eleven sub-categories based on Jackson and Rucks' (1995) Constraint Negotiation Theory. The eleven sub-categories were grouped further into three primary categories based on Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey (1991) Hierarchy of Constraints. The final three categories are, in order of negotiation principles, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Structural.

Using responses included in the ORPR and domains from the REP Scale as a guide for coding the interviews for motivations, thirty-seven codes were developed. These thirty-seven codes were sorted into twelve of the nineteen REP Scale domains identified by Manfredo, Driver, and Tarrant (1996), and two additional sub-categories were developed by the researchers as a result of the coding process. These fourteen domains were then grouped further into three primary categories—Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Structural—based on Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey's Hierarchy of Constraints. Data coding resulted in a total of seventy-three initial

codes—thirty-seven constraints/barrier codes and thirty-six motivations codes—that were collapsed into themes based on the guiding frameworks. Similar to the findings of Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey, three final categories of data were evaluated: Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Structural.

Results

Through the coding process, two final categories of data were assessed. These were Constraints and Motivations. Because, by definition, constraints have the possibility of being overcome, while barriers are not, researchers aligned with the Hierarchy of Constraints model (Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey 1991) when coding the data. Five themes were identified within the Constraints and Motivations categories stemming from the data collected in the formal and informal interviews with the youth and the program coordinator. At times, the five themes identified through this coding process paralleled previous research on motivations, constraints, and barriers, and other times revealed new insights into why this participant group does and does not participate in NBOR. It is important to interpret the frequencies of these five themes with caution because the frequency counts did not account for situations when a single participant mentioned a certain theme several times while other participants mentioned it only once or not at all. Regardless, the frequencies allow additional understanding of the data and can be used to guide future investigation and research focus. Because the sample of seven youth included five youth who self-identified as American Indian, who at times provided responses different from the non-American Indian youth participants, the researchers felt it too valuable to tabulate all youth responses together without providing a second set of data representing the American Indian participants' responses when particularly of interest to the field.

Constraints

From a total of 540 responses coded as constraints, nearly half (47%) were identified as Structural constraints. Intrapersonal constraints accounted for 33 percent of the responses and Interpersonal constraints accounted for 20 percent of the total responses. Previous research suggests a progression from Intrapersonal to Interpersonal to Structural constraints, the same progression used to measure types of motivation in this study (Crawford and Godbey 1987; Nyaupane, Morais, and Graefe 2002).

Within the eleven constraint sub-categories the identified constraints/barriers were, in descending order by weight: Geographical Accessibility (22%), Problems with Interpersonal Relationships (19%), Lack of Interest (16%), Cost/Lack of Money and Facilities (12%), and Commitments and Time (9%). The other six categories accounted for the final 22 percent of responses and included: Mental/Emotional Limitations, Lack of Knowledge, Weather/Climate, Health and Physical Fitness, Lack of Skills, and Culture.

Within the original thirty-six initial codes for constraints/barriers the most frequent responses were, in descending order by weight: Preference for other activities—outdoors (8%), Proximity/Location (8%), Transportation (7%), Preference for other activities—indoors (7%), and Lack of Knowledge/Lack of Awareness (6%).

The data show that the Constraint responses represent not only Intrapersonal and Structural constraints, but specifically constraints related to Lack of Interest and Geographical Accessibility. The most frequently identified constraints for both the collective group of youth and the program coordinator were nearly the same, with the greatest emphasis on Structural constraints. These results suggest that these participants have negotiated Intrapersonal and Interpersonal constraints and are currently most often experiencing Structural NBOR constraints.

Table 1: Frequency of Constraint Responses by Category

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	<i>Youth</i>			<i>Adult</i>	<i>All</i>
	<i>American Indian (n = 5)</i>	<i>Non-American Indian (n = 2)</i>	<i>All (n = 7)</i>	<i>Program Coordinator (n = 1)</i>	<i>Youth and Adult (n = 8)</i>
<i>INTRAPERSONAL</i>					
Lack of skills	6	1	7	3	10
Health and Physical Fitness	7	4	11	1	12
Lack of Knowledge	13	10	23	11	34
Lack of Interest	40	22	62	25	87
Mental/Emotional Limitations	3	5	8	27	35
Subtotal	69	42	111	67	178
<i>INTERPERSONAL</i>					
Problems with Interpersonal Relationships	31	16	47	58	105
Sub total	31	16	47	58	105
<i>STRUCTURAL</i>					
Commitments and Time	16	1	17	32	49
Geographical Accessibility	45	17	62	54	116
Cost/Lack of Money – Facilities	18	6	24	43	67
Weather/Climate	5	4	9	15	24
Subtotal	84	28	112	144	256
<i>CULTURAL</i>					
Culture	1	0	1	0	1
Subtotal	1	0	1	0	1
Total	185	86	271	269	540

