“Racialised” pedagogic practices influencing young Muslim’s physical culture.

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Abstract

Background: There is growing concern surrounding the “racialised” body and the way young people develop dispositions towards physical activity and sports, and more broadly to physical culture. This paper draws on Bourdieu’s social theory in an effort to explore the ways in which the intersectionality of various fields (family, religion, school) and their dimensions (culture and social class) influence young Muslim’s physical culture.

Purpose: More specifically the paper examines the “racialised” pedagogic practices in various fields that influence young Muslim’s dispositions to physical culture.

Method: The study reports on the voices of 40 participants identifying as young Muslims (12-15 years old; 20 girls and 20 boys) from one secondary school in the South of England, UK. A case study approach was used to explore participants’ understanding, meaning, structural conditions and personal agency with regard to physical culture and “racialised” body pedagogies. Data includes semi structured paired interviews with participants. Data was analysed using thematic analysis. More specifically, thematic analysis based on the notion of ‘fields’ (Bourdieu, 1984) informed deductive and inductive procedures.

Findings: Results suggested that religion had limited influence on the participant’s agency when intersecting with schooling and social class with regards to embodiment of active physical culture. Economic capital, on the other hand, had a considerable influence on participants’ physical culture as it contributed to young people’s access to physical activity opportunities,
agency, and body pedagogies. In addition the study concludes that fields outside the school play a significant role in influencing and enabling young Muslims’ physical culture.

**Conclusions:** One of the most significant implications of this study is emphasising that young Muslims should not be viewed as a homogenous group as various fields intersect to influence their participation in physical education and their embodiment of physical culture. Identified fields and their markers make dispositions unique, dependent upon characteristics and their relative influence.

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Introduction

Neoliberal and neoconservative governments around the Western world, and particularly in the UK, have emphasized individual responsibility for health through their education (and particularly Physical education- PE) and public health policies and media campaigns (Dagkas 2014). Within these policies, young people, those living in deprivation and ethnic minority groups are categorized as “healthy” or “unhealthy” and even as “good” or “bad” depending on their disposition to physical activity and their involvement with physical culture (Quarmby and Dagkas 2013, Burrows, 2009). More importantly, such assumptions of health and fitness are being demonstrated constantly in global epidemiological data, which often adopt a homogenous approach (Gard and Wright 2005) and overlook individual difference between and more importantly within specific social groups from various socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicities, racial and family formations (Dagkas, 2014; Frohlich and Aber 2014). Such a homogeneous approach to categorisation of ethnic groups prevents general understanding of the processes of embodiment of physical culture and dispositions to physical activity (PA) through various structures (such as school sport and PE, community sport and informal play); and various fields such as religion, family and school that will be examined in this paper in more depth.

According to Frohlich and Abel (2014) ‘epidemiological approaches tend to pay little or no attention to individuals or groups of individuals as social agents in the production and reproduction of health behaviour and social
inequalities’ (p. 200). Therefore, reinforcing the race and class gap in current
public health and educational policies (provision of PE; School Games etc.)
and heightening othering (Ahmad and Badby; Gillborn, 2005). Furthermore,
the importance of social class variations within BME groups needs to be
considered. In this sense, further othering (Macdonald et al. 2012) and
marginalization occurs and now, more than ever before, the need to explore
and interrogate issues of body pedagogies as “fluid, culturally encoded within
and between multiple contexts” (Evans and Davies 2011, 278). Othering
means treating difference between people hierarchically, for example, in
terms of superiority and inferiority, thereby dismissing the needs of others as
invisible or unimportant. The other not only functions as a way to maintain the
interlocking systems of race, class and gender, but also as a way to
reproduce a social, moral order in which people are positioned at the margins;
the difference of the marginalized other maintains the mainstreamed centre,
the normal (Azzarito and Solomon 2005). As such, those who identify as non-
white are denied the privilege of normativity and are marked as inferior,
marginal and “other” (Gillborn 2005). Therefore, specific bodies and identities
in relation to the health discourse are normalized, celebrated and legitimized
in pedagogical settings (i.e. school PE and school sport) through many acts of
reinforcement and reiteration. Furthermore, these processes of normalisation
through pedagogical settings negate specific socio-cultural and environmental
factors and contribute to institutional and social racism. Any research in the
area of racialised bodies and identities needs to recognise that individuals
differentially negotiate multiple and complex layers of identity (Dagkas, Benn
and Jawad 2011). The problems of deciphering religious requirements from
pseudo-religious, culturally embedded practices also add to the challenge.

