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Photography as a pedagogical tool for shedding light on 'bodies-at-risk' in physical culture

LAURA AZZARITO

In Western countries, given current global public health imperatives around obesity, the lack of engagement with and compliance to normative health-related physical cultures is a concern for young people of ethnic minority backgrounds (particularly females) and low socio-economic class. These groups represent cohorts of young people more likely to be physically inactive and unhealthy compared to other groups, and thus are framed as 'bodies-at-risk' or portrayed as a 'problem' by neoliberal projects of the body in public health. What remains hidden in the enterprise of the fit body produced by a Western physical culture of healthism, however, is how sport and physical and health education in schools continue to reproduce inequalities of gender and race/ethnicity that heavily bear upon some young people's bodies in local sites. To problematise the body-at-risk discourse, this visual participatory ethnographic research conducted in inner-city, state-funded schools in the Midlands region of the UK, aimed to reveal the visual dimensions of embodiment as expressed by young people of different ethnic backgrounds in the local contexts of their lives. Student-researchers used digital cameras to create visual diaries entitled Moving in My World *to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas, and to 'speak for themselves' about their knowledge of their own bodies, sharing their embodiments. What moving in their worlds meant to young people varied significantly based on differences of cultural background, gender negotiations and opportunities for, and choices in, their engagement with physical activity. The student-researchers' visual diaries captured a heterogeneity of meanings about the moving body that young people construct and represent in their creation of the hybrid physical cultures of their daily lives.*

INTRODUCTION

In Western landscapes of public health, alarming discourses about obesity and its health-related risks saturate the public consciousness (Wang 1999; Gard and Wright 2005; Wright and Harwood 2009; Yates 2010), call for school pedagogies that 'regulate', 'treat' and 'prevent' young people's risk for fat or physical inactivity (Evans *et al.* 2008) and, moreover, inform the ways young people come to see their bodies and know themselves. In public health discourses, the lack of engagement with and compliance to normative health-related physical culture is especially a concern for young people of ethnic minority backgrounds (particularly females) and low socio-economic class. These groups represent a cohort of youths more likely to be physically inactive and unhealthy compared to other groups, and thus are framed as 'bodies-at-risk' or portrayed as a 'problem' (Nazroo 2003; Pearce and Dorling 2009). As a result of current health imperatives, the linking of young people's identities to corporeal ideals of shape and size – 'fitness' – not only decontextualises and homogenises ethnic minority young people's body experiences, but indeed, dangerously colonises their bodies to ideals of whiteness embedded in Western societies (Azzarito 2009). Given that the body-at-risk discourse produces ways of seeing the body in dichotomous and reductive terms, unhealthy/healthy, different/normal, unfit/fit bodies, there is an urgent need to understand the ways young people themselves understand their experiences in the physical cultures with which they engage.

While globalisation either affirms and/or erases 'difference' in favour of sameness, the body-at-risk discourse situates the remedy for the 'problem' of the 'different', 'unhealthy' or 'inactive' body within the individual's responsibility for 'care of the self' (McCarthy and Dimitriadis 2000). The body-at-risk discourse aims to foster individual discipline, self-management and compliance with normative discourses of healthism and physical activity promotion. In this vein, as Wells (2007) evidenced, institutions such as schools are increasingly complicit in the formation of students as neoliberal subjects – subjects who are not only successful academically, but whose bodies and identities 'fit' the needs of the global market. At the same time, the body-at-risk discourse denies the problematisation of the many forms of discrimination constraining a basic education of the body for *all* young people. It implicitly marks certain young people as lacking the responsibility, self-governance and self-determination to successfully achieve a 'normal', 'fit' and healthy body (Harris 2004).

Laura Azzarito is an Associate Professor at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her current research uses visual methods to examine the links among young people's construction of the body, identity and inequality issues from a pedagogical and sociocultural perspective.

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The neoliberal body project obfuscates institutionalised mechanisms of inequalities that have an impact on young people's opportunities and access to material, cultural, educational and economic resources (Azzarito 2010). Sport, exercise and healthy eating behaviour, all represent crucial practices of the body for successfully meeting the demands of the global market (Griffin 2004). What remains hidden in this neoliberal enterprise of the healthy fit body produced by Western physical culture, however, is how local and global sites of learning about sport and physical and health education, continue to reproduce inequalities of gender, race/ethnicity and social class that bear heavily upon some young people's bodies. In the context of the United Kingdom (UK), for instance, research suggests that youth sport clubs and popular sports such as football remain gendered sites, male-domains, and thus a space of exclusion of many young girls (Bradbury 2010). How gender informs women's subjective experiences of health and exercise still 'remains largely untapped' (Wang 1999). Whereas the neoliberal agenda puts forward ideals of individual initiative, enterprise and 'global democracy' as the key to becoming successful in the new global order (Torres 2009), such an agenda masks the kinds of choices that individuals have available to them and make in their daily lives.

Shedding light on young people's embodiment in their everyday localities, therefore, is crucial to tackling the global discourses of 'bodies-at-risk', and to addressing persistent institutionalised inequalities constraining some young people's physicality (Nazroo 2003). Despite the proliferation of valuable academic debates about the neoliberal enterprise of healthism and schooling (Wright and Harwood 2009), the visual dimension of young people's bodies remains for the most part neglected. Recently, a handful of researchers have begun to use visual methods to research socio-educational issues in physical culture (Azzarito 2010; Phoenix 2010). In public health, other scholars have made a case for the adoption of visual methods, as they can provide culturally sensitive, relevant and contextualised approaches to making health disparities among ethnic minority women visible (Keller et al. 2008). Taking on Prosser's (2007) argument that visual research can reveal the 'hidden culture' of schooling, the use of the visual investigations of physical culture can highlight the materiality of socio-educational and economic resources young people draw on in their daily lives and local contexts.

Visual research offers innovative tools for understanding which can frame the context through more authentic lenses, revealing the economic-cultural-educational factors having an impact on health, access to physical activity and the body. The aim of this article, therefore, is to present and discuss findings from a two-year visual participatory ethnographic research project, *Moving in My World*, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, UK. As one of the primary purposes of this research was to tackle the body-at-risk discourse by making visible the embodiments of young people of ethnic minority backgrounds, this article reports findings that deal with the pedagogical potential of young people's using the digital camera to making sense of, construct and represent in their own terms the physical cultures they engage with daily in their communities.