Motivations

From a total of 624 responses indicating Motivation, Intrapersonal Motivations (37%), and Interpersonal Motivation (34%) responses were nearly equal. Structural Motivations (24%) and Cultural Motivations (5%) accounted for the final 28 percent of the coded responses, indicating that the participants cited a range of motivations.

Within the fourteen identified sub-categories, the most frequent motivation responses were, in descending order of frequency, Similar People (25%), Risk Reduction (17%), Learning (13%), Achievement/Stimulation (11%), and Family Togetherness (10%). The other nine categories were: Culture, Risk Taking, Enjoy Nature, Financial, Equipment, Escape Personal-Social Pressure, Physical Rest, Nostalgia, and New People.

Within the initial thirty-seven codes for Motivation, the top five most frequent responses were, in descending order of frequency, Location/Proximity (12%), Be with Family (9%), Fun/Cool (9%), Time with Friends/Peer Influence (8%), and Activity Leader/Parent-led (7%).

Motivation Subset—American Indian Youth

Among the 294 responses from the American Indian participants, in the original 37 codes for Motivation, the top five most frequent responses related to Motivation varied from the overall response. For the American Indian participants, the top five most frequent responses for Motivation were, in descending order of frequency, Be with Family (16%), Location/Proximity (16%), Time with Friends/Peer Influence (10%), Tradition (7%), and Organized Group and/or Activity (6%).

Table 2: Motivations Table

Table 2: Frequency of Motivation Responses by Category

	<i>Youth</i>			<i>Adult</i>	<i>All</i>
	<i>American Indian</i>	<i>Non-American Indian</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>Program Coordinator</i>	<i>Youth and Adult</i>
	<i>(n = 5)</i>	<i>(n = 2)</i>	<i>(n = 7)</i>	<i>(n = 1)</i>	<i>(n = 8)</i>
<i>INTRAPERSONAL</i>					
Achievement/Stimulation	26	11	37	33	70
Risk Taking	2	0	2	28	30
Learning	16	12	28	51	79
Enjoy Nature	17	1	18	5	23
Nostalgia	4	0	4	0	4
Physical Rest	2	0	2	8	10
Escape Personal-Social Pressures	8	1	9	5	14
Sub total	75	25	100	130	230
<i>INTERPERSONAL</i>					
Family Togetherness	52	5	57	4	61
Similar People	69	23	92	65	157
New People	1	1	2	0	2
Sub total	122	29	151	69	220
<i>STRUCTURAL</i>					
Risk Reduction	56	16	72	34	106
Equipment	5	3	8	7	15
Financial	3	3	6	14	20
Sub total	64	22	86	55	141
<i>CULTURAL</i>					
Culture	33	0	33	0	33
Sub total	33	0	33	0	33
Total	294	76	370	254	624

Themes

Based on the Motivation and Constraint data sets, the following five themes represent relationships among participant responses in connection to their NBOR participation. These

themes incorporate motivations and constraints because study participants often cited both when referring to their level of participation or non-participation in NBOR.

Theme 1: Value of Family

Based on their responses, the American Indian youth participants considered a sense of community, family togetherness, and cultural tradition as primary motivations for participating in NBOR. This response to family togetherness parallels the Outdoor Foundation's 2016 ORPR's findings that family togetherness is a strong motivation for NBOR.

Responses in this study differ from the ORPRs in that for the American Indian youth, family togetherness was often mentioned in combination with culture and tradition—participating in pow wows—as well as spending time with siblings, extended family, and parents. June (female, age thirteen) mentioned hiking at a local park with her mom, siblings, cousins, and uncle as well as playing at the park while babysitting siblings and cousins. John (male, age fourteen) mentioned “enjoying a day at a park with his family while celebrating his brother’s birthday” and he responded “Yes” when asked “if spending time with family makes him want to spend time outdoors.”

