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The Role of Youth Sport Participation in
Substance Use Prevention among Low-
Income Filipinos: The Case of Keni Discs

필리핀 저소득층의 약물 사용 예방에 대한 스포츠의
역할: Keni Discs 의 청소년을 중심으로

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Abstract

**The Role of Youth Sport Participation
in Substance Use Prevention
among Low-Income Filipinos:
The Case of Keni Discs**

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Youth sport participation has long been used as a tool in various social development programs. However, it has not been fully understood in substance use prevention applications. While there were no known sports-based substance use prevention programs in the Philippines, Keni Discs, an Ultimate Frisbee group in San Fernando, Pampanga catering to low-income Filipinos, presented an interesting case study. The capacity of sport to become effective in substance use prevention applications requires further investigation as previous studies have had varying and complex results. The purpose of the study was to explore the effectiveness of youth sport

participation as a tool for substance use prevention applications catered to low-income Filipinos.

Drawing upon semi-structured interviews with seven members of Keni Discs and an interpretative phenomenological analysis, the research critically investigated the impact of sport participation in the lives of the participants, the relationship of youth sport participation and substance use prevention, and key factors of youth sport participation that aid in substance use prevention applications towards low-income Filipinos.

The research found that there is added value in using the sport of Ultimate Frisbee for substance use prevention applications as the sport's "spirit of the game" culture builds character among the members. It also identified the coach's crucial role in creating a positive environment for the members to thrive and consider the group as their family. This effectively filled the void left by the members' dysfunctional family relationships at home. The coach also played an important role in shaping the members' perception of substance use.

Findings concerning the relationship of youth sport participation and substance use prevention were consistent with past studies in that sport participation is able to prevent the youth from using substances like cigarettes and illicit drugs but cannot fully prevent the youth from drinking

alcohol. Moreover, youth sport participation can aid in substance use prevention by promoting health concern among the youth, providing an alternative activity to risk behaviors, surrounding the youth with good peer influences and introducing a role model in the person of the coach.

The research argues that there are three key factors that make youth sport participation an effective tool for substance use prevention. Firstly, sport participation builds character among the youth that make them resilient to risk behaviors such as substance use. Secondly, sport participation, if properly organized and supervised, provides the youth with positive peer influences that reduce risk of substance use. Lastly, sport participation provides an additional avenue where the youth can be informally educated about the harmful effects of substance use.

Youth sport participation is proposed as an ideal and effective way to not only reduce drug use but also substance use in the Philippines beginning with the low-income sector.

Keywords: Youth Sport Participation, Substance Use, Substance Use Prevention, Ultimate Frisbee, Sport-based Program

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Background

For years now, sports has remained a global enigma. While most people can come to an agreement that sports provides a lot of good to the society, some researchers warn of its negative effects. After all, the spectacle of sports has been shrouded globally with its accompanying 'dark side' as issues of sustainability, corruption, gambling, match-fixing, doping and the like have increasingly been unraveled for the past few decades.

On a micro-level, sports, especially among the youth, has been linked to an inherent risk of injury which does not only have physical but also psychological and social effects (Merkel, 2013). Furthermore, the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2002) mentioned that, among other things, sports can lead to violence, cheating, lack of respect, and unequal opportunity for everyone to participate.

Focus then has to be made particularly on the youth as this is a crucial stage in building lifelong habits. Ensuring that the youth participate in sports and bear fruit the positive effects it has to offer throughout the development years is important. While sport participation in the pre-adolescent years can be remarkably high, data suggests that this

participation rate peaks at age 11 (Brady, 2004). From here, sport attrition rates become significant through the teenage years. In fact, by the time children reach the age of 15, 70 to 80 percent are no longer participating in sports (Merkel, 2013).

Interestingly, a report by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (2014) noted that the teenage years are also the years where there is a significant increase in the use of substances such as alcohol and illicit drugs. One must then wonder if there is a relationship between the departure from sport participation among the youth and their subsequent substance use and even abuse.

