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**SPORT CLUBS AND WELLNESS: ANALYZING THE IMPACT BEING A  
SPORT CLUBS MEMBER HAS ON THE DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS**

by  
Michael Anthony Brito

A Thesis

Submitted to the  
Department of Educational Services and Leadership  
College of Education  
In partial fulfillment of the requirement  
For the degree of  
Master of Arts in Higher Education  
at  
Rowan University  
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Thesis Chair: Andrew S. Tinnin, Ed.D.

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I would like to thank my parents and brother for their support throughout my journey. Thank you to Rowan University Campus Recreation for providing me with the chance to attend graduate school. Also, I would like to thank the professors in the program for challenging my knowledge and thoughts while educating me on the world of higher education.

## Abstract

Michael Anthony Brito

SPORT CLUBS AND WELLNESS: ANALYZING THE IMPACT BEING A SPORT CLUBS  
MEMBER HAS ON THE DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

2019-2020

Andrew Tinnin, Ed.D.

Master of Arts in Higher Education

The purpose of this study was to understand how a student's wellness is impacted through participation in sport clubs. This was done at a division three public institution with a Campus Recreation department, which offers 45 sport clubs. This study was conducted during the spring 2020 semester at Rowan University by distributing an online survey. The survey focused on gaining information about their sport club experience and the impact on occupational, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical dimensions. As well as understanding the factors that may affect their wellness.

The findings of this study showed a high positive impact to the social, emotional, and physical wellness dimensions. Findings provided research for a particular program area within campus recreation. Conclusions discuss the impact sport clubs programs can have on multiple students and how the university will benefit from that.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iv
List of Tables .....	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Significance of the Problem.....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	3
Assumptions and Limitations .....	4
Operational Definitions.....	4
Research Questions.....	4
Overview of the Study .....	4
Chapter II: Literature Review .....	6
Introduction.....	6
Campus Recreation.....	6
Student Employment.....	8
Sport Clubs .....	8
Wellness.....	11
Development Theories .....	13
Future Research .....	16
Summary of Literature Review.....	16
Chapter III: Methodology .....	18
Context of Study .....	18
Research Questions .....	19

## Table of Contents (Continued)

Data Collection .....	19
Population and Sample .....	19
Instrumentation .....	20
Data Gathering .....	20
Data Analysis .....	20
Chapter IV: Findings.....	21
Profile of Sample .....	21
Data Analysis .....	22
Research Question 1 .....	22
Research Question 2 .....	25
Chapter V: Summary, Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations .....	27
Summary .....	27
Discussion.....	27
Research Question 1 .....	28
Research Question 2 .....	28
Limitations .....	28
Conclusion .....	29
Recommendations.....	30
References.....	31
Appendix A: Significant Financial Disclosure Form.....	33
Appendix B: Recruitment Email .....	35
Appendix C: Instrument .....	36

## List of Tables

Table	Page
Table 1. Age of Sample (N=103).....	22
Table 2. Social Wellness Impact (N=98).....	23
Table 3. Emotional Wellness Impact (N=98).....	24
Table 4. Intellectual Wellness Impact (N=98).....	25



## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Overall wellness can be described as someone effectively functioning and performing to their best, balanced ability based on the different dimensions of wellness. The dimensions are occupational, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical (Roscoe, 2009). Universities are responsible for providing resources dedicated to the students' wellness development. The time spent in college is critical to student development as students are typically learning about themselves in a more complex, cognitive manner than they have in the past (Hillman, Snook, & St Jerome, 2003). Students have to make different choices and decisions with deeper implications for the future. Academics, social life, work, family, and personal care may take time to effectively balance. Knowing how student affairs programs are providing positive outlets for students to improve their wellness is vital to higher education.

The various departments across the university have the chance to aid in this development if they are programed and structured with effective, researched, and adaptable methods. One department, which has a great opportunity to do so, is the campus recreation department. This department affects students' on campus quality of life, as well as student success, retention, and wellness (Hillman et al., 2003). In particular sport clubs programs have an opportunity to impact multiple dimensions of wellness and create positive, long lasting habits. Previous studies have not fully looked at each dimension that can be impacted by a particular program area from a campus recreation department.

## Statement of the Problem

Sport clubs programs have been growing in recent years and are an option for students looking to stay active during college. As campus recreation administrators continue to advocate for this profession it is important to show the value of the programs offered for students. However, the literature does not explain the significance of sport clubs programs and the potential for creating healthy habits for students. This study will analyze the gap in research to show how beneficial sport clubs programs can be to the student population and an asset to the university.

Astin's (1999) Student Involvement Theory discusses environments that are designed to promote active participation from students and create the highest opportunity for learning. It is important for students to have a place on campus that elicits positive emotions and behaviors. Once this relationship is established, students are more inclined to continue pursuing it. Place bonding can help students find a place they belong to and ultimately contribute to the university's retention rates (Miller, 2011). However, proving this benefit to the university involves more research.

Sustainability and access are vital for the success of many programs. Sustainable programs are able to show their value and demand for their services. This can be accomplished through intentionally gathering research and data. With more data being asked of higher education departments and budget limitations, it is vital for programs to show the impact and necessity for their programs. "Making efforts to roll evidence of student learning up in a way that practitioners can communicate their contributions to broader university goals is critical to sustaining and improving this work" (Cochran, 2016, p. 4).

## **Significance of the Problem**

This study will explain the impact sport clubs programs can have and why universities should care about them. Being involved is important to student development during college, especially outside of the classroom. There is a lot of involvement in sport clubs when compared to the other programs within campus recreation because sport clubs include paying membership dues, practicing, developing a competition schedule, and serving in an administrative role for the club (Lower, Turner, & Peterson, 2013). This study will show the benefits of sport clubs for students and how they can contribute to campus recreation's goal of improving student's wellness. This study will bridge the connection between wellness impact and sport clubs, which is difficult to find research for. The data findings from this study can provide clarity and reassure student affairs departments who evaluate the impact a sport clubs program has for the university.

