“Huế ơi, quê hương của tôi, ta nhớ muốn đời”: Vietnam’s participation, processes, and practices in Sport for Development

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Abstract

Set in Vietnam’s Thừa Thiên Huế province, this dissertation is based on an eleven-month ethnographic project alongside a Norwegian funded and supported Sport for Development (SfD) project, Football for All in Vietnam (FFAV). Applying theoretical concepts from Paulo Freire, Norbert Elias, and Martha Nussbaum, complemented by methodological frameworks of Participatory Action Research, Participatory Evaluation (PE), and Critical Indigenous Methodologies, this dissertation exhibits how SfD research can be done between academics and SfD projects that benefit both parties with local communities in mind. By testing the aforementioned approaches, this dissertation found that collaborative research guided by a PE framework bridges SfD practice and scholarship towards a united goal that is conscious of participants needs.

Moreover, conducting participatory research allowed for contextualizing the ways in which local history, culture, and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế act as figurations that influence SfD. Following Elias-ian thought, this dissertation argues that SfD ought to be examined within the specific contexts in which programs occur, while recognizing interwoven social processes of history, culture, and community as influential factors in SDP projects. As a
result, recommendations are made for more locale-specific SfD research around the world moving the study of SDP as a global movement towards a more micro-focused field.

Lastly, deploying an analysis framed by Nussbaum’s (2011) Capabilities Approach, this dissertation argues that FFAV’s SfD practices are compatible with the concept of central capabilities in ways that underpin the achievement of a meaningful life. In investigating FFAV’s practices using the Capabilities Approach, this research extends conversations about the necessity to comprehend SfD in a more holistic manner. This highlights the benefit of moving away from the notion that sport reduces social ailments, and towards conceptualizing other capabilities formed in SfD that improve the lives of individuals. In the end, this dissertation unpacks SfD in Vietnam with a specific case study of FFAV, thus offering a detailed discussion of novel methods, traditional theory, and research with potential for positive change.
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Two roads lead to my home: one long, yet short, the other short, yet long – From a Vietnamese Folk Song (from Perfume Dreams: Reflections of the Vietnamese Diaspora by Andrew Lam)

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List of Acronyms

CA: Capabilities Approach
CCs/CC: Central Capabilities/Central Capabilities
CIM: Critical Indigenous Methodologies
DoET: Department of Education and Training
FFAV: Football for All in Vietnam
HFF: Hue Football Federation
MoET: Ministry of Education and Training
MoCST: Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism
PAR: Participatory Action Research
PE: Participatory Evaluation
Sub-DoET: Sub-Department of Education and Training
SfD: Sport for Development
VFF: Vietnamese Football Federation

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Mẹ ơi năm này con sẽ về Việt Nam
(Mom, this year I will go home to Vietnam)

1.0 Writing for Myself, FFAV, and Thừa Thiên Huế

I start this dissertation off by acknowledging that I am the writer of these words. This dissertation is written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Ph.D. in Exercise Sciences from the University of Toronto. However, I want to recognize that the stories, voices, and experiences that permeate this dissertation come from not only me, but also from the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province and other Vietnamese people from the country. This dissertation offers rich and thick stories because I was given the opportunity and access to conduct first-hand research in Vietnam.

I wrote this document in an effort to enmesh the culture, people and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế throughout this entire dissertation. I aimed to do this by writing in a manner that is reflexive and performative of my position as an academic researcher, a Vietnamese person born in America, and a Vietnamese person returning to a land that I am historically and biographically connected to. To write this dissertation in a way that incorporates the personal and the public, I was guided by acts of performative writing. Performative writing creates a dialogue between the researcher’s position and the world in which the research occurs by asking questions about ontology, epistemology, method and praxis. According to Tomaselli, Dyll, and Francis (2008), it is impossible not to write oneself into a reflexive performance as, like all stories, a person’s account is partial, fragmented, and contextualized by one’s own learning and experience (p. 40). In this sense, giving personal accounts of where and how I positioned myself with the people of
Huế was relevant to the overall research project because of my subjective involvement in the lives of participants, data collection, and analysis. Also, my reflexivity allowed for the experiences and voices of the participants to be heard. The people that I lived with and communities that I researched were not in the same privileged position to tell their stories as I was. Therefore, I acknowledge the privilege I have as a researcher and I am obliged to write with their stories, voices, and lives on my mind.

Because this dissertation represents a passionate and involved research process, I found it suitable to form a first-person narrative in order to consciously incorporate the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Doing so helps me provide reflexive, ethical, critical, respectful, and humble accounts of the research that took place (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Smith, 1999). Throughout this dissertation, I interweave my life, the lives of people I encountered throughout my time in Thừa Thiên Huế, and the lives of those I researched. It is my intention that the participants, people I researched with, and the people that made my life worthwhile are included, represented, and honored in this document.

1.1 The Topic: Sport for Development

Recent years have seen the advancement of a field of research and practice known as Sport for Development (SfD from here on; Darnell, 2007; Darnell, 2012b; Levermore, 2008a). In the application of SfD, sport is viewed as a socio-cultural tool used to bring about an effective social change to communities around the world (Giulianotti, 2011b). Although contested for being ambiguous in definition (Black, 2010) from an academic description, SfD generally refers to programs located in communities that use sport to address social-humanitarian issues both nationally and internationally. SfD programs have largely coincided with the United Nations
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Beutler, 2008) aiming to provide preventative education on HIV/AIDS, find a peaceful resolution for religious and/or ethnic conflicts, and provide education and life skills development for marginalized children in underdeveloped countries. Among SfD practitioners, sport serves as a catalyst in delivering development projects because it is seen as a non-verbal international language (Koss & Alexandrova, 2005). Sport is also an attractive catalyst because (1) certain popular sports like soccer appeal to many people worldwide; (2) sporting equipment and infrastructure are easy to obtain and create; (3) and sport is able to unify diverse populations, as in the case of sporting mega-events (Wilson, 2012). The ideas underpinning SfD have resulted in the implementation of projects around the world, while at the same creating a growing field of academic research.

Some scholars have commended the work being done in SfD (Cohen & Welty-Peachy, 2014; Kidd, 2008; Sugden, 2010), while other scholars have been critical of the implications of SfD work (Coalter, 2010; Donnelly, 2011; Hartman & Kwauk, 2011). One common critique of SfD is that sport does not in itself, nor by itself, create processes of social change (Hartman & Kwauk, 2011). A wide review of the literature indicates that “sport” in SfD might lead to desired outcomes for some participants or some organizations in certain circumstances (Coalter, 2010); however, the use of sport to engender positive social change cannot be broadly claimed. Hence, discussion arises about whether or not sport can make a difference in particular social settings in various locales, and claims that “sport can save the world” are subject to scrutiny. In turn, it may be more important to examine other social factors (i.e. social relationships, community involvement, and family influence) in the communities in which SfD exists. This led me to explore SfD locally, viewing sport as an open and empty cultural process that can only be understood once it is placed in a specific context (Guest, 2007). To that end, throughout this
argument, I argue that SfD studies may be richer when focusing on the ways in which local communities experience SfD and how practices or outcomes are locally grounded.

Hasselgard (2015) also argues for examining SfD in specific localities and communities because local-specific research in SfD may reveal “how different worldviews are negotiated, how actors at different levels translate their interests into the project and how this affects the implementation in practice” (p. 23). Refining SfD studies from the global to the local (Lindsey, Jeanes, Kay, Jeanes & Banda, 2017) allows a specific focus on the culture, communities, and people that experience SfD. As a result, bottom-up processes can occur whereby transformative effects are possible (Donnelly & Harvey, 2006). SfD studies that are able to encompass the totality of stakeholders, beneficiaries, and social processes can provide an intimate analysis of SfD. That is, when exploring local conditions of SfD studies have the opportunity to explore the ways in which local actors influence, as well as how international stakeholders implement project goals and if these viewpoints coalesce or diverge. In sum, this project offers a timely portrayal of SfD research.

With this in mind, this research explored SfD in a very specific location. More importantly, rather than examining the ways in which SfD is created, implemented, and understood in a particular location, I studied the way human conditions (e.g., social, political, cultural, familial, and communal) in this location influenced the manner in which SfD was accepted and experienced. By examining the relationship between SfD projects and local communities, I examined the complex bottom-down and top-down relationships inherent in SfD (Black, 2017). That is, when positioning SfD in a specific locality, attention was paid to how local authorities and community members had agency in their acceptance and resistance of SfD. Also, SfD research situated in a particular community allowed for critical discussion of whether
SfD as a global act does or does not acknowledge the ways in which local people, cultures, histories, and politics influence the implementation and effect of SfD.

1.2 The Research: Who and Where?

To study SfD in a specific location, research was located in the Southeast Asian country of Vietnam. Specifically, I worked alongside Football for All in Vietnam (FFAV), an SfD non-governmental organization located in the city of Huế within Thừa Thiên Huế Province. The selection of FFAV as the organization to facilitate this study was twofold: (1) in the scope of SfD research around the world, there is a lack of scholarly attention paid to Southeast Asia (Okada & Young, 2011, 2014), and (2) I have a personal connection to the country as a first-generation Vietnamese-American. Simply and briefly, the decision to place this study in Vietnam stems from a historical and biographical intersection rooted in my personal identity. I was further inspired to situate myself with FFAV by Sugden (2015) who used Mills’ (1959) sociological imagination to describe how Mills,

Helps us to understand how we can climb down from the fence to become effective critical sociologists and activists, while at the same making informed, realistic and pragmatic judgments about participation in progressive political and cultural interventions (p. 609).

To that end, and because of my belief that research should be pragmatic, participatory, and public, I embedded myself in the SfD field. My research with FFAV was consistent with Hasselgard’s (2015) suggestion that SfD research should become more nation-specific and contextual using qualitative and first-person methodologies. Hasselgard argues that SfD interventions may benefit from nation specific research because this approach focuses on how different national views are negotiated, how actors at different governmental levels translate their
interests into the project, and how this affects the implementation in practice. Based on Hasselgård’s suggestions, I came to see that working with local communities is a valuable tool because community members are best equipped to identify their needs, clarify the nature and sources of conflicts, and choose appropriate strategies and responses. The opportunity to research with FFAV afforded intimate insights into the culture, communities and people of Thừa Thiên Huế. It was the locally rooted nature of this study that provided the stories, voices, and experiences that will follow. More importantly, situating my research in Vietnam, Thừa Thiên Huế Province, and FFAV offered valuable insight into distinctly local processes in SfD. By acknowledging the need for research that is personal and local, this dissertation offers a contribution to SfD research that is practical, critical, and theoretical, drawing on strengths provided by multiple and interdisciplinary perspectives.

1.3 The Research: What did I (we) do?

My research was rooted in the question of how SfD is understood and organized in Vietnam. With that in mind, the research also explored other aspects of Vietnam and its culture, which was important for understanding the cultural and social processes that SfD creates. Due to the interwoven nature of the research, this dissertation explored the ways in which SfD through FFAV manifested in Thừa Thiên Huế Province when implemented in the many villages and communities across the province. Moreover, exploring how FFAV was created allowed insight into how FFAV was shaped by the culture and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế. In this case, this dissertation examined SfD as a social process as well as how local conditions shape SfD. The culture and communities that I immersed myself in, and people with whom I interacted eventually guided the research in ways that were not imagined prior to my arrival in Huế. That
is, many events that occurred during my time with FFAV and in Huế, such as interacting with people from local communities and villages, visiting primary and secondary schools, and socializing with governmental partners, were experiences and moments of learning that markedly changed my research. These moments informed the entirety of the research process.

Before my arrival in Huế, there was a conscious discussion between myself and FFAV to carry out research collectively that would benefit FFAV as an organization, but also the different populations of Thừa Thiên Huế that FFAV aims to benefit. For that reason, a major part of this dissertation is informed by a participatory evaluation that we conducted together (See Chapter Six). By doing the participatory evaluation, I was allowed access to villages, hamlets, homes, and groups of people such as headmasters, parents, community members, and government authorities. These conversations and experiences with people from Thừa Thiên Huế became the data that drive this dissertation. I realized that because research for this dissertation was done with people of FFAV and in communities of Huế that, in fact, this dissertation was about these people, places, and processes. Although SfD was the topic guiding the research my relationships with FFAV, living in Huế forced me to recognize that this dissertation was in reality about the culture, communities, and people that reside in Thừa Thiên Huế.

I implemented portions of different methodologies to construct a suitable approach to research that respected my realizations. I employed a methodological framework that draws on concepts of participatory action research, participatory evaluation, critical indigenous methodologies, and ethnography. The methodological mixture was imperative for creating a research process that was not only participatory, but also locally contextual, passionately intimate, and practically relevant. The attention to methodology resulted in a research process
that ultimately positioned this dissertation as a product influenced by the participants and social settings.

To understand the creation, implementation, workings, and possibility of SfD in Vietnam, I allowed the experiences with FFAV, living in Thừa Thiên Huế, and the data to guide my theoretical positioning. In writing and analyzing the data, I employed an academic perspective applying Paulo Freire’s (1971) dialogical action theory and critical pedagogy, concepts from Norbert Elias (1971) concerning figurations, history and power, and Nussbaum’s (2011) Capabilities Approach to human development. The concept that research and knowledge creation should be done with people in a communal effort formed the nexus of these theoretical approaches. Meshing Freiren dialogical pedagogy with Elias-ian figurations and Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach allowed a new approach to the study of SfD, with Freire guiding the study of SfD with communities and projects, Elias framing who and what influences SfD implementation, and Nussbaum exploring holistically occurring activities and practices in SfD.

1.4 The Significance

With the preceding description in mind, the significance of this study was fourfold. First, in the context of SfD, there has been little research that has attempted to use aspects of participatory research as a methodological approach, and even less that has incorporated aspects of critical indigenous methodologies to bring in local and involved knowledge. Spaaijj (2009) called for SfD organizations to be “Participatory, promote self-reliance and empowerment, use indigenous understandings and knowledge, take an interest in both the means and ends of development, and be concerned with ethical and moral issues as well as practicalities” (p. 1109).
The application of participatory research and critical indigenous methodologies allowed me to implement the approaches called for by Spaaij, with a focus on “Action” resulting from the “Research.”

Second, in Vietnam there has been very little research on sport in the country and no research on SfD (at least to my understanding within Western literature). This study is quite possibly the first of its kind in this country. Even more specifically there has been minimal social science research conducted in the city of Huế by scholars from the west (Personal communication, Luong, 2016). Further, my personal background as a Vietnamese-American allowed a research perspective that has rarely been offered before. Specifically, my Vietnamese heritage offered a unique lens with which to capture this project. As a Vietnamese person, I was able to examine and experience the research using a cultural element that was both comfortable and challenging. Focusing this thesis on Vietnam expanded the breadth of literature seeking to understand the flow of SfD programs, policies, and practices moving through a project, and how cultures and local communities affect SfD.

Third, this dissertation attempted to answer the call for longitudinal involvement in SfD research (Svennson & Hambrick, 2015; Welty-Peachy & Cohen, 2016) that is locally rooted (Darnell, 2014; Jeanes, 2013; Spaaij, Schulenkorf, Jeanes & Oxford, 2017) and that is inclusive of the many different groups of people that experience SfD (Chawansky & Mitra, 2015; Giulianotti, 2011; Hasselgard, 2015). Conducting SfD research in such a manner re-centers the focus of SfD research away from the phenomena of SfD and to the actual people that are implementing, organizing, and receiving activities. I will argue throughout this dissertation that SfD, is neither about sport nor development primarily; it is mostly about people and the communities. Hence, I advocate for SfD research that allows people to inform the research
through their lives and their experiences. This nature of research largely rebuffs the traditional critical analysis that has positioned SfD in a postcolonial (Hayhurst, 2014), whiteness (Darnell, 2007), and feminist (Forde, 2013) viewpoint. Discussed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, I argue that local history, culture, and people, when interwoven together, have the ability to create their own understanding of SfD that is rooted in their own cultural processes and own social constructions. That is, people within and associated with SfD from local communities are not passive and incapable of resisting the neo-liberal and postcolonial interpretations of SfD as a global institution. The aforementioned later chapters illustrate the collective agency which complicates these prior critical analyses.

Finally, I conducted the research that formed this dissertation because both FFAV and I wanted to bring about practical suggestions based on community and local knowledge. This thesis is more than just academic research to earn a doctoral degree: it is research with people, based on meaningful discussions and interactions, including local culture and communities, with the ultimate goal of determining practical results that will inspire future action. Burnett (2015) states that we are no longer in a time of detached SfD research. Now is the time for an inclusive, involved, and immersed SfD research agenda. As the researcher, I worked as a volunteer with FFAV and lived in Huế for eleven months. I lived my life as a local would. Their lives became a part of mine. I argue that SfD research has too rarely been conducted from this position. Local project ownership from staff members and community members in Huế was consciously promoted through full user-group participation. Through my immersion, I was able to be involved in and experience many different interactions. These rich experience provided by an in-depth look at the workings and capacities of an SfD organization abroad. Thus, in this thesis, I give partial ownership of the research process to FFAV and participants from the communities in
Huế. This project is about the people and community connected to FFAV. In the end, this dissertation is not only about FFAV and the project’s practices and potential impacts in Thừa Thiên Huế Province, but also about exploring ways to conduct SfD research with both new and traditional approaches.

1.5 Outline of the Dissertation

The dissertation is organized into two parts and ten chapters. The first part sets the historical, contextual, and methodological context. Chapter two offers insight into Vietnam as a country from the historical to the present context. Chapter three describes the setting in which this research took place. Chapter four offers a review of the literature of SfD. Chapter five develops the methodological framework and methods I employed.

The second part of this thesis presents the bulk of my empirical research. Chapter six offers a description and an analysis of the participatory evaluation that I conducted with FFAV, detailing the methodological process as informed by Freire’s dialogical action theory. Chapter seven provides a discussion that links FFAV and Vietnam together via the application of concepts from Norbert Elias. Chapter eight invokes Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach to human development as a framework to analyze FFAV’s practices as experienced by the local communities. Chapter nine, I conclude the dissertation by discussing the implications, limitations, and future research opportunities derived from the study. Lastly, in the epilogue, I reflect on the research experience by providing my own thoughts through the personal epistemology that underlies this dissertation. It is my hope that this thesis, as well as the work I did together with FFAV, will push the boundaries of SfD research to be more inclusive, immersive and participatory.
CHAPTER 2: VIETNAM

Vietnam! Hồ Chí Minh!

“My only argument was if you do not condemn colonialism, if you do not side with the colonial people, what kind of revolution are you waging?” (Hồ Chí Minh, The path that led me to Leninism, 1960, cited in Decolonization: Perspectives from now and then)

2.0 Introduction

As this thesis was situated in Vietnam, it is appropriate to contextualize the country historically and presently in order to establish a background. I follow the lead of Lindsey et al. (2017) who contextualized the historical, social and political state of Zambia before engaging in their research on SfD in the country. In describing Vietnam, I show it to be a late socialist state in flux dealing with continuing social, political, and economic change. I discuss the history of Vietnam starting with the country’s colonial legacy with France, to America’s war in Vietnam, and ending with the current state of the country. Alongside the historical description of Vietnam as a country, this chapter also highlights aspects of sport and youth culture in Vietnam to provide perspectives on its contemporary physical culture.

2.1 Vietnam is a Country, Not a War

People continually associate Vietnam with a war named in its honor, or dishonor (Nguyen, 2017), but Vietnam is not a war; Vietnam is a country. In Vietnam there are peaceful countrysides made of villages and villagers living modest lives, and there are cities conforming to modernity and aspiring to be economic hubs on the Asian continent. With a population of approximately 93 million in 2018 (World Bank, 2018), Vietnam has a diverse populace still
feeling the lasting effects of colonialism and war. For a country that was ravaged by wars with the French and Americans, Vietnam has culture and landscapes that attract numerous tourists. In the north, the capital, Hanoi, holds landmarks such as the tomb and mausoleum of Hồ Chí Minh. Vietnamese citizens, if they are able, will make the pilgrimage to visit Hồ Chí Minh and pay homage to the revolutionary hero. Within hours’ reach of Hanoi are the natural sites of Sapa and Ninh Bình, both filled with luxurious green rice fields and beautiful villages; Ha Long Bay is three hours east to the coast, consisting of small islands and majestic caves. Central Vietnam hosts the former imperial capital of Huế, the gorgeous beaches of Đà Nẵng, and the very popular ancient town of Hội An. Hồ Chí Minh City, otherwise and still known as Saigon, is in southern Vietnam. Vietnam is a country that continues to grow and pursue a place in the global community. However, for better or for worse, it is a country that is also still somewhat trapped by traditions that make it problematic for people to thrive.

2.2 French Colonialism in Vietnam

Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos made up France’s colonial empire in Southeast Asia. France completed their conquest of Vietnam in 1885 and added Cambodia to their colonizing efforts in 1887 (McLeod, 2008). The territory was recognized as French Indochina (Bradley, 2009; McHale, 2002; Raffin, 2005). Between the three nations, French officials recognized Vietnam’s access to the ocean and the economic wealth associated with the Mekong Delta as financially beneficial (Bradley, 2009). Raffin (2005) explains that in the late 1850s, France became more aggressive with Vietnam because they considered the country a springboard to China and Chinese markets. Vietnam’s economic connection to China ensured French investment and development of the country greater than in Cambodia and Laos, resulting in
organized colonial control in Vietnam (Raffin, 2005). As a result of the colonial investment by
the French empire, Indochina, and especially the state of Vietnam, became a powerful influence
in the southern hemisphere. Although the Vietnamese monarchy was permitted by the colonists
to survive in the imperial city of Huế, Cochinchina (Southern portion of Vietnam) was ruled by a
French Governor General based in Saigon where French power resided.

When France entered Vietnam, the country was made of many villages and communities
that cultivated land based on a system that joined communal and private properties. This way of
living, especially in northern and central Vietnam, assured land for every family, nourishing a
strong sense of belonging to the family and the village (Raffin, 2005). A strong collective
identity radiated from this system, rendering the family an integral part of the village. Regionally
in the north and central segments of Vietnam, the country was a closed world and difficult for an
outsider to penetrate. In these communal societies, village elders controlled the local centralized
government, which grew, in part from collections of goods or money from peasant families.

Vietnam’s sociopolitical system was also built on familialism. Family, community, and loyalty
were concepts that steered the way of life. Social hierarchies in Vietnam were rooted in
ideologies of Confucianism and family imported by the Chinese centuries ago (Bradley, 2009;
King, Nguyen, Minh, 2008; Luong, 2006; Raffin, 2005). As described by Raffin (2005),
relationships in Vietnamese society were centered on ideal hierarchical relationships implied by
the three moral principles known as “Tam Cuong”: a subject’s loyalty to his ruler, a son’s
obedience to his father, and a wife’s submission to her husband. These principles, with strong
connections to ancestral and familial lineage, shaped Vietnamese political and social order in
villages; family and ancestry influenced how people behaved throughout their lives. The
Confucian influence in Vietnam peaked in the 19th century soon after the Nguyễn dynasty
established the new imperial capital in Huế (Bradley, 2009). Vietnam was not free from conflict before colonial times, but norms of imperial rule through Confucianism during the Nguyễn dynasty produced relatively stable lives of familial and individual well-being.

2.2.1 French Ruling of Vietnam

French rule of Vietnam disrupted this stable way of political and social life in Vietnam (Bradley, 2009; Raffin, 2002, 2005). When France entered Vietnam, they quickly established a new political and social regime, forcing the Vietnamese to follow a new way of life. The Vietnamese emperor located in Huế was preserved as a figure but served colonial officials as an avenue to control citizens. French colonialism introduced a capitalist market economy which substantially impacted the countryside. French officials transformed villages, that used to be socially, culturally, and politically connected, into commercialized industries where products were sold at a profit. In rural villages, French officials imposed a land tax in order to fund the colonial project in Vietnam. The French controlled the mining, and rubber markets. As a result of the French imposition, the previous way of life in the Vietnamese villages that harbored interdependent relationships between families was challenged. Four types of imperial oppressors that came during colonial times: people in the navy or military, civil servants, merchants or businessmen, and missionaries (Raffin, 2005). The intersection of these foreigners resulted in a new type of Vietnam in which officials encouraged Empiric loyalty. Missionaries brought religion to civilize the Vietnamese, while the French military and businessmen coerced Vietnamese, often by force. Thus, French control permeated all of Vietnamese life and culture affecting a once peaceful and stable country.
2.3 Vietnamese Revolution

Despite French imperialism, radical revolutionaries in Vietnam banded together to fight back against the French empire. The most prominent figure in the movement against the French was the passionate and devoted Hồ Chí Minh. Hồ travelled to Europe and the United States, where he learned about anti-colonial ideas and Marxism. After many years of exile, Hồ returned to Vietnam to ignite the revolutionary flame, founding the Vietnamese Revolutionary Youth League in 1925. Bradley (2009, p. 25) states that the Youth League served as the forefront of Vietnamese communism and provided much of the movement’s leadership and ideologies for the rest of the century.

Ho founded the Vietnamese Communist Party in February of 1930 and youth leagues formed by the French provided a major portion of the initial membership (Raffin, 2005). Through his speeches and teachings, Ho gathered progressive elites and peasants united through patriotic ties, to unite to contest French colonialism. Ho was a carefully crafted person in public. He brought many qualities of older Confucian ethics and selfless sacrifice to society. Ho projected himself as the public’s man by exuding qualities of rectitude, sincerity, modesty, courage, and self-sacrifice (Bradley, 2009, p. 36). Hồ Chí Minh was always with the people, and for the people of Vietnam. The Vietnamese people were compelled by Hồ Chí Minh to stand up and fight for their country.

2.3.1 Vietnamese Uprising

The French ruled Indochina from 1887-1954, until an uprising of Vietnamese revolutionaries led by Hồ Chí Minh sought to oust French control. The August Revolution initiated by the new communist party, known as the Viet Minh, occurred in 1945. The Vietnamese Liberation Army although skeletal at the time, under the leadership of Võ Nguyên
Giáp, teamed with local militias and reclaimed the Red River Delta. The Viet Minh took control of Hanoi on August 19 and, within days, Saigon and Huế (Raffin, 2005). The imperial order put in place by the colonialists soon ended. This event spurred the rise of the communist party in Vietnam, whereby “The Viet Minh became the institutional mechanism designed to implement new policies, an organizational front under communist control” (Bradley, 2009, p. 34). The war against the French had begun, and the revolution for a free Vietnam permeated the country.

The French War broke out in December 1946 when the Viet Minh rebelled against the French empire which had tried to re-seize control of Vietnam after the August Revolution and World War II (Raffin, 2005). Due to solid local support, and because the Viet Minh were able to capture or assassinate many collaborating village leaders, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) retained control of most of the countryside and prevented the establishment of an effective French-sponsored regime. Momentum and recruitment to fight against the French surged as the realization that an all-encompassing rebellion was needed by the Vietnamese people. The war against the French lasted 8 years, culminating in a historic battle in Northern Vietnam.

The Battle of Điện Biên Phủ was the eventual catalyst that led to the surrender of French forces and finally ended the colonial rule of Vietnam as a country (Bradley, 2009; Luong, 2007; Pelley, 1998). The success of the Viet Minh in defeating the French at Điện Biên Phủ was noteworthy world-wide. Just 15 years before, communists, other anti-colonial movements, and nations around the world never considered that a group of revolutionaries from the countryside could overthrow a Western empire (Raffin, 2005). Countries like Algeria and other French colonies looked at the Vietnamese triumph as an impetus to wage their own wars against colonizers (Truong, 1986). In turn, France’s humiliating defeat at Điện Biên Phủ in May 1954
led the United States of America to assume the role of anti-Communist protector of South Vietnam.

2.3.2 Revolution to Civil War

However, what would emerge in the colonial aftermath was far from the rebuilding of a nation under socialist and communist politics. As time went on, many Vietnamese became increasingly uncomfortable with the radical and authoritarian directions of the DRV.

Only two years after the successful and immensely popular revolutionary breakout from French colonialism, the Vietnamese nation allowed itself to be divided into two hostile camps: one “betraying” the DRV and entering the French and American effort towards gradual decolonization, the other aligning itself with communist China and the Soviet Union (Bradley, 2009). The Geneva Accords in 1954 split Vietnam into two countries at the 17th parallel, with the Viet Minh regrouping in the North and the French retreating to the south. Since 1945, Hồ Chí Minh himself and the DRV employed political strategies with nationalist Chinese military occupation in the North. Meanwhile, in the South, President Ngô Đình Diệm, a dictator in his own right, conformed to French and American influence. The plan from the Geneva Accords was to allow national elections as a way to reunify the country; however, these elections did not occur due to Ngô Đình Diệm’s fear of Hồ Chí Minh’s appeal, and potential loss of the presidency of Vietnam. Thus, the victorious war against colonial oppression only resulted in further oppression and war against another foreign aggressor. What occurred in the following decades was an internationally fueled conflict inciting the people of Vietnam to fight against each other.
2.4 The Vietnam (American) War

As a result of defeating the French, Vietnam ascended into a state of political and social flux. The country suffered the misfortune of becoming a front line in what the United States believed to be a global struggle between communism and the “free world” (Bradley, 2009). Furthermore, Vietnam became the face of an international war, the results of which continued to be felt decades later.

Diệm was chosen by American officials sufficient to lead a new country based on his affiliations with American officials. In supporting the Diệm government, the United States believed they had a force against international communism in Southeast Asia. In 1955, Diệm initiated the “Denounce the Communist (To Cong)” campaign to root out communist elements in the southern countryside; those who were caught were sent to detention camps, where some were tortured and executed (Bradley, 2009). Diệm’s contentious campaign weakened the communist networks, but suffered as corrupt officials appropriated power to resolve personal vendettas. The DRV paid close attention to the political climate in the South and endorsed Northern ideologies amongst those oppressed by Diệm. Many of the southerners who supported the DRV came from two different ways of thinking: they were either communist sympathizers who were keen for a full-scale socialist transformation or they were drawn to the DRV out of simple patriotism (Bradley, 2009). The peasants and communists of the South eventually resolved that armed conflict was the only way to fight back against Diệm and his draconian government.

Beginning in the summer of 1959, local communist groups in central and South Vietnam initiated a series of concerted uprisings where they usurped portions of several districts in the central highlands and the Mekong Delta. These groups eventually formed the National Liberal Front (NLF) (Raffín, 2005). The NLF were known as guerillas and became recognized as the
Việt Cộng (VC). The NLF consisted of civilians from different groups of men and women, ranging from peasants, writers, youth, students, Buddhist, Catholics, and minorities, who unified to protect their land, fight for their nation, and fight against Diệm’s forces. The NLF and Việt Cộng were the common people and militia groups that supported the communist regime (Bradley, 2009; Raffin, 2005). The NLF and Việt Cộng were supporters of complete independence from American imperialism at first, then became guerrillas, while the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) enlisted and trained as proper members of the military (Tour Guide, Củ Chi Tunnels, Personal Communication April 2017). The NLF was created for the people and by the people. Unlike the Diệm government, the NLF provided people in the countryside with protection, land reform (different Diệm’s land reform where people were pushed away from their villages), and policies to follow. In terms of both physical and economic well-being, the NLF provided a viable means to challenge the Diệm government and imagine an alternative communist state for society in Southern Vietnam.

Vietnam was divided into North and South Vietnam, under separate, hostile regimes (Bradley, 2009). Domestically, the Vietnam War created political ideologies amongst the population, as people aligning with the DRV saw themselves as freedom fighters against oppressive American imperialism. In South Vietnam, people believed they were fighting for a free and politically open Vietnam that was not deterred by Hồ Chí Minh’s communist agenda. The war primarily pitted southern communist insurgency and North Vietnam, backed by Soviet and Chinese support, against the South Vietnamese and the American military. The lines were seldom clear, though, and many bystanders on both sides were heavily subjected to violence by the opposition.
In 1964, President Johnson increased the numbers of United States ground troops in Vietnam by doubling the draft in America (Bowden, 2017), and in the same year, he approved American troops direct engagement in ground combat. Johnson said in 1965 that, “If we are driven from the field in Vietnam, then no nation can ever again have the same confidence in an American promise, or in American protection” (taken from Bowden, 2017). In 1966, the number of American troops rose to 385,000, and in 1967 the numbers swelled to half a million troops. American troops were now involved in heavy fighting against the NVA and Việt Cộng, while also addressing the political endeavors of the NLF (Bradley, 2009). The years of fighting would continue to escalate, forcing America to send more troops and weaponry to support the mission against communism. Johnson and his followers naively believed their efforts would eventually lead to victory and the end of communism in Vietnam.

2.4.1 The Tết Offensive and Battle of Huế

Arguably, the most important event that shaped the Vietnam War was the Tết Offensive in 1968 (Bowden, 2017). Tết is the most important holiday in Vietnamese culture, representing the Lunar New Year in the country. Similar to Christmas in Western countries, almost all work in the country comes to a halt during Tết for celebrations. Vietnamese people journey home to their villages or ancestral homes to be with their families and pay homage to ancestors of past (Bowden, 2017; Smith, 1999). Both sides honored the holiday throughout the war, always issuing a cease-fire. However, the DRV and NVA had planned, since 1966, a general uprising that they hoped would be the turning point of the war. Therefore, on January 30, 1968, communist forces made up of mainly local units of the NLF attacked 36 of South Vietnam’s 46 provinces, 64 of the 242 district capitals, five of the largest cities, and countless villages (Bradley, 2009). The Tết Offensive caught American and South Vietnamese forces off-guard.
Northern forces and the NLF swept through the south making a substantial impact on how Americans saw the war and the ability of the North Vietnamese to organize such an attach, but American and Southern forces regrouped and defeated the North and the NLF.

During the Tết Offensive, the most damage came in the course of the Battle of Huế. Bowden (2017) elucidates that,

The Battle of Huế would be the bloodiest of the Vietnam War, and a turning point not just in the conflict, but in American history. When it was over, the debate concerning the war in the United States was never again about winning, only about how to leave (p. 3).

Communist forces took hold of Huế during the offensive and kept the city in an ongoing battle until late February. Americans and South Vietnamese forces experienced the revolutionary wrath of the North. The Battle of Huế showed the weaknesses of American military and their lack of understanding of the North Vietnamese while showcasing a North Vietnamese regime willing to fight for total liberation.

The North Vietnamese leaders looked at the Battle of Huế not as a revolution, but as a liberation. NVA saw an opportunity for Huế to be freed from imperialistic control where the people were free to lead Huế in the Vietnamese way. It was established that the people, or “nhân dân,” would lead the success of the Battle of Huế because it was their city and their imprisonment would be lifted. Nhân dân would be the future of Huế, while the Battle of Huế would eliminate the history of domination (Bowden, 2017). The Battle of Huế was thus an expression of the people’s will and it was supposed that nhân dân would come to support the cause and liberate themselves from their imperial oppressors. However, the Battle of Huế would end with North Vietnamese forces being pushed out and defeated.

The taking back of Huế by American and South Vietnamese forces involved intense artillery fire, bombings, and street fighting which resulted in a large number of civilian
casualties. In the aftermath of the battle in Huế, the bodies of 2,800 South Vietnamese civilians, made up of elders, women, and children who had been executed by the North and NLF, were found in mass graves (Bradley, 2009). Although the Tết Offensive failed to overtake South Vietnam, it did alter the mindset on the nature of the war. Tết was a turning point in the United States’ perception of the war, whereby support from the American government and the public deteriorated. Eventually, support for the War, America’s involvement in the War, and the future of South Vietnam began to unravel. The ambiguous nature of the war affected domestic politics in the United States. In the United States, the war being televised to the American public lead to massive protests and conflict against the government in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

2.4.2 End of the War

In March of 1975, the United States evacuated personnel from the military base in Đà Nẵng, setting off a state of panic in the South, with many people convinced the United States intended to abandon South Vietnam and that a North Vietnamese victory was imminent (Bradley, 2009). The speed of the South Vietnamese government’s collapse surprised officials in Hanoi, who re-calculated their timeline and began the “Hồ Chí Minh Campaign” on the final day of March 1975. This campaign symbolized the beginning of the end. On April 21, 1975 Nguyễn Văn Thiệu resigned as president of South Vietnam. Chaos ensued as officials in Washington D.C. ordered the evacuation of all United States personnel (Bradley, 2009). In Saigon, many southern Vietnamese desperately sought visas and escape routes from the country in fear of the impending treatment by the Northern communists.

The Vietnam War officially ended on April 30, 1975, when the North Vietnamese Army entered and, consequently, seized Saigon, the then capital of South Vietnam. The Fall of Saigon, as it would famously be known to Vietnamese around the world, ended the war and allowed the
rise of a new Vietnam. A very violent war lasting almost 20 years concluded (Bradley, 2009). The process of reunification in a new socialist republic of Vietnam began with renaming Saigon as Hồ Chí Minh City, followed by a process of a systematic “re-education” of many citizens who were almost all affiliated with the southern regime. After decades of colonial control by France and a civil war, the country of Vietnam was now unified and entering the process of being rebuilt into a socialist state and society.

2.5 Youth Sport and Physical Education Movements in Vietnam

With the revolution against the French and America’s war in mind, Vietnam’s prominent leaders and fighters were socially and politically trained in French forms of sport and physical culture. Stated earlier, French youth leagues were prominent spaces where revolutionary and nationalistic ideologies espoused. Anne Raffin (2005), details in her book *Youth Mobilization in Vichy Indochina and Its Legacies, 1940-1970* the nature in which French attempts to mobilize youth ended up creating spaces of revolutionary action. The French introduced youth organizations, such as the Boy Scouts and physical activity programs, to Vietnam during colonial times by the way of the scout's movement in the 1920s (Raffin, 2005). To the French, scouting was a powerful means of coming together in order to protect and to be protected by the French empire. French colonials sought obedient subjects, so they introduced structured sport and promoted recreational activities with youth corps in order to prevent them from growing a political consciousness. Raffin (2005) describes that their intent was to create patriotic citizens who would represent the French empire throughout Southeast Asia. They instilled a policy of boosting imperial pride in disciplined, strong, and healthy subjects. From Paris to Saigon, there was an identical athlete pledge: “I promise, on my honor, to practice sport with unselfishness,
discipline, and loyalty to improve myself and to better my homeland” (Raffin, 2005, p. 31). Due to the patriotic goal of scouting organizations, the military also heavily influenced the officials promoting physical activity.

According to Raffin (2005), in order to reach out to children and promote certain ideologies of nationalism, the colonial state promoted Buddhism to emphasize how the religion reciprocated limited universalism while emphasizing moral influence on peace and on fostering tolerance towards one another. By establishing youth organizations, the French not only aimed to promote patriotism towards the French empire, but also to regulate young children’s participation in local politics. French officials did this by encouraging the practice of sports to build strong and healthy subjects for the empire, whereby the goal of the colonialist was to create a sporting atmosphere aimed to forge a more stable union.

Army personnel and nuns also directed sports in schools for youth, but they directed schools with particular notions of youth discipline drawn from their institutional cultures, which suited the colonial power (Raffin, 2005, p. 156). The goal of the army and nuns in sport and physical activity was to teach morals and ethics as the foundation of social order in society. In this particular situation, educating the body through physical activity transmitted political ideologies to the youth of Vietnam. Further description by Raffin (2005) indicates sports were another avenue to develop an attachment to the French imperial nation. It was claimed that sports also taught discipline by submitting players to the rules of the game and helping wipe out social class identity. Collective sports would teach cohesion and solidarity between races and classes. Every collective sport asked its members to be united and to cooperate with one another for the team to be competitive, the beginning of a new social contract between individuals (Raffin, 2005, p. 175).
Within the education system, authorities developed mass sports systems, physical education systems at school, and leisure activities under state control while stressing the social and educational importance of physical activities. The concept of sport as a useful tool with which to create new men who would put the country right had become a common political theme in France from 1936-1946 (Raffin, 2005). Sport was a national duty for French citizens and new mass sporting events stressed patriotic rituals; this ideology was thus implemented in French colonies, like Indochina (Raffin, 2005). Statutes of sporting associations had to mention that their goals were only to develop feelings of solidarity and companionship and to develop the taste for physical education, and that sport would never be a place for discussion of politics, religion, or foreign affairs. This was enacted to prevent any gatherings of youth that would be based on dismantling French colonial rule. The main groupings at this time were the scouts, Catholic organizations, and oeuvres.

Eventually, non-professional volunteers, mainly Vietnamese businessmen and merchants, created an organization called Friends of Sports and Youth, to help lead a state-run project, and shine the capacity of civil society, meaning Vietnamese without French assistance, to establish such an organization that was to discipline and mold Vietnamese youth. Raffin (2005) acknowledges that the mobilization of Vietnamese people in sport and physical activity would contribute to resistance to French forces. In Vietnam, these youth groups offered a network through which the Viet Minh was able to reach young people in order to attempt to seize power during the August Revolution of 1945 (Raffin, 2002; 2005). Many Vietnamese people viewed the end of World War II as an opportunity to challenge French power. Thus, youths and adults carried a people’s desire to become an independent nation from inside youth organizations that were based on patriotic youth organization, some of which derived from physical activity. It
came to a point that songs were sung by Vietnamese scouts contesting French colonialism (Raffin, 2005, p. 120)

In an ironic state of affairs, those who were trained under French officials in organizations focusing on sport and physical activity would later be the main participants of the Viet Minh (Raffin, 2005). Described by Combeau-Mari (2006), Vietnamese youth were being prepared without their realization by the French-Vichy regime for national liberation movements embedded with communism. That is, mobilization of youth was initiated in physical education and sports supplanted by the French where groups met and propaganda was distributed (Combeau-Mari, 2006; Raffin, 2005). Viet Minh distributed underground propaganda in pursuit of a competing sense of nation. The August Revolution freed scouts to express their hatred of the French, some wore placards inscribed “Chase away the French” (Raffin, 2005, p. 197). Scouts were active participants in the August Revolution and would nurture nationalistic beliefs that fought French imperialism. Indeed, the scouts gave hundreds of healthy, motivated, disciplined, Cadres to the Viet Minh. Scouting in Hanoi had a Viet Minh political propensity rooted in anti-colonial liberation (Raffin, 2005).

Raffin (2005) describes then the Viet Minh rose to power, the group was managed by youth leaders trained by France’s physical activity movement. Former scouts were active participants in the August Revolution. It was the sport and youth organizations implemented by the French that fostered future Viet Minh troops. The unintended consequence of these youth organizations was their evolution into a basis for Vietnamese nationalism and the quest for independence from French colonialism.

Ngô Đình Diệm also saw the potential of molding young people to support the causes of the Republic of Vietnam. Diệm aimed at adapting, as he put it, the best of Vietnamese heritage
into the modern situation. Diệm wanted to retain the tradition of building a national culture of local and Western influences. Members of the Republican Youth were asked to memorize and follow the president’s guidelines. First, was to understand and carry out the Republic of Vietnam’s constitution, which was based on four principles: (1) respect for the human person, (2) building a community-oriented society, (3) developing the nation economically, and (4) echoing personalized principles (Raffin, 2005). Second, young people had a set of duties to perform to educate their minds and bodies in order to become useful persons for the community and to help build an independent and democratic nation. The third was to participate in the task of removing feudalism, colonialism, and communism. Fourth, young people had to help promote the rapid economic development of the country. Finally, Diệm wanted young people to fully understand the notions of justice and self-reliance (Raffin, 2005).

The youth motto presented by the French regime was: ‘United and strong in order to serve’ (Raffin, 2005). Youth sports movements introduced by French colonials were seen as a form of leisure and physical development that would improve the French empire, but resulted in the development of strong citizens within the Viet Minh and the ARVN. With Raffin’s (2005) rich research in mind, the historical, social and cultural attention to sport and physical culture in Vietnam is significant because these processes shape present day physical culture in Vietnam. As youth sport organizations were once a place for mobilization and resistance against the French, they are currently a place to remind Vietnamese youth of the past (Raffin, 2005). Patriotic and nationalistic ideologies are rooted in sporting festivities and performances that allude to revolution and defeating France and the United States of America (Raffin, 2005). This is potentially done to develop strong Vietnamese citizens of the future that will always protect their
homeland. Thus, historical forms of physical culture in Vietnam have great influence on the ways in which present day physical culture is created and implemented.

2.6 Current Affairs in Vietnam

In 1986, 11 years after the end of America’s war, Vietnam went through an economic transformation known as Đổi Mới. Đổi Mới was an economic shift that aimed to move Vietnam from a closed market economy that prohibited capitalistic and open trade to an economy opened to the Western world (Andreff, 1993; Beresford, 2008; Irvin, 2007; Luong, 2006, 2007; McHale, 2002). Like many developing nations in the 1980s, Vietnam underwent severe economic crises, and while other nations received aid from international agencies, Vietnam implemented Đổi Mới as an economic institutional process to recover from the state’s disparity of low economic status and lack of finances since the end of the war (Irvin, 2007). The years after the war and leading up to Đổi Mới saw drastic poverty and an insufficient economic climate. In promoting Đổi Mới, the Vietnamese government lifted embargos against international trade and private corporations leading to opening country’s doors to foreign trade. Đổi Mới was aimed at creating, under a socialist state, a market-oriented economy, allowing for a multi-sector economy, de-collectivization, private ownership, and a liberalized increase in foreign trade and investment (Irvin, 2007; King et al., 2008). The result of Đổi Mới was changes in the Vietnamese economy with a reduction in poverty while also reproducing Western societal issues such as a growing gap between socio-economic groups, corruption in the government (in the case of bribery and western ideas of corruption), gender inequality, and other problems among civil society such as health related issues, kinship, and disparities among social class (Luong, 2006).
One source of corruption were the reforms of education placed during Đổi Mới. In the 1980s, Vietnam took measures to reduce the "political" function of education and to increase education's capacity to serve the new imperatives to modernize, industrialize, and correspond with the fast-growing economies of their Asian neighbors and the "developed" world (Marr & Rosen, 1998). Starting in 1989, the Vietnamese government charged tuitions fees at all levels in the education system. Besides these fees, families had to contribute informal fees such as textbooks and uniforms. By 1993 in Vietnam, more than half of the total expenditure on public schools came from households, not the state, a fundamental reversal of patterns during the previous four decades. As a result of this fee-paying model, education was difficult to obtain families (Beresford, 2008). Only families with the financial means could afford to send their children to school. Eventually, high quality education, not in the public format, became a commodity that groups who had the ability to pay high amounts of tuition could access in Vietnam. In sum, there were profound social, cultural, and, to a much less extent, political changes that materialized as a result of Đổi Mới (Bradley, 2009).

In particular, Đổi Mới impacted younger generations of Vietnamese people (Nguyen, 2005). Vietnam opening its trade doors to Western and capitalistic ideologies during Đổi Mới and created a climate that allowed for an array of influences from other countries (Beresford, 2008; Irvin, 2007). Beginning in the 1990s, young people in Vietnam were exposed to foreign influences from across the world. According to King et al. (2008), older generations who fought in the Vietnam War saw these foreign influences leading to young people losing their roots and having little interest in Vietnam’s proud history of defeating imperialistic powers. Older communist leaders felt that Vietnam was “losing its soul” as the country allowed more businesses like Coca-Cola and Nike in the country (King et al., 2008). The exposure to foreign,
especially Western, music and entertainment also created a liberal attitude among younger
generations to what were once taboo subjects.

Another consequence of Đổi Mới was the increase in social inequality between the rich
and the poor, as well as between urban and rural communities (King et al., 2008). During Đổi
Mới, the state abolished the subsidy system which helped people with education, healthcare, and
unemployment and moved in the direction of a free market. Poverty and unemployment rose.
Đổi Mới also created a middle class which consisted mainly of people who were educated and
had jobs despite and for the most privileged due to the economic reform. King et al. (2007)
indicate that education is still a route to social mobility for some, but it is also increasingly a
means to consolidate one's position in the middle class. Therefore, education is used to validate
one’s position that historically has been carried on by the family. These elements along with
educational qualifications, income level, and career aspirations are the basis of professional
middle-class identities in Vietnam today. Marr and Rosen (1998) highlight the connection
between education and employment in Vietnam that emphasizes an economy based on products.
Thus, what used to be an economic state based on labor and skill has transformed into a
capitalistic economy where the focus is on production and profit in the name of free trade.

As a result of the Đổi Mới economic reform, young Vietnamese became more oriented
towards education, jobs, and careers which have resulted in delaying marriage and experiencing
different partners as compared to traditional marriages where families would meet to discuss the
suitability of their children (Hayslip, 2003). Vietnam has become a more liberal and open
society, particularly amongst young people, and as compared to their parents and elders who
grew up in a stricter socialist state (King et al., 2007). Đổi Mới also indirectly influenced
education and employment opportunities, which in turn have affected Vietnamese ideals and
identity. Young Vietnamese people are now less clear about their motives, such as during time of war motive always surrounded fighting and revolution, and less altruistic about their country, as compared to previous generations (Luong, 2006, 2007).

The socialist and communist ideals are slowly disappearing and being replaced by modern ideas of young people who want to make money and enjoy their lives. The principal divide is between those who came of age during the American war versus those who are growing up within the past 15-20 years of dramatic economic and social change (Nguyen, 2007). The older generation nostalgically remembers the sense of purpose and group solidarity of their generation when they were teenagers, and they demand respect for the sacrifices they endured. On the other hand, younger Vietnamese are tired of war stories, convinced that these have little relevance to present conditions, and eager to look to the future (Marr & Rosen, 1998). Young Vietnamese people work more, especially in the middle-class, and seek to experience more of life as it is lived in the West (Nguyen, 2005). Older values of having a family, women being subordinate leading to an increase of gender equality (Belanger, Nguyen & Nguyen, 2012), and children being there for their parents are being forgotten and replaced with a more care-free lifestyle (Nguyen, 2007).

From my own experience in the country, young people in Vietnam are generally liberal, listen to Western music, and are influenced by other cultures. Vietnam is also in a state of constant change and influence. For instance, officials recently signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement which is a trade partnership with other growing nations such as Malaysia and Peru, and already powerful Western nations like Canada. This partnership puts Vietnam more firmly into the political and economic landscape of the world. As Vietnam continues to develop socially, politically, and economically, it will become more of a recognizable country.
From my time in the field, people are hoping for Vietnam to be the new “Asian Tiger,” where the country can be economically similar to a country like Singapore, but they also feel that it will be decades before Vietnam fully opens gates for this to occur (Fieldnotes, November 2016).

2.7 Conclusion

The decolonization of Vietnam as a nation state, which began in 1945, was not complete until 1975 when the war in Vietnam ended in the creation of a communist regime recognized by the United Nations. The sheer scale of the damage inflicted on people, property, infrastructure, and environment during the almost thirty years of war in Vietnam marks a tragic history (Raffin, 2005, p. 143). Vietnam is currently in a state of economic, social, and political growth. Forty-three years after the Fall of Saigon, much has changed in accordance with global shifts. The Vietnamese economy has opened itself up to foreign influence. But with that, there are still old ways of thinking and living that were developed through the revolution. As the years pass, it will be intriguing to see how the country continues to develop throughout the 21st century.

The details provided in this chapter contextualize Vietnam as the setting in which this research project took place. The purpose was to provide a historical background in order to understand events that impacted the country, as well as present the current political and social landscape in what young Vietnamese people are living. With this in mind, I now move on to the experiences, people, spaces, and places that I interacted with when conducting research for this dissertation.
3.0 Introduction

Nguyen (2018) writes in his introduction to the edited book *The Displaced – Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*, that when we speak of refugees—or for the purpose of this research, participants from FFAV, Thừa Thiên Huế Province, and Vietnam—that it is impossible to remember them all, but if we can imagine them, then maybe we can hear them, and if we can hear them, perhaps others will as well. In the spirit of participatory research, and in acknowledging that this research was done with others in a specific location in Vietnam, this chapter is written to offer a face and a voice to the people of Football for All in Vietnam, as well as to illuminate Thừa Thiên Huế Province.

3.1 Thừa Thiên Huế Province

Thừa Thiên Huế Province is located in the narrowest part of the country, central Vietnam. Its various landscapes consist of mountainous highlands, calm lagoons, and beautiful coastlines. The unique geography of Thừa Thiên Huế allows the province to access many parts of the country and the world. Huế rests on a coastal plain between the South China Sea and the Annamite Mountains, nestled between the Pacific Ocean to the east and Laos to the west. Thừa Thiên Huế consists of 8 districts and 1 city. The 8 districts are A Lưới, Nam Đông, Phú Lộc, Quảng Điền, Phong Điền, Phú Vang, Hương Thủy and Hương Trà. The capital and main city of
the province is Huế City (Thành phố Huế). Each district differs geographically and
demographically. A Lưới and Nam Đông are located on the border of Laos and are in the
mountainous central highlands, while Phú Lộc is located on the coast along the beaches; Quảng
Điện and Phú Vang are positioned in lowlands near lagoons; Phong Điền is the furthest north,
bordering the neighboring province of Quảng Trị; and the others are located centrally within the
city limits. Huế City, as the capital of the province, is the economic, cultural, and political hub.
The exact geography of Thừa Thiên Huế can be found in the map below provided by FFAV (See
Figure 1).

Figure 1. Districts of Thừa Thiên Huế Province

The city of Huế, according to Buddhist myth, was a lotus flower that had grown from a
mud puddle (Smith, 1999). Huế has a spirit that is independent, but also calm and peaceful.
Although it is the biggest city in Thừa Thiên Huế Province, it is at the same time very small in the sense that people identify each other through small degrees of separation. Considered a big city by some, especially those that live in the province, it is small in comparison to the offerings of Hanoi and Saigon. The city has kept its traditional and cultural values intact. Huế is almost caught in a vortex of honoring its past while concurrently endeavoring to balance Vietnam’s rapid modernization within the global community. Hammel (1991) describes Huế as a place where “east meets west,” signaling the convergence of Vietnamese and French civilizations. Huế is also a city that is outwardly Buddhist and Catholic, both ancient and modern, and both progressive and conservative. Deep roots in Confucian and Buddhist ideology have created a way of life that is loyal, communal, and familial. In the development of Thừa Thiên Huế Province, historical moments of imperial dynasties, French Colonialism, the war against America, and Đổi Mới all have lasting effects.

Due to its rich history, Huế is a UNESCO Heritage Site, holding significance as the former imperial capital housing different sites and war time linkages. Around Huế City are tombs of past emperors that have been repurposed as tourist attractions for both Vietnamese and Western tourists. The Citadel is the major tourist attraction in Huế. Thiên Mu Pagoda is the most famous landmark in Huế as it looks over the Perfume River. The Perfume River (Sông Hương), named after the orchids that fall in and fragrance the water during the autumn season, snakes through the city dividing it into north and south (Pham, 2016). There is a traditional practice of people sending paper cups with flickering blossoms lit with candles floating down the river to represent prayers for good health, success, and to honor memories of loved ones far away. Huế, in all of her beauty, was the location where this research was situated.
3.2 Football for All in Vietnam - Bóng đá Cộng đồng tại Việt Nam

Football for All in Vietnam (FFAV) is a non-governmental organization based in Huế City, Thừa Thiên Huế province, Vietnam. FFAV was originally established in Hanoi in 2001 through an agreement that was initiated by Norwegian authorities, between the Football Association of Norway (NFF) and Vietnam Football Federation (VFF) (Football for All in Vietnam, 2018). However, after realizing that the city and urban landscape of Hanoi limited the capacity to properly conduct activities, the project moved to Huế in 2003. The vision of FFAV is to enable children to play football and experience life skills education through the development of grassroots football programs across Vietnam (Football for All in Vietnam, 2018). To achieve this vision FFAV seeks to educate parents, volunteers, and teachers and to empower local communities to create sustainable grassroots football structures (Fieldnotes, December 2016).

Creating a sustainable football structure was influenced by the Norwegian sport for development (Hasselgard, 2015) idea that grassroots football programs for children in primary and secondary schools, if done with an emphasis on fun, openness, and inclusivity, engenders the development of civil society (Fieldnotes, September 2016). FFAV decided in 2003 to include life skills education in conjunction with grassroots football because the project realized the potential in merging physical activity, and personal and social development. Regarding life skills, FFAV creates activities focused on specific topics that need attention within a specific community. Moreover, FFAV prioritizes the inclusion of marginalized children including but not limited to, young girls, disabled children, children from ethnic minorities, street children with no homes, children living in poverty, and children affected by or from families living with HIV/AIDS (Fieldnotes, September 2016). Adults from local communities are targeted and recruited to run clubs and programs. As compensation for their time, FFAV provides basic training in coaching,
life-skills education, and if possible, money for motorbike petrol (Football for All in Vietnam, 2018). Therefore, FFAV focuses heavily on each local community where programs and activities exist, to develop specific sustainable grassroots football and life skills education (Fieldnotes, September 2016).