Various factors may be the cause for such a high sport attrition rate. At the top of the list of reasons why children give up on sports is burn-out. According to Coakley (1992), excessive training hours, intense training requirements, demanding performance expectations, excessive parental involvement, lack of opportunities outside the sport, abusive coaches and lack of fun are possible factors in making children forgo sports and seek other alternatives.

Despite all these potential problems with sport, the United Nations (UN) still considers sport as a vehicle in achieving its Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The UN adopted a resolution in 2003

“affirming its commitment to sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace” (Coalter, 2010). The emergence of development through sports has given rise to a multitude of top-down and bottom-up initiatives that cater to people who are most vulnerable and at risk such as the youth, women, ethnic minorities and the differently abled. It is widely believed that sports can develop discipline, confidence, tolerance and respect among all people.

Global organizations like the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the UN have therefore boldly called sport as “a human right that all should be free to enjoy” (Levermore, 2008). Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan resonated with this and particularly focuses on this human right for children, emphasizing on the formative role of sports in building self-esteem, leadership skills and breaking down barriers between communities. IOC President Thomas Bach further reinforced this by saying that:

Sport is not just physical activity; it promotes health and helps prevent, or even cure, the diseases of modern civilization. It also is an educational tool which fosters cognitive development; teaches social behaviour; and helps to integrate communities. (International Olympic Committee, n.d.)

Combining all these potential negative outcomes of sport as well as the greater good it can generate in society, Martens (1993) conveniently gave this analogy about sport:

Sport is like a double-edged sword. Swung in the right direction, the sword can have tremendously positive effects, but swung in the wrong direction it can be devastating. The sword is held by adults who supervise children's sports. Whether sport is constructive or destructive in the psychological development of young children greatly depends on the values, education and skills of those adults.

1.1.1. Sport and Physical Activity in the Philippines

Sport plays a very significant role in shaping Philippine culture, history and identity. A Social Weather Stations (SWS) Sports Survey conducted in the Philippines concluded that "Ninety-three percent of adult Filipinos feel proud when Philippines does well in international sports or games" (Social Weather Stations, 2008). Further proof of how significant sport is in the country is how legendary boxer Manny Pacquiao is the most recognized Filipino in the world today. He remains as the country's unifying source of national pride.

However, most Filipinos engage in sport only as spectators. Millions of Filipinos watch collegiate and professional basketball leagues. For the past few years, even volleyball attracts as much attention. But in as much as

these two sports, along with football and boxing, are quite popular in the country, the percentage of the population actually practicing these sports, or any sport for that matter, is glaringly low.

The Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), the country's top government sports body, reported in 2015 that only 22 percent of Filipinos exercise at least three times a week (Gomez, 2015). Furthermore, in the same report by then PSC Commissioner Jolly Gomez (2015), he added that only 5 percent of Filipino students actually play a sport. Various studies have validated this claim further concluding that the Filipino, including the youth, are well below the globally acceptable norm in terms of physical activity (Cagas, Manalastas, Torre, & Sanchez-Pituk, 2015; Peltzer & Pengpid, 2015; Yuchingtat, Tanchoco, Bautista, Aquino, & Orense, 2007). Yuchingtat et al. (2007) also highlighted that females were more inactive than males.

Thus, it is safe to say that there is a lot of room for growth in terms of sport participation and physical activity engagement in the Philippines. While the American-style school system put into place a physical education program from primary to tertiary levels, much of the population still does not engage in any significant sport or physical activity. In fact, even for the school-based physical education programs, it only provides an hour a week

for urban schools and two hours a week for rural schools of physical activity or sport (Gomez, 2015). Clearly, it can be said that there is a lack of a sports-for-all movement in the country.

When Filipinos were asked regarding their sentiments toward sport, 90 percent agreed that sports develops the character of children, 75 percent agreed that sports can bring together people and, more importantly, 50 percent agreed that the government should spend more on sports (Gomez, 2015).

