

## **Examining psychosocial assets developed through leisure activities in older adults**

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Developing positive psychosocial assets from sport has been extensively studied in youth settings. In this literature, for example, sport is positioned as an activity that builds on the strengths (such as competence, confidence) that individuals may already possess, instead of focusing on eliminating deficits (e.g., obesity, delinquency). However, the acquisition or maintenance of psychosocial assets has not been studied to the same extent in older adults. In addition, our knowledge of psychosocial development is largely built on findings from qualitative approaches, which lack the ability to compare across activity groups, which is necessary to identify the ideal form(s) of leisure activity for psychosocial development. The goal of this dissertation is to develop and provide preliminary validation of an assessment tool that measures psychosocial assets developed through leisure activities (including sport) among older adults. To build this ‘assets scale’, the project will be organized into three phases. In phase 1, a scoping review will be conducted to evaluate information available on sport and older adults since the first World Masters in 1985. The second phase will involve qualitative interviews (using the general interview guide approach) to understand the types of psychosocial assets developed from various leisure activities. This step will help confirm findings from the literature review on psychosocial assets related to sport as well as identify gaps in current research that have not yet been explored. Information gathered from phase 1 and 2 will be used to inform the creation of the assessment scale. Phase 3 will involve using information from previous phases to modify the Developmental Assets Profile, a scale widely used in youth settings, for an older adult population. Older adults who participate in leisure activities such as competitive sport, recreational sport, and exercise as well as inactive older adults will be recruited to measure the presence of aging-related psychosocial assets among these groups. Following the creation of the assessment tool, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis will be performed to provide preliminary validation of the tool. Findings from this study will have implications for understanding how psychosocial assets can assist older adults to maximize health, function and wellbeing.