Throughout the 16 years of FFAV’s existence, the project has grown and adapted to meet the needs of local communities. As word spread about FFAV’s work across the province, schools and community groups developed interest in having FFAV assist with the creation of football clubs in their local communities. As the number of football clubs increased substantially, numerous young people became active in grassroots football and physical activity connected to life skills education. During introductory meetings with FFAV staff members in the beginning of my fieldwork, it was described to me by FFAV staff that due to the popularity of FFAV and the impacts the project is having on the organization and promotion of SfD initiatives, Vietnamese authorities, such as VFF, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), and the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MoCST), have commended and endorsed the activities of FFAV (Fieldnotes, September 2016). Additionally, this supportive praise of FFAV’s work was generally given by local community members that I interacted with throughout the province; however, I am skeptical that many of the people I interacted with were proponents of the project. Moreover, FFAV has partnered with international SfD organizations such as Streetfootball World, Women Win, and FIFA Football for Hope (Football for All in Vietnam, 2018). The local and national recognition in Vietnam, as well as the connections to renowned projects around the world such as FIFA Football 4 Hope, Streetfootball World and Asian Football Confederation, have put FFAV on the map as a major SfD project in Southeast Asia (Fieldnotes, December 2016).
3.2.1 Current FFAV Activities

**Figure 2. Current Chart of FFAV Activities**

FFAV creates and supports football clubs, programs, and activities in all nine districts across the province of Thừa Thiên Huế by providing equipment, funding, and logistical support. Schools and district are authorities eligible for yearly support from FFAV through funding which is dispersed by Norwegian partners, NFF and the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee (NIF). FFAV football clubs are established in primary and secondary schools, as well as social centers that house orphans or young people that have been separated from their families. At each FFAV football club, there are weekly regular trainings that consist of grassroots football activities and life-skills education and games. FFAV also assists in the organization of district-level events where schools and communities assemble to participate and interact with each other. A particular district-level event is the Fun Football Festival (FFF), an all-day event occurring in each of the nine districts. FFF consists of football matches, other
physical activity games, life-skills stations, singing, and dancing. In addition to regular trainings and the FFF, FFAV organizes and implements specialized activities, such as the GOAL Project geared toward young girls, or community grassroots football events which are intended to create and promote solidarity within one specific community.

When not in the field working with districts or schools, FFAV staff are in the main office working on an array of assignments and duties (see Figure 2 above). FFAV staff members assist in many of the activities; however, some are given extra responsibility for special projects. For example, those specializing in grassroots football and life skills elements primarily concentrate on those areas. Others, such as the director of FFAV, have a hand in capacity building, advocacy, and monitoring and evaluation. Nonetheless, FFAV is currently working on an array of projects while at the same time visiting and working with provincial and community partners.

3.2.2 Organizational Structure of FFAV
Figure 3. FFAV Organizational Structure

For FFAV to be an SfD project in Thừa Thiên Huế, collegial relationships with many groups and individuals are required. Foremost is the relationship between Norwegian authorities, such as NFF, and NIF. Both are international bodies that act as the overall authority figures to FFAV. The director of international development for NFF is the official overseeing FFAV’s operations, and NIF is the major financial supporter. Although both NFF and NIF are not present in Huế and only visit the project once a year, FFAV staff are responsible for reporting to them when needed.

FFAV is staffed by Vietnamese people, mainly from Huế, excepting one Norwegian national who has been with the project since its inception. However, FFAV staff are not the only people from Huế who work to establish activities across the province. Due to the laws of
Vietnam, any international group that wants to establish a project must partner with a Vietnamese authority (Fieldnotes, September 2016). The purpose of these partnerships is for Vietnamese authorities to govern international presence and ensure that no misconduct occurs. FFAV’s direct partner is Thừa Thiên Huế Department of Education of Training (DoET). Whatever FFAV wants to do, whether it be establishing a football club at a new school or having researchers from abroad work with the project, must be approved by DoET. Simply, there is nothing that FFAV can do without DoET’s knowledge and stamp of approval. Related to DoET are the district-level sub-department of education and trainings (Sub-DoET). Authorities from the nine Sub-DoETs work closely with FFAV staff members, acting as gatekeepers to local communities, and are responsible for the activities that occur in their districts. The last group of people that help FFAV function are the local communities where the SfD programs are implemented. These local communities are the villages or communes in the nine districts, where primary and secondary schools that have football clubs and activities are located. The headmasters, physical teachers, children, parents, and even some volunteers in the local communities are the direct actors and presumed beneficiaries of FFAV activities.

3.2.3 Current State of FFAV

In May 2016, a decision by NFF changed the total landscape of FFAV. NFF, along with NIF, implemented an exit process that would eventually cease all funding and logistical support to FFAV after December 31, 2018 (Fieldnotes, August 2016). By way of this decision, leadership and decision-making processes shifted from Norway to Vietnamese employees of FFAV. The decision forced FFAV, as a SfD project funded by NIF and supported by NFF, to relinquish all programs and activities to Vietnamese partners and communities by the end of 2018. This placed FFAV in a state of instability, struggling, to keep the project operational and
how figuring out how to sustain activities in the local communities without Norwegian funding. Thus, since May 2016, FFAV has shifted the focus of creating and implementing activities to supporting and strengthening local capacities. This plan provided that, from 2016 to 2018, FFAV would do everything in the project's capacity to ensure that government partners and local communities were able to continue activities. Gradually, Vietnamese authorities took responsibility for all aspects of FFAV from funding to education, and program implementation.

In response to the decision handed down by NFF, FFAV staff initiated a handover strategy to ensure that even if the project ceased to exist, activities and ideas related to grassroots football, life-skills education, and football for fun would continue in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. The overall goal of the handover transfer strategy was to strengthen local communities’ confidence in maintaining activities with their current resources and advocating to national and provincial authorities to support the sustainment of non-competitive and open grassroots football, as well as the integration of life skills education in activities. The handover transfer strategy has encountered many difficulties regarding the planning and due diligence of FFAV staff members, as well as procuring provincial government partners’ and local communities’ cooperation with the idea of moving forward without support from FFAV and NFF.

However, FFAV staff members’ commitment and devotion to their province reinforced their determination to ensure activities were sustained in local communities. The handover transfer process shaped our actions and implementations. More importantly, it shaped the manner in which research for this dissertation was conducted and the data that was collected. Thus, the handover transfer process that FFAV is currently experiencing sets a pivotal backdrop that underlies this dissertation.

3.2.4 People of FFAV
While I was at FFAV, there were eighteen people working for the project. The main FFAV staff consisted of a management group comprised of a director, vice-director, and the department heads of technical, programming, and communications. Under the management group were support staff and interns who assisted with various tasks in each department (See Figure 4 above).

To give voice and face to FFAV, I use the real given names of staff members in the descriptions below. These descriptions are only descriptions of the people who let me into their lives and SfD project, and is not intended to harm their identities in any manner. Also, in telling accurate stories that are needed in participatory research I argue using real names was needed in
writing this document. This is because these people are the real reason why this research project took place. As well, I want to represent them in the best possible way that I can. No last names are detailed because everyone in FFAV was on a first-name basis. Moreover, in Vietnamese customs when we refer to someone or address someone we use titles that represent them according to their age. If I refer to a male who is older than me I preface his given name with “anh” meaning elder brother. When referring to a female older than me I preface her given name with “chi” meaning elder sister. When referring to someone younger than me whether they are male or female I use the term “em” which loosely translates as someone your junior and is used as a direct form to address someone younger. Thus throughout this dissertation, there will be occasions when I refer to someone I will use the appropriate form of addressing them.

Anders is the former director for FFAV. However, before my arrival the handover transfer process commenced, resulting in Vietnamese leadership of FFAV. Therefore, Anders is currently serving as the Special Advisor to Southeast Asia via NFF. Phuong is now the director of FFAV and Hoa acts as the vice-director; they both handle different members of the management group. Chung is head of the technical department responsible for all grassroots football-related topics, such as coaches training and education, meetings with VFF, and implementing grassroots football activities across the province. Huong is head of the programming department responsible for working with Sub-DoETs and local communities, specializing in topics of life-skills education training, organizing events, and meeting with school officials. Phuong, Chung, and Huong are the external leaders who represent FFAV at meetings and clubs, and with leaders from around Vietnam. Hoa is the leader of the internal affairs. Working with Hoa are Nhi, Tinh, and Sang. Nhi is head of human resources and takes care of logistics concerning volunteers locally and abroad. Tinh is responsible for the communication
and marketing department. Sang is responsible for the financial accounting of FFAV. The trio working on internal operations rarely left the office unless needed for a workshop or meeting.

In addition to the management group, there are other staff members supporting FFAV. Mrs. Ha (Ha is the first name, but I use the “Mrs” because her seniority and status), the former leader of the Thừa Thiên Huế DoET, holds significant political influence around Huế. Thao helps with life-skills education and leads the GOAL program. Men was the office assistant who coordinated field trips, meetings, and support for my research. The young staff members are interns. Hong helps Nhi with human resources; Kan Lin helps Chung with technical; Ngoc Linh helps Tinh with communications; and Son helps Huong with the programming department. Summarily, these people constituted my daily interactions during the research.

3.2.5 Contextualizing FFAV in Vietnam: NGOs in Vietnam

As an international non-governmental organization FFAV is implicated by governmental and local processes that are required for the project to function. The project in itself does not function solely on its own. Vietnam is a one-party Communist government where policies are often dictated by people in leadership positions (Bonnin, 2010; Turner, 2010). In a state that is presently rooted in the past (McHale, 2002) it must be recognized that Vietnam exists in a nuanced state of political processes.

Historically in Vietnam, Đổi Mới, the Economic Renovation decreed in 1986 at the Sixth National Congress, and implemented over the following two decades, has generally reduced the level of state authoritarianism (Turner, 2010). Beresford (2008) and Irvin (2007) emphasize how the economic policy of Đổi Mới shifted the landscape of Vietnam because of how the country opened its once closed borders to outsiders. Lux and Straussman (2004) indicate that due to the reformation process there has been an increase of presence of international NGOs and towards a
more open civil society. In turn, this has allowed for foreign companies and organizations to establish a market presence in the country.

However, in recent decades since Đổi Mới, the state has tended to impose a ‘one-size-fits-all’ and ‘top-down’ approach in terms of policy design (Rambo, 2003; McElwee, 2004, cited in Bonnin, 2010). Lux and Straussman (2004) recognize that there is an obvious reality of the Communist party still holding a dominance over Vietnamese civil society. This domineering governmental process in Vietnam holds substantial impact for NGOs. Regarding FFAV, and in conjunction with this research project, there are top-down governmental processes that FFAV must adhere to, such as having to partner with the provincial Department of Education and Training. I reason, as I was told by FFAV staff members and experienced by Turner (2010) that this partnership is not only for the project to function, but also a form of surveillance implemented by the government. Civil society in Vietnam being comprised of non-state institutions comprised of organizations, voluntary organizations, and social movements are given relative autonomy but there are zones of contestation, such as working in communities, in which they are monitored by governmental authorities (Fforde & Porter, 1994). With this in mind, there needs to be a conscious effort to understand that FFAV is entwined in Vietnamese national policies.

To best describe the governmental and authoritative nature of Vietnam, FFAV must go through an audit with the police station every year. During my time I experienced the yearly audit where two police officers came to the office to meet with the FFAV management group, specifically Phuong, Hoa, and Nhi. I was not invited to attend the meeting but from the outside looking into the meeting room it appeared that FFAV was giving a presentation about the activities and initiatives of the year, and what foreign visitors had come, such as myself and
various Norwegian stakeholders. The meeting, from my vantage point, appeared to conclude positively because what happened after was an invitation to dinner and socialize (Fieldnotes, April 2017).

Bonnin (2010) elaborates that Vietnam has political practices of which include a desire to control how the state is portrayed through academic practices by monitoring the activities of researchers. With that, the tedious process of conducting research in Vietnam was both expressed to me verbally by mentors and experienced first-hand. Connected to how foreign organizations must cooperate with national partners in Vietnam, this research project was interspersed with different levels of authoritative elements. Without getting into too much detail and nuance, at the highest level of this research project was FFAV’s cooperation with the Thừa Thiên Huế Department of Education and Training, who is given direction by the national Ministry of Education and Training. This specific relationship, I reason from my experience, was a process of Vietnamese oversight (Fforde & Porter, 1994; Lux & Straussman, 2004). For example, a topic that will be detailed more in Chapter 7, is FFAV’s forced cooperation with Thừa Thiên Huế DoET leaders in which the project must seek permission from them before any programs or activities can begin. This relationship is intended to be a partnership; however, as many FFAV staff members expressed, DoET rarely brings their concerted efforts to the table (e.g., scheduling meetings, showing up to meetings on time, responding to phone calls or emails). And similar to Turner (2010; 2013) who had to go through governmental partners in Vietnam for her research, FFAV’s strenuous relationship with DoET may produce restrictions on the project’s implementation of programs and activities, as well as other processes such as academic research.

To further elaborate, the participatory approach to the research rooted in this dissertation was implicated and influenced in by the socialist state that Vietnam exists in. Turner (2010)
acknowledged that even participatory research projects are subjected to authorities of socialist states like Vietnam where authorities may be cautious of long-term fieldwork conducted by researchers. In this research project, FFAV and I can attest to having to seek approval from government authorities. Thus, while the participatory nature of the research was truly between FFAV and me (and to a minimal extent local communities) our research needed to be approved by DoET and was monitored by Sub-DoET. Our research plan, interview guides, and logistics such as field visits for the research to be conducted needed to be overlooked and approached by the leader of DoET. As well, it was decided that a member of DoET would be assigned to monitor the research that FFAV and I were undertaking. FFAV, as an internationally funded and supported project, is thus subjected to provincial and national regulations. In turn, the research that permeates this dissertation was affected by the nature of Vietnamese governmental policies regarding foreign research and workers.

3.3 Timeline of Activities

I spent a total of eleven months volunteering for FFAV, conducting research for my dissertation and living life in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Recounting every moment and event of my time in the field is beyond scope of this project. Thus, I compiled a timeline of major events and trips, month by month, in a timeline below (See Figure 5 below) to provide a snapshot of my experiences. For the most part, if I was not traveling with FFAV staff members to the field, the majority of my time was spent in the FFAV main office in Huế City.
August 2016
- Arrival in Vietnam
- Move to Hue
- Meet with FFAV staff

September 2016
- Meet Sub-DoET officials at fundraising workshop
- Official meeting with Thua Thien Hue Department of Education and Training
- First fieldtrip to Nam Dong Fun Football Festival
- Visit resettlement areas in Quang Dien and Phu Loc

October 2016
- GOAL Trips with all female FFAV staff
- Fun Football Festival in Phu Vang and A Luoi Districts
- All province sustainability workshop
- Participatory Evaluation meeting with DoET & Sub-DoET

November 2016
- Participatory evaluation data collection in Nam Dong, Phu Loc, Quang Dien, Huong Thuy, Phu Vang, Hue City
- Fun Football Festival in Huong Tra

December 2016
- Participatory evaluation data collection in A Luoi District
- Fieldtrip to Hanoi to meet government officials
- FFAV staff seminar and trip to Hoi An

January 2017
- Mainly in the office
- Tet Holiday for 2 weeks

February 2017
- Fieldtrip to Nam Dong, Huong Tra, Hue City

March 2017
- Field trip to Hue City

April 2017
- Fundraising workshop in Nam Dong, Phuong Dien, Quang Dien
- Fieldtrip to Huong Thuy, Huong Tra
- Fun Football Festival in Phong Dien
Figure 5. Timeline of Work with FFAV

The eleven months of field work were filled with many experiences and moments that ultimately comprise the research developing this document. While I find it unnecessary to provide in detail the entire day-to-day research experience, I am compelled to say that the entirety of my time with FFAV and in Thừa Thiên Huế substantially influenced the research. That is, in the course of conducting this ethnographic project, it was important to invest the amount of time that I did, and in the engaged manner that I did. These experiences were vital to the research findings that resulted.

3.4 Conclusion

For eleven months I was located in Vietnam’s central province of Thừa Thiên Huế, conducting research with and about the Norwegian supported SfD project, FFAV. The sixteen years FFAV has been a presence in the province have garnered attention from the Asian Football Confederation (i.e., Asian Football Confederation Dream Asia Award) and praise from FIFA (i.e., FIFA Football for Hope support) due to the project’s introduction and continued implementation of grassroots football and life skills activities (Football for All in Vietnam,
Unfortunately, troublesome times have come for FFAV’s impacts’ ensured sustainability when activities are handed over to local communities. Thus, in the end, this research details the project’s state during a difficult time, in which the local communities’ had to develop new interactions with FFAV. In the subsequent chapters, I consider the interplay of these shifts in this traditional, in its attention to culture and history, province in Vietnam.

CHAPTER 4: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

4.0 Introduction

The aim of this literature review was not to simply recount SfD research, but also to construct a backstory of SfD that highlights the manner in which this dissertation fits into the SfD field. The literature review, and parts of this dissertation more broadly, place SfD in a context that is multi-faceted methodologically, culturally, and longitudinally. I also aim to build
on previous SfD research and taking on suggestions presented by SfD scholars. To create the scholarly context in which this research was based, five areas are explored: (1) a historical overview of SfD; (2) the cultural ambiguity of SfD; (3) previous theoretical frameworks in SfD research; (4) methodologies and methods in SfD; (5) and future movements for SfD research as suggested by previous scholars. The point of discussing these areas is to show how this specific research fits into the SfD academy, while attempting to add to the overall scholarly conversation.

4.1 Historical Overview of SfD

The use of sport in relation to meeting human development needs is not a new phenomenon. Giulianotti (2011) states that, historically, sport and physical activity have been used to “develop” human beings across the world, often through unequal power relationships. In the colonial era, human development through sport often occurred through movements such as the diffusion of association football as a maneuver of supporting European colonialism. The “development” of human beings through sport or physical activity was thus often a condition of colonial oppression. Colonizers used physical activity as a method to teach cultural practices to indigenous populations and try to force the abandonment of their “backward” ways. The use of sport for development became more nationalistic in the sense of promoting national ideals and state expansion between the 1940s and the 1990s where sporting governing bodies were formed to both develop sport and address social issues (Giulianotti, 2011). Then, in the beginning of the 21st-century sport and physical activity became consciously used to address vexing international humanitarian issues.

In 2001, Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), identified sport as a fundamental right for all human beings (Beutler, 2008), arguing that every person should be
given the opportunity to participate in sport and experience the life lessons that sport can teach (Donnelly, 2008; Lyras & Hums, 2009; Wolf & Hums, 2006). Ideas and actions toward using sport as a human right spurred the United Nations to specifically state that sport can be used to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Darnell & Black 2011; Kay, 2009; United Nations, 2012) and, in turn, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This push for sport as a mechanism for development resulted in a sub-area of international development. Kidd (2008) defines SfD as an international movement of, “A concerted effort to remobilize sport as a vehicle for broad, sustainable social development, especially in the most disadvantaged communities in the world” (p. 370). With this in mind, the utilization of sport to address humanitarian issues has grown in popularity.

With recognition by organizations such as the UN and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), a spike of non-profit and non-governmental international organizations working in the field of SfD has arisen (Kay, 2009; Kidd, 2008). With organizations and governments promoting SfD, SfD projects have expanded around the globe, leading academic research to venture into uncharted territory in order to understand this field.

To that end, Vietnam is not a nation state that has been excluded from the colonial use of sport for development nor the modern day adaption of using sport to address humanitarian issues. As mentioned in chapter two, Vietnam was once a country under the colonial oppression of the French. During French colonial governance, officials introduced physical activity in the form of boy scouts and youth leagues. Both were intended to shape and influence Vietnamese youth to be loyal servants. Now, almost 50 years after French colonialism, FFAV, a Norwegian-founded SfD project, has entered Vietnam and exists in a nation resistant to foreign ideas. Thus,
there is an important element of Vietnamese history and SfD history that interconnect in the analysis of FFAV and Vietnam’s acceptance of and resistance to SfD.

4.2 Cultural Ambiguity in SfD

Although the basic premise behind using sport to address humanitarian issues and as a vehicle to promote positive human development is recognized, researchers still face issues of when defining SfD as a field of research and practice. This is rooted in the different views, expectations, and practices people have of sport and physical activity (Guest, 2008). This ambiguity surrounding the term SfD (Black, 2010; Darnell, 2012) has led to studies critiquing how SfD is created and the meanings that are attributed to SfD, especially pertaining to different perceptions between organizations which are often from the global north (Giulianotti, 2011; Mwaanga & Prince, 2016; Kay, 2012) versus local communities in the global south (Jeanes, 2013; Nicholls, Giles & Sethna, 2010; Samie, Johnson, Huffman, & Hillyer, 2015). Such disparity and disagreement among SfD projects and local communities often result in different interpretations of SfD practice that need to be reconciled.

4.2.1 Defining SfD

Hartman and Kwauk (2011) reason that the ambiguity surrounding the use of sport for social development is an issue when researchers try to understand the field. Between academic circles and organizations working in SfD, different terms are used to identify SfD (Hayhurst, 2009) resulting in an unclear definition of the field. Some projects use “sport for development” while others use “sport for development and peace” (Black, 2011). Hartman & Kwauk (2011) state that ambiguity in SfD disrupts the theorizing and understanding of the field. Obscurity results in uncertainty about leadership and who has the power to define SfD, and the goals,
values, and policies that go along with a project’s implementation of SfD (Darnell & Hayhurst, 2012). Hayhurst (2009) and Darnell and Hayhurst (2012) point out that the actors within SfD are not homogenous and to categorize them as such often presumes, the objectives of a project and the benefits for the participants. SfD projects are often implemented by staff from developed global-north countries who have different sporting philosophies, creating the space for different conceptions of the field. This is an issue in SfD research that needs attention.

4.2.2 Foreign SfD Ideas

Coalter (2010), Donnelly (2011), and Hartman and Kwauk (2011) all acknowledge that sport in itself cannot and should not be praised as an essential tool for social change, and instead SfD may reproduce hegemonic ideologies and keep marginalized people in unfortunate situations without addressing social issues. For example, Straume and Hasselgard (2014) highlight the forceful translation of Norwegian SfD discourses in Zimbabwe. Their study analyzed a Norwegian SfD organization’s creation of discourse in respect to what “development” means and the implementing of this meaning in a local community in Zimbabwe. The researchers reasoned that Northern organizations often define “development” and those “people” who need development through processes of power. What is concluded is that the Norwegian organization recreated and imposed their directions of development through sport, while trying to get the local communities to buy into the programs. Straume and Hasselgard conclude that SfD was viewed primarily through the lens of the Norwegian sports model, neglecting other knowledge of SfD (e.g., from Zimbabwe) in the application of SfD activities and programs. Similarly, Mwaanga and Banda (2014) provide an analysis unpacking the ambiguity of SfD in Zambia that is constructed through dominant Western discourses. Using the southern African philosophical concept of *Ubuntu*, which is a cultural practice that focuses on how to become one
with others, the researchers found that even though the SfD organization did not include local Zambian culture into its programs, Ubuntu resonated and was a central experience felt by participants in the SfD programming. Thus, from both studies, there is a need to recognize the local conditions and culture that create SfD by moving away from ideologies and precis implemented by Northern organizations.

Both studies correspond to Hayhurst (2009) and Darnell (2012) who argue that Western SfD organizations impose and reproduce hegemonic ideologies about sport and further ground SfD. In creation of SfD discourse, it is those organizations from developed Western and Northern countries that believe they have the ability and knowledge to answer what they determine to be issues in other areas around the world (Njelesani, Cameron, Gibson, & Polatjako, 2014; Straume & Steen-Johnsen, 2010). Certain questions about why sport, why this specific sport is used, what sport represents, and how it plays into SfD are usually defined by Northern organizations while leaving out the locally rooted answers to these questions. Thus, the foreign sporting culture from which SfD originates often conflicts with local ideas, resulting in an uneasiness for researchers, practitioners and participants when attempting to create a clear definition of SfD practice and impacts.

4.2.3 State and Cultural Specific Research of SfD

The issue of ambiguity and the perceived meanings ascribed to SfD by people outside local communities highlight the need for more state specific research (Hasselgard, 2015). Guest (2008, 2009) and Kwauk (2014) note that due to the different meanings given to sport by different cultures, it may now be appropriate to move away from SfD as a global movement (Kidd, 2008) and situate it within a specific locale where scholars are localizing global SfD (Lindsey et al., 2017). Guest (2009) demonstrates that a general SfD perspective involves
recognizing sports such as soccer as “an empty cultural form and a practice that is only meaningful in its particularly local experience” (p. 15). Therefore, sport and physical activity ought to be given meaning by local communities when implementing SfD. Guest also argues that rather than assuming that sport transmits general values across borders, it may be best to conceptualize sport in the context where meanings are created. For example, Meier and Saavedra (2009) distinguish how local culture influences SfD by considering how Zambian’s culture impacts an individual’s interpretation of what a “role model” is in a boxing SfD study. They claim that historical, spatial and cultural contexts affect the nature and efficacy of role models. Having more state-specific research can explore how SfD takes up different meanings and cultural forms experienced by local participants. Looking into cultural influences of SfD may also illuminate the differences in cultural and local attitudes toward SfD at local levels.

By exploring SfD and the meanings associated with the field, researchers have the opportunity to examine cultural and social elements of communities where SfD projects are located (Burnett, 2015; Coalter, 2010; Guest, 2009). Because of the way SfD is understood and defined, there is now room for research that explores SfD in a more holistic nature by situating studies in a specific locality or community (Darnell & Dao, 2017). It is of the utmost importance to consider SfD in all its intricacies from the views of stakeholders including funders, program staff, participants, family, and social settings. Research that examines all these areas may produce relevant insights into how SfD is conceptualized, practiced, and understood within a specific culture and community.

4.2.4 SfD as a blank space

Coalter (2010) argues that sport may not be the determining factor in SfD, and it is necessary to conduct research that extends from the boundaries of sport. Sport needs to be
understood as a “blank canvas” that can be made into anything or what Donnelly (2011) calls its “Janus-face.” Rather than focusing solely on sport, it is important to consider the social settings in which sport is implemented in SfD. Re-situating SfD from the global to the local (Lindsey et al., 2017), previous research argues for the need to examine local needs, local cultures, and local voices in SfD; that is, sport needs to be understood through the experiences of local communities. For that reason, SfD research ought to close the gap and recognize that SfD may not “Save the world”, but SfD can help in particular situations, communities, and culture. In seeking to promote SfD, researchers and practitioners should realize that “one size does not fit all” (Coalter, 2007, 2010). It is important that researchers that are attempting to go into the field approach their work in ways that are context specific to the location that SfD is working.

The ability to examine SfD in particular localities offers prodigious insights into how different cultures understand and conceptualize their experiences in this global practice. Therefore, exploring SfD initiatives in various cultures and communities is worthwhile because it speaks to the micro processes that allow SfD to function. Given the differences in sporting and physical activity ideologies across nations and cultures, this research was capable of fitting a very specific locality, that is a specific province in Vietnam. Conducting SfD research in Vietnam and, more so, in Thừa Thiên Huế Province, was important in questioning the nature of SfD as a global process.

4.3 Theoretical Approaches to SfD Research

Studying SfD through either sport management or the sociology of sport results in different interpretations and approaches of the field. These approaches could lead to differing discussions on social, political, racial, and economic concepts pertaining to SfD (Spaaij, et al., 2017). The diverse research approaches offer fruitful discussions to SfD; however, rarely do they
interact with one another. Thus, converging these disciplines has the potential to examine SfD in a more theoretical, practical, and meaningful manner. Rather than focusing on these different approaches to SfD research as if they were isolated, it was beneficial for me to focus on how SfD scholarship intersected across different approaches and to explore SfD where managerial elements and sociological elements merged to form the socio-managerial studies of SfD.

4.3.1 Sport Management SfD Studies

Colleagues from the discipline of sport management are concerned with a pragmatic take on SfD. Compared to their colleagues in sport sociology who have looked at the social processes occurring in SfD, studies from sport management perspectives tend to accentuate the SfD organizations as the focal point of study. Lyras and Welty-Peachy (2011), Schulenkorf (2012), Svennson and Hambrick (2015), Svensson and Seifried (2017) all approach SfD research by emphasizing the working and organizational processes within SfD. Their analyses highlight organizational processes that occur within an SfD project often by interviewing staff members (Svennson & Hambrick, 2015), leaders (Welty-Peachy, Burton, Wells & Chung, 2018), and entrepreneurs (Svensson & Seifried, 2017). In these particular management studies, researchers focused more on SfD from an organizational lens, often highlighting the agency of SfD organizations and their struggles to acquire appropriate resources from their donors. Results from their research regularly come with recommendations as to how to improve SfD organizational practices. This research illustrates that sport managers are particularly concerned with the organizational workings of SfD projects regarding difficulties that projects experience in providing activities to their respected communities. Research in sport management is certainly warranted in SfD projects because of the potential to produce practical and purposeful insight into improving SfD working capacity.
4.3.2 Sociology of Sport SfD Studies

By contrast, colleagues from the sociology of sport have used myriad approaches to examine SfD. These approaches include social processes as understood through neo-liberalism (Darnell, 2010; Forde, 2014; Hayhurst, 2009; Hayhurst, Wilson & Frisby, 2010), Goffman’s dramaturgy (Manley, Morgan & Atkinson, 2014), feminism (Forde & Frisby, 2015), Gramscian hegemony (Darnell, 2012), postcolonialism (Darnell, 2014; Hayhurst, 2009; Mwaanga & Banda, 2014), and whiteness (Darnell, 2007; Forde, 2013). The ability to explore SfD in so many ways has led for more critical studies concluding that while SfD promotes positive social change, the field is also marked by individualistic and inequitable relations, structures and discourses.

Research in the sociology of sport is often therefore cautious about praising SfD and suggests that people consider SfD through the intersections of many social processes and interactions that occur in the field (Hartman & Kwauk, 2011; Jeanes & Lindsey, 2014; Levermore, 2011; Meier & Saavedra, 2009). In examining the social processes experienced by various actors, power, neo-liberalism, and racial ideologies in SfD that be overlooked. Critical discussions on SfD include the role of race, nationality, and power in SfD program implementation (Darnell, 2007, 2010a, 2012), post-colonial feminist critiques of SfD ideologies in relation to neo-liberalism, and how interns understand their status as teachers and educators to marginalized people who are in unfortunate situations (Schulenkorf, 2012; Sugden 2010).

Research acknowledging these critiques can begin to incorporate ways of addressing them. I argue the combining sport management and sport sociology. Bridging practical and organizational routines of sport management with the critical outlooks of the sociology of sport can lead to a broader SfD research paradigm.

4.3.3 Socio-Managerial SfD Studies
The interaction between sport management and the sociology of sport offers opportunities for SfD research. Marrying these two disciplines in SfD research allows research that bridges the theory-practice nexus. Bridging the critical and practical also creates the possibility for SfD research to tackle a multitude of perspectives. Studies can feature the cultural, local, and historical elements of the communities while also understanding the organizational nature of an SfD project. Such research needs to immerse itself within an SfD project and within local communities.

From this perspective, it is valuable to explore SfD critically while also attempting to provide instrumentality (Darnell, Whitley, & Massey, 2016). SfD research can be conducted through concepts related to organizational processes while also acknowledging the broader social inequalities that create the need for SfD to exist to begin with. It is now crucial for SfD scholars to broaden their theoretical lenses in studying SfD (Burnett, 2015; Sugden, 2014; Svennson & Levine, 2017). Cohen and Welty-Peachey (2016), drawing on their interviews with prominent SfD scholars argue for the importance of combining research paradigms to bring greater significance and credibility to the field. Working together, sport management and the sociology of sport have an opportunity to accomplish this. At this point SfD research in sport management and the sociology of sport can amalgamate, becoming socio-managerial.

The intersection of sport management and sport sociology can occur through innovative approaches to SfD research. Previous literature acknowledged that researchers ought to take new and different approaches in SfD (Donnelly, Atkinson, Boyle & Szto, 2011; Darnell, 2014; Levermore, 2008; Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013). These approaches include a public sociology perspective (Donnelly et al., 2011), a participatory process (Levermore, 2008), and a Freire-ian pedagogical approach (Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013). The overlapping theme of these approaches is
that SfD research should consider local knowledge, involve local participants, acknowledge differences between researchers and participants, and carry out research that makes a difference. Creating research that is local, involved, and public can be accomplished by building an academic relationship between sport management and sport sociology. A socio-managerial approach can possibly move researchers to partner with SfD projects and local communities in order to outline and understand the contexts and circumstances of SfD’s successful operation (Donnelly, 2011).

Sugden (2015) has similarly written that it is no longer sufficient to provide critical analysis of SfD without suggesting ways to improve it. Now is the time for researchers and SfD practitioners to collaborate in participatory efforts (Burnett, 2015) in order to improve SfD as a field providing while opportunities to play sport, participate in physical activity, and learn valuable life skills. Achieving this will take a collective effort by all researchers, pushing their theoretical backgrounds, and appreciating the wealth of knowledge stemming from various spaces of academia. SfD as a practice and a place that promotes the development of human beings deserves to have this effort by academic research. Thus, in relation to the research at hand, this project conducted research within and alongside an SfD project to comprehend the everyday organizational workings, while also exploring SfD implementation in broader Vietnamese society.

4.4 Methodologies and Methods in SfD Research

Recently, there have been important discussion pertaining to the methodologies and methods used in SfD research (Collison, Darnell, Giulianotti, & Howe, 2017; Darnell et al., 2016). These have included what questions about what methods are useful as evidence
(Chawansky, 2015), what epistemologies should be included to illustrate SfD (Hayhurst, Giles & Wright, 2016), and how local participants are involved in the research process (Reis, Vieira, & de Sousa-Masst, 2015). One concern scholars have proposed is about the appropriate methodological paradigm concerning locales, participants, and communities (Collison, Giulianotti, Howe & Darnell, 2016; Darnell, 2014; Nicholls, 2009; Spaaij et al., 2017). In order to implement the best methodological approaches and methods for a comprehensive interpretation of the study, it was important for this research to understand how SfD has been examined to date.

4.4.1 Qualitative Research in SfD

Kay (2009) argues that qualitative investigations may capture the complex and multifaceted process through which individuals experience beneficial social outcomes from sport. She states that qualitative-based research in SfD enables researchers to retrieve valuable information from participants that would otherwise be missed. Qualitative studies in SfD literature have provided rich examinations of how SfD as a social process materializes as a social institution through SfD projects, local participants, and theoretical frameworks. Kay (2009) and Schuleinkorf (2012) identify the need for more useful qualitative measures since local communities are understood as best equipped to identify their needs, clarify the nature and sources of conflicts, and choose appropriate strategies and responses.

4.4.1.1 Interviews. Within the domain of qualitative research, interviews have been shown to be a valuable qualitative method in SfD research because of the ability to create a conversation with people (Kay, 2009). Research in SfD using interviews as a method includes data collected with SfD officials (Giulianotti, 2011), practitioners (Blom, Van Zee, Hilliard, & Judge, 2014), volunteers (Darnell, 2012), and program participants (Hayhurst, 2014).
Schulenkorf, Sugden, and Burdsey (2013) were able to explore the experiences of various SfD stakeholders such as local coaches, organizers, community members, and volunteers in interviews and focus groups. They used this to discuss the dissonance between a project’s goals and what occurs in reality. By conducting interviews with SfD project staff, local community members, and participants, researchers can acquire and detail meaningful and deep discussions pertaining to the overall and complex experiences of an SfD project.

4.4.1.2 Ethnography. Within SfD literature, ethnography is another incorporated qualitative methodology and method. Ethnography in SfD research is commonly based on participant observations and field notes (Guest, 2006, 2007, 2009; Hayhurst, 2014; Kwauk, 2014). Ethnography as a research method sees the analytical focus move toward local, informal practices, and the local realities of SfD organization and the recipients of SfD in the community. Utilizing ethnography in SfD research also allows the researcher to immerse him/herself into the social context leading to better understanding of intricate cultural and social processes that emerge in SfD. Guest (2009) and Hayhurst (2014) uncovered different meanings underlying SfD work between organizations and local communities related to sport, physical activity, and participation. As both were able to observe intricate social processes in their research settings, they were able to witness first-hand how SfD is negotiated among cultural differences and how that affects the translation of ideas into practice. In this sense, ethnography allows a researcher to experience and acquire an in-depth perspective on sport, the meaning of sport, and how these ideas coincide with SfD in local communities.

As a research method that allows for participation, observation, and immersing oneself in the research setting, ethnography is still somewhat underused in SfD research. The researcher who takes an active role in SfD experiences improved access to various forms of data. For
example, ethnography can inform interviews in SfD research in which researchers can ask questions that stem from observations already made (Hayhurst, 2014). Even more, while interviews are valuable in providing direct discussion, ethnography can position researchers in the lived experiences of SfD, with attention paid to the cultural underpinnings that inform SfD in local communities. Such was the case of Guest (2009) who distinguished how the idea of teamwork in sport differed between SfD participants in different communities located in Angola. Studies using an ethnographic approach can also help locate the transition from policy to practice; how the complex social life and agency of actors working in organizations affects programs; how different worldviews are negotiated; how actors at different levels translate their interests into the project; how local recipients participating in programs create their own meaning of SfD; and how this affects the implementation and practice SfD (Hasselgard, 2015).

Ethnography and interviews are largely complementary, by which the application of both methods measure the transition of SfD policy to practice and reveal the complexity between agency and actions by asking further questions (Hasselgard, 2015). Research that pursues qualitative methods, in this way, has the potential to illuminate SfD from the perspectives of the participants. It is also more inclusive of the voices, lived experiences, and communities in which SfD works.

**4.4.1.3 Participatory Research in SfD Studies.** While qualitative methodology is efficient and effective in SfD research, such methods do not always purposefully include the voices, experiences, and involvement of participants in the research process. Methods developed and used in SfD have primarily been from researchers and practitioners based in developed nations, who work in programs either in their own countries or in developing nations that are the frequent recipients of SfD aid (Reis, Vieira, & de Sousa-Masst, 2015). Due to this origin of methods,
research may overlook the local cultures and communities where SfD projects are located. The dismissive tendency of SfD practice and research has resulted in a much needed push methodologically to become more participatory and inclusive for participants that are at the receiving end (Darnell, 2014; Darnell & Hayhurst, 2014; Levermore, 2009; Spaaij, 2013).

Darnell, Whitley, and Massey (2016) encouraged researchers to take on innovative methods to explore SfD. Due to the diverse nature of SfD projects, that often include many voices, and are motivated by factors related to funding and providing outcomes, future research may need to explore SfD in non-formal manners. Research in SfD, especially done in the parts of the world that are described as marginalized and of needing of development work, will need to engage in messy and complex processes in order to draw out meaningful data that is informed by the people that actually implement, participate in, and experience SfD. Moving away from conventional research in SfD requires receptivity to multiple meanings, methods, and subjectivities as anchors for the research process.

Following this, methodological suggestions for SfD research in previous literature have acknowledged that researchers ought to apply participatory forms of methodology (Spaaij, et al., 2017). Approaching SfD work in a participatory manner involves and creates an environment where the local community and recipients of SfD participate in identifying problems (Schulenkorf, 2012), incorporate local culture and knowledge (Mwaanga & Banda, 2014), create dialogue and language that is welcoming and understandable between researchers and participants (Reis, Vieira, & de Sousa-Masst, 2015), establish deeper meanings and holistic understandings (Levermore, 2009), and in which participants guide the research agenda (Darnell, 2014). Opening up SfD research to consider various cultural and social elements is beneficial because projects can effectively work with local participants in solving local troubles.
4.4.1.3.1 Participatory Action Research in SfD. One form of participatory research methodology utilized in SfD is Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR is a methodology that turns over ownership of the research process to participants and allows them to engage with creating the research agenda by creating the research question, methods used, and dissemination of results. PAR raises epistemological questions about community representation; for example: who has the power and/or opportunity to speak and which voices do or do not get heard? (Schulenkorf, Sugden, & Burdsey, 2016). Researchers from the sociology of sport (Darnell, 2014) and sport management (Edwards, 2015) have acknowledged that now is the time in SfD research to incorporate everyone (e.g., researchers, project staff members, & local community members) and their knowledge into the research process. Wilson (2012) claims that SfD research benefits from using PAR because it supports non-hierarchical and inclusive research where all members are involved in some sort of capacity. Thus, the application of PAR or other participatory methodologies is beneficial in SfD research because of the active agenda of including participants’ knowledge and experience in the research process.

4.4.1.3.2 Critiques of Current SfD PAR. Research by Nicholls, Giles, and Sethna (2010), Reis, Vieira, and Sousa-Masst (2015), and Hayhurst, Giles, Radford, and The Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society (2015) have incorporated facets of PAR into their work. However, these researchers were only able to incorporate certain principles of PAR into their work. Nicolls, Giles and Sethna (2010) state that their role in PAR “Was defined from the start: to ask questions, to listen, to analyze, and to engage, but ultimately to respect the knowledge that resides with the participants” (p. 253). The researchers’ attempted PAR methodology assisted in developing a relationship with the communities, but did not result in any sort of recommendations or changes to the policies of programs. Along the same lines, Reis, Vieira, and
Sousa-Masst (2015) state that “Although not strictly following a PAR framework, the researchers were and continue to be (albeit with less intensity due to limitations imposed by physical distance) actively involved in exchange, dialogue, and knowledge sharing with different members of the Vilas ‘community’ and are strong advocates of the on-the-ground work conducted and being delivered to the community-end of the program” (p. 4). In both cases, PAR was used primarily to incorporate the participants into the research process. However, PAR can consist of more than that; it can include ownership of the research belonging to the local participants. From this perspective, in PAR there is a need for practical action from data analysis, for participants to have ownership of the research process, and to have some effective change based on the research. Therefore, PAR in SfD requires a more thorough and detailed involvement of participants rather than just perspectives and opinions.

4.4.1.3.3 Reasons for PAR in SfD. Darnell (2014) asks, when supporting the use of a PAR approach: “What if SDP participants set the development terms and agenda of policy and programming with support from SDP institutions and government?” (p. 28). A participatory commitment to research and the participants aims toward improving the sustainability and development initiatives of programs. For example, Darnell (2014) states,

There is a move in both international development studies and sport management studies towards participatory action research (PAR), whereby research participants set the research agenda (p. 207).

From this perspective, it is of importance that participants, which may include SfD organizations, local communities, and young people, become involved in the research process. To do so, researchers implement partnerships with SfD workers and local communities, to outline and understand the contexts and circumstances under which sport interventions are likely to succeed (Donnelly, 2011). In a similar vein, Donnelly (2011) notes that
Well-planned programs resulting from community consultation, with well-trained staff and volunteers, a clear ‘logic model’ for intervention, and appropriate plans for sustainability are more likely to be successful (p. 72).

Participatory research in SfD offers theoretical, substantive, and reflexive research lenses for seeking practical solutions to SfD (Darnell, 2014). The fact that voices of intended beneficiaries, program deliverers, and community gatekeepers of SfD have been missing in decision making, policy, and knowledge production has moved research to respect local knowledge (Kay, 2012). Overall, the time has come for SfD research to involve many different people and their knowledge in the creation and implementation of projects.

4.4.1.3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation through Participatory Research. PAR can also help answer questions of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (Kay, 2012). Coalter (2007, 2010) and Jeanes and Lindsey (2014) highlight the pressures of accountability with M&E in SfD. Questions such as who is doing the M&E, how they are doing it, and who it is done for are questions generally presented in PAR. Jeanes and Lindsey reveal that in their experiences in the field, evidence concerned with M&E was influenced with by NGO’s concerns about painting a positive picture while disregarding negative findings. Due to limited funding, SfD projects frequently feel pressured in producing only positive evidence which hinders the possibility of understanding specific nuances in programs. PAR helps to mitigate these tensions through relationships of trust grounded in the ethical conduct of participatory epistemologies (Frisby, Reid, Millar & Hoeber, 2005). M&E should be formative and undertaken to provide information that will lead to organizational and program improvement (Coalter, 2006). The building and maintaining of trust in PAR, where everyone believes in a common goal of improving programs, being open to conversations about negative findings. Therefore, M&E has potential in SfD in improving
understandings of how projects work and the improvements that can be made to increase effectiveness (Jeanes & Lindsey, 2014).

Darnell and Hayhurst (2010) have stated that as much as participatory approaches to development research promised to create autonomy and voice for participants’ development, little progress has been made. There needs to be more work with PAR that is conscious of putting the “participatory” in the research (Frisby et al., 2005) and then, furthermore, taking “action” (Reid, Tom & Frisby, 2006), with the data collaboratively collected, analyzed, and distributed. Rarely are there stories about SfD written by or with SfD recipients. Thus, upon reviewing the extensive methodological applications, this research project identified the need to adopt an inclusive, immersed, and participatory approach to SfD research.

4.5 Future Movements in SfD Research

Jeanes and Lindsey (2014) state that future research in SfD is capable of raising questions across a variety of dimensions. Questions pertaining to what evidence is required, how it is collected and practiced, for whom, and to what extent it serves the purpose of an SfD project are all needed. It was important that this research project considered and addressed these future SfD research movements made by previous research. Recommendations that this dissertation heeded were: (1) broadening the application of theory and methods in SfD; (2) embracing various SfD participants; (3) creating inclusive research settings; (4) and conducting a longitudinal study.

4.5.1 Broadening the boundaries of theory and method

Many SfD scholars have acknowledged the need to push the boundaries of different approaches to the study of SfD (Darnell, 2014; Donnelly, Atkinson, Boyle & Szto, 2011;
Levermore, 2008; Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013), consisting of theory and methods that explore SfD differently. Darnell and Black (2011) commented that much of SfD research has come from sport studies disciplines. SfD research situated primarily in sports studies leaves room for other academic areas to study the field by incorporating approaches that originate in other academic disciplines, such as development studies, education, and anthropology (Hasselgard, 2015). Hayhurst (2009) urges an anthropological approach that addresses how the “receiving end” (local participants) of SfD policies are experiencing the programs. More recently, SfD research has called on scholars to apply different theoretical approaches such as the Capabilities Approach in exploring the holistic nature of SfD impacts (Darnell & Dao, 2017; Svennson & Levine, 2017; Suzuki, 2017). To that end, opening SfD research to other areas of academia holds vast potential in exploring the field.

Burnett (2015) states that synthesizing theoretical frameworks could increase nuanced insights of how SfD affects different constituencies while expanding critical sociological inquiry to contribute to debates and inform dominant discourses in developing theories of SfD. Pursuing a combination of theoretical underpinnings has methodological implications for research design and data capture because the research generates a holistic and contextual understanding of SfD development processes and impacts (Fritzen & Bassard, 2007; Lawson, 2005). For example, creating a cocktail of theory and methods can include the involvement of development studies examining the evolution of development through sport (Cohen & Welty-Peachy, 2014), how leadership ultimately affects organizational processes (Welty-Peachey & Burton, 2016), and engaging education and pedagogy (Rossi & Jeanes, 2016; Rynne, 2016) to understand the educational aspects of SfD. Moving away from familiar modes of research allows for different theoretical and methodological approaches to come forward.
Overall, the recommendation that SfD research magnify the scope of theory and methods across different academic disciplines can help to ensure research meets the needs of local communities. Levermore (2011) and Darnell (2014) argue that positivist research limits our abilities to include local knowledge in our research which, as a result, hinders the ability to improve SfD practices. The union of theory and methods through different multi-faceted frameworks reimagines and refocuses the lens onto SfD projects and the people from local communities that work within SfD.

4.5.2 Embracing local & various SfD populations

Giulianotti (2011) states that SfD research should follow a critical model by engaging diverse community groups who contribute to an SfD project’s implementation. That is, SfD research should reach out to parents, families, friends, village authorities, teachers, and so forth. Blom et al. (2015), Lindsey et al. (2017), and Schulenkorf (2012) similarly recommend that research done with SfD projects and local communities has the potential to examine how people from local communities influence SfD implementation and practice. Burnett (2015) advocates that local voices can no longer be denied and that local culture and knowledge should be considered in evidence. Thus, studying SfD from the specific locality of a project leads to insights about how local people, communities, and culture shapes SfD. Research that is committed to understanding SfD locally has the potential to result in a holistic and local contextual understanding of SfD.

4.5.2.1 Parents in SfD. Chawansky and Mitra (2015), also recommends incorporating family members’ attitudes towards SfD because parents and other guardians act as gatekeepers to children’s participation in programs. Lindsey et al. (2017) included data from parents in Zambia to elucidate their opinions and ideas about SfD, finding that parents had divergent views of SfD
from their children which, in turn, affected the children’s participation. In line with Chawansky and Mitra, Lindsey et al. asked future researchers to consider the limited amount of academic attention given to families within SfD programming and suggested further exploration on the topic to include interviews directly with family members discussing their children’s involvement in SfD projects. Knowledge and interactions with family are clearly important and merit attention because the role of family and parental control differs greatly across cultures.

4.5.2.2 Young People in SfD. Populations most targeted in SfD initiatives, young people, must also be examined and included in the research. Their thoughts, voices, and lived experiences are crucial to the overall SfD agenda, but little research has included the perceptions of young children. Jeanes (2013) emphasizes the need for researchers to include and privilege the views of young people from a range of backgrounds within SfD and promote their opinions as valuable to policymakers and practitioners in order to assist with the development of future interventions (p. 403). The involvement of young people as knowledge bearers in SfD research holds valuable data to understand, improve, and sustain SfD initiatives.

4.5.2.3 Donors, SfD Project, & Local Community Relationships. Hasselgard (2015) and Mwaanga and Prince (2016) emphasized the need for research to focus on relationships between funders, projects, policymakers, and local communities. Further studies that highlight both top-down relationships and bottom-up relationships can open discussion to the similarities and differences people at the top may have from those at the receiving end. In turn, by researching together with these groups, Giulianotti (2011) argues that the goals of an SfD organization can be met, but not without difficulty. Difficulties arise when a researcher has to balance both the demands of the SfD project as well as the authoritative expectations of the partners and the relationships with local communities.
Schulenkorf (2012) has further expressed the need for research on specific SfD organizations initiatives and practices, and that the people who work for the organization be allowed to express their ideas. Svennson and Hambrick (2015) suggest that research that examines the organizational capacity of an SfD project might benefit from a stronger emphasis on examining the broader cultural, political, and economic factors of those involved in the experience. Therefore, the experiences of volunteers, interns, and other staff members also need to be examined further. Positioning the researcher within an SfD project in order to experience and understand the mechanics of how SfD is conceptualized by the people that work for the project is a viable avenue. Additionally, research with an SfD project can shed light on the bonds and relationships staff members create with one another, and more importantly with the local communities (Welty-Peachey, et al., 2015). Research conducted this way assumes a similar form in diverse settings across cultures; however, it should be designed to meet and reflect local demands because SfD often adopts meaning within local communities (Schulenkorf, 2012).

At the same time, SfD does not work only with the intended beneficiaries, the young people of certain localities. In fact, SfD works with and needs the participation of many different groups. A research project that takes the time to incorporate the different groups of people working and experiencing is also needed (Lindsey et al., 2017 & Schulenkorf, 2012). Accordingly, it is of the utmost importance to consider SfD in all of its intricacies from the views of stakeholders, including funders, program staff, participants, family and social settings. All-inclusive research provides the real possibility that community members will describe programming effects in a different manner than what program officials are aiming for (Macintosh, Arellano, & Forneris, 2015). Research that explores SfD in such a way has the possibility to examine how the complex social lives of actors affect programs, how different
worldviews are negotiated, and how local recipients participating in programs create their own meaning of SfD (Hasselgard, 2015).

4.5.3 Localized SfD Research

If SfD research is to take a critical, practical and informative agenda, then critically engaged social researchers should understand their responsibility to situate themselves among other actors, community organizing scholarship, and public writing (Fine, 2008). Darnell (2014b) acknowledges that development, as well as the efficacy of program implementation, are often misconstrued because there is often disconnect between a projects goals and the needs of local communities, and there is a dissonance between SfD projects and local adaptation in relation to goals and outcomes. With that thought, it is important to position those who have local knowledge of SfD in an active role in the research process, to the point where they are able to say that they own the research (Mwaanga & Prince, 2016). Warhman and Zach (2016) state that SfD researchers need to take risks and become more engaged within the research setting to have an emic, that is an insider approach that is informed by local communities. SfD researchers incorporating local culture and practices will be able to explore SfD through the lens of local communities that are often disregarded.

4.5.3.1 Research Immersion & Inclusion. For the inclusion of local participants, researchers may need to become actively engaged in SfD practices in local communities. In order to work with local cultures and communities, trusting relationships must be fostered (Warhrman & Zach, 2016). And to build trust with local communities, SfD researchers may need to take a step in their commitment to research. Spaaij et al. (2017) state that research has vastly failed to incorporate and engage the knowledge, experience, and expertise of the local communities, practitioners, and people (p. 2). Therefore, there is a need for research based on
partnerships, which is participatory in all aspects, uses local knowledge of local conditions, and prioritizes the needs of in-country partners over those of external funders (Darnell, 2014; Darnell & Hayhurst, 2010; Kay, 2012; Mwaanga & Banda, 2014). The involvement of local people, whether they are SfD organizational staff members or community members, can provide substantial context to research in SfD.

From a practical standpoint, there is also need for a real model in which responsible academics have the ability to understand the why, when, how, and where of sport-based interventions, and make that information readily available to SfD projects (Donnelly, 2007). Thus, explanations of the ways in which local communities have immersed themselves within SfD organizations is also needed (Tiessen, 2011). An appropriate means for understanding why local communities have SfD programs and how they conceptualize SfD is for researchers to immerse themselves with an SfD project and within the communities in which the project is located. Sugden (2010) has called for researchers to get up from their academic chairs and immerse themselves in the field. SfD research is now at a point that research requires researchers to be more immersed, inclusive, and interactive. In doing so, SfD can be theoretically, methodologically, and practically modified leading to adjustments of policies and programs to meet the needs and objectives of local communities (Sugden, 2015).

4.5.3.2 Bringing in local context. An examination of a locally rooted context of SfD programs is both extensive and daunting, but it offers the ability to capture the data of many people, communities, and cultures involved. Mwaanga and Prince (2016) suggest that to alleviate tensions and create comfortability in local research, researchers ought to incorporate cultural philosophies of local communities and discuss these ideas so that appropriate action can take place. By disregarding the culture, knowledge, and experiences of those working and
participating in SfD programs, research is primarily construed to fit within constraints of
academics (Hasselgard, 2015; Manley, 2014). As a result, research may need to concentrate on
broader cultural practices in a specific setting to understand how SfD is applicable. In this
respect, SfD can move from a broad social movement (Kidd, 2008) to a more micro field.

4.5.3.3 Locally pushing back the critical. Recent research has positioned local communities and people from these communities as having agency in the creation and implementation of SfD. Lindsey et al. (2017), emphasize the importance of understanding SfD from a localized setting and with local agents, but this has not necessarily been done by critical scholars of SfD. The authors recognize that critical SfD research seems to occur from afar, primarily focusing on participants and projects originating from the Global North. Lindsey et al. confront critical SfD scholars saying those that argue for postcolonial examinations into resisting hegemonic power “do not necessarily foreground local perspectives but rather constitute them in an overall analytical narrative” (2017, p. 45). Guest (2007) supported foregrounding local perspectives when he discovered that participants of an SfD project conceptualized their reasons and outcomes for participation as completely dissimilar to the goals of the project. Guest also states that understanding the local variations of sport is important for SfD projects and must be taken into consideration.

Overall, Lindsey et al. offer an important critique of SfD research that encourages researchers to be more conscious before making critical comments on the inability of local communities to conceptualize SfD in their own meanings. Hasselgard (2015) similarly asked that researchers become more nation-specific and rooted locally. In this respect, there is room to explore how local communities in SfD are resilient to authority and co-opt SfD projects to fit local needs. Even more this is not say research is not critical but to be more attentive and
evaluative of power relationships. Research can move away from discourses that are centered in
the power of SfD practitioners from the global north. By privileging the voices and experiences
of local communities, future research might make room for new insights that complicate research
that is often post-colonial, neo-liberal, and ridden with power imbalances. The ability for local
communities and participants of SfD projects to voice their opinions may be more nuanced than
what critical SfD research has presented to date. Local people’s knowledge and life narratives
warrant more attention than that which the academy has afforded them.

4.5.4 Longitudinal SfD Studies

Macintosh, Arellano, and Fornersis (2015) propose that SfD studies need to commit to
long-term research in the field in order to examine how resources are allocated by organizations
and to create outcomes that are useful to both external agents and the community. The ability for
long-term SfD research allows for insights into the organizational, cultural and communal
practices of a particular locale. Long-term SfD research is also encouraged because it “appears
one of the key strategies to carrying out effective research is to spend the requisite time
necessary to build strong relationships, trust, and credibility with practitioners” (Cohen & Welty-
Peachey, 2015, p. 21). Lindsey and Jeanes (2013) and Kay (2012) describe that more time spent
in-country, immersed in the research and communities, allows for knowledge production rooted
in the ideas of the local communities. Knowledge production also results from the time
researchers spend in the field building trusting relationships and gaining acceptance in
communities (Lindsey, 2016). Welty-Peachey and Cohen (2016) suggest that future research
should engage with SfD organizations to develop long-term assessment plans, and capacity
building that may allow for better mechanisms to be established within the organization to track
and access participants over time. With these recommendations in mind, this research took on an
inclusive, local, and longitudinal approach. Moreover, methodologically and theoretically, this research applied new and different approaches, while also returning to traditional theories and methods in order to explore FFAV and SfD in local ways.

4.6 Review of Literature Discussion

Previous SfD research has made substantial contributions in exploring particular concepts, but there is still work to be done. SfD can be approached methodologically and theoretically, not only according to the interests of the researchers, but also from the interests of the participants. There is also a possibility for academic research in SfD to be participatory and inclusive of the people from local communities. People in local communities working in, participating in, and implementing SfD can offer voices and forms of agency that need to be magnified. Fostering SfD research in the relationship of sport management and sociology of sport has potential in creating critical and practical analyses. Simultaneously, researchers who are bold enough to immerse themselves in local dynamics over a long period of time may experience SfD in ways that have rarely been addressed before.

