Abstract
This thesis explored the physical activity (PA) experiences of Punjabi-Canadian women living in the Greater Toronto Area. It argues that the choice *not* to participate in PA is an act of agency reflective of the pressures placed on 18 Punjabi-Canadian women from their communities. The underlying research question to guide the study was: How are PA experiences of Punjabi-Canadian women impacted by intra-and-inter community dynamics? The theoretical frameworks used to guide the findings were the centrality of women’s bodies in social and cultural reproduction as articulated by Yuval-Davis (1997, 1996, 1993) as well as whiteness (Frankenberg, 1993) and critical race theory (Hylton, 2010, 2009). The methods used to conduct the research were focus groups coined “chai and chats.” Results revealed that the “Body Triad,” a term I coin, consisting of the “Fat Body,” “Skinny Body” and “Muscular Body” and the dominance of whiteness in Canada impacted the women’s decision to *not* participate in PA. As a result, the women negotiated these pressures by talking back, “feeling blessed” and challenging existing gendered and racial assumptions about their bodies. This study showed the relationship between gender, immigration and whiteness where Punjabi-Canadian women’s bodies were central to the discussion.