Sandlin, Schultz and Burdick (2010) describe (public) pedagogies as spaces and languages of education and learning that exists outside the school as crucial to our understanding of the development of identities and social formations (lisahunter 2013). According to Tinning (2010), cultural transmissions, exchanges, and (re)production of cultural values constitute informal pedagogic practices. In this relational cultural practice, socially contracted set of markers of habitus such as gender, class, race and ethnicity are used to differentiate and therefore position people (individual and group habitus). This operates through capital endowment within fields and influence young peoples dispositions and access to capital. In addition the intersectionality of “pedagogies of exclusion” (Dagkas and Armour, 2012) add symbolic value to the body and embodiment of physical culture, based on economic capital, family income and structure, locality, place of birth, working hours, cultural and pseudo-religious interpretations (Dagkas and Quarmby, 2012).

Intersectionality has been defined as “a useful shorthand to describe the complex political struggles and arguments that seek to make visible the multiple positioning that constitutes everyday life and the power relations that are central to it” (Phoenix 2006, 187). Such developing eclecticism increases understanding of multiple and fluid identities, intersecting axes of oppression and the need to problematise universalistic terms (Flintoff, Fitzgerald and Scraton 2008) such as race, ethnicity, gender and the way the racialised body navigates through various and often overlapping fields of family, school and religion.
The aim of the paper is to explore the intersectionality of various (often overlapping) fields of family, school and religion, their markers such as race and social class, and their influence on young Muslim girl’s construction and embodiment of physical culture.

The paper is organized in 5 sections. Following the introduction a section on the theoretical framework that underpinned the paper is presented. The study section will provide details on the project, methodological approaches and the analyses of the data, followed by the Navigating the “racialised” body within and through various fields section that presents and discusses the data from the young Muslims. The fifth section presents a discussion and provides concluding thoughts reflecting on the consequences of the data on the pedagogical sphere.

Theoretical implications

Drawing from social theory the paper will provide a framework of agency and dispositions towards physical activity, and embodiment of physical culture of young Muslims. The utility of Bourdieu’s theory in relation to fields associated with physical activity has already been established (see for example Evans and Davies, 2008; Fitzgerald, 2005; Quarmby and Dagkas, 2013). His theory of fields is particularly prominent in this paper to describe dispositions of racialised bodies. Used by Bourdieu (1984), habitus is a means to understand how the practices of physical activity participation and embodiment of physical culture shapes and is shaped by social structures; essentially, how young people’s habitus is shaped may influence their initial and ongoing involvement in physical activity and even the nature and reasons behind engaging in
activities in general— in effect changing who participates in what and why.

Importantly, the concept of habitus recognises potential for agency, for a change in practice within habitus and field at the same time. Bourdieu suggests this possibility when individuals encounter new fields:

“[habitus, as] the product of social conditionings, and thus of a history (unlike character) is endlessly transferred, either in a direction that reinforces it, when embodied structures of expectation encounter structures of objective chances in harmony with these expectations, or in a direction that transforms it and, for instance, raises or lowers the levels of expectation and aspirations” (1984, 116).

As such hierarchical influences in and of the primary socialisation field (family) influence practices and agency in and of the secondary field (school; social environment) and possibly visa versa. Markers of habitus, such as race, position individuals and groups differently according to the field. Whereas one’s race positions a young person strongly within their family field this may not be so within the schooling field. In this paper we explore how this plays out through physical activity practices and embodiment of physical culture.

