Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Science

of

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BSc (University of Victoria, 2012)

“Social Marketing Approach to Understanding What Adolescents Need in a Community-Based Healthy Lifestyle Intervention Program”

Department of Exercise Science, Physical & Health Education

April 24, 2019
9:00am
Clearihue Building
Room B007

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Patti-Jean Naylor, Department of Exercise Science, Physical & Health Education, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Joan Wharf-Higgins, Department of Exercise Science, Physical & Health Education, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Jenny Scott, Pinna Sustainability

Chair of Oral Examination:
Prof. Lara Wilson, Department of English, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

Overweight and obesity affects almost 30% of Canadian children and adolescents aged 2-17 years old which can lead to chronic disease later on in life. Research shows that healthy weight programs are effective at reducing BMI but have issues regarding recruitment and retention. One way to address these problems is by using a Social Marketing framework to determine what adolescents need in a community-based healthy weight program. **Methods:** Open-ended and closed-ended question surveys were conducted with youth aged 13-17 years, parents, and youth workers in Fall 2018. Open-ended question answers were *a priori* categorized by the ‘4Ps’ of the SM framework (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion) while frequency count data was generated for closed-ended question answers. Open-ended answer data were managed using NVivo 12 and were analyzed using Braun and Clarke’s six-step approach to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). **Results:** A ‘marketing mix’ was thematically generated to identify elements of a healthy weight program that adolescents need in order to participate. Based on the findings, programs should include physical activity, nutrition, and emotional/social health components that are relevant and fun. They should also emphasize benefits to participating such as improvement to physical and mental health, having fun, receiving incentives, and building relationships while minimizing barriers including emotional health concerns, lack of time, financial cost, transportation, boring programs. Programs should take place in convenient, appealing, and safe locations that may already exist (e.g. schools or recreation centres) and should also be promoted using social media and peer word-of-mouth or create partnerships with youth-relevant organizations and use body positive language.