Author's response to reviews

Title: A qualitative examination of the impact of microgrants to promote physical activity among adolescents

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Author's response to reviews: see over
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Dear Editor,

Please accept our resubmitted manuscript entitled “A qualitative examination of the impact of microgrants to promote physical activity among adolescents” to *BMC Public Health*. We have addressed the additional concerns identified in the manuscript and demonstrated our adherence to the RATS Qualitative Reporting Guidelines (see responses below).

I will continue to serve as the corresponding author on this manuscript and my coauthors have agreed to the submission of this manuscript in its present form. I will be responsible to keeping my coauthors informed of its progress through the peer review process.

Sincerely,

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Response to Editor’s Comments:
Thank you for your attention to this manuscript. Below we have indicated on a point-by-point basis our adherence to the Qualitative Reporting Guidelines outlined by BMC Public Health (RATS Guidelines: http://www.biomedcentral.com/authors/rats).

1) The study received ethical approval from the corresponding author’s (Dr. Spence’s) University Research Ethics board. A sentence indicating this has been inserted into the manuscript (p.5).

2) Qualitative Reporting Guidelines (RATS):

R – Relevance of study question:
Our research goal is explicitly stated on p.5: our goal was to develop a holistic and contextualized account of a purposively sampled range of microgrant programs operating across Canada.; our research question is also stated on p.5: what were the experiences of teen participants and program organizers who were recipients of microgrants?

Our research question is justified based on existing knowledge (introduction, specifically p.3-4)

A – Appropriateness of qualitative method:
Study design described and justified: on p. 5 (lines 94-103) we justify the appropriateness of our case study methodology (using interviews and site visits) for achieving our research goal.

T – Transparency of procedures:
Sampling & Recruitment: Criteria for sampling cases was explicitly stated on p. 5-6 (lines 108-128). We used purposive sampling to explore a range of sites based on ages, genders, and geographic areas, and we sampled cases where organizers were able to recruit adolescent participants to engage in interviews during the site visit. Details about cases that could not participate because they were unable to facilitate a site visit are also provided.

Data collection: Methods are described in detail (lines 130-202) and examples of the interview questions are given (lines 161-171). The case sites are clearly described (table 1, p.36-38). The data collection was stopped after nine cases were sampled as there were no other cases available which met the sampling criteria and which were available to facilitate site visits during the data collection period.

Role of researchers: Researchers did not occupy dual roles with the participants. As noted in the ‘competing interests’ section (p.30), the study reported in this paper was funded by a Coca Cola Canada grant to ParticipACTION, however neither organization had any role in study design, data analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript
Ethics: Informed consent was explicitly sought from participants (lines 134-138), participants were assigned a code to ensure anonymity (lines 178-179), and ethics approval was cited (p.5).

S – Soundness of interpretive approach:

The inductive content analysis was appropriate for the purposes of the research (i.e., exploring participants’ experiences within physical activity programs). A description of how the themes were derived from the data is provided (lines 184-188), and alternative/deviant examples are presented in the results: for example, the ‘Yukon’ case reported low participant turnout (see example quote in table on p.39), and was an example of a case where improvements to the program could be made (i.e., not all cases were ‘immediate successes).

Interpretations are all supported by quotes in the results section and in Table 2. As a form of reliability check, following the analysis the case summaries were sent to each community organizer for review and participants were invited to comment on our findings (lines 150-155).

Discussion – the findings are presented in reference to previous literature and demonstrate an extension of the existing knowledge base (e.g., lines 629-641). The strengths and limitations are discussed (e.g., lines 584-612).

Based on the previous reviewers’ comments, we believe the manuscript is well written, accessible, and is a valuable contribution to the literature.