## **Purpose of the Study**

This study focuses on Rowan University's campus recreation sport clubs program. The participants are Rowan students who are part of a sport club. The study focuses on the impact being a sport clubs member has on wellness. This study was conducted to contribute to a gap in the research and advocate for the campus recreation department as a profession and necessity to the student body. It specifically examines sport clubs and demonstrating their benefit beyond just the physical component. The purpose of this study qualitative study is to explore and understand the wellness Rowan University sport clubs members using an outcomes assessment.

## **Assumptions and Limitations**

This study can be replicated at other universities varying in the size of the institution, amount of sport clubs, and amount of participants. This study gathers data from only sport club participants at Rowan University. Students will have different levels of involvement within their sport club and this may affect the data results. I know some of these students from working with them during my time here and a few of them also work for the campus recreation department. Involvement levels can vary between all sport clubs participants, which may potentially affect their perceived benefits through participating in a sport clubs.

## **Operational Definitions**

- Campus Recreation: typically a department within student affairs providing multiple program areas including sport clubs. This can also be referred to as collegiate recreation.
- Wellness Dimensions: the main six dimensions are occupational, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, social and physical. Achieving a healthy state of wellness includes finding balance within all six dimensions.

## **Research Questions**

1. Which dimensions of wellness are impacted the most by sport clubs involvement?
2. What factors of being a sports club member affect students' wellness?

## **Overview of the Study**

The remaining chapters in this research study include: Chapter II discusses the literature pertaining to this topic and provides a review. This chapter will mention the need for more research to be done about this topic. Chapter III explains how this study is

conducted in detail. Chapter IV reveals the results of this study and how this pertains to the research questions. Chapter V further discusses the findings of this study. This chapter also provides recommendations for future research.

## Chapter II

### Literature Review

#### Introduction

This review will discuss how campus recreation can impact wellness and student development. Also, there are student development theories from Astin (1993) and Chickering (1976) which explain the effect campus recreation programs are able to contribute to a student's development. In addition, wellness and the dimensions of it will be defined. Lastly, the focus of this is to examine how sport clubs programs have a large platform to impact multiple dimensions of wellness for the students. The research has mostly shown how overall wellness can be positively impacted by general participation in campus recreation programs. The research has thoroughly analyzed how each dimension of wellness can be impacted, or which specific program areas yield positive impacts on the student's wellness. The belief is that being a member of a sport club can greatly impact many of the different dimensions of wellness. Another belief is that sport clubs may be the program area with the greatest chance of improving the multiple dimensions. However, there is not much research to currently explain this claim because of the gap within the literature.

#### Campus Recreation

The literature has grown over the last few decades on the value of the campus recreation department (Forrester, 2015). As the literature has grown, the value student recreation centers provide to the university has also grown. This has led to many expansions and renovations of campus recreation buildings to accommodate a growing student body population. The research has been showing the positive impact these

facilities can have, while justifying the need for this department and profession. The justifications are also important for requesting additional resources from the university. Campus recreation departments offer various programs to the student body, which all play a role in shaping students' well being.

These programs include group fitness classes, intramural sports, aquatics, sports clubs, personal training, and outdoor adventure education. Group fitness classes allow people to enjoy a workout led by an instructor who plans the workout and guides them through it. Intramural sports involve playing against other students at the university in traditional sports and some odd or different sports. Aquatics include being able to use the pool for open recreational swimming and often having the chance to sign up for swim lessons if needed. Students are also able to sign up for a personal trainer to learn the proper lifting techniques and to find a workout plan that meets their needs and goals. Outdoor adventure education programs typically include an indoor climbing wall along with signing up for various hikes, camping trips, kayaking and more throughout the year. Some of these programs can include a cost, but they are typically cheaper for the students than the costs they will find in the community.

Student recreation centers can be a factor for students when selecting a university and for remaining enrolled (Forrester, 2015; Miller, 2011). This paper will specifically analyze the role and impact sport clubs can have on the students who participate in them. In the past, a successful program was defined by the amount of participants. However, in today's data-driven world with higher accountability, departments are analyzing programs at a deeper level to determine the effectiveness of learning outcomes (Ellis, Compton, Tyson, & Bohlig, 2002).

**Student employment.** Campus recreation departments offer various opportunities to employ students. Variance in program areas allows the department to appeal to and hire students of different backgrounds, interests, and skills. The department can become a unique on campus place for students because it gives them a chance to interact with many people. Most of the people who use these programs have a shared value, which is improving their wellness in some capacity. Being in a space surrounded by like-minded individuals who are trying to better themselves can be empowering for a student's development. Campus recreation student employees earned a higher grade point average than their non-campus recreation employed peers (Kampf & Teske, 2013). These students did not exhibit a higher academic performance in high school before entering college. The researchers saw one hundred percent of campus recreation student employees' return in the following fall semester (Kampf & Teske, 2013). These results can be attributed to the chances students have for social integration at student recreation centers. Campus recreation departments' focus on developing their student employees while off campus employers may not decide to invest time into the development of their employees with transferable skills.

### **Sport Clubs**

Many campus recreation centers have a sport clubs program. This program area has grown to become an alternative for students who want to continue competing, or learn a new sport, but not on the varsity athletics level. Sport clubs often involve different intensity levels to them. There are competitive clubs, which often compete and travel for games with the goal of qualifying for post-season tournaments and ultimately earning a national championship (Lower et al., 2013). Depending on the interest from students,



these clubs can also have enough members to fill one or two teams. There are other clubs, which are more recreational based, and they may compete and travel sometimes, but not often as competitive clubs. They may or may not have a post-season goal. Finally, there are instructional-based clubs, which focus on learning a new skill and meeting new people. They do not compete. However, they still practice and improve their skills. It is possible for sport clubs to move in between these levels from one year to the next depending on the goals of the club, number of members, and skills of the members.