Bourdieu (1993) defined field as a site in which certain beliefs and values are established and imposed on the people within it through the various relationships and practices that occur. In that sense, fields are sites of ideological reproduction (Bourdieu, 1993). Wacquant argues that a field “is simultaneously a space of conflict and competition” (1992,17), structured internally in terms of power relations. The relative power that determines
positions of dominance and subordination and locates individuals and groups within fields is determined by the distribution and accumulation of capital in the form of cultural, social, or economic resources (Bourdieu, 1993). In this sense, individuals are positioned and defined in particular groupings that Bourdieu conceptualises as “class”. As noted by Evans and Davies (2008: 200) class ‘is a visceral reality, constituted by a set of affectively loaded, social and economic relationships that are likely to strongly influence, if not determine and dominate, people’s lives. These involve dynamic processes within and across many social sites or fields of practice (Bourdieu, 1986) particularly in families and schools’. Individuals and other agents try to distinguish themselves from others and acquire capital that is useful or valuable within that arena and as such, fields are seen to be hierarchical. However, the boundaries of a particular field are demarcated by where its effects end. Consequently, such boundaries can be difficult to locate and thus, overlapping fields (and in the case of this study and this paper: family, school, and religion) can affect the internal dynamics within them (Laberge and Kay 2002).

The macro field of “PE” is made up of a “structured system of social relations between the educational authority, PE teacher educators, PE curriculum writers, health and sport professionals who have influence over curriculum and practices, individual school administrators, PE teachers, and PE students” (lisahunter 2004, 176). The overlapping fields of “family”, “religion” and “school” that are carried into the daily practices of the micro field of PE in any one context, is made up of a structured system of social relations that maintain physical, economic and symbolic power relations between
members (Bourdieu 1996). Such family and cultural/religious fields are hierarchically structured in terms of economic capital (usually lying with the agent(s)) and cultural or social capital and its symbolic value within that field.

**The study**

The main research question of this study was ‘how do young Muslim construct and embody physical culture within and through various fields’ of pedagogical encounters?’. More specifically the study examined the intersectionality of various markers within identified fields to identify and discuss interlocking inequalities that heighten the gap between (public) health pedagogic policies and lived realities of embodiment of physical culture of ‘racialised’ bodies.

**Research setting and Participants**

Data presented here, are drawn from a larger (ongoing) project that explores the place and meaning of physical culture in the lives of young people living in superdiverse communities. The concept of superdiversity recognizes the complexity of migrant populations: created by overlapping variables including country of origin (ethnicity, language, religious tradition, regional/local identities) and migration experience (influenced by gender, age, education, specific social networks, economic factors). This population complexity has created unique challenges with regard to how we identify, and respond to, psychosocial and health well-being needs of all members of society, especially those of migrant status and ethnic minorities (Phillimore 2013).

This study reports on voices of 40 young Muslim (20 boys and 20 girls) from a co-educational non-selective secondary school in the South of
England. The majority population of the school is White British, with pupils also from Afro-Caribbean, Eastern European and Muslim backgrounds that are representative of the demographics of the superdiverse local area where as of the 2001 Census Muslims made up 3.7% of the population (Office for National Statistics 2012). The school is situated in an area of high deprivation, ranking in the top five most deprived areas in England (Office for National Statistics 2012). To comply with widely accepted validating research tools the school’s Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD): a UK Government measure of deprivation (Noble et al. 2008) was used through the school’s postcode. As such, the IMD was obtained for the postcode and thus represented a measure of deprivation for the school. It is however worth noting that the IMD represented a measure of deprivation for the school area and not the individual participant (Quarmby and Dagkas 2013). In addition to further validate sample selection, eligibility for free school meals (Linder 2002) was used as a measurement of the participants’ socioeconomic status. As such half of our participants were eligible for free schools meals to contextualize further agency within and through various fields.

Data Collection Procedures
All participants were aged eleven to fifteen and were randomly selected from those participants whose parents provided consent for their participation and all adopted pseudonyms for the purpose of anonymity and for the presentation of the data later in this paper. An interpretative approach was used for data collection that offered the opportunity to participants to elaborate further on issues related to navigating their bodies through various fields,
which complemented our theoretical framework. A semi-structured protocol was used to uncover young Muslims dispositions to physical culture through focus groups interactions. Paired interviews in which young Muslims took part with a friend have been found to create a supportive environment, encourage conversation and elicit reflective accounts of their dispositions (Highet, 2003).