VISUAL DIARIES: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO TRACING SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE

Researchers have employed visual participatory methods across disciplines to enable and empower participants to make sense of the self, and to speak up about socio-educational issues in a wide range of social contexts. For instance, Chaplin (2004) discusses the usefulness of creating and keeping a personal visual diary as a record of reality, events and routines in her daily life. Whereas photography in her own visual diary is framed as a 'trace' of her subjective experience that prompts critical self-reflection, the importance of written explanation (caption) to capture the significance of the image is crucial to the meaning-making process and expression. According to Berger (1982, 92), 'the photograph is irrefutable evidence but weak in meaning'. Similar to Chaplin (2004), Wissman (2008) employed a visual participatory method, using photography as a 'praxis-oriented inquiry', to explore a group of African American girls' identities in an urban charter school. In this project, photography served as a pedagogical tool to assist girls' creation of visual autobiographies and, in particular, to engage them to reflect upon issues of social justice which have an impact on their lives. In this study, photography was pedagogical in the sense that it opened up safe spaces of learning for girls' self-social inquiry of personal experiences, and it led to their sharing their visual representations, entitled 'Sistah', in public exhibits at school and at conferences. Harper (2003) notes that such visual approaches challenge 'objective truth' and stereotypical constructions of gender and race, instead fostering dialogue about the complexity of meanings participants construct around images they create and deliver.

Other image-based research conducted 'with' young people has examined social issues affecting young people's daily lives and identities (Hubbard 1991; Bolton, Pole, and Mizen 2001; Burke 2005). Hubbard's (1991) research offers a powerful account of using

photography with homeless children in an inner city context to empower them to speak about their daily lives and identities. Bolton et al. (2001) provided young people working in part-time employment with disposable cameras to make photographic accounts of their experiences, work culture and their roles in their workplaces. Reflecting upon findings emerging from this research, Bolton et al. (2001, 512) concluded that 'pictures convey the reality of the culture of young people's work in a way that children's written and spoken words do not'. Similar to the focus of this latter study, Mizen (2005) also used photography to examine school-age children's experiences of employment. The use of photo-diaries, 'work diaries' and related reflections were central in Mizen's visual participatory research, generating insightful information about the 'spaces, places, and things' of children's lives at work. Especially when researching marginalised, vulnerable people in society, or issues of social justice, photo-diaries can elicit in-depth, rich and sensitive information about sense of self, context and self-worth (Thomas 2007). Photography becomes a visual plan through which young people thoughtfully express the meanings they attach to the various experiences in their daily lives.

The use of photography in visual participatory research is not always empowering, however. For instance, Barrett (2004) discusses the challenges she faced and contradictions she negotiated in her photo-documentation of needle exchange in a local community. In particular, her research captured the tension between her own desire as a researcher to document people's exchanging needles, and the participants' wish and need for protection, privacy and anonymity. Similar to Barrett's research in its focus on 'marginalised' people, Packard (2008) aimed to empower homeless people in an urban context, by giving them disposable cameras to make the reality of their daily lives visible. One of the purposes of this visual participatory research was to develop a more 'collaborative' and 'power-leveling' methodology by decreasing power differences between the researcher and homeless people. However, in spite of initial intentions, Packard (2008, 73) reported that many of the participants 'appeared uneasy about having to talk about and explain their images, or even listen to or take compliments about them'. As both Packard and Barrett suggest, despite the empowering aspects of participatory research with 'stigmatised' or 'marginalised' people, the process of participants' image-making can raise ethical challenges when researching those whose will is to remain 'invisible' in society.

Visual Research and Physical Culture

Whereas the growing significance of visual research has increasingly challenged its traditionally limited status in the orthodoxy of qualitative research, stimulating methodological debate and critical reflection about research in sociology and education (Prosser 1998), visual research with young people in physical culture is still in its infancy. This paper argues, therefore, that the use of image-based data can be fruitful when researching young people and physical culture for a number of reasons. First, given contemporary public health imperatives complicit with globalisation that objectify, reduce and label certain young people as 'at-risk' or 'at disadvantage', visual research can re-position them as 'experts of their own lives' (Thompson 2008), offering insightful, powerful and authentic accounts of their physicality. Young people's reflections might thus challenge stereotypes, beliefs and ongoing inequalities, by opening up transformative possibilities.

Second, whereas dominant media narratives of sport, health and fitness construct body hierarchies in gender, race and social class terms, visual research can provoke young people to consider relationships among the self, the body and society and increase the sense of agency that shapes their own stories (Yates 2010). Reflexivity, thus, might serve as a pedagogical tool to assist young people in dealing critically with the question 'Who Am I?', and create counter-narratives that challenge the body-at-risk discourse. Lastly, whereas dominant regulatory discourses of health work to either obfuscate or hinder the subjective embodied experiences of young people, visual methods that emphasises a more collaborative approach to research can enable young people to speak about their subjective body experiences in more authentic and contextualised ways. Visual research *with* and *for* young people has the potential to honour their voices and perspectives (Soto and Swadener 2005; Prosser 2007), and thus to legitimate their ways of seeing of their own bodies.

VISUAL METHODOLOGY

The *Moving in My World* research project was conducted in three state-funded inner-city schools with predominantly ethnic minority student populations in the Midlands region of the UK. The participants were over 60 student-researchers aged 14–15 who used digital cameras and created visual diaries to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas, and to share their stories about what it means to 'move in their worlds'. Against the pervasive body-at-risk discourse that implicitly

homogenises young people's bodies (especially those of minority ethnic backgrounds) in problematic and reductive ways, a visual methodology was employed with the aim of exploring young people's subjective experiences of their bodies in their school community contexts and empowering participants through digital photography (Rose 2007). Specifically, this research adopted a participatory visual method design, and more specifically, a 'creating something together' approach (Pink 2007, 57). This methodology is 'participant-centred', and the visual diaries created by the participants in this research were the outcome of the 'combined intentions' of both researchers and participants, and their negotiations. Thus, participants in this research became researchers, photographers of their own subjective experiences 'capable' of picturing and critically reflecting upon their embodiments. In other words, the researchers 'place[d] the cameras in the hands of those who are experts of their own lives' (Thompson 2008, 26) to enable young people to 'speak for themselves' (Burke 2008) about their knowledge of their bodies.