Family support and engagement is variable and often presents challenges for the group of research participants. According to the program coordinator, “many parents of the youth...are simply focusing on survival—ensuring they and their kids are fed and safe.” Other instabilities in home life may also exist for these youth: transient living situations and inconsistent parental support, for example, can affect the ability to get required offsite activity permission slips signed. Youth participants mentioned occasionally they would rather be doing something than stay home. When asked the question “What makes you want to spend time outside?”, John (male, age fourteen) stated, “There’s really nothing to do in my house,” and June (female, age thirteen) stated, “I’m not really at home. I’m usually outside or at my friend’s house.”

Theme 2: Peer Influence

Responses from all eight participants suggest that peer influence is a strong motivation for NBOR participation. This includes spending time informally with friends as well as with friends and peers in organized groups and activities. Similar to Flett et al.’s (2010) findings, participants preferred to participate with others that they had an established relationship with rather than with new people they did not already know.

For example, to the question “What would convince you to do a new activity?” John (male, age fourteen) responded, “Like if my friends were doing it...my cousins, my brother, my sister.” Anika (female, age thirteen) and Cayla (female, age thirteen), who were interviewed together, agreed that to try a new outdoor activity, their friends would first have to be doing it, “If we all decide to do it, we all do it.” Natalia’s (female, age fourteen) response was one of the strongest, “I wouldn’t do anything on my own. That would be too scary. I would rather go with the group...like they tried it and I see it’s ok, then I would.” John’s (male, age fourteen) responses to most questions were short, but most often focused around friends and family. John (male, age fourteen) responded with “friends” to nearly every question posed about NBOR participation—what he does, why he chooses to do it, why he wouldn’t do it, why he would try a new activity, and so on. Brian (male, age sixteen) went so far as to suggest ways that he and others could be more enabled to participate in NBOR. “Probably if it was more like community things like cookouts or gatherings or festivals.”

The program coordinator cited numerous examples of the positive and negative effects of peer influence on the youth at the after-school program. Examples included “pressure to take part in, ceasing, or not taking part in various activities offered through the program.” One example provided involved one male youth convincing another male youth not to participate in a field trip so that he could instead meet up with an acquaintance known for selling drugs. However, “that

caused an opening on the field trip and allowed another youth on the waiting list to participate in his place.”

Theme 3: Geographical Accessibility

Throughout the interviews, participants clearly stated how proximity impacts their choice of activities. Most often, a park located just a few blocks from the after-school program was mentioned as their choice for outdoors location. For example, June (female, age thirteen) stated “[The] Park...I sit there with my friends and have so many memories there.” Nearly all participants also cited spending time at the beach along the lake walk in warmer months.

Another convenient outdoors location was the park located adjacent to the school that some participants attended. Natalia (female, age fourteen) explained, “I usually spend my time at the school’s park because that’s where like a lot of kids are and stuff.” Her response indicates not only convenience in location but also preference for being around her peers. Natalia was the only youth participant who also discussed safety as a factor in her NBOR location choices.

Geographical accessibility also includes access to transportation. Many participants identified transportation constraints and barriers, and some explained how they negotiated those constraints. “Yeah, transportation is like a big problem. Especially here because like everywhere there’s like hills and stuff” (Natalia, female, age fourteen, formal interview).

Brian (male, age sixteen), discussed his interest in spending time with his dad fishing on a reservation about ninety miles away from the after-school program. He said that he “doesn’t get to do it as much as he would like” and identified transportation and cost constraints. “If I had transportation...my mom usually gives me a ride...but sometimes [there’s] no gas money to get out there and back.” He also explained how he is faced with the choice of buying a bus ticket to travel to a nature based area or buying milk and bread for his family. His responses reflect the reality that constraints can compound to create more a complex set of constraints (Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford 1994).

However, Brian (male, age sixteen) and other participants identified principles of constraint negotiation by describing their use of public transportation. “You know the [city bus] has been like a great help in getting me where I want to go,” (Brian, male, age sixteen). When asked “What are your typical ways of getting around town? How do you get to places?”, John (male, age fourteen) also responded, “city bus.” Anika and Cayla (both female, age thirteen) said they believed “They could take a bus or ride their bikes to get to a park or location that is further away from home.”

For the participants in this study, Geographical Accessibility was the most frequently mentioned limitation to participation in NBOR. The Outdoor Foundation (2010, 2016) reported the response “There aren’t places for outdoor activities near me” as the second highest constraint and fifth highest barrier for Hispanic youth ages six to seventeen, but this response was much lower in all other groups of youth in the ORPRs for both constraints and barriers. This parallels a response from the program coordinator related to this group of youths’ non-participation in ice skating, a fairly common recreational activity in the Upper Midwest. However, the neighborhood park and most frequently mentioned outdoor location in this study, no longer offers free skate rentals and the City Parks Department no longer floods the skating rink.