A thematic analysis approach was used to manage the data collected. More specifically, analytic induction was based on deductive (reduction of initial themes and categories of our semi-structured interview protocol that covered issues of identity, families, school, PE and school sport, locality and physical activity participation etc.); and inductive procedures (LeCompte and Preissle 1993), which involved scanning the data for categories and relationships among the initial categories, developing working typologies on an examination of initial cases and then modifying and refining them on the basis of subsequent cases (LeCompte and Preissle 1993). More specifically inductive and deductive analysis, consists of, open coding which is the line by line analysis of data, which allows the inductive procedure of data being placed into main and subcategories. Finally deductive analysis was employed through axial coding where links were established between sub and main categories allowing sense to be made of the whole data set and for it to be refined through selective coding. Deductive analytical process involves the amalgamation of categories and their characteristics (Cohen et al. 2007).

Causal relationships or cases are grouped under a larger concept to produce final themes and categories, which in this case were the three fields of family, school and religion. The researcher takes the working typologies identified
during the inductive process, provides an in-depth study of cases, and then modifies the model based on subsequent cases to accommodate new emerging patterns or themes (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Silverman, 2006). In this paper final categories represent the fields (i.e. family, religion and school) (Bourdieu, 1984) that participants experience to inform agency, dispositions to and embodiment of physical culture. Finally, it is imperative to acknowledge that research ethics was granted from the principal investigator’s institution before any fieldwork commenced and consent forms were administered.

Navigating the “racialised” body within and through various fields

The results section will be presented based on the three main fields (as mentioned above) that have been identified as influential in the development of young Muslim’s embodiment of physical culture. As such the family, religion and school are the fields identified through our participants accounts.

The function of the family as a field of social reproduction was highlighted by participants who felt it was a significant part of their lives.

“We’re very close as a family... we share a lot of things, and mainly my parents.” (Saleema, Girl14)

“my family is everything to me.. we are a big family as well.”

(Aasim, Boy 15)

All participants perceived their parents valued physical activity for health maintenance. “They (both parents) think it’s good for you, keeps you healthy.” (Saleema, 14). Nevertheless, in the field of family such parental
encouragement was asserted through verbal encouragement as a young Muslim contextualises: “they (both parents) like say run around” (Safa, Boy 15). This encouragement influenced participants’ own values and beliefs as they shared parents’ views without question. Furthermore Saleema (Girl 14) described her family as very supportive for enacting sports and physical activity as illustrated below

**Interviewer:** So all of you (siblings) want to use the gym more, would your parents be happy to let you do that?

**Saleema:** Yeah cos my dad’s a member of David Lloyds so he goes there all the time and he tells me if I want to go he’ll get me a card and I’ll be a member of David Lloyds as well.

It is clear in Saleema’s case that the presence of intergenerational habitus supports assertions that the family is a pedagogical environment (Dagkas and Quarmby 2012) where the values and beliefs which promote physical culture are learnt showing the family is a highly influential field for young people (Bourdieu 1996).

Aside from encouragement responses from young Muslim with low economic capital, suggested parents provided little support for participants’ physical activity through involvement, with the majority of joint family activities taking place with siblings.

“playing outside football, basketball, running with my sisters”

(Tariq, Boy 14)

“I go play outside (Busrah, Boy 11)
In addition hierarchical relationships in the family field have also influenced dispositions towards physical activity and sport. In many cases the young Muslim females in our study with low economic capital adopted within the family field a more apathetic relation with the physical culture discourse. In most cases girls who could be identified as having low economic capital had limited support to enact physical culture. Nevertheless for some of these girls the school field in the form of PE was the only place to enact and experience physical activity. Even though, our interviews revealed that most girls would have an unproblematic participation in PE, in some cases like Aishaa (girl 12) nature and curriculum provision was an issue. “I dislike the activities (on offer). I wish we could do Pilates or yoga”. In many cases gender power relations in the family field had affected young girls’ physical culture. In the case of Anisha (girl 14) that was evident in her comments during the interview.