These various levels of sport clubs allow the program to appeal to a wide variety of students with different needs and goals. Not all people who join a sport club necessarily need a previous background or certain skill level to join (Haines, 2001; Lower, Turner, Petersen, 2013). Some clubs do host tryouts, so there may not be a guarantee of joining a club. Those are typically the more competitive clubs. Although, for most other clubs, students are able to join and develop their skills afterwards. Sport clubs may not operate similar to varsity sports, in terms of the structure of them, but the students have different experiences in each area.

The main difference between sport clubs and varsity sports is the time commitment, with varsity usually requiring time, energy, and effort every day of the week (Haines, 2001; Lower, Turner, Petersen, 2013). Meanwhile, sport clubs typically include two practices a week with competitions taking place on the weekends. Varsity athletes may not have much time to become involved in other organizations. Meanwhile, with sport clubs, members are able to fulfill their other interests through other organizations.

There is more involvement for sport clubs when compared to the other campus recreation programs because sport clubs include paying membership dues, practicing, developing a competition schedule, and serving in an administrative role for the club (Lower et al., 2013). Sport clubs are designed to be student run organizations. That means the administrative responsibilities of running a club and adhering to all of the policies and requirements, set by the campus recreation department and sports league, must be completed by the students. Sport clubs often elect presidents, vice presidents, treasurers, risk managers, secretaries, match coordinators and so on. Some clubs do not hire a coach or find a volunteer so the students will also serve in this position, which is not uncommon. These sport club officers are often responsible for holding a budget to make purchases, pay league fees, pay officials, coordinate travel expenses, and purchase any equipment. They also have to set up their own schedule through communication with other universities and their sport clubs. Some leagues create the schedule for the clubs, while others leave it for the club to figure out. If a sport club is part of league or governing body, then are also policies and requirements to follow from the league itself. These officer positions give students a chance to improve their leadership skills along with the wellness effects.

Opportunities available through collegiate recreation facilities enable students to have perceived wellness benefits, perceived being a key word because of the lack of tested evidence to ensure this claim. Successful students who are able to adapt to colleges' demands develop skills in stress management and psychosocial wellness (Conley, Travers, & Bryant, 2013). The most successful students are able to find balance with their physical wellness and reduce their stress levels (Haines, 2001). Another study

showed that participation in recreation sports, at a competitive level or for leisure, decreases the negative effects of stress, acting as a buffer (Kanters, 2000). The frequency of participation also leads to lower anxiety levels when facing a stressful life event (Kanters, 2000).

A sense of belonging, which directly impacts students' social well being, is provided by campus recreation centers. These campus recreation centers also attract, retain, and integrate students further into the university environment (Henchy, 2011; Miller, 2011). Perceived wellness benefits by students from participating in campus recreation programs most directly affect the physical, social, and emotional wellness dimensions (Haines, 2001). A study found that students who join a sport club were more likely enroll into classes the following year when compared to students not involved in a sport club (Kampf & Teske, 2013). This shows a sense of integration to the university. It is important to include time for leisure activity in our daily lives, or to have some type of outlet to find relaxation. For students at a university, the recreation center can provide this option. Creating a healthy, sustainable lifestyle through diverse programs is a way to combat physical inactivity (Lower et al., 2013); a growing problem within the nation (American College Health Association, 2011). The healthy behaviors and habits developed by students when attending college can become an important part of their lives.

### **Wellness**

Developing students' wellness in a holistic manner involves balance and effort to improve each dimension. Each dimension of wellness is explained as follows. Social wellness is finding a sense of belonging and balancing relationships within the

community (Roscoe, 2009). Emotional wellness involves the successful management, expression, and awareness of emotions and feelings (Roscoe, 2009). The physical dimension is about improving and maintaining the overall fitness, flexibility and strength for themselves (Roscoe, 2009). Physical wellness also includes having a balanced and healthy diet to give the body the proper nourishment needed. Intellectual wellness is actively improving cognitive ability through stimulation and gaining new knowledge (Roscoe, 2009). The spiritual dimension is defined as understanding how their own beliefs, values, and philosophies fit into the universe (Roscoe, 2009). Finally, the occupational dimension is described as finding satisfaction with one's work as it relates to their values. This dimension also involves doing work that engages their strengths and skills by making the work feel meaningful (Roscoe, 2009). Multiple dimensions can be impacted by an activity with each one being able to see some type of effect. Achieving a balance of all dimensions can lead to added results.

The benefit of reaching a balanced state of wellness includes increased life expectancy, healthier relationships, increased productivity, and fewer mental and physical issues (Prilleltensky, 2013). Universities contain multiple departments that are able to contribute to the students' wellness through their programs. Campus Recreation departments also have a platform for impacting the students wellness. Through the many program areas offered not all are able to have an impact on every dimension. Students can participate in multiple programs to fulfill their balanced state of wellness. However, it is possible that a sport clubs program offers a chance to impact each dimension.

Sport clubs provide the opportunity to be physically active while also promoting a healthy lifestyle for students (Lower et al., 2013). When compared to the other program

areas within student recreation centers, sport clubs had a significant difference in perceived benefits by reporting the highest mean in overall, social, intellectual, and physical wellbeing (Lower et al., 2013). The wellness benefits from participating in these sport clubs shows how reasonable it is to believe this program area can keep students attached to university each year. The students are developing different personal skills and abilities during college. Astin (1999) and Chickering (1976) created theories centered on the change and factors, which affect that change in college students.

### **Development Theories**

Astin's (1999) Student Involvement Theory refers to the amount of time and effort, both physically and psychologically, students devote to college activities. An important postulate of this theory states the amount of learning and development a student gains is proportional to the quality and quantity of the program. Examples of programs for students to become involved with include student government, greek life, student organizations, and recreational sports. Astin discusses environments that are designed to promote active participation from students create the highest opportunity for learning (Astin, 1999). Students who become involved are more likely to find their community and feel a sense of belonging (Sturts & Ross, 2013).