Theme 4: Culture and Tradition

With five of seven youth participants identified as American Indian, a strong culture and tradition theme emerged from the interviews. In response to what they do with their family outdoors, three of the five American Indian participants described participation in pow wows. A fourth participant did not mention pow wows but was the brother of another participant who described attending pow wows regularly as a family throughout the summer. The two neighboring states in

the region where the study took place are home to twenty-two American Indian reservations, all within a day's drive of the study site (Indian Affairs Council 2016).

Participants who mentioned pow wows as a form of NBOR offered similar descriptions of activities and traditions that they take part in while participating in this particular NBOR activity. Brian (male, age sixteen) explained, "Well, it's a native gathering, I guess. And you know we go there to practice our traditions and have a good time... [we] dance, sing, eat, and we just you know...talk with people you haven't seen in a while." The female participants also mentioned jingle dresses and taking part in traditional dances. "A pow wow is a native gathering where all natives get together. We have special outfits for dance and then songs that the boys drum...And then after you're done and out of your outfit you can run around...and then sometimes there's a lake by it so we can swim and stuff. And we camp out," (Cayla, female, age thirteen).

After further discussion, it was learned that Cayla and June go camping only when they go to pow wows, which suggests a direct link between attending that cultural and traditional event and their participation in NBOR through camping and other outdoor activities. June also mentioned collecting pine boughs in late Fall or early Winter with her father and extended family, and canoeing with her father while harvesting wild rice. Both of these are further examples of NBOR that are influenced by native cultural traditions. Despite stating that ricing is "hard," June still considered it and gathering boughs to be "fun" activities. Based on these examples: pow wows, ricing, and gathering boughs, one may link a number of motivations and enabling factors that affect these American Indian youths' participation in NBOR: being with family, spending time with friends, tradition, and culture.

Theme 5: Lack of Interest

A lack of interest or preference for other non-NBOR activities was voiced by every participant in this study and aligns with the ORPR (Outdoor Foundation 2016) report as the highest ranked reason for thirteen to seventeen year olds to not participate in NBOR more often. Additionally, the program coordinator emphasized the need for adventure and a sense of risk as key motivators for youth to engage in NBOR. The participants' preference for other activities included both indoor and outdoor preferences and were widely variable, ranging from Cayla's response, "I just want to stay inside and sleep ...and watch movies..." to John's response of rollerblading at the skate park. Others, including the program coordinator, mentioned organized sports as preferences for other outdoor activities. Indoors activities that were mentioned included going to the mall and watching TV.

When asked about what these participants may do in their free time to relax, the program coordinator emphasized the danger of too much free time as an opportunity to experiment with drugs, which were noted to be easily accessible, and the "easy high" associated with that experimentation. According to Laurel Sanders, "Kids like adventure. And they like stimulation. And they like escape. And so, unfortunately for a lot of these kids, the easiest form of that is not to go to the climbing wall...The easiest form is in some pain or shootin' up...The challenge is, after they've had that very easy high, is then to come up with something else that meets that high," (pers. comm).

In general, while it may be a combination of lack of knowledge, interest, and access, participants did not identify a wide variety of NBOR activities that they were interested in, nor were motivated to partake in. Some even said they thought there should be more to do. "It's not, like for teens, I wouldn't say there's too much stuff, like outdoors just made for teens. We just find our own stuff like swimming, just to be outside" (Brian, male, age sixteen). All youth in the ORPRs cited a lack of interest as their primary or secondary barrier to NBOR participation. Another common barrier in the ORPRs was lack of time, either because of schoolwork or other responsibilities, a topic that was not mentioned by the youth or program coordinator in this study.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify motivations, barriers, and constraints affecting participation in NBOR for a small group of underprivileged youth in the upper Midwest. For this group of participants, Structural constraints paralleled Intrapersonal and Interpersonal motivations. Factors such as location, cost, time, and weather greatly impact these underprivileged youths' opportunities for NBOR. Further, because they are still youth, many of these constraints may require assistance to negotiate (Jackson and Rucks 1995; Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez 2006; Outley and Floyd 2002; Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford 1994; Ries et al. 2008; Van Velsor and Nilon 2006). For these youth, participating in NBOR is less a matter of what the activity is and more a matter of where it is happening and who is taking part. This study encourages NBOR practitioners and educators to continue to be aware of important motivations and constraints such as location, peers, family, and culture when working with underprivileged youth. Practitioners and educators who understand these motivations and constraints may have a greater likelihood of creating an inclusive atmosphere for outdoor activities where they may provide equitable, inviting, and welcoming opportunities for all (Allison 1996; Hellison 2009; Ries et al. 2008) if they can purposefully plan around them.