1.1.2. Substance Use and Substance Use Prevention in the Philippines

Despite this call for more investment in sports, the current administration led by President Rodrigo Duterte is fully focused instead on waging a violent ‘War on Drugs.’ The Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) conducted a nationwide survey on the ‘Nature and Extent of Drug Abuse in the Philippines’ in 2015 that revealed 1.8 million Filipinos between ages 10 to 69 years old are currently using illicit drugs (Gavilan, 2016). While this represents only roughly 1.8 percent of the total population of the country, Duterte insists on cracking down on drug users and pushers as he claims this as the root of criminality (Asia Times, 2016). This, despite data suggesting that the drug use incidence had actually already declined from the critical 2.1 percent level reported in 2004 (Devaney, Reid, & Baldwin, 2007).

However, data on in-school adolescent lifetime drug use incidence in the Philippines as reported in the World Health Organization's Global Student Health Survey (GSHS) in 2003 indicate that Filipinos aged mainly between 11 and 16 years old have significantly higher usage rates at 14.4 percent for boys and 3.8 percent for girls (Page, Dennis, Lindsay, & Merrill, 2011). Further usage data for other harmful substances such as cigarettes and alcoholic beverages from the GSHS in years 2007 and 2011, along with the 2003 survey, suggest a much higher prevalence rate. In essence, between 20 to 25 percent of boys and 6 to 8 percent of girls smoke cigarettes while between 28 to 38 percent of boys and 16 to 20 percent of girls consume alcoholic beverages (Page, Dennis, Lindsay, & Merrill, 2011; Peltzer & Pengpid, 2015). These figures point to an inherent and pressing need to focus on substance use prevention among the youth.

Meanwhile, the ongoing 'War on Drugs' has claimed the lives of over 13,000 people (Al Jazeera, 2017). Among the casualties of Duterte's 'War on Drugs' as of January 2017 are at least 31 people between ages 4 to 22 years old, who were killed in either police operations or vigilante-style killings (Gavilan, 2017). Moreover, Amnesty International's Matt Wells (2017) describes Duterte's 'War on Drugs' as a war against the poor as

evidence and first-hand accounts point to massive deaths in urban poor locations across the country.

Former Colombia President César Gaviria, who also waged a brutal war on drugs, sought to remind Duterte by saying that:

I was also seduced into taking a tough stance on drugs. But after spending billions, I discovered that the war was unwinnable and the human costs were devastating. The cure was infinitely worse than the disease. (Gaviria, 2017)

Instead, Gaviria (2017) suggested alternative solutions such as treating drugs as a health, human rights and development issue.

Philippine Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo echoed this stance by recounting how countries like Venezuela, Colombia and Mexico failed miserably in their drug campaigns while employing violent means (Yap, 2017). Instead, Robredo pointed to the successful case of Portugal who brought their drug use levels below the European average by decriminalizing drug possession in 2001 while implementing social and health reforms to aid the new drug policy (Yap, 2017). Moreover, then Philippine health minister, Paulyñ Rosell-Ubial said that “reaching young people through schools and in the community was critical to tackle drug misuse” (Cousins, 2016)

Furthermore, elsewhere in Europe, the Icelandic Model of Adolescent Substance Use Prevention has shown to be successful in not only reducing illicit drug use among adolescents in Iceland, but also cigarette smoking and alcoholic beverage consumption (Sigfúsdóttir, Thorlindsson, Kristjánsson, Roe, & Allegrante, 2009). This non-violent model, which was theoretically-grounded and evidenced-based, was a collaborative effort between policy makers, behavioral scientists, field-based practitioners and community residents in Iceland. It is proof that treating substance use as a health problem and implementing non-violent means such as an organized sports-based program can effectively curb substance use.