This theory applies to sport clubs by how they offer a chance to become a part of a community. Student recreation centers are important to creating a social bonding experience and a deeper sense of belonging to their university, as well as creating a sense of community to build relationships with peers, finding a network of friends, and developing a deeper trust in peers (Miller, 2011). Involvement can also lead to an

increase in leadership skills, which can serve as the foundation for the student's future growth post-graduation.

A study conducted by Hall, Forrester, and Borsz (2018) analyzed the development of leadership skills for student leaders involved in their campus recreation sports departments. There are seven themes of skills the students gained from their positions; problem solving and decision making; communication skills; giving and receiving feedback; working with others/diversity; organizing, planning, and delegating; motivating/influencing others and being a mentor/role model; and balancing academic, personal, and professional roles (Hall, Forrester, & Borsz, 2018). By understanding the outcomes of a student's participation and involvement in campus recreational sports, institutions can realize how these programs are about more than physical exercise. In a broader sense they can also contribute to the development goals each institution has for their students (Hall et al., 2018). "The results from this study can be used to provide a voice to campus recreational sports professionals when attempting to justify their programs and services to higher education administrators" (Hall et al., 2018, p. 138). Another important developmental phase students have to navigate is discovering their identity.

Chickering's seven vectors of student development, as discussed by Todaro (1993), can explain how recreational sports influence the psychosocial development of students. Chickering's model focuses on college students developing their identity. This can be done through experiential learning, which is learning through an event that affects one's knowledge, judgments, or feelings and this can affect their development too

(Chickering, 1976). The seven vectors and the impact recreation sports can have are described as the following.

Developing competence is when the student develops self-confidence and self-esteem, making them believe in their abilities. Recreational sports offer the chance to experience success, and increase their physical capabilities, and interpersonal skills (Todaro, 1993). Next, managing emotions is being able to control and exert emotions through an appropriate manner. Sports provide a potential outlet for these emotions, and learning how to conduct themselves as established through the rules for each sport (Todaro, 1993). Achieving autonomy is when a student does not seek validation from others and is comfortable accepting full responsibility of their actions. Participation in sports involves decision-making skills, especially if the student is a leader or captain for their team. Developing interpersonal relationships is learning about and respecting other people's backgrounds, race and ethnicities, and communicating appropriately with them. A team sport brings together people of different backgrounds to achieve a common goal (Todaro, 1993). Establishing identity is the student understanding who they are and how others may judge them. Participating in sports involves physical challenges and other pressures which can make the student feel comfortable in their own ability to overcome these situations, thus increasing their self-esteem (Todaro, 1993). Developing purpose is being able to create a plan for their long-term goals. Recreational sports helps to build a goal oriented mindset and team or personal performance goals (Todaro, 1993). Developing integrity is acting in accordance with a set of beliefs and values to guide their behavior. Recreational sports involve sportsmanship where rules dictate acceptable and

unacceptable behaviors (Todaro, 1993). These student development theories have helped to advocate for campus recreation, but there are still more things to study and discover.

### **Further Research**

The research can look to analyze the structure of sport clubs from the administrator and participant viewpoint to better understand the impact structure can have on the participant experience (Lower et al., 2013). Comparative analyses can be done between both sport clubs and varsity sports to compare how the differences in time commitment and structure affect the athletes' wellness. Future research can also compare student leaders in campus recreational sports to other student leaders involved in the other departments across the university (Hall et al., 2018). Continued research can be done on the variables keeping students from getting involved with campus recreation at their university. It would also be interesting to see what effect does participation in recreational sport programs have during life after graduation.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

There are different opportunities available to students to improve their overall wellness at their university and the student recreation center can play a key role in this. Analyzing the provided programs can help administrators understand how these programs best fit into the overall framework of the university. Understanding these programs offered to students will help the university attract, retain, and integrate students further into the campus environment (Haines, 2001; Lower et al., 2013; Miller, 2011). Therefore, it becomes important for universities to devote the necessary resources to keep this department operating successfully. In addition to the wellness impact recreation centers



can provide to students, these departments are also able to contribute to the university's goals and mission.

University's student recreation centers are one tool, which can be used to affect the overall impact a campus culture has on its students. From the administrative perspective, this department is able to provide chances to students that help them grow, find a community, and improve their holistic well-being (Haines, 2001; Miller, 2011). Proper integration into a university makes a significant difference for students during collegiate careers. Recreation centers are able to contribute to the retention and integration of students furthering their significance and connection to the university (Lower et al., 2013). Astin's (1999) involvement theory and Chickering's (1976) seven vectors of student development are critical to higher education administrators in order to continue creating effective programs. These theories provide researched evidence on the importance of the programs. Campus recreation departments have shown to be effective in student development through the theories mentioned. Specifically, sport clubs can impact various dimensions of wellness and self-development through different avenues and more research is needed to validate this.

## Chapter III

### Methodology

#### Context of Study

This study was conducted at Rowan University, a four year public institution located in Glassboro, New Jersey. Bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees are all offered. Along with two medical schools also located in New Jersey, there are approximately 19,500 total students enrolled at the university with 16,120 undergraduates, 2,228 graduates, 1,117 professional/medical students (Rowan University Fast Facts, 2019). The main campus in Glassboro will be used for the purposes of the study. Rowan University has experienced much growth recently and is the sixth fastest growing research university within the nation allowing the institution to be ranked 19th among universities in the northern region according to the U.S. News and World Report rankings (Rowan University Fast Facts, 2019).

The campus recreation department at Rowan University offers 45 different sport clubs for students to join. In the 2018-2019 academic year there were approximately 1,400 unique sport clubs members (D'Elia, 2019). These sport clubs vary in competition and involvement level. Some clubs practice and compete more often than others. Within each club some members are more involved than others, especially if they serve in a leadership by being one of the officers for the club.