Because another goal of this visual participatory research was to allow outcomes of the students' work to remain in the research setting, instead of just 'taking' from the setting (Pink 2007), for the *Moving in My World* research project, digital photography from students' visual diaries was exhibited in community art centres, local museums and the participants' schools. The *Moving in My World* exhibitions of photographs and words attempted to capture the inspiring stories of teenagers' ways of 'seeing', talking about and reflecting upon the significance of physical activity in their everyday lives. These exhibitions aimed, first, to centre young people in the research process and, second, to make the diverse forms of embodiment of student-researchers visible to the public. Used as a pedagogical tool in this research, the digital camera given to each participant aimed to encourage and enable them to 'speak' to the public about their own ways of seeing their body experiences. All of the student-researchers, their families, their teachers and school staff were invited to the opening of the first exhibition at a local community art centre (Figures 14 and 15).

In researching young people's embodiments, photography in particular provides 'a medium of seeing that is shaped by the social context, by identity, and by experience' (Wissman 2008, 14). Student-generated visual diaries are particularly useful when researching young people because they enable participants to communicate and express themselves in meaningful and contextualised ways (Gauntlett and Holzwarth 2006). For Harrison (2002, 859), the potential of generating visual diaries in research resides in 'offering data about personal lives and experiences, forms of subjective understanding and identity construction'. The photo-inquiry employed through student-researchers' creating and reflecting upon visual diaries engendered their meaning-making about the resources of physical culture available to them. Photography in this case served as a pedagogical tool for developing critical dialogue about the body and physical culture between the researcher and the student-researchers (Azzarito and Sterling 2010). According to Soto and Swadener (2005), photography creates a pedagogical context in which young people as active agents develop and use their ability to think, articulate, analyse and understand their lives and their positions in the world.

In this visual participatory ethnography, data was collected from multiple sources: field notes, interviews and participants' visual diaries of digital photographs of their body experiences. This research project broadly followed Wang's (1999, 188) outline for conducting visual participatory research, but adapted this framework for the aims this research. First, student-researchers received written and verbal explanations about the goal of the *Moving in My World* project and the use of the camera in a classroom setting. The instructional sheet included in the camera case served as a 'brief guide' (Thomas 2007) to assists students' creation of the *Moving in My World* visual diary. To develop the instructional sheet, a number of steps were followed. First, a substantial literature on visual diaries was reviewed. Second, to enhance the clarity of the written instructions, which included guiding questions for the diary and an explanation of digital camera functions, a pilot study was conducted with four non-participant Year 10 and 11 (aged 14 to 16) students and their feedback on the instructional sheet was considered. Third, an artist/scholar in art education with expertise on participatory research with ethnic minority young people was consulted for advice and comments on the written instructions for the visual diary.

The results of the pilot study and all the feedback gathered were taken into account to finalise the methodological procedures to be followed and the written instructions to be used with participants. Thus, on the final instructional sheet, student-researchers were asked to creatively make a photo-diary that expressed the ways they felt about physical activity. Given the non-participants' feedback during the pilot study, the instructional sheet defined physical activity as any way 'you move around the world during the day'. In addition, the non-participant young people had suggested that researchers use very simple words to make the instructions accessible to everyone. The main

guiding questions included on the instructional sheet for the visual diary creation therefore were (a) How do I move in the world?; (b) How does my body feel when I move in my world?; (c) Why do I move in my world? Finally, during classroom time, students were introduced to the digital cameras, the instructional sheet was reviewed and time was allocated for them to try out the various camera functions, and to ask any questions. An explanation of the digital camera functions included on the instructional sheet was also reviewed.

At the outset, each participant had possession of a digital camera with the written instructions for a one-week period (Wang 1999; Mizen 2005). However, based on negotiations between the researchers and the participants, the one-week period initially proposed by the researchers was later treated in more flexible terms to accommodate students' needs, desires and requests. Drawing from prior visual research (Burke 2005; Lovejoy and Steele 2005), students were instructed to include up to 20 pictures in their personal visual diary. A number of students produced a higher number of photographs. In these cases, the researchers asked students to select up to 20 photographs that were most significant in their expression of their body experiences. Participants' selection of particular images often symbolises significant meanings in their lives (Prosser 1998; Keller et al. 2008).

Following the completion of their visual diaries, formal interviews were conducted with each participant using a 'photo-feedback' technique (Harper 2002). Each student received a printed copy of their photographs to allow them to reflect upon (Mizen 2005) and make sense of what they had aimed to represent about their body experiences. Similar to Burke's (2005) approach, a printed colour copy of the photographs included in the visual diary were randomly laid out on a table before each participant, allowing them time to see and to react to the images. The interview questions, following a conversational protocol (Patton 1990), attempted to probe participants' interpretations of their visual diaries, eliciting reflections on and personal narratives about their *Moving in My World* images. Conversations conducted in collaboration with young people aimed to cover the following topics: (a) student-researchers' cultural backgrounds and views of their body experiences; (b) eliciting students' meaning-making about the photographs included in (and/or deleted from) their visual diaries (Harrison 2002); (c) descriptions of place(s) and/or people in photographs and their relevance to their body experiences and practices; and (d) their views on the process of taking photographs, decision-making and using the digital cameras to express their body experiences. The images, in this case, served as a 'neutral-third party' (Burke 2005) or a 'neutral-ground' (Barrett 2004) to destabilise hierarchical power positions between the researchers and the young people, and thus facilitated conversations about the focus of their visual diary. The photo-elicitation created a 'two-way process' (Soto and Swadener 2005, 140) for the student-researcher to educate the researcher about her/his body knowledge, and for the researcher to learn about and enter students' worlds.