1.1.3. The Case of Keni Discs

While there are many sports-based programs in the Philippines, the study focuses solely on Keni Discs, an ultimate Frisbee group based in San Fernando, Pampanga. Among all sports that the Filipino youth engages in, ultimate Frisbee or “Ultimate” does not even come close to being popular. However, the culture and mechanics of the game, as well as the culture Keni Discs maintains, present a unique and interesting case for substance use prevention applications among the low-income Filipino youth.

Ultimate is considered as a lifestyle sport recognized by the IOC. It is “a non-contact, self-refereed team sport played with a flying disc” (World Flying Disc Federation, n.d.). Unique to the sport is the concept called “Spirit of the Game” where even as competitiveness is practiced, “respect between players, adherence to the rules, and the basic joy of play” must still be maintained (World Flying Disc Federation, n.d.). The idea of having a “good spirit” is fundamental in the global practice of the sport and is what makes the sport potentially effective in positively affecting the youth.

In the Philippines, the sport has been gaining some traction among elite young professionals based in the National Capital Region. One such Ultimate enthusiast is David Edward Jimenez, the founder, manager and coach of Keni Discs. Jimenez established the organization seven years ago with the hopes of promoting the sport in his hometown of San Fernando, Pampanga where Ultimate was virtually unheard of.

Today, Keni Discs caters to hundreds of low-income Filipino youth in Pampanga from ages 13 to 21 years old. While the group only has around 15 to 20 active members at any given time, former members join the training sessions and tournaments freely. In its seven years, the group has become more organized and structured with its training sessions, even coming up with its own set of rules dubbed “CONTROL G.” A rule book or

by-laws is even in the works. Therefore, with the constant supervision and guidance of Jimenez, Keni Discs has not only been able to promote and teach the sport as it originally planned, but also participate in and organize competitive tournaments.

Ultimately, Jimenez was able to build a small community of young Ultimate enthusiasts by continuously pursuing partnerships with public schools and the local government. Moreover, the culture of the sport and Keni Discs seems to attract youth from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds where gender and race is a non-issue.

While Keni Discs never intended or intends to be a substance use prevention program, the nuances of the sport as well as the culture that Jimenez promotes and maintains presents an interesting case that may well have the potential for success not just in the entire province of Pampanga but also the rest of the Philippines.

1.2. Research Significance

An important element to consider regarding youth sport participation is the context to which sport will be applied. Understanding the role of youth sport participation in Philippine society further enriches the existing body of knowledge. Currently, studies involving sport and physical activity in the Philippines are few and far between. Furthermore, specific application

of youth sport participation to low-income Filipinos has not been explored. This research aims to contribute to the current knowledge base.

While there is a vast array of studies dealing with youth sport participation and what its positive impact to society are, fewer studies have paid attention to the factors that ensure these positive effects are attained. When employing sports for purposes other than competition, it is important to know and understand the factors that ensure that sport participation will result in positive outcomes while limiting the negative. One such factor that has not been explored extensively is the relevance of the choice of sport. Since this study focuses solely on Ultimate, it will help build new knowledge towards understanding what kinds of sports are suitable towards effecting positive outcomes such as substance use prevention.

Furthermore, data on the relationship between sport and substance use is limited to certain North American and European countries. Its application to Asian settings, especially low-income countries like the Philippines, is still untested. This research will either reinforce the findings in other countries, add new knowledge from its findings or even refute the findings from previous studies. In the case of substance use prevention, sport is still not widely accepted as a solution as previous results have been inconclusive or complex. Thus, this research will look into the relationship

between sport and substance use prevention particularly among the low-income Filipino youth.

At the same time, there is a need for policy-makers in the Philippines and abroad to think of alternative and creative ways to solve the substance use puzzle, with the illicit drug problem being of primary importance. If it is seen as a health problem, then organized team sports like that of Keni Discs may be a solution.

The low-income Filipinos who are currently entangled in the ‘War on Drugs’ are prime candidates for implementing a sports-based substance use prevention program. Incidentally, Keni Discs is located in the Central Luzon region where the concentration of low-income households is among the highest in the country (Albert, Gaspar, & Raymundo, 2015).