Sugden (2015), Burnett (2015) and Chalip (2015), in their essays in the 50th anniversary of the International Review for the Sociology of Sport, all called for shared research that is actionable, realistic, and practical, particularly in cases where sport is the center of promoting social change. Within the ongoing research into SfD, this dissertation offers a timely exploration into an SfD project with a community in a part of the world that has not yet been highlighted in the SfD literature. This research was conducted to incorporate critical research into practical and attempt to bring effective change counter to the hegemonic, political or oppressive aspects of some practice.
CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

5.0 Introduction

In conducting research for this dissertation, I was influenced by a variety of methodological epistemologies and approaches. I found myself immersed in epistemologies rooted in participatory research and methodologies that advocate for the incorporation of local culture. The epistemological shift that was required for me participatory research led me to contemplate how I was to do research, how I related to the participants, and what I thought of as knowledge (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2009). As a result, I became part of FFAV, advocated for FFAV participation in the research, and consciously attempted to include local knowledge from the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. With that in mind, it was my responsibility as a researcher to ensure that we carried out methods with appropriate resources and in line with the
principles of the particular methodologies (Frisby, Reid & Ponic, 2007). To carry out this study, I used several research tools including participant observation, fieldnotes, interviews, data analysis, and processes of being ethical and reflexive.

5.1 Methodology

There were four different but similarly connected methodologies that I gleaned from to conduct research for this dissertation: (1) Participatory Action Research (PAR); (2) Participatory Evaluation (PE); (3) Critical Indigenous Methodologies (CIM); (4) and ethnography. Each had a significant influence on the research process. Rather than applying each methodology individually, I took ingredients from each to create a methodology cocktail (See Figure 6 Below) that created the participatory, inclusive, and immersed nature of the research.
As depicted in figure 6, I understood that all four methodologies were connected in a circular manner, while at the same time bringing their own distinct approach to the research. This chapter illustrates how each methodology was conceptualized and integral in shaping the research process.
5.1.1 Participatory Action Research

PAR is based on characteristics of participation, action, and research. It is rooted in the idea that research aims to engage participants in every aspect of the research process (Frisby et al., 2005; McTaggart, 1991). Participants becoming active agents in the research process is important because they have a stake in how research is conducted and shaped. PAR researchers purposefully break down authoritative relationships between researchers and participants by ceding power (Gavin, Wali, & Miguel, 2009). The intent is for a research relationship formed between the academic and participants where there is mutual sharing and engagement. Academic researchers cede their authority to do research, and as Szala-Meneok and Lohlfeld (2005) have stated about PAR, “Researchers generally serve as advisors, facilitators, and resources rather than sole researchers” (p. 54). Thus, research is not necessarily done “on” or “about” participants, but instead “with” them.

The inclusion of participants in PAR is encouraged because participants create research that matters to them. That is, instead of a researcher entering a space on their own accord with their own research question, agenda, and tools, participants have agency in the way research is conducted. In PAR, research participants are no longer seen as passive objects of research, but as active agents in creating their own knowledge and action where they are seen as co-researchers working alongside the researcher (Mellor, 2007, p. 177). Participants are able to provide, from their own experiences guided and informed research, questions that they want to address (Kidd & Kral, 2005). However, as Greenwood, White & Harkavy (1993) proclaim, participation cannot be forced in PAR; instead, it must be a process that is generated with participants (p. 176). To that end, researchers must be patient when working to create an inclusive research environment with participants.
PAR is not merely a different approach to doing research, it is a fundamentally distinctive way of thinking about how research should be accomplished. PAR aims to meet the needs of the participants in a social setting where results enact positive social change (Tandon, 1981). McTaggart (1996) proposes that PAR is not a “method” or “procedure” but a series of commitments to observe and problematize research through a set of principles for conducting an inquiry (p. 246). Reid, Tom and Frisby (2006) describe the principles of PAR as inclusion, participation, action, social change, and research reflexivity. These principles of PAR are rooted in how research is conceptualized, practiced, and brought into the research setting by researchers and participants. PAR purposefully engages human agents in self-reflection and knowledge production for the betterment of a social and cultural setting (Frisby, Crawford, & Dorer 1997, p. 11). Engaging with the principles of PAR research has the potential to accomplish the goal of positive social change.

Kindon, Pain, and Kesby (2009) emphasize that PAR is a mode of inquiry that adapts methods to fit local contexts, questions, and problems. No PAR projects are the same, and, thus, PAR cannot be simply replicated across studies. Because there is no clear PAR plan, this project sought out a general outline that has been provided by previous researchers. Frisby et al. (1997) and Szala-Meneok and Lohfeld (2005) describe executing PAR as: (1) research inception and design by listening to what community members have to say and especially what they want; (2) data collection and analysis where participants are involved; (3) knowledge transfer in the form of policies written in handbooks and presentations at academic and non-academic settings; (4) and action based on new knowledge.

To conclude my thoughts on PAR, I saw the approach as more than research because PAR purposefully allows participants into the research process. Thus, when doing PAR, labels
such as activist, us, them, me, and I tend to be forgotten (Chatterton, Fuller, & Routledge, 2009). Instead, PAR researchers use terms like we. The purpose of PAR in this research was to collect good quality data alongside members of the local community to help them better understand and handle adverse situations they face. PAR was also important to this research because it forced me to create a link between social research and social action through processes of creation and connection. Moreover, PAR’s commitment to creating positive social action and sincere trust and engagement between researchers and participants was inspirational in doing research that did not adhere to traditional norms of research. In the end, PAR was conducted, the data were analyzed, the findings were reported, but the action is something that is continuous. Thus, as data from this research is continually processed, the hope is to provide insightful discussion that improves situations in a particular context.

5.1.2 Participatory Evaluation

PE has the same foundation as PAR, where there is a requirement of participant involvement in the research process. However, to differentiate between the two, PE is applied to social research that involves a partnership between trained researchers (e.g., academics or trained evaluators) and members of an organization (i.e., SfD project) that have responsibility or a vital interest in a particular program (Cousins & Earl, 1992). Similarly, King (2005) states:

Participatory evaluation is an overarching term for any evaluation approach that involves program staff or participants actively in decision making and other activities related to the planning and implementation of evaluation activities (p. 291).

Cousins and Earl (1992) suggest that PE is different from PAR because PAR is normative and ideological in form and function (p. 400). PE, on the other hand, is formative in relation to the development of a project. That is, in PE there is a special focus on the development of participants in the research process, as well as discovering knowledge that will improve the
organization being studied. Thus to differentiate PE from PAR, PE is concerned with assessing an organization and discovering ways in which the organization can be improved. By doing so, members of the organization take on active roles in the entire research process (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998, p. 99).

Suarez and Harper (2003) suggest that PE is embedded with PAR principles about active participation of stakeholders in the evaluation process; however, stakeholders also share control of critical decision making. In PE research, organizations and researchers share responsibilities for the evaluation in pursuit of both understanding and improvement of what is being studied (Fawcett, 2003). Daigeneault and Jacob (2009) outline that involvement of stakeholders requires their participation in creating evaluation questions, designing the methods, participating in data collection, and reporting the findings. The process of PE is not completely different from PAR, but since the organization itself has a legitimate stake in the research in order to discover organizational improvements, its members are deeply involved.

There are five requirements that researchers and partner organizations should be aware of to conduct a PE (Cousins & Earl, 1992). First, an evaluation must be recognized as important by the organization. Second, the organization must have the time and resources (financial and human) to carry out an evaluation. Third, organizations ought to have a commitment to learning about themselves in the research process to engender their improvement. Fourth, and similar to the third requirement, PE activities must be motivated by people. And finally, appropriate training must be given to people who may not have the knowledge to carry out research. Organizations that decide to carry out a PE must consider their ability to do so in relation requirements above.
In PE it is also fundamental to assume that knowledge is socially situated (Cousins & Whitmore, 1996). Thus, data collection in PE must be conducted using different methods and involving different people. Researchers and organizations that use PE intentionally seek to involve different groups of people as participants in order to capture their experiences and knowledge. As a result, participants in PE differ in terms of demographics, positions, and responsibilities. Interpersonal networks for sharing and discussing information are then created among researchers and participants. PE, through its systems of inclusion, becomes a powerful way of learning because local knowledge and culture are fostered as powerful sources of data. Cousins and Earl (1992) explain that direct involvement of people in the research process can increase opportunities to discuss the data and practically apply findings.

Due to issues of power within research, there are some concerns that warrant consideration when doing a PE. Most importantly, there needs to be honest consideration of who creates and controls the production of knowledge between the researcher and members of the organization. Organizations need to consider the knowledge they are obtaining as data and from where knowledge comes (i.e., academic vs. local). As a result, conscious attempts should be made to reduce power and control by both the trained researcher and organization. For instance, when doing a PE, sincere discussions about who controls the evaluation and how the findings are used are important. There may be points of dissonance between academic researchers and members of an organization, so conversations about disagreements are likely. Even more, issues regarding culture need attention because culture is often at the heart of disagreements when doing collaborative research, especially collaborative research in international settings (Donnelly, 2007). Researchers are cautioned to be reflexive about their position and their privilege when working with people from cultures different from their own.
Distance between researcher and members of an organization can be mitigated when everyone works collectively to contribute dialogue, understanding, and respect (Cousins & Whitmore, 1996). However, researchers ought to recognize that participation levels will vary, from people acting as consultants to those that are heavily involved in collecting data, setting the research agenda, and approving the research. The degree of participation refers to the level of involvement of co-researchers or participants. In PE often times there are many tasks that need to be done with different levels of attention. The importance and intensity of these tasks will affect how much or how little participants are involved.

Overall, in building capacity for PE, research can be strengthened by utilizing local knowledge and outside researchers’ competence in translating findings into practice. Through the collaboration by a trained researcher and a group of interested stakeholders on a PE, potential insights may be discovered to improve particular elements of the organization. PE enhances the capacity of communities that can use data for issues of accountability, to celebrate successes, and to improve performance and outcome (Fawcett, 2003). Therefore, the end product of PE is not a report itself, but a continuous process of program improvement and capacity building (Suarez-Balcazar & Harper, 2003). As a result, findings ought to be rooted in knowledge that will make sense in bettering conditions of those for whom the PE is intended. By transforming conditions to support this form of research, researchers and organizations build bridges of relationship and responsibility among the once-separated communities of research and practice.

The main reason for detailing aspects and components of PE is that while there has been recent SfD research applying participatory methods, SfD organizations may be better served using a PE to understand their impacts in the localities where they work. For example, SfD projects that utilize a PE can have a trained researcher enter their organization and collaborate
with the researchers to collect data that examines the impacts, difficulties, successes and attitudes people from local communities have towards their project. PE in this sense can be done to enhance an organization’s capacity (Smits & Champagne, 2008).

5.1.3 Critical Indigenous Methodologies

CIM is an approach that draws the researcher to consciously acknowledge and interact with local participants’ culture and knowledge. The application of CIM forces researchers to consider how their research benefits participants, how to deconstruct Western privileges and to be aware that there are other forms of knowledge that impact the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Importantly then, CIM is brought up in methodological discussions, especially in indigenous communities, to address how Western scholars have benefited from the stories and culture of indigenous people often without considering the potential negative effects of research on indigenous people. For these reasons, Smith (1999) is passionate in her contention that research is a “dirty word” and has often represented indigenous peoples in colonizing ways. Henceforth, it is of utmost importance to conduct research that is critical of the researcher, the research process, and with the academic goal of co-producing knowledge. In a CIM spirit, the hope is to turn research into a process that is locally and culturally relevant.

CIM stresses personal accountability, caring for people, the value of individual expressiveness, the capacity for empathy, and the sharing of emotions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Research from a CIM approach ought to be both political and moral, and actively engage the culture, knowledge, and history of participants. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) suggest that research in CIM should meet multiple criteria, such as being ethical, transformative, and participatory; that research should be committed to dialogue, community, and cultural autonomy; that research should resist being confined to a single paradigm; and that research should be dedicated to goals
of justice and equity (p. 1). Battise (2008) states that knowledge from communities must be understood from a local perspective using local language, and cannot be understood from the perspective of Eurocentric discourse. As a result, local ways of knowing become a pivotal resource for the work of academics. The education that can be created through the implementation of indigenous knowledge can benefit all parties and be accountable towards participants, especially those from local communities.

Research using CIM is purposeful in its attempt to reposition itself away from a Western position to one that reflects the local setting. In this reposition of research, processes of knowledge production are shared between the researcher and local people (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). For this to occur, CIM imagines and explores the multiple ways in which knowledge can be understood (Smith, 1999). CIM encourages research that includes academic knowledge from the researcher as well as cultural knowledge from local people. To conduct research that does not exploit or appropriate indigenous wisdom, CIM adheres to a strict set of morals set forth by Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) that requires research to be

Devoted to the self-determination of indigenous peoples; an awareness of the complex, ever evolving ways that colonialism oppresses them; the intercultural nature of all research and analysis of indigenous knowledge; and the dedication to use indigenous knowledge in ways that lead to political, epistemological, and ontological changes that support the expressed goals of the indigene (p. 147).

With this in mind, this research aimed to be sensitive to the history, culture, traditions, and knowledge of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Through this hyper-awareness, the research aimed to be attentive to the local conditions of the research particularly setting as guided by FFAV and community members.
5.1.4 Ethnography

The last major ingredient to my methodological recipe was ethnography. Similar to PAR, PE, and CIM, ethnography has no clearly distinct definition; it can be a method or a methodology (Jachyra, Atkinson, & Washiya, 2015; Lillis, 2008). For the purpose of this dissertation, ethnography was conceptualized as an intensive, long-term, qualitative methodology that consists of different methods for data collection. More importantly, ethnography was a way of doing research that brought the researcher closer to the details of everyday life (Agar, 1996). Ethnography involves intensively studying a social group by immersing oneself in the day to day lives of people in the group in order to describe the social processes that occur (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Stewart, 1998; Van Mammen, 2010). Similarly, Atkinson (2012) depicts ethnography as a way of studying a group via the researcher’s immersion into the group’s cultural setting. To that end, in utilizing ethnography, it is important for researchers to become involved with the setting they are studying.

Many contemporary ethnographers advocate for highly involved roles in which the researcher actually performs the activities that are central to the lives of those studied (Stewart, 1998; Wolcott, 1999). In this view, assuming real responsibility for actually carrying out core functions and tasks provides special opportunities to get close to, participate in, and experience life in previously unknown settings (Emerson, Fritz, & Shaw, 1995). As a result from the immersion into the research setting, Ethnography is often a flexible methodology where data collection can come at any time (Gratton & Jones, 2004). There is no clear-cut plan that ethnographers must carry out, although there are some steps that ethnographers ought to consider before taking on an ethnographic study. Following an outline by Gratton and Jones (2004), there are steps to guide an ethnographic approach. The generalized series of steps to undertake in
ethnography are to: (1) identify the research problem; (2) determine that ethnography is actually appropriate to conduct; (3) consider researchers’ personal characteristics and how they may have potential impact on the research setting; (4) select the research setting and define the setting’s boundaries; (5) consider the length of the study; (6) gain access into the research setting; (7) and “learn the ropes” of fitting into the research setting. These steps form a formidable outline that can help situate the researcher into an ethnographic process.

Ethnography as a methodology and a set of methods puts the finishing touches on my methodological cocktail. Ethnography positioned me, the researcher, directly into the culture and setting that was being studied: FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huệ Province. Ethnography also helps puts to practice the principles of PAR, the inclusion of PE, and the appreciation and representation of local knowledge founded in CIM. These methodologies complemented each other. There was no definite process of how this methodological recipe occurred, but when conducting, I sought the most appropriate methodologies during my time in the field.

5.2 Methods

Doing methods in PAR, PE, CIM, and ethnography are often complex because there is no formal procedure to follow. Thus, I used various qualitative methods to guide me in collecting data throughout the duration of my eleven months in the field. I incorporated methods in the form of non-directive and naturalistic participant observations, writing of fieldnotes, and semi-structured interviews to collect data (Emerson et al., 1995; Pawluch, Shaffir & Miall, 2005; Gratton & Jones, 2004). Similar to the methodologies above, each method was distinct but at the same time complemented the others.
5.2.1 Participant Observation & Fieldnotes

Living in, rather than simply visiting, a field site requires the ethnographer to partake in culture, daily routines, and language to which they may be unaccustomed (Emerson et al., 1995). Participant observation is the up-close, long-term engagement, and daily interaction in the setting or cultural spaces of the study (Atkinson, 2012; Stewart, 1998). Moreover, as Atkinson (2012) proposes, participant observation is often the primary source of data collection because the researcher takes on dual roles of participant and academic observer. Through the active participation in a social setting, an ethnographer is able to be immersed in the reality and lived experiences of those that are in the research setting.

Fieldnotes are a record of an ethnographer’s observations, conversations, questions, interpretations, and suggestions for future information to be examined (Agar, 1996, p. 161). According to Emerson et al. (1995), writing fieldnotes is not necessarily about writing everything down, but picking and choosing things that are found to be significant, interesting, or confusing, while also attempting to ignore unimportant moments. In writing down ethnographic fieldnotes, it may take an ethnographer some time to discern what is important or not. For the ethnographer, participants and informants become key to helping discover what is important and to educate the researcher on what to observe. Van Mammen (2010) stresses that people who write ethnography require at a minimum some understanding of the language, concepts, categories, practices, rules, beliefs, and so forth, used by members of the written-about group. As well, Van Mammen (2010) suggests that researchers who want to provide insight into how fieldwork was done, and provide detail of the researcher’s emotions and perspectives, ought to write in a confessional tales approach. These confessional tales are a more intimate encounter of
fieldnotes because confessional work is done to convince the audience of the human qualities of
the fieldworker. Overall, writing of fieldnotes becomes the ethnographer’s collection of data.

5.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Participant observations allow not only a look into the lives of a group of people, but also
allow participants to speak, and listening to them adds another flavourful ingredient to the
research process. Emerson et al. (1995) acknowledge that participants’ descriptions and stories of
their experiences are invaluable indexes to their views and perceptions. Providing participants
with opportunities to speak and giving them voice opens research to data related to their lived
experiences. As a result, participants’ words should be documented verbatim when possible. To
document participants’ words, interviews are valuable not only to the research but also to
provide participants an opportunity to give insights into their thoughts and speak about their
lives.

Semi-structured interviews are useful tactics in opening up participant observations
because they are open and non-conforming. Semi-structured interviews are developed in a
“systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are allowed freedom to digress...to probe
far beyond the answers to their prepared standardized questions” (Berg, 2004, p. 81). Gratton and
Jones (2004) describe semi-structured interviews as an approach to an interview that uses a
standard set of questions. However, the researcher adopts a flexible approach to data collection
and can alter the sequence of questions, or probe for more information with subsidiary questions.
The ability in a semi-structured interview to ask formal questions in addition to the freedom to
branch out if a major theme arises allowed me the flexibility to “veer off course” as needed.
Semi-structured interviews are also a beneficial method because researchers are able to turn
something formal into conversations with people. Conducting semi-structured interviews creates
spaces for research, but more importantly, it allows academics to share moments of friendship, positively blurring lines between researcher and participant. Semi-structured interviews act as an appendage to ethnography because they are useful in exploring ideas that are not grasped easily through participant observation. In the end, participant observations, fieldnotes, and interviews were applicable to this project due to their interwoven relationship.

5.3 The Research Process

I conducted an eleven month (from August 2016 to July 2017) ethnographic project with FFAV during which we carried out a PE to discover possible areas to support the sustainability of the project after 2018. Data collection was primarily done in Thừa Thiên Huế Province across the nine districts, and during one trip to Hanoi in December 2016. Through this research process, I officially interviewed 40 participants ranging from community leaders such as headmasters of schools, parents and district officials, to government authorities, and FFAV staff members. In addition, I interacted and had many more informal conversations with local community members around the province.

Through attention to local contexts and cultures as instructed by CIM, I was able to conduct research that was sensitive to the people of Thừa Thiên Huế in a manner that they felt the most appropriate. Moreover, I attempted to be inclusive of the local culture and knowledge to help guide the research and, in turn, the findings of this research project. Here, I detail my own application of the methodologies and methods carried out for this research.

5.3.1 PAR

Influenced by Darnell and Hayhurst’s (2011, 2012) suggestions for future SfD research to use PAR, I was intrigued by PAR because I wanted to engage various people and groups of Thừa
Thiên Huế Province in the research process. The people I asked to participate in this research project included FFAV staff members and authorities from DoET and Sub-DoET. I also wanted to include other people from the province in the research process such as children, parents, headmasters, and physical teachers, but unfortunately, I was unable, due to time, issues with regular access to communities, and a lack of resources for traveling. My inexperience with PAR led me to assume that people from local communities would be amenable to participating in research; however, this was not the case because people from local communities had responsibilities to tend to and did not have time to participate in academic research solely for my own benefit. As noted earlier, participation in PAR varies and one cannot expect groups to be able and willing to participate (Reid, Tom & Frisby, 2006). Therefore, it was decided early on in my time in Huế that participation in this research would consist of people with which I had regular contact: the members of FFAV and, when possible, government officials.

The aforementioned outline by previous researchers (Frisby et al., 1997; Szala-Meneok and Lohfeld, 2005) provided a guide that I followed to create a PAR approach with FFAV. First, FFAV and I identified a research topic that FFAV thought was important and that they wanted to address. The approach we selected was that of an open forum of communication among selected staff members, and I generated certain topics and issues that FFAV believed were of concern. Our primary focus became how FFAV activities could be sustained after December 31, 2018. Secondly, data collection designed to uncover ways in which sustainability could be assisted was also conducted throughout the duration of my time with FFAV. Data collection was done in two ways: (1) by me recording notes as a participant observer and conducting individual semi-structured interviews and (2) during research trips to conduct interviews and focus groups as a team. Third, transferring knowledge from the findings was done by producing written reports.
and presentations to government officials and leaders from local communities. Finally, a course of action based on new knowledge is still being determined even as this dissertation is finished. FFAV is continuously selecting findings from our research in order to modify their programs and policies. For instance, one action that resulted from our research on sustainability was that fundraising workshops have been provided by FFAV to authorities in each district such as headmasters and physical education teachers highly involved in FFAV activities.

5.3.2 PE

Related to PAR, PE was a useful methodology in this dissertation because it spoke to the research that FFAV and I conducted together. In accordance to the five principles required (Cousins & Earl, 1992) to conduct a PE, this project was guided by the fact that: (1) FFAV recognized the importance of an evaluation; (2) FFAV had the time and resources to conduct a PE; (3) FFAV and I were committed to pursuing improvement and sustainability of the project; (4) the PE was motivated by myself and FFAV staff members; (5) and training via mutual learning was granted to us all. Similar to the outline for PAR, FFAV and I felt that a PE was appropriate and necessary because it fit the needs of FFAV, as well as provided me access to data for this research.

In this research, I was the trained researcher and FFAV staff members were program staff with interest in evaluating their programs and activities to determine the best processes for future sustainability. An evaluation of FFAV was not a point of research I had intended to study. However, because FFAV were concerned with sustainability, they asked me, as part of my research and in my role as a volunteer, to help them with an evaluation. FFAV believed an evaluation would them to help discover both weaknesses and positive reasoning why activities
should continue, as well as how local communities were understanding their role in sustainability. Thus, applying a PE framework was foundational to the way I conducted research.

5.3.3 CIM

My application of CIM was done taking the “indigenous” people of CIM to represent the “local” of Thừa Thiên Huế. As a researcher, CIM forced me to be responsible not only to the actual discipline of academic research, but also to the people involved with the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Because much of the data that informs this dissertation came from the people and communities across of Thừa Thiên Huế Province, it was crucial for me to ensure that their culture was constantly considered and respected.

5.3.3.1 CIM & Nhậu. As an outsider to Huế, there were cultural behaviors that I had to learn and participate in to assimilate. To learn about Huế and how I should conduct myself, I deferred to FFAV staff members (and my homestay family) when I had questions about how to act and behave in Huế. For example, in Huế, many people go for what is called nhậu. Nhậu is when people gather to drink beer, talk about the day's events, and socialize. Nhậu allows people to gather to discuss an array of topics in order to get to know each other and break down formal walls. When these walls come down, I learned in Vietnam, people will speak freely to you and allow you into their lives. It often occurs after the working day, is generally a masculine space, and consists of Vietnamese appetizers and copious amounts of the most popular beer in Huế, Huda Beer.

My first nhậu in Huế showed me what it really meant to partake in this Vietnamese social event. It was early in my research, during my first month in Huế, when the members of Sub-DoET invited me out with them. We were given a private room at a popular “quán nhậu” (nhậu restaurant) where we ordered steamed mussels, fried rice, pork ribs, and boxes of Huda Beer. In
this room, we drank, ate, sang traditional Vietnamese songs, and held hands. The lived experience was a moment where I was allowed to witness culture and community. Significantly, during this nhậu, in the middle of the festivities, a Sub-DoET member who was sitting to my left touched my left leg, leaned into me and told me he was happy to meet me, have me in Huế, and hoped he could help with my research. In that moment nhậu was not about drinking with friends; nhậu was about comradery, community, and culture. In Vietnam, nhậu is a way of socializing and creating relationships, it is not simply drinking beer, socializing, and gossiping after work. Pertaining to CIM, nhậu was a culturally social process that allowed me to participate in the local culture.

I was told by an FFAV staff member that for me to gain access into communities and become collegial with the people of Huế, I would have to go for nhậu, even at moments that I did not want to (Fieldnotes, October 2016). Not participating in this cultural practice would have positioned me as a person not wanting to socialize or unwilling to appreciate Huế culture. Through a CIM approach, I had to participate in nhậu to learn from the culture, align the research with this culture, and create space for local people to be part of this research project.

The knowledge of people from Huế informing this research process was crucial. However, the negatives of nhậu as a space to collect data were encountered an unfortunate truth; that is, in regarding the research I will never know truly if participants were actually being honest with me in their responses especially after hours of consuming beer. While smiles, laughter and generosity filled these spaces of people’s homes and restaurants there are days, I wonder if people from local communities or government agencies were just being kind to me because I was an outsider or they were actually interested in me as a person. I admit that even at the end of this project and upon my departure from Thừa Thiên Huế Province that I still do not
know the true feelings people from local communities, really, I can never know the true motives and feelings that participants had of me. However, I must say that indeed the moments of nhậu were amazing spaces to enter. In the end, I can only say that engaging in local practices and subscribing to cultural knowledge undoubtedly benefitted the research and the relationships formed during my time in Huế.

5.3.3.2 A Note and Ethics on Drinking. During my time in the field in this research project, I was exposed to various cultural practices. As mentioned above, the most common practice that I encountered was “nhậu,” or moments where drinking alcohol was the basis of a mutual connection. Drinking alcohol, mainly beer and occasionally rice whiskey, occurred in almost every field trip I made to local communities in addition to every social gathering I attended. I was invited into homes of community leaders where we sat together drinking beer and discussed life. When I went to Hanoi, I sat all night with a leader from the Ministry of Education and Training where we drank beer all night and discussed my research, our lives, and how Vietnam has changed throughout the last 40 years. Going for drinks and immersing myself in moments and spaces that consisted of socializing through drinking was very much a pivotal piece of the research process. There was no doubt that drinking was a social process that informed how I conducted research and how I built relationships with others.

However, I do need to admit and acknowledge that nhậu as a social process mainly consisted of male bodies. That is not say that women did not attend, but in the act of drinking beer and socializing in this environment it was mainly men in my experience. Ethically, this is important to consider because as a male I was allowed to enter these spaces and was often welcomed by my male counterparts. Unfortunately, this cannot be said for the females, especially the female staff of FFAV, who often went home after work or when they did attend
nhậu, rarely drank beer. I am aware that this troubles the research because of my privileged position as a Vietnamese male that allowed me to enter these masculine spaces where research was conducted.

But, these moments where I came together with people to drink and socialize were necessary in order to build trusting relationships. Ethically, it was important for me to partake in the cultural ways of socializing in Vietnam. If I was a person or researcher that did not participate or did not want to be a part of the social settings then I would not have built the relationships I did, and I would have lost valuable access to the data that I eventually acquired.

Like in many ethnographic projects, there were tensions surrounding social processes, in this case of drinking alcohol as a space to collect data. I came to a realization that I was indeed drinking too much and it was affecting my health. There were times when I visited districts, and I found myself in situations where I knew drinking would occur, that I wished I could avoid it, but I would remain present in the space. When the beer was coming out I would at first refuse invitations but by the time the tenth person asked me to share a beer with them, I would give in and drink. Thus, what I realized was that I was living my life in Vietnam now, and that my life was being informed by how people around me were living. I could not be a researcher from the outside with my own beliefs and living my life in a way that was informed by standards that I have been taught. The research process required me to adapt to local customs.

To that end, drinking as a social process was required for me to develop genuine relationships that were necessary for this research to occur. Some might challenge this as unethical. My first response to this challenge is to say that during the research I was either going to embrace and immerse myself in these spaces or I was not. And in keeping with ethical and moral inclusion of local, cultural practices I believe that by not partaking or engaging with the
social drinking settings that I would have exhibited disengagement with the people of Huế. As I was told by a FFAV staff member and from my own lived experience, to not participate in life in Huế, would have been to refuse to open myself up to the people and thus to the research. I reason that while ‘ethical drinking’ is not a concept that is often considered, in Vietnam it is part of the ways people socialize with each other. Overall, it was significant to not only the research but also to me as a researcher and person living in Huế, to embrace the lived experiences of those around me.

For these reasons, I argue that to embrace the lives of those around me and their way of socializing it was of utmost importance for me to participate in nights of nhậu and days of drinking. The decision was to either participate or not to participate. And for the purpose of wanting to appreciate people’s lived experiences and the local conditions, I decided to participate in every cultural practice with one of them being the drinking and socializing.

5.3.4 Ethnography

Goffman (1989) advised that ethnographers should interject themselves and their personalities into the research setting in order to access the people they are studying. He argued that doing so allows researchers to hear and see everything they do to the point that minor details become relevant. So naturally, because I was a volunteer with FFAV and lived in Huế City with a local family, I became something of an insider into the daily routines and life of Thừa Thiên Huế.

I followed a series of steps presented by Gratton and Jones (2004) in order to make this project ethnographic. First, I identified the topic I wanted to study, which was SfD in Vietnam. The second step, to determine if ethnography was an appropriate methodology and method for this project, was situated in my ability to move to Vietnam for a year to become a volunteer with
FFAV and a community member in Thừa Thiên Huế. Furthermore, ethnography was determined to be a proper methodology because FFAV leaders wanted me to move to Huế and be part of FFAV, not simply to be a short-term researcher. Third, I reflected on my identity as a male, Vietnamese person born in America, a Ph.D. student, and a person not from Thừa Thiên Huế. I did this reflection before entering the field. This third step was particularly important for me because my cultural, historical, and ethnic connection to Vietnam are rooted in my parents fleeing the country five years after the Vietnam War. Within this third step, I metaphorically “cut myself to the bone” (Goffman, 1989) where I attempted to enter FFAV and Huế without any influence of prior knowledge or expectations. Goffman (1989) advised ethnographers to leave any preconceived notions when entering research settings so that judgment clouds the participants or setting as little as possible. For example, although I have knowledge about Vietnam and Vietnamese culture provided by my upbringing, I consciously “cut” my knowledge and let my interactions in Thừa Thiên Huế inform me. Step four established an ethnographic approach to selecting where this study would take place. For this study, as mentioned, because I wanted to study SfD in Vietnam, I selected an SfD project, FFAV, located in Thừa Thiên Huế Province of Vietnam.

Step five focused on gaining entry to the location of the study. Access in this study consisted of gaining entry to FFAV and the local communities. First, to gain entry into FFAV, I had to provide proper official documents from the University of Toronto and personal documents to the government of Huế. My entry into FFAV was established in July 2015 when I visited to introduce myself and my ideas about doing research with FFAV. The second level of access was that FFAV acted as gatekeepers, opening doors (Collison et al., 2017) to people and communities across Thừa Thiên Huế where I met participants and informants. Step six decided how long I
would stay in Huế as an ethnographer; I followed previous SfD literature that called for longitudinal studies (Chawansky, 2015) and aligned this suggestion with Goffman (1989) who said ethnographers should attempt to stay in the field for a year. It was also important to limit the length of time I spent in the field, as eventually ethnographic projects need to finish and the write up of data needs to begin. Thus, I knew that on June 30, 2017, I would leave FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế Province.

Lastly, I had to “learn the ropes” of how things work as a volunteer for FFAV, a researcher in Vietnam, and a person living in Thừa Thiên Huế. Learning the ropes was facilitated by members of FFAV and by making friends with people in the communities in which I lived. As a volunteer with FFAV, I learned the day-to-day routines of office work at an SfD project, while also being exposed to the working culture of Vietnam. In my role as a volunteer, I helped in the office by writing English language articles for the website, helped to edit documents in English, and was tasked with writing applications for funding. I also learned that the working culture of Vietnam can be very relaxed: people can go home for lunch to eat and take a nap. As a person living in Thừa Thiên Huế, I acclimatized by simply taking in the everyday way of life around the province. I learned how to ride a bike around the congested city streets of Huế, discovered who sold the best bánh mì for breakfast, and learned that when greeting elders, there are formal ways of bowing. As an example of my familiarity of living in Huế, I was able to find what I thought to be the best bowl of the local delicacy, Bún bò Huế. The scene of this curbside stall selling this delicious bowl of spicy beef noodle soup is depicted in a fieldnote below.

An aroma of Bun Bo Hue (Hue style beef noodle soup) fills the air in this city. Bun Bo Hue is what people call “đặc sản huế” which translate into “Hue specialty.” The broth is a mixture of spices, fish sauce, and lemongrass. Topped with green onions, cilantro, and chili peppers, it is one of the most delicious foods to come from Hue. Every morning adults and children sit on small red stools hunched over a table slurping down the thick white noodles and chunks of beef brisket. Many homes on
each street sell the specialty dish in front of their house. Only some are good though. You’ll have to find your own spot. I like the one on Le Huan Street just a little down from my house where everyone in my community goes. If you arrive after 8:30 AM, chances are this home will have sold out. (Fieldnotes, October 2016).

As an ethnographer, I aimed to take on living my life in Huế to the fullest extent possible. I embraced my entire life, not just the research, as someone who was from this central province of Vietnam. Eventually, I became comfortable with my surroundings as if they had been my surroundings for years. I learned to speak Vietnamese using the words and dialect of people from Huế, and I eventually came to understand the Huế accent when speaking Vietnamese. Thus, in an ethnographic tradition, I fully immersed myself into the research setting and allowed the process to inform me. Eventually, adapting became the way I lived my life in Huế and I was able to build rapport not just as a researcher, but also as a person living in Huế. This can be seen in fieldnotes I wrote one morning:

The mornings are humid. I wake up and walk out of my air-conditioned room into the hallway to a thick, sticky cloud of hot air. The cloud engulfs me letting me know that the day has come. I hear the roosters crowing as the bright sun creeps through the windows. An older man on his bike yells “Miiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!” as he rides around announcing that on the back of his bike, in a large metal container he has egg noodle soup ready to be eaten. Just come out with your own bowl and he’ll pour in piping hot ladles of broth.

Life starts early here; around 4 am people are awake and ready to put in their labor for the day. There’s no sleeping in here. People have a routine and it consists of hard work.

Outside the motorbikes whistle down the street. Some with fathers getting breakfast for their families, some with adults going to work, and some with one adult and 2 or 3 kids on their way to school. Other kids walk in their uniforms down the street to get to school or ride their own bicycles to get them there.

Every morning I wake up and embrace this. (Field notes, September 2016)

In summation, I was not an ethnographer that entered a space for a couple hours a day. I was truly immersed as a researcher and a person living in Thừa Thiên Huế. Everyday I experienced something new or different until whatever was new or different became routine.
Adding to the ethnography, I stayed with a homestay family which was operated by an FFAV staff member, so I was always around FFAV and the other staff members. Undoubtedly, my experiences and data gathering was hugely impacted by participant observation as a method because of my immersion.

5.3.5 Participant Observations & Fieldnotes

I engaged in local activities with FFAV in every way possible. In addition to working in the main office, I participated in workshops, meetings, trips to local communities, trips to Hanoi, and attended events such as school tournaments and district level Fun Football Festivals. In all of these moments, I attempted to record my ethnographic fieldnotes. Field notes represented my thoughts and understandings of FFAV activities, the communities that I entered, and the overall experience of living in a different culture. In composing my fieldnotes, I was attentive to meanings given to ŠfD by the many people participating in FFAV and how individuals invoked these meanings with each other, in specific locations, and through their experiences. The fieldnotes were not simply a collection of notes about FFAV and participants, they were also reflective of my own life and practices of the culture of Vietnam and living in Huế. For instance, I made sure to write about the emotions and feelings that emerged in me as a researcher and a person.

I kept a daily journal which was both handwritten and on my computer. If I was visiting a school, community, or in a space that was outside the FFAV main office, I carried a small pocket size notebook where I jotted down observations and experiences. My ethnographic field notes consisted of hours of observations and many informal discussions with people while I was in the field. However, in trying to be inconspicuous, it took time to figure out how, where and when I could take notes. If I was able to jot down notes in the field, I was conscious of the space in
which I subsisted. For instance, if I was in a meeting or workshop, taking field notes was easier because everyone had a notebook and was writing down notes. But, if I was visiting a school and observing activities, then I would either write notes in my pocket-sized notebook off to the side or try to remember important moments to write down later. When I was in official meetings, taking notes was a lot easier because people around me were also jotting down their own notes; thus, there was no reason to try and act incognito. On the other hand, writing down field notes if I was visiting a school, at a FFAV event, or when I was in local communities was more difficult. For the most part, I made sure to write anything down when I was off to the side or I would only write down simple notes to remind me as I elaborated on my field notes when I wrote my daily notes at the end of the day. Like Joseph (2013) who described how she wrote up her field notes in her room, I often retreated to my room at night to transcribe my field notes. During my times of isolation, I was able to write confessionals (Van Mammen, 2010) where I detailed the process, and examined the emotions, that I experienced on that particular day of field notes.

5.3.6 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used for three reasons. First, interviews allowed me to ask participants about their experiences and permitted them to speak freely about areas of interest and importance. This allowed participants to elaborate more on their feelings and attitudes toward certain topics such as FFAV, SfD, life in Thừa Thiên Huế, or even me. Many times, interview participants became informants and guided me to certain ideas to examine further, particularly ideas regarding FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế. Second, unexpected data emerged from semi-structured interviews that I may have overlooked in my ethnographic participant observations. This resulted in more insightful data and future ideas to examine during my time in
Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Last, interviews allowed for more intimate one-on-one scenarios where bonds were formed and rapport was built.

The logistics of conducting interviews with participants were often complicated and did not always proceed according to plan. Doing research with FFAV and in Vietnam had many moving parts. For example, I never scheduled my own interviews. For official interviews, FFAV staff assisted in contacting people and scheduling the time and location with them. FFAV staff accompanying me to official interviews made sure formal processes were met and proper introductions were made. This was particularly important during research trips to local communities because as I was introduced, leaders of local communities seemed to take an interest in who I was which allowed me to open myself up to them.

So we are lead into the Vice-Headmasters office where we sit for some coffee, brief talk about random topics like food, me being Viet Kieu, and the demographics of the school. An important note is that this is the first time I’ve met a Vice-Headmaster and soon to be headmaster of the school that is female. Most headmasters have been male. I’m always an interesting topic as I’m introduced and asked about. It usually goes like this: this is Michael Dao, he was born in America but is Vietnamese, has Vietnamese heritage. He is currently going to school for his Ph.D. in Canada and is working with FFAV as a volunteer while doing research for his Ph.D. Oh, can he speak Vietnamese? Which I come out in my Vietnamese and say yes I can speak it but not well. Especially when people speak fast because I cannot follow them well. Then we talk about my experiences of being Vietnam in America and I tell them being raised and born in San Jose, CA I was surrounded by Vietnamese people to the point where my mom went to the market, salon, and nail shop and for the most part where she went anywhere it was to a Vietnamese person or store. I told them that I grew up eating Vietnamese food almost every day and that it was common to see 4 or 5 Pho restaurants in a mile stretch. I feel like I have to show or reaffirm my Vietnamese to the people I meet from the school and districts. I have yet to encounter someone who didn’t like me or gave me a hard time because I am Viet Kieu. I’ve always been welcomed and talked to. People are usually impressed that I am able to speak Vietnamese as well as I do, even though I think it’s pretty shitty. (Fieldnotes, November 2016)

Interactions like the one depicted above created a friendly ambiance that I believed was important for relationships to be built. Then as relationships were built through the commonality
that is Vietnam I was able to conduct interviews with leaders from local communities such as headmasters, Sub-DoET officials, and government authorities.

Logistically, interviews that I conducted with people outside of FFAV staff members were done at the time and schedule of the participants. The impromptu nature of schedules meant that there were times I had to do spontaneous interviews and had no interview guide or, rather, had more informal semi-structured interviews. For example, there was one interview with an official from DoET that I conducted for which I was provided only one hour’s notice and did not have any materials (e.g., interview guides, audio recorder). When I did encounter an unplanned interview, I did my best to remember the questions from the interview guide and wrote synthesized notes of responses. More so, because of restricted travel (i.e., only rode a bicycle), restricted capacity as a researcher in Vietnam (e.g., DoET approval), and at times a lack of fluidity in the Vietnamese language, I was always accompanied to interviews by an FFAV staff member. Staff members acted as tremendous support in ensuring I arrived at the right location and the interviews ran smoothly. Particularly, there were three FFAV interns, Hong, Ngoc Linh, and Kan Lin who took me on their Honda bikes to interviews and helped with any interpretations.

5.3.6.1 Interviews & Translation. As stated above, every time I went on an official interview there was an FFAV staff member who accompanied me. Not only was this done to ensure that I followed all research protocols, did not perform any misconduct, and to formally introduce me to participants, but it helped with the translation and interpretation of interviews from Vietnamese to English. Although I was able to converse fluently in Vietnamese in order to live my life in Huế, I admit that there were times when I was in conversations that when people were speaking it became too fast for me to fully understand every single word. In addition, the
dialect and accent of Huế was different from the Vietnamese that my parents taught me which was from the south (for further discussion about my language ability see Appendix B). With my inability to fully grasp Vietnamese fluently, especially during important interviews used for data, coupled with the different accents in Vietnam, it was thus appropriate to have a trusted FFAV staff member helps translate interviews for me. Moreover, I had almost no capacity in writing Vietnamese; thus when it came to translating the written language I rather desperately needed the help of those around me.

Stated in the previous section, the primary people who helped me translate interviews were Kan Lin, Hong, and Ngoc Linh. Then, occasionally Nhi, Sang or anh Chung would help me if the others were not available. For example, in Hanoi, anh Chung helped interpret and translate interviews for me with government officials. I trusted everyone who helped with the interview process and never once did I feel as if I was being misled in translation. Thus, people may wonder and question if FFAV staff interpreted interview conversations differently from what was actually being said. I refute these claims by first stating that in the ethics of conducting research with FFAV never did I once believe that I was being misled. In conducting interviews with FFAV I had to trust them and allow them to take over when necessary because, in the end, they were ones who understood the language best. Secondly, it was not as if I did not understand Vietnamese at all. At worse, I was conversational and was able to follow along in my head and in writing down my notes during interviews. My control of the Vietnamese language allowed me to comprehend the conversation, as well as ask my own questions in Vietnamese. With this in mind, FFAV staff members were helpful in making sure nothing was lost in translation and any nuances were caught.
Therefore, on speaking about the translation of Vietnamese to English I must admit that it is possible that the data was affected because not every word in Vietnamese can be translated into English. However, I argue that the main concepts came across in the interview data particularly in relation to topics of sport for social change, ideas around community, and conducting research with FFAV. Data from interviews are provided in the subsequent chapters and illustrate the ability for language to be translated for this research project. Here, I only acknowledge the intricacies of collecting data through interviews because indeed language played a huge role in this research project. Both written and verbal language ultimately had to be translated from Vietnamese to English. Without the ability and help from FFAV staff in translating interviews or documents, this research would not have come about. In the end, the translation process was needed as this entire research project was done with Vietnamese people in Vietnam. And to know that the people who helped translate for me were people who I worked closely with, trusted and cared about the research helped ensure translations were accurate and truthful.

5.4 Data Analysis

My sensitivity to the principles of PAR, PE, and CIM encouraged me to attend to the knowledge and culture of Thừa Thiên Huế in my own analysis of the data. Instead of letting a theoretical framework guide my way of thinking and analysis, I was conscious of permitting the context of the research with FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế to drive my analysis. Data analysis in participatory research is built upon an intersectionality that involves and requires multiple pieces of knowledge to inform the analysis process (Cahill, 2007). The influences of the culture and people of Thừa Thiên Huế allowed this data analysis to be both individual and collective, as well
as local (Cahill, 2007). Data analysis was individual because I performed it, but it became collective when I sought guidance from FFAV staff members and the locals, and because everyone around me were from Huế, they provided a local context to my analysis. Cahill (2007) explains that data analysis can intersect individuals, as well as connect people and the local communities when participants are able to voice their ideas and knowledge in the process. When possible, data analysis occurred as Cahill (2007) instructs, by “checking-in” with people to give the participants authority in validating the data. I came to realize that doing research with people of Thừa Thiên required my analysis to involve their historical, cultural, social, and political way of life.

The analysis of fieldnotes and interviews were both done in similar fashion. I followed a procedure outlined by Gratton and Jones (2004). First, I reduced the raw data into organized categories by coding. Coding is the reduction of large pieces of data into categories based on themes. I began coding the data while I was in still in Vietnam and continued upon my return to Toronto. My coding process started by carefully reading my fieldnotes, interview notes, and official interview transcriptions. As I read through the hundreds of pages of data, I noted common themes that appeared. In addition to indicating common themes in the data, I highlighted different specific quotes, moments, and notes that spoke to these themes. Each theme was given a specific color to keep my coding organized. I repeated this process until I found no clearer and common themes emerging. Throughout this entire process of coding, especially when I was still in Huế, I always considered the aspects of culture or way of life that the data encouraged me to be conscious of.

The ability to code some of my fieldnotes and interviews while I was in Vietnam was extremely beneficial to the analysis. In full disclosure, I tried my best to conduct data analysis
with participants while I was in the field, but at times it was difficult because I was the “researcher” throughout this entire project. Talking to people in Huế about what I was experiencing, what I was exploring, and what I was starting to discover allowed them to augment their own local knowledge to the analysis. Their input regarding the data provided an authentic richness that I could not have delivered on my own. I remember a FFAV staff member always telling me, “Think about the culture. That is culture. Make sure to include the culture.” Although it was difficult for me to ask questions to people in Huế during my data analysis, when I returned to Toronto, those friends and participants I became closest to in Huế were always an email away when I needed advice on a particular analysis. As a researcher promoting tenets of PAR and CIM, it was my responsibility to have FFAV, other participants, and Huế influence data analysis. Therefore, I acknowledge that not only did participants provide substantial data, but they also, on different levels, guided my data analysis.

5.5 Ethics and Reflexivity

I close this chapter speaking about my responsibility as a researcher to be ethical and self-reflexive regarding my position and the people with whom I conducted research. There are likely questions about how I maintained ethics in protecting the identities of people, especially young children that I met and interacted with but did not conduct official data collection, and people whom I affiliated with and conducted interviews during data collection. Formally, I registered with the Vietnamese government, and local Thừa Thiên Huế Department of Foreign Affairs and police force. I was required to obtain a foreigner’s work permit and have official documents approved before I went on visits to local communities. The approval process was necessary because it ensured that I was officially sanctioned by the Vietnamese government to
perform academic research. In addition, I carried out my due diligence in completing and obtaining ethics approval from the University Of Toronto Review Of Ethics Board.

5.5.1 Ethics

Ethics for this project were not completely straightforward. Not only was I required to follow the University of Toronto ethical guidelines, but I was also compelled to add another layer of ethics following the rules of Vietnam. The rules of Vietnam included following the law, registering with the government, and most importantly, being considerate to local culture. In this vein of following Vietnamese ethics, I raise the concern of informal principled procedures where researchers should have an ethical responsibility to the participants, their culture, and their way of life. I argue that conducting ethical research is often based on decision making in different situations, drawing from culture and history, and not a pattern simply following the rules (Plummer, 2001). Donnelly (2007) says the “great divide within ethics is between those who judge an act right or wrong in accordance with whether it produces the best consequences, and those who judge right or wrong by some rule or principle” (p. 117). In this sense, university ethics boards may not always be the ultimate judges of what is considered wrong or right in research. I argue that it is also the participants of the research that have agency in judging research ethics. Research ethics is not solely following university and governmental ethics then, it is about respecting the ethics of participants, whatever those may be. In following an ethical commitment to FFAV and other participants, Manzo and Brightbull (2007) outline a participatory model of ethics that I found relevant to this project. They advocate for representation of participants in an honest manner, accountability on the researcher to involve participants, social responsibility where ethics moves from a review board to a community, that
participants have agency in the research, and that researchers should be reflexive. Their approach towards research ethics is consistent with the research conducted in this project.

I found it more important and more responsible to follow ethics of FFAV and the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Their ethical guideline may not have been formal like the University, but it was informed by their culture and way of doing things. For example, I had to submit proper documentation to the Vietnamese government, and then I had to obtain formal approval by NFF and FFAV to work with them. Culturally, I had to be attentive to the social processes of Huế when it came to ethics. Returning to nhậu, I could have said “No I will not partake,” but that would have been interpreted as disrespectful to the person who invited me. Respect in Vietnam comes in the form of age and hierarchy. Therefore, if a person older than me who worked for DoET invited me for nhậu, I never declined the offer. Every interaction and experience I had during my fieldwork in Huế consisted of different ethics. Seeking permission to conduct research and enter hamlets or villages, for example, did not always come formally in the method of consent forms. I had to be conscious of what asking someone to sign consent forms signified culturally. I was advised by FFAV leaders that consent forms may not be understood by a village leader or that it may be seen as a sign of distrust. Thus, I needed FFAV to plan my visits and explain why I was entering someone’s community.

Then, when I entered the space, ethics were navigated based on relationships I had with individuals. For instance, when entering a village, I dealt with ethics based on the personal connection I made with the village elders. To navigate this ethics process, I made sure to be receptive, honest, and straightforward about my intentions to district level Sub-DoET leaders and village elders. Moreover, I described why I was in Huế doing research on SfD, revealing that due to my historical and cultural connection, I felt drawn to return to Vietnam and was hoping that
one day my research could make a positive difference. In turn, village elders spoke to me with
genuine interest, asking me questions about who I am, about my life in general, and what my
research was about. I answered their questions honestly and comprehensively. To accentuate the
ethics of research in local communities, I return to a time when I sat in a leader’s home in the
rural district of A Lưới.

The district leader invited me to sit close to him. So I found a space next to him. The dishes of food came out consisting of succulent roasted pork, the grilled rabbit, the bloody tiết canh (raw blood pudding), and plentiful vegetables. The boxes of Huda beer were opened up and cans were passed along the roughly dozen people in the room. I was passed a beer but before I popped the can open the district leader was pouring beer into my glass. I was his guest and I am pretty sure he wanted to make me feel welcomed. In this night, I felt a warm acceptance by this community. Each person in that room invited me to drink with them. We chanted “mot, hai, ba, Dzo!” (One, two, three, cheers) every time we drank.

The district leader and I talked more about Vietnamese life in America. He asked me about what kind of Vietnamese culture I have experienced in America and if it were any different than what I have been seeing in Hue. Particularly, we talked about the Vietnamese food I was accustomed to. He was happily shocked when I told him that tiết canh can be found in America and it is a dish my father favored in his younger years. While we talked he would use his chopsticks to pick up pieces of food and place them into my bowl. The acts of him pouring beer into my cup and placing of food into my bowl were meaningful.

The night became a moment in which the research I was conducting took a back seat to the experiences I was having. Here I was, a Vietnamese person born in America, sitting in a district that has a historical connection to Ho Chi Minh, Vietnamese communism, and the people's war against the Americans. But I believe at this moment, on this night, with these open people that the events of the past are over. That the stories my parents would tell me did not matter. The night was interesting, yes, but it was impactful, it was amazing. More importantly, it was a moment that the research became something more than an academic project. It was a moment where fieldwork became a truly lived experience. (Field notes, December 2016)

Overall, while trust cannot be measured, I made every attempt to be honest and candid about my intentions, research, and who I was to establish trust with local communities. There were times in my past that I was told to fear communist Vietnam. However, the war has been
over for 43 years and people are moving forward. Sitting on the floor of that district leader’s home, I was accepted by people who, while being born and raised in different worlds, share the same traditions, foods, and culture that I do. I can only describe that the ethical commitment that I have to SfD research is found in my loyalty to Vietnam where Vietnam represents the people who allowed me into their lives and were willing to be involved in this research.

Still, there will be questions as to how honest and trusting my relationships with local communities were; I can only reply that moments where I was invited into someone’s home in a village and instructed to sit next to them on the floor to share a beverage were signs of trust in the research process. Dialogue and cultural cues such as offering food and invitations for coffee became the ethical guidelines that I followed. I found that traditional REB ethics were useful in establishing institutional ethics, but ethics in the communities were based on open communication, honesty, and familial behavior. Therefore, ethics were not simply approached in the beginning stages of research as done in more traditional research models, or by submitting ethics to the university review board and removing oneself from the process (Manzo & Brightbull, 2008). Instead, I constantly negotiated ethics in Huế by ensuring I was conducting research openly and in ways that aligned with the cultural values of the province.

5.5.2 Reflexivity

Donnelly (2007), Frisby et al. (2005), and Plummer (2011) all state that reflexivity occurs when a researcher contemplates their power through a greater social and self-awareness of the research process, especially in communities and in relationships with participants. Being reflexive is continuous and forces researchers to be honest about their intentions (Mellor, 2007; Smith, 1999). Self-reflexivity may also force researchers to acknowledge the issues and problems that their research may cause. Smith (1999, p. 1) argued out that research is a dirty
word because it is never “innocent.” Research may create issues, rather than solving them, because researchers may not understand cultural tendencies or often position their knowledge ahead of local communities. In turn, in any research in a development context, the role of the researcher can never be neutral and the need to be reflexive is constant (Mellor, 2007).

In recognizing this, I constantly conversed with the power and privileges that I had as a researcher and outsider in the research setting (Frisby, Reid, & Millar, 2005). I confess that it was difficult to ensure that I was doing ethical and moral research while trying to retain an agenda that would collect data for my Ph.D. There were many moments in Vietnam that I asked myself what I was doing in Huế, felt I had made a big mistake in doing this project and was boggled by the position in which I found myself. My authority and power were rooted in my framework of being Vietnamese, but not from Vietnam, and my status as a Ph.D. student. In my conversation with this power, I attempted to be as unguarded as I could with the people around me, especially FFAV staff members and local authorities, by constantly reassuring them that I was there in a research capacity. I also strove to embrace their everyday struggles.

In my constant self-reflection, I attempted to be critical of my position and the responsibilities I have as a researcher, such as representing the participants and local communities appropriately and not taking advantage of being a foreigner. More importantly, in being reflexive I attempted to position FFAV and the people of Thừa Thiên Huế at the forefront of this research. My privileged position became clearer when I was spending time with FFAV university interns, and they told me that because I was a Ph.D. student from abroad, I was given more respect and preferential treatment by local authorities. The interns continued to say that a Vietnamese academic researcher with the same skills and ideas would not have been as respected because their training is in Vietnam. In that particular moment, I was saddened by the idea that
there may be some researchers from Vietnam who want to study SfD but are not afforded the same resources that I was.

The reflexivity that I took up during my trip continues to motivate me today. In doing this type of research there are emotions that come and stay with you. For the researchers who go to a far off place to carry out ethnographic methods, they must know that their lives will forever be affected as well. We cannot do this alone. We need our research participants and collaborators more than they will never need us. There is no manner in which we as researchers can go into these spaces believing we know more or better. And with that, I have to acknowledge how the relationships I was a part of allowed me to enter the spaces that I did. Moreover, the relationships I built were informed by my position as a Ph.D. student from the University of Toronto, compounded with my identity as a Vietnamese born abroad. My whole life and subjectivity undoubtedly affected who I was and how I was seen in the field.

Not a day goes by that I do not think how my identity and my position as a Vietnamese person born in America to refugee parents shaped my experiences in Huế. It is an identity I bear and it influenced how I was perceived. People of Vietnam and Huế would make it a point that I was a Vietnamese born abroad. Adding to this was my position as a doctoral student conducting research and how that gave me a level of undeserving authority. I was conscious and, at times disenchanted, that being Vietnamese from abroad possibly gave me privileges that I did not deserve or that being a doctoral student from a prestigious university positioned me as a person with expert knowledge, all the while real knowledge was in the communities. I aimed to be reflexive, not only to my own perspectives about research and how those perspectives influenced me, but also in respect to my social relationships with the people, the communities in Huế, and as a representative of the University of Toronto.
5.6 Contextualizing the setting: Research in a one-party state

In closing out the methods chapter, I must make a note about conducting research in a one-party and authoritative state like Vietnam. Currently, Vietnam is governed under the Community party which has been the leading political apparatus since 1975. While decades have passed and Vietnam continues to develop there are still lingering repercussions from the war and historical colonial control. McHale (2002) writes that themes of nationalism and revolution occupy an important place in post-1945 Asia and there is no place more evident of this than in Vietnam.