The goal of this study is to understand how wellness is impacted for sport clubs participants in order to show the value this program area can bring to the university. This is currently lacking within the research and this study to add to the research. To achieve

this goal a quantitative analysis will be used. All values will be compared at the conclusion of the study to understand impact sport clubs participation has on wellness.

### **Research Questions**

1. Which dimensions of wellness are impacted the most by sport clubs involvement?
2. What factors of being a sports club member affect students' wellness?

### **Data Collection**

After obtaining approval the Institutional Review Board, a survey was distributed to all sport clubs' participants through a recruitment email with the survey link attached within it. Data was collected in February of the spring 2020 semester. All results were anonymous for the participants. All participants volunteered to participate in the study and provided their consent.

### **Population and Sample**

The target population for this study was the approximate 1,300 sport clubs participants enrolled during the 2019-2020 academic year. After obtaining approval from the Assistant Director of Sport Clubs and Student Development, Drew D'Elia, I sent a survey link to all participants. All participants were asked to participate in an online survey through an email invitation sent to them in the spring 2020 semester. Of the estimated 1,300 sport clubs members, a total of 111 participants partially completed or completed the survey (11%).

## **Instrumentation**

The 28-item online survey is comprised of multiple choice and Likert-style questions. Demographic information is also included as well as background questions related to their involvement with sport clubs. It was difficult for me to find a research instrument which answered my research questions. For this study I created a survey instrument (McMillian, 2016, p. 198). This was done using Qualtrics software. Consent procedures were followed and made was required for subjects to participate in the study.

## **Data Gathering**

Data was gathered through the use of an online survey provided through the Qualtrics software. Qualtrics is an official survey method used at Rowan University. This software is designed to create and distribute surveys (Qualtrics, 2019). There were no benefits or incentive prizes given to anyone who participated. There is minimal risk for participation in this study aside from those faced in common everyday life. The online survey took approximately take 10 minutes for the subject to complete. The survey was available for two weeks in the month of February.

## **Data Analysis**

All data collected from the Qualtrics survey was transferred into the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software. Frequency tables were used to analyze the findings and provide answers to the research questions. The independent variable in this study is each participant's perception of how their wellness has been impacted through their experience as a sport clubs member. The dependent variable in this study is the participant's involvement within their respective sport club (McMillan, 2016, p. 56).

## Chapter IV

### Findings

#### Profile of Sample

The target population for this study were the 1,256 sport clubs participants enrolled during the 2019-2020 academic year at Rowan University's main campus in Glassboro, New Jersey. Both undergraduate and graduate students were invited to complete the survey. To participate students must have been a part of a sport club and completed a waiver to officially join the club. Of the 1,256 students who were contacted there were 111 responses with 8 partially completed surveys and 103 completed surveys. This yielded a completion rate of 8%. The sample consisted of 42 males (41%) and 61 females (59%). The class level of each participant was 22 freshmen (21%), 21 sophomores (20%), 24 juniors (23%), and 34 seniors (33%).

Of the 45 sport clubs offered to students at the time of the survey 33 (73%) were represented. Of the 103 responses, 38 participants (37%) serve on the executive board of the sport clubs, while 64 (62%) did not. A majority of the participants (N=93) indicated the sport clubs program was not a factor when choosing a college to attend (72%). However, 88 participants responded that the sport clubs program has been a significant part of their college experience (95%). Table 1 shows the age for each person who responded, with the majority of people falling in between the ages 18 to 21 (78.6%).

Table 1

*Age of Sample (N=103)*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
18	17	17
19	24	23
20	17	17
21	23	22
22	15	15
23	2	2
24+	5	5

The most popular majors were Engineering (19.6%), Education (14.9%), Marketing (7.4%), Health Promotion and Wellness Management (7.4%), Psychology (4.6%), Accounting (4.6%), and Finance (4.6%).

### **Data Analysis**

**Research question 1.** Which dimensions of wellness are impacted the most by sport clubs involvement?

Table 2 illustrates how social wellness was impacted for sport club participants. Most of the students somewhat agreed or agreed they had a sense of belonging to the university because of sport clubs (98.9%). A majority of them reported having gained impactful friendships from sport clubs (96.7%). Another important statistic is 82 students

(83.6%) reported spending time with other sport club members outside of practice and competitions. Occupation wellness was also shown to be affected. When asked if their leadership has increased as a result of their sport club involvement, 7 people disagreed (7.1%), 13 people somewhat disagreed (13.2%), 27 people somewhat agreed (27.5%), and 51 people agreed (52%). Along with leadership, students also reported feeling more responsible through their sport clubs participation with 87 students who somewhat agreed or agreed (88.7%).

Table 2  
*Social Wellness Impact (N=98)*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>		<i>Somewhat Agree</i>		<i>Agree</i>	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Participating in sports clubs has given me a sense of belonging to the university	0	0	1	1	21	21.4	76	77.5
Participating in sport clubs has provided me with impactful friendships	0	0	5	5.1	24	23.4	72	73.4
I often spend time with sport club teammates outside of the practice and competitions	10	10.2	6	6.1	25	25.5	57	58.1

Table 3 demonstrates the emotional wellness benefits with students reporting positive improvement within this dimension.

Table 3

*Emotional Wellness Impact (N=98)*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>		<i>Somewhat Agree</i>		<i>Agree</i>	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
My self-confidence has increased since being involved in a sport club	1	1	10	10	36	36.7	51	52
I am able to effectively handle my emotions during physical activity	0	0	3	3	17	17.3	78	79.5

For the spiritual wellness dimension most students indicated they do not reject outside thoughts or beliefs with which their personal views disagree: 6 students disagreed (6.1%), 9 students somewhat disagreed (9.1%), 33 students somewhat agreed (33.6%), 50 students agreed (51%). Also, 100% of students either somewhat agreed or agreed that they strive to challenge themselves in order to experience growth.