**Anisha:** My mum she’s a housewife.

**Interviewer:** Does she do any physical activity?

**Anisha:** Yeah she does, the cleaning.

A gender order was evident in Anisha’s case and especially the way that gender hierarchies influenced physical activity dispositions. “I don’t know (responding about engaging with PA) I don’t normally do active stuff, I just, I’m not lazy, but I do PE and sport and stuff but not all the time (Anisha, Girl 14)
Parents were perceived to place high value on education, which for some was, viewed a more worthwhile pursuit than physical activity. This again was common in young Muslims with low economic capital for both genders.

“I don’t really think that she (referring to his mother) likes it (PE subject) cos I said I wanted to take PE as one of my subjects in GCSE...But she doesn’t want me to; she said get that out of your mind, what’s PE going to do for you in your life?” (Nasif, Boy 12)

In discussing her parent’s support for enacting physical culture Busrah a 12-year-old girl mentioned that her parents are supportive and in some cases when she plays football they attend the games. “Umm parents sometime come, but cos they have to stay with my Gran she’s kind of disabled, they don’t”. In addition the power relations within the field have been detrimental in the developing of physical culture in Busrah’s case as she contextualizes in this quote.

**Interviewer:** so how about with your immediate family your parents and your siblings do you do any activities with them?

**Busrah:** Yeah, we sometimes at weekends we go out and play things. Last time we went Hill End and there was like a fare so we went there and its quite cool and err we done the usual stuff that we do in the park but new stuff as well like sumo wrestling, so did my mum and dad done it against each other, it was quite funny and yeah we just go out places sometimes like London and stuff.
The public health discourse, of maintaining positive dispositions towards enacting regular physical activity for better health, was evident in the case of Genissa (girl 14). In her case her parents adopted the normative health discourse by engaging in various healthy appropriate activities. Her engagement with PA in various fields was also similar with her high participation in PE and school sport. In many cases power relations exerted extra tensions to conform to the white bodily ideals of thin and fit as she contextualized in her statement.

“My parents you know they watch TV shows about fat people and are like do you want to be like that?”

The prominence of the healthism discourse which in many public health documents holds parents morally responsible for the health of their children (Dagkas and Quarmby 2012) was evident in the field of family and Genissa’s parents, making the encouragement of enacting physical activity a key component of good parenting (Burrows 2009). Therefore participation in physical activity for health purposes is a value, which holds capital in her family field, as evident in her parent’s dispositions towards physical activity and health.

Parental involvement may have a significant influence on young Muslims physical activity because as the dominant actors in the field they determine what constitutes capital (Bourdieu 1993). Therefore if parents integrate physical activity into family life through joint participation this becomes a norm, making young people more likely to participate (as evident in Genissa’s case above) because its reproduction will lead to acceptance
and increased capital (Bourdieu 1993). Disparity in the values assigned to participation in physical activity between Muslim and western parents demonstrate that physical activity is culturally laden (Shilling 2008) and therefore the capital assigned to activities is specific to different fields. Therefore due to its association with western secular culture embodiment of physical culture can be perceived as an acceptance of the values of this field (Shilling 2008) as seen in Nasif’s case above and Aasim’s, Saleema’s and Busrah’s case below, leading to parental involvement to be resisted in order to maintain cultural distinctiveness (Benn, Dagkas and Jawad 2011). Cultural distinctiveness is desirable because it produces and reproduces cultural capital maintaining power within the given field. The limited cultural value placed on physical activity and the resulting lack of proactive support highlights how culture intersects with the influence of the family field as parents who assign high value to physical culture are more likely to support physical activity, leading to increased dispositions to be physically active amongst their children. This indicates why research, which has to date, focused upon hegemonic (nuclear, two parent) families is problematic (Dagkas and Quarmby, 2012), as it has failed to account for the mediating role culture plays in the mechanism of parental support.