Socialist rule in Vietnam plays a substantial part in shaping fieldwork experiences within the country (Bonnin, 2010; Turner, 2010; 2013). The state establishes rules and regulations of what kind of research can be conducted and furthermore what topics are allowed. For example, before I left for Vietnam, an advisor told me that topics such as government, religion or social-political issues should not be brought up in conversation (Luong 2016, Personal communication). Thus, in line with the experiences of Turner (2013), who was advised by her own gatekeepers to keep her project proposal in Vietnam “more bland and grey to avoid phrases that hint at political curiosity or other sensitive topics” (p. 398), I made sure to keep all of my documents and language simple. Thereupon, my correspondences to FFAV and formal letters to DoET emphasized that the research I was wishing to do was merely about sport and sport for development in Vietnam. This process was simple and straightforward because this research project was about sport and sport for development in Vietnam. I can say with conviction and honesty this research had no hidden agenda. To ease any suspicion, I was conscious that in my role as a researcher I was only to be in the spaces that FFAV and others allowed me into. Even more, when I was in Vietnam I never raised any discussion concerning governmental practices.
At worse, if I was in spaces where others were talking about Vietnam, I only voiced minimal opinion. To briefly illustrate a moment, one morning when a few of the neighborhood mothers were congregating at my homestay family’s home they were discussing the economic conditions of Vietnam saying that while conditions have improved, Vietnam is still a poor country. Affirming the description of economic conditions one woman said we (Vietnam and Vietnamese people) could be like South Korea if it were not for the policies of prior regimes to where she turned to me soliciting my thoughts, and all I could say was that I do not know enough to comment on the conditions of Vietnam (Fieldnotes, December 2016). Generally, to protect FFAV, my homestay family, this research, and myself I refrained from discussing any sensitive topics with the general public; because as my parents stressed to me before moving to Vietnam that you never know whom you can trust.

The state of Vietnam is weary of foreign influence, let alone researchers, where there is governmental authorities overlooking people who enter the country (Scott et al., 2006) What I mean is that while Vietnam is a country where tourism is booming and is open to visitors, there are still social processes that are strictly surveilled by the government. Vietnam as country, from my experience, is an open country for tourists and income generating businesses; however, regarding conduct of more intimate concerns, such as academic research, doors may be more difficult to open. Regarding this research project, I encountered various different layers that I had to navigate in order to conduct research. The Vietnamese government, from my research experience, played an authoritative role in my research specially pertaining to access and what I could or could not do.

Turner (2010) alludes that permission to undertake officially authorized social science fieldwork in the current political climate of Vietnam one must have ‘red stamps’ and visas to
properly obtain permission. These red stamps come in the form of letters and authorizations provided by all levels of the state apparatus in Vietnam, which can range from the local, provincial and to the national. For my research, the process of making sure I obtained the proper authorization began before I arrived in Vietnam. The process I went through resembled Le Ly Hayslip’s (2003) experience, who wrote in a memoir her insecurities about returning to Vietnam in 1986, where she experienced the stressful control of her trip by governmental agencies. Similar to Hayslip (2003) who had to obtain proper paperwork to enter Vietnam from the Vietnamese consulate and United States embassy, I had to submit formal documents to the Vietnamese government to conduct my research. For example, to begin the research process I was asked to obtain a letter of support from my supervisor, a letter from the University of Toronto indicating that I was actually a PhD student, two letters stating my ability to conduct research and work in Vietnam, my bachelors and masters diplomas, and a criminal background check. Then I had to get these documents notarized, authenticated by the attorney general of California, and then approved by the Vietnamese consulate in San Francisco. When this process was all said and done I had spent close to $600 USD to conduct the research and I had not arrived in Vietnam yet.

Then I arrived in Vietnam and was asked to wait for a proper work permit before I could enter the communities that FFAV had activities in. Expanding on the process of obtaining ‘red stamps’ of approval as mentioned by Bonnin (2010) and Turner (2010) I was forced to go through bureaucratic processes such as obtaining a work permit. To do so, I was asked to get a health check at the local hospital, take headshots and then submit these documents to the local police station. Furthermore, during the first few months of my time in Huế and with FFAV, whenever I went to the field someone from FFAV had to notify the police of the location and the
time. I never felt unsafe, but I was aware that ultimately my body and the research was being monitored in some sort of capacity.

The fruition of this surveillance by Vietnamese authorities came to light during the latter part of my time in the field when there was an FFAV event with various governmental and local partners at an upscale hotel restaurant located on the major tourist road along the Perfume River. As I was walking around greeting guests and familiar faces I came across a man wearing a white collared shirt with black pants with long hair parted and combed over. When we met, I shook his hand and introduced myself, where he replied, “Oh, I know who you are. I know a lot about you, Michael.” To my awkward surprise, he continued the conversation by indicating that he was the police officer who had been in charge of my paper work and was the contact Nhi was working with. After our encounter we sat to eat, and in what seemed to be like normal procedure as I have mentioned previously, we invited each other to drink beer. Then the night went out and we conversed about each other specifically on topics of our families (Fieldnotes, April 2017).

Research in Vietnam is not a simple task due to the tensions of the political system. What I can say about my time in Vietnam is that it takes a certain level of commitment and relationship building. In terms of commitment there were times where I asked myself if the money and time I was spending to gain access worthwhile, but I can say now that it was. Vietnam has a history of colonial and imperialistic intervention and the current government is cautious of foreigners, and this may be more relevant regarding Vietnamese born abroad who have parents that fled Vietnam or have connections to the former Republic (e.g., myself and my father). It is particularly important for me to recognize my identity and position as a Vietnamese person born abroad who returned to Vietnam to work because of the transnational processes that occur during the return where bodies become forms of capital implicated in Vietnamese development or not (Carruthers,
What is mean, is that while I was in the research, I possibly held cultural capital for Vietnam that needed to be monitored by Vietnamese officials. And it may have needed to be volunteered so that they could confirm I was not a returning Vietnamese with lineage to the former Republic plotting to overthrow the Communist regime (Nguyen, 2016).

I write this section not to scare anyone or to deter anyone from doing research in Vietnam. More importantly, I write it to detail the nuances of doing research in a country that is heavily influenced by the past and one that works in what can describe as a one-party, authoritarian system. This way of governance implicates all facets of society in Vietnam, and while I was in the country, the research and I were part of the country. Thus, to conduct the research for this dissertation I had to abide by the governmental and protocols that exist in Vietnam.

5.7 Conclusion

The methodological approach I implemented for this research project derived from traditions of research that extend beyond the boundaries of normal quantitative or qualitative research. I appropriated components from various methodological approaches to create my own methodological process. I required components of each methodology to produce the best research foundation. I wanted FFAV staff members to be part of the research, so I used PAR to guide me on how to open the research to them. FFAV wanted an assessment of their project, so PE was needed as an outline for how to prepare an evaluation with organizational members. I needed CIM to help me pay attention and appreciate the local culture and people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Then, I needed ethnography because I had to be an active member of the cultural setting of the research.
When it comes to the academy’s definition of credibility and validity regarding qualitative research, some may question that just because I spent eleven months in a research setting does not mean the research in this dissertation was good research. However, I argue that our definition of good research is research that is done right in terms of ethics and morality. I was the academic researcher in this setting and as a result, I was afforded different privileges that were not always given to those around me. My feelings regularly swayed from excitement to shame while I was researching with FFAV. Excitement came in the moments where we were expanding our research across the province. Doing this research together we shared anger, annoyances, laughter, and love. But after I would return home from these research trips there would be times where I felt guilty. I felt guilty because here I was doing research for my dissertation, a dissertation that is just one part of my life, while it was the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province whose lives I was infiltrating. Their lives continue in the districts, in the communities, and in the office located on Lý Thường Kiệt Street. Thus, for the people who discount the research in this dissertation, I will argue and say that in doing so you are discounting the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Their voices should be heard and their experiences should be seen.

My personal discussion with PAR scholar Maria Elena Torre at the Critical Participatory Action Research Institute at the City University of New York Graduate Center (Personal Communication, 2016), also pushed me to think about the purpose of research and to build in moments for those who were living the questions I was studying in order to bring their own expertise. I hope that by doing research in the manner that I did with FFAV and in Huế, I was able to make research participatory, inclusive, and considerate of Huế culture. In the chapters that follow, analyses and stories from this research are provided. I finish this chapter by stating I
am the writer of the analyses in the subsequent chapters and themes that accompany them. Yet these analyses did not come entirely from me. It is the lives, words, and emotions of FFAV and the people from Thừa Thiên Hué Province that make this research complete.
CHAPTER 6: THE PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION

Our partners and the communities, they’re educated, they know exactly what they need and want, and they understand very well. So playing a role as the NGO means you teach, and you tell people, and you try to inspire them to do, you teach them here (points at heart) to do, you encourage them to do, and you do together with them, you stay with them, you understand them, and at the end you shake hands with them, like OK we’ve done something together. – FFAV Staff Member

6.0 Introduction

Embracing the call to push methodological boundaries in SfD (Darnell, Whitley, & Massey, 2016), I present the story of how the PE with FFAV came into existence. I do this as a way to explore PE’s utility a methodological approach to conduct SfD research with FFAV. Rarely has SfD research written in-depth about the actual processes of conducting research with people from the research setting (Darnell, 2014; Mwaanga & Prince, 2017; Reis et al., 2015; Spaaij et al., 2017). The significance of this chapter is that while SfD scholars have attempted to do forms of participatory research (Hayhurst et al., 2015; Reis et al., 2015; Spaaij et al., 2017), few have provided insights into their experiences, thus leaving sporadic examples upon which to build.

I wrote this chapter following a moral ethics founded in participatory research that calls for researchers to share stories of research conducted with participants and co-researchers (Frisby et al., 1997; Greenwood et al., 1993). With that said, I am guided by Simpson (2007) who states that studies embracing the tradition of participatory research must stimulate the senses of research that was conducted with communities for the sake of depicting the realities that occurred. My intention is to provide an honest description of what it looks like to do participatory research with an SfD project that is guided by a pedagogy founded in a commitment to the people.
Situating this chapter theoretically, I explored the PE through a lens driven by the work of Paulo Freire. SfD scholars (Mwaanga & Prince, 2016; Spaaij & Jeanes, 2013; Wright, Jacobs, Ressley & Young, 2016) have discussed Freire and SfD, but few have developed an actual research plan and more so described participatory research with an SfD project that applies concepts from Freire (Spaaij et al., 2017). The inspiration behind the application of Freire was that it emphasizes a pedagogy and dialogue that mobilizes people to create change. Freire’s relationship with participatory research provokes thoughtful ways to incorporate people from the field into the research. I argue this provocation was needed in SfD because it adds needed insight into how theory can influence practical research conducted by scholars. Therefore, the purpose of writing this chapter was twofold: (1) to give life to the PE that was conducted and (2) to build upon other SfD research that has applied a Freire-ian theoretical framework. I argue that participatory research between an SfD project and a researcher allows for the possibility of the co-creation of knowledge that benefits both parties. To do so requires a theoretical commitment to dialogue and mutual learning as described by Freire, as well as a methodological framework, in this case, PE. This introduces PE methodology as a form of co-research to the field of SfD and continues the application of Freire-ian theory as a guide to conducting participatory research.

The outline of the chapter is as follows: first, key concepts from Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that framed the analysis are highlighted. Second, reasons why the PE came about are detailed. Third, the process of conducting a PE is discussed. Fourth, results based on Freire-ian thought are illustrated. Fifth, tensions and lessons learned when conducting research with FFAV are reflected upon. Last, impacts of this research on SfD and a call for further research to pursue an agenda of participatory research conclude the chapter.
6.1 Freire-ian Theory of Dialogical Action and Pedagogy

The goal of elaborating on Freire-ian concepts in SfD was influenced by other scholars who have related participatory research to Freire’s work (Baum, McDougall & Smith, 2007; Cahill, 2007; Minkler, 2000). Paulo Freire was a Brazilian educator who argued that the only way for social change to occur was to gather the masses of oppressed peoples to create dialogue through which action could be created. Freire’s approach to teaching and educating with marginalized people in Brazil is quintessential to the idea of doing research with people that do not have or come from academic backgrounds. To Freire, whether it was educating or researching with people, a conscious effort was required of the researcher to become immersed with others around a common goal towards social transformation.

Freire (1972) developed community-based research processes to support people’s participation in knowledge production and social transformation. According to Freire, “In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation they can transform” (1971, p. 49). Applying this quote from Freire, it must be recognized that our FFAV research is not about struggles or liberation from oppressive structures, but is about unearthing limitations hindering the sustainability of their activities in Thừa Thiên Huế Province and then producing responses to these limitations. Even more, this PE did not intend to use Freire’s words, “liberation of people,” in a literal sense. Vietnam has been liberated since 1975, but since liberation, just like in any emerging society, the country encounters various social, political, and economic struggles. So, our research was more centered on realizing with the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province the problems that limit the progression or improvement of FFAV activities for the people who participate in them. Through a Freire-ian lens, we had to
struggle through ideas and collaboration in the interest of determining the best way to do research together. As a result, we collaborated in processes of research that are still often privileged to the trained researcher, such as creating methods, planning the research process, and engaging in fruitful discussion.

To Freire, dialogue is an essential element in cooperation that will lead to effective social change. This is known as the theory of dialogical action (Shor & Freire, 1987). In the theory of dialogical action, Freire believes that researchers have no place for controlling people in research processes, but can only gain their commitment (Freire, 1971, p. 168). The communication that occurs focuses the attention of everyone involved in the research towards issues that are problematic, and these issues become a challenge to be acted upon. Once issues are formulated between the researcher and participants, a solution is sought, and an answer is enacted. Theory of dialogical action speaks to how groups of people can find common ground through communication and a mutual understanding of education to enact change (Freire, 1971). Change may originate from collaborative social processes because Freire’s dialogical action theory is based in co-learning, action, and critical reflection whereby these processes are grounds for participatory efforts (Angeles, 2011; Minkler, 2000). The process of the dialogical theory of action begins when people meet in cooperation with a common goal to change the social world in which they are living. I connect his theoretical framework to the PE that research was done with the participants, not for the participants.

That said, Freire provides more than just a social theory that helps to explain social phenomena; he approaches theory in a more practical and applicable manner by stating,

[H]uman activity consists of reflection and action: it is praxis; it is transformation of the world. And as praxis, it requires theory to illuminate it. Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action (1971, p. 125).
Freire supported critical reflection because it provided some of the critical philosophical groundings for participatory efforts (Minkler, 2000). There must be a continuous process of discussion that allows for the practice of reflection and action between members. The mutual commitment we all maintained in this research was rooted in our passion to keep activities going for the communities across the province.

Through Freire’s theory of dialogical action based on people’s ability to manifest love, humility, values, and faith, a critical pedagogy can manifest, where education is used and performed to disrupt and deconstruct harmful cultural practices in the name of improving a particular social world. Researchers (e.g., academics, SfD workers, community members, and programs), for the sake of creating much needed reflection, must foster a mutual education where the line between researcher and participant becomes hazy. Freire advocated that educators should share reality with their students in the interest of understanding the social world together. Dialogical pedagogy is designed to teach in a way that leads and enables participants. The praxis behind critical pedagogy is to transform the social setting into something more appropriate for the people. The act of integrating consciousness that is both collective and critical may lead to social change. I found this theory to be influential to our research process because critical pedagogy attempts to make a positive impact in the lives of others. For us, it was about transforming FFAV from an SfD project reliant on Norwegian support to a self-sufficient Vietnamese project carried out by local community members.

According to Freire (1971), the pedagogy of the oppressed, which is a pedagogy of people, has two distinct states:

In the first, the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation. In the second stage, in which the reality of oppression has already been transformed, this pedagogy ceases to belong to the
oppressed and becomes a pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation (p. 54).

With that said, Freire-ian pedagogy and dialogical action greatly inform this chapter. Due to the practical nature of Freire’s approach, this chapter shows moments of the PE that illuminate ideas such as pedagogy and dialogical action theory in the praxis of SfD.

6.2 The Background: What and Why a PE?

In my own preparation to conduct research with FFAV, I had no strategy to carry out an assessment of the project. However, in my year-long preparation after my first visit to FFAV in July 2015, the landscape of FFAV dramatically shifted. After 15 years of support from The Norwegian Paralympic and Olympic Committee (NIF) and The Football Association of Norway (NFF), it was decided by the international partner, NFF, that Norwegian financial and logistical support would gradually decrease and cease on December 31, 2018. FFAV was positioned in an unfortunate and abrupt circumstance where they were required to proceed knowing Norwegian support was ultimately coming to an end. With NIF and NFF producing this troublesome social reality (Freire, 1971), FFAV now had the task of critically transforming their social reality to support the future of activities in the province. As stated, Freire (1971, p. 54) described pedagogy’s two distinct stages: (1) the oppressed unveil their reality and commit themselves to transformation and (2) the reality becomes an all-encompassing pedagogy. FFAV and I faced both stages head-on in our PE; we had to acknowledge that funding and support from Norway were ending, and we had to inform the people and communities who implement FFAV football clubs, activities or events.
The Norwegian decision to exit set off a chain of events where an assessment was sought out by FFAV. Reasoning for withdrawal of Norwegian support from FFAV was that the overall Norwegian development paradigm was shifting to be more domestic. In a one-on-one meeting with the director of development of NFF who visited FFAV in March 2017, he told me that funding was being allocated to help with the Norwegian domestic influx of refugees, thus international projects were being funded less. And as a result of FFAV being a project in existence for over 15 years it was decided by NFF that it was time to make plans for a handover process to Vietnamese nationals. Thus, what was initiated was a handover process putting the responsibility on FFAV to ensure that local communities and partners would be able to continue activities and events without FFAV/Norwegian support after 2018. The primary purpose of the PE was to determine the appropriate steps in the remaining two years (2016-2018) of NIF and NFF support, in order to provide the tools and resources for sustainability in the local communities across Thừa Thiên Huế. To explore how FFAV could assist local communities, FFAV wanted to focus on local people’s perceptions on FFAV’s impacts, their ideas for sustainability, and what areas they wanted FFAV to assist with to alleviate the tensions of continuing activities once the handover process was complete. Furthermore, the secondary purpose of the PE was to gather data to be presented to Vietnamese authorities such as the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and DoET to pursue their support and potential financial contribution in order to continue activities once NIF and NFF contributions have ceased and desisted.

From my own lived experience as a volunteer with the project, no staff member wanted to give up on FFAV as a project, but they knew the best way to move forward was to be committed to ensuring that the people and communities were equipped with the necessary means
to continue activities. For the eleven months I was with FFAV, there was a constant concern about how the project would survive and, more so, how programs would be maintained in local communities. FFAV staff members were distraught because their livelihoods were in danger as many of them have been working for FFAV for years. For many FFAV staff members all of their work experience was with the project and as I was told there are not many opportunities to work in Huế (e.g., businesses, corporations) as compared in Hanoi and Saigon. Those staff members that I became close with had seen their former colleagues let go by FFAV months previous due to the budget cuts. They also expressed to me their concerns permeating the province, specifically, in local communities about how activities would be maintained. Upon my arrival, it seemed I had entered a state of real fear. PE was thus warranted because research was designed with the intentions of helping decision makers - FFAV staff - make clear and wise decisions for the benefit of the project.

6.3 The Participatory Evaluation Process

From a Freire-ian (1972) pedagogical approach, FFAV and I centered on the issue of sustainability as the topic to address in our PE. For FFAV and I, our PE was motivated by finding answers and obtaining data to help carry on FFAV programs and activities throughout Thừa Thiên Huế Province once NIF and NFF exited with their resources. This section provides insight into the experience of initiating participation, creating methods, data collection trips, and processes of data analysis.

6.3.1 Initiating Participation

My first day at FFAV was on August 14, 2016. When I arrived in the office, Hoa and Anders, whom I both met in July 2015 and were continued contacts for me, greeted me. After I settled into my new desk, I met with Hoa, Vice-Director of FFAV, for the entire day. Instructed
by Barab et al. (2004) to be upfront about my own goals at the beginning of participatory research, I was honest and spoke to how my Ph.D. dissertation is academic and must be because at the end of my journey I need to write a document that allows me to graduate. However, I also said this academic tension was my own, and I was going to try to not allow my academic responsibilities to affect our collaborative efforts.

I told Hoa that I wanted to take a participatory research approach where I insisted on FFAV involvement and ownership of the research as well. I expressed that it was due to FFAV that I was afforded this unique opportunity, thus it was only right for them to be involved and for each staff member to participate how they saw fit. She understood and was receptive to my request for FFAV involvement. It was an honest discussion between the both of us. In this regard, Freire’s pedagogical theory consisting of trusting dialogue facilitated our research relationship in Huế. This particular meeting was the beginning of a research partnership and a relationship of mutual understanding with efforts for a PE. So, I dedicated myself to FFAV in a unifying effort (Freire, 1971). I immersed myself in FFAV, the culture of Huế, and the communities around me. This immersion and sense of unity resulted in what Freire calls cultural synthesis. Freire (1971) states,

In cultural synthesis, the actors who come from "another world" to the world of the people do so not as invaders. They do not come to teach or to transmit or to give anything, but rather to learn, with the people, about the people’s world… In cultural synthesis, the actors become integrated with the people, who are co-authors of the action that both perform upon the world… Instead of following predetermined plans, leaders and people, mutually identified, together create the guidelines of their action (pp. 180-181).

As a researcher, I jumped into my role as a volunteer with FFAV. I consciously and actively committed myself to FFAV and, to an extent, the communities of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. I came to an early realization that this research had the potential to affect FFAV and
the communities, thus I was obligated to extend the research to them and have their efforts inform the research process. Throughout my time in the field, I felt this honest need of wanting to help FFAV and the local communities in any way possible. In a very Freire-ian way and in the ethics of my research approach I was connected to the research and to the people. With that, Freire’s devotion to people out of love and humility was a basis for the participatory research here. To illustrate my feelings about this concept deeper here are fieldnotes from two different moments at the beginning of my stay:

I mean shit, I’m only a volunteer and I feel the pressure of wanting to produce good work that will show how FFAV is indeed a good thing for this community. I’ve been working on putting together a perfect evaluation that sometimes I need to remind myself that I’m here for my Ph.D. research. Kind of tough though because I feel like I owe something to the people here. It’s been hard because I think there are high expectations of me by the people at FFAV but then I also have to deal with the University in some ways, such as revising and making my ethics protocol solid. (Fieldnotes, September 2016)

[Feelings after a staff meeting] They also kept telling me to stop being so modest. But I can’t help but feel that they know way more than me about all of this and that I am just naïve researcher who is about to come in and fuck shit up. They also said that this is my project, when in truth it’s “our” project and I feel like I’m just here to help in the long run. (Fieldnotes, September 2016)

Throughout my entire stay, I always felt this constant need to do good work with FFAV. I honestly felt like because they gave me the opportunity to do research with them, that I had to help in any way that I could. Returning to my first day, when I had introduced my research ideas, Hoa then turned to what FFAV needed from the evaluation and hoped I could assist with. Since I came to FFAV as an outsider and had no working experience with the project, Hoa thought I could provide a perspective to the PE that was objective. She described the need for an evaluation that was requested by partners from national level ministries. I felt obliged to help
FFAV in the sense we were doing this together. I wrote in my notes this comment that sums up the feelings I felt after another meeting we had:

This is not entirely an evaluation but an internal assessment to be conducted by FFAV staff where, I, an external Ph.D. researcher will assist in every way possible and help coordinate the efforts. Because I am an outsider to the FFAV model it has been expressed that I can bring an attitude of objectivity to the research as I have not been influenced by the total working capacity FFAV has done. (Fieldnotes, September 2016)

Therefore, in my role as a volunteer and researcher with FFAV, I welcomed my position and the possibilities of how I can help FFAV in conducting this evaluation. And since I harmonized with participatory research by not formulating a research plan before I left for Vietnam and without FFAV (Kidd & Kral, 2005; Mellor, 2007), I fit the PE into my own research and used this PE as a huge part of my fieldwork. Hoa and I discussed that any data gathered from the evaluation team could be used for my dissertation, along with my own interviews and ethnographic field notes. Therefore, the PE provided me important access to data (e.g., participant observation, interviews, and informal conversations), which informed the rest of this research project. A leader of FFAV would end up calling our agreement a “win-win situation for all of us.”

6.3.1.1 Freire Dialogical Action. The dialogical theory of action rolled out when Hoa and I met to initiate research with the intention to positively transform FFAV. Freire (1971) recognized that the researcher (me) might lead participants (FFAV) who do not have the academic capital to initiate their own research processes. As a result, a cooperative bond between FFAV and myself was formed. In line with the theory of dialogical action, I did not control FFAV; instead, I committed myself to them and they committed their efforts to me (Freire, 1971, p. 168). What occurred was that many FFAV staff members became actively involved in researching with me and each other for the PE. According to Mellor (2007, p. 186), from a
dialogic perspective, the authenticity of knowledge in participatory research derives from the interactions in the research process. In creating a dialogical process, participatory research allows for researchers and participants to commingle various knowledge and expertise (Kindon, Pain & Kisby, 2007; Mellor, 2007). Kirby and McKenna (1989) state that an authentic dialogical approach is essential in the research process where all are respected as knowing subjects. Gibbon (2002) and Minkler (2000) also state that in forms of participatory research, it is necessary for beneficiaries to become co-researchers so a mutual gain is shared, and processes of learning can occur. The more we engaged in meetings with each other, talked about sustainability and our research, the more we became connected as co-researchers. Because sustainability of FFAV was on the minds of everyone it influenced every decision that was made. In the beginning of my time, we discussed at lengths in meetings, during morning coffees, and outside the office how we could approach sustainability of FFAV in the local communities. Eventually, our bonds extended beyond researcher and SfD project; our realities became intertwined for the sake of sustainability.

One particular moment where tons of dialogue occurred was during an important FFAV all-staff meeting where we decided that the objectives of the evaluation were to help inform three areas: (1) assess FFAV’s impact on children and the education sector; (2) understand difficulties and challenges for FFAV from 2016 to 2018; (3) obtain recommendations for sustainability from local communities.

Today we had a meeting about the evaluation. All of the management team and myself were sat in the meeting room to discuss the evaluation of FFAV. Phuong facilitated the meeting and spoke for most of the time. He spoke about how this evaluation is really important to FFAV and needs to be done in order to capture some sort of evidence and data that can be used across the handover strategy. He asked me what I thought about sustainability and I replied that I don’t know much about the ongoing situation other than what I have been told; however, as expressed I want to help in any way possible. The discussion then opened to the group where everyone provided input on what they
believed were relevant information to address sustainability. With Phuong leading the
discussion he honed in on needing to get evidence of FFAV success to show partners
such as DoET and to get information on the difficulties that may prohibit local
communities from continuing activities. In the end, it was determined that three areas
we wanted data to inform are to: (1) assess FFAV’s impact on children and the
education sector; (2) understand difficulties and challenges for FFAV from 2016 to
2018; (3) obtain recommendations for sustainability from local communities. We
believed focusing on obtaining data to inform these three areas would help meet the
objectives of presenting data to provincial and national partners. Another important
resolution was that this evaluation is something I will take lead on and coordinate, but
I am not entirely responsible and it is not entirely about my Ph.D. With that said, FFAV
is immensely invested in the research. Lastly, it was officially made known that Nhi
and I will be working on this whole research project. (Fieldnotes, September 2016)

During this meeting we coalesced as a group to create vacillating dialogue to conclude
the most appropriate areas of concern for the PE. Phuong, as the director of FFAV, led the
discussion but he made an effort to include me and other FFAV staff when necessary. It was
clear and straightforward that FFAV wanted the PE to inform the three specific areas because it
would help the project present formidable data to DoET and MoET, as well as inform the project
on how to assist local communities to continue activities. Moreover, by engaging in conversation
we were able to clearly define my role as a volunteer and researcher in leading the PE, and also
to know that I had a partner in Nhi in conducting the research. This specific meeting was
informative, clear and successful in establishing the foundation of the PE.

Once things were finalized on our end we sent an official letter to request a meeting with
DoET and members from each Sub-DoET to review the evaluation plan and tools. Referenced in
the methods chapter any research that was being conducted had to be approved by DoET and
then DoET had Sub-DoET officials be responsible for working with me and FFAV. Thus, in
extending the participatory nature of the evaluation to Sub-DoET officials outside of the FFAV
office we had an “evaluation meeting” with all nine Sub-DoET physical experts. The primary
purpose of this was to notify these government partners of the entire research plan and to get
their thoughts and suggestions. Specifically, they helped inform the interview guides and provide feedback on how we should conduct interviews in local communities.

At 2:00 pm we have the evaluation-meeting workshop with everyone. There are volunteers, SuB-DoET members, FFAV staff, and interns. The meeting is pretty packed. The FFAV meeting room is full, with no empty seats. Not all the SuB-DoET members are here though Phú Lộc is not here and the person from DoET that is supposed to be working with us is not here. Hoa and Nhi run most of the meeting. I sit next to Thao so she can help me translate.

Opening the research process or otherwise known as the evaluation planning to many other people is both important and good for the overall process. To be able to hear other people’s opinions, especially those from SuB-DoET is great. However, it did get loud and it was a lively discussion. So the meeting went like this: chi Hoa introduced everyone and started with the opening remarks to why we are doing the evaluation; reviews the agenda; introduces the volunteers who are here to help me translate.

The PAR element to this meeting comes at the time we review the interview guides. As we review the interview guides that will be used people from SuB-DoET input their ideas on how things should be worded or occur. For instance, Binh from Huế City SuB-DoET said that parents from poorer areas may not be educated enough to answer questions. Chi Hoa said ask anyway and we take note of this in our data analysis. There was also discussion of providing the questions to people prior to their interview to get them informed, but chi Hoa said we shouldn’t do that either and if a person says “I don’t know”, then we write I don’t know.

Some thought that the wording was too academic even in the Vietnamese language. Also, the wording in Vietnamese needed to be dumbed down a little bit so that the questions can be understood by parents, especially those from ethnic minorities. So people make changes and we change questions around. The meeting is lively, with many people talking, lots of opinions, changes, and discussions.

There is a huge discussion between FFAV and SuB-DoET to the role SuB-DoET plays. This started because people from SuB-DoET thought they were being interviewed only, not doing interviews. FFAV, Chi Hoa especially, stressed that this is an evaluation team and that we are together on this and it’s not FFAV and then SuB-DoET. The point of this is to create a sense of unity that is greatly needed. Also, it’s not to allow for an environment that is creating a divide. In the end, we are a team. And I think the message got across. It was concluded they would interview parents. (Fieldnotes, October 2016).

From the story above, I want to point to an important moment when a member from SuB-DoET voiced that he thought the interview guides were too verbose in academic language and
could make it difficult for some populations to follow. I had not realized this as I constructed the interview guides, and most likely would never have thought twice about the language. Another moment was when Binh from Huế City was inputting his thoughts on the education level of parents and how that could affect the research. This specific meeting was special in the overall process of participatory research because FFAV, DoET, and SuB-DoET all came together to ensure that the evaluation plan was good to go.

6.3.1.2 Freire Problem-Posing Education. The type of dialogue between FFAV and I formed an education known as problem-posing (Freire, 1971, p. 80, 1999). Problem-posing is an educational process which helps create an atmosphere of mutual dialogue, wherein education involves a constant unveiling of reality resulting in an emergence of consciousness and intervention in reality (Freire, 1971). In problem-posing education, the teacher-student and the students-teachers reflect (or in the case of this research the researcher-participants and participants-researchers) simultaneously on themselves to create an authentic form of thought and action (Freire, 1971, p. 83; Macedo & Freire, 1995).

As Freire advocates, through communication, trust, and cooperation, we were able to participate in this problem-posing education together through the various meetings we had. Freire (1999) would identify that I and FFAV worked together leading to critical reflection and continuous discovery of issues. We had to openly listen to each other, even during times of disagreements, to create the mutual form of education that would uncover this PE. FFAV staff members were not passive listeners; they were critical co-investigators in dialogue with me and each other. In line with Freire-ian pedagogy, FFAV staff members were clearly conscious of their reality regarding the handover process. FFAV had the power to critically perceive the way they exist as an SfD project because they came to see sustainability not as a static reality, but as a
reality in process, in transformation (Freire, 1999). The problem-posing educational method created an atmosphere of mutual dialogue amongst all of us resulting in an involved constant unveiling of reality. Our discussions were an active process of thought provoking interactions where FFAV and I negotiated the social reality that required transformation. The unveiled reality illustrated the abundant amount of work towards research necessary to facilitate planning for FFAV sustainability.

It was important for FFAV to set the goals and the three focus areas of the PE. Truly, it was FFAV staff who informed this PE because,

Participatory researcher and evaluation maintain that the actors in the situation are not merely objects of someone else’s study but are actively influencing the process of knowledge-generation and elaboration (Fernandes & Tandon, 1981, pp. 20–21).

Below are my fieldnotes from after the particular meeting described above when we discussed the objectives and how we would handle the PE.

These meetings are perfect examples of participatory research between academics and practitioners. As I know it, participatory research would be true if it included the children here in developing the methods and such, but in this case, I think it’s close to impossible to accomplish. Just for me to interact with children is made difficult by the government so that’s out of the picture. However, I don’t think that should take away the research process and interaction between FFAV staff and myself. Without them and their input, this internal assessment is useless. Like there is no way I could know what the project needs for this evaluation. If I was in charge and doing it all then I would be lost. They’re the ones with the knowledge and experiences that are valuable. My academic knowledge is useful but, in the end, my knowledge is constricted to only theoretical, sociological and whatever I read in books and discussed in class. No way would I have been able to develop those three areas of focus by myself. I would’ve been lost. (Fieldnotes, October 2016)

Leaving the meeting room that day, there was a genuine process of co-learning and co-researching. The meeting consisted of jovial discussion where we talked about the evaluation and the importance of it; the roles and responsibilities we would take on, and most importantly why
we were doing it. To Freire, dialogue is an essential element in cooperation, because it facilitates effective processes of learning and teaching, resulting in potential for social transformation (Shor & Freire, 1987). Freire (1972) would suggest in this PE that FFAV staff members as the local stakeholder should be contributing authentic local knowledge. Spaaij et al. (2017) also argues that fostering local participation in evaluation needs increased attention as participatory research continues to be implemented. In line with critical pedagogy, FFAV educated me throughout the entire process. The participation of FFAV was obligatory throughout the entire process of this PE because, in the end, FFAV staff knew more and knew better than I did. I was fortunate to be allowed to work with them. My position as a researcher was to create, together with FFAV, the conditions in which knowledge at the level of local communities could be explored.

6.4.2 Participatory Evaluation Methods

Following PAR and PE, when creating interview guides and focus group guides, I, FFAV staff, and one leader from each district level Sub-DoET were involved. I was tasked to develop the first drafts of interview and focus group guides for the following populations: children, parents, physical teachers, headmasters, Sub-DoET and DoET. In the best interest of the research and in keeping with PE epistemologies, I sought input from FFAV staff members when constructing the research instruments. The research approach of CIM became helpful here because as much as I could develop questions, it was FFAV staff members and those from Huế who provided local knowledge to the research strategies (Cameron & Gibson, 2005; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008).

FFAV staff members were not self-deprecating (Freire, 1971) where they ceded their knowledge because of my academic background. According to Freire (1971), peasants in educational projects will believe that because they are not the researcher then they are not
reputable sources of knowledge. However, Freire went on to say that peasants do have expert knowledge when engaged in critical dialogue because the oppressed can emerge as confident holders and creators of knowledge. Applying this thinking to our research, I found that all people truly do have substantial opinions to provide, and, in our PE, FFAV staff members did “know things” that were valuable. For instance, Nhi, who I grew close with and consider to be a great friend was an individual who was so self-deprecating of her knowledge, while not recognizing how much she offered to me and the research. Nhi and I worked together often and we had many one-on-one meetings about the evaluation. One particular meeting early on in the PE process Nhi and I collaborated on creating the research plan by deciding who should be the participants, what schools we should visit, and estimating the timeline for the entire project. During this meeting Nhi showed great humility often insisting that I make the final decisions; however, I encouraged her to be confident and to educate me on research processes in Vietnam. This is shown in my fieldnotes of this meeting Nhi and I had when finalizing the plan for evaluation.

Today was such a great day. Nhi is an amazing person and has so much research in her. I mean it when I say that people are researchers and they don’t need to have a Ph.D. to be recognized as one. We worked together all day to finalize a perfect plan for the internal assessment. The conversations we had illustrated such an important relationship between researcher and practitioner. She was insightful, inspiring and knew so much more than I ever could about the FFAV. We were able to put together a very solid and doable timeline for the evaluation. We had amazing conversations about what FFAV is able to do and not, how sustainability is hard because of the model itself is not easily accessible. We talked about how serious DoET is and the how the Vietnamese government is serious about making sure no one is messing around in the country, especially INGOS that are doing work in the country, even more specifically when it comes to topics pertaining to human rights. She shared a story with me about how someone recorded a meeting and then she was asked to translate a piece of the conversation, and how when someone called her and she asked where this person was they answered in Hồ Chí Minh City but they were really next door to the meeting listening to the whole thing. (Fieldnotes, September 2016).
Throughout my time with FFAV I was always being informed about topics that I knew little about. For example, until Nhi informed me about her experiences working for FFAV and foreigners, I never imagined the extent to which Vietnamese authorities monitor international presence. It was during a moment like the one shared that I realized how little I knew about Vietnam and more so, conducting research in the country.

Humble and Smith (2007) advise that methods should be beneficial towards enacting change and should be influenced by stakeholders. Discussions and meetings where we assembled to discuss methods were then required to ensure all was sound. The process of planning this PE and the data collection necessitated the involvement of everyone from FFAV. If I had any questions or needed clarity about topics related to Huế such as gender or anything that may criticize Vietnam, Nhi informed me of what may be appropriate to ask or not. For instance, Nhi advised keeping the questions straightforward and simple so our participants could understand the questions and answer coherently. Many staff members provided input on the guides, especially Mrs. Ha, who has much experience working with government officials. Mrs. Ha because of her previous role as director of DoET acted as a final review for interview guides. I remember her telling Nhi and I on many occasions that our questions did not make sense or were not specific enough. Specifically, Mrs. Ha wanted us to clear up the interview guides for parents because she knows that some parents living in rural villages may not have an educational background which may make it difficult for them to answer complex questions. Anh Chung was another FFAV staff member who helped me with interview guides. Unknowingly, I made mistakes in translating many interviews from English to Vietnamese, thus anh Chung, reviewed the Vietnamese versions to ensure that the language was formal and appropriate. To that end,
undeniably, I turned to FFAV staff members often when creating methods and planning research for the PE.

6.4.3 Participatory Evaluation Data Collection

We visited all nine districts in Thừa Thiên Huế Province to collect data for the PE. Additionally, I went to Hanoi, Vietnam’s capital, to conduct interviews with national leaders. It would be excessive to detail all of the PE research trips, but I do share moments from different trips we took in Huế to illustrate how this PE process developed for us. Once again, no PE process can or should ever be identical given the social contexts, but by providing snapshots, it is possible to consider these stories as examples for future research.

All data collection trips occurred in the general same manner, in that when we arrived in a district, we went to the Sub-DoET office and two schools: one primary and one secondary that have FFAV football clubs. In the early morning, when we arrived at a Sub-DoET office in a specific district, I would interview leaders in their office. After interviews with Sub-DoET were completed, we would visit one school mid-morning and the other school in the afternoon. At the schools, we did our data collection simultaneously. For instance, I would often interview a headmaster with help from an interpreter (usually a university student interning with FFAV) in their office, while someone interviewed the physical teachers in a separate classroom. The people doing focus groups with young people would be in another classroom, and lastly, the person conducting interviews with parents was in another classroom. Although each field trip consisted of different FFAV staff members, this plan ensured a consistent process. From our trip to Nam Đòng:

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1 I use physical teachers instead of physical education teachers because this was the language used with FFAV and in Vietnam.
We get to Nam Đông around 8:30 am and the physical expert for the Sub-DoET in Nam Đông, at a coffee shop where we meet to talk for a little and to catch up. He’s such a kind person. He and I get on well always talking about America and how his English skills are. At 9:15 we go to the first school and FFAV Club of the day, Huong Huu primary school. We get to the school and are greeted by the headmaster and a FFAV coach. We walk to the headmaster’s office where there is a large rectangular table with water and tangerines for us to enjoy. Introductions are made by physical expert introducing the school's staff, FFAV staff, and the local parents. Anh Chung from FFAV formally introduces why we are doing the evaluation to the school and thanking everyone for their time. (Fieldnotes, November 2016)

Participants for data collection were often selected with the assistance of district level Sub-DoET physical experts as well in conjunction with headmasters of schools we went to. Like the story above, I was always introduced in any formal spaces in the following manner:

This is Michael Dao. He is Viet Kieu from America but is studying his Ph.D. in Canada. He will be volunteering with us for the year and conducting research for his thesis which this evaluation is a part of.

These introductions were always awkward but were required so people knew who I was and what I was doing, especially since I was visiting their schools and communities. When we arrived in the districts, I made sure to be friendly with people, and I was often received in a hospitable environment by Sub-DoET leaders and members from the local communities. For me, showing face and goodwill helped build relationships of trust and sincerity with the communities. Relationships built on sincere trust founded in a common love are needed (Freire, 1972) when doing research with people. Torre (2014) and Torre et al. (2008) comment that for any productive and actionable research to occur, strong and honest foundations of trust must be created. We made sure the trust we had as a research team was extended to the local communities in order for them to feel at ease when speaking with us.

Data collection trips consisted of many moving parts. Even for us, plans were disrupted when someone from the local communities was late or did not have the adequate time devoted to
the PE. So, we adapted our plans when needed, conducted interviews in whatever spaces were open, and made sure everyone felt comfortable. In the end, the overall experience seemed like it was good for everyone because data collection trips provided a space for research teams to talk about the PE, socialize, and get to know each other. Specifically, in car rides to far away district like Nam Đông, we often joked around about if someone had a significant other or if there were any gossips about people. It certainly seemed like friendships grew during these research trips. These trips were especially significant for me because I got to know FFAV staff members better and more personally. I remember during this specific PE data collection trip to Nam Đông I learned through a joking manner that anh Chung is known as “Mr. Market” because everywhere he goes he likes to visit the local market of a district or community to see if they sell anything special (e.g., fruits, produce, or clothes). As well, we became closer by inviting each other to share a meal together. I vividly remember that after the research trip to Nam Đông anh Chung, Nhi, Hong, Linh and I treated each other for a late lunch, early dinner of bánh canh cá rô (tapioca noodles with fish) at a roadside stall to celebrate a successful data collection trip. In the end, we conducted research, but we also created relationships extending beyond the realms of the PE.

6.4.4 Participatory Evaluation Data Analysis

Data analysis in participatory research is built upon multiple pieces of knowledge informing the process (Cahill, 2007). Even more, McTaggart (1991) details that social change is contingent on explicit analysis that involves the culture and individuals of the many people involved in the research process. Thus, for our PE, I was well aware that I needed the people around me to help inform the data analysis. There was no possible way to justifiably analyze data which came from the people of Huế without assistance from people from Huế. More importantly,
because data analysis and action emerge between co-researchers and participants (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2007), I made sure FFAV contributed input in formulating results.

Cahill (2009) argues that data analysis in participatory research may span the spectrum from more traditional models where only one person (usually the academic researcher) conducts the analysis alone or where some, but not all co-researchers are able or willing to help with the analysis. Since I was the “trained researcher” of the PE, I was primarily responsible for data analysis; however, I regularly checked in with FFAV staff members for clarification of what I was finding. Although their participation was minimal in the analysis, I followed Torre et al. (2008) who said everyone should be encouraged to participate in the data analysis. In an attempt to have the data analysis be co-constructed, I often asked FFAV staff members what they thought about what I was finding in the data analysis, and they would inform me of their perspectives based on their data collection. For example, when looking at the data from interviews with physical teachers, I needed clarification from a staff member about their notes on if physical teachers wanted less training from FFAV or were physical teachers concerned about how the money from FFAV was being distributed among the clubs in the province. This FFAV staff member clarified that some physical teachers wanted less training from FFAV on grassroots football and would rather have the funding for these trainings to be distributed to support their FFAV football clubs. Generally though, FFAV staff members helped provide knowledge about cultural tendencies of Thừa Thiên Huế, such as how children are expected to be respectful and obedient in the classroom or local practices like how headmasters will maintain an FFAV football club but will not fully support it with school resources.

Unfortunately, during the data analysis, I became frustrated with how FFAV staff collected data. This was my problem as the researcher leading the PE with FFAV because I did
not clarify to staff members how to take interview notes, authorizing them to do as they felt was most comfortable. As a result, there were times I had issues with others, as depicted below in my fieldnotes:

I hate to say it but some of the interview data that I’m looking at is just bullet points. There’s no substance to the data where I can sift through and try and find some themes. But I got to go with it. It’s part of the research process that we are doing. This was done in a participatory manner and so it goes that data is the way it is. (Fieldnotes, December 2016)

My frustrations were my own, and I realized I had to check my emotions during the analysis. I had to consciously tell myself that it was not reasonable for me to be annoyed because my way of doing research was not met; even more, I did not express to the team how I would like their notes to be written. These feelings and inability for cooperative data analysis are downsides of doing a PE. Regrettably, in doing PE there are times when researchers training and participants training clash. I should have been more cautious of data collection and data analysis with FFAV before I embarked on this research with them. From a pedagogical standpoint, I did not teach to facilitate (Freire & Macedo, 1995) the collection of data. The staff members of FFAV were not at fault at all. To be open, the inability and immaturity of not being able to instruct data collection with FFAV is a downside of this project and broadly with PE. I believed that by stripping away my academic training would allow for greater participation; however, what occurred was unguided participation on behalf of FFAV.

This was another example of the inconveniences that occurred when doing research with coResearchers. In retrospect, it was my fault for not giving more specific instructions. I admit these feelings I had indeed stemmed from an academic background that has made me think in a certain way. I hope these narratives of my own misfortunes enable other researchers to approach participatory research in a more thoughtful manner. This experience has taught me not to be
scared of bringing in academic practices when necessary. The goal of PE is to bring an effective social change to an organization and in order to do so, there are times where academic knowledge will need to supersede local practices and vice versa. Thus, future SfD researchers engaging in participatory research ought to be more cognizant of when to insist on academic practices.

Nonetheless, in the end, the data analysis worked out because I was able to go through everyone’s notes to code relevant themes. I coded notes from FFAV staff members then spoke with Nhi to clarify any misunderstandings I may have had pertaining to culture or FFAV practices. Through discussions and input from various staff members, we were able to identify helpful findings that spoke to the focus areas underpinning the PE.

6.4 Results: Freire-ian Participatory Evaluation

Freire (1970) acknowledged that cultural action implies a commitment between people to transforming reality, and cultural action is founded on scientific knowledge of reality. We wanted to do this PE not only to assess FFAV activities and explore what local communities thought of FFAV, but also to take what we found and do something to improve the project and help communities move forward with sustainability. With sustainability in mind, analysis through a Freire-ian framework resulted in two pertinent themes: (1) actionable results and (2) mutual learning. Each theme alludes to the co-creation of knowledge that I argue benefitted this research project and the goals of FFAV.

6.4.1 Actionable Results

While I was still with FFAV in Vietnam, we (mainly I, but with Nhi’s input at various moments) wrote a thorough report of our findings that was used as an internal source of
information. I sat at my desk in the FFAV office in February 2017 writing this report which came out to be 80 pages from title page to last appendix. With the occasional peek over to speak with Nhi who sat two desks away from me to ask her questions, I took sole responsibility of writing the report. The report consisted of an introduction, the context of the PE beginning with why it was done, who the target audience was, the methods used, the participants, the findings and a conclusion. I wrote it to highlight what different groups (e.g., MoET, DoET, Sub-DoET, headmasters, physical teachers, parents, and children) said pertaining to the three focus areas of the PE. We had an all-staff meeting to discuss the findings and ensure there were no major discrepancies about what I had written. Below are my fieldnotes of the meeting:

I was a little nervous going into the meeting. I mean this has been my project and Nhi and I worked really hard on it so that it would make sense and be presentable. Overall, the presentation went really well. In the beginning, I had to make sure to slow down my English so that everyone could follow. I need to remember to slow down and enunciate. I went through the presentation slide by slide. I went over the findings from all the groups and then I went to the students, which I emphasized was the most important part. This is where I recommended that the reasoning for sustainability should come from an overall human development standpoint. It is now more important not to promote football, but to promote the idea of human development to MoET and DoET. If FFAV is presented in a way that emphasizes youth development in Vietnam and developing Vietnamese citizens then it is possible to create a more convincing argument for DoET and MoET to support FFAV.

Chung, Chi Hoa, Thao, Anders, and Phuong were the ones to speak and make comments, big or small. Chung made a comment about the coaches training having a limit and if they are boring we need to bring in new training techniques, and that DoET should look at themselves of owning clubs, not football activities. Chi Hoa spoke about the ownership of the clubs by DoET and they need to be more involved in the process because they are our partners. Thao had a comment of coach trainings being boring and could be limited thus that is an issue that needs to be addressed.

All in all, though, everyone was receptive of the results, provided feedback, which wasn't much, but also didn't really challenge the findings. Mrs. Ha who is probably the toughest critic even said to me said “Michael giỏi quá!” (Fieldnotes, March 2017).
After the meeting, the report became an official FFAV document to be referenced for information regarding the PE. This specific meeting was another instance where we sat in the FFAV meeting room discussing sustainability, but now we had data to dissect. Although I led the meeting and presented the findings, Chung and Thao had things to say about coaches training because those are aspects they are involved in. Moreover, it appeared that everyone sitting in that room was happy with the work that was produced. Selfishly, for Mrs. Ha supporting the efforts was in itself worthwhile due to her status as an elder and figure of FFAV.

In staying with PAR modes of disseminating results in a public sphere (Fine, 2016; Frisby et al., 1997), near the end of my time with FFAV, we held a provincial meeting with DoET and Sub-DoET leaders where we presented the findings from the PE. All the officials from DoET and Sub-DoET I had ever met and interacted with were in the meeting. Nhi and I presented the findings together. In a 15-minute presentation, we presented what we decided were the most important findings, which were impacts of FFAV activities on children, common difficulties with FFAV, and concerns of sustainability across the province. After the presentation, a leader of DoET commended us for our work and said this PE will help everyone move forward with the handover process. Then we discussed the findings in an open forum, creating, in line with PAR, space for critical discussion (Cahill, 2007; Humble & Smith, 2007). Below are my fieldnotes from the provincial workshop.

Then it was time for Nhi and me to present. We had practiced twice the day before because I was going to try my best in to present in Vietnamese but if I had trouble anywhere Nhi would jump in and help translate anything. We provided what we thought were the main points from the PE which were that the communities really liked that FFAV has brought different forms of life-skills education to the province. This is of importance because there is the creation of spaces to talk about issues that affect children every day. But when it came to sustaining activities communities feared that a lack of financial and human resources after FFAV has exited will result in the dissolving of all communities. When it came to recommendations for sustainability from the communities is that FFAV help put
things in order to train the local community members to sustain activities even if they are at a minimal level. Lots of questions and discussion came from the audience. There was a discussion on guidelines and guidance from DoET. District leaders wanted DoET to be more involved in the continuation of activities. Many district leaders shared their opinions on how sustainability can work by encouraging headmasters and teachers to take on activities when they can. Someone said the evaluation only talked about FFAV but we don't know if this is happening in other clubs (e.g., math club, science club, etc.), which I agreed to. The primary school life skills expert from DoET had an emotional telling that we can definitely continue activities as long as we try and make an effort. He stood up with fervor to say that we (a collective we in the entire room) know we can definitely continue FFAV activities; that we just need to make an effort and try. He continued to say that he knows people are busy in the province but we can still go on the motorbike to visit clubs once a week and that each Sub-DoET has physical experts that have knowledge about FFAV and can help facilitate the transition. His call resonated in us and a former DoET leader who said that we have to try for the children echoed it. This meeting was the beginning of a more concentrated effort of everyone in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. I was told and I believe the presentation went really well. (Fieldnotes, June 2017)

The provincial workshop depicted was a turning point in ensuring sustainability would occur.

Hearing passionate speeches from provincial leaders acknowledging the importance of FFAV’s impacts and the need to continue motivated all of us.

Another practical action that came from the PE taken thus far is FFAV has started visiting each district to deliver training on how to fundraise for clubs. Findings from the PE saw that local communities did not have the resources nor did they feel comfortable about fundraising for their FFAV football clubs. Fundraising workshops were already in the works but became a priority and further initiated when it was indicated by the PE that there was an immense need to train local communities how to obtain funds for clubs. A fundraising team consisting of headmasters, Sub-DoET physical experts, and FFAV staff spearheaded the fundraising workshops. In these workshops, FFAV invited headmasters, physical teachers, Sub-DoET members, and parents of a specific district to interact with each other to learn how to fundraise. The workshops were led by FFAV staff members who were trained in fundraising by a company
located in Hanoi. We also presented data from the children that indicated how they were
cognizant of the lack of funds and were willing to support their individual club with their own
money. The purpose of presenting the mobilization of children was to inspire adults to contribute
to fundraising efforts.

Furthermore, FFAV, in conjunction with each Sub-DoET, assembled district level teams
to expedite the handover and sustainability of activities. These teams consist of Sub-DoET
physical experts, headmasters, and physical teachers from local communities who are
particularly keen on FFAV. The headmasters are selected based on their level of interest and
involvement with FFAV, while physical teachers are selected based on their knowledge of
activities and pedagogy related to non-competitive grassroots football with life skills education.
The plan is to have a successful handover in Thừa Thiên Huế Province; Sub-DoET will lead the
change, with selected headmasters and physical teachers assisting at the local level. For example,
if a new school would like to incorporate FFAV activities, then chosen physical teachers will
conduct the training instead of an actual staff member of FFAV. The model follows
Schulenkorf’s (2012) suggestion that to increase sustainability for SfD projects, coaches should
train coaches; in the case of FFAV, local communities will train each other. The aspiration of
headmasters helping other headmasters and physical teachers training other physical teachers is
that ultimately everything will be done by the people of the communities without any
intervention by FFAV as an SfD project.

When discussing elements of PE in relation to social change, the research shows
“participation” is consistent with the relationships that have been formed between me, FFAV,
and, to a certain extent, the local communities; the “research” has been done via this PE that we
initiated; but, and, most importantly, “action” has yet to be completed and is something we are
still processing. In participatory research, work is a continuous course of action that will arise as needed and planned (Gibbon, 2002). And because this chapter is written in a certain time and space, I cannot speculate what will happen regarding the future of FFAV and activities in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Thus, the call to action is in the hands of those still at FFAV and who are planning to be with the project until Norwegian funding ceases.

To that end, the success of the PE cannot be determined by the outcomes or the sustainability that may or may not occur in the future. Now what can be said with confidence is that the process of doing a PE with FFAV has had success in producing action taken on such as a written report, fundraising workshops, and district level teams working on sustainability. Thus, in order to gauge the PE, I direct attention to the process of working with FFAV in order to carry out collaborative research that has resulted in action towards sustainability, and not sustainability as an end result.

6.4.2 Mutual Learning

Doing this PE illuminated how FFAV staff and I were able to learn from each other (Greenwood & Levin, 1993; Ponic, Reid & Frisby, 2010; Scott, Millar & Lloyd, 2005). These experiences resonate with Freire (1971, 1974) who stressed the importance of empowering people through dialogic education and participatory learning for which he adopted the concept of conscientisation (or conscious raising). Conscientisation refers to people’s awareness and probing of reality that will lead to change and transformation (Freire, 1974). According to Freire (1971), the fundamental goal of dialogical teaching is to create processes for learning and knowing. Freire’s critical pedagogy was designed to help people develop the literacy and inquiry skills that would allow them to more powerfully engage structures of inequality surrounding
their everyday lives. In this spirit, co-teaching and co-creation of knowledge was a cyclical process for all of us.

I realized as the “academic researcher” how capable FFAV staff members were in doing research, particularly when it came to interviewing, forming interview guides, and guiding me through research in Vietnam. Even apart from their note-taking ability which annoyed me during the data analysis process and which I admit I should have been more forthright in instructing them, people of FFAV had research skills. Collectively, we developed skills in a positive manner. Morrell (2008) and Romero et al. (2008) describe that processes of education and learning increasing when participants are active and contribute to the research. I found that we were all educated performing this PE because it allowed spaces for creating new knowledge and gaining valuable experiences (Veugelers, 2017). An example of this was when one of the interns I worked closely with as an interpreter started to ask probing questions during an interview with a headmaster.

Having Hong as a translator has been an amazing experience because I can see her growing and learning methods by conducting the interviews with me. Throughout the day she also probed and asked other questions that she saw as relevant during the interviews. As I said before eventually PhDs from abroad should probably not doing this kind of research and it should be done by locals. Maybe this is a step to doing something that will create that local research agenda. (Fieldnotes, November 2016)

I was truly amazed when Hong took over the interview to probe with her questions. I do not think it was my influence which allowed her to probe, but in line with Canella (2008) and Chatterton, Fuller, and Routledge (2008) who promote inclusive research spaces, having her positioned as part of the interview process most likely stimulated her probing. Below are fieldnotes that describe how Hong and I worked together when conducting formal interviews.
We sit around the coffee table where there are tea and water. Hong and I are on one side and the two headmasters on the other side. I do my beginning speech saying I’m sorry my Vietnamese is not good enough to carry this interview out by myself so Hong is here to help and we thank you very much. Hong also says this is just a conversation so please feel free to say anything you want and if you don’t want to say anything it’s not a big deal at all. We want this to be comfortable for everyone. (Fieldnotes, November 2016)

In the form of dialogical education, where spaces are formed in order for people to come together, I argue that for Hong and I to conduct interviews together allowed both of us to engage in research. In general, she and I had a good relationship because she helped me with translation and transportation during my time with FFAV. So, once she took over the interview, I was both surprised and overjoyed. Through participatory epistemologies, I argue Hong and other FFAV staff indubitably have the capability to be researchers in their own right.