Guided by relevant literature and the project's research aims, a visually oriented discourse analysis informed by feminist post-structuralism and postcolonial perspectives (Bordo 1993; Foucault 1997; McCarthy and Dimitriadis 2000) was conducted of all the photographs included in each diary (van Leeuween and Jewitt 2008). Specifically, an inductive and deductive analysis was conducted of participants' discourses as represented though visual images and articulated during interviews. The discourse analysis centred on their body practices (e.g., sport, school PE, outdoor activities, home practices, recreational/leisure activities), relevant places for self-expression as moving bodies and decision-making in their visual diary construction. Images were categorised by writing codes next to each printed photograph and triangulating the photographs with transcripts and field notes. Triangulation of all data sources was conducted using a constant comparison approach.

'I DO ACTIVE STUFF': SELF-MANAGEMENT, ETHNIC IDENTITY AND DOMESTIC SPACE

In this research, many student-researchers of ethnic minority backgrounds viewed themselves as active bodies and committed themselves to physical cultures expressed in diverse forms. What moving in their world meant to them, however, varied significantly based on differences of cultural background, gender and opportunities for physical activity, and body experiences in and outside of school. The young people's visual and verbal narratives reported in this section attempt, on the one hand, to exemplify young people's own understanding of and commitment to physical cultures relevant to who they are in the local contexts of their daily lives and, on the other, to present counter-narratives of the body-at-risk discourse. (All the names used in this article are pseudonyms.)

For instance, in conversing about the *Moving in My World* photographs Shreya produced, she identifies the landscape of home as a particularly relevant space in the

FIGURE 1. 'Me playing cricket'. (In this and a number of subsequent images participants' faces have been blurred to obscure their identities. This was a specific requirement of the Institutional Review Board in order to secure approval for the research to proceed.)

FIGURE 2. 'I play in the garden with my brother. I practice tennis ball and bowling'.

making of herself, and in the kind of physical culture she creates and immerses herself in, 'Exercises and stuff':

> I do it at home and stuff . . . I do yoga, when I get a chance to, I skip, I play cricket, in the garden I stretch quite a lot . . . I play cricket with my brother and my next-door neighbours, but the rest of the stuff I just do it on my own . . . I think most of the stuff which I do is in this [visual diary]. These are things in just one week but I do it every day, like my yoga and watching TV while I'm doing it, and the cricket and everything in the kitchen . . . I do like active stuff . . . On the weekend that's what I do, I'm just sitting down on the floor, and that's where I do most yoga, like while I'm watching TV.

Sheya's *Moving in My World* diary, subjectively expressing an active body constructed through daily practices of cricket, yoga, housework and so on, is strikingly discrepant from the body-at-risk discourse mapped onto ethnic minority girls' bodies. Shreya's body-self formation occurs, however, by her engagement in a physical culture geographically contingent upon the space of home. Whereas girls in the context of this research, and especially ethnic minority girls, occupied marginal or absent positions in public spaces, remaining invisible in and excluded from youth sport clubs (Bradbury 2010), home symbolically represented a safe, private and supporting space for Shreya's lived, embodied experiences. In her diary, the representation of her active body is not invisible but rather the focal point of her digital images, signifying commitment to movement and great interest in a wide range of physical activities from sport to Indian dance. Even when she was unable to take photographs of herself dancing, in conversation, Shreya made a point to explain that Indian dance is one of her favourite activities, viewing it as particularly important in the making of herself and body performance, as she explained:

> I didn't get really a chance to because I didn't know how to take pictures, but I've been dancing like in my own room ever since I was little. I dance in the front room because there is more space than my room and there are not that many people going in and out of it. I do Indian dancing.

The diary Shreya constructed makes visible and indeed puts in motion a self-reflection about the wide range of micro and macro practices of the body she engages in in her daily life. As an active agent, Shreya offers a compelling picture of how she constructs her own subjectivity in physical culture. Rather than viewing herself as oppressed in the space of home (Carrington, Chivers, and Williams 1987), or 'at-risk' for becoming fat or physically inactive, Shreya uses the digital camera as a pedagogical tool to actively construct and express a personhood, one greatly invested in recreational, leisure and sport practices. She invents a physical culture that is not grounded in traditionally male-dominated public sporting spaces. Asserting herself as an active body outside of the gendered boundaries of public sport, her subjective representation greatly diverges from traditional performative constructions of sporting bodies. Twelve out of the 14 photographs Shreya included in her visual diary express culturally relevant practices of the body in spaces of home: her living room, TV room, kitchen and cemented backyard or front of the house.

Throughout her visual diary, Shreya, who moved to the UK from India at a young age, included photographs that revealed aspects of her cultural background and her

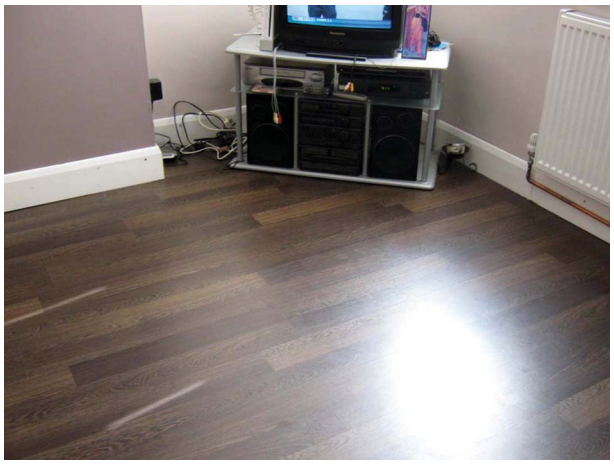

FIGURE 3. 'I'm just sitting on the floor, that's where I do yoga'.