All participants had at least one Muslim parent with religious beliefs and observance constituting a large part of family life, which for some reduced their psychical culture in various pedagogical contexts such as school PE and sport and also physical activity. This was particularly
prominent in families with low economic capital. As Aasim a 15-year-old boy describes:

“mum reminds us to read, to pray everyday” (Aasim)

Contextualising power relations within the field of family and religion Nasif explained:

“There’s no time for it (PA) because like on Mondays I get home... go to Mosque. On Tuesdays the same thing, Wednesday the same thing. Thursday... I can’t really go out cos that’s when it’s the prayer when we’re not allowed to go out and after that it’s already dark..., on Fridays it’s the same thing. Then on Saturday after I go Mosque... I play football and come back home and then it’s the prayer when we’re not allowed to go out and then we have to just stay home pray and it’s just dark. (Nasif, boy 12)

Participants also acknowledged that modesty requirements (in PE and PA contexts) could cause barriers to their participation. Nevertheless agency was clearly influenced by liberal interpretations of religion and culture within the family and social field influenced by the economic capital of the young Muslim people. Both Safa and Saleema are contextualizing the point by illustrating liberal interpretations of religious requirements within the various fields they occupy.

“it depends on how you take your religion, you don’t have to believe every single word, word by word you just take the bits that you believe is right.” (Safa, 15)
“I have to wear a scarf, well it is up to me, some people choose to wear it and some people don’t but it doesn’t make the person who hasn’t chosen to wear it wrong, like a wrong Muslim. Some people choose to eat pork but it doesn’t make them a bad Muslim because at the end of the day you believe in the same God you believe what you do then its fine it doesn’t matter what you do…. if you have a scarf on and you play football or anything it’s going to fall off, so don’t try that.” (Saleema, 14)

“Well my Gran she says I’m too skinny so she says to me to stop fasting cos I’m too young, but then I say to her that I kinda want to do it cos you’ve got more chance of going to heaven than hell and stuff, but then she says to me that umm you can do that when you grow up and stuff (Busrah Girl 13).”

Young Muslim’s further demonstrated their agency from the influence of the family as whilst assigning to the religious beliefs conveyed by their parents. This was especially evident in those young Muslims that economic capital was low. This further supports that intergenerational embodiment of strict religious adherence amongst Muslims with low economic capital is prominent within the field of family. Outside the family liberal interpretations were applied which allowed unproblematic participation in physical activity, PE and school sport, as whilst acknowledging their commitment to Islam has the potential to limit their physical activity, participations made concessions to these requirements for example through removing headscarves when participating. The liberal interpretation of religion outside the family field
suggests that participants have adapted their intergenerational habitus which
Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) explain is prompted by encountering multiple
fields which hold conflicting norms therefore adaption is required to allow
acceptance. Young Muslims experienced this conflict between religious and
secular values transmitted by the multiple fields of the family, school, religion
and social (Dagkas, Benn and Jawad 2011) as a result of living in
superdiverse communities. This was evident in Busrha’s case where she had
to maintain fasting during the religious festival of Ramadan. Conflict of
multiple fields is particularly pertinent for participants in this study as in both
their school, family and social fields they were very much in the minority
therefore a significant disparity in norms exist between the family and fields
outside of it. Whilst some research (Modood and Ahmad, 2007) suggests
young Muslims negotiate multiple fields by connecting to parents heritage
through religion and accepting majority nationality, this may be problematic
due to rising Islamophobia (Dagkas and Benn 2006) and racial discrimination,
meaning those who are visibly Muslim through dress for example face more
prejudice. Therefore young Muslim people in this study negotiated their
racialised multiple body identities by limiting the embodiment of religious
habitus to the family where it held capital, which also allowed integration into
fields outside of it (Bourdieu 1993). The influence of fields outside the family
shows that the relative strength of conflicting discourse which young Muslims
encounter causes varying values to integrate into their habitus and physical
culture, as whilst participants in this study adopted liberal interpretations of
religion, in studies (Dagkas and Benn 2006) where migration has led to
residential encapsulation participants felt more pressure to conform to Islamic
culture because these were the norms expected of them both within and outside the family. This highlights the fact that young Muslims, as evident in this study, therefore should not be treated as a homogenous group as has been accepted in the public health discourse.

The influence of the family field intersected with that of wider fields, as highlighted and demonstrated by liberal religious interpretations in this study, showed the adaptation of habitus was triggered by experiencing conflicting fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Therefore religion had minimum significance and impact on participants' embodiment of physical culture especially for those young people with high economic capital as demonstrated in the accounts above. We maintain that early family experiences intersecting with practices in various fields “produce the structures of the habitus which become in turn the basis of perception and appreciation of all subsequent experience” (Bourdieu 1977, 78) as we mentioned earlier.