Another example of mutual learning that occurred during the PE was Nhi having to teach me about topics in Vietnam of which I had little knowledge. Nhi and I would sit down often to discuss the culture of Vietnam pertaining to areas of gender, poverty, and social science research to ensure that this PE was in accordance with local conditions. Below are fieldnotes from after a meeting between her and me.

Nhi is so good at this stuff. She is definitely taking part in the participatory nature of this research. Her comments on the interview guides are great. She has knowledge and experience that is making this research process and evaluation that much better. It’s insightful when she is able to comment. Being able to work with her through these things is something I believe participatory research needs. Her knowledge and experience in FFAV, while also being a participant in my study is something greatly needed in SfD research. Just got some focus group guides back from Nhi and she is way better at facilitating these things compared to me. She’s got so much experience in all of this it’s crazy. (Fieldnotes, December 2016)

As depicted in the excerpt above, this research could not have been carried out without the knowledge and experience of FFAV. Overall, nobody can eliminate the processes of learning
that were constantly surfacing as a result of our research. Struttaford and Coe (2009) state that in participatory research through mutual learning, there can be action. Whether it was me learning about Vietnamese culture in a more intimate way, a university intern finding within herself the ability to conduct interviews, or us collectively learning about each other, we were all learning. If, in the end, PE is an approach to research that engenders an education for people, as Freire would imagine through processes of critical pedagogy, then I argue that it is well within reason to push this type of research across the SfD spectrum.

6.5 Tensions & Lessons Learned

There is no simple or easy way of doing research with other individuals. Executing participatory research takes patience, a level head, and the ability to engage in fruitful discussion. I learned this lesson in the most humbling manner while doing the PE with FFAV. I realized as more people become involved in the research process that problems arose regarding active listening, knowledge inclusion, and participation.

Although I was tasked to be the “coordinator” for the PE, in many cases I was not the final decision maker; instead, it was a leader of FFAV who did so. When I was with FFAV, I did not feel bothered by the chain of command, but I admit there were times of conflict when I deferred final decisions to others. There were times that I did not feel as if my ideas were taken into consideration. Some reasons for this could be my lack of knowledge of how things work in Vietnam or my position as volunteer answering to directors. Nonetheless, I felt these immature feelings of annoyance and anger when I thought nobody was listening to me. I realized that my knowledge did matter but it had to come in a way that worked with FFAV. I could not approach
our research with my way of thinking anymore which was something I preached I was ready to do, but took longer to practice.

6.5.1 Tensions in Participatory Research

In keeping with Freire-ian education, our research did not just have one person who dictated the entire process. This is not to say there was no leader in our research process, but we tried to work in a cooperative manner. For Freire (1971), cooperation is formed through constant communication where “there is no place for conquering the people on behalf of the revolutionary cause, but only for gaining their adherence” (p. 168). But as much as participatory research is devoted to the involvement and knowledge of others, someone must take a leading role (Frisby et al., 2005). For that reason, in participatory research, the goal should not be to eliminate power differences, but to work in meaningful ways to acknowledge, when possible, these differences. I argue in participatory research as I experienced differences often come from the disassociation between researchers and practitioners.

The most humbling research experience connected to this difference occurred during the second meeting I had with Hoa. I came into the meeting with Hoa with an academic mindset where I showed a PowerPoint presentation similar to my thesis proposal. I thought if I was a professional, I would display a serious and educated demeanor. I was talking about ethnography and participant observations, and how doing these methods would benefit “my own data.” She stopped me mid-sentence and said, “Michael, this is too much about your research than it is about the FFAV evaluation.” I could not believe that during my first week, I had let off this attitude of an academic know it all. I was embarrassed. I read so many books and articles on creating spaces for collaborative knowledge creation. But here I was already putting “my”
research fist. The worse part was I did not even notice it. I was humbled. Through this research I found that there were moments I needed to set academia aside and embrace humility.

Torre et al. (2008) would state that at this moment, I needed to stop using academic language that would distance myself from the people I was doing research with, and instead use their words and reality to demonstrate the current situation. From my own experience, I caution others that before they enter a research space to be aware of their position and power, as well as to begin thinking of the research space as a place that many people occupy (Atkinson, 2012; Barab et al., 2004; Miller, 2007). Once a researcher enters a space that is not theirs to research, the space changes and becomes a place where they work with others to recreate the world that is studied (Fine et al., 2003). When doing any kind of participatory work, there will always be tension. As the “researcher,” I initiated processes and was involved, but FFAV staff members were co-researchers. Following Freire (1970), researchers must disregard their own knowledge to help create a unifying effort. For us, this unity led to forming strong relationships where I, as a researcher who came from abroad, did not come as an invader into the FFAV space, but as a new colleague and friend (Freire, 1970, pp. 180-181).

Moreover, I was naïve in my approach to research with FFAV because I felt it was of utmost importance to ignore my academic privileges. My inexperience in conducting a participatory research project led me to think if I just disregarded my academic training, I could rebuild myself with knowledge of FFAV. However, that was an inappropriate way of handling myself as a champion for involved participatory research. Instead, I should have constantly reflected on my position by engaging with FFAV further. Freire and Macedo (1995) have a conversation where Freire encourages teaching to facilitate, and when doing so, maintaining a certain level of authority. Freire explains there can be no real education without direction,
meaning it is appropriate in critical pedagogy to have a certain level of direction from both sides. As I look back on the research experience, I realize I made mistakes in approaching the PE in an overly relaxed manner, because as Freire (1971) describes, teachers, by not intervening so as not to impose, commit an ethical error. And it is a duty for educators (researchers) to intervene in challenging students (participants) to critically engage with their world in pursuance of action (Freire & Macedo, 1995, p. 385).

There were also tensions about the PE among FFAV staff members. I worked closely with one FFAV staff member who has tremendous experience with qualitative research. We worked together to develop the whole PE plan and the tools (e.g., interview guides, focus group guides, timelines). She was amazing to work with because she had extensive knowledge about Huế culture and the current social climate of the province. One PE meeting, unfortunately, was filled with tension because of disagreements about the interview guides. It was expressed by FFAV leaders that the questions were not specific enough, allowing interviewees to stray from the focus areas of the PE. I told FFAV staff that from my experience, you do not want to lead the participants to answer in a particular way, but rather unpack the questions for them to answer. The reply was that the people we would interviewing needed guidance because they may not be educated enough to understand our questions. The exchange was longwinded, and I continued to provide my reasoning. Eventually, my partner and I were asked to fix the interview guides to be further consistent with the three main areas for sustainability. Leaving the room, we were annoyed because we felt like we worked hard on the interview guides and they were well-informed.

Whenever I felt disgruntled, I constantly reminded myself how my knowledge differed from FFAV’s knowledge, but in our contact zones where everyone’s knowledge and experiences
were coming together (Fine et al., 2003; Torre et al., 2008), we were actively creating new knowledge. Nobody was right, and we all had something to offer. Also, I realized, similar to Frisby et al. (2006), disagreements and heated discussions were good learning experiences and should not be avoided. This is what participatory research looks like. It was not nice and cordial. It was confrontational and messy. During the times of uneasiness, we grew because we were open with each other.

6.5.2 Lessons Learned

For an academic and staff members from an SfD project, collaboration on research was a courageous thing to attempt. Framed in Freire-ian theory, this chapter discerns how a practically engaged theory can contribute to producing meaningful and transformational research in SfD. Freire-ian thought guided me towards people via love and humility in ways that are sorely lacking in participatory research. I stand with Freire’s (1971) belief that trust is created through love, humility, and faith. And trust is a most crucial element in any form of participatory research as illustrated amidst an interview during my final days in Vietnam.

We have seen that it takes time to establish trust. You can’t get the permits you need, you can’t get the financial support unless you are trusted meaning that hidden agendas whether they are religious or political is a no go. It comes back to transparency principle. Listen to the people. And the more they can do themselves, the better. We have to go with the people and listen to them, and know the best is when people say we made it ourselves. They own the activity, you don’t own the activity. I never talk about me, I always talk about us which goes well in this context. It goes well with this culture. (FFAV Staff Member)

From this FFAV staff member, I learned that commitment and trust involved more than being invested in something. I learned that it took passionate devotion to ensure that research brought about transformation. I found a humility while opening myself to processes of love and trust (Freire, 1971) that was effectively compulsory when researching with FFAV.
This research holds methodological significance to scholarship on SfD, as many scholars have called for participatory research that is involved with and informed by people from the locale (Lindsey et al., 2017; Oxford & Spaaij, 2017). Even more so, there has been little participatory research in SfD guided through an evaluative research framework (Kay, 2012; Schulenkorf, 2012). What I have tried to show is that participatory research in the form of PE has the potential to bring about experiences and results that will lead to improving SfD projects. Although, my experience with FFAV situates this entire research into one specific locale, doing so is important to the overall SfD literature. Echoing Guest (2008) and Lindsey et al. (2017), I argue SfD research should transition from a macro global conception to examining how SfD fits into specific cultures and communities. The purpose of this chapter was to illustrate participatory research with an SfD project. I argue that through a PE framework guided by Freire-ian theoretical commitment to participants, a co-creation of knowledge can occur that is both academic and actionable. Infused with a Freire-ian theoretical framework, I argue the type of practical and actionable research needed in SfD must engage people who are actively working in SfD.

6.7 Conclusion

I wrote about the PE with the ending of the quote from a FFAV staff member in mind, “We’ve done something together.” I argue that participatory research should be taken seriously where there is a moral conscious concerning how and why research is conducted. From a methodological standpoint, this is important because researchers cannot and should not enter settings expecting to conduct research without giving back to the people. I caution future SfD researchers wanting to implement participatory approaches to be cognizant of their actions and how they are recompensing from the research. FFAV expressed to me that, in the past, they had
volunteers from Norway who did not necessarily contribute to the project. Specifically, a leader from FFAV told me this during one of my last days with FFAV:

When I remember, when you first sent me an email to ask for the Ph.D. in Vietnam in FFAV, I was so reluctant because we haven’t had good experiences with volunteers before. Even with a person from Norway that came here. It takes a lot of time for them to adapt. Maybe because you are Vietnamese it is easier.

Nobody should attempt this nature of research relationship without establishing trust and mutual respect. FFAV, as an SfD project, as a group of friends, as a family, and as a community, made this PE. There may be fear of critiques that researchers in participatory research may impose on participants, but this can be avoided through dialogue and trust (Mellor, 2007; Minkler, 2000). From this research, I argue the honest dialogue and relationships we had, as Freire would want, was what made this PE a success. There were tensions, but we worked through those tensions together to make this PE happen. When doing participatory research, the researcher must share and experience the reality of the setting (Burkey, 1993). Being in the reality of others is a reminder to be not just an academic researcher but to assimilate into cultures by becoming involved in everyday activities.

I acknowledge that PE is not a perfect methodology in conducting participatory research, but I argue in SfD research there needs to be more research along these lines. I advocate for future SfD researchers to embrace the messiness and uneasiness of conducting research with participants. That is, there is no more room to run from the lived realities in which SfD projects exist and the communities that shape them. There is no easy way or step-by-step guide to doing participatory research, but if it may be performed in a manner where people are included and not shunned, where people are disagreeing but can still meet for nhậu after work, and where people can feel safe in sharing their stories, then it is possible for actionable change to occur. If
researchers follow Freire, committing themselves in an honest and loving manner to the participants, then it is possible to do research that is positive and worthwhile. Most importantly, participatory research needs people to have courage and passion for one another because if all things fail, then at least they know they have each other at the end (Morrell, 2008).
CHAPTER 6 – THE PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION - PICTURES

Image 1 – Meeting with provincial leaders to discuss current plans to sustain FFAV activities (October 2016)

Image 2 – Focus groups with children for the participatory evaluation (November 2016)
Image 3 – Nhi conducting a focus group with young children from a village in Huong Thuy District (November 2016)

Image 4 – Fundraising workshop in Nam Đong district as a result from the recommendations given by community leaders from the participatory evaluation (February 2017)
Image 5 – Nhi and I presenting findings from the participatory evaluation to leaders from the Thừa Thiên Huê Department of Education and Training and district level Sub-Department of Education and Training (June 2017)

Image 6 – FFAV staff, DoET leaders, Sub-DoET leaders, and headmasters from across Thừa Thiên Huế Province (October 2016)
CHAPTER 7: HISTORY, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OF THỪA THIÊN HUẾ

[It is] the culture change that is challenging. The culture itself is not a very big challenge, but it’s a part of the work, because when you have a long culture like in Vietnam, for example, it normally takes time for you to change. You understand what I mean? It takes time to change, so that cultural thinking. The culture also affects in the work for the people and it affects not only for one person but two person, but for the whole system. – FFAV Staff Member

7.0 Introduction

The opportunity to immerse myself into FFAV as a volunteer and live with a traditional Huế family encouraged me to embrace a deeper understanding of Thừa Thiên Huế Province, a better understanding of the people, community, and culture. By way of close-knit encounters, I realized that many moments of the research were significantly about Thừa Thiên Huế more so than about SfD nor FFAV. There were moments in the research that rather than studying SfD in Vietnam, I became more attuned to how the history, culture, and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế Province were pivotal in shaping the implementation of FFAV.

With this in mind, in this chapter, I shift the focus of studying SfD to the cultural locale of this research. In the epistemological spirit of Critical Indigenous Methodologies, I use this chapter to exhibit how the history, cultures, and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế were significant social processes that influence how FFAV was implemented. In this vein of thought, I argue that to examine SfD it is of utmost importance to reposition research in ways that consider the localities in which SfD projects are located. Repositioning the focus on the culture, communities, and people that SfD works in, with, and around created room to reimagine and reshape SfD attuned to the local communities. Conversely, I claim that examining SfD without contextualizing the local communities creates an emphasis that is primarily on SfD but ignores
the locations that SfD is meant to improve. As a result, research tends to disregard the voices and experiences of people experiencing SfD. Similar to Lindsey et al. (2017) who advocated for SfD research to consider localities through historical, social, and political lenses, this chapter positions the people, communities, culture, and histories of Thừa Thiên Huế as important elements in understanding the application of FFAV.

To contribute to localizing SfD research, this chapter draws on concepts from Norbert Elias, a sociologist concerned with the embedded historical, cultural, and social development of a society. The turn to local SfD research and the strong tradition of Elias in the sociology of sport created a synergistic relationship that allowed for the contextualization of FFAV, a Norwegian founded SfD project, working in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Thus, in this chapter, I combine localized SfD research and Elias-ian concepts to argue that a figurational approach helps to exhibit the specific locality of SfD while also illuminating relations of power. Moreover, the importance of this chapter is to re-direct SfD research to focus on the people from local communities, rather than SfD itself. I argue from the findings of this chapter that a figurational framework is applicable in understanding FFAV in Thừa Thiên Huế. The point is that figurations help show FFAV was organized, implemented and maintained in Thừa Thiên Huế province, but these figurations are specific to this locale and this SfD project and are not universal. Thus, this chapter shifts the focus away from how SfD was implemented in Vietnam to concentrate on how Vietnamese social processes influences SfD. To that end, this chapter encourages SfD research to apply this framework in order to fully conceptualize how SfD is engendered across different locations in the global community.

The chapter is organized as follows: first, Elias-ian concepts framing the analysis of this chapter are detailed; second, results pertaining to how FFAV is created through figurations of
history, community, and culture are discussed; third, power relationships between FFAV and local communities are explored; and last, the chapter concludes calling for locally specific SfD research.

7.1 Elias-ian Sociology: Figurations, History and Power

Applying an Elias-ian framework (sometimes referenced as figurational sociology or process sociology), Maguire (1988) suggests that Elias rejects the imposing of theory onto evidence. Instead, the framework consists of a two-way process in which theory formation and empirical data are woven together. It is through a constant development of theory and data, as each build upon each other, that the dynamics of a society can be elaborated (Maguire, 1991). Therefore, Elias provides a useful framework that explores dynamic and inclusive social processes in SfD studies, based not only on the abstract idea that is SfD, but the people, communities, and cultures experiencing SfD.

7.1.1 Elias-ian Sociology

Elias’s sociological theory examines the processual nature of how people influence each other and how group dynamics impact single individuals (Dunning, 1999). Elias argued that human beings are not closed and individualistic, but rather are open, social, and interdependent (Malcolm, 2006). It was therefore important to Elias for researchers to understand the relationship between society and individuals through a complex web of intersectional social processes such as history, society, and individuals. Maguire (1991) states that such social processes are often structured by a network of interdependencies, and individuals and societies are constantly “processed” rather than going through a process (Malcolm & Mansfield, 2012). These interdependencies can originate in different forms such as in groups, ideas, or social
settings. With this in mind then, I introduce the idea that FFAV is an ongoing process in itself, a social process fundamentally interdependent on an outcome of relations consisting of individuals from Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Therefore, concepts from Elias-ian sociology that helped provide analysis of this chapter were figurations, history, and power.

7.1.1.1 Figurations. Elias (1978) described figurations as structures that consist of mutually oriented and dependent people. Figurations simultaneously refer to living individuals and their bonds, or relationships with others for, “figurations of individuals are neither more nor less real than the individuals who form them ...Individuals always come in figurations and figurations are always formed by individuals” (Elias & Dunning, 1966, p. 396). By examining figurations, studies are interested in networks of social interdependencies that help analyze the basic elements of human relations.

Linklater and Mennell (2010) stress that networks of people stem from the ways in which human beings are bound together and by the pressures that they place on one another (p. 388). For example, the interdependent functions people have, such as a factory director, a mother or a father, or child, are functions that people take on and are based on other people (Elias, 1987). That is, a mother is only a mother when she has a child and a director is only a director when there are subordinate employees. Processes of figurations are fluid and continuous whereas networks, people, and groups are constantly different. Interwoven relationships of people are dynamic and ever-changing where no isolated incident occurs in society; society is shaped by and connected by figurations (Murphy, Sheard, & Waddington, 2000). Elias refers to an individual person as interdependent persons (at the micro level) and society as a plural form of interdependent persons (at the macro level) (Quintaneiro, 2006). Thus, what is explored through
a figurational framework are the layers of different groups and people that engage in social processes to form the society in which they reside.

Moreover, figurations are not necessarily exclusive to people, but can also consist of historical moments and social ideas that have developed throughout centuries (Elias, 1987). Rules, norms, and values that have developed throughout time are then forms of figurations that link people within a social structure (Baur & Ernst, 2011). These social processes that form figurations often occur and materialize in unseen and unplanned ways; thus, figurations cannot be explained solely in terms of people (Maguire, 1988; Ritzer, 2005). Maguire (1988) and Baur and Ernst (2011) describe that figurations are just as real as the people forming them. Networks upon networks, in between networks, and through networks are constantly reconfiguring figurations of people. Maguire (1988) explains that the task of the figurational perspective is “to explore, and to make people understand, the patterns that they form together in the nature of the figurations that bind them to each other” (p. 189). Thus, in the studies of the figurational tradition, a researcher’s participation and involvement in the society is needed to explore the social processes that occur.

Ritzer (2005) proclaims that how and why people are connected to form specific and dynamic figurations is a central question to sociology. Understanding how and why people are connected provides insight into the reasons social processes occur and maintained throughout history. Murphy, Sheard, and Waddington (2000) elicit that, from Elias, social scientists ought to examine social relations as processes that are continuously emerging among people. Maguire (1988) helps explain that figurations are meant to be understood as the totality of relationships created by interdependent people which undergo different forms of development over time.
Thus, it is important to explore structures of people as processes undergoing transformations both as a whole and individually.

### 7.1.1.2 History

Elias was an advocate that research examining structures of society can only be imagined through historical conceptualizations and a trajectory of events that have occurred (Liston, 2011). History does not act or make itself; people are the ones who act out history (Elias, 1987). Moreover, Elias (1983) makes a point that studies of social development must be done with a recollection of the past. The integration of history into social science research situates history not as a structure made up of an assemblage of events, but rather as a combination of moments that result in an ongoing social process. Thus, in regards to figurational sociology, history is a social process that involves the development of societies by way of social-cultural changes.

Dunning (1991) argued that studies involving figurations must recognize history as both progress and regress, or some combination of both, resulting in unplanned processes of development that affect human beings with a capacity of learning. History as a social process holds major importance because the analysis benefits by drawing on moments of what has happened, what is currently happening, and how this may affect events of the future. When applying an Elias-ian framework, it is important to conceptualize a social setting in an interwoven process of continuous change (Elias, 1987, p. 237). Elias stated that “history is always the history of a society, but to be sure a history of a society of individuals” (1987, p. 45). Conceptualizing history as the history of society and individuals allows for an understanding of the social processes generations undergo over a course of time. Elias (1987) was adamant about the study of history in society because individuals take from their histories to form social
relations. In an Elias-ian framework, relationships in society are built upon the historical structure of human networks that have developed before them.

In fact, Dunning (1999) argued that there can be no separation between sociology and history. Undoubtedly for one to understand social processes, no present study can be completed without understanding important historical moments is also required (Roberts, 2016). Thus, all sociological studies are, in some manner, studies of the past and are inevitably involved in some kind of historical analysis. A historical comprehension is also needed because although individuals create their own social world by interacting with others, they do not create them without some inherent structure of the past (Maguire, 1985). All human beings have a history, and it is through their history that people change, develop, and become their own way of existing. Baur and Ernst (2011) advocate that only when looking at the past can researchers begin to comprehend the macro and micro long-term development of a figuration, as well as the changes of power and functions that derive from any particular figuration. Hence, it is amidst intergenerational processes where the development of the individual and society occurs.

7.1.1.3 Power. Elias-ian conceptions of power are also particularly insightful for analyses pertaining to different formations of groups. The interconnected, interdependent, and woven processes that resonate in figurational sociology theorize power into a more nuanced way as compared to defining power as a concept of only authority and control. Power in the language of Elias is something larger than the ability to dictate the behavior of individuals, in that Elias did not see power as a thing someone has while others did not (Landini, 2013). Instead, power should be understood as “power ratios” meaning that power is bipolar and can shift between people or groups (Dunning, 1999). More so, Elias (1987) writes “power cannot be understood if its parts are considered in isolation, independently of their relationships” (p. 7). Elias directed
people to conceptualize power as ratios and balances that fluctuate between individuals. Landini (2013) explains that as long as a person has a function for someone else, nobody in this two-way relationship is powerless, even if a huge discrepancy in the power ratio between the two may exist. Power is relative in social processes because it affects how these relationships are created, fluctuate, and are eventually tied together. Furthermore, Elias-ian notion of power is processual because of the overall nature of a social relationship; power comes from long-term unintended chains of interdependence. What this indicates is that power is neither given nor taken. Rather, power flows between people, groups, and positions through processes that themselves have occurred throughout historical roots.

Overall, Dunning (1999) states that in figurations, the key to understanding power is rooted in the interdependency of people that has been formed through their relationships. The figuration of power is to be understood as relationships between people, rather than control of people. Simply, power cannot be grasped without first situating the relationships between individuals as the focal point to be studied. Later, Elias (1987) says, “What we call “power” is really nothing other than a somewhat rigid and undifferentiated expression for the special extent of the individual scope for action associated with certain social position, an expression for an especially large social opportunity to influence self-regulation and the fate of other people” (p. 52). The Elias-ian approach to power creates a nuanced outlook on the agency-structure dilemma that has confounded sociology. This is because Elias (1978) stressed the point that power works in a reciprocal manner, where power is not a form of domination, but instead that the network of relations between more and less powerful groups works in a boomerang effect.

A key point pertaining to Elias-ian power is that these differences are by no means fixed (Maguire, 1991). Rundell (2005) describes power in Elias’ thinking as something more than
belonging to someone or a social system. Power in this regard comes from chains of interdependence (Rundell, 2005). Therefore, for Elias in regards to figurations, power transforms and passes through many stages and is inherent in all human relations (Malcolm, 2006). Malcolm and Mansfield (2012) illustrate Elias’ concept of power by describing how human life is characterized by diverse and shifting relationships constantly underpinned by ever-changing balances of power. And because the basic concept of figurations is that human beings are somehow interdependent on one another, power should be seen as a question of relative balance flowing among people and groups of people.

The manner in which figurations, history, and power interweave allowed for a meaningful examination into the interplay between FFAV, an SfD project with international ideologies, and the local context of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Through participant observations and discussions with various populations, I discuss complex ways in which SfD exists in this locale.

7.2 Results: Figurations of FFAV

In the localized approach to SfD research underpinning this chapter, through analysis framed in an Elias-ian framework the figurations of community, history and culture were derived to provide insight into the interplay between FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế Province. These figurations show how people of Thừa Thiên Huế worked both to accept and resist FFAV, as well as help position local communities as prominent actors in their own experiences with FFAV. More importantly, when analyzing these figurations, it was important to distinguish each; but as Elias would argue, each figuration of community, history, and culture were interdependent and helped frame one another.
7.2.1 Communal Figurations of FFAV

Applying Elias’s concept of figurations, where social processes involve the interweaving of people in an open and interdependent manner (Ritzer, 2005), showed Thừa Thiên Huế Province itself to be a process of figurations that constitutes FFAV. Moreover, the people, communities and districts of Thừa Thiên Huế form the figurations that make up FFAV. The project’s activities have spread throughout the province, and each district has schools and communities with FFAV football clubs and activities. However, not every single school and communities in all 9 districts have FFAV football clubs and activities due to various reasons such as lack of communal interests, support from the school or resources (e.g., equipment, money, or human resources). For example, I experienced a field trip with Chi Huong where we went to potential schools in Phú Vang district to assess if they could handle FFAV activities. From observations and discussion with chi Huong it seemed that the schools did not have enough human resources or proper equipment to carry out activities. Consequently then, when describing and speaking of community, it was people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province who were connected to FFAV that were located within a web of interdependency bonded by the pressures they placed on each (Linklater & Mennell, 2010). The analysis indicates that without the strong communal relationships of the past strongly resonating today, especially in a more traditional region like Thừa Thiên Huế Province, a social process like SfD does not function appropriately because all groups (e.g., FFAV staff, DoET authorities, Sub-DoET leaders, and people from local communities) were somehow dependent on each other to carry out FFAV.

During my time in the field, I experienced many examples of social interdependencies when groups of people worked together to carry out FFAV activities. Over the time of my stay in Vietnam, I noticed this communal behavior in my observations when I was in the field
experiencing spaces of FFAV activities. I also came to see this in the everyday workings with FFAV. When I was in Vietnam I fell into different roles (e.g., volunteer, researcher, son, brother) which allowed me to experience how the people of Thừa Thiên Huế work together and are interdependent on each other to live their lives. Interdependent networks were especially apparent in each district where local communities came together to organize and stage events. The interdependent relationship needed for FFAV to function was exhibited during a Fun Football Festival (FFF) planning meeting in Phong Điền district. Across the spectrum of groups (e.g., FFAV staff, Sub-DoET, local communities), everyone with different roles in the figuration of FFAV was involved in the organization, processing, and implementation of an FFF. The execution of the FFF can be understood as a network of figurations where individuals from FFAV, DoET, Sub-DoET, and local communities are bound together by the pressures of having to collaborate and plan together (Linklater & Mennell, 2010).

The meeting was attended by Phong Điền Sub-DoET members, FFAV programming staff, as well as local community members such as headmasters, physical teachers, and parents. The purpose of the meeting was for all groups to convene and discuss plans for the FFF. The meeting had varied personalities incorporating their opinions.

This afternoon a group of went to Phong Điền for a meeting to prepare for the fun football festival in the district on Sunday. The 4 people that went were Huong, Cong, Son, and I. As the official meeting goes underway official business will be the FFF and the planning that will be undertaken. Khuong says that at 8:00 AM he wants the football matches to begin. That means everyone must show up at 7:00 AM for the opening ceremony to start at 7:30 AM. Khuong goes over the whole schedule and times for FFF on Sunday, he then goes to talk about the number of people and who they are such as volunteers, headmasters, and students. He indicates that the GOAL Program visitor will be visiting the FFF on Sunday and people should be prepared for an outsider to be present. Physical teachers then talk about their plans. 7:15-7:30 is the opening ceremony, 7:30 is the parade, and then by 8:00 pitch to play. Talk about having 12 pitches total with 8 being bigger and 4 being smaller in size. Then there will be a life skills education area and a dancing area. The DoET leader speaks and invites all headmasters to participate so that they can
be involved in the event. She says for people to do their part so the kids can have fun. Bring around 23 chairs for yourself and your children to sit on. She puts a huge emphasis on the children. She comments to headmasters that they need to do their best and to have a good time and showing because this is for the communities and outsiders from the province such as the English woman observing the GOAL program will be there…The discussion returns to the size of the pitch and appropriate measurements to accommodate all the players across all the pitches. Cong states what he thinks and he gets some pushback from the physical teachers. They pretty much say we’ve done this before and it’s worked so, whatever. The tension was palpable. I can see Cong being frustrated because he was not being listened to. (Fieldnotes, April 2017)

There was a discussion about how the FFF would happen and what equipment was needed, but there was also a disagreement between FFAV and physical teachers about the size of the pitches. In a figurational perspective, Dunning (1999) explains that the ties that bind people vary in conflict and cooperation. Thus, in this FFF meeting, the people forming the network engaged in both cooperation and conflicts, which escalated with the physical teachers pushing back against FFAV and ultimately deciding the size of pitches. The physical teachers teach, live, and originate from Phong Điền, so they knew the size of the field better than anyone in that meeting and were not open to someone from FFAV who was not living every day in their community telling them how to measure the football pitches. Although disagreements were bound to happen among people, in a figurational perspective, everyone in that room was connected and dependent on each other. FFAV’s ability to work in Thừa Thiên Huế Province was evidently dependent on people from local communities.

The relationships I had with people provided me with strong connections that I felt and carried with me during my time in the field. For instance, after the meeting in Phong Dien district about the upcoming Fun Football Festival that was going to be held over the weekend, the SUB-DOET physical expert and some teachers from a local school treated us out to Banh Canh đầu Cá (a type of noodle soup made from thick tapioca noodles and fish head). It was my
first time spending intimate time in Phong Dien district with these individuals. They welcomed us to a nice meal where we spoke about the festival that was upcoming while interjecting some light-hearted jokes.

In line with Elias (1987), who said that in a network of interdependency is a need for people to fulfill a specific set of elementary functions for each other, FFAV and the people of Phong Điền congregated to plan the FFF. FFAV produced functions correlated to financial and logistical support, whereas the people of Phong Điền provided local knowledge and capacity pertaining to the FFF. The fieldnotes above indicate how the working relationships and the manner in which groups of Thừa Thiên Huế Province collaborated with one another influenced how FFAV activities were created and implemented. As shown, the FFF planning meeting consisted of different people responsible for different tasks. The figurational framework shows FFAV as an interconnected network of relationships among many different people and groups. It is the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province, from the local communities, to the district level and to the provincial level that interacted and were dependent on each other allowing for SfD to be created, implemented, and experienced. To further exemplify this communal interdependency, I turn to a discussion I had with chi Tinh from FFAV which exemplified how her role in the FFAV office was connected to communities across the province.

MD: That’s very interesting. So do you go to the field a lot then in your role?

Tinh: With my role, I don’t go that much often.

MD: Ok so, do you or how do you think with your role with the marketing and the communication is helping create the impact with the local communities?

Tinh: Actually, with the impact, I think that if I can do good communication work I can do good promotion for the project, I can do promotion to get our information, our values, and our principles to reach the communities. This means that people understand about like non-competitive football, what is non-competitive, and what should we do when we join non-competitive activity or with messages that we show
during the football tournament then for example ‘count smiles, not goals’, ‘play football, learn life skills’ something like that then the children or at least the people at the local community when they come to the event they will see that ok this is children football activity, this is just for fun, we don’t put much pressure on the children, so I think if I can do good communication work then the message about values, principles, or what we focus will reach the people at the community and also the children.

Tinh’s response of not going to the field much but still being compelled to do good work was based on her engaging and desire to contribute to local communities across the province. In this manner, the communal figuration of FFAV does not merely exist in a specific village but the overall community that is FFAV. I argue that FFAV is thus a communal interdependency that is at the center of focus for all that interact with the project. The overall context of FFAV was formed through a chain of interdependence where the activities are only maintained in relation to the functions of people (Rundell, 2006). From my time in Hue I came to truly appreciate what it meant to be a part of a community, a group of people, that I felt looked out for each other. These stories and this dissertation come from the interpersonal relationships or functions among the communities and groups that interacted with. Functions of community members of Phong Điền, as well as chi Tinh in the FFAV office, represent the communal figuration, which involves the bodies and peoples of the province, associated with FFAV that form SfD processes. Thus, as Maguire (1986) describes, the formation of communal groups must grasp how individual human beings are bound to social life. In this particular context, social life was FFAV. Conceptualizing the communal figuration of FFAV is significant because FFAV as a form of social life did indeed bind people together. That is, for FFAV to exist in Thừa Thiên Huế Province different people in different locations must work together, both implicitly and explicitly, to carry out FFAV activities.
7.2.2 Historical Figurations of FFAV

Malcolm and Mansfield (2013) state that structures of global sporting practices result from a historical interweaving of society and individuals. Aligned with the belief that figurations are not just among groups of people, but are processes occurring in often unplanned ways, the relationship between SfD and Vietnam can be seen as a manifestation resulting from international relations that have developed over the last century. SfD, in the manifestation of FFAV, is influenced by centuries of international relationships. Just like the French bringing forms of physical activity through obedient scout movements, Norway brought a new form of sport and physical activity in the form of grassroots football with integrated life skills.

With the history of Vietnam in mind, according to Dunning (1999), figurations can be applied to interdependencies between and within institutions such as governments, schools, and organizations. Therefore, Vietnam’s interplay with SfD can be conceptualized as a relationship made of interdependencies between DoET, schools, and FFAV. With Elias’s (1983) idea that social development must be conceptualized from a historical process, the troubled past of Vietnam has resulted in governmental measures to ensure no imperialistic infestations re-occur. I recall a meaningful conversation I had with a MoET officer who simply stated that Vietnam does not take kindly to outside ideas infiltrating into Vietnamese society which stems from revolutionary ideology of past French colonialism and American imperialism. Thus for any foreign organization to be implemented in Vietnam, there needs to be cooperation between the organization and a Vietnamese government office. For example, to monitor foreign influence in Vietnam, I was told by an FFAV member that any sort of foreign organization, particularly those working in the non-profit sector, must be partnered with some governmental office. When
describing to me why FFAV moved from Hanoi to Huế in 2001 and the requirement of working
with DoET, a staff member said:

So we saw the potential of organizing the activities and we choose to go through
the school system. There’s several reasons for that. The obvious reason is because
all the kids go to school so it means that you can actually reach out to everybody
and of course when we started we could use the not to pay to play system where it
was no strings attached when it comes to finances. And the second reason is that
Vietnam has legislation making it difficult to form organizations in civil society. I
doubt that you can really talk about civil society in Vietnam; it’s either government
or its private. Even though they support the NGOs they establish now, so there’s
movement, but formally to start the club you need the permit from the government.
So there as a result to avoiding any red tape, we went through the school system
and made the school authorities, the department of education and training, our
prime partner.

Portrayed by this FFAV staff member, partnering with the Vietnamese government was an
important element for FFAV to function in Thừa Thiên Huế society. This FFAV staff member
spoke to the requirement that FFAV must have in partnering with DoET in order to carry out
activities. As a product of historical figuration, I argue that FFAV was dependent on its
partnership with DoET. Recognizing how history is progress or regress resulting in unplanned
social processes (Dunning, 1991), FFAV was highly impacted by the social-cultural changes that
have occurred in Vietnam in the last 50 years. For example, history influenced by war,
revolution, and independence is constantly preached to Vietnamese people through national
media, teachings in school, and in the case of this research working with government authorities.
I personally had to subject myself to the surveillance of DoET and other governmental
authorities, because I was an outsider from America conducting social science research, in a
country still really open to this kind of academic practice.

My first experience with the deeply ingrained history of Vietnam producing
governmentality and surveillance of FFAV was when I was in Nam Đồng District visiting
primary schools on a weekend in February. While I was interacting with the headmaster, teachers
and another FFAV staff member I noticed a man sitting on his motorbike at the entrance to the school. He just sat there looking at us to the point where I started to feel uncomfortable due to his presence. So I turned to Ngoc Linh who came on the trip with me to help translate and asked her who that man was. Her reply was “That’s someone from the local police force. He’s probably here to check on you to make sure you aren’t doing anything inappropriate.” In that moment, I realized how FFAV as a SfD project is not removed from the historical influence of Vietnam. Vietnam, I argue, because of past atrocities monitors activities of foreigners. Thus, because I was with FFAV as a foreigner I was subjected to the historical figurations that make up the project.

I asked why the government has such an influence on FFAV and it was informally expressed to me that due to former French colonial oppression and the war with America, the Vietnamese government developed a cautious attitude towards foreign interventions. French colonialism and the war against America then becomes a historical moment that affects and requires FFAV to have a partnership with DoET and Sub-DoET to implement programs. I particularly felt the stress of this partnership during my first meeting with DoET.

The meeting started late. It was supposed to start at 2:00 pm but all the DoET members showed up 15 minutes late. The seating arrangement was that we (FFAV) put four rectangular tables together in a square shape. I sat at one table with Huong to my left. Across from Huong and I were two members from DoET; one who deals with finances and one who is responsible for physical education. The table to Huong’s left is where Phuong and Chung sat. Then the table to my right is where the head DoET person sat. His proximity to me was alarming. These guys run the show around here. The head person said that he has to leave at 3:00 pm, although the meeting was scheduled to end at 4:00 pm. The authoritarian attitudes and approach they have in doing things bring an element of obedience that I thought I should portray; which I did.

They need to approve everything that is done like the evaluation we are going to undertake. The atmosphere of the meeting was just DoET had all of this authority that they held over the meeting. It was probably just me but the air was just filled with this feeling of sternness. They want to know every step you make, what you do, and how you do it when it comes to research. They can easily say no to anything. They asked me to speak and present what I wanted to do. I spoke, beginning by
saying I was sorry that my Vietnamese was poor. I was interrupted by the DoET member across from who said in an annoying tone that it was ok but to just say what I wanted to say as if I was wasting his time. I proceeded to explain what my Ph.D. research was about, why I am with FFAV, and why we wanted to conduct this evaluation. I presented them a draft of the plan. They gave me some critiques because of the English to Vietnamese translation of the documents, the plan not being clear enough, and other minor mistakes. It was hard to follow because the language is still an issue for me. I just need to make sure I do a better job of getting things right the first time. Things pertaining to the evaluation plan all need to be reviewed twice before I send them to translation. It was a huge mistake on my end not to double-check the translations. I left the meeting with a drenched shirt. And it’s not because of the humidity. (Fieldnotes, October 2016)

There I was sitting in a humid room with DoET officials who controlled the fate of the PE and more broadly my Ph.D. research. Due to the nature that my research was with FFAV, both FFAV and I needed their approval. In Vietnam, the formalities and bureaucracy of authorizing field research are linked to getting the “red stamp” of approval proving we had passed through proper channels of government approval, from the top down. The partnership often led to tension as shared by a FFAV staff member:

I’m not sure how to explain it, but with the FFAV tradition, the way we are working with the partners is not convincing. I mean that we always have to follow the partners like for example we are playing the role as a sponsor but it seems like we always have to ask partners, can you please organize that workshop during that time, blah, blah, blah can you meet us or something like that, we always go and follow them.

This feeling of DoET not wanting to cooperate with FFAV is actually something I came to feel rather palpably when I was in Hue. These instances of discord came about often when I was with FFAV, and they eventually came to affect my work and position. For example, the PE that we performed needed official approval from DoET because I was coordinating it and I am not a Vietnamese citizen. The officials kept pushing back meetings with me and telling FFAV staff that they needed to reschedule or that they had yet to go over the documents we sent them to review. This forced someone from FFAV to call personal mobile phones to speed up the process.
Eventually, meetings were held where I was introduced, discussion of the PE was had, and a workshop was organized. But this all occurred on the time and commanding of DoET. I asked around to why partners, primarily those in governmental positions such as DoET, were not always easy to cooperate with. FFAV staff members explained to me that for DoET, FFAV is not their job, that they have many other responsibilities to worry about. Also, Vietnamese law mandates the partnership. In this sense, I argue the politics of Vietnam has monumental influence on how FFAV was organized and implemented as a project.

History as a system of pressures that holds influences over the present day (Elias, 1987) has created a Vietnamese process that impacts the way FFAV is implemented. Raffin (2005) describes during the Vichy-Indochina regime, authorities developed mass sports systems, physical education systems at school, and leisure activities under state control while stressing the social and educational propensities of physical activities. The dependency of FFAV on Vietnamese nationals sparks connections to past French implementation of physical activity whereby Vietnamese culture powerfully influenced the building of physical activity institutions, mainly because French officials wanted these organizations to appear compatible with local cultures (Raffin, 2005). Presently, FFAV is implemented in a similar fashion despite, being an outside SfD project, functions according to the Vietnamese education system because DoET forces FFAV to comply with national, provincial, and communal regulations. For instance, I was told by a Sub-DoET leader from Quảng Điền that a lot of FFAV’s life skills education falls in line with DoET’s campaign of “Friendly school, active students” which supports education on topics such as environmental sustainability, personal hygiene, and traffic safety. The alignment of activities with the educational curriculum of the province was a controlling factor of FFAV.
because it forced the project to suit activities to the demands of the government. In this process, FFAV becomes part of the education sector of Thừa Thiên Huế Province.

Nearly a century ago, French elites delivered sport and physical activities in an attempt to create Vietnamese servants loyal to the French empire. But instead, what resulted was Vietnamese radicals manipulating these sporting arenas into spaces to mobilize their fight for independence. Presently, in the context of FFAV, installing Vietnamese ideas and social processes into activities and programs produces similarities to the past. I argue that because of the history of Vietnam, FFAV conformed their practices to meet the cultural and social processes of Thừa Thiên Huế such as fusing historical elements into practices. To argue this point, I return to FFF where young people participated in song and dance. The songs, dances, and performances are rooted with ideologies and messages of an independent Vietnam. At each FFF I attended, there was always a dance performance to the song “Những Trái Tim Việt Nam” which translates to “The Heart of Vietnam.” Young people, particularly primary school children, would dance to this song which expressed lyrics of:

Vietnamese people love peace
Hate wars of hatred
But when our country calls our name
We are ready to stand up

Vietnam stand up
Vietnam is strong
Four mountains in the hands of the mountain river
Vietnam I stand up
And light the victory
Cannot stop me from loving Vietnam.

Historically, youth organizations, some of which derived from physical activity, were places where revolutionary leaders like Ho Chi Minh recruited young people to become participants for the fight to liberate Vietnam (Raffin, 2005). Lam (2005, p. 107) also references
how youth movements of the past directed Vietnamese politics when youth responded to Ho Chi Minh’s call to fight the French. In this sense, I argue FFAV being a youth-centric project, has been adapted and influenced by Vietnamese people to push an agenda of Vietnamese pride that is a result of independence and revolution. During my time in Vietnam, there were constant reminders of French oppression and the war against America in the form of banners hung in neighborhoods, songs sung on television, and propaganda on large billboards. With pictures of Ho Chi Minh in many different spaces such as FFF, a reminder of strong and victorious Vietnam through song and dance is done to co-opt and re-imagine SfD in Vietnam which resembles use of youth organization of the past to breed revolutionary thought. I reason that FFAV is a historically rooted process that is used to socially develop young people to meet state-specific motives. Similarly, to youth movements of the past where songs were sung by Vietnamese scouts contesting French colonialism (Raffin, 2005), I argue modern day songs such as “Những Trái Tim Việt Nam” acts as a social process that is taught to young children to indoctrinate them with Vietnamese national ideals.

Thus, unlike the French implementation of physical activity, which was made to fit in line with Vietnamese culture to create citizens loyal to the French Empire, Vietnam has co-opted SfD to fit their educational and national needs. FFAV being a sport-based program, fits into the physical education network of DoET. Due to the way Thừa Thiên Huế DoET obligates FFAV to seek permission from them and to cooperate in every community, FFAV is forced to create their activities and programs in line with local communities’ needs and resources, as well as the governmental policies. In this process, there is a reciprocal process where FFAV works with local communities to implement programs or activities. I travelled with chi Huong to Phú Vang district to visit primary schools who were applying to create FFAV football clubs. During this
trip, Huong conducted what FFAV calls a “baseline survey” which is to gather data such as the number of students in the school, assess the playing areas, comprehend the equipment needed, and to ask about the relevant social and life skills needed in the school.

We all (chi Huong, the headmaster, anh My, and two physical teachers) sit around the table where I’m at the end, anh My is to my left, chi Huong is to his right and then next to chi Huong is the headmaster of the school. I take a passive listening role in order to make sure I can get all the information that I can. Chi Huong begins the meeting explaining why we are here which is to see if the school has the necessary facilities and support to have a FFAV football club. She explains that because of the decrease in funding from Norway FFAV cannot provide financial support as in the past, thus new schools will have to be resourceful. Previously, FFAV had more ability to provide equipment and help create spaces for play. The look on the physical teacher’s faces looked deflated as this news was presented.

Chi Huong then asks descriptive questions such as how many students are in the school, if grassroots football is certainly an interest, and what social issues do the children encounter in this particular community. The headmaster answers with there are 180 children across six grades, that the children definitely love football, and that poverty is a social issue that immensely impacts the children. The headmaster elaborates that because of the high poverty rates some children are forced to work manual labor to help their families which results in them dropping out of school.

In this meeting, I was able to experience the working relationship involving FFAV, Phu Vang Sub-DoET, and a local community. Rather than FFAV strictly implementing their own programs and activities, the project must work with provincial authorities and local communities to determine the appropriate topics and life skills education. To further extenuate FFAV’s alignment with DoET and local communities chi Tinh expressed:

Tinh: I just make an example of our activities in Đồ Sơn and also in Thừa Thiên Huế and we go to the school and we talk to the school about what is the problem that is now happening in the area that they have the activity, so some of the schools they are located next to the highway (Highway 1) they see that traffic safety is the problem for the children and there is some accidents happen so we use football and the games to educate children about the message about traffic safety. The other school they have a problem with the personal hygiene for the children and also based on the real situation we try to integrate some messages about personal hygiene and sanitation.
Overall, FFAV must go through the process of working with and aligning their activities to what was needed by local communities. In turn, Sub-DoET being an extension of DoET acted as surveillance during the meeting, while the headmasters and physical teachers provided Huong with information. In this manner, FFAV does not act alone but is forced and more so needs the collaboration of Vietnamese officials to function as an SfD project.

Therefore, the surveillance of DoET and Sub-DoET acts as a form of state control that influences the kinds of activities and topics that FFAV implements in communities across the province. Particularly, A Lưới and Nam Đông districts have a high population of ethnic minorities, so FFAV activities are made to meet health and social topics pertaining to young ethnic minority girls in these regions. To that end, as a historical figuration, SfD is formatted to fit within each specific locality across Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Hence, as a historical figuration, FFAV undergoes social processes that manifests local SfD practices which are influenced and produced by Vietnamese history. This is seen by the surveillance of FFAV by government officials to ensure that no foreign influence is promoting wrongful ideologies, the performances of songs with national and patriotic undertones, and FFAV’s required working with DoET, Sub-DoET, and local communities.

7.2.3 Cultural Figurations of FFAV

Figurations are a framework in which individuals and groups behave, act, and participate (Maguire, 1998). Therefore, it makes sense that when looking at figurations of a society, researchers be concerned with the ways people are bonded together by their cultural traditions. In exploring how the culture of Thừa Thiên Huế impacted the application of FFAV, the deeply ingrained importance of family, commitment, and loyalty rooted in Vietnam were significant.
7.2.3.1 Family. One of the strongest tenets in Vietnamese culture is a sense of family (Smith, 1999). Historically in Vietnam, family has always been an important concept; family comes first, and the village is second (Luong, 2006; Raffin, 2005). Values regarding family expound love, loyalty, and commitment for those who cared for you. Family in Vietnam comes before other aspects of life where parents care for their children and children obey their parents. From participant observations, I saw how family relationships played an intricate role in how FFAV activities were experienced. Parents, most of whom do not have the financial ability to take time off from work, would still come to support their children at FFF.

While the children’s smiles lit up the football pitches and their excitement echoed with laughter; I become more captivated by the pure enjoyment of the many adults in attendance. This being my third FFF I visibly noticed the large number of adults ranging from parents, teachers, coaches and club managers partaking in the festival. From brief discussions with many parents, we realized the sacrifice most made of taking the day off from work to come and be involved in their child’s participation in the FFF. To better understand the involvement of the parents in A Lưới, Ngoc Linh and I walked around asking adults about their experience where one parent told us “This is for the kids, for them to have fun. That we have fun when they are having fun.” (Fieldnotes, October 2016)

Parents attending the FFF demonstrated a familial commitment that is pivotal in Vietnamese life. A familial analysis indicates that due to the cultural importance of family in Vietnam, there must be consideration to how this social idea influences FFAV. These familial connections formed a specific figuration between parents and children that was significant in the organization and maintenance of FFAV. Specifically, since figurations can be seen as an interwoven network of people and their relationships (Elias & Dunning, 1966), the parents attending the FFF and cheering on their children adds to the overall experience and SfD processes of FFAV.

7.2.3.2 Commitment & Loyalty. The cultural idea of community is also rooted in how the people of Vietnam have a sense of responsibility for each other (Raffin, 2005). Vietnamese
culture is about relationships with the people in your social setting. Mentioned in chapter two, Vietnam’s sociopolitical system of villages was built on familialism. And family, community and loyalty have always been concepts guiding way of life for Vietnamese people (Nguyen, 2016). In *Journal of a Vietcong*, Uncle Truong Nhu Tang (1986) said that, during the time of war against the Americans, the National Liberation Front could rely on family and friends, no matter what. In Vietnamese society, it was typical for personal loyalties to be valued highly. Elias (1987) describes history’s impact on the present by saying that in groups, expressions such as cultural values are passed down from group to group for generations. Following this, cultural processes of family and community intertwined in Vietnam’s history are a foundation of social relations in the present day that influence FFAV.

Elias (1987) provides a guide to understanding the patterns people form together, the nature of these patterns, and the changing configuration of all is what binds people to each other. Thus, in Thừa Thiên Huế and Vietnam, it is loyalty and commitment to each other that brings people together. Loyalty stemming from Confucius’ principles is a historical social process that has passed through generations. Confucianism advocates loyalty and respect between king and subject, and members of a family (Bradley, 1995). The loyalty taught in Confucianism has created a present day cultural figuration to which Vietnamese people are attached.

From the research, loyalty as a form of cultural figurations influenced the implementation of FFAV. Raffin (2005) describes that before colonial times, Vietnamese communities lived together according to a system that had a strong collective identity that tightly bound people together in familial manners. In these past societies, Vietnamese people performed civic duties to better their local communes. To that end, what was important about Thừa Thiên Huế and FFAV was that people of local communities were responsible for carrying out programs and activities.
From participant observations of regular training and local community events, it was the people, adults and young people of each village, commune, or hamlet who planned and conducted SfD activities.

The community from the headmasters, physical education teachers, and volunteers all came together for these events. At Huong Ho secondary school in Hương Trà district, a group of former students came back to help organize the tournament. Now in grade 10, a group of boys returned to their old playing grounds to lead a new wave of pupils. I was excited to see these boys take an initiative in helping their former school by refereeing and setting up matches. With help from Tinh, I asked two volunteers who have played together for years why they felt the need to return to their former school to help. Ty, wearing his black and red football kit expressed that this wanting to help “comes from my football passion and that I want to share knowledge and my experience to play football well to the younger pupils.” Ty’s friend, Cam, in a long sleeve shirt told us that his reasons to help stem from “having fun, being comfortable with the young pupils, and wanting to help the school.” Being members of the community, having fun, passion for football and wanting to help is the core of successful activities. There is a camaraderie and commitment for people who want to help organize activities such as the young boys at Huong Ho primary school. (Fieldnotes, April 2017)

The people of Vietnam stay loyal to those that care for them (Truong, 1986). Ty and Cam were young people committed to their small community and who felt obliged to give back to their old secondary school. Both expressed an attitude and sense of responsibility. These boys grew up in this community, lived in this community, and were a part of this community. Ty and Cam wanted to return to help provide the younger children the same experiences the both of them had. Moreover, as the older children in their community, Ty and Cam understood their roles of being role models who are to support the younger generation. I argue that FFAV functionality is fueled by this communal loyalty as shown by Ty and Cam. They were the ones to help put this school tournament together, as well as being influential figures for the younger children. I argue that bonds of loyalty and commitment to the community as shown by Ty and Cam were significant to
the implementation of FFAV. That is, in the communities where FFAV activities are
implemented webs of interdependence grounded in loyalty and commitment link people together.

This deeply rooted loyalty may not equate to fighting for independence from the French
and Americans, but it still resonated among the people of Vietnam. Loyalty in Vietnam is simply
about being there for those that care for you and for those you care for; this social process of
caring about others is a bond that motivates individuals, specifically adults, to implement FFAV
activities. This way of life has not completely been forgotten and still permeates throughout the
way of life in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. During one of my field trips, I talked to a person from a
hamlet in Quang Dien district who shared how living in the community was peaceful and calm;
that everyone knew each other; and people looked out for each other if you were friends and
family. Thus, to accentuate this notion of communal loyalty and commitment, I turn to everyday
lived experiences of my fieldwork. Living with a homestay family and immersing into the
community I was able to experience how people helped each other and cared for each other by
looking after another’s children, helping buy groceries, or watching over someone’s home. This
cultural process was especially visible among older women who acted as the watches of the
hamlet. From my own lived experiences, I argue that Vietnamese communal way of life shapes
many social processes, one of them being FFAV.

Culture in Thừa Thiên Huế is a social process and figuration produced through people’s
interactions. Raffin (2005) details how the principles emphasizing strong connections to
ancestral and familial lineage shaped Vietnamese political and social order in villages. Ty and
Cam exemplified their strong connection to their community by returned to their old school to
organized and implemented grassroots football. To see two young boys take initiative in their
community extrapolates the loyalty and reliance of community members that Tang (1985)
describes about Vietnamese people. Thừa Thiên Huế, in many ways, has kept familial and communal values as a way of life. Elias was concerned with locating knowledge in processes of communal growth that allowed people of the past to survive and live with one another (Gabriel & Mennell, 2011).

In that vein, the communal and familial processes of loyalty and caring for one another were produced through the culture of Huế. And importantly, community and loyalty as figurations of culture in Thừa Thiên Huế Province were prominent factors in the way SfD is implemented and how people view the project. For example, FFAV as a SfD project does not administer activities or programs itself; it is people from the local communities such as headmasters, physical teachers, and parents who do this. As a result, I argue that the commitment and loyalty that is founded in Vietnamese culture and more so in the smaller communities of Thừa Thiên Huế is influential in the administration of FFAV activities. Thus, in a figurational perspective, it is the bonds people have for one another within their communities that allow for FFAV to function. This is particularly important regarding the sustainability of FFAV because, in the end, it is not about sustaining the actual project, it is about continuing activities within local communities. Thus, the commitment people have for each other and for their communities could be a pivotal factor in sustaining activities.

One particular FFAV staff member elaborated on his thoughts of being from Huế and how being from Huế was the inspiration that fueled his passion and commitment to FFAV. He passionately told me that his life has always been rooted in Huế as he was born and raised in Huế, and even played for the Huế City professional football team as a young adult. When his playing days were over, FFAV had just been established, and he knew to work for FFAV was his way to give back. As we sipped on our Huda beers and snacked on fried pork skin he said:
Some people, they are not from Huế. They are only here for the job, so they do not work in the same way as I do, in a way that puts the communities and people first. And people they can see that. They will not work with someone who does that.

Illustrated in this quote is the Vietnamese cultural belief that a commitment to community is an obligation (Nguyen, 2016) and one that deeply impacts the work of FFAV. Providing this quote was anh Chung, who is a member of FFAV who brings his homegrown Huế roots to passionately work for FFAV. It is anh Chung’s testimonial where cultural processes founded in loyalty and commitment appear as elements in Huế that cannot be disregarded. Cultural values in Vietnam, like being committed to your communities, are passed down from generations thus creating a social process that affects all facets of life. Extrapolating how local cultures and communities interact with SfD will provide rich insight to how programs can be adapted to specific localities.

Positioning this project within a specific province Vietnam moves SfD from a broad social movement to a micro field. In doing so, I argue there are specific cultural values that influence the implementation of SfD. For FFAV and Vietnam values of family, loyalty, and a commitment to one’s community were important to the way the project was understood and implemented. I argue that this is significant because rooting SfD within specific cultures shapes practices to fit local demands and knowledge. This can allow for researchers to contextualize SfD from within the specific locales a project is situated.