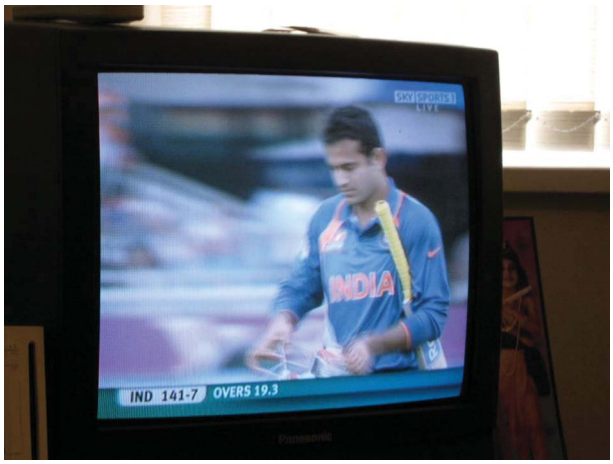

FIGURE 4. 'Watching cricket'. Shreya, a fan of the Indian national team.

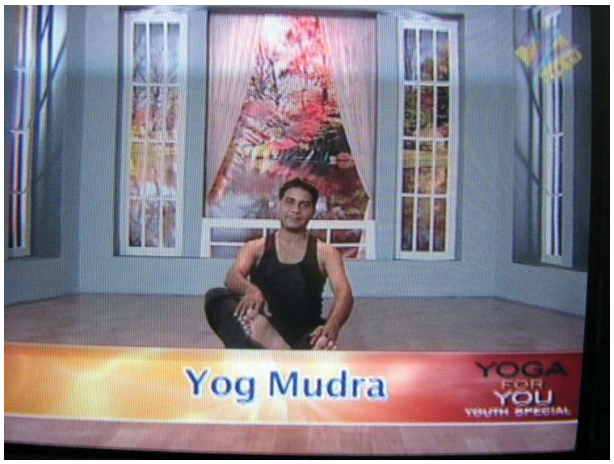

FIGURE 5. 'My yoga and watching TV while I'm doing it'.

FIGURE 6. 'My kitchen where I clean, that's part of being active'.

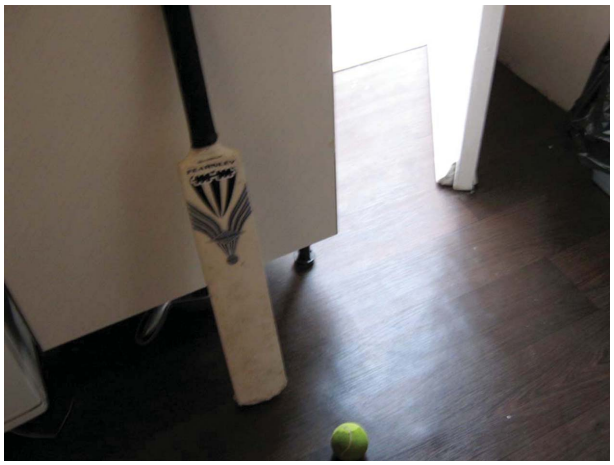

FIGURE 7. 'I play cricket with my brother'.

FIGURE 8. 'I went for a walk two times'.

negotiations of traditionally 'Western' and 'Eastern' cultures of the body. For instance, Shreya regularly practices yoga in her living room. She comments: 'I just watch this programme on TV, but I can only do that on the weekend because on weekends it comes on at nine o'clock, but every day it comes at half-seven'. In her management of the body, 'Eastern' practices appear particularly relevant to Shreya's sense of self. In Figure 5, Shreya captures a yoga pedagogue performing a mudra, representing the infusion of her British context with traditionally Indian body practices. Yoga, according to Markula and Pringle (2006) represents to young women a 'hybrisise' space of physical culture that combines the combination of contemporary popular fitness practices for women in the Western context and 'Eastern' principles of body practices (e.g. balance, meditation, flexibility, slow-controlled movement). Shreya experiments with and invents new subject positions in physical culture in the space and place of home where, informed by media, local and global body narratives merge.

During her photo-elicitation conversation, Shreya seems to underscore the importance of her ethnic identity to her daily routine, even stating several times that she plans to return to India one day. 'I'll probably finish the university hopefully and then go back to India', she stated. Shreya's practices of the body might therefore be read as a means of cultivating her own 'Indianness', for example, through self-teaching of yoga and Indian dance in her own bedroom. The physical culture Shreya creates seems to resemble neither a Western-driven physical culture that values the 'skinny' white feminine ideal body (Bordo 1993) nor a culture of the 'new girl' in sport (Harris 2004); her body self-management moves beyond traditional Western practices of the feminised body. Shreya's meaning-making of her body practices is discrepant from the ordinary, institutionalised feminised practice of dance (especially ballet), which according to Atencio and Wright (2009, 32) signifies not only a slim body, but also the staging of a 'higher level of artistic and aesthetic performance'. In her visual and verbal narratives, Indian dance is evidently not embodied by Shreya in performative terms in the way that it is as emplaced in white Western contexts. Rather, her practice of Indian dance in the privacy of her bedroom serves as a technology of the self (Foucault 1997), an intentional, pedagogical practice for the maintenance and establishment of her cultural identity, and expression of ethnic pride.

In Shreya's visual diary, the places where normative engagement with physical culture occurs for many young people – public school spaces, physical education, playgrounds, sport clubs, private fitness gyms or dance studios – are notably absent. The majority of the photographs, in different ways, capture a part of the 'Indianness' she consciously or unconsciously aims to express. Rather than representing being 'caught between two cultures' (Burdsey 2006, 24), her narratives of yoga, cricket or Indian dance might symbolically represent sites for the making of an ethnic identity shaped by a deliberate exclusion or rejection of white Western normative practices of the body, a cultivation of an imagined, aspired and desired sense of belonging to India. For Shreya, home emerges as crucial site for her embodied identity formation, a space where she manages and/or invents new subject positions, and contests Western-oriented physical culture; though at the same time, it is a space where she learns the domestic role of womanhood. She practices and maintains gender roles by doing housework. Making sense of two photographs that capture her kitchen, she explains:

> they're just pictures of my kitchen where I clean, and I think – because I think that is part of being active, yeah, you know, because I'm sweeping. I bend down and I use a lot of my arm muscles and when I'm stretching up to clean the cupboards it's more of arm muscles, and just walking around the whole kitchen. It does involve a lot you know, moving around.