The intellectual wellness dimension was tested for by asking questions relating to cultural awareness and cognitive ability. These two areas were chosen because intellectual growth can impact them and can directly relate to sport club participant's experience at some point. Table 4 shows the results.



Table 4

*Intellectual Wellness Impact (N=98)*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>		<i>Somewhat Agree</i>		<i>Agree</i>	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
My cultural awareness has grown since being involved in a sport club	11	11.2	13	13.2	36	36.7	38	38.7
My cognitive ability has increased since being involved in a sport club	6	6.1	7	7.1	40	40.8	45	45.9

Lastly, the survey questions for the physical wellness dimension yielded highly positive remarks. Participants were asked if their physical ability has increased through their involvement with sport clubs. Responses included 3 students who disagreed (3%), 1 student who somewhat disagreed (1%), 32 students somewhat agreed (32.6%), 61 students who agreed (62.2%). In addition to this, 81 students (82.6%) reported to somewhat agree or agree with now feeling comfortable exercising at the recreation center while 16 students (16.3%) did not.

**Research question 2.** What factors of being a sports club member affect student's wellness?

Sport clubs often include students needing to pay dues for their membership status. The reported amount of dues each student paid is \$0-\$99 (71.2%), \$100-\$499 (18.5%), \$500-\$999 (2.7%), \$1000 plus (7.4%). The associated costs for being a sport

club member can impact a student's ability to join a team and affect their wellness. This illustrates the financial factor of sport clubs.

Another potential factor is the amount of time the student must dedicate to their sport club and balancing that with their priorities. Simply put, time and student's level of involvement can be an issue. When asked (N=108) if their sport club requires a lot of involvement from them through practices and/or competitions 92 people (85%) agreed with this while 16 students disagreed (14.8%).

The availability, ability to obtain, and awareness of wellness resources for students can also affect one's wellness. Having the tools and effectively utilizing them can help, but I am not sure if many students are aware of these resources. This may start with the assessment of their wellness. There were 78 students (82.1%) who indicated they often assess their personal wellness and 17 students who disagreed with this statement (17.8%), (N=95). Along with this, 78 students (82.1%) reported feeling satisfied with their current state of wellness when completing the survey and 17 students did not feel satisfied (17.8%)

## Chapter V

### Summary, Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

#### Summary

This study aimed to study the impact being a sport clubs member has on an individual's wellness at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. The goal was to understand which wellness dimensions are affected: occupational, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical (Roscoe, 2009) and also, to learn what factors may affect their wellness through sport clubs. The participants were undergraduate students who successfully completed a waiver in order to officially join a sport club.

The survey instrument was distributed through email to 1,256 sport club participants after gaining the access approval from the Assistant Director of Sport Clubs and Student Development, Drew D'Elia (Appendix B). For this study a survey instrument was created to best attempt to find answers to the two research questions. (McMillian, 2016, p. 198). This was done using Qualtrics software (Appendix C). This study yielded a completion rate of 8%. There was a total of 111 responses with 8 partially completed surveys and 103 completed surveys. The data were analyzed through the use of frequencies and percentages.

#### Discussion

This section will further explore the research questions and yielded data from the previous chapter.

**Research question 1.** Which dimensions of wellness are impacted the most by sport clubs involvement?

Based on the results of the survey conducted in this study, the wellness dimensions that are most impacted include social, physical, and emotional. The results for social and emotional wellness were demonstrated in Tables 2 and 3, respectively. These wellness dimensions had positive response rates ranging from 82% to 99%.

**Research question 2.** What factors of being a sports club member affect student's wellness?

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the different factors can involve finances, time, and wellness resources. Although sport clubs can be inexpensive and some not, each student is coming from a different socioeconomic status which might prohibit them from being able to join a sport club. Also, students may be accustomed to being involved in different things. More involvement means they have to strategic with planning their time and prioritizing their interests, which can negatively impact their ability to fully commit to a sport club. Lastly, understanding that there are actual wellness benefits through sport clubs can help students realize the positive impacts they are directly receiving. Without taking a step back and analyzing the benefits of something, people may not be fully aware of them.

### **Limitations**

The survey yielded a response rate of 8%. Although the information gathered is useful, a larger sample would have provided a more significant impact to the study. I would have liked to dive further into the potential barriers and underlying factors to better

answer research question number two. This survey was created specifically for this study. It was difficult to find self-wellness assessments that can be applied to this topic.

## **Conclusion**

There are many positive benefits to a student's overall wellness from being a sport clubs participant. This also shows how sport clubs can create a foundation for developing transferrable skills which can apply to other environments a student may find themselves in such as the classroom, other club involvement, or the workforce (Haines, 2001). Sport clubs are a vital programming area for students. This program area can also be beneficial for the university by contributing to the student experience through involvement and engagement. Retention of students is key for many universities. Sport clubs aligns with student development research to prove this can enrich a student's experience and connection to the university (Astin, 1999; Forrester, 2015; Miller, 2011). This can translate to higher levels of engagement and involvement in other areas of the university from these students.

There was a wide variety of majors represented in this sample showing how sport clubs can be inclusive of all students from various backgrounds and interests. This helps students incorporate multiple enrichment opportunities into their college experience, which aids in their overall development (Henchy, 2011; Todaro, 1993).

More research can be done to analyze the impact of different program areas within campus recreation departments. There is research showing the overall benefits of campus recreation but not the individual program areas. That data would be helpful in understanding how each area fits into the needs of the students and what the strengths for

impact are within the program area (Cochran, 2016). Not many studies have focused on sport clubs and the wellness impact. This study can help create a foundation for future research in this area.