7.2.4 Communal, Historical, and Cultural Figurations of FFAV

History, culture, and communities are all figurations that act as adhesives, bringing groups in Thừa Thiên Huế Province together to form the figuration of FFAV. When examining FFAV and the layers that make up the project, I imagined FFAV as a figuration and a social process that the history, culture, and communities of Huế undoubtedly influence. History shows that the use of sport or physical activity as processes to gather children and educate them in
Vietnam has occurred for decades (Combeau-Mari, 2006; Raffin, 2005). Even more, FFAV, as a foreign idea, is governed by legislation formed from historical attitudes. FFAV as a figuration is not tangible, in the fact that it cannot be held. However, FFAV is a type of figuration that the individuals of Thừa Thiên Huế embrace through communal and social interactions. In processual figuration, I argue Vietnamese familial values are espoused into the work of FFAV. That is for most of the people who work for FFAV it is not just a job for them it is a way to give back to their communities which is rooted in their upbringing. And the communal and social interactions come from a sense of commitment, loyalty, and family that permeates the province. Thus, there is importance to how Vietnamese communal life influences FFAV. That is, in the end, this study because of the attentiveness to Vietnamese way of life, there was reason to exhibit that Vietnamese communal life shapes FFAV, despite Norwegian influence.

Culture, communities and history are important points of analysis pertaining to how FFAV functions in the societies of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Applying a figurational framework to contextualize the interwoven social processes, shows that the association of villages and communes that makeup Thừa Thiên Huế province were interconnected figurations themselves created through the relationship of community, history, and culture and that resulted in a larger social process that was occurring, namely FFAV.

7.3 Power Ratios among FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế

Elias did not think power as something people had or did, as if power was a thing (Landini, 2013). Instead, power a process that occurs between people and through the relationships individuals have with one another. For Elias (1978), power is constantly changing and inherent in all human relationships. Therefore, regarding power and authority, no one is ever
all powerful, and no one is ever all powerless. Elias recognized in figurations that there are always instances of conflict and cooperation (Elias & Dunning, 1966). To that end, an Elias-ian concept of power was relevant in analyzing social processes among FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế Province because power framed how relationships were created, fluctuated, and were eventually tied together.

### 7.3.1 Historical and Cultural Power

Applying the idea of power-ratios to the history of Vietnam, I reason that Vietnamese agency in pushing back against foreign ideas, specifically SfD, needs to be recognized as a form of historical power. The history of Vietnam is itself a form of power that immensely impacts the acceptance of new ideas such as SfD. One FFAV staff-member told me that he feels limited to the implementation activities of FFAV because of Vietnam’s history and culture:

> I find this is an old culture. It’s several thousand years old. But thousand years of war have kept the people back. And also, I think that the hierarchy has restricted a lot when it comes to creating community (new things) and finding new solutions, being innovative, and this all also reflected in the sports. But now we are talking more overarching issues, this is just not only about sport, it’s about social-economic development in the country or obviously in the region.

Vietnam’s history against foreign ideological intervention certainly has an effect on FFAV. The global dynamics of SfD, where sport and physical activity are directly used as tools for social development, are not easily accepted in Vietnam. Moreover, the ideologies of using sport for fun, sport for development, and non-competitive grassroots football have encountered issues pertaining to cultural ideas about sport. The culture around physical education is restricted and as a community member told me “We also have the situation here with physical education in the country it’s a lot about lecture, it’s a lot about inactivity, and you know you have the teacher with 40 students and you have one ball.” With this reality, Vietnamese history and culture serves as a form of agency that pushes back against FFAV; that is, recognizing the cultural power of
Vietnam is important to the agency of local people. The manner in which physical education is processed in Vietnam limits the application of SfD. Due to the nature that sport is not prioritized as a legitimate form of education, SfD, in its broad and open manifestation as a tool for social development, often does not resonate in Vietnam.

Pushback against FFAV was further exemplified by a leader from the Ministry of Education and Training. During a night of nhậu in Hanoi, I was fortunate to have an intimate conversation with this MoET leader who used to work in Huế and has a working relationship with FFAV. We talked about FFAV and the difficulties of expanding SfD across Vietnam.

MD: So, do you think FFAV is something that can be replicated across Vietnam?
MoET Leader: Michael, I think FFAV has done good work in Huế. It has changed the way people think about girls and football and non-competitive football. But it will be difficult to expand the program because it is still something that is new in Vietnam overall. And new ideas coming into Vietnam are not easily accepted by people. Vietnamese people do not like to change or take in new ideas from the outside.

Depicted by this government leader, independent thought runs deep through the people of Vietnam. After years of imperial oppression, Vietnam is reluctant to allow foreign ideas to influence civil society. Even something seemingly non-threatening as SfD was viewed suspiciously by Vietnam. The suspicions against foreign ideas are why FFAV must partner with DoET to exist. Hence, the surveillance of FFAV by Vietnamese authorities is based on a history of foreign intervention. The cultural perception of sport and the history of conflicts in Vietnam are processes of power that instrumentally affect the application of SfD in Vietnam as exemplified by the work of FFAV. Vietnamese history and culture are social processes that provide Vietnamese people power to exhibit agency and thus certainly influence the implementation of FFAV.
7.3.2 Interdependent Power Relations

Vietnamese people have considerable agency and authority, but the power relations in Vietnam regarding the foreign idea of SfD cannot be understood without incorporating the relationships that exist between people (Elias, 1987) with and around FFAV. The relationships between FFAV and the people of Thừa Thiên Huế illustrate that no group is either all powerful or powerless (Landini, 2013); indeed, power exists in a two-way relationship. Therefore in Eliasian (1987) thought, it was important to understand the relationships of power by exploring the interdependent nature of FFAV and individuals from Thừa Thiên Huế.

The relationship between FFAV and communities Huế was such that FFAV provided financial, organizational, and logistical support, while the communities of Huế provided human resources and access. Using power-ratios to interpret levels of power between FFAV and people of Huế shows power to be fluid and dependent on the situation and circumstance of relationships. Malcolm (2006) explains that the network of interdependency eventually becomes complex as more people are involved, and, as a result, power lies in the interdependency of people. I argue that the complex configuration of FFAV comprising different groups results in a nuanced outlook on agency-structure because the required dependency allocates each group different levels of authority. Based on the fact that FFAV provides financial support, but the project has no control of activities without DoET’s stamp of approval, local communities have authority to determine what activities enter their schools.

One FFAV staff member said when it came to FFAV’s work, “My idea is that if we use the sport for development that is the demand of the societies. But not all Vietnamese people, especially the parents, are aware of this importance.” The fact of the matter is that people of Thừa Thiên Huế are not accustomed to SfD. As a result of state control and the lack of
knowledge about SfD, Vietnam is not a country in which SfD projects such as FFAV can easily be implemented. Thus, parents and authorities from certain local communities were hesitant in allowing FFAV to enter, limiting FFAV’s opportunity to implement activities.

As well, FFAV staff members spoke about the difficulty in working with provincial level partners. Although FFAV must cooperate with the government, this did not always resonate in return from DoET and Sub-DoET. Interdependently, government authorities were forced to work with FFAV; however, this does not mean that they cooperated with FFAV. The lack of cooperation led to dissonance in the implementation of FFAV as described by an FFAV staff member.

One of the most important I think and most challenging is to realize with our partners and make them understand, make them understand and agree and follow, follow is a good strong word to say but to cooperate and coordinate, with us, which is an INGO to implement so-called new things if you understand what I mean, because they normally do their way, while you want to bring something in, they want to do competitive football, but you want to keep in with non-competitive, they want to do football and cash prize, and trophy, while you want to come in with football and development, football for development, or football and life skills, so that is the most challenging part, the most challenging part of my job…that is one of the things I see is most challenging with INGO, and specifically in our case because that is something pretty new in Vietnam. (FFAV Staff Member)

The quote from an FFAV staff member illustrates how the interdependent relationships allowed for local agency Vietnamese officials’ hold over the local implementation FFAV. Through a power-ratio analysis, FFAV attempted to bring in new ideas pertaining to sport and physical activity; however, the agency of Vietnam rooted in the need for FFAV to work within local condition discouraged the idea of using sport for life skills and social development.

7.3.3 Top-down, Bottom-up Power

Van Krieken (2001) notes that when regarding power, issues of rule and authority are often discussed, but do not make visible the power relations from the bottom to the top. FFAV,
made of different groups, people, and culture in an interdependent network, forced an exploration into how gaps are bridged between micro, macro, and meso perspectives (Dunning, 1999). That is to say, a figurational framework helped exhibit interconnected processes among groups in Thừa Thiên Huế even when those groups or figurations did not physically interact. The application of figurations to understand the connected network of people and communities in Thừa Thiên Huế Province was assisted by viewing FFAV in a multi-tiered social formation where authority has diminished across the groups from the bottom-up and the top-down (Mennell, 1977).

Power-ratios formed through the dependency between FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế illustrated the relationships of authority that flow between the project and the province. In reality, FFAV provides logistics and financial support from Norway, but local power belongs to the people of Thừa Thiên Huế. Thus, from a top-down perspective, FFAV had power because of their organizational and financial contributions, but in an Elias-ian concept of power, where power is continually in flux and takes different forms, authoritative power is inherent in Vietnamese local partners, the culture of Vietnam, and the children.

In this sense, power relationships between FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế differed and were dependent on each other. As stated earlier, currently, for SfD to be implemented, FFAV needs the communities, and Thừa Thiên Huế needs FFAV. Importantly, through the Elias-ian concept of power, neither FFAV nor the people of Thừa Thiên Huế are ever all-powerful or powerless. The relationship between parents and children centering on respect and obedience in Huế was also a relational process of power that impacted the implementation of FFAV. Parents ultimately held authority over their children’s participation in activities. Due to the fact that SfD is not entirely accepted in Thừa Thiên Huế, parents often determine that their children should not
participate in activities. Some parents reacted to FFAV as unimportant, instead emphasizing children take on extra classes in English or math. Returning to the quote above that illustrated how parents are not entirely aware of the importance of FFAV’s work, many parents I had informal conversations with during some of my field visits spoke to how they prioritized formal education and housework before allowing their children to participate in FFAV activities.

Supporting this idea was a FFAV staff member who told me during an interview that,

> We also see in Vietnam that’s a specific problem in this part of the world and that the pressure for the children to have a lot of extra education up to evening class. It’s very, very strong. And the parent’s ambitions and the children’s ambitions themselves going to the top high school and so on.

It was expressed to me that there is a cultural significance placed on more formal education instead of playing or participating in physical education. Ultimately, for children who have parents more concerned with what they consider formal education these children may not be allowed to participate in FFAV activities which often occur after school.

Also, from the PE data collected from parents detailed how because FFAV programs often take place after the school day, their children are unable to attend because they either go to extra class for math or English. King, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2008) describe that in Vietnam education is used to certify one’s position in society that historically has been carried on by the family. With this, sport and physical activity continues to be seen as unimportant to the lives of Vietnamese people.

Consequently, as FFAV advocates for the usage of sport and physical activity to develop Vietnamese children, some parents find the project irrelevant to their child’s future development as a successful individual. Headmasters told me that parents would rather put their children extra classes that would benefit their child’s academics. Parents, I was told, believe physical activity can just be done during school time. With this educational thinking, sport and physical activity
continue to be perceived as insignificant. Consequently, as FFAV advocates for the use of sport and physical activity to develop Vietnamese children, some parents found the project irrelevant to their child’s future development as a successful individual. Thus, within the dependent network that forms FFAV, parents had substantial authority because they are the gatekeepers to the children’s ability to participate. Because as shown through various conversations with parents and headmasters, there is a tendency to disregards physical education for more formal education that was looked at as more practical for future success.

Children also had authority in the working capacity of FFAV because young people are the target groups FFAV activities aim to include. For example, if children stopped attending activities, then FFAV would not continue. I spoke with a FFAV staff member about young peoples’ influence over sustainability where they eluded:

Michael, I think we discuss a lot, and we agree about sustainability or working for sport for development, working for the children, it’s not so challenging. If that person really loves the children and really love what they do. So my advice for anyone who wants to do this job, because this job is for the children. If this person has the motivation or really want to work with the children or love the children and that take the job, then everything will come after that because sport for development to me is not difficult. Yea, it’s easy. As long as you have the children, everything will be fine.

Returning to the issue of sustainability, the quote above depicts the significant role that children have in carrying on FFAV activities. FFAV is immensely dependent on the children because they are the ones the project aims to help. In an Elias-ian framework of power, babies have power over their parents (Elias, 1987); thus, in similar fashion, children indeed have power over the implementation of FFAV activities.

When applying concepts of power-ratios, we cannot discuss top-down authoritative processes in SfD without acknowledging that bottom up. The bottom are the individuals and
communities across Thừa Thiên Huế Province that work to carry out FFAV activities and have the opportunity to participate in FFAV activities. I argue that Elias-ian power relations help examine processes that occur in the meso-level between SfD and the people in the local communities. Because many groups comprise the network of interdependency FFAV relies on, I argue that power flows between and within these groups. Thus, in examining relationships of power that reside in the interdependent network, many layers have to be unpacked within the top-down and bottom-up relations in FFAV.

People are not the only possessors of power, but in an Elias-ian conception, culture and ideas also shape authority and agency. Situating the history, culture, and people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province within Elias-ian concepts of power gives voice to the agency individuals and communities have in relation to FFAV as an SfD project. This leads to a more nuanced understanding of agency and power between the project, government partners, and local communities. This finding extends the conversation by Lindsey et al. (2017) who critique critical SfD scholars for their lack of engagement and appreciation of agency because their studies are done from afar. From my research, intertwining history and culture of societies when exploring SfD discussions provided insights into the power these societies have in defining and controlling the way SfD is conceived. It is the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province who are actively involved and participate in the social process of FFAV and SfD who accept and control the way FFAV works as a project. Through this research, it is seen that, if there is a shift in research that is more central to people and communities, then there is more room to explore the agency of “disadvantaged” groups supposedly benefitting from SfD projects.
7.4 Importance and Discussion

In a figurational framework, I extend questions presented by Maguire (1988) such as “What happened?” and “How did this occur?” to discuss the interplay between Thừa Thiên Huế and FFAV. Elias provided a solid theoretical framework for this chapter because in order to see how Thừa Thiên Huế Province interplays with SfD, we must comprehend the culture and history of the province. Through the history of Huế, there is space to reimagine SfD working in this specific locality. Elias, because of his historical approach to positioning individuals, groups, and culture within a common link, was useful in shifting the focus away from SfD and refocus towards Thừa Thiên Huế. I argue that SfD research done abroad should take into consideration the local cultural and historical context. In an Elias-ian manner, doing so will help position the research into its specific setting. Two members of FFAV told me the importance of including cultural processes into my research:

Person 1: I think you should right away understand and start working in the context. In the cultural context and the historical context. You have to understand that you are not knowledgeable, you are not ever going to be educated enough to understand the context, so be very humble…and here you have to work in consensus, it is a very different concept of democratic understanding and different practical understanding actually. If you don’t have any senses you cannot have the results. So be humble.

Person 2: [When discussing beer consumption and nhậu culture] Here in Vietnam we always go for nhậu with our partners. Yes, that is our culture, you should put culture into your research. That is important.

The application of culture also needs to be clear when situating SfD work in a local-national context (Hasselgard, 2015). It is important to make clear these cultural, social, and historical ways of life in Vietnam because they affect how FFAV is processed and implemented. That is historical, cultural, and communal figurations make up FFAV. From an empirical perspective, the stories and experiences in this dissertation showcase how SfD works in a specific locale with
FFAV as the project of study. Rather than exploring the abstract notion that sport or physical activity serves as a useful tool to promote positive development in individuals, I found it more crucial to position history, culture, and communities as sites of exploration within the SfD paradigm.

7.6 Conclusion

In writing this chapter, my purpose was not to simply focus on SfD or FFAV. Instead I repositioned Thừa Thiên Huế as a macro society, and within this society the histories, cultures, and communities as the main influences shaping FFAV. From the analysis, I argue that when exploring SfD, it is necessary to examine the historical, political, cultural, and social contexts of the respected society. A figurational analysis emphasizing interdependency gives discernment to relationships between the history, culture, and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế Province and how these social processes influence FFAV as an SfD project. That is, this chapter argues that SfD, when examined through a local specific lens, is produced historically and socially, as well as through the interwoven nature of the two social processes and is not just implemented externally. More so, this process of studying SfD can be applied to other settings creating a more localized and micro approach to SfD research. This chapter argues that an SfD project like FFAV can only work in relation to the historical, cultural, and communal processes that occur in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Hoa, the vice-director of FFAV, to whom I reported, worked closely with and confided in, told me during one of my final days with FFAV:

When you are in the community, you understand, because life in the communities is not like on paper. Yea, I’m happy because you learned and I’m happy with your contribution. We both, you and FFAV make the right decision. That’s good. I think your parents are also very happy.
With Hoa’s sentiments and in line with epistemologies of Critical Indigenous Methodologies, I argue FFAV as an SfD project was dependent on the people of Thừa Thiên Huế, and as a result, FFAV was produced by history, cultures, and communities. Applying an Elias-ian theoretical framework to studying the local interplay of Thừa Thiên Huế and FFAV, this chapter exuded the historical, cultural, and communal figurations that impact SfD, while also drawing out a nuanced discussion of power.
CHAPTER 7 – HISTORY, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OF THỪA THIÊN HUẾ – PICTURES

Image 1 – Women of Huế have always been the essence of culture and tradition in this province. Their lives, experiences and bodies pass along tradition and cultures to future generations. (March 2017)

Image 2 – Scene from Fun Football Festival in Nam Đông with kids dancing to “Những Trái Tim Việt Nam” (September 2016).
Image 3 – Secondary school grassroots football tournament organized by community members and older adolescents (April 2017)

Image 4 – Secondary school tournament organized by community members and carried out by older adolescents of the community. (April 2017)
Image 5 – “Long live the glorious community part of Vietnam!” – Banners like this are put up in neighborhoods and communities as a reminder of Vietnam’s allegiance to communism and past struggles against foreign oppression. (January 2017)

Image 6 – Statute of Hồ Chí Minh inside the Hồ Chí Minh Mausoleum in Hanoi. Hồ Chí Minh may be the most significant symbol of Vietnamese agency. (December 2016)
CHAPTER 8: THE CAPABILITIES OF THỪA THIÊN HUẾ PROVINCE

Sport is, football is just not only the football or one kind of sport that people just play and gambling and accidents, but the football for the children is to have more fun. Because the children themselves they have the very big passion for playing football because they have more friends and then they become more confident, some even study better, when they play football and they also learn the life skills.
– FFAV Staff Member

8.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the actual development processes and experiences that occur in Thừa Thiên Huế via FFAV. The stories highlight how young children participating in FFAV activities and events experienced moments of individual development through opportunities to engage in a quality of life that is worthwhile. Data provided in this chapter are framed by Martha Nussbaum’s (2011) work in development theory. Nussbaum (2011) argues for thinking of human development in direct relation to a distinct nation-state and locale-specific context (p. 41). She also advocates for human development as a process that is locally driven and allows for practices to be cognizant of the social, cultural, and political landscapes which may enhance or hinder a person’s personal growth. To complement both chapters six (i.e., an assessment of FFAV’s impacts) and seven (i.e., advocacy towards locally contextualized SfD research), I explored the specific processes and practices human development that occur through FFAV in Thừa Thiên Huế. Situating the research within Nussbaum’s framework of development, which she calls the Capabilities Approach (CA), I explored FFAV’s SfD practices, as well as creation of spaces and opportunities for young people to engage in moments that are rooted with lessons that potentially develop their capacity to live what Nussbaum calls “a life worthwhile.”
In turn, and given the importance of evaluating SfD impacts (Lindsey & Jeanes, 2013) and appreciating locality in SfD research (Lindsey et al., 2017), I argue that the CA is a useful framework for investigating the outcome of SfD initiatives like FFAV. From a pragmatic approach, the analyses in this chapter show how the CA, when situated in a locally-driven milieu, has potential to guide SfD practices towards ethical conceptualizations of positive social change (Darnell & Dao, 2017). I argue for the importance of positioning FFAV (SfD for that matter) within the CA as a way to assess the project’s provision of SfD activities because the CA views human development as an ongoing process that focuses on the opportunities available to each individual person. Applying the CA situates each person as an end themselves with their development dependent on the opportunities provided to them by their societies. Thus in this chapter, I argue that the CA is an applicable framework to understand SfD, by using FFAV as a specific case study to examine how FFAV’s practices through the CA can lead to impacts as a SfD project. Thus, the point of this chapter is not to argue FFAV’s impacts on young people of Huế, but rather to examine FFAV’s practices and their potential experiences through the CA. Moreover, this chapter does not aim to show if FFAV was successful or not in achieving development outcomes, but rather to illustrate that their practices represent some forms of human development as depicted by the CA. Application of the CA to SfD has been advocated by Darnell and Dao (2017), as well as Rossi & Jeanes (2016) who encourage scholars and practitioners to imagine SfD through a CA because of its holistic spirit towards human development. Recognizing this, this chapter puts the CA into practice to understand the social processes of FFAV is attempting to provide towards social development.

The chapter first details the CA to human development as conceptualized by Nussbaum. Then, FFAV’s practices in Thừa Thiên Huế as viewed through CA are discussed. Next, the
usefulness of the CA for examining FFAV is discussed. Last, the chapter concludes by addressing criticisms, weaknesses, strengths and the further importance of framing SfD research through the CA.

8.1 The Capabilities Approach

“What is each person able to do and to be?” (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 18)

Martha Nussbaum asks the question above when contemplating how communities can provide lives for their people that are filled with justice and human dignity. It is a simple question, but a question that forces researchers and practitioners to think about development in human terms. Rather than understanding human development as issues regarding the economy or political dilemmas, Nussbaum advocates for an individualistic conceptualization of development. An individual person, whoever s/he is, is seen as the end of their individual well-being. The approach, therefore, does not account for macro-level of economics or policies. In the CA, individualism is key because the approach emphasizes that a person ought to be able to decide for themselves how to conduct their lives given that s/he is provided choices to do so.

8.1.1 Overview of the Capabilities Approach

The main premise of the CA is to understand the quality of life of people and to theorize about basic social justice (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 18). Quality of life of human beings is grounded in people’s abilities to choose and to have freedom in their ability to make decisions for themselves. Influenced by the original CA created by Amartya Sen, Nussbaum (2009) conceives the CA as a theory devoted to basic social justice. The CA is concerned with responding to social injustices and inequalities that are the result of discrimination or marginalization of peoples and communities (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 19). Social justice is assessed on whether people
are or are not given freedoms and opportunities from which to choose. Nussbaum does not propose to solve all the issues of societies across the world with her approach. Rather, Nussbaum’s focus in presenting this theory of human development is to establish criteria to create a minimum threshold of capabilities that will enable individuals to live lives of human dignity. Dignity in the spirit of Nussbaum (2011) is about equal respect for all people in terms of the opportunities provided to them. Removal or withholding of opportunities negatively affects a person’s life worth living and therefore their human dignity. With this in mind, the task of institutions that promote human development is to ensure that people have opportunities to choose provided and protected. The reality of what this basic social justice is and looks like depends on the resources of nation-states and more specifically, local communities. By way of localized implementation, the approach, therefore, requires a local assessment of what a life worthwhile and filled with human dignity looks like.

When applying the framework, it is important to acknowledge that the CA is seen differently, both quantitatively and qualitatively, amongst different states. Nussbaum stresses that there is room in her approach for different states, to interpret, apply, and prioritize the Capabilities differently based on their histories, politics, and traditions (p. 40). Thus, it is important that the CA be recognized as contextually specific, as one society may prioritize and understand capabilities differently compared to another society. Additionally, no single person acts in the same manner. Sagovsky (2010) explains that it is a critically important component of the CA for people to choose and value what they find makes their lives worthwhile. Nussbaum posits the CA as a theory that is specific to the well-being and quality of life for individuals and, in particular, communities. In turn, the CA consists of an interactive web of functions based on personal and communal situations comprising both personal and external factors. Additionally,
she stresses that people define their own personal choice and freedom, and it is the work of state and local authorities to protect these choices and freedoms (Dang, 2014; Deneulin, 2010; Oosterlaken, 2009). Thus, if local authorities cannot produce and protect capabilities, external projects like FFAV may be helping in producing and maintaining certain opportunities.

8.1.2 Types of Capabilities

Capabilities themselves are “Not just abilities residing inside a person but also the freedoms or opportunities created by a combination of personal abilities and the political, social, and economic environment” (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 20). Capabilities, when provided, supported, and grown, are the answer to the question “What is each person able to do and to be” (p. 20). Nussbaum specifically identifies the different types of capabilities within her approach. First, are combined capabilities, which are the summation of choices and freedoms for a person based on their personal, political, social, and economic situations. An example can be an American citizen who has a totality of opportunities for choice and action such as having the right to freedom of speech and then acting on this capability by speaking freely.

Second, and distinguished from the combined capabilities are the internal capabilities of a person, which are specific to each individual and are developed within an individual by the interaction he or she has with the external environment (e.g., political, economic, familial; Nussbaum, 2011, p. 21). Internal capabilities consist of an assemblage of functions, which range from building self-confidence, to learning how to write, and having knowledge of governmental politics. Internal capabilities are trained or developed characteristics that may change based on social environments to which a person is exposed. Nussbaum explains that it is the job of society to promote and support the development of internal capabilities through appropriate education, physical and emotional support, and a healthy environment of love. Nussbaum indicates that
because combined capabilities are internal capabilities plus the social, political, and economic conditions in which a person can choose to act, it is impossible to develop combined capabilities without developing internal capabilities. It is important therefore to differentiate between combined and internal capabilities because a society may promote the development of internal capabilities, but may not promote the opportunity for people to function with these capabilities. For example, many governments educate people internally with the idea of free speech on political issues, but in turn deny them external ability to speak out with force (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 22).

Furthermore, Nussbaum describes *basic capabilities* as innate characteristics of a person that make later development and training possible (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 24). In the CA, it is important to develop and nurture basic capabilities, for example in relation to physical, mental, or cognitive skills. An example of basic capabilities not being nurtured is when children cannot develop physically because no opportunities for physical education/education are provided. Thus, basic capabilities are mainly concerned with disadvantages such as cognitive or physical disabilities that may hinder a person to reach their full potential. As a result, people with poor basic capabilities may have difficulty in achieving an appropriate level of internal and combined capabilities. Gilabert (2013, p. 307) summarizes basic capabilities as innate abilities people have, whereas internal capabilities are the result of the development of basic capabilities over time when and where eventually people are eventually able to act, then combined capabilities are the result of suitable interactions between internal capabilities and external circumstances.

Beyond capabilities is a final important concept, *functioning*, or the “active realization of one or more capabilities” (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 25). People function by realizing through their capabilities that they are able to do what they want and possibly be whatever they wish based on
the opportunities which they are provided. Gasper (2007) describes functioning as components of how a person lives. To clarify functions and capabilities: capabilities are based on the freedom to choose and functions are acting out this choice. Specifically, Nussbaum (2011) takes from Wolff and De-Schalit (2007), to introduce \textit{fertile functioning} which is a functioning of a capability that may promote other related capabilities (p. 44). Thus it is possible, but not surely, that the functioning of one capability may engender other capabilities.

Nussbaum (1998) indicates capability, not functioning, to be the overall goal. Robeyns and Brighouse (2010) similarly call for development projects that focus on people’s capabilities to function. For example, when it comes to food consumption, those who choose not to eat food because they are fasting have the capability to eat and the function to decide not to eat, while those starving because they have no food do not even have the capability to eat. At its core then, the CA is concerned with how people should best be provided choices and opportunities, rather than required to confirm outcomes (Darnell & Dao, 2017).

### 8.1.2.1 Central Capabilities

Nussbaum provides a core list of ten capabilities, named \textit{Central Capabilities (CC)}, that she put forth as basic and universally important across societies. Nussbaum indicates that societies should minimally provide each of the ten CC:

1. Life – the ability to live to the end of a natural human life;
2. Bodily Health – the ability to have good health such as adequate nourishment;
3. Bodily Integrity – the ability to move freely and be secure against all forms of violence;
4. Senses, Imagination and Thought – the ability to use the senses to do things that are truly human and to have pleasurable experiences;
5. Emotions – the ability to have attachment to people and things outside ourselves and to not have one’s emotions stunted;
6. Practical Reasons – the ability to critically engage and be thoughtful of one’s situations;
7. Affiliation – the ability to live with others, engage in various social actions, and to have self-respect and non-humiliation;
8. Other species – the ability to live and have concern for other animals, plants, and nature;
9. Play – the ability to laugh, play, and enjoy recreational activities;
10. Control over one’s environment – the ability to participate in political decisions and the ability to own property and have rights (Nussbaum, 2011, pp. 33-34).
The list is designed to be a focus for institutional practice either in national or local level institutions because, each select capability can be convincingly argued to be important in any human life (Nussbaum, 2011). The CC are interwoven; thus, one Central Capability cannot be isolated from the rest. Instead, all the CC ought to be recognized in the development of a person in pursuit of a worthwhile life.

However, as this theoretical approach is intended to be practical, some capabilities are often prioritized over others based on available resources (Dang, 2014; Deneulin, 2010). Human diversity and interpersonal differences are therefore important for when looking at the practicality of the approach (Dang, 2014). Nussbaum (1998) argues that the list is intended to be open and given room to be remade in accordance to local beliefs and demands, leaving room for local communities to interpret the list as they see appropriate. How the CC are achieved or understood is partly a question of how they are recognized within particular societies given their specifically diverse cultural and historical traditions (Nussbaum, 2006, p. 79, cited in Watene, 2013). Thus, conceptualization and mobilization of the CC ought to be driven by the culture and history of the locality in which they are being created. Nussbaum (2003) states that the list should be seen as “open-ended and subject to ongoing revision and rethinking, in the way that any society’s account of its most fundamental entitlements is always subject to supplementation or deletion” (p. 42). For instance, living with other species may be given lower priority over bodily health depending on the circumstances of a community. Therefore, each central capability is distinct, and ought to be secured and protected in their own respected manner.

Focusing on individuals first, the CC are then reflected in society. Nussbaum’s approach is that while some locales may not have significant resources, there should be an effort by organizations or governments to provide a minimum of each CC. When a basic threshold of a
capability is not met because of entrenched social injustice or inequality, the result is capability failures. Nussbaum (2011) shows that some situations in which one capability is valued over another can be a tragic choice, wherein the inability for a person to achieve one capability comes through another capability taking precedence (p. 37). An example of tragic choice provided by Nussbaum is when working longer hours than other parts of the world, results in a decrease of leisure and family time (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 38). The lack of time spent with family, in turn, can affect familial relationships or bodily health, since people are not afforded enough time within a day to spend time with family or exercise. Tragic choice is not merely a cost-benefit analysis where one trades one Central Capability over another but a failure to address the CCs in total. The goal of development policy and programming is to manage levels of thresholds so that the CCs are met. As nations states differ from each other historically, culturally, and traditionally, it is fair to state that how the CCs are approached to reach a minimum threshold will differ across localities. This makes the CA context specific and not one that can be broadly applied around the world.

8.1.3 Usefulness of the Capabilities Approach to SfD and FFAV

Charusheela (2009) states that, due to the open-endedness of the CCs, one must analyze the CA within a specific context. Thus, situating FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế Province into the CA, saw Nussbaum’s universal framework applied to a specific location. Particularly, Nussbaum encourages people to learn and develop with local cultures a core list of CC (Clark, 2005). NGOs, SfD projects, and researchers collaborating aligns with Nussbaum’s (2011) reminder that the world is fluid and interconnected, and that various non-governmental organizations (e.g., FFAV) can possibly play a part in providing CCs. Henceforth, the CA offered a collaborative framework to understand whether and how FFAV helps people live a life worthwhile and full of
human dignity, and, whether FFAV creates opportunities for people to do what they wish and be who they want as a process of human development.

8.2 Results: FFAV and the Capabilities Approach

Using the CA to study FFAV was useful in this study because it aligned with the focus of the local. Examining FFAV’s practices of implementing grassroots football and life skills education in Thừa Thiên Huế through the CA shows brings a local perspective to the literature. Moreover, application of the CA brings to the forefront a moral philosophy and politically informed framework to SfD that is needed in examining practices (Darnell & Dao, 2017). By sharing stories, this chapter follows Nussbaum’s suggestion that empirical evidence can illustrate the connections of the CC with one another. The point of using stories or narratives is to cultivate the imagination of readers (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 80) so they can see how the tenets of the CA were understood and negotiated in the specific context of FFAV.

8.2.1 FFAV Providing Holistic Capabilities

To examine FFAV’s activities through the CA, I argue analysis ought to encompass the interdependent people and processes that are associated with the project. Darnell and Dao (2017) state that positioning SfD, (in this case FFAV) within the CA allows room for a theoretical assessment of how the CC are supported by the project's activities since the CC are not detached from one another. Positioning FFAV in the CA required an examination of the interdependent and related social processes that occurred. For example, rather than focusing analyses of SfD within the realm of “sport” or play, I looked for any social processes which created moments of individual human development.
Thereupon, examining FFAV’s programs and activities required a CA framework because it encompasses not only activities that are sport, physical activity, and life skills related but also those peripheral interactions that occur with and through FFAV. Darnell and Dao (2017) state as seen through the CA,

The opportunity to pursue sport participation would thus be seen as an essential component of social development as opposed to simply a means of achieving it…from this perspective, play, as an example of a capability, would be seen as (partly) constitutive of a worthwhile human life and therefore worth servicing, investing in and protecting (p. 8).

The following analyses positioned play as a capability that was one element of social development connected to the CCs. Even more, Darnell & Dao (2017) contend that when sport, if organized effectively, can support other capabilities. Thus, to illustrate the practices and potential impacts of FFAV through the CA, the remainder of this section shows how FFAV influenced the CCs of play, affiliation, emotions, bodily health, bodily integrity, and practical reasoning, all of which are intertwined and linked to each other.

8.2.1.1 FFAV Providing Play. The central capability of play is produced, provided, and promoted by FFAV. Play, in itself, is not a new idea FFAV brought to Thừa Thiên Huế. I encountered people, adults and children, playing regularly in various manners. For example, children in my homestay neighborhood would play random games in the street, often times just running around and laughing. However, playing and active participation in forms of physical activity through FFAV existed in different social processes and with different connotations. As chi Huong describes in her statement to me,

I think the biggest impact is that we have made is that the philosophy on their mind, this is the mindset of the community because when they think about football they only think about professional football, but since FFAV came with a lot of ideas on the grassroots football so now in their mind when they think about football they also think about the non-competitive football. So I think it’s quite clear with the community.
Chi Huong expressed that since FFAV came to Huế there has been a progression by communities to think about football in a non-competitive manner. FFAV produced and delivered play rooted in a non-competitive, open approach, and with a focus on skills rather than winning attitude. Ideologies guiding FFAV came from the Norwegian “sport for all” model that is implemented in all SfD projects funded by Norwegian organizations. FFAV, supporting opportunities to play through the “sport for all” attitude, created an inclusive, play-based approach promoted to all children, regardless of gender, ability, and ethnicity. The process in which play was produced by FFAV was and is, to some extent, novel because the idea of football rooted in a free and open approach was still not implemented entirely across the province. There are still some areas, mainly in remote villages of Nam Đông and A Lưới, where resources are minimal and the opportunity to play freely is limited. These two specific districts face high poverty in rural life where some families often have young children working manual labor which as a result hinder their opportunities to do other things such as play. Therefore, some groups of young people in Nam Đông and A Lưới have yet to be exposed to FFAV activities of play. Thus, for communities that have had FFAV activities for a long period of time different grassroots soccer has been a communal staple. From my many trips to local communities around the province, adults, particularly parents, expressed their appreciation of FFAV’s different approach to sport and physical activity because of how all children are welcomed to come to play.

FFAV’s effort with the Art Center in Huế City exemplified the project’s inclusion of socially marginalized and under resourced populations in Vietnamese society. FFAV’s involvement with the Art Center is important because FFAV created opportunities of play for individuals with limited basic capabilities. The director of the Art Center told me as we sat on the side of a bustling street having morning coffee that the financial contributions and logistical
support from FFAV have made it easier for him to provide children with cognitive disabilities opportunities to grassroots football that are routine and organized. He expressed that now children with disabilities are participating in grassroots football, and as they have gotten older, have become independent and extroverted. The director’s sentiment also resonated with a leader of FFAV who said, “I see clearly and strongly with the children with disabilities in the Art Center. I go with them 5 years ago and I see how they were and I see how confident they are now.” The basic capabilities of the children participating in the Art Center were hindered but FFAV provided the opportunity, resources and equipment to play within their social conditions. Thus, in line with the CA focus on quality of life and human dignity, the children of the Art Center, by participating in FFAV supported activities, experienced a set of opportunities that were not afforded to them years ago. Moreover, FFAV activities provided the opportunity for children of the Art Center to function within the CC of play. In spirit of the CA, the ability to realize and experience the CC play was constitutive for the children with disabilities to live a life worthwhile. This is because the opportunity to play was once limited, but was now better supported.

For the children with disabilities from the Art Center, through play, FFAV provided development of basic capabilities in the form of physical development through playing football, which I argue had the potential in nurturing internal capabilities in the form of self-confidence as alluded by the same FFAV leader “When they talk to us in a very confident way when they communicate, when they work as a team, I see a lot of impact on them (young people with cognitive disabilities).” I argue that the opportunity to experience CC of play provided by FFAV possibly nurtured the basic capability of young people at the Art Center in their physical development. Then the nurturing of physical development was processual in developing their
internal capabilities by way of their confidence. Nussbaum (2011, p. 44) states that this process being fertile functioning, whereby a functioning in one capability has the potential to promote other related capabilities. This is not to say the outcome of participating in FFAV was improved self-confidence, but I do reason within the holistic nature of the CA that the young people of the Art Center participating in FFAV activities were exposed to processes that theoretically improved their self-confidence.

FFAV has also implemented different conceptions and ideologies of play that did not exist in Huế before their arrival. Outside of schools and playing in the street, there are now organized playgrounds and activities for young people that emphasize fun and pleasure. During my time in the field, I often asked people from communes and villages what they liked about FFAV, and what FFAV brought to their lives which were not there before. The most common and enthusiastic response from parents was that FFAV brought an organized, safe, and fun playground for the children to participate in. Moreover, headmasters I spoke to were praiseful of FFAV’s principles of fair and open play for all. A specific event that exemplified this were Fun Football Festivals (FFF). With the help of FFAV organized a FFF where children from all over the respective district from different primary and secondary schools, and social centers came to play together. Walking around the many FFF I attended, I was mindful of the pure enjoyment the children were having as shown from my early fieldnotes.

If you looked at her from afar you would notice her football kit: a bright green shirt with “Milo” written on the front and “Football for All in Vietnam” written across the back. But if you took a closer look you could see she was wearing something else; a smile that stretched from ear to ear. She ran on the pitch in bouncy strides, giggling with every touch of the ball. Her laughter filled the air and her playful demeanor captured the atmosphere. She was a picturesque example of the many experiences during the Fun Football Festival in Nam Đông district this past weekend. It was an amazing day filled with never-ending playfulness and laughter. (Fieldnotes, September 2016)
As the story depicts and from what I observed, FFF are places where children were able to be free and enjoy themselves in the non-competitive and fun environment promoted by FFAV. Although, the children may keep score of the goals, FFAV promoted the motto “Count Smiles, Not Goals.” At all FFAV events, the emphasis was on fun and participation. Young people are encouraged to play grassroots football, participate in life skills games, dance, sing, and have fun. For example, to educate children on fair play, FFAV took the “Handshake for Peace” from FIFA where before every match each member of opposing teams shook hands. Moreover, in the context of fun, there was always a jovial and energetic adult who led dance routines for the young people. Adults set the example of a fun environment so that the kids felt comfortable to be open as well. During the FFF in Phong Điền District, a physical teacher asked me if I knew how to sing and dance and if I would perform something. I replied by saying I can’t sing nor dance. His reply was that it actually does not matter if I can sing or dance but to do it for the children so they can see me joking around and having a good time. Regrettably, I refused to sing or dance for the children.

The focus on children’s participation rather than on competition or skill-development was pivotal in supporting the capability of play. Because the CC of play is concerned with having fun, laughing, and enjoying recreational activities, the activities, and events of FFAV resonates through the capabilities of play, as the project promoted and created spaces of play rooted in enjoyment. I argue that assessing the impact of FFAV by the way the project provides the capability of play is fruitful because analysis situates opportunities to participate or play as a piece of the overall quality of life of a child in Huế. Even more, the functioning of children to play is in line with the CA and contributes to the realization of the CC.
Since 2001, a slow and gradual ideological shift towards grassroots philosophy, physical activity and play founded in “football for all” and non-competitiveness has occurred through FFAV and in communities where the project’s activities are implemented. While play is the most impactful capability provided by FFAV, I argue the manner in which play was supported and provided by FFAV allows for other CC to materialize. Returning to the idea of fertile functioning where functioning in one capability has the potential to promote other CC there was room to perceive how FFAV focusing on fun, openness, and enjoyment, FFAV produced moments that brought about CC creating a life worthwhile. Moreover, Nussbaum (2011) stated the CCs are not detached thus making room to examine how this philosophy of “sport for all,” through the manifestation of play by FFAV, other CC arise for children of Thừa Thiên Huế come to experience. Thus, while the capability of play is a pivotal component offered by FFAV, the project through its activities also supported bonds of social interactions that resemble the CC of affiliation and emotions. In the next section, I detail how FFAV supporting the CC play in their SfD activities possibly promotes other CCs (as Darnell & Dao (2017) argue).

8.2.1.2 FFAV Providing Affiliation & Emotions. Play was just one impact children experienced via FFAV. Similar to the social process of figurations that are found in play (Elias, 1972; Mennell, 2006), my analysis yielded interactions bound the children who participate in and experience FFAV. I argue playing together results in social relationships resembling the CC of affiliation and emotions that, according to Nussbaum, are needed to live a dignified life. The children who participate in FFAV activities often attend the same school and come from the same community. Thus, their interactions in FFAV activities were a possible extension of communal affiliations. Referring back to Chapter 7 and the story of Ty and Cam FFAV works in a communal social process. Applying that analysis to the CA, I argue participating in FFAV
supported activities of play promotes communal affiliation. The CC of affiliation is concerned with the ability to live with others and to engage in various social actions. FFAV creating football clubs and implementing activities in communities promotes moments of affiliation for children since they are able to play together enhancing their social relationships with their classmates and friends from their own communities. To further draw on affiliation, the children spoke in their focus groups during the participatory evaluation of how much they enjoyed socializing and making new friends when they participate in FFAV activities. Deneulin (2010), when describing the CA, states that individual lives are deeply dependent and inter-connected, therefore intrinsic satisfactions occur through social interactions with one another. Creating relationships during FFAV activities elicited emotional experiences as children are able to build bonds of attachment with each other and share a form of human association that is crucial for their development (Nussbaum, 2011). Nhi described how playing football for the children provided other values other than playing:

Because the children themselves they have the very big passion for playing football because they have more friends and then they become more confident, some even study better, when they play football and they also learn the life skills.

As depicted by Nhi, playing football aims to create room for friendship, becoming confident and learn life skills. I argue that the interaction children were having in FFAV activities were moments that promoted social interactions. In turn, these social interactions were often in communities that these children lived in together. As a result, the CC of affiliation was strongly promoted through FFAV. This CC of affiliation was further exhibited by a FFAV staff member who said: “I see a football team as a mini-society where everybody depends on each other where we try to make each other good.” Again, in the communal life that FFAV activities exists, there were moments where playing football together expressed the ability for young people to interact
and to be with each other. Therefore, the playing spaces created by FFAV reflects the CA approach and the CC of affiliation by way of supporting human interactions.

Complementary to affiliation was how the CC of emotions was supported by FFAV. The CC of emotions is concerned with “being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves…to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger” (p. 33). To that end, I argue participating in FFAV activities afforded young people to feel an array of emotions whether they be happiness by playing games or anger because of not being able to play. My visits to FFAV football clubs were often infused with laughter and elation.

The children love playing with each other; at least that's what it looks like to me. The boys and the girls are running around together, cheering each other on, and participating with one another. It's interesting to know that a decade ago boys and girls were likely not playing with each other. But now in 2017, I can see a young girl stand up to a boy who made fun of her and slap him behind the head. Today we are at a regular training in Nam Đong district. A few of us came to visit the district and hang out. The second regular training we attend in the afternoon is in a very remote area of Nam Đong. Nam Đong is already rural and remote but this particular school was a trek to get to. Think about more woods, dirt roads, and jungle environment. The vice-headmaster of this school told me that these children would travel three to four kilometers in order to get to school. And this was on a Saturday just to participate in club activities. Today the children were playing games that took teamwork. One was a snakelike relay where on mixed teams, boys and girls, linked hands in between their legs; then, the person in the front of each line ran to the back and when they got there they released the person in the back who ran to the front releasing the person in the front. This occurred in the original person in the front returned. I got really into it, not rooting for any particular team, but because the kid's enjoyment was transferred to me. I smiled because they smiled. (Fieldnotes, February 2017)

The story exemplifies a Saturday afternoon consisting of moments of affiliation and emotions for children of Nam Đong. Children from Nam Đong having the chance to play on a Saturday with their classmates was particularly important because most live in poverty due to the remoteness of the district. Unfortunately, not many recreational activities were provided for these children, especially on the weekends, which led them to partake in negative activities (e.g.,
gambling, drinking alcohol); thus, the space to play, be with their friends, and enjoy themselves was meaningful when taking into considerations their social conditions. The freedom for people to act on their capabilities is important, but so is that they experience capabilities in a positive manner (Nussbaum, 2011). Moreover, in terms of functioning, FFAV activities aimed to create an environment where children can play freely and hopefully experience bonds of affiliation. Hence, children of Huế who participate in FFAV activities experience the CC of affiliation and emotions because they are immersed in an atmosphere that reinforces having fun. In these moments, playing is more than just an act; the intersection of the CC became apparent in FFAV because by playing, children of this community in Nam Đông were also in an interconnected web where emotions of happiness manifested. In the spirit of the CA, experiencing emotions which are joyful, fun, and enthusiastic may have provided these children from Nam Đông a heightened sense of dignity and a life worthwhile because, in these moments of playing, the children were able to learn, to engage in social interaction, and experience a sense of attachment. Simply, being able to function in terms of having a sense of attachment and experiencing emotions constitutes a life worthwhile according to the CA. Chi Tinh supports FFAV’s ability to support and provide the CC of affiliations and emotions when she told me during an interview:

"But together with football we can see that there are some intrinsic values like what I said it is all about team-building, how you cooperate with each other, how you can show the respect to the others, then those are the very important values that everyone need for their own personal development, and how to behave with the people in your daily life."

Chi Tinh spoke to the CC of affiliation provided by FFAV in the team-building, cooperation, and behavior with others, while showing the CC of emotions by referencing the respect young people can show for each other. In turn, FFAV created opportunities for young children’s collective play which helped reinforce the comradery and communal elements that resonate in Vietnamese
culture (Nguyen, 1994). Nussbaum (2011) reasons that protecting the capability of affiliation is done by protecting institutions that nourish the ability for human beings to engage in social interactions and live with others. FFAV as a SfD project acted as a social institution that processed and provided additional moments for children to socially interact with each other. From observations from the field and interviews with FFAV staff members, as shown above, analysis alludes to FFAV created moments of affiliations and emotions which had the potential for young people to grow an attachment to each other.

8.2.1.3 FFAV Providing Bodily Health and Bodily Integrity. Life skills education provided by FFAV was an extension of the topics provided through the traditional education system. Formal education in Vietnam is created and mandated by the MoET Hanoi; then it is the duty of each province’s DoET to ensure that the national education agenda is followed. FFAV, having to fall in line with DoET, worked to include the relevant life skills regularly taught in Vietnam, such as personal health, environmental protection, and hygiene. Through my interactions with different headmasters, a common comment was that with FFAV life skills education children have a chance to develop not only with knowledge from school but also with the activities that FFAV provides centering on life skills. Nussbaum (2011) states “education forms people’s existing capabilities into developed capabilities of many kinds” (p. 152). With that said, I argue that the CCs of bodily health and bodily integrity were supported by FFAV practices through the processes in which the project delivers life skills education. The CC of bodily health is concerned with having good health as well as having adequate nourishment and shelter, while bodily integrity is about being able to move freely and to be secure against sexual violence (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 33). In these terms, I argue that through the life skills education provided by FFAV and the manner in which it was done supports both CCs.
For example, in A Lưới district, there are still many unexploded remnants of war (e.g., bombs, claymores & mines). These unexploded remnants of war hinder the bodily health and bodily integrity of children living in A Lưới because children lack knowledge of what an unexploded remnant may look like and may play with one potentially leading to fatality. Thus, FFAV introduced education on bomb safety to children of A Lưới to support awareness of the topic to children on the dangers of unexploded remnants and what to do if they come across an unfamiliar object. This education on bomb safety was done during FFAV activities through the showing of photos, having open discussions, and answering of questions. In this example of bomb safety, I argue it was both the topic and the way the education was provided that potentially leads to children being better equipped to handle this dangerous issue. To that end, the pedagogy of which FFAV was able to educate young children is important to the support of bodily health and bodily integrity.

In a discussion with an official from the MoET, it was expressed to me that FFAV has done a tremendous job advancing life skills education in Thừa Thiên Huế Province through the project’s innovative ways of integrating topics into physical activity. To support this notion chi Huong described to me how FFAV has developed and implemented life skills in their activities to support young people in complementing ways:

With the life skills, as you may know, because at FFAV we work at the 6 life skills components – that is traffic safety, that is prevention of HIV/AIDS, mine risk education, environmental protection, personal sanitation, and FFAV values like solidarity, fair play. So these kinds of life skills is not like we are working at the office thinking about the life skills for the children but then we make a survey, I remember this survey we made in 2012 when we conduct an overall survey for the clubs we’re done the provincial level, the district level, the head of the club and the children and so we gather and we have to final results that these are the 6 main life skills and children really want us to tackle.
Described by chi Huong is the process of how FFAV is informed by local communities on what life skills are relevant. By acknowledging the needs of the community FFAV purposefully curtails their life skills education to be specific. As a result, FFAV is purposeful in their activities in order to potentially teach life skills that can develop young children.

Moreover, the same MoET official told me that Vietnam’s approach to education is attempting to move away from knowledge and theory to capacity building of Vietnamese citizens. Thus, FFAV’s interactive and participatory teaching philosophy and commitment to life skills education aimed to provide lasting impacts by bridging theory and practice for young people participating in their activities. Nhi further explained to me how FFAV’s method of teaching life skills has captured the attention of young children:

And also we use football, but we also integrate the life skills activities and I think that is very helpful because you know in Vietnam with the teaching method that we are using now with the lecture hall and with a notebook, we don’t like to read, but with the very simple games, we can give a very clear message about the life skills and it is very easy to remember and to learn from that.

Nhi’s comments concerning FFAV life skills education depicts an approach that was different and apparently crucial to develop the capabilities of bodily health and bodily integrity. This is because the traditional style of teaching in Vietnam that is mainly the teacher lecturing to students, where students are expected to be obedient, may not allow for open discussion on life skills. My discussions with various FFAV staff members describe that education in Vietnam is traditional in the lecture style and that schools also lacks resources to teach life skills. As one FFAV staff member said about physical education in Vietnam’s inability to adapt to new approaches:

So this is about methods which I believe is one of the key issues, that these principles, these values, they also have to be distributed through the education of
physical education teachers, which is why I believe that MoET, DoET is to reform and renew these curriculums. This is very traditional, very old fashioned.

This FFAV staff member was alluding to the fact that a key issue in Vietnamese education is the lack of funds and as a result, the methods being very traditional. I argue then that FFAV’s practices created a different form of education that was unlike the Vietnamese school system. And in accordance with the CA where if government institutions cannot provide capabilities other authorities should, the education system in Vietnam unlikely being able to deliver life skills which speaks to the CC of bodily health, FFAV as a SfD project aimed to help promote the CC. Complementing this quote another FFAV staff member spoke about the lack acceptance of life skills in the education system:

But I think the recreational activities should go parallel with the school educational system, so sometimes as the NGO we try ourselves to integrate the life skills into the activities. For example, the topic of environmental protection but then for the school themselves sometimes the life skills component is not welcome in the school.

Thus, because of the strict nature of Vietnamese schools, traditional ways of doing things, and lack of resources, there may be some children who are not learning valuable life skills in schools. As a result, their bodily health and bodily integrity may be harmed because they lack knowledge of how to protect these capabilities. Hence, FFAV as a SfD project was promoting bodily health and bodily integrity by their way integration of relevant life skills and open approach to education.

Many of the headmasters and physical teachers expressed that their students embraced the life skills education that is embraced by the students because FFAV’s pedagogical approach to life skills education is vastly different from the teacher-centric education of Vietnam. That is, education in Vietnam is strict, where teachers hold all the power while students are expected to sit, listen, and be obedient. An FFAV staff member described to me that the way of teaching in
Vietnam, when it is teacher-led and in the space of a formal classroom, largely prohibits children from discussing life-skills topics openly due to fear of punishment. Therefore, through a CA framework that supports the provision of opportunities, I argue that pupils were more engaged in life skills education when participating in FFAV’s interactive playing style as compared to when being lectured in a classroom during the school day. Since FFAV created an interactive, open, and safe learning environment, young people were able to comfortably engage in life skills education to promote their knowledge on their own bodily health and bodily integrity.

Another FFAV staff member shared their thoughts of how FFAV programs have allowed young people to develop their knowledge in life skills resulting in their functioning in bodily health and integrity, as well as the potential of their lives improving:

So I think it’s important because you know that the education program in Vietnam is all about theory, so the children they are like chicken in the cage, they don’t have practical lesions, and even they have, don’t know much about life skills in the classroom where they feel not comfortable to convey their idea. So sport for football is a very good tool, it is not only for health, but also for the children to improve their skills.

FFAV acknowledged that incorporating life skills education into their activities is beneficial for the children of Thừa Thiên Huế. Due to Huế’s traditional lifestyle where obedience is expected and talking back is disrespectful, the playful and interactive teaching method of FFAV opened space for children to learn about pressing topics, hopefully resulting in positive impacts. Thus, learning about various life skills has the potential of contributing to the functioning of good health and having knowledge of one’s body. FFAV implemented their style of life skills education because “At the heart of the CA since its inception has been the importance of education” (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 152). Education in all its forms, whether it is in the traditional Vietnamese school system or in unconventional FFAV ways, was an important element to both
the protection and formation of internal capabilities and CC. The basic education people receive can be in different forms as long as they develop a person’s capacity to live a full life, because, in the end, education is central to human dignity, equality, and opportunity (Nussbaum, 2011).

8.2.1.4 FFAV Providing Practical Reasoning. At the same time, Nussbaum cautions researchers not to quantify education as simply literacy and numeracy skills that are needed to function, but rather, to extend the approach to areas such as critical thinking. Following this, I argue that FFAV life skills education helped provide the basic foundation for the CC, and specifically practical reasoning. The CC of practical reasoning is focused on conceiving what is good and engaging in critical reflection (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 34). By way of FFAV’s life skills education, I was able to observe the ability for children to have moments of practical reasoning. From the research, the manner in which life skills are taught by FFAV caught the attention of young people because the focus was on play wherein life skills became incorporated in the process of play. Young people participating in FFAV’s non-traditional life-skills education were exposed to the Central Capability of practical reasoning because young people were able to critically engage in calculated thinking, rather than passive learning. During one field trip, I observed a game where children participated in a relay race-like activity and had to solve a puzzle after:

The children competed in a relay race where there were two teams with six pairs of boys and girls teamed together. The objective of the game was a race where one boy and one girl had to hold a ball between their foreheads while walking down a line and placing the ball in a basket. Once they placed the ball into the basket one them needed to pick up a piece of a word puzzle that was to be put together once all of the pairs on the team completed the race and collected the pieces of the puzzle. The teams finished and scrambled to put together the word puzzle. One team finishes first but has the wording incorrect. The other team frantically works to put together the word puzzle and signals to the physical teacher. The physical teacher raises his hand signaling the team has correctly put together the word puzzle. The sentence is in Vietnamese says, “If you see someone drinking beer or alcohol tell them to not drive their motorbike.” (Fieldnotes, February 2017)
Illustrated above, and alternative to the lecture style education in Vietnamese schools, the children participating in FFAV activities learned about bodily integrity and health in an interactive manner. Drinking and drive is a relevant issue in Vietnam because of the ease of obtaining alcohol, especially in rural communities. Through playing in the relay race the children are asked to solve a puzzle that writes out an important message of not drinking and driving. Thus, FFAV providing space to play like in the story illustrated, children are learning about their bodily integrity by engaging in critical thinking processes in solving the puzzle. Education was fundamental to introducing a range of adult capabilities that should be provided in all forms possible (Nussbaum, 2011). To that end, the functioning of practical reasoning has the potential for children to understand and develop because now they may know the dangers of drinking and driving. By participating in FFAV activities, children were able to have fun, play, and learn all at the same time; playing a game that has a lesson about traffic safety integrated into its interaction was useful in capturing the children’s attention in ways that support the CC of practical reason.