In the space of home, Shreya constructs identities in physical culture based on the choices and opportunities available to her. According to Bettis and Adams (2005), the space of home becomes a crucial geographical space for girls' self-management of gender, where they negotiate, manage and express traditional roles of womanhood and simultaneously construct new subject positions. Shreya transcends traditional gender-appropriate practices of sport and fitness, by bringing sport, physical activity and Indian dance together in the same domestic space. She also recognises the physical labour involved in traditionally 'feminine' practices or 'women's work'.

Shreya, in her visual diary, shows a versatile, self-determined, moving and flexible self; someone who exercises flexibility and body control; a girl who dances, does housework and takes walks in her neighbourhood. At the same time, Shreya also portrays herself as someone who is passionate about sport. Sport, in fact, is neither marginal nor absent from her visual diary. The space of sport at home, however, becomes for Shreya a site of contestation and, simultaneously, a place where she subverts the stereotypical construction of the cricket player as a male (Velija 2011). Picturing herself playing

cricket in the backyard (Figure 1), she asserts herself by declaring that she loves cricket: 'I play cricket with my brother and my next-door neighbours, but the rest of the stuff, I do it on my own'. In conversation, Shreya explains that she enthusiastically follows the Indian national cricket team on television at home. Cricket emerges as a site of empowerment for Shreya, but again as a site of conflictual choices. She maintains:

> I wanted to do cricket [at school] but all the boys were doing it, there's not one single girl doing it so I couldn't . . . I don't think any of the girls will do it with all those boys and they [boys] have been trained ever since [they were young], most of them, know, they've been playing cricket for years. I've just been playing home. But I think if there was a girls' only team there would have been loads of girls doing cricket that I know.

With the digital camera, Shreya makes visible the ongoing gender issues institutionalised in the public space of cricket at school. She sees the sport with critical eyes, her experience of cricket outside of her backyard, in context of her school, revealing the masculine dimension of this sport as a male domain.

Despite a commitment toward gender equity in many educational sites in the UK (Azzarito 2011), women continue to experience the gender hierarchies established by certain sports, where boys occupy a visible, centred and privileged position. This kind of gendered physical culture, implicitly or explicitly, reinforces dominant narratives of masculinity (Wellard, Pickard, and Bailey 2007), reproducing gender-appropriate behaviour, actions and performances. Bradbury (2010) has extended this analysis to suggest that cricket is often constructed as a site of resistance to white male sporting hegemonies performed in other sports (i.e., football). Yet cricket, like other male-dominated sports, remains 'an affair between men' (Azzarito 2010), at the exclusion of young women. As Velija (2011) notes, cricket remains associated with boys and masculinities, legitimating and privileging their participation from youth. Shreya sums up her reflections on cricket, finally asserting: 'there's not really enough stuff for girls'.

As insider/outsider of cricket played in her garden, Shreya negotiates discourses of gender and sport in fluid and contradictory ways. Whereas Shreya is excluded and does not insert herself into the male-dominated public space of cricket at school, in the privacy of her garden, she represents herself as a sporting body. By picturing herself as a cricket player, holding the bat in ready position, her yard offers a site of subversion and transformation of dominant gender discourses of cricket. In the private space of home, Shreya not only challenges the gendered construction of cricket, but also constructs, positions and re-envisions herself as a cricket player. Moreover, she uses cricket, Indian dance, and yoga in particular, to establish an identity removed from white Britishness, from Western-driven physical culture, and to imagine herself closer, more connected to her national origins, to India. Indeed, Shreya's favourite photographs from her visual diary (Figures 1, 4 and 5) do not present traditional feminised practices of the body in a British context (fitness, netball, dance), but instead offer images of ethnic minorities (including herself) engaged in yoga or cricket. Burdsey (2006, 17) has suggested, 'cricket fandom provides an opportunity for British Asians to distance themselves from those elements of white "Englishness" with which they feel uncomfortable'. Cricket to British Asians, often recalls a sense of 'home' rather than 'homeland' (i.e. their residency in the UK). As a result of her agency, the embodied and enjoyable experience of a range of practices provides her with an alternative physical culture, a culture around 'Indianness' (Burdsey 2006, 21), in the space of home; a space in and through which she can practice yoga, become a dancer, a cricket player and a cricket fan, and simultaneously maintain roles of womanhood (e.g. cleaning, washing dishes).

The digital camera served in this case as a means for Shreya to recognise, legitimate and assert herself as an active body, greatly invested in a particular physical culture she desires, creates and negotiates in her daily life. Reflecting upon the process of taking pictures for her *Moving in My World* visual diary, Shreya becomes aware of the many activities she performs daily at home, and proudly concludes:

> Because sometimes when you do things you don't realise how much you're doing it, but when I looked, took the pictures and I looked back I can see that in this day I did this much, that kind of sort of thing, but if you don't then, they don't stay in your head that fresh. Like in one day if I've watched cricket, did yoga and cleaned the kitchen, at the end of the day it is not going to be like a big thing, but If I look over it then I can see that I did a lot of things.

Photography is also a pedagogical tool that put in motion 'body-reflexive practices' (Wellard, Pickard, and Bailey 2007) by promoting Shreya's self and social reflection of her bodily experiences. As Keller et al. (2008, 433) argue, 'self-produced visual images can guide women in determining where, how and under what conditions they are engaging in physical activity and reveal physical activities that women are not aware

FIGURE 9. 'I'm out with my friends playing. We played for quite a long time'.

FIGURE 10. 'The kind of things I do'.

they are already doing'. As Shreya points out, the process of taking and reflecting upon the photographs provided her with critical resources for becoming aware of the many physical activity practices she engages in in her daily life. Shreya's meaning-making through the visual diary revealed her complex negotiations of physical culture that otherwise might have remained hidden. Although public health reports in the UK have identified ethnic minority young women (especially South Asian girls) as having 'bodies-at-risk' compared to other cohorts of young people (Sport England 2008), in the space of home, Shreya contests and re-defines this South Asian girlhood traditionally constructed as 'anti-sport', 'subordinated' (Walseth 2006) and physically inactive.