Furthermore, the low-income and poor population in the Philippines represent roughly 52.7 percent of the total population providing further reason to focus on the said group (Albert, Gaspar, & Raymundo, 2015)

Moreover, with regards to age group, the Transform Drug Policy Foundation identified ages 15 to 24 years old as drug initiation years (Yap, 2017) while the Icelandic Model suggests that prevention programs must even be initiated in as early as ages 12 to 13 years old (Sigfúsdóttir,

Thorlindsson, Kristjánsson, Roe, & Allegrante, 2009). This is presented as an ideal group to focus all efforts of substance use prevention through sport.

Ultimately, this research intends to encourage Philippine policy makers to allocate more funds into youth sport participation by showing the positive effect of sport on substance use prevention and by laying out key factors that ensure the success of such a sports-based program. It may even present a good case for adoption in other developing countries.

1.3. Research Questions

The research will begin by investigating the role of youth sport participation in low-income Filipinos before delving into the relationship of youth sport participation in the said demographic to substance use prevention. Furthermore, it will attempt to identify key factors that can aid in the success of such sport-based programs towards substance use prevention. In particular, it will address the following questions:

RQ1. What impact does youth sport participation have on low-income Filipinos?

RQ2. What relationship does youth sport participation have with substance use prevention among low-income Filipinos?

RQ3. How can youth sport participation aid in substance use prevention among low-income Filipinos?

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Literature pertaining to sport and physical activity in the Philippines is quite limited. Furthermore, these studies focus on broad topics concerning physical activity and exercise. Thus, this research begins by looking into studies relating to the benefits of youth sport participation. These findings can, but may not necessarily, hold true in the Philippines and in all sports.

Next, studies on the relationship between sport and substance use will be discussed. Although there is limited knowledge in this area, there are recurring results from various studies conducted in different parts of the world. This understanding of the direct or indirect relationship between sport and substance use can help build the information leading towards answering the research questions.

After which, studies on the relationship between substance use and socioeconomic status will further contextualized the research and its unique and specific applications. It will reveal similarities or differences in substance use brought about by socioeconomic status.

Finally, studies on the factors that influence substance use among the youth will be explored. This will ultimately lead into an understanding of key elements of a successful sport-based substance use prevention program.

2.1. Benefits of Youth Sport Participation

Sports has long been considered as a multi-faceted activity providing positive benefits to one's health but also influencing one's psychological and social dimensions. While the physical impact is clearly positive, the mental and emotional effects are only arguably good. In fact, some studies indicate that sports can lead to violence and other detrimental activities (Holt, Kingsley, Tink, & Scherer, 2011a). However, for the most part, sports is seen as a tool to solving many problems.

Upon reviewing various scientific studies, the scholar Wolfgang Brettschneider (1999) summarized that sport participation for young people can lead to improved self-esteem, better capability to handle stress, increased academic performance and better relations with their family. These same benefits are seen by the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2002) "as protective factors or assets that can be potentially developed through sport, and can help prevent a range of problems, including substance abuse."

Furthermore, a research conducted by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (2013) shows that positive outcomes through youth sport participation depend on a number of things: 1) the manner in which sports are organized; 2) what occurs in a

young person's relationships with parents, peers, and coaches; 3) the meaning that a young person gives to sport experiences; and 4) the way a young person integrates sport experiences into other spheres in life.

The same study mentions that benefits of youth sport participation are maximized only when conditions are made suitable for them to enjoy sports. These conditions include: 1) participating in multiple sports; 2) an environment that emphasizes on skill development rather than a competitive environment that focuses on winning; 3) understanding the difference in the perspective of youth and adults; 4) respecting and accommodating the physical and psychosocial developmental stage of young people playing sports; 5) ensuring that the goals of the youth sport program are stated clearly and conveyed to the parents so that parents can determine whether their children should participate in the program; 6) identify and discuss with the participants the lessons learned through sport experiences and how they can be used in other aspects of life; and 7) ensuring that youth sport coaches are properly trained and equipped to deal with the youth (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013).