**8.2.2 FFAV Providing Central Capabilities.**

In the example of the relay race and puzzle, a process occurred that wove the capabilities of play, bodily health, bodily integrity, affiliation, practical reasoning, and emotions together. Play thus works to make up the CC of bodily health and bodily integrity because the children are able to move freely in an open and safe environment rather than dangerously playing in the street. FFAV, by implementing activities across the province, was not only providing opportunities for playing games, but also creating valuable lessons that were cultivating the combined and internal capabilities of children. The interwoven and interdependent nature of the CC is pertinent to how and if FFAV has had any impacts in Thừa Thiên Huế. FFAV attempted to provide opportunities for children to play grassroots football, learn life skills and have fun is a
way of creating and supporting social processes that allow for the CC to exist. As Darnell & Dao (2017) suggest, sport in the CA is constitutive of development, but is not the “tool” for development. Instead, as the data illustrates, FFAV in creating spaces to play potentially engenders other processes of development. I argue that the provision and support of the aforementioned CCs at the very least allows them the opportunity to realize these capabilities which may not have been the case before. Children participating in FFAV activities are then theoretically more able to experience and develop their own capabilities to live a life worthwhile. Thus, the CA offers a useful framework to explore processes of SfD programs such as FFAV.

8.2.3 FFAV Providing Capabilities for Young Girls.

To speak of the holistic nature of the CA and FFAV, Nussbaum (2011) also expressed that when providing a minimum threshold of capabilities, those who need more help to get above the threshold should be given more help (p. 24). Due to social norms, one group that FFAV certainly made an effort to include in activities were young girls, particularly those that come from ethnic minorities. FFAV staff members told me that young girls in Thừa Thiên Huế Province are often stuck in a traditional to modern day conundrum. While young girls aspire to take on higher education or move away as they become older, by their teenage years, they are occasionally expected to follow a familial norm where they are to obey and listen to their elders. Their free time is spent helping around the house and conforming to historically constructed gender roles (Rydstrom, 1998). It must be said that young girls in Thừa Thiên Huế are not given opportunities at all; in fact, relatively recent research indicates the gender gap between young boys and girls has become equal by 2009 (Belanger et al., 2009). But what I reason is that there may be other opportunities that may be limited, specifically in the context of the Capabilities Approach, when young girls take on domestic duties. For example, using Nussbaum’s (2011)
term of tragic choice, young girls of Thừa Thiên Huế may have their choices taken away from them such as not being able to participate in sport and playful environments when they are tasked with domestic duties. I was told that when young girls go from secondary school to high school, they often relinquish sports or physical activity because they have more responsibilities in the home (e.g., caring for younger siblings, preparing dinner, or cleaning the home). So, while boys are allowed the freedom to play and be outside, in Huế, girls are expected by society to be obedient and serve in familial roles. These societal norms possibly restrict young girls from integrating into their societies and exploring other activities, like playing football.

Coinciding with FFAV’s time in Thừa Thiên Huế have been years where girls’ and women’s place in society has significantly improved over the 20 year span of 1989-2009 (Belanger, Nguyen & Nguyen, 2012). Thus, I argue that with a project like FFAV working in Huế, there is possibility for complementary actions of improving gendered dynamics. It was described that since the inception of FFAV, perceptions have seemed to be changing regarding the opportunities presented to young girls and participation in physical activity. A female FFAV staff member commented on the development of young girls playing football and being physically active compared to when she was going up,

Let's imagine 10 years ago, 15 years ago when I was in primary school there are no girls to play football. Nowadays I can see many girls interested in playing football and now we even have women football in Huế.

Although some, but not all young girls still encounter repressive familial expectations, by participating in FFAV activities, there is an opportunity to receive a minimum threshold of play that may be different from what is normally offered in their lives, which may allow for space to develop bodily health, bodily integrity, and practical reasoning. In the specific context of FFAV play for young girls is centered on grassroots football which may not always be provided to
young girls. My experiences and interactions with the female FFAV staff, coaches and participants provided insight into the progressive ways FFAV implements programs to educate young girls on the issues affecting their lives.

Silent ball is played to help build communication skills especially for those young girls that are not allowed to speak up. The goal of the game is to get the ball across a line by passing it around. There are two teams and the first round the girls are to be silent. They play the first round and quickly experience the difficulties in playing a game without talking. After one round they’re allowed to regroup and strategize but still without talking. After the second round then they’re allowed to talk. This is all supposed to symbolize how women may be silenced in communities and have to learn how to communicate in other ways such as through body language. Then after each game, there is a circle discussion where girls and coaches talk about the issues that they encounter and relate to the game. (Fieldnotes, October 2016)

After each game is played, the young girls sit down in a circle with the physical teacher who facilitated the activity to discuss the underlying meaning of the games. Young girls are presented with questions that ask them to critically think. Questions presented by coaches during the discussion I overhead were “Who can you go to when you are in trouble?” and “Who do you feel can protect you from dangers?” The purpose of asking these kinds of questions is to have young girls think about who they can turn to when they feel like their well-being is threatened. Based on this story, I argue that the opportunity to play, participate in physical activity, and engage in meaningful discussions via FFAV fits in line with the CA because young girls have a chance to develop and realize capabilities of play, bodily health, and practical reasoning. The young girls of Thừa Thiên Huế are a group whose opportunities in life are possibility limited such as being able to play football; therefore, FFAV aims to create moments where young girls participate in activities that are intended to develop and improve their lives. In turn, I argue at the very least FFAV was creating additional opportunities for young girls to function and realize CC that may historically and traditionally may not have been provided by other avenues such as in
school. These sentiments were also expressed to me by chi Huong when speaking of young girls participating in FFAV activities:

They learn a lot and some of the girls they came and some of the female teachers they came said that thanks to FFAV to who bring a lot of chances and opportunities for them to grow and now hear what they have today. Like they used to be very shy, cannot talk, but now they talk a lot, and they’re not shy, it’s amazing…I mean we’ve done very good on that. I miss one impact, because the biggest impact with FFAV so far, is the girls playing football, it is the very strong impact that you can see very clearly.

Chi Huong speaks to how FFAV has been able to provide young girls opportunities to play organized grassroots football which was not a function that had been historically. Thus, FFAV has provided spaces for young girls to function and experience various CCs within the constraints of their social conditions which may hinder their growth otherwise. Stemming from their participation in the GOAL Program, young girls may be supported to realize that they can become and achieve more than what traditional norms have allowed them to. And while gendered discrepancies have decreased in Central Vietnam (Belanger et al., 2012) there is a still a need for continued efforts in promoting opportunities for young girls. I spent a lot of time with the GOAL program during the beginning of my time with FFAV where I was allowed into spaces of these women carrying on programs.

This weekend I was allowed to go on the trip to A Lưới, a mountainous district in Thừa Thiên Huế Province on the border of Laos. This was an overnight trip for two GOAL events being held on Sunday. Other than the driver, I was the only adult male in the group. For them to allow me into the space where they are working and educating young girls is something to note. Chi Thao, the other coaches, Ngoc Linh, Kan Lin, Hong, and all the other coaches work exceptionally hard to ensure that the GOAL events are ran smoothly and effectively so the young girls are able to experience and learn as much as they can. Thao especially is a strong advocate for gender rights and the equitable treatment of young girls. Her history and life experience have put her on a crusade against the social injustices that the culture and lifestyle have put together here. As I understand it, personally and from my discussions with others, young girls and women are expected to be subordinate to men in many different ways. This is more so, for girls from ethnic minority groups,
who are constrained by cultural norms such as being married at 13 or not being able to participate in social settings due to their expectation of being at home and caring for the house and younger siblings. In the end, there is a cultural hegemony that speaks to how things are supposed to be between the genders here in Vietnam. (Fieldnotes, October 2016)

My experiences and interactions with the adult women coaches and participants from local communities allowed insight into the progressive ways (as compared to traditional gendered lecture education) that FFAV uses the GOAL program to educate young girls on issues that may affect their lives. Framed within the CA, I argue that stemming from their participation in the GOAL program, young girls may be better positioned to realize that they indeed have the capability and functioning to become what they want to be. For example, during a GOAL station ran at a Fun Football Festival, I overheard young girls provide answers of wanting to be teachers, doctor, and engineers when they are asked what they wanted to be when they grew up. This is not to say that it is due to FFAV that young girls may be exploring different futures, but there is compatibility to the CA, where FFAV may be providing further opportunities for young girls to develop. In line with Belanger et al. (2012) who indicated that the proportion of women in positions of power remains low in Vietnam, numbers have increased dramatically over the years. I argue then with projects like FFAV where young girls are able to participate in physical activity and be educated about their opportunities then there is a possibility of continuing the increase of Vietnamese women in positons of power. For the aforementioned reason then, there needs to be continued efforts made to improve Vietnamese women’s professional opportunities and to increase values of daughters (Belanger et al., 2012). Thus, FFAV may indeed be offering social processes that are assisting the development young girls of Huế.

In line with the CA question of “What is each person able to be and to do?” the GOAL program is potentially instilling belief and creating opportunities for young girls of Thừa Thiên
Huế Province to achieve their full potential. Moreover, in line with Coalter (2007, 2010) what was observed is that FFAV offers an appendage to a more complex web of development processes. That is, it cannot be determined that FFAV was a significant player in the overall development of young girls, but it can be recognized that the project does possibly play a role in providing Capabilities where young girls are playing and learning life skills.

Ricoeur (2010) provides different insight by moving the lens of the Capabilities Approach to the person by positioning them in an action verb focusing on their ability to say “I can.” From this, there is potential to see the girls’ participation of the GOAL program resulting in their ability to possibly say “I can become a teacher, doctor or engineer.” And this is important, because as Belanger et al. (2012) have determined from their report of a 20 year gendered development, that there is still room to improve and provide more opportunities for Vietnamese women for positions of power. In the context of this research, due to the fact that Thừa Thiên Huế Province still follows traditional Vietnamese norms, young girls can possibly be removed from positive social settings which potentially results in their development being stunted and their opportunities to live a life worthwhile may be limited. As the CA is focused on opportunities and achievements rather than outcomes, FFAV when examined the approach is definitely providing young girls opportunities to develop and possibly live a life worthwhile. The GOAL Program is thus a great opportunity for young girls around Thừa Thiên Huế Province to learn about their rights, participate in physical activity, and most crucial, develop their basic and internal capabilities to be whatever they want to be. FFAV within a CA framework provides young girls real possibilities of being and doing (Robeyns & Brighouse, 2010). Indeed then, in a CA framework, FFAV’s practices can be examined focusing on the opportunities and capabilities provided to beneficiaries like the young girls. In the specific context of FFAV and
Thừa Thiên Huế, while research indicates that education has reached equality, there is still a significant discrepancy of women in legislation, senior official, and managerial roles in 2009 (Belanger et al., 2012) where in these types of position 77 percent were held by men with a ratio of .24 female to 1 male. Returning again to Nussbaum’s theoretical question of “What is each person able to do and to be?” (p. 18), I argue that FFAV in conjunction with other social processes provided by the province such as education, family or development processes is possibly helping young girls answer what they may be able to be. Specifically in Vietnam this is important because in respect to economic participation, women if given more opportunities to participate and develop, can contribute to the country’s economy (Belanger at al., 2012). To that end, exploring FFAV and more specifically their SfD practices, the CA was a useful framework in examining how programs may support the provision of CC to young girls in a way that will allow them to broaden and further push gendered dynamics in Vietnam. Thus, with the provision of CC, there is a possibility for SfD projects to create moments of a life worthwhile where individuals may develop.

8.3 Utility of the Capabilities Approach to FFAV and SfD

In considering Nussbaum’s (2011) question of “What does a life worthy of human dignity require?” (p. 32), I argue FFAV provides a basic minimum of CC that likely better the lives of young people. Capabilities are produced and provided for each child that participates in FFAV activities with the goal of improving their quality of life. Deneulin (2010) states that the CA is not a full-fledged theory of justice; instead it is simply a framework to conceptualize human development because the approach proposes that the impacts of development be set in the provision of CCs. FFAV provides people access to an enhanced set of capabilities that can fulfill
a worthwhile and dignified life. These interrelated capabilities ought to be looked at as holistic and not separate from each other. Play, through FFAV, is provided in the form of non-competitive grassroots football in a safe and organized manner. Also packaged in play are bodily health, affiliation, bodily integrity, practical reasoning and the other CCs. Practically and theoretically, the CA can be a framework acknowledges that sport (play) may be a vessel in which other pertinent capabilities are supported towards making a human life worthwhile. Thus, this relates to Darnell & Dao’s (2017) understanding that SfD when examined the through the CA can position sport within a play-based philosophy, such as FFAV does, resulting an ethical notion of sport that may render development outcomes.

8.3.1 Benefits of FFAV Practices

FFAV, through the projects’ implementation of grassroots football in a safe and organized playground, provides opportunities that seemingly allow children to experience moments of social and individual development. It is important to note that the outcomes and impacts of FFAV were not measured within the scope of this study, but when applying the CA as a framework to examine activities there is room to acknowledge the positive work FFAV is doing in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Furthermore, it is not the capability to play that is the sole component in human development, but combined CC facilitated by FFAV that makes life worthwhile. Realizing one of the CC on the list entails not only promoting the appropriate development of people’s internal abilities, but also preparing the social environments in which people can function (Nussbaum, 1999). FFAV created social environments that were safe and open where young people can gather to play freely without the stresses of competition, while also being immersed in a space where they are taught pertinent life skills to handle issues in their communities. In the spaces created by FFAV such as FFF, regular trainings, and community
football young people escape from the orderly way of school or the strict traditions at home so that they can develop. It is possible and likely that the practices the young children are experiencing will provide them with the tools to pursue the future they imagine and to become what they want. To extenuate the nature of how FFAV may help provide spaces for develop I turn to a deep discussion I had with a headmaster.

I met Ms. Phuong during one of the field visits where we collected data for the participatory evaluation. She was a younger headmaster compared to the others that I had met before. Most of the headmasters I ever interacted with were older men in their late forties to sixties. Ms. Phuong, however, was in her thirties and had been at the school for some years now. Throughout all of her years with the school, there has been a FFAV football club. Ms. Phuong and I talked at length about how her school is located in a remote area, away from Huế City making it hard for her to rally volunteers or financial donations. Nonetheless, when we talked about the importance of having activities and the FFAV football club at this school, she expressed that for the children there is nothing else for them to do when it comes to positive entertainment or physical activity. Ms. Phuong said that in this area, and especially where the school is located, (On Highway 1 south of Huế City in Phú Lộc District) the children have nowhere to go play other than in the street.

Ms. Phuong said that without the activities provided by the FFAV football club, her students sometimes turned to playing in dangerous spaces like the street or spending their time in internet cafes getting addicted to gaming. In order to remedy any negative consequences from not having positive playing spaces, the school itself is open on weekends for children to use the pitch as a space to play where FFAV programs and activities are provided.
Ms. Phuong went on to describe that many children are transplanted to this school because they are from resettlement areas, thus they are not socialized well with the other students. So she wants children to create bonds with each other by playing with one another. Further, she felt that it is important to protect the space that has been created with FFAV in order for the children to have a place to play. While opening up to me about the situation with the school, she spoke with commitment and passion. She told me she was committed to maintaining activities once FFAV had handed everything over to her specific school because she is scared that children will turn to negative social vices that are common in Vietnam (e.g., drinking, gambling, and skipping school not to work but to stay at home). Ms. Phuong also shared with me that as an adult woman and leader of the school she positions herself as an example or role model, in order to encourage other community leaders to be part of the schools activities to help with sustaining FFAV activities. What was important to Ms. Phuong was that she wanted the pupils of her school to have a fun place to play; that the children knew they would be able to come to school and play. With this story, I argue that by consistently producing small but tangible results (capabilities) that build on each other (Campos, Randrianarivelo, & Winning, 2013), FFAV aims to build a holistic approach to individual development. To that end, I reason that play can be an epicenter of the other CC that arise from FFAV.

Returning to the question of “What is each person able to do and to be?”, children who participate in FFAV activities seemingly experienced moments that assisted their quality of life and quite possibly led to a life of basic social justice. Reflecting on this question, it is reasonable to imagine that FFAV enables young people to have opportunities to develop individually. Evidently, what has been described to me, and from my own personal experiences working for the project, is that FFAV produces worthwhile moments of development for children.
Robeyns (2016) reminds the CA can be used for theoretical and conceptual work on values other than justice. By positioning FFAV, as well as SfD, in the CA framework, one can theorize how children, if provided equitable opportunities and a minimum of threshold of resources, may have a life that is worthwhile and also develop to the best of their potential. So, while social justice is not a goal of FFAV, the project espouses values and important opportunities to the individual human development of children. With that, SfD researchers must incorporate auxiliary elements that derive in SfD projects. SfD is also not just about “sport,” especially in the case of the processes that occur in, with, and through FFAV. By positioning SfD projects like FFAV into the CA framework, there is space to examine the totality of work an SfD can potentially produce regarding alleviating humanitarian issues and developing individuals. Thus, it may be that SfD creates moments for human dignity to grow and a worthwhile life to occur rather than solving specific social issues.

8.3.2 Response to Critics of the Capabilities Approach

As a theoretical framework, the CA has been criticized because it does not aim to help explain how social injustices such as poverty or gender inequality are created; instead, as a theoretical framework, it works towards addressing these existing situations via each individual person (Robeyns, 2006). The approach merely reasons that all human beings should be provided a minimum threshold of CC to overcome inequalities and live a life worthwhile filled with dignity. Clark (2005) also critiques the utility that the CA as a general list of capabilities that can be utilized in every community. As communities come from different historical, cultural and political backgrounds, it is difficult to generalize a list of CC to be applied. Robeyns (2005) argues that it is overly idealistic to apply the CA and, with it, Nussbaum’s list of CC, universally. The CA cannot account for disagreements that occur in community settings when determining
lists of capabilities, cultural, and political differences of nations, and importance associated with each capability. Critics have reasoned that the realistic application of the CA is difficult to imagine for these reasons and remains idealistic at best.

However, I argue that although a universal list of capabilities is not always appropriate to be placed in a specific context, many of the CC are generally applicable to SfD. Supporting the practicality of the CA into different societies, Nussbaum states explicitly that “When we speak simply of what people are actually able to do and to be, we do not even give the appearance of privileging a Western idea… there is no culture in which people do not ask themselves what they are able to do and what opportunities they have for functioning” (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 39). I argue following Nussbaum’s (2011) view, that equal worth among people is something that can be accepted across all states, all religions, and all cultures if there are resources to reach a minimum threshold of the CC. It is therefore universally applicable in SfD.

That said, applying the CC needs to understand the tradition and culture of the society to which it is applied. Charusheela (2009) contends that Nussbaum’s list of CC is open, leaving room for local communities to interpret the list as they see appropriate. Aligning with Nussbaum’s (2011) loose interpretation of the Central Capabilities, FFAV as a project performs in line with community settings, and this differs depending on districts and communities (e.g., traffic safety in Nam Đôn district versus HIV/AIDS education in Quảng Điền District). The CA, in practice, makes room for cultural diversity, the interdependence of all the capabilities, and allows some movement on how achievable the full set of capabilities actually is (Watene, 2013). Nussbaum (2011) recognizes that all cultures contain a variety of voices where the views of women, rural people, and other groups must be accounted for. FFAV works in divergent settings from the mountainous highlands bordering Laos to the villages along the coast of Lạng
Cô Bay. The districts have their own characteristics, populations and way of life, but similarly, they all have FFAV football clubs and activities. FFAV, as an SfD project, plays a part in promoting capabilities to people, whether they are from ethnic minority groups in Nam Đông District or young children from Huế City. From this analysis, I argue that the CA warrants application because the CC are broad enough to be interpreted and adapted to local communities, and even more importantly, the basic concept of each are elements of any life. I agree with Nussbaum (2011) that at the very basic belief, all ideologies, communities, and nation-states believe in the well-being of their citizens.

In addition, Nussbaum (2011, p. 108) says that the list of CC is abstract and general such that it should be able to accommodate the capacity of people to specify concretely their own interpretations of what is important. And to support Nussbaum’s approach, the people and communities, if able, have the ability to practically reason how they prioritize the CC. Thus, the CC are flexible and abstract enough to allow for a project like FFAV and the communities like those in Thừa Thiên Huế to integrate local traditions and knowledge. In the manner of FFAV, the focus is on children’s development, which results in the promotion and protection of CC such as bodily health, play, bodily integrity, affiliation, and others. Therefore, in regard to sustainability, FFAV football clubs and practices are worth servicing, investing in, and protecting because they complement other capabilities that help a person live a full life.

8.4 Conclusion

Within the framework of the CA, FFAV is SfD project that aims to create and provide moments that promote CC. Investigating the practices of FFAV through a CA framework, I argue that SfD can be evaluated in more qualitative and holistic terms such as a project’s ability
to provide and promote the CC. Young people from all over the province are now exposed to different styles of play that are open for all, while also learning how to handle pertinent issues affecting their lives. Moreover, the most marginalized populations, such as young girls, are supported in developing capabilities of play and bodily integrity. For these reasons, the CA, when positioned in a certain SfD context, is suitable to explore SfD practices. The findings support Darnell & Dao’s (2017) suggestion that connecting the CA to SfD may provide important discussion to the cultural and political values of sport. That is, FFAV introducing and applying grassroots football grounded in open, safe and for all philosophies there is evident potential is positive outcomes for FFAV participants. This chapter extends the conversation that the foundational idea of FFAV which is grassroots football (play) is a tenet that resides in the CA which potentially and theoretically organizes other CC for a life worthwhile.

Specifically, in this chapter, I argue that the CA was useful in investigating the practices of FFAV whereby the data showed how FFAV’s activities were in line with various CCs. This is supported by how this research was situated in a particular context in which historical, political and cultural implications shape SfD. Thus, FFAV as a SfD project was able to adapt to the specific location of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Many of the people from the communities, hamlets, and villages of the district were unlikely to be able to describe ‘sport for development’ or ‘sport for development and peace’ in academic terms. But they could most likely explain that something is happening as a result of the programs and activities of FFAV. I argue that these happenings, positive or negative, should not be disregarded. Particularly when framed in the CA, and as shown by the data, there are moments in FFAV that resemble what Nussbaum would describe as a life worthwhile.
In sum, the deployment of the CA is important because it allows us to view SfD not as a solution to issues, but a part of a more comprehensive process of development. It would be idealistic to state that FFAV is the answer to the ongoing social, economic, and gendered issues in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. On the other hand, presuming that FFAV as not having any impact is an injustice to the commitment and work of the people involved, especially those living in the local communities. What can be said is that FFAV aims to develop CC for children through opportunities to play and the interconnected social processes that arise from play. FFAV, therefore, aims to support the creation, implementation, and protection of activities necessary for a quality of life and for human dignity in Thừa Thiên Huế.
CHAPTER 8 – THE CAPABILITIES OF THỪA THIÊN HUẾ PROVINCE – PICTURES

Image 1 – Young boys playing grassroots football in Nam Đồng district during a weekend school tournament. The pitch was created and is maintained by teachers of the school. (November 2016)

Image 2 – Young children participating in a sack race with their classmates during a Fun Football Festival in Quảng Điền district that was moved inside due to the rain. (November 2016)
Image 3 – Young boy runs around the pitch after he scores a goal. (November 2016)

Image 4 – Life skills relay game where young children are on teams racing each other to pick up pieces to a puzzle in regards to traffic safety. (February 2017)
Image 5 – Linked to the previous image the young children piece together the puzzle that has a message regarding traffic safety. (February 2017)

Image 6 – Young girls playing “My Rights” from the GOAL Program. (October 2016)
Image 7 – Discussion of “My rights” after playing the game to discuss how young girls can protect themselves from unwanted aggression and who they can turn to for help. (October 2016)

Image 8 – Young girls from ethnic minority doing FIFA’s “Handshake for Peace” before they play grassroots football with each other. (October 2012)
CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

“Đi mò cũng nhớ quê mình Nhớ Hương Giang gió mát, nhớ Ngự Bình trăng thanh”

Above is a traditional quote from Huế referring to the longing people from Huế have for this special province in Vietnam. Loosely translated, the quote depicts that when people of Huế leave their homes, whether it is due to work, school, or being forced to move for various reasons, they often reminisce about Huế because there is poetic beauty of Huế symbolized by the Perfume River and Ngự Binh Mountains. That is, for the people of Huế, wherever their lives may take them, be it to a different region of Vietnam or abroad, they will always remember their home in Huế. With that said, the eleven months I lived in Huế were longer than my parents have stayed in Vietnam since they left in 1980. During those eleven months, I conducted research, but I also experienced Vietnamese life. These are largely synonymous in this dissertation because there was no research without living life in Huế and no life in Huế without carrying out the demands of academic research. And with this sentiment, I write this chapter with my own longing for Huế because to me, Huế is not just a city and a place where I conducted research. Huế is the history, people, the lifestyle, and the culture that undoubtedly made this research possible. So, in this final chapter I discuss the significances, limitations, FFAV’s potential for sustainability, and directions for future research that come from this dissertation.

9.0 Discussion

Because of the participatory nature of this research project, I maintained flexibility in the theoretical perspectives used to explain the different social processes that occurred during my research with FFAV and in Thừa Thiên Huế Province. I admit that I did not go to Huế with a
theoretical framework guiding my study; instead, I allowed the context of my lived experiences to direct me towards appropriate theories that formed each pertinent analysis of this dissertation. With that said, I revisit the three main analysis chapters in a way that attempts to connect all three. I argue that each analysis is connected and builds upon each other resulting in potential future research.

9.0.1 Freire, Elias & Nussbaum Union

What I aimed to do was conduct research that was meaningful not only to the academy, but also to the people who let me into their lives for eleven months. The PE was an experience that not only provided valuable data; it was also research that was purposeful to FFAV. I can honestly say we were able to gather significant data that is helping FFAV support the sustainability of their programs and activities across Thừa Thiên Huế Province. Certain transformative actions such as delivering workshops on how to fundraise, establishing district level hand over teams, and gradually educating local communities on how to perpetuate activities are now being done. I argue that the process of conducting a PE with FFAV because an academic (me) and a SfD project (them) were actually able to collaborate on research that was in line with their needs and conscious of local communities. Doing a PE to conduct SfD research was also useful because it created bonds that extended far beyond researcher and participants. The utility of PE as a methodology created research that privileged FFAV’s goals, while also allowing me to conduct research my Ph.D. In the spirit of Freire-ian pedagogy and theory of dialogical action, I argue these bonds formed through the PE were significant because it established love, trust, humility and a reciprocal learning process for all. In the end, at least there was confidence to say that the partnership between FFAV and I resulted in tips for sustainability, but also lasting personal relationships.
Our success of the PE will only be measured in years to come when I have funding to return to Thừa Thiên Huế Province to see how and if sustainability of FFAV activities has occurred in local communities. Whether the future will consist of non-competitive grassroots football, physical activity games with life skills education, Fun Football Festivals, and the various activities introduced by FFAV is yet unknown. Yet, I am compelled to say from the research that sustainability is likely to occur, not because of FFAV, but because of the ways the people of Thừa Thiên Huế care, live, and work with each other. The way of life in this province has strong connections to historical, cultural, and communal roots that have stayed intact through hundreds of years. Therefore, by way of my close-knit relationships informed by Freire-ian concepts I delved deeper into the way of life that FFAV exists in.

Through my active immersion in FFAV and the opportunity to live with a homestay family, I was guided to a discovery that history, culture, and community are webs of networks inherently connected in the province of Thừa Thiên Huế. Moreover, explained in detail in chapter seven, I argue that FFAV’s existence as an SfD project can only occur within the elements of history, culture, and communities. Understanding how local history, culture, and communities influence the implementation of FFAV allowed for exploration into the practices of the project. In this research, FFAV while being an externally Norwegian, was implemented and understood in a Vietnamese local context. I argue that SfD can only work when implemented locally when considering historical, cultural, and communal social processes. Thus, the application of the Capabilities Approach (CA) to understanding the FFAV’s practices prompted discussions about the project’s ability to produce, provide, and protect various intersecting Capabilities.
9.0.1.1 Theoretical Synergy. Theoretically, three distinctly different frameworks informed this project. To contextualize this research within the various intricate ways it came into fruition, data analysis led to concepts stemming from Freire, Elias and Nussbaum. This is because they all offered a lens to illuminate the research in special ways. Coming from practices of education, sociology and development studies this project attempted to draw out various ways in which SfD is participated in, processed and practiced in Vietnam. For instance, Freire sheds light on the practice of doing participatory research, while Elias provided insight into the how broader historical and societal processes of Vietnam impact FFAV, and Nussbaum offers an analysis of what forms of development may be occurring in Thừa Thiên Huế via FFAV. But in respect each theoretical frameworks contribution there must be recognition that in this research each bear a linkage to one another.

The synergy between Elias and Nussbaum is that the application of the CA became relevant within the historical, cultural, social, and political context between FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế. Returning to the seminal question presented by Nussbaum “What is each person able to be and to do?” I reason that, in Thừa Thiên Huế, there are limitations to a person’s development depending on interwoven factors that indeed stem from historical, cultural, and communal ideologies. Capabilities, I argue, are in many ways shaped and formed by historical and cultural figurations. This finding supports Darnell and Dao’s (2017) suggestion that when connecting the CA to SfD, practitioners ought to contextualize their efforts within the specifics of the local context including the cultural, historical and political settings. The researchers contest that doing so will move SfD to be a more ethical approach to practice. Nussbaum (2011) based on her approach to the CA emphasizes by leaving the framework empty where local communities are able to satisfy the framework with their own beliefs and cultures can lead to
more informed practices. I argue applying the ways Elias’ figurational framework concerning history, culture, and society helps to explore how Capabilities are conceived and planned.

I reason that in order to be committed to the participatory research that is advocated through the pedagogy of Freire I had to immerse my entire self into the society of Thừa Thiên Huế and consider the ways in which Vietnam and the province have developed historically. By forging the pedagogy of Freire and the Elias-ian approach to how individuals and society act as figurations I became deeply embedded into life of Hue. Then, this synergy led me nuance the practices of FFAV to be in line with the social, cultural, and historical context of Thừa Thiên Huế. Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach, for this research project, is thus informed by the historical sociology of Elias where both are situated in FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế Province. So to say linearly, Freire guided the participatory characteristics of the research which opened doors to the people of Thừa Thiên Huế province resulting in the flow of historical, cultural, and communal processes to inform the research, where in turn the practices of FFAV were filled by the way of life of Hue. With this, I argue this theoretical linkage allowed for a deeply localized SfD study where the practices of FFAV are guided and linked to the society of Thừa Thiên Huế. This understanding of SfD via FFAV in Thừa Thiên Huế speaks to Coalter (2007; 2010) and Guest (2009) who both acknowledge that sport is an empty form that must be filled with the cultural expectations of a specific context.

In further building the theoretical relationship permeating this research project, I reason that first, Freire offered a practical approach to theory and research. Freire guided me to take a practical approach to theory full-heartedly opening the research to FFAV staff members. To me, Freire would want researchers to engage participants in any way possible, particularly if there is a need for transformative education and social change to occur (Hartman & Kwauk, 2011). I
found that there was no room to be afraid of allowing FFAV to be involved in the research, for Freire would advocate that humility to research and trusting relationships may engender fruitful outcomes. For me, a believer in Freire-ian pedagogy, to not open this research and to not be engaged with FFAV, would have been cowardly of me as a researcher.

Drawing on the openness of the Freire-ian approach to research, Elias and Nussbaum provided descriptive facets to the research. Guided by the pedagogical approach of Freire, I learned much about Thừa Thiên Huế from the people who are from this central province of Vietnam. As referenced in Chapter 6, there was much mutual learning between everyone involved in this research project. For me, I was able to learn an immense amount about the people, culture, history and community. And through this learning compounded with Elias-ian theory, I learned that life of Huế and life of Vietnam deeply influences how SfD is processed. I argue that if I did not take a participatory and immersed approach to research where I became an embedded person living in the day-to-day life of Huế then I would not have become aware of how society of Huế and the people of Huế inform the figurations that encompass the province and thus inform FFAV. As well, to understand the development practices of FFAV via Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach and her Central Capabilities, there was a need to pay attention to how people of Thừa Thiên Huế identify development. For this reason, when analyzing how FFAV’s activities may resemble the Capabilities Approach and more so specific Central Capabilities, it was FFAV who helped draw out what capabilities may be occurring. The descriptive nature of Elias and Nussbaum taught me to be more attentive to the nuances of the localized context in SfD. That is, while SfD is described to be a global movement consisting of different projects, governmental agencies, and major international organizations, the field ought to be understood and narrowed in on localized spaces. SfD if interpreted between different
locations may offer a more distinct and nuanced analysis. To that end, it must be understood that in this research project, the Central Capabilities which may be promoted by FFAV are informed by the figurations that make up Thừa Thiên Huế Province; and I would have never understood this without the theoretical and methodological commitment championed by Freire. Simply and with confidence, there was no way for me to genuinely learn about FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế that would allow me for the intimate insight if it were not for the overarching approach to the research that was applied. And for this point, I argue the synergy of locally informed participatory research, which this project attempted to accomplish, is worthwhile and requires further work in SfD.

Through FFAV, children of Thừa Thiên Huế Province since 2001 have been exposed to play in ways that emphasize fun, participation for all, and non-competitiveness. The production of play in the spirit of fun brings along other Central Capabilities (CC) that make life worthwhile (e.g., affiliation, emotions, bodily health, and bodily integrity). FFAV has been able to provide young children opportunities that are regularly denied them by the social institutions of Vietnam. Vietnam as a nation-state is financially under-resourced and ideologically lodged in a particular way of thinking; therefore, the most marginalized communities of Vietnam societies are not provided with the adequate opportunities to grow. Thừa Thiên Huế Province is one specific location in Vietnam where resources are insufficient, thus the existence of FFAV is helpful in providing CC from which young people can experience and potentially grow. The opportunities created by FFAV are of special importance to the most disenfranchised groups of Thừa Thiên Huế such as young girls and young girls from ethnic minorities.

To summate, in this research project, Freire, Elias and Nussbaum were linked together by the practical nature of Freire and the descriptive research of Elias and Nussbaum. All three were
important to how this research was conducted. Moreover, Elias acts as the hinge that holds all three theoretical frameworks together; this is because Elias as a broad theoretical framework consisting of different elements allows for the convergence of the practical and the descriptive. In this research the practical comes from the participatory approach to research, whereas the descriptive comes from the attempt to comprehend how Thừa Thiên Huế influences FFAV and what outcomes that FFAV may be providing.

9.0.2 Final Discussion

Notable from the research is the manner in how Vietnamese people, culture, and society intertwine for SfD/FFAV to exist. In chapter six, I argued that conducting a PE is useful in SfD research because it intently allows for the possibility of the co-creation of knowledge that can help SfD projects address issues. Regarding the PE conducted between me and FFAV, we were definitely able to establish a research process, carry out, and discover some actions to take regarding sustainability. Moreover, FFAV activities could only materialize if the people Thừa Thiên Huế accept and believe in the project’s ability to improve the lives of young people across the province. To that end, how history combined with culture created social processes within communities was important to the overall adaptation and manifestation of FFAV. Focusing on the people and locality of Thừa Thiên Huế, I argued in chapter seven that SfD projects must be understood within the specific localities they exist in. Understanding FFAV within the history, culture, and communities of Huế, SfD I argue, moves away from a broad social movement to a micro-level process.

Similarly, the practices FFAV has on the primary beneficiaries can only be understood within the local context. That is, in chapter eight, I argued SfD practices when examined through the CA can illustrate potential impacts. Using FFAV as a case study, I argued that their SfD
practices draw out Capabilities that have the potential in creating a life worthwhile. More specifically, the realities of Thừa Thiên Huế Province, such as lack of safe playing spaces in urban areas and lack of organized spaces in rural areas, few opportunities to learn about life skills education, and the vexing social conditions, set the stage for FFAV’s practices to be impactful. FFAV as a SfD project implements practices that allow for the functioning in an array of CCs. Thus, in the final analysis, what needs to be clearly depicted is that every aspect of Thừa Thiên Huế is somehow and in some manner involved in the creation, implementation, and impacts of FFAV.

Reviewing my time with FFAV and in Thừa Thiên Huế, while I did not notice it at the time, I came to a conclusion that the PE, the historical, cultural, and communal influences of Vietnam, and the promotion of Capabilities were all interconnected. Thus as Elias would argue all social processes are interconnected and that in the CA these processes impact the ways in which develop can occur. There would be no way to conduct a PE without the acceptance of me, an outsider, by FFAV and the communities across the province. Through their acceptance, I was able to learn and appreciate the way of life in Huế, thus drawing my attention and scopes of this research to focus on the history, culture, and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế. Then, because of my attention towards the social processes that take place in Huế, I found that the practices of FFAV though a CA framework warranted special contemplation because Capabilities were represented and formed by local conditions. This research through the participatory and attention to local people and culture is rooted in a practical and ethical conscious in which we sought out the transformative processes of FFAV. Overall then, this dissertation speaks to the broader SfD academic literature, while also speaking to Vietnam’s specific interplay with SfD. Both are unique and deserve their own consideration in the expansive SfD and Vietnamese literature.
9.1 Significance

When writing this dissertation, I was divided into two beings: one academic who did his best to write using theory to ground data related to SfD in a way that would obtain the accolades to earn a Ph.D. from the prestigious University of Toronto. Another who did his best to write this dissertation in a way that would justly honor and represent the people, history, and culture of Thừa Thiên Huế. The research in itself has endless possibilities for analyses. However, in returning to the findings of this dissertation I present four main points that make this research significant.

9.1.1 Participatory Research in SfD

First is the process of doing participatory research with and alongside an SfD project. If there is anything to be taken away from this dissertation that we wish other researchers to notice, it is the methodology that we carried out. Methodologically, we did this research together. Working with FFAV to conduct a PE of their project speaks to the experience of doing research with participants and people outside the academic world. I argue that this study shows the significance of using a PE methodology to conduct SfD research. PE is useful because it creates the potential of researchers and practitioners of SfD to collaborate in order to assess practices which hopefully are intended to improve activities for local communities. This is not to say that other methodologies do not allow for this collaboration but I argue that the ethics and epistemology supporting PE requires such a research relationship. I believe another important takeaway from this study regarding PE, and, participatory research more broadly, is that to carry out this particular kind of research, there must be a commitment that extends far from the boundaries of the academy. Participatory research requires a devotion unlike what is commonly
preached in the positivist traditions of research where participants are rarely included in the research process other than being sources of data. I learned that research, when inclusive of other people’s ideas and knowledge, is complex and will often lead to difficult roads. But through the difficulties and awkwardness, practical research was conducted, and long-lasting relationships were created. Intersecting the Freire-ian foundation of the PE into the other analyses, I reason there is warrantable discussion towards the nature of conducting research alongside with SfD projects and, if possible, inclusive of the local communities where SfD projects implement activities.

Participatory research, in all of its forms, is useful to examining SfD projects, whether it be understanding what issues local communities are encountering to creating beneficial programs, or, as we did, exploring areas that will make sustainability practical. Conducting research that was open for FFAV to have their voices and input control the process was monumental to this dissertation. What developed was that this research was not simply an academic endeavor; but more importantly, it was a goal to do research that centered on enacting change (Donnelly, 2015). I argue that by doing PE, or other forms of participatory research, there is potential for action and change that is greatly needed. No longer is research constricted to the goals of the researcher and the academy, instead, research extends to the participants. As a result, there is a commitment and investment from all parties. When conducting a PE the research is not simply academic; rather, research is public (Donnelly et al., 2011) and open, unlike other approaches. From both practical and theoretical standpoints, there is much discussion to the actual process of implementing this particular kind of research approach; therefore, I encourage future researchers to attempt to create their own process participatory research that is unique to them and the people they are working with.
I argue that from my time with FFAV and our efforts of doing a PE that participatory research should be pursued more often. For those academics that wish to be in the field and are able to fully commit themselves to the efforts of others, I encourage them to believe that participatory research needs to be done not for the sake of research, but for the purpose of creating transformative action. This PE did not exist without the commitment of FFAV and the willingness of DoET, Sub-DoET, and the communities working with us. It is truly because of all of them that this dissertation goes beyond the norms of methodologies and methods that have been recommended by the scholars of SfD.

9.1.2 Localizing SfD Studies

Second, this dissertation significantly extends the conversation that SfD ought to be explored specifically within the historical, cultural, political, and social context in which a project exists. In line with Lindsey et al. (2017) and Guest (2009), my time in Huế reshaped my focus on the local conditions that allow FFAV to work and, that allowed, for SfD as an international form of development to materialize in Huế. FFAV and, more broadly, SfD only exist because of the interwoven and interdependent relationship between history, culture, and community. Addressing suggestions from previous research that have recommended longitudinal engagement, interactions with stakeholders and community members, as well as to consider the needs of projects and beneficiaries, I found that my research focus extended far beyond SfD. I was guided to needing and wanting to understand the social processes of Thừa Thiên Huế. I realized that to understand SfD in Vietnam, I first needed to understand Vietnam. By understanding Vietnam and, more so, Thừa Thiên Huế, I was then able to conceptualize the interplay between SfD, FFAV, and the province.
Thus, at times, during the field work and especially during my writing, there were moments when this dissertation was actually more about Vietnam and Thừa Thiên Huế than it was about SfD. I believe that is a finding in itself and one with implications for SfD literature. It is significant that SfD studies conceptualize from the onset of studies the local. That is, I argue that SfD scholars often narrowly focus on the theoretical and practical elements of SfD such that they, forget that there are people who make up SfD in their local communities. With the people come histories, cultures, politics, traditions, and lived experiences that must be included into all SfD research for deep, meaningful insights to accrue. The truth is that aspects of life are what engage with the interplay of FFAV. The major finding to take away from the interplay between the lives of Thừa Thiên Huế and FFAV is that FFAV can only exist within the realities of these aspects.

Understanding the local implications of SfD processes, I argue, will allow for SfD projects to better conceptualize how their programs and activities align with local conditions. Moreover, in discerning the manners in which local social processes affect the implementation of SfD, I argue there is space to explore how people from local communities are able to be active in their pushback against SfD. Too much of our time is spent studying the impact of SfD projects, while being critical of their postcolonial, feminist, and top-down approach. Our studies are lacking focus on the people that experience and partake in SfD projects. Pushing back against critical SfD scholars that have spoken about the lack of agency of local people, I believe there is reason to acknowledge the authority Vietnamese people have in accepting and resisting SfD practices. Shifting our focus to people allows sharing of stories about their overall SfD experience for better and for worse. Shown by the agency of people, the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province are indeed directing and governing FFAV. Local communities are more than
capable of continuing their own development without intervention from FFAV. And it is through a historical, cultural, and communal understanding that there is an ability to position Vietnamese people as active agents interacting with SfD.

9.1.3 SfD Practices in the Capabilities Approach

Third, applying the CA as a framework to investigate the work that FFAV is doing yielded insight into the ways that SfD is conceptualized in practice. Some may question my analysis because the broad scale social inequalities in Vietnam have yet to be dismantled, but I countered by saying that the goal of this dissertation was not to dismantle the social injustices or to eliminate the inequities that people experience in Vietnam. Rather, I sought to understand how opportunities created and provided by FFAV were assisting young children to live a life worthwhile with the possibilities to be whatever they want to be.

Simply, young people of Huế lack opportunities and chances to develop into individuals due to lack of resources, living conditions, and cultural ideologies. FFAV’s practices, providing the opportunity to play grassroots football grounded in concepts of fun, non-competitive, and participation for all, was theoretically producing moments that were not commonly provided for young children. Thus, through the provision play, FFAV was possible creating moments to experience various CCs with which the young children were able to develop. Discussed in chapter eight, children given opportunities to play possibly produced functionings that aligned with other CCs such as affiliation, emotions and bodily integrity. Moreover, in line with the CA, the opportunity for children to function in the CCs of play, affiliation, emotions, bodily health, bodily integrity, and practical reasoning through FFAV practice’s warrants discussion to the potential impacts of the project. That is, according to Nussbaum, FFAV by providing these CCs through their practices was constitutive of adding to a life worthwhile.
Positioning the examining of FFAV’s practices within a CA framework, I reason that FFAV’s programs and activities are locally and culturally founded. The specific application of Nussbaum’s comprehension of the CA was useful in exploring the practices and possible outcomes come from FFAV because, when aligned with a more local outlook of SfD, the CA takes into consideration the very specific cultural, political, and economic aspects of a social setting. Working within the social, cultural, and political landscapes of a place, as Nussbaum advocates, a lens opens to the development of a life worthwhile.

FFAV did provide experiences that help mitigate unfavorable social conditions experienced by certain populations and bring about worthwhile moments. Within the social and cultural social constructions of Thừa Thiên Huế, FFAV was able to produce SfD activities that directly contend with specific areas. So, when contextualizing the CA within the specific locality of Thừa Thiên Huế, I reason the practices of FFAV were more subtle than grandiose SfD gestures (i.e., sport can save the world). Again, this analysis elicits for SfD to move away from broad international conception and towards locale specific manifestations. For example, due to the historical and traditional outlook on young girls, it was well within reason to look at how FFAV has broken down beliefs that young girls should not participate in football. Young girls merely being able to play was beneficial to their social development because they were given opportunities to play football, interact with other young girls, and learn about sensitive gendered topics. In similar fashion, children from ethnic minorities were exposed to experiences that may improve the mundane and working lifestyle they experience in their everyday lives. Having the opportunity to be included in FFAV activities outside of the school day exposes them to play and more so affiliation, emotions, and senses of the imagination. Within the theoretical construct of
the CA, this dissertation argues that FFAV has brought worthwhile experiences for the young people of Thừa Thiên Huế.

Exploring FFAV’s ability to provide experiences that allowed young children to play safely, make friends, have feelings, and to imagine they can be more than what traditional society has allowed suggests FFAV practices are valuable. Children of Thừa Thiên Huế Province will certainly face obstacles and challenges growing up. Young girls will have to encounter gendered expectations that will never completely be forgotten. Because Vietnam as a nation-state is still overcoming the atrocities that have tormented the country, it will take time to adjust and overcome the structural inequalities that permeate the country. I argue, then, within Nussbaum’s CA framework where each individual is viewed as means to their own development, that FFAV is aiming to create moments for children to experience a quality of life that is worthwhile. More significantly, children were able to experience a quality of life that fits within the social, cultural, political, and economic landscape of Thừa Thiên Huế. That is, FFAV’s programs and activities are constructed to fit the conditions of local communities and their specific needs. The CA is not a theoretical lens that wishes to solve the structural inequalities of a society; rather, it accesses what Capabilities should be provided and protected, as well as what institutions can promote the Capabilities. I argue that because the government and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế Province do not have the resources, and they are controlled by an overarching Vietnamese way of life, that an SfD project like FFAV was needed to help support provide opportunities to experience Capabilities.

9.1.4 Studies of Vietnamese Physical Culture

Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, is that this dissertation is possibly the first of its kind in Vietnam. That is, very little research in the sociology of sport and physical cultural
studies has been conducted in Vietnam. While I am not the only person to conduct research in Vietnam, it appears from my knowledge and conversations with mentors (Luong, Personal communication 2018) that research in the area of sport, physical culture, and/or physical activity is very limited. The ultimate contribution that this dissertation will make to the field of SfD, the broader arena of the sociology of sport, and the overarching social science paradigm is that it has opened a door to study sport and/or physical culture in Vietnam. Every aspect of Vietnam is developing and growing, and the country is assuming a new place in the international community. Academic research and education are just one component in the push to develop the country. To that end, I hope that this research not only continues to inspire me to pursue a research agenda in Vietnam, but also to encourage others to consider exploring topics of sport, physical activity, and physical culture in Vietnam in any capacity, not limited to SfD.

9.2 Self-Determination of Huế vs. External Agency of Norway

My position as a volunteer with FFAV undoubtedly created internal strife in conducting this research. I admit that I was deeply connected to FFAV and the people that became participants in this research. As a result, I believe my ability to be critical about FFAV, SfD, and the lived experiences became somewhat blurred. Further, in concluding this dissertation, I realize that there were tensions throughout between external support and local agency. That is, while FFAV was locally staffed and ultimately governed by people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province, there was also reliance on the external presence (financial and logistical) of Norway.

Discussing the fundamental neo-colonial nature of SfD (Giulianotti, 2004), and thus FFAV, this project understands that the implementation of FFAV prioritizes Norwegian centric sporting practices that in turn may be eliminating Vietnamese physical culture. In the discourse
of SfD research, this inconvenient truth of continuing colonial legacies cannot be ignored. Thus, Vietnam, through a history of French colonialism and American imperialism, is still encountering forms of external pressures. SfD and FFAV is one of them. Returning to the economic reform, Đổi Mới, since the mid-1980s Vietnam has gradually opened relationships with other nations. Due to the economic hardships affecting Vietnam after the way, Đổi Mới in the eyes of political leaders was necessary to improve the economy and build formal trade relations with other nations. Therefore, through a historical analysis which begins with French colonialism and is currently working in modern day Vietnam, this document acknowledges the reasons why and how SfD comes with colonial power and baggage.

And with the current political, economic and social climate of Vietnam, this project was situated in a specific moment and process between Vietnam and Norway. This project was set in a pivotal juncture in which Norwegian agency was existing and the actual implementation of FFAV was being done by local Vietnamese people. As stated throughout the document, a pressing concern for FFAV during the research was the fact that NFF had decided to halt all monetary and logistical support, leaving FFAV staff members to plan a handover of activities to local authorities and communities. The handover created an atmosphere of distress and fear because NFF and NIF had provided extensive support for the last 16 years. Now it was up to local communities and people of FFAV to determine the future of FFAV and more so SfD practices.

This underlying tension in the research allowed me insight into how a SfD project could be handed over to local communities. In the spirit of a resilient Vietnam, I saw the effort put forth by FFAV staff to handover activities to local authorities. In turn, I saw the passion that some governmental authorities and community leaders had in wanting to maintain what FFAV
has implemented. It was amazing to see the way various leaders discussing and working together to ensure that their communities would continue FFAV activities after 2018.

However, as FFAV was and is still in many ways influenced by Norwegian ideal of SfD, I cannot ignore the inherent power relations and the specter of colonialism. Indeed, while I applaud the agency of Vietnam and Vietnamese people in chapter 7, there was always a Norwegian presence during my time with FFAV. While Anders K. the former director of FFAV, relinquished his authority to anh Phuong, he still had an influence on processes and decisions. As a participant observer, I noticed the tension between Anders K. and FFAV staff. Indeed, I was told that Anders K., because his new role was still so new, has had trouble with the change of leadership and lack of control. The new reality of FFAV is that Vietnamese staff now have increased agency in dictating the way forward for the program. Thus, the determination of FFAV and SfD practices will, in the end, now be processed by Vietnamese nationals.

At the same time, FFAV’s practices will always be inherently rooted in Norwegian SfD discourse and the potentially colonizing processes that NFF implemented through FFAV. Ideas and practices of grassroots football, football for all, free play, safe and open environments were heavily influenced by Norway and Norwegian thinking. This is not to say that these concepts were not in Vietnam before FFAV, but they were heightened in Thừa Thiên Huế Province through the project’s practice. So during the research, I noticed a complicated relationship between Norwegian SfD and Vietnamese sporting practices. Norway provided a different conceptualization of playing football and physical activity games that Vietnamese nationals took on. But in this tension, I saw an acceptance of “football for all” and life-skills education by those implementing and participating in activities. This is because various community leaders told me that the children are participating in activities that may potentially improve their lives.
Simply, FFAV and the project’s activities were financially supported by Norway; however, the actual people working in the office and those carrying out activities of local communities were Vietnamese. Even more, I reiterate from previous chapters the Vietnamese agency that has historically formed against foreign intervention. As I experienced in my own process of gaining research access, and from conversations with FFAV staff and governmental officials, nothing happens in Vietnam without the “red stamp” of approval. For this reason, FFAV staff members worked closely with headmasters of schools and district leaders to make sure that SfD activities are in line with the needs of each community. Thus, there is no doubt of the conflict of external pressures versus internal agency, but I argue that the local communities have been able to process this conflict to obtain social benefits. For the purpose of this document, I argue for the awareness of how Vietnam has a role in the creation of SfD more than the ways in which Norwegian SfD discourse leads to colonial control and oppression. I argue that failure to do so emphasizes the external authority of funders and the limited capacity of local projects that are often discussed in SfD research.

9.3 Sustainability of FFAV

Returning to the moral ethics of sharing participatory research stories (Greenwood et al., 1993; Frisby et al., 1997), before I end this dissertation I want to comment on what I argue may be reasons for future sustainability of FFAV activities. In turning to the overarching topic during my time with FFAV, sustainability, I synthesize the PE, with the influence of Thừa Thiên Huế’s history, culture, and communities on FFAV, and the practices of FFAV as seen through the CA. I argue from my observations and discussions of the PE that sustainability of FFAV may occur if the attitudes toward of sustainability align with the beliefs of local communities. That is, if local
communities believe non-competitive grassroots football, life skills activities and education, and safe environments are deemed worthy, then sustainability is possible. From conversations with local community members, many spoke to how in their eyes FFAV has established meaningful practices children are developing in. To substantiate this, I turn to an experience I had with a headmaster in a primary school in Phu Vang who spoke about his thoughts about FFAV’s activities:

The headmaster of the school, (Name), pulled me into his room to drink tea and talk. I was lucky to get a conversation in with him. We talked about how he supports the idea of football for young girls and he appreciates how the GOAL event is able to bring some fun to all the girls. He thinks that everyone can play football and supports this notion. (Fieldnotes, October 2016).

Sentiments like the one above about how FFAV has opened up spaces to play for all, while also integrating forms of life skills education were also expressed to me by officials from MoET. Hence, there was recognition of the work FFAV has done which I argue are potential reasons that sustainability may occur. From my analyses, I believe the sustainability of FFAV programs and activities can likely to be protected and continued in local communities because the Capabilities, such as *play, bodily integrity, bodily health, affiliation and emotions*, are interwoven into FFAV’s practices. Thus, sustaining activities aligns with the need to protect the CC that are both implicitly and explicitly supported through FFAV. Young children playing in safe and organized spaces, young girls learning to handle issues concerning their well-being, and a sense of community that resonates in these spaces all represent Capabilities worth protecting. For the above reasons, I argue if internalized by district leaders, village authorities, and community members, local communities may find enough value to carry on activities in the best possible way they can.

Moreover, driven by historical traditions where values are placed on community, family and loyalty in society (Nguyen, 1994; Raffin, 2005), FFAV was influenced by the overall social
processes of Vietnam. In an Elias-ian framework, the interdependent relationship created from a constellation of history, culture, and community influences how sustainability can be affected. The sustainability of FFAV, I argue, may likely occur within the historical, social, and cultural landscape of the province that emphasizes community. I reason that for FFAV to imagine sustainability and continuation of activities, the project needs to consider the communities’ ability to subsist with what they have. For example, while monetary support will be exhausted, local communities have the knowledge and experience to continue the ideology of non-competitive, open grassroots football with various life skills programs. I have seen communities be resourceful in constructing goalposts out of bamboo, nets out of cloth, and adults converging to organize activities. I also experienced committed community members attend fundraising training and meetings to discuss a way forward without FFAV. Thus, just like stories of Vietnam during the war where people used whatever they had to survive and were committed to each other (Truong, 1986), I see the same, but not to severity of war, processes possibly happening to sustain FFAV activities.

Discussed in chapter six, local communities have gradually began to take over logistics, processes, and activities to the extent that they are responsible for the continuation and growth of FFAV. Currently, primary and secondary schools that have established FFAV football clubs and programs are beginning to train other primary schools and secondary schools wishing to apply this form of SfD. That is, headmasters are assisting other headmasters to understand the organizational and logistical operations of having FFAV clubs, such as creating participatory spaces, how to schedule events, and how to reach out to communities. Then, physical teachers who act as coaches and administer activities are training other physical teachers about the philosophy of grassroots, non-competitive, football infused with various life skills activities.
With support from district level Sub-DoET, communities across all nine districts are beginning to take on, whether it is at a minimal level or to a great degree, responsibility to carry on FFAV once the project absolves at the end of 2018. This responsibility, I believe, may be rooted in the Vietnamese commitment to creating and building one’s overall society (Raffin, 2005). The interwoven communal relationships that stem for centuries can impact the way SfD manifests and is implemented in Vietnam, thus hopefully sustaining activities.

9.4 Addressing Challenges to Evaluating SfD

Coalter (2007; 2010) acknowledges that evaluating SfD projects is strenuous and takes a longitudinal effort that may be conflicted by demands of research output and financial stakeholders. However, I argue from what I learned from this research project, is that there needs to be more in-depth analysis and evaluative measures within SfD. For better and for worse, both positive and negative stories ought to be told to the nature of doing research intended to evaluative SfD. Levermore (2011) and Jeanes and Lindsey (2014) discuss the tensions of what is occurring in the field compared to what “truths” may be told. I argue that by building formidable, honest, caring, and trusting relationships as Freire advocates then there is potential to alleviate any dishonesty in evaluative studies. What can be said from this research is that there needs to more detailed and immersed evaluative research that is informed by local participants because there is potential for transformative processes to occur (Hartman & Kwauk, 2011).

By including local participants, like how this project included FFAV staff-members, there is potential to train local participants in research, which may benefit their own development while also reducing costs for external evaluators. Moreover, it is not enough to evaluate SfD projects without incorporating members from local communities in which these projects exist. In this manner there is also possibility to uncover the subjugated voices (Nicholls et al., 2010).
Again, the opportunity to fully evaluate SfD is apparent and is needed more than ever. If there is anything that this dissertation can attest to is that an immersed and evaluative approach in SfD where researchers, project staff and community members collaborate ought to be pursued. And to do so, researchers will need to put their academic prowess aside and to be committed to the communities and the projects.