SPORT: 'IT'S MY WAY OF MEDITATING'

Similar to Shreya, Hasan moved to the UK at an early age, but differently from her, he is of African origins. Hasan explains: 'I came here when I was five. Before, I used to live in Africa, Kenya'. He points outs out that both of his parents are from Kenya, yet self-identifies as 'other Asian' as he sees himself being from 'Africa but I'm Asian'. However, eventually, he rejects a fixed racial identification, explaining that he 'does not fit in' any of those categories. While Hasan's self-identification of race/ethnicity is fluid, his religious affiliation emerged as a fixed part of his embodiment, as he firmly stated, 'I'm Muslim'. Like his religion, a sport-driven physical culture also emerged as a central, stable aspect of his sense of worth, confidence and belonging to a group of male peers who, like him, invest themselves in sport. Hasan explains:

> I've always liked being active ever since I can remember. I've always been interested in sport . . . Football, as far as I can remember, probably [since] about five years old I've been playing, I'm not so sure about cricket. I like sports, going around doing whatever that interests me. Like on the weekend sometimes I'll be playing sports. I go out to town with my friends, play a bit of pool or cinema . . . playing football, cricket or whatever . . . like the kind of sports I do, the kind of things I do like these when I'm out with my friends, we're just playing (Figures 9 and 10). Sometimes, like these two were taken the same day, we started quite early playing at like twelve in the afternoon and carried on I think, that was nine o'clock at night. We like, we don't stop, we like take five minute breaks, go and get some water.

Differently from Shreya's geography of her body, public spaces of the street, playgrounds and park are all crucial sites for Hasan's enactment of embodiment of a confident, sporty masculinity. Being a 'street-kid' is a particular physical culture Hasan values and practices to form himself as a sporting body. Similar to the ways in which Fleming (1991) has described a street-kids culture relevant to Asian 'Street-kids' in the UK, the culture of 'hanging around' in the city, 'kicking the football around', playing 'pick up' games on the playground or at the local youth club are central to Hasan's embodiment. Whereas ethnic minority males are often characterised as 'at-risk' for disruptive behaviour (Dwyer, Shah, and Sanghera 2008), according to recent research conducted in the multicultural urban context where Hasan lives (Bradbury 2010), certain amateur sports (i.e., cricket, football) have become central venues for the social inclusion of 'Other' boys.

Sport, in this case, serves as a powerful means for the 'diversity management' of boyhood. The 'street-kids' culture Hasan performs does not involve socially non-compliant or disruptive behaviour or gang associations. Neither Hasan's visual story-telling nor his

FIGURE 11. 'I'm scared of heights. I tried to get as far as I could'.

verbal narrative echoes tension or violence. Sport is central to Hasan's life; it is a vehicle for the consolidation of a masculine self and expression of meaningful, positive, sporting experience with his male friends. Race/ethnicity plays an important role in the ways masculinities are performed in physical culture. Given that the media representation of football, for instance, remains, in the context of the UK, deeply rooted within the performance of white hegemonic sporting masculinities, amateur or pick-up games of football, for many boys with different ethnic backgrounds, might come to symbolise a site of acculturation and assimilation to the dominant culture, an 'Anglicized process of socialization' (Burdsey 2006).

At the same time, during the photo-elicitation conversation, when Hasan talks about the various sport teams and clubs he has belonged to from childhood, throughout the discussion an aspiration to become a professional football player is absent. This might be the result of a lack of self-identification with the overwhelming representation of professional football as a white male sport, or simply a rejection of competitive forms of sport. For instance, whereas certain sports (i.e., track and field and/or basketball) are often embodied by some ethnic minority boys as a means to fantasise about success and popularity in society through professional sport (Fleming 1991), such aspects of embodiment are

FIGURE 12. 'I like to try new things'. (Hasan in the back of the canoe.)

FIGURE 13. 'This was the first time I tried this'. (Hasan on front right.)

not relevant to Hasan's sense of self. For instance, while the role of sport is intimately connected to his sense of self, Hasan chose not to take advanced studies of physical education at school, instead selecting an examination course in graphic design, which he feels will further his career goals. Academics, feeling good, friendship, well-being, strength and, moreover, faith are central to his masculine embodiment and performance of sport in his daily life. His construction of a sporty self is, in turn, intrinsically linked to his commitment to Islam. During conversation, Hasan compared football, a sport he started playing at the age of five, to a religious practice.

> Whenever I get the chance, school, every lunchtime, I'm either playing football or Fridays I'm normally praying. Like I play in the morning, before school we play basketball, we play football. On the weekends we probably go to the park or the cage and play basketball, probably on the field playing cricket or football, whenever we feel . . . I'd say [sport] it's one of

> the most important things, because if I don't do it then I feel like really depressed. I don't feel as good as I do when I'm playing football or after I've played football and I'm feeling, well [when] I've played any kind of sport I feel really good about myself, like I'm more relaxed I would say. *It's my way of meditating.*

Whereas young boys from different ethnic groups strive to assert and manifest their identities in physical culture in a wide range of ways (Fleming 1991), Hasan's self-identification with Islam appears to be an essential part of his embodied experience. Amara (2008) argues that, notwithstanding the range of Muslim religious practices that might be acknowledged, using sports for fitness, well-being and health benefits, as Hasan appears to embody, is a crucial component of Islam. While Hasan's use of the metaphor of meditation to express his commitment to sport was suggested in his first interview and confirmed during his second, and while the practice of meditation might be understood as a practice of Islam, Hassan's making a link between sport and Islam is not explicit. What seems obvious, however, are his self-identification as a Muslim, his habits of prayer and sport as part of his daily life, and his characterisation of sport as a practice of spirituality, an important concept in Muslim religiosity (Amara, 2008). Among other kinds of masculinities performed by ethnic minority boys through sport, Dwyer et al. (2008) identifies 'religious masculinities', as identities that prioritise and express their Muslim faith. Hasan's identity, for example, is informed by observant religious practices such as regular Mosque attendance. Hasan's cultivation of himself as a Muslim does not collapse in any way because of his investment in sport, but helps him feel 'good about himself'.