The five themes identified through this study are: Value of Family, Peer Influence, Geographical Accessibility, Culture and Tradition, and Lack of Interest. The first theme, Value of Family, reinforces previous studies that found family to be both a motivation and a constraint to NBOR participation (Flett et al. 2010; Hultsman 1993; Outdoor Foundation 2010; West and Merriam 2009). This group of youth was most heavily influenced to participate in NBOR by their peers and family (Outdoor Foundation 2010, 2016; Hultsman 1993). The second theme, Peer Influence, is related to the role that interpersonal relationships play in these underprivileged youths' NBOR participation (Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey 1991; Manfredo, Driver, and Tarrant 1996). The third theme, Geographical Accessibility was identified as a constraint by every participant in this study. When assessing the minimal resources available to underprivileged youth specifically, a number of constraints may overlap and lead to geographical challenges (Nygreen, Kwon, and Sanchez 2006; Outley and Floyd 2002; Van Velsor and Nilon 2006). The fourth theme, Culture and Tradition, is directly associated with responses from the American Indian youth in this study. The American Indian youth participants indicated a sense of community, family togetherness, culture, and tradition as motivations for participating in NBOR. While previous research has mentioned the influence of family, this finding suggests a stronger emphasis placed on family and community togetherness by the American Indian youth in this study than other reports that included research on family influence (Hultsman 1993; Outdoor Foundation 2016). Further, the combination of culture and family have enabled some participants to take part in NBOR by going camping, an activity they did not identify as being independent of traditional gatherings. The fifth and final theme identified in this study, Lack of Interest, is a theme that continues to be a growing concern to the fields of outdoor recreation and outdoor and environmental education, and, in this study, was often associated with a Lack of Knowledge, including examples of participants being unaware of available NBOR opportunities in the form of resources, activities, and locations (Louv 2005; Outdoor Foundation 2010, 2016).

Based on the sampling and responses of youth included in this study, this study reveals two strong differences to ORPR results. First, direct input from American Indian youth is particularly valuable for framing inclusive and appealing NBOR activities. And second, this study indicates a strong connection between Culture and NBOR for the American Indian subset of youth. Based on several cultural and traditional responses associated with NBOR, urban American Indian youth may engage in NBOR differently than urban non-American Indian youth. Investigating the impact of ethnicity and culture on leisure preferences was recommended by Godbey, Crawford, and Shen (2010) in their research that evaluated the current state of the Hierarchy of Constraints model. Godbey, Crawford, and Shen suggest that culture is intertwined in all three levels of

constraints, rather than as a potential fourth category separate from Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Structural constraints. Based on results from the American Indian and Non-American Indian participants, Constraint/Barrier responses related to Culture were limited, which may support Godbey, Crawford, and Shen's suggestions that Culture is in fact not a factor to be evaluated separately from the three established levels of constraints.

From the results of this study, five themes emerged related to underprivileged youths' participation in NBOR. In the process of identifying these themes, it was found that American Indian youth are underrepresented in research related to NBOR. Future research regarding both urban and non-urban American Indian youth will be a valuable addition to the current body of knowledge. Other future research recommendations include longitudinal investigation of underprivileged youth and NBOR in the upper Midwest, including larger participant samples. Lastly, localized research that investigates connecting all youth to NBOR opportunities would be useful to practitioners.

Based on Manfredi, Driver, and Tarrant's (1996) conclusion that the nineteen domains of the REP may in fact be expanded, this study recommends a Culture domain be added. The addition of this domain would address the importance of diversity and respect for tradition as motivators for NBOR participation, while paralleling Godbey, Crawford, and Shen's findings that Culture is not shown to be an influential NBOR constraint.

The five themes identified in this study relate to motivations and constraints that may affect underprivileged youths' participation in NBOR, and may be used as a guide for educators and practitioners interested in offering effective, equitable NBOR to this population. The perspectives of the seven youth and their adult program coordinator are a valuable addition to the existing body of literature related to underprivileged youth, NBOR participation, and, more specifically, American Indian youths' participation in NBOR.

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