Challenges to research come in ebbs and flows. However, in research that is determined to make a difference, strive for positive change, attempting to be evaluative and be inclusive of participants challenges may arise more often. As mentioned by other scholars and from my own experience, challenges to evaluative research may be time (Welty-Peachy & Cohen, 2016), truthful responses (Levermore, 2011), and inclusion of voices from the field (Darnell & Hayhurst, 2012; Nicholls et al., 2010). These challenges may direct researchers to stray away from the types of participatory research called for by scholars (see Donnelly et al., 2011) and the research that fills the pages of this dissertation. But, from the experiences had in this project, I argue, that if researchers are scared to take on these challenges, then transformative SfD research will be stunted and we will continue to make calls for this line of research without actually doing something about it. I must confess, that if we (SfD practitioners and SfD researchers) do not have the moxie to push the research agenda then maybe academic we may all need to re-evaluate our purposes. I simply suggest as an aspiring academic myself who has researched SfD, that scholars may need to be more reflexive in their research practices and their overall goals. In the end, if academics can put the communities, participants and projects first, then I argue we can do more and better work.

In writing this dissertation where I am away from FFAV and Thừa Thiên Huế Province people ask me how do I know that we were able to do any type of research that was helpful for
FFAV and the communities that experience the project’s programs. Honestly, I cannot answer this question with confidence. The only words I can write to express this story, is that, we tried our best to do research together with the local communities in mind. And I believe this is where future research should base their motives.

9.5 Limitations

Before embarking on the research for this dissertation, I was influenced by the need to position research that is open to members of FFAV and communities of Thừa Thiên Huế. Unfortunately, I was unprepared and did not know how difficult it would actually be to include local communities in Thừa Thiên Huế Province in the actual research process. Other than being informants of data and gatekeepers, people from the local communities such as children, parents, teachers, and headmasters, did not fully participate in the research process. In the spirit of PAR in SfD research, I believe this project missed an important opportunity to include the most important beneficiaries, children of FFAV, into the research. Aligned with more inclusive PAR, the children needed to have their voices magnified, and I recognize that I was limited in doing so.

As well, during my time with FFAV, I encountered many different people. I met top people from NFF and NIF. I socialized and had meetings with Vietnamese officials from MoET, the MoCST, and the VFF. I worked alongside the Thừa Thiên Huế DoET and the Sub-DoET from each of the nine districts. And last, I entered the homes of district leaders to share meals and exchange life stories. The ability to interact with so many different groups comprising FFAV was amazing; however, my time was limited to each group for various reasons, such as travelling to different locations, their time to meet with me, and my ability to meet with them. While the
opportunity to meet and experience life with so many different people yielded so many insights, I was not able to fully appreciate everyone.

Participatory research is difficult, but I argue that its difficulty is the main reason for pursuance in the realm of SfD. I argue that SfD research should undertake difficult projects founded in participatory research. I encourage future SfD scholars to shelve their academic endeavors and elevate the goals of the participants. I believe if scholars are able to do so, then they can imagine with participants a future of SfD that is meaningful and parallel with local conditions.

Another important limitation to my research was the fact that I became a total insider with FFAV. I believe and admit that my insider status with FFAV through my ethnographic and participatory methodologies skewed my ability to be totally critical of the project. Two specific research critiques must be acknowledged by my involved ethnographic methodology. The first, as mentioned, was my absentmindedness to being critical of FFAV as a Norwegian funded and supported organization. I do acknowledge that FFAV is a product of neo-colonialism which unfortunately resembles French imperialism. But for the purpose of this document my intent was not to critique FFAV for being a product of Norwegian SfD practices and thus reproducing historical colonialist. The second critique is that in not discussing the colonial discourse permeating FFAV that this document likely gave the staff of FFAV and people of Thừa Thiên Huế extensive agency. That is, due to the care and deep involvement I had in the field I admit that my research bias became cloudy and I gave the people more agency than recognized.

Thus, both limitations that affected this project stem from methodology and methods. In the form of participatory research, I was inexperienced and did not fully contemplate the difficult it would be to create a full participatory action research or participatory evaluation project.
Moreover, due to the nature of participatory research and my epistemological commitments rooted in Freire-ian principles, I lost the ability to remove myself and be fully critical during my time in the field. With these limitations in mind, I hope this project will still provide substantial insights into SfD in Vietnam that is both critical and practical.

9.6 Future Research

There is no doubt that there is substantial room for the conduction of research in various areas deriving from this dissertation. First and most importantly, from a broad perspective, there are endless possibilities to conduct research in the sociology of sport and physical cultural studies in Vietnam. From my experience and discussions with leaders in the education sector of Vietnam, there is a need to study sport and the many forms of physical culture in Vietnam. I encourage Vietnamese scholars or colleagues from the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, and Asian-American studies to pursue opportunities for research in sport and physical culture in Vietnam. Continuing research in the sociology of sport or physical cultural studies will be tremendously beneficial for the country.

Second and specifically related to research on SfD, I encourage future research to be fully immersed in the processes and epistemologies of participatory research. I vouch that there is something to being with the people (participants) in every moment during participatory research that yields experiences which are deeply emotional and passionate. In the spirit of Freire (1971), the doing and being with participants in participatory research will open experiences of love and commitment that will assuredly lead to research that has the potential to transform the social setting. Now is the time for research that diverges from the positivist, safe discourse that seems to be a familiar practice. Following C. Wright Mills (1959), there is no room for abstracted
empiricism in SfD research. For those who wish to study SfD in the heart of the action, I advise that to do so requires a commitment that is far greater than the boundaries of research.

Third, future research must take in, understand, and realize how local social processes influence the application of SfD. I argue because SfD functions in many different locales research should begin exploring SfD locally. SfD research can no longer disregard cultural and historical influences of a specific locality and community. There is a belief that SfD, because of its universal applicability, can transcend national boundaries. However, as I have shown, SfD as a global process does not necessarily fit into the Vietnamese way of life and that Vietnamese social processes influence SfD. More importantly, it was of greater applicability to understand how Vietnam shapes and defines SfD. Local adaption and understanding of SfD will yield how projects fit into cultural discourses surrounding sport, physical activity, and, furthermore, the use of SfD initiatives. That is, from what was discovered in this dissertation, SfD researchers must explore the ways in which historical and cultural practices are interrelated and, as a result, influence how SfD works. SfD manifests and is understood differently across social settings (Guest, 2008), thus, it must be examined through the specific local contexts in which it is placed.

Lindsey et al. (2017) provided valuable discussion on the interplay between SfD and two specific local communities in Zambia. Similarly, this dissertation zeroed on one specific province in Vietnam and the way SfD works within this location. Doing so brought to light a focus on the historical, cultural, and communal influences that both accept and withstand FFAV as an SfD project. Research into the way local cultures adapt to or resist the ideologies rooted in SfD is needed.

Fourth, the usage of Nussbaum’s CA as a pragmatic lens to view the practices and impacts of SfD warrants further application. I reason that applying the CA allowed for analysis
to examine the holistic and interconnected processes occurring in SfD that may yield positive benefits. The application of Nussbaum’s (2011) CA brought a complementing practical outlook to theory. Examining FFAV’s practices through the CA and Nussbaum’s various CC yielded a qualitative outlook on what SfD projects bring to local communities. Rather than exploring benefits of SfD that identify measurements and exact numbers, the CA allowed for a broad qualitative outlook on people’s overall well-being and life experiences. Through the CA, I reason that SfD projects are able to create moments that people are able to experience and build upon where they may possibly live a life filled with dignity and a life that is worthwhile. For this reason, the next line of research I wish to see completed in relation to the CA and SfD is for future research on SfD apply the theory from the onset of program evaluation as a framework to guide the planning and implementation of activities. Moreover, an extensive longitudinal study of SfD applying the CA to access the impacts of a SfD project will be greatly beneficial to understand outcomes. Future research committed to navigating how the CA can guide practice, implementation, and impacts will hold substantial clout to how SfD is measured and evaluated.

Overall, the future research that can emerge from this dissertation has room to move in different directions. Whether it is establishing a credible sociology of sport in Vietnam, pushing the methodological boundaries in SfD, making a conscious effort to seriously consider the local contexts of a community, or applying the CA as a framework to understand the impacts of SfD, I hope future academics will take what has not been done in this dissertation and explore new heights.

9.7 Final Conclusion
This dissertation goes beyond the boundaries of SfD, the sociology of sport and physical cultures studies and symbolizes the inherent ability for Vietnamese people to work together towards a common research agenda. Instead of writing theory, I wanted to write research (Smith, 1999) that resulted in tangible benefits for FFAV staff and the local communities of Thừa Thiên Huế. In every fiber of my body that is motivated by the immersed, inclusive, and participatory nature of the research that was conducted, I wanted this research to shine a light on the people of Thừa Thiên Huế. My research was not only about what I learned and me, nor was it only done to add to the broad academic literature on SfD. Rather, the research moved in ways that intimately captured people’s lived experiences. In the end, I encourage SDP researchers to move away from ‘sport’, ‘play’, and ‘physical activity’ when talking about this broad movement known as sport for development. For what is more important in this field are the people. It is the people and the communities that they belong to that are the most fundamental element in all of this. We must remember it is the development of people that is the goal of sport for development projects. Emblematic of the research are the actual lives and experiences that endured. The lives of FFAV, the children of Thừa Thiên Huế, and other people of the province, such as headmasters, community leaders and government officials I interacted with, were the human beings that embody this dissertation.

Prevalent from the findings was the manner of how Vietnamese people, culture, and society intertwine for SfD to exist. FFAV activities can only materialize if the people of Thừa Thiên Huế accept and believe in the project’s ability to improve the lives of children across the province. To that end, the importance and meanings given to FFAV were influenced by historical, cultural, and communal figurations. How history combined with culture created an ongoing historical social process within communities is important to the overall adaptation and
manifestation of FFAV. Similarly, the practices of FFAV experienced by the primary beneficiaries can only be understood within the local context. More specifically, the realities of Thừa Thiên Huế Province, such as lack of safe playing spaces, few opportunities to learn about life skills education, and the vexing social conditions, set the stage to how FFAV works. Thus, in my final analysis what was clearly depicted was that every aspect of Thừa Thiên Huế was somehow and in some manner involved in the participation, processes, and practices of FFAV.

After a year of writing, I come to a conclusion of this dissertation that is outside the realm of SfD, theoretical frameworks, and more so the sociology of sport academy. The journey of this dissertation began with the idea to study the ways in which SfD is processed, provided, and promoted in Vietnam. Although that research idea was an ongoing and underlying premise of my research, I must honestly say that the research became substantially about much more than simply SfD in Vietnam. The research led me in different directions, forcing me to reposition the focus of the study through different lenses. Analysis of the data was particularly enlightening as it forced me to delve further into the actual topic of study anchoring this dissertation, that is, the life and people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. As I have stated before, it was, and it is the totality of Thừa Thiên Huế Province that composes this dissertation. The dissertation at hand was about, with, and for the people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. What I want to clarify is that SfD does in fact become a topic of conversation throughout these pages, but more importantly, the lives, voices, and experiences of the many people are the crucial topics within this study. In the end, I wrote this research for them, about them, and with them.
CHAPTER 10: EPILOGUE AND REFLEXIVITY

As you read this message, I will most likely be on my way back to North America. First back to San Jose, California, with my parents, then onto to Toronto, Canada where I will pick up where I left last year. I will return to my life before coming to FFAV. However, my life will never be the same. FFAV, the Purple Huế Homestay, Huế and all of you will forever be a part of my life.

Every day I will work on my Ph.D. thesis, and every day I will write with FFAV on my mind. Not a day will go by where FFAV and the communities will not cross my mind. The day that I submit the final thesis to my committee, FFAV will be on my mind; the day that I defend my thesis, FFAV will be on my mind. As the years go on and I continue my life, I will always look back on my time with FFAV and in Huế.

Because of all of you, I will one day have my Ph.D. degree. For that, I will be forever thankful. Coming from an academic background where we are taught to think critically and use sound reasoning, I don't believe in destiny. But one of my favorite quotes, from one my favorite books is, “And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it,” from The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho. So, sometimes a person cannot logically think things through. In this occasion, I believe the universe brought me to FFAV for a reason. I am lucky to have met each and every one of you on this journey. (Email written to FFAV in June 2017)

10.0 Huế: 1968 – 2018

In February 1966, President of the United States of America, Lyndon B. Johnson asked his commander and military advisor in Vietnam, General William Westmoreland, what Moreland thought the next best move the North Vietnamese would make. Westmoreland responded:

Capture Huế. Taking it would have a profound psychological impact on the Vietnamese in both the North and South, and in the process, the North Vietnamese might seize two Northern provinces as bargaining points in any negotiations (Smith, 1999, p. xvii).

Huế was thought to be a safe and prestigious place in Vietnam because of its rich imperial history. Both sides hardly touched the historical city during the war.
Two years later on January 31, 1968, during Vietnam’s national holiday, Têt, the North Vietnamese forces and the Vietcong let loose an all-out attack on Huế. In 1968 the people from both sides of Huế faced atrocities. Casualties of the North Vietnamese ranged in the 5,000s. South Vietnamese forces and American military personnel lost as many as 600 people. But what was the most alarming and historically tragic was discovered in the weeks, months, and years after the Battle of Huế was over. Following the Battle of Huế, in the rebuilding of the city, mass graves were found of men, women, children, and elderly people. The number of dead people ranged from 2,800 to 3,000 people. These people, many of them civilians, were found with hands tied with wire or rope behind their backs, opened mouths with silent screams across their faces. No city in Vietnam suffered more than Huế did in 1968.

On Tuesday night, February 27, 1968, American news correspondent Walter Cronkite spoke to the American public about his findings from the war zones of Vietnam, particularly from the recently completed Battle of Huế. His report was titled, “Who, What, When, Where, Why: Report from Vietnam.” Cronkite wrote the narrative himself in which he presented with cadence and eloquence:

The ruins are in Saigon, capital and largest city of South Vietnam. They were left here by an act of war, Vietnamese against Vietnamese. Hundreds died here….We paid a visit to the Battle of Huế, and to the men manning the northernmost provinces where the next big community offensive is expected…The destruction here was almost total (speaking of Huế). There is scarcely an inhabitable building in the whole of Huế. Whatever price the communists paid for this offensive, the price to the allied cause was high. If our intentions is to restore normalcy, peace, serenity to this country, the destruction of those qualities in this, the most historical and probably serene of all South Vietnamese cities, is obviously a setback.

Cronkite ended his report without the slightest confidence for an ultimate United States victory in Vietnam:
We have been too often disappointed by the optimism of the American leaders, both in Vietnam and in Washington…To say we are closer to victory today is to believe, in the face of the evidence, the optimists who have been wrong in the past…It is increasingly clear to this reporter that the only rational way out then will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as honorable people who lived up to the pledge to defend democracy, and did the best they could.

In the space and time that this dissertation is completed, it will have been fifty years and some months since the conclusion of the bloodiest battle in America’s war in Vietnam. The tumultuous history of Vietnam still resonates in the lives of all of Vietnamese people. The brave people who fought for an independent and sovereign nation are the backbone upon which modern Vietnam is built. Their sacrifices will forever be ingrained in the memories and teachings for every Vietnamese citizen born today and tomorrow.

I would be remiss to not acknowledge the long unfortunate history of Vietnam. But in doing so, I have journeyed into the depths of Vietnam’s history, culture, and people, so desperately needed for this dissertation. I reason from the bottom of my heart, with every fiber of my soul, that I could not have written this dissertation without grasping Vietnam; that is, without grasping Vietnam, there would be no way to grasp SFsD in Vietnam. SFsD can only exist in Vietnam as Vietnam allows the global process to do so.

This dissertation will come to an end when the final page turns over. However, the lives, voices, and experiences that inform this dissertation will live on. The most important lesson I learned from the research is that every moment passes and life always continues. While I sit and write the pages of this dissertation for hours on end, the people of FFAV are across the world waiting out the eleventh hour of their jobs. Similar, but not as dramatic, FFAV holding onto the final months and days of Norwegian support resembles so much of former South Vietnamese president’s Nguyễn Văn Thiệu naïve hope that the American government would somehow
provide a miracle in the final days of Vietnam. But as history has shown, it will be the Vietnamese people who have always continued and built the nation.

To me, Huế is not just a city, it is the people, the lifestyle, and the culture. Huế has endured the worst of times and is finally emerging from the ashes and rubble that litter the province. The province from the mountains of A Lưới to the oceans of Phú Lộc transcends a world that is living in the past but at the same time growing in the present. The research infused into this dissertation represents the Hue’s struggle against the foreign, the new, and the future. Thus, SfD with its Vietnamese adaptation will somehow, for better or worse, grow with Vietnamese influences in its own way. Specifically, in the case of FFAV, the continuation and sustainability of ideas and activities will adapt to the local conditions. I believe that SfD, within the national context of Vietnam and more specifically in the provincial setting of Thừa Thiên Huế, will continue by the people and with their own application of the global process.

10.1 Final Goodbye

My last day in Huế with the people of FFAV was June 26, 2017. We gathered for breakfast at the Parkview Hotel where my parents, FFAV staff, and I treated ourselves to a large western style buffet. At the time, all I could think was that this would be the last time I would personally see most of these people. I was in my own head as conversations about family in Saigon, the food we were eating, and what my parents did over the weekend went on. My feelings were stoic. I told myself that this day was bound to come. I knew that I could not stay in Huế forever. I was neither sad nor happy. Knowing that inevitably allowed me to be at ease when I finally boarded the plane at Phú Bài airport bound for Saigon.
In my final days in Saigon, I was full of laughter, surrounded by family, whether blood related or bonded through my father’s wartime air force squadron. We came together as if years, an ocean, and lives did not force us apart. Then on July 6, 2017, on a humid, sunny day, my parents and I said our farewells to my family and got into a white Vinasun Taxi going to Tân Sơn Nhất Airport. At 5 PM Vietnam time, we boarded the plane home to San Francisco.

Ultimately, this dissertation was at first academic, but most importantly it was personal. Not a day goes by that a flicker of memory does not cross my mind. In the year that has passed, I returned to the University of Toronto to write this dissertation. Every day that I wrote, FFAV, the people from the local communities, and Vietnam were on my mind. If my emotions were not stirred as I left Vietnam, they have trembled upon my return to Toronto. I felt broken, as if a piece of me was missing, and this piece was nowhere to be found. I will remember Huế in all of her beauty. The way the Perfume River calmly flows throughout the city, the sun shimmering off the glossy top. Every morning, when I would ride my bike through the city, surrounded by motorbikes, cars and the thousands of people. I long for Vietnam and especially Huế.

10.2 FFAV Now

FFAV as an SfD project has continued to follow a handover process of organization and activities. With today’s technology of emails, Facebook, and Skype, it has been easy to stay in touch with the family and friends I am fortunate to have in Vietnam. Their lives have gone on in Huế, just like my life has gone on in Canada. Since my departure, a few things have changed for FFAV. A few staff members have left FFAV to study in Hanoi, Japan, and Canada. The core senior management staff remains intact, diligently working to hand over FFAV to Thừa Thiên Huế province. FFAV has held workshops and trainings for the people of Thừa Thiên Huế on
topics such as how to deliver life skills education through physical activity games, fundraising in their local communities, and how to organize events. FFAV staff members have continued to travel to Hanoi and Saigon to speak with governmental partners that could potentially help with supporting the idea of grassroots football with life skills integration. Most importantly, there has been a reinvestment by NFF in supporting the logistics of the FFAV handover process. As of September 2018, in a Skype call, I was notified by NFF that they will not officially withdraw after 2018 and will support FFAV at a minimum capacity. In the end, nobody from FFAV has given up on the hope of sustainability.

10.3 Memories of the Past

Thi Bui (2017) writes in her illustrated memoir when speaking of her parents’ past in Vietnam, “But maybe being their child simply means that I will always feel the weight of their past” (p. 325). Bui’s quote rings true as I conclude this dissertation. The history of my parents has informed me in ways beyond the scope of my imagination. My father was a pilot and squadron leader of Thân Tượng 215 of the South Vietnamese Air Force (SVAF) who served time in a re-education camp. My mother was from a family ostracized and targeted by the new communist regime after the Fall of Saigon. Their histories indubitably informed the research.

While SfD was the subject of my dissertation and would help to form my identity as a researcher, my time in the field would be an experience centered in, with, and about Vietnam. Vietnam runs through my blood and compels me to continue carrying out academic research, whether it be on SfD or not, in Vietnam. I am compelled not only through my history and biography, but also by the history of Vietnam as a country. I realize now that studying SfD in Vietnam emerged from a historical and biographical relationship located in me; that the troubles
and issues in Vietnamese society are also a part of me because Vietnam is in me. Vietnamese people can never forget their history because it is our history that will forever guide our lives (Nguyen, 2016). Nguyen (2016) states that individual memories are made possible by memories already inherited from the communities to which we belong. All people, but as Nguyen notes particularly Vietnamese people, because of our culture, remember their ancestors through the stories passed down by their older relatives. Difficult to explain, there is something about Vietnamese people, families, and communities where stories inherently affect the way younger generations behave and perceive. Thus, my own history and that of my family have certainly guided my life and undoubtedly underpins the research at hand. Vietnam’s history will always be a part of me in ebbs and flows. And, thus, my history with Vietnam has grown, because the research has come and gone, but the experiences and memories will be forever. It is Vietnam that I will forever be grateful to.

10.4 Family

Living with a homestay family was the apex of the research experience outlining this dissertation. I arrived in Huế with no intention of being a part of a family. But that quickly changed as in Huế, family and being together with those around you is a vital way of life. In many ways, this dissertation was about community, family, friendship, and the people that comprise these groups in Vietnam. It is because of this family’s sincere love, generosity, and familiar virtues that this dissertation has life.

This family took me in as one of their own. In this family, I became a son, a brother, and an uncle. Ba (dad) and Mẹ (mom) are the grandparents and elders of the family. They care for the family in every way possible. Most of their days are spent at home caring for their
granddaughters, maintaining their garden, cooking, and keeping the house safe. Binh and Tinh are the patriarch and matriarch of the family. Then there are Chau An and Chau Yen, the daughters of Binh and Tinh, aged two and one respectively. In this home, I was not a guest, but a family member. Each one of them took me in and treated me like family. Similar to my role in my own family, I happily obliged when I was called upon to help with familial duties. In Vietnam, home and community act as a place of obligation and identity (Bowden, 2017). Whatever they asked me to do, whether it was cutting down bananas, helping attend the garden, or watching the children while Mẹ was cooking, I did.

Ba and Mẹ cared and worried about me as their own son. They protected me, made sure I ate (a lot for that matter) and that no harm came to me. Ba took me to their ancestral village in Phú Vang during Tết, so I could experience their family traditions. Binh and Tinh encouraged me and advised me as I was truly their own little brother. They lifted me up during my times of doubt and stress about my research, teaching me to live in the present and to not stress about the future. Chau An and Chau Yen laughed and played with me like an uncle who loves them, which I do. They showed me an innocence and curiosity of life that I lost as an adult. Chau An and Chau Yen stole my heart with their genuine love, happiness, and warmth. I love each and every member of this family. The personal experience I had living with this amazing family and researching with FFAV adds an emotional and personal subjectivity that filled this dissertation. I do not want to neglect these emotions and people that helped this dissertation, as if I never lived in Huế. It is only right to include them as a reflection of my experiences in Huế.

My eleven months with this family was special. I will always consider them to be my family. This special family taught me what it is to be Vietnamese and what the country of Vietnam represents. The family instilled in me what it means to be committed and loyal. They
taught me what it means to be a family and part of a community in Vietnam. They helped guide me throughout my time in Vietnam. I pay my respects to them for because of them I felt at home in a place that was foreign. Without them caring for me and for this research I would not have survived my time. This family informed my research just like the people and communities that I met from all over Vietnam. My time in Huế city important because it was where this dissertation was located. My experiences are central to Thừa Thiên Huế. By living in Huế I fell in love with life and experienced research in a way that gives true authenticity to my experience and stories that are rooted in this dissertation.
CHAPTER 10 – REFLEXIVITY & EPILOGUE – PICTURES OF FFAV AND FAMILY

Image 1 – FFAV staff members celebrate Norwegian Independence Day. (May 2017)

Image 2 – FFAV staff and Sub-DoET officials celebrate Tết 2017. (January 2017)
Image 3 – FFAV staff members (Hong An, Sang, Ngoc Linh and Nhi) and I take a picture after the Fun Football Festival in Nam Đông. (September 2016)

Image 4 – FFAV staff enjoying a morning coffee break. (October 2016)
Image 5 – FFAV family and friends weekend trip to Hoi An. (April 2017)

Image 6 – FFAV staff curiously contemplating during a game at the staff retreat in Hoi An. (December 2016)
Image 7 – Me making a speech to FFAV family and friends with my parents in attendance at a final farewell dinner. (June 2017)

Image 8 – FFAV family, friends and my parents during one our last night’s together. (June 2017)
Image 9 – My homestay family and I during a last dinner together. (July 2017)

Image 10 – My family and my homestay family having one last dinner together. (July 2017)
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Appendix A

My father was a pilot and squadron leader of Thân Tướng 215 of the South Vietnamese Air Force (SVAF). He trained in Alabama where he learned English and was able to rise in the ranks working as a member of the military who could speak both Vietnamese and English. But when Sài Gòn fell his life completely changed. Just like many other people who fought or worked with the South Vietnamese regime, my father was at risk of being persecuted for his collaboration with the Americans. He told me the day Sài Gòn fell he burned every picture he had of himself and his squadron, as well as any indicators of his service with the SVAF. He was afraid of being killed because of his affiliation with the Americans. But erasing any notion of his affiliation did not save him from being selected by the new regime to serve time in a re-education camp for his ‘crimes’ against the Vietnamese struggle for liberation.

My mother is the youngest of ten children. My mother’s family was wealthy due to my grandfather’s position as a manager for Esso Petroleum. Due to my mother’s family’s status and sympathy with the South Vietnamese regime (all four of my uncles served in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam) they were ostracized and targeted by the new Sài Gòn government. She told me that Sài Gòn in those days was in a state of fear, never knowing when you or someone you loved would be taken away. My mother was young and was then living a life with no clear direction, future or safety.

My name is Michael Sanh Dao and I was born in San Jose, California to two Vietnamese refugees who left Vietnam in 1980. While this moment in history certainly informs who I am it does not necessarily define my entire being. I cannot escape the fact that I was born in America, nor do I want to. However, I have to acknowledge that me being a Vietnamese person born in America to immigrant/refugee parents holds substantial influence on this project. If my parents
did not flee from Vietnam’s newly formed regime I would not have been born with the possibilities and privileges that have allowed me to study SfD in Vietnam. I say this because if I were my father’s child in Vietnam then whatever treatment he would have received as former SVAF personnel is most likely what I would have encountered. This moment in my parents’ history holds substantial influence in my life. It is with this that I am able to be sitting here writing this dissertation and having had the opportunity to conduct the research I did in Vietnam. Leaving their homeland is the hardest decision my parents made in their lives. I have realized the most fundamental truth about leaving: it is never yours alone to experience (Tran, 2018); that the heartbreak of my parents leaving Vietnam would someday affect me.

Being a Vietnamese-American certainly impacted me as a researcher and the overall experience of this project. I cannot run from being a Vietnamese-American and the meanings that I inherently carry. For Vietnamese, America represents both atrocities of war and hope for a better world. This is evident in my parents who both left Vietnam in 1980 during the tumultuous aftermath of post-war Vietnam. For them, America was a country that brought promise for a separate South Vietnamese state; however, any promise of South Vietnam was only established in America. That is, growing up in San Jose, California was immersed in Vietnam in many ways due to the heavy immigration after the war.

In turn, being a Vietnamese person born in America informed my identity as a researcher during this project. I was many times Vietnamese and not Vietnamese as well as American and not American. I was aware that my identity held significance during my time in the field. Unfortunately and fortunately I carried a dual identity that impacted the research, as well as my overall experience. The part of me that was Vietnamese, I believe, created an authentic interest from people who wanted to help me. Then the part of me was American, I believed, created
curiosity to life abroad. Both in hand positioned me as a researcher studying sport for
development in Vietnam, as well as a Vietnamese person living in their return to Vietnam. With
that in mind, I can say with confidence and sincerity that being Vietnamese brought an element
to this research that non-Vietnamese could not have brought. The acceptance and the rejection of
my Vietnamese identity helped the research. Being Vietnamese, understanding Vietnamese
culture, and knowing the language provided me opportunities that I do not think is afforded to
others.

What makes me feel Vietnamese? I know there's something innately Vietnamese inside
of me, because, I know how it feels when a father asks his child in Vietnamese if he is hungry or
if he is not well that. When I walk around the streets of Toronto and I hear someone speaking
Vietnamese I can feel them in my body. It is hard to definitely explain but it is how I feel. I
cannot definitively say what makes me Vietnamese, but I know that I am. My position as a
Vietnamese person undoubtedly allowed me access and acceptance in the research process.
Regardless of being born in separate countries and experiencing Vietnam differently; myself and
the people that allowed me into their lives created bonds that made the research possible.
Moreover, I believe it made the experience greater for all of us. The telling of stories of my
family and the mutual connection of Vietnam brought many of us together. Through experiences
with my homestay family, FFAV staff members, and the people I interacted with on a daily basis
I became more immersed in the everyday life of Thừa Thiên Huế. Living in Vietnam was a foray
into the culture, communities, and people of Thừa Thiên Huế Province. For many different
reasons, whether it was my role as a student or my Vietnamese heritage, I was constantly
welcomed into the lives of the people of Huế. My life in Huế evolved into much more than a
Ph.D. dissertation. Thus, being both Vietnamese and American, this dual identity and position I
walked with allowed for access that was both informative and generous. Being Vietnamese is more than speaking the language, knowing cultural cues, and looking similar in physical appearances. For me, being Vietnamese was solidified by the relationships I created in Hue. It was only until I began sitting with people from Hue and other parts of Vietnam where we had intimate discussions about life. I could not simply go home after working at FFAV when the day was over. I was in Huế living with a family and making friends; I was slowly feeling my need to become attached. I attended events, workshops, and festivals with FFAV where I was allowed to enter communities and homes of village leaders. Moments of fieldwork turned into moments that I will never forget and motivated me towards research that makes a difference.

An eventual connection created between myself and many people ranging from FFAV staff members, local community members or government officials that helped me navigate the Vietnamese-ness. It was only until I was able to spend time with people that I felt comfortable in my own body and my own way of being Vietnamese. The research is important because it is not simply a practice I was required to do. Studying SfD forced me to embrace Vietnam in a way that I had never before imagined. But the most important thing that studying SfD demanded me to do is realize how moments of my life were always guiding me to take on research in a location in which my biography is ingrained.

On a cold December night in Hà Nội, I sat with a leader from the Ministry of Education and Training. We were in a restaurant by ourselves drinking beer and smoking the occasional cigarette. Hours passed as we talked about our lives. The night was late as the beer bottles started to take up space on our table when the leader looked at me from across the table with his elbow resting on it. In-between his index and middle finger he held a lit cigarette. He used the cigarette as a pointer and slowly moves his hand back and forth pointing at me. As he points he says, “Son, tonight I am happy to meet you. I am happy to spend this night with you. To me you are Vietnamese. There is no difference that you were born in America. In your blood is Vietnam.” (Field notes, December 2016)
Mills (1959) wrote that, by means of *The Sociological Imagination* people are able to grasp what is going on in the world and to understand what is happening in themselves as points of the intersections of biography and history within society (p. 7). Throughout most of my entire life, I never felt truly Vietnamese. I continue to live in this constant flux of being Vietnamese-American. On that night in Hà Nội, with a person the same age as my parents who experienced the war just like my parents, telling me that no matter what, Vietnam runs through my blood compels me to continue to carry out academic research, whether it be on SfD or not, in Vietnam. I am compelled not only through my history and biography but also by the history of Vietnam as a country. I realize now that studying SfD in Vietnam emerged from a historical and biographical relationship located in me; that the troubles and issues in Vietnamese society are also a part of me because Vietnam is in me. And because Vietnam is a part of me it was my “task” through the interweaving of my opportunities, my history, and my biography to take on a research project that explored SfD in Vietnam.

In the end, being Vietnamese made this research what it was. The comfortability and acceptance that I experienced in the field were due to the historical, biographical, and cultural connections. They are inherent in me because Vietnam is in me. Thus, as a result, my body being Vietnamese regardless of the country I was born in, informed this research in many ways. I say this because I will not run from the fact that being Vietnamese helped me conduct this research.
Appendix B

When I was a youngster I always spoke Vietnamese at home with my parents. I was fluent and could understand the language easily. However, as I started going to school and making friends with non-Vietnamese people, English became the primary language of my life resulting in the declining of my ability to understand Vietnamese. Then throughout my teenage years, my Vietnamese faltered. It was only until the latter parts of my undergraduate degree that I took an initiative to re-learning Vietnamese and integrating the language into my everyday life. In a disappointing social process, I lost my ability to speak Vietnamese fluently and understand the many conversations happening around me.

Before embarking on my research in Vietnam, I immersed myself into Vietnamese language and culture by listening to music, watching movies, having conversations with my parents and reading books about Vietnamese by Vietnamese authors. I did not take any formal classes to learn Vietnamese but rather I took it upon myself to dive into learning the Vietnamese language on my own. I made an effort to speak Vietnamese with my parents on the phone whenever I called them, I searched for Vietnamese movies or television shows with sub-titles to watch, and every day I listened to Vietnamese music in order to just hear the words. With my constant interactions with Vietnam and the language leading up to my departure, I eventually felt slightly comfortable in my ability to carry out the research in another language.

When I arrived in Vietnam I noticed that I was able to carry on conversations in the southern dialect. In Saigon, I easily understood and conversed with my father’s friends and relatives. I was happily confident in my ability to engage with my father’s friends, as well as my family. But then when I arrived in Hue for the research I quickly realized the Hue accent and dialect was far different than the Saigonese dialect. Comically, I stressed over learning
Vietnamese before my departure that I completely neglected the fact that in Vietnam there are
different dialects and accents. To that end, I was forced to grasp the Hue dialect in order to make
it through my stay and even more to collect data for this dissertation.

Due to my inability to control the Vietnamese language during interviews, I always had
an interpreter/translator come with me to conduct official interviews. As stated in the methods
chapters, all official interviews were scheduled and organized by FFAV staff members. As well,
a FFAV staff member accompanied me to every interview I conducted. With their help, I was
able to meet with government officials, community leaders, and various populations in Vietnam.
Additionally, they helped me interpret conversations when I felt the speed of discussion was out
of my grasp and ability to understand. While I was able to understand and translate many of my
one-on-one conversations, during official interviews an interpreter assisted in obtaining all of the
details and nuances of translation.

I must say that I was able to converse and exist in Vietnam with my hold on the language.
However, for the sake of the research and collecting data having a FFAV staff member help as a
translator for me assisted in the overall quality of the data. In turn, data from interviews for this
research projected was translated word for word with help from a FFAV staff member. For
interviews conducted in Vietnamese, a FFAV staff member always accompanied me to help
interpret and translate the interviews. In trusting the individuals who helped me conduct
interviews with participants I believed they were able to help translate and synthesize the
conversations that occurred. Moreover, it was not as if I could not completely understand the
participants during interviews. For the most part, I was able to grasp major points of discussion.
However, having a translator help me catch the nuances of language and moments where
someone was speaking fast greatly helped me collect data. In addition to the formal interviews
that were conducted I had many conversations when I was in the field such as at events or in local communities. During times when I was having discussions with people in the field through my ethnographic experience, I would synthesize the Vietnamese to English translations in my field notes. Thus, with my own ability of understanding Vietnamese as well as having help from people of FFAV data for this research was translated from Vietnamese to English.

In summation, I recognize that this project was predicated on traversing two languages. This document is written in academia’s primary language, English. However, the words, stories, and language that make up this document are Vietnamese. As a writer and researcher, I had to make sure the authenticity of the stories that I shared were kept when translating them from Vietnamese to English. To do so, I made the sincerest attempt to have FFAV staff members help me in translation. Nhi, Sang, Ngoc Linh, and Hong were the most involved and helpful in the translations needed for this document. Without them, the data for this dissertation would not have been smoothly translated to English with a sensibility of Vietnamese roots.

Personally, I returned to my own history and biography to re-learn Vietnamese. Although it was hard for me to believe, many people from FFAV and in Hue told me at the end of my stay my Vietnamese was really good and it had vastly improved throughout my time in the field. Re-learning Vietnamese and being able to have the opportunity to speak it every day in life helped make this dissertation Vietnamese. Eventually, I was able to speak Vietnamese, read Vietnamese, and write (very minimally) Vietnamese. And with this immersion, I believe the translation of this document was authentic to the best of my ability to make it so. Whether it was a southern accent, Hue accent, or northern accent this document is filled with the Vietnamese language written in English words. That is, having the translations done and supported by people of FFAV and more so in Hue, I argue allowed for a rich and authentic translation.
In the end, as this dissertation is complete, I am reminded that this entire project is rooted in Vietnam; in her culture, history, and language. Thus, while this document is being read in English I remind the reader to consider the words of this document to be forever Vietnamese. And more importantly, it comes with a translation that is rooted from the people who are greatly appreciated for helping me conduct this research.
Dear Dr. Damell and Mr. Michael Sanh Dao,

Re: Your research protocol entitled, "Nuoc Viet Nam La Que Huong Cua To: A participatory action research approach to sport for development in Vietnam"

ETHICS APPROVAL

Original Approval Date: October 18, 2016
Expiry Date: October 17, 2017
Continuing Review Level: 1

We are writing to advise you that the Health Sciences Research Ethics Board (REB) has granted approval to the above-named research protocol under the REB's delegated review process. Your protocol has been approved for a period of one year and ongoing research under this protocol must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events in the research should be reported to the Research Oversight and Compliance Office - Human Research Ethics Program as soon as possible.

Please ensure that you submit an Ethics Renewal Form or a Study Completion/Closure Report 15 to 30 days prior to the expiry date of your current ethics approval. Note that ethics renewals for studies cannot be accepted more than 30 days prior to the date of expiry.

If your research is funded by a third party, please contact the assigned Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.

Please note, all approved research studies are eligible for a routine Post-Approval Review (PAR) site visit. If chosen, you will receive a notification letter from our office. For information on PAR, please see http://www.research.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/documents/2014/09/PAR-Program-Description-1.pdf.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix C
Appendix D

PROTOCOL REFERENCE #33355

November 25, 2016

Dear Dr. Darnell and Mr. Michael Sarah Dao,

Re: Your research protocol entitled, "Nuoc Viet Nam La Que Huong Cua Toi: A participatory action research approach to sport for development in Vietnam"

We are writing to advise you that a member of the Health Sciences Research Ethics Board (REB) has granted approval to an amendment (Received October 28, 2016) to the above-referenced research protocol under the REB's delegated review process. This amendment approval letter only applies to what was outlined in the request form under section 5.a) or otherwise marked in the revised protocol.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research.

Yours sincerely,
From: The Football Association of Norway (NFF)
To: Mr. Michael Sanh Dao

May 23, 2016

Ref: INVITATION TO CONDUCT PH.D. RESEARCH WITH “FOOTBALL FOR ALL IN VIETNAM” PROJECT

Dear Mr. Michael Sanh Dao,

The Football Association of Norway (NFF) would like to invite you to work as a volunteer and conduct academic research with the Football for All in Vietnam Project (FFAV) with the following details:

Time: 11/08/2016 to 30/06/2017
Location: Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam
Purpose:
1. To conduct academic research that will help assist Football for All in Vietnam evaluate their programs through a participatory methodology, in which he will have opportunity to work with FFAV’s beneficiaries including children.
2. To conduct academic research that will be a part of Michael Sanh Dao’s Ph.D. thesis at the University of Toronto.
3. To work as a volunteer under the Program Department of Football for All in Vietnam in order to support and assist in the following areas:
   - Academic research
   - Internal evaluation
   - Monitoring and evaluation
   - Writing proposals and applications
   - Developing programs and policies based on results from academic research

In case, you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact us at Anders Hasselgard at anders.hasselgard@fotball.no, mobile: +47 9077 6048

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

Anders Hasselgard
Corporate Social Responsibility and Projects
Head of International Development Cooperation
The Football Association of Norway
Ref: LETTER OF CONFIRMATION

To whom it may concern,

The Football Association of Norway (NFF) is to confirm that Mr. Michael Sanh Dao will work for Football for All in Vietnam Project as the role of a volunteer with the details as below:

Full name: Michael Sanh Dao
Day of birth: 22/8/1988
Passport no: 446399013
Duration of the voluntary in FFAV: 11/08/2016 to 30/06/2017
Location: Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam
Purpose:
(1) To conduct academic research that will help assist Football for All in Vietnam evaluate their programs through a participatory methodology, in which he will have opportunity to work with FFAV's beneficiaries including children.
(2) To conduct academic research that will be a part of Michael Sanh Dao's Ph.D. thesis at the University of Toronto.
(3) To work as a volunteer under the Program Department of Football for All in Vietnam in order to support and assist in the following areas:
   • Academic research
   • Internal evaluation
   • Monitoring and evaluation
   • Writing proposals and applications
   • Developing programs and policies based on results from academic research

We thank you for your assistance and support for Mr. Michael Sanh Dao during his assignment.

With kind regards,

Anders Hasselgard
Corporate Social Responsibility and Projects
Head of International Development Cooperation
The Football Association of Norway
Appendix G

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF KINESIOLOGY & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Research Title:
“Nước Việt Nam Là Quê Hương Của Tôi”: A Participatory Action Research Approach to Sport for Development in Vietnam

Researcher: Michael Sanh Dao, Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education,
University of Toronto,
Tel: 647-949-3436, E-mail: mike.dao@mail.utoronto.ca

I, ______________________ (Director’s name) consent to have Michael Sanh Dao
(Investigator) come to Football for All in Vietnam to introduce and engage in Participatory
Action Research for the study “Nước Việt Nam Là Quê Hương Của Tôi: A Participatory
Action Research Approach to Sport for Development in Vietnam.” I understand that this
research has been reviewed and approved by the University of Toronto’s Research Ethic
Board. I agree to have Michael Sanh Dao collect data by conducting participant observations,
focus groups, and interviews for the study from this location for a period of 10 months.

Name (please print)   Signature  Date
NGUYỄN HỌNG PHƯƠNG   5th October 2016

Michael Sanh Dao
Doctoral Candidate
Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education, University of Toronto
Email: mike.dao@mail.utoronto.ca
June 23, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm the consent for interviews Michael Sanh Dao conducted for his PhD thesis entitled “Nước Việt Nam Là Quách Hướng Của Tôi”: A Participatory Action Research Approach to Sport for Development in Vietnam for the Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education, University of Toronto. In his role as a volunteer for Football for All in Vietnam (FFAV), Mr. Dao was responsible for conducting a project assessment for FFAV, where he conducted semi-structured interviews with different people. The data collected by Mr. Dao is to also be used in his PhD thesis.

Due to the culture in Vietnam it was advised that Mr. Dao not present university consent forms to participants because it may cause certain populations to feel uncomfortable and may be seen as a form of disrespect. Instead, FFAV scheduled and confirmed interviews through authorities such as the Thua Thien Hue Province Department of Education and Training and local police for Mr. Dao. All participants were informed of Mr. Dao’s research, the purpose of his research, his volunteer role with FFAV, and were told their participation was voluntary and their identities will be kept confidential. In addition, a member of FFAV staff accompanied Mr. Dao to all interviews. Thus I can confidently say that Mr. Dao followed strict procedures and ethical conduct when conducting interviews with the many different participants.

Please take this letter endorsing the consent for interviews that Mr. Dao conducted during his time with FFAV. Below you can find the specific names of participants along with their titles, as well as the time and location interviews were conducted.

If there are any questions or concerns, as well as any further information please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your time.

With my best regards,

Nguyen Hoang Phuong (Mr.)
Football for All in Vietnam Director

6th Floor, Viettel Building
11 Ly Thuong Kiet Street - Hue city – Vietnam Postal code: 530000
Tel: +84 54 3825 325
Fax: +84 54 3883 795
Mobile: +84 986 672 444
E-mail: phuong@ffav.com.vn
Skype: hoangphuongmf
Appendix I

June 23, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm the consent for the field trips Michael Sanh Dao conducted for his PhD thesis entitled “Nước Việt Nam Là Quê Hương Của Tôi”: A Participatory Action Research Approach to Sport for Development in Vietnam for the Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education, University of Toronto. In his role as a volunteer for Football for All in Vietnam (FFAV), Mr. Dao was allowed to visit and be apart of many different FFAV activities. During his field trips Mr. Dao collected data by doing an ethnographic method, participant observations. The data collected by Mr. Dao is to be used in his PhD thesis.

FFAV scheduled all the trips Mr. Dao took and confirmed the field trips with authorities such as the Thua Thien Hue Province Department of Education and Training and local police for Mr. Dao. All participants were informed of Mr. Dao’s research, the purpose of his research, his volunteer role with FFAV, and were told their participation was voluntary and their identities will be kept confidential. In addition, a member of FFAV staff accompanied Mr. Dao on all field trips. Thus I can confidently say that Mr. Dao followed strict procedures and ethical conduct when conducting participant observations for his research.

Please take this letter endorsing the consent for field trips that Mr. Dao took during his time with FFAV. Below you can find the title of specific field trips along with their respected dates.

If there are any questions or concerns, as well as any further information please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your time.

With my best regards,

Nguyen Hoang Phuong (Mr.)
Football for All in Vietnam Director
6th Floor, Viettel Building
11 Ly Thuong Kiet Street - Hue city - Vietnam
Postal code: 530000
Tel: +84 54 3825 325
Fax: +84 54 3883 795
Mobile: +84 986 672 444
E-mail: phuong@ffav.com.vn
Skyp: hoangphuongnff
UBND TỈNH THỪA THIÊN HUẾ
CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
SỞ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO

Số: 24/GD&ĐT-KHTC
Thừa Thiên Huế, ngày 2/4 tháng 10 năm 2016

V/v đánh giá dự án “Bóng đá công đồng tại Việt Nam” tại tỉnh Thừa Thiên Huế.

Kính gửi:
- Liên đoàn Bóng đá Na Uy/Dự án Bóng đá công đồng tại Việt Nam;
- Phòng Giáo dục và Đào tạo các huyện, thị xã và thành phố Huế.

Số Giáo dục và Đào tạo nhận được công văn số 02/GE-FFAV ngày 17/10/2016 của Liên đoàn Bóng đá Na Uy/Dự án Bóng đá công đồng tại Việt Nam về việc đánh giá dự án “Bóng đá công đồng tại Việt Nam”. Về việc này, Sở Giáo dục và Đào tạo cơ y kiến như sau:


2. Động ý cứ Ông Nguyễn Văn Việt Vũ - Chuyên viên phụ trách giáo dục thể chất Phòng Giáo dục Trung học Sở Giáo dục và Đào tạo tham gia vào quá trình đánh giá dự án.

3. Yêu cầu Phòng Giáo dục và Đào tạo các huyện, thị xã và thành phố Huế:
   - Cung cấp phụ trách giáo dục thể chất tại đơn vị cùng tham gia vào quá trình đánh giá dự án;
   - Chỉ đạo các đơn vị trường học thực hiện dự án trên địa bàn cùng phối hợp, tham gia đánh giá dự án khi có yêu cầu.

Số Giáo dục và Đào tạo phúc đáp để Liên đoàn Bóng đá Na Uy/Dự án Bóng đá công đồng tại Việt Nam biết và yêu cầu Phòng Giáo dục và Đào tạo các huyện, thị xã và thành phố Huế tổ chức thực hiện.

Nơi nhận:
- Như trên;
- Lãc VP, KHTC.
Appendix L

**FFAV 2016 Internal Assessment - Interview Guide**  
**Target group: Thua Thien Hue Department of Education and Training**

1. How successful do you think FFAV programs such as football activities and life-skills education are in reaching children across Thua Thien Hue Province?

2. What is your idea or thoughts on the topic of “grassroots football”?

3. What are the strengths and challenges of bringing grassroots football as an optional subject in the education system?

4. What do you see as the benefits that grassroots football and life skills education provided by FFAV bring to children?

5. What improvements do you think are needed by all related stakeholders involved in this project (DoET, Sub-DoET, FFAV and schools) to support club sustainability?

6. What is your suggestion for FFAV to change on structure, system, management, and principles to capture full participation of all stakeholders into FFAV program?

7. What are your thoughts on including FFAV activities such as life-skills education and football as a compulsory subject into the education curriculum of the province? Do you think they can be combined?

8. How do you think FFAV football clubs will be sustained after 2018?
   
   a. In your opinion, what should FFAV do from now until December 2018 to help support the clubs?

9. What difficulties do you experience when trying to promote FFAV football clubs to schools in the province?

10. Based on your observations what do think are the most successful aspects of FFAV in the province?
Appendix M

FFAV Internal Assessment 2016 – Interview Guide
Target group: Sub-DoET Officials and Leaders

1. Before FFAV clubs started in your district how was football and physical activity provided?

2. How have you expanded FFAV football clubs to other areas of the district?

3. What is your idea on the topic of “grassroots football”?

4. How do the community partners interact with the FFAV football clubs in the district?

5. What difficulties do you see football clubs encounter when working with community partners?

6. What FFAV club activities such as football, games, and life-skills education do you see children like to participate in?

7. How are life skills integrated into sport/physical games by the FFAV football clubs in your district?

8. What changes in behaviour do you see in children when they participate in the FFAV football club?

9. Has there been anything that has surprised you while establishing FFAV football clubs?

10. Can you describe a time that was challenging trying to establish FFAV football clubs?

11. What do you think has been provided by FFAV football clubs to your district that was not here previously?

12. How successful do you think FFAV programs are in reaching children across Thừa Thiên Huế Province?

13. What improvements do you think are needed by FFAV football clubs?

14. What do you think is the most successful thing about FFAV football clubs?

15. Is there anything else you’d like to share with about the FFAV football clubs in your district?
1. In your opinions, what is the impact of football and life skills to the development of your children? Why?

2. What have you contributed to support football clubs as well as other football and life skills activities in the community? Why and why not?

3. Do you think you have received adequate training and support from FFAV? Why and why not? If not, what should be changed?

4. Do you think you have received adequate technical support from FFAV? Why and why not? If not, what?

5. Do you think the Football Club should continue football and life skills activities after 2018 when FFAV withdraw? Why and why not? Should be changed?

6. How can FFAV club maintain regular training after 2018?

7. Do you know FFAV’s hand over strategy with emphasis on capacity building to increase engagement of local competence into project activities?

8. How can you, as physical teachers as well as the other potential sources contribute to maintain football clubs?
1. In your opinions, what is the impact of football and life skills to the development of your children? Why?

2. What have you and other parents contributed to support football clubs as well as other football and life skills activities in the community? Why and why not?

3. Do you think the Football Club should continue football and life skills activities after 2018 when FFAV withdraw? Why and why not?

4. Do you know FFAV’s hand over strategy with emphasis on increasing engagement of parents?

5. How can you as well as parents contribute to maintain football clubs?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Questions/ Themes</th>
<th>Methodologies</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Why do you like participating in the FFAV football club? Examples: playing football, making friends, life skills education, having fun, other games</td>
<td>Using sticky color notes for participants to write out all the answers  Grouping and finalizing and making the comparison</td>
<td>Ao, Color papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>What is the most favorite thing you have learned by participating in the FFAV football club? Why? Note: try to mention gender-based benefits, dropout rate, self-confidence, teamwork, different education</td>
<td>Using sticky color notes for participants to write out all the answers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>What makes life-skills education interesting for you? Why?</td>
<td>Using sticky notes 2 groups to answer to questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>What activities would you like to participate more in? Why?</td>
<td>Using sticky color notes for participants to write out all the answers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>What are some things you would like to change about the FFAV football club? Why?</td>
<td>Ask and take notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>FFAV is decreasing support for your football club. Please kindly share your ideas on raising funds to support your club? How much you can pay and how many students can pay?</td>
<td>Ask and take notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. What is your idea or thoughts on the topic of “grassroots football”?

2. How do you see FFAV activities working in schools in Vietnam?
   a. Do you see it as an optional activity?

3. What do you think are the key strengths of Football for All in Vietnam and grassroots football?

4. What do you think are the key weaknesses of Football for All in Vietnam and grassroots football?

5. What are your thoughts on including FFAV activities such as life-skills education and grassroots football as a subject into the education curriculum?

6. Do you think football is a good tool to teach life-skills and social skills? Why?

7. What do you think children improve by playing football? Why?

8. Do you have national policies to support sport at the community level?
   a. How are they implemented locally to promote sport activities (example – friendly school, active students?)?

9. How do you think FFAV football clubs will be sustained after 2018?

10. In your opinion, what should FFAV do from now until December 2018 to help support the clubs?

11. Where do you see Football for All in Vietnam and grassroots football will be in January 2019?
   a. Why?
Appendix R

**FFAV Internal Assessment 2016 - Interview Guide**
Target group: Vietnamese Football Federation

1. Do you have national policies to support football at the community level?
   a. How are they implemented in each province to promote football activities?

2. What is your idea or thoughts on the topic of “grassroots football”?

3. What is your involvement with Football for All in Vietnam?

4. What do you think are the key strengths of Football for All in Vietnam and grassroots football?

5. What do you think are the key weaknesses of Football for All in Vietnam and grassroots football?


7. How do you think grassroots football creates elite football talent?

8. What is your suggestion for FFAV to change on structure, system, management, and principles to capture full participation of all stakeholders into FFAV program?

9. Do you think football is a good tool to teach life-skills and social skills? Why?

10. How do you think FFAV football clubs will be sustained after 2018?

11. In your opinion, what should FFAV do from now until December 2018 to help support already established clubs?

12. Where do you see Football for All in Vietnam and grassroots football will be in January 2019?
   a. Why?
Appendix S

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE – FFAV STAFF

1. How did you become interested in working for a sport for development organization?

2. What are the primary causes supported by the organization you work for?

3. Can you tell me a little about your position?
   a. How long have you been working for the organization?
   b. What does your job description entail?

4. How would you describe your experience working for (name of organization)?
   - What additional duties have you been assigned or what have you learned since you started?
   - What kind of programs do you implement now?

5. What knowledge or ideas did you have about sport for development before you started working?
   - Have any of those ideas changed?
   - How did they change as you continue to work in this area?

6. What impact do you feel sport for development makes in communities?

7. How do you feel about your experience as someone directly in a sport for development organization?
   a. What preparations do you make to implement sport for development programs?
   b. Can you describe something you do differently if you could do it over again?

8. Have there been any surprising experiences as you work to implement sport for development programs?

9. What are some positive experiences you have working in sport for development?

10. Can you describe a time that was challenging working in the sport for development field?

11. What advice would you give to anyone who is thinking about working for a sport for development organization?

12. Finally, is there anything else you’d like to talk about from your experience that you feel is important to you?
Appendix T

Acceptance of the Conditions of the Research Process and Consent

By signing this form, I acknowledge that:

I. The researcher has given me the opportunity to ask questions about the study and its procedures and that these questions must be answered to my satisfaction.

II. At any time during the study, I may request further clarification from the researcher. I can do this by contacting the researcher by phone [redacted] or by e-mail at [redacted].

III. The research study I am participating in may be reviewed for quality assurance to make sure that the required laws and guidelines are followed. If chosen, a representative(s) of the Human Research Ethics Program (HREP) may access study-related data and/or consent materials as part of the review. All information accessed by the HREP will be upheld to the same level of confidentiality that has been stated by the research team.

IV. I may contact the Research Oversight and Compliance Office - Human Research Ethics Program at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-1273, if I have any questions regarding my rights as a participant.

V. My participation in the research is voluntary and I am under no obligation to participate in the study. In addition, I acknowledge that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without explanation.

VI. Focus groups will be conducted with my peers in a space that is provided by Football for All in Vietnam.

VII. Interviews will be conducted with the researcher and a staff member from Football for All in Vietnam in a space provided by Football for All in Vietnam.

VIII. I have been told that my information will be kept confidential, except where release of information is required by law. The only exception to this is the academic supervisor of the researcher with whom data might need to be discussed in the analysis process. Where sharing data with the supervisor (Dr. Simon Darnell) is necessary, for example to gain his assistance with analysis, the interviewer (Michael Sanh Dao) will ensure that he will not have access to personal identifying information.

IX. Data from this research will be shared with staff members from Football for All in Vietnam in order to develop new policies, practices and programs that are formulated by your knowledge.

X. No information that would identify me will be released or printed. I will be given a pseudonym by the primary researcher in order to keep my identity confidential.

XI. The possible risks and benefits (if any) of this study have been explained to me, and in no way does signing this consent form waive my legal rights nor does it relieve the researchers or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities.

XII. I may obtain a copy of this consent form (and the appended letter) for my records.
I, ____________________________ (print name) agree to participate in the study entitled
"Nước Việt Nam Là Quê Hương Của Tôi: A Participatory Action Research
Approach to Sport for Development in Vietnam" by Michael Sanh Dao (University of
Toronto).

Participant's signature          Location          Date

Contact Information:
Telephone:
E-mail:

I, the undersigned, have, to the best of my ability, fully explained the nature of this
study to the participant. I believe that the person whose signature appears above
understands the implications and voluntary nature of his/her involvement in the
research procedures.

Researcher's signature          Location          Date

Sincerely,

Michael Sanh Dao, Doctoral Candidate
Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education, University of Toronto

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