### **Recommendations**

In order to yield a higher response rate, offering an award or raffle prize could have helped gather more responses. In the future I believe incorporating an interview or focus group can better provide data for more deeply understanding the barriers and underlying factors. This would add more in-depth responses to research question number two of this study. I also think gaining more information about the student's involvement outside of sport clubs would have helped to discover more potential barriers and provide a larger understanding of today's students. I would be curious to see this study conducted at multiple institutions with varying enrollment numbers. I also wonder if this study can be applied to students involved in general student organization clubs to compare the differences between those and sport clubs involvement.

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## Appendix A Significant Financial Disclosure Form

**Significant Financial Disclosure (SFI) Form**  
**INVESTIGATOR FINANCIAL & OTHER PERSONAL INTERESTS DISCLOSURE FORM**  
 This form includes Adobe Digital Signature Functionality - See FAQ for Adobe Digital Signature Information Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) located on pages 4 & 5  
 Version Date: 07/29/2019

PROJECT TITLE <i>Sport Clubs &amp; Wellness: Analyzing the Impact Being a Sport Clubs Member Has on Wellness</i>			
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR Drew Tinnin, Ed.D.		DEPARTMENT Educational Services & Leadership	PHONE 856-256-4909 <i>Dimension</i>
FUNDING AGENCY OR SPONSOR department-funded		TOTAL REQUESTED BUDGET \$ 0.00	REQUESTED START DATE 4/1/19
TYPE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training/Education            Service            Other:			

This disclosure is an:

initial disclosure for a proposal / application  
 Update to existing disclosure for ongoing, existing proposal / application – New personnel, change in SFI, newly acquired SFI  
 Annual update to an existing disclosure with no changes Annual  
 update to an existing disclosure with changes

Does any of your research involve use of human research subjects?  Yes     No **Significant**

**Financial Interest means the following:**

A. In the 12 months preceding this disclosure, did anyone, including any individual's spouse/domestic partner and/or dependent children, listed on this disclosure form receive remuneration related to their institutional responsibilities from a publicly traded entity or non-publicly traded entity, when aggregated, exceeds \$5,000?  
*Examples: Salary, Payment for Services, Consulting Fees, Honoraria, Paid Authorships, Gifts, Gratuities, Compensation for Services on Advisory Panel/Committee or Review Panel/Committee or Providing Expert Testimony*

B. In the 12 months preceding this disclosure, does anyone, including any individual's spouse/domestic partner and/or dependent children, listed on this disclosure form hold any equity interest in a publicly traded entity or non-publicly traded entity, when aggregated, exceeds \$5,000?  
*Examples: stock, stock option, or other ownership interest*

C. In the 12 months preceding this disclosure, did anyone, including any individual's spouse/domestic partner and/or dependent children, listed on this disclosure form receive any income related to intellectual property rights and interest not assigned by Rowan University and/or intellectual property rights and interest (royalties) other than Rowan University, related to your institutional responsibilities?

D. In the 12 months preceding this disclosure, did anyone, including any individual's spouse/domestic partner and/or dependent children, listed on this disclosure form, engage in travel related to your institutional responsibilities that was paid for on your behalf (and not reimbursed to you so that the exact monetary value may not be readily known) by a sponsoring/reimbursing entity other than a / an:

- Federal, state, or local government agency
- Institution of higher education as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1001(a)
- Academic teaching hospital
- Medical center
- Research Institute that is affiliated with an institution of higher education

E. DHHS/PHS NIH Sponsored Projects ONLY In the 12 months preceding this disclosure, does anyone, including any individual's spouse/domestic partner and/or dependent children, listed on this disclosure form receive remuneration related to their institutional responsibilities from a foreign institution of higher education or foreign government?  
*Examples: Salary, Payment for Services, Consulting Fees, Honoraria, Paid Authorships, Gifts, Gratuities, Compensation for Services on Advisory Panel/Committee or Review Panel/Committee or Providing Expert Testimony*

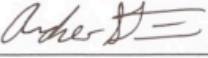

If any of your answers to Questions A - E above is "No", then complete, sign, date and submit page 1 and page 2 (Form A -see below). Nothing more is needed.

If any of your answers to Questions A - E above is "Yes", then complete, sign, date, and submit page 1, page 2 (Form A) and page 3 (Form B).

**FINANCIAL CONFLICT INTEREST DISCLOSURE  
FORM A**

By signing below, individuals certify that the information on this form is correct; that they have read and understood the Rowan University Conflict of Interest Policy; that, to the best of their knowledge, all required disclosure of financial and other personal interests has been made herein; that they will complete a Disclosure Form on an annual basis during the duration of the research, or more frequently as new interests are obtained or if their situation with respect to potential conflict of interest changes since the most recent disclosure, and submit it to the Office of Sponsored Programs and Office of Research Compliance; that they will comply with any conditions or restrictions imposed by Rowan University to manage, reduce or eliminate conflicts of interest caused by any interests. By signing below, individuals certify that the information provided in the table titled: Significant Financial Interests for any and all individuals that have indicated a significant financial interest exists is accurate and up to date. Principal or Primary Investigator(s), acknowledges that anyone's signature below indicates they are aware that any significant financial interest meeting the criteria must be reviewed, a final determination whether or not a financial interest is a conflict, and development of any and all management action plans associated with a Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) must be adhered to and followed accordingly. They are aware that any changes in the reported Significant Financial Interest (SFI), a newly acquired SFI, or FCOI needs to be reported immediately and a new conflict of interest disclosure form completed and submitted to the Office of Research Compliance. For PHS agency and office funded projects, disclosure of the financial conflict of interest and management action plan must be documented and submitted to the PHS agency and office via eRA Commons.