In summary, the possible benefits of youth sport participation can be grouped into the following categories: 1) health and physical benefits, 2)

psychological or emotional benefits, 3) intellectual or academic benefits, and 4) social benefits (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013).

2.1.1. Health and Physical Benefits

The most obvious result of sufficient participation in sports is a healthier body. Youth who participate in various sports regularly tend to have enhanced functioning and health of the heart, lungs and muscles. Also, they are expected to have more flexibility, mobility and coordination. Finally, in the longer run, they are more highly likely to be able to maintain their weight (Beets & Pitetti, 2005).

Another health benefit of youth sport participation is that it gives them an alternative to sedentary behaviors like watching TV, playing video games, surfing the internet, etc. Moreover, getting used to participating in sports from youth has a lifelong benefit of the ability and tendency to participate in sports through adulthood (Beets & Pitetti, 2005). Practicing and enjoyment of sport in pre-adolescence can develop a lifelong habit for physical activity and health consciousness.

Young people who participate in sports also tend to be more conscious about the food they eat, allowing them to build a lasting habit of making the right choices on what to eat. This leads to an overall reduction in

their lifelong risk to diabetes, heart disease, obesity and other related diseases (Beets & Pitetti, 2005; Brady, 2004).

In addition, sport participation for girls has an added benefit. A study shows that “girls involved in sports are less likely to become pregnant or begin smoking and have a decreased risk of developing breast cancer” (Leone, Lariviere, & Comtois, 2002).

It is important to note that all these benefits are not acquired just by any form of sport participation. “Deliberate efforts to ensure that the amount of moderate and vigorous exercise is sufficiently maintained” for each individual is necessary (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013).

2.1.2. Psychological or Emotional Benefits

In terms of psychological and emotional benefits, the first positive impact of youth sport participation is an increase in confidence or self-esteem especially when they experience enjoyment (Fox, 2003).

Furthermore, especially in team sports, young people have the opportunity to develop social skills, learn to work together and develop leadership skills (Light, 2010). These are all crucial skills in order to achieve a shared goal.

Sport programs also offer the youth regular access to peers whom they can interact with and develop friendships as well as learn about different backgrounds (Jones, Dunn, Holt, Sullivan, & Bloom, 2011). These,

in turn, lead to positive values including caring, empathy and compassion (Bailey, 2005).

While the sport environment can elicit emotions of anger and anxiety, some youths report learning how to manage these emotions through sports (Hansen, Larson, & Dworkin, 2003; Light, 2010). Sports also provides the youth with an opportunity to take initiative. Initiative is defined as the ability of an individual to commit energy to achieving a certain goal over a specific time (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013). This leads to development of skills like the ability to plan, time management and problem solving.

Finally, sports is a medium for self-discovery. By navigating one's strengths and weaknesses, an individual can discover his identity (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013). It should be reiterated that these psychological and emotional benefits can only be obtained in an appropriate environment. Moreover, these intangible benefits are hard to measure.

2.1.3. Intellectual or Academic Benefits

Various studies have shown that physical activity participation is positively linked with “better grades, test scores, school engagement and education aspirations” (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002). Studies also show that physical activity participation leads to lower school

dropout rates and higher college attendance (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001).

More importantly, “sport and physical activity participation carries greater benefits for high-risk youths and youths from low-income families” (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002). This can later be linked to the use of sports in substance use prevention.

While these studies seem to indicate that youth engaging in physical activity or sport tends to perform better in school, have a greater desire to attend classes and pursue further studies, the research is not fully conclusive on these matters. Hence, context and environment might still play a role.

2.1.4. Social Benefits

There are multiple entities that youth can interact with in the realm of sports or physical activity. If the youth play in informal, player-controlled sports, participants are given the opportunity to “organize group activities, resolve interpersonal conflicts, solve problems, and sustain the consensus and cooperative relationships” (Martinek & Hellison, 2012).