**Discussion and Conclusions**

Even though this study has provided valuable insights in the way the interplay of various fields impacts upon young Muslim’s dispositions towards physical culture; corroborating Hill and Azzarito’s (2012) comments, more data are needed exploring the way that diverse populations or those identified as “at risk” identify the multiple ways that they “value” their bodies. More specifically, more research with young populations that represent “at-risk” communities in the public health discourse to uncover the multiple ways that the interplay of various fields such as family, social class and culture and religion and race (and gender) impacts on physical culture; and the way these influence health
dispositions (and inequalities), practices and views of one’s own body. Most importantly, we need to find ways of making racialised bodies visible by engaging with them in research that allows the elicitation of dispositions to be explored by voicing the body of the invisible and non normative (Hill and Azzarito 2012, own emphasis). It was evident in this study that liberal interpretation of the field of religion to allow physical culture demonstrates that whilst it may not hold capital within the field of the family; young Muslims’ physical culture developed relative to the influence of the multiple fields they inhabit, as the embodiment of secular physical activity values can be seen as a means to gain acceptance into fields outside of the family (Bourdieu 1996).

Discrimination against those identified as disadvantaged within the public health policy, as the Muslim young people in this study, takes concrete form when health disparities and embodiment of physical culture are the result of structural and societal barriers. In this study it was evident that structural inequalities and barriers to enacting physical culture was relative to the economic and cultural capital of the young people. The voices of youth of different races, genders and social classes, as well as the intersection of these fields and their markers, must be heard and legitimated in physical education as part of health education policy to be able to provide an effective learning environment that respects diversity and individuality (Azzarito and Solomon 2005). It is clear from the youth voices in this paper that navigating one’s body through multiple often-overlapped fields forms multiple body identities, from members of a group that has been perceived and represented as homogenous in the public health policy. In many cases these non-
normative diverse identities in the context of PE and physical culture are ignored. Within these pedagogical contexts hierarchies and power relations influence agency by neglecting personal taste and habitus (lisahunter 2013).

Creating and providing health pedagogies as part of health education policies that feed into a new health education programme that is culturally sensitive, that employs freedom of expression through movement practices, that denies stereotypical ideals of gender hegemony and racial advancement especially of the white middle-class supreme can provide more effective engagement with physical culture and the health discourse and address health disparities.

Reflecting on Goodyear, Casey and Kirk (2013) statement about a more student centered curriculum we would like to echo their proposal of physical educators working with students to understand likes and dislikes, thoughts and feelings and, to extent further, diverse body identities and practices that reflect habitus and personal agency as evident in the voices of the young Muslims in this study. This is more prominent in cases where many young people from diverse backgrounds especially those that experience disadvantage or non-whites, engage with the physical culture at macro level (i.e., school environment and curricula and health education) due to structural barriers at micro level (such as economic resources; family structures; facilities and locality). Particularly where economic and cultural capital is low as evident in this study. We maintain that a Physical Education curriculum should take into consideration pedagogic practices that occur in various fields (i.e. family, community, religion) and their intersection, providing culturally
responsive pedagogic practices that allow young Muslim to enact and navigate their bodies through a variety of physical activities. We suggest, as a consequence of the data presented in this study, that we need to invest in pedagogic practices that reflect on the variety of cultures that are present in the given field without silencing specific bodies or unnecessarily stigmatising specific bodies, particularly those bodies at greater risks of exclusion (Azzarito and Hill, 2013).

The relative invisibility of marginalised groups in influential vocational positions in health professions, public health promotion and education is critical in terms of social justice and equity. Understanding different body values and ways in which these are affected by practices in physical education and sport is important to effective strategies for the inclusion of diverse lived realities. Finally embracing intersectionality, combined theoretical frameworks and culturally tailored methods to examine diverse multiple positionalities of physical culture, can provide valuable insights in the effects of the hidden curriculum of healthism (Azzarito and Hill 2013) in schools and beyond. In particular, we need to extend current work presented in this paper and provide substantial evidence of the ways young Muslim people and racialised bodies in superdiverse communities, process and act on the public health discourse and the ways they understand and enact physical culture within local communities and schools.

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