If your study has more investigators than what is provided below, then submit multiple Forms A, listing all investigators

NAME (PRINT & SIGN) (see definition of "investigator" on page 4)			NO	YES	DATE	NAME (PRINT & SIGN) (see definition of "investigator" on page 4)			NO	YES	DATE
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Drew Timin Signature: 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			9/26/19	*INVESTIGATOR* Michael Brito Signature: 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			9/26/19
*INVESTIGATOR* Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				*INVESTIGATOR* Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
*INVESTIGATOR* Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				*INVESTIGATOR* Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
*INVESTIGATOR* Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				*INVESTIGATOR* Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
*INVESTIGATOR* Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				*INVESTIGATOR* Signature:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

This project involves a contract, subcontract or collaboration with an outside institution or group.


Attached is a written assurance from an appropriate official of this outside entity that individuals from the outside entity who will participate in this project comply with the outside entity's investigator conflict-of-interest policy and that such policy meets the requirements of the PHS (42 CFR Part 50, Subpart F).

In the event the outside entity has no investigator conflict-of-interest policy, attached are a written assurance from an appropriate official of this outside entity that individuals from the outside entity who will participate in this project comply with Rowan University's Conflict of Interest policy, plus all Rowan University Disclosure Forms completed by these individuals.

Does this project include international collaborations, foreign governments, or foreign institutions of higher education?  Yes  No  
If yes, please provide the names of the collaborator(s) and the collaborating institution below:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Department signatures must be obtained after all investigators listed have been listed on this form, completed Form A & Form B (if applicable) and signed the disclosure Primary Investigator Department Chair (or Dean) or Supervisor signature would go into the first signature line If multiple departments are included in the project, then Co-Investigator's Department Chair (or Dean) or Supervisor signature is included in addition to Primary Investigator's Department signature.

  
\*Signature of Department Chair (or Dean if investigator is Chair) or Supervisor

10/22/19  
Date

\*\*Signature of Department Chair (or Dean if investigator is Chair) or Supervisor  
\* - Single Department Project - Only one Department signature is required  
\*\* - Multiple Department Project - Multiple Department signatures are required

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix B Recruitment Email

Hello,

My name is Michael Brito, Graduate Coordinator of Sport Clubs and Student Development for Rowan University Campus Recreation.

You are receiving this email because of your involvement with the sport clubs program. I am conducting a research study analyzing the impact being a sport clubs member has on overall wellness. The goal is to analyze and show the connections between sport clubs and wellness to further explain the value a sport clubs program brings to the students.

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

The survey involves a questionnaire which should take approximately 15 minutes.

The questionnaire is anonymous. The findings will be published with no personal identifying information from you.

There is no direct compensation or benefit for your participation but choosing to participate in the study can provide a benefit to the quality of the university's recreational services. There is minimal risk for participation in this study aside from those faced in common everyday life.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject you may contact the Glassboro IRB Office at 856-566-2712. Feel free to also contact myself (britom54@rowan.edu) or my advisor Drew Tinnin (tinnin@rowan.edu).

Approved by Rowan University IRB #**Pro2019000872**

Should you choose to participate you can find the survey link here:

[https://rowan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_56V5LkmbvYWzzBb](https://rowan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_56V5LkmbvYWzzBb)

Thank You,  
Michael Brito

## Appendix C Instrument

### Consent

#### Welcome to the research study!

You will be presented with information relevant to Sport Clubs and Wellness and asked to answer some questions about it. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential.

The study should take you around 15 minutes to complete. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, you are 18 years of age, belong to a Rowan University sports club, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

The questionnaire is anonymous. The findings will be published with no personal identifying information from you.

There is no direct compensation or benefit for your participation but choosing to participate in the study can provide a benefit to the quality of the university's recreational services. There is minimal risk for participation in this study aside from those faced in common everyday life.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject you may contact the Glassboro IRB Office at 856-566-2712. Feel free to also contact myself (britom54@rowan.edu) or my advisor Drew Tinnin (tinnin@rowan.edu).

I consent, begin the study

I do not consent



APPROVED

IRB #: Pro2019000872  
APPROVAL DATE: 12/24/2019  
EXPIRATION DATE:

What is your age?

- 18
  - 19
  - 20
  - 21
  - 22
  - 23
  - 24+
- 

What is your gender?

- Male
  - Female
  - Other
  - Prefer not to say
- 

What is your class level at Rowan?

- Freshman
  - Sophomore
  - Junior
  - Senior
-

What is your major?

Which sports club(s) are you a member of?

- Archery
- Ballroom Dance
- Baseball
- Men's Basketball
- Women's Basketball
- Cheerleading
- Crew
- Cycling
- Dance
- Disc Golf

Do you serve on the executive board of your sport club?

- Yes
- No

My sport club requires a lot of involvement from me through practices and/or competitions

- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree



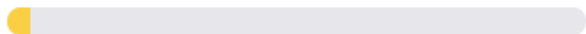
How much do you pay in dues for your sport club?

- \$0-\$99
- \$100-\$499
- \$500-\$999
- \$1000 +

---

My sport club primarily practices on campus

- Yes
- No



Participating in sport clubs has given me a sense of belonging to the university?

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

Participating in sport clubs has provided me with impactful friendships?

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

I often spend time with sport club teammates outside of practice and competitions?

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
-



My leadership ability has increased throughout my sport club involvement

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

I feel more responsible as a result of my participation in sport clubs

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

My self confidence has increased since being involved in a sport club

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
-

I am able to effectively handle my emotions during physical activity

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

I have my moments where it is hard for me stop self-pity

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

I reject any outside thoughts or beliefs which challenge my personal views

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
-

I strive to challenge myself to experience growth

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

My cultural awareness has grown since being involved in a sport club

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

My cognitive ability has increased since being involved in a sport club

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
-

The sport clubs program has been a significant part of my college experience

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

The sport clubs program was a factor when choosing a college to attend

- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
- 

I often assess my personal well being

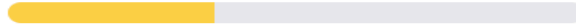
- Disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Agree
-

My physical ability has increased through my involvement with sport clubs

- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree

I now feel comfortable exercising at the recreation center

- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree



I am satisfied with the current state of my well being

- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree



We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.  
Your response has been recorded.