Moreover, sport, like religion, allows him to reinforce a masculine identity in the context of his family. According to Dwyer et al. (2008), sport for 'religious masculinities' might serve as means to establish performative identities in relation to male peers' masculine culture, but also to construct gendered relationships to male family members within patriarchal family structures. In the father/son relationship Hasan envisions, he hopes to 'have children, have sons to be able to play football with them'. In his meaning-making about photographs from his visual diary, he further comments:

> I do like them all [the photographs] because like *they all tell a different part of me*, some of them like reiterate it, but it outlines a part of me that I feel is very important . . . when I'm active I feel really energised, I feel like I'm actually doing something good so it makes me feel better . . . because it's something I've always enjoyed doing, like it's basically a part of me now, I mean like most conversations I have with my dad is probably about football or school, mostly probably about sports, so it's actually physical activity has become like a big part of me.

Hasan expressed this importance of physical activity to his identity by including 19 photographs that reflect what it means to 'move in his world'. Masculine identities, like feminine ones, are not fixed in physical culture, but rather fluid, situated, accommodated and negotiated. As Hasan made clear during the photo-elicitation conversation, he particularly wanted to give an impression of the wide range of recreational and leisure body practices he had experienced with friends, and the challenges he feels he himself has overcome in sport, with commitment and persistence.

In most of the photographs, Hasan is visible and centred. The photographs in his *Moving in My World* diary range from representations of 'playing football with his friends at the park' (Figure 10) or at football club, to other physical activities that capture his interest in novelty. 'I like to try new things' he stated, from playing recreational ping pong in school PE, to canoeing (Figure 12), fencing (Figure 13), to more risky, challenging, alternative outdoor activities such as a climbing wall and rope course at the outdoor pursuits centre he visited with his school. As he explained of canoeing, fencing and rock climbing, 'that was the first time I tried all of these'. Hasan suggests that some of the photographs represent a snapshot of his character and determination to overcome challenge. He explains:

> The others (Figure 11) – I'm scared of heights, I'll say the truth, I was scared of heights, but when I did that I just I tried my best. I tried to get as far as I could and that's what I did. I tried fencing, canoeing, stuff like that so I'm not like scared to try new things, I'm for a challenge . . . I feel much more comfortable with heights now after doing this course and rock climbing.

Reflecting upon his photographs, Hasan adds, 'It says quite a bit about my personality, how I like trying new things, I'm not scared to do things that I'm scared of, I'm up for a challenge and this basically shows things I enjoy'. The process of taking, seeing, representing and reflecting upon these photographs initiated a pedagogical process through which Hasan became aware of the centrality of sport in his life. Hasan concludes:

> I learnt quite a few things like how sometimes I take the sports for granted, like I don't really stop and think about how I feel when I'm doing like those sports, how I feel after, how I feel

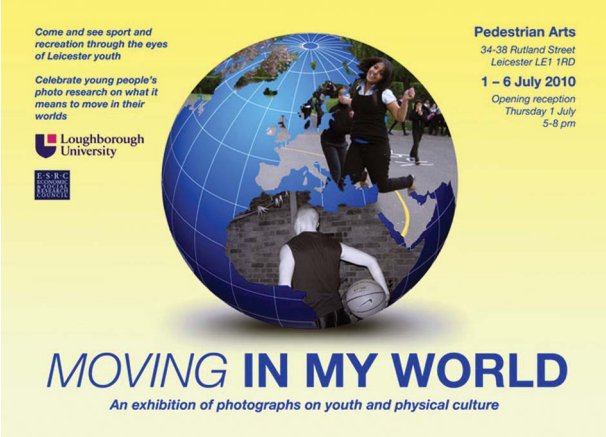

FIGURE 14. Invitation to opening reception at the community art centre. (Additional participant consent was obtained to use original images.)

FIGURE 15. *Moving in My World* exhibition at the community art centre.

> before, what I feel during. It's really opened my eyes for me, like, to take it more seriously not just take it, like, take it in my stride.

Whereas the digital camera provided Shreya with a critical tool to speak out about the relevance of some physical activities to cultivating her Indianness, the camera allowed Hasan to 'open his eyes' and to speak in a 'pedagogic voice' (Thompson 2008) to reflect upon the centrality of sport to who he is and how he feels about being active. While the visual representations of what *Moving in My World* meant to these participants differs significantly in terms of gender and cultural background, bringing to light the multiple meanings they construct about their body as situated in particular contexts, their use of a digital camera enabled both to 'speak up for themselves' about their body knowledge, legitimating and honouring their own views, feelings and priorities.

BEYOND BODIES-AT-RISK

The visual diary *Moving in My World,* created by student-researchers, opened up possibilities for self-expression, self-presentation and body reflection. Digital photography in this research became a 'source of dialogue through which others may begin to enter their (students') worlds' (Soto and Swadener 2005, 140) and see the heterogeneity of meanings ethnic minority young people construct about their moving bodies. Specifically, in this study digital photography pedagogically equipped young people to engage in a contextualised, self-social understanding of their moving bodies. The visual captured the wide range of ways young people experience their bodies and the world through their body. Young people's picturing of themselves created pedagogies of representation that displayed counter-narratives of the body-at-risk discourse, making visible taken-for-granted racialised and gendered assumptions of the body.

Against the body-at-risk discourse that frames and homogenises young people of different ethnicities (especially girls) as 'unfit' or 'lacking responsibility' for the care of the self, young people's visual diaries in this study evidence the complicated self-assemblage process as emplaced in the choices, opportunities and access to physical culture they have in their daily lives. Both Shreya and Hasan took an active role in the research process, using the camera as a tool to critically reflect upon their body knowledge, and to educate themselves and others. Whereas, gender as rooted in the normative cultivation of the (white) feminine body in school, sport or fitness clubs can circumscribe girls' engagement with physical culture, for Shreya, these public spaces were not inclusive of the body practices meaningful to her. Instead, Shreya's engagement with yoga, cricket and Indian dance symbolised the creation of an Indian-centred physical culture in the privacy of her home. For Hasan, sport and public city spaces offered sites for constructing himself as a 'Street-kid' and, at the same time, as a religious masculine sporting identity. For both student-researchers, as they created hybrid physical cultures through the resources and opportunities available to them, the process of visual diary construction 'opened their eyes' to their ongoing identity formation and performances of the body.

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