If the youth play in organized, adult-controlled sports, participants are given the opportunity to “participate in relationships with adult authority figures and engage in rule-governed teamwork in the pursuit of a shared goal” (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013).

Youth sport participation expands the social network of the participant to include not just teammates or members of the team's network, but also that of the opponent's. It also allows the youth access to role models that they can look up to or adults who can mentor them or help them with their questions, issues and problems in life (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013).

Social benefits in youth sport participation greatly depend on the environment of the experience. "When playing a sport expands a young person's experiences and relationships, social benefits increase (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013).

2.2. Sport and Substance Use

Various studies have been conducted to look into the impact of not only sports but also physical activity and exercise to substance use. For this reason, a cohesive understanding and definition of 'sport' must first be made for this research. The UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2002) presented an appropriate and broad definition of sport stating that "sport may be seen as a physical activity with an agreed upon structure, or set of rules that allows for competition against oneself or an opponent." They further added that sport should always provide "an opportunity for a mix of fun, self-improvement and competition that will

vary with players involved and the sport they are playing” (United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, 2002). Moving forward, sports, physical activity and exercise will only be referred to as ‘sport(s)’ in this context.

However, in the case of professional or elite sports, the definition and motivations for sport participation may greatly vary. As such, this research will distance itself from such contexts, focusing instead on leisure sport, recreational sport or sport pursued for exercise and the like. While competition is a key component of sport, too much competition can skew the way participants treat and view sport participation. Likewise, it will greatly affect the impact of sport in promoting positive behavior.

The other key definition to establish is the term ‘substance use.’ While this research is inclined towards focusing on illicit drug use and abuse, literature mostly group illicit drugs with other addictive substances such as alcoholic beverages, cigarettes and tobacco. While the term ‘substance use’ will be used in this research to include all these forms of substances, it must further be defined what illicit drugs are.

In a World Health Organization publication, Degenhardt, Hall, Warner-Smith and Lynskey (2004) defined illicit drug use to include “the non-medical use of a variety of drugs that are prohibited by international

law” such as “amphetamine type stimulants, cannabis, cocaine, heroin and other opioids, and MDMA (ecstasy).”

In reviewing some of the studies, it was noted that illicit drugs such as marijuana and cocaine were isolated. Still other studies involved performance enhancing drugs. But, again, the main interest of this research is on substance use as defined earlier. However, it should be remembered that illicit drugs receive overwhelming attention in the Philippines today.

Sport has been associated with positive benefits as evidenced earlier. Thus, it does not come as a surprise that youth sport participation and physical activity engagement are also linked with substance use and abuse prevention. However, the evidence points to a more complex relationship between them.

Research in this area can be grouped into two main themes: 1) Studies that explore the relationship between sport and substance use, and 2) Studies that evaluate the impact of physical activity-related interventions on substance use among the youth.

2.2.1. The Relationship of Sport and Substance Use

A study by Nelson and Gordon-Larsen (2006) across the United States compared the impact of physical activity and sedentary behavior with various risk behaviors. In essence, the study revealed that “participation in a

range of physical activity-related behaviors, particularly characterized by high parental sports/exercise involvement, was associated with favorable adolescent risk profiles” including reduced likelihood of using illicit drugs (Nelson & Gordon-Larsen, 2006). On the contrary, adolescents who exhibited sedentary behavior, especially high TV/video viewership, were unlikely to have positive risk behavior outcomes. Thus, influencing adolescents to spend significant time in organized sports involving parents rather than passively allowing them to exhibit sedentary behavior has immense positive impact.

However, as mentioned earlier, youth sport participation does not immediately lead to positive risk behaviors. A study by Moore and Werch (2005) conducted in Florida, USA looked into the relationship between participation in school-sponsored sports and out-of-school sports with substance use. There were mixed results linking sports both positively and negatively to substance use. Furthermore, the study pointed to varying effects of sports to substance use that depended on three main factors: 1) gender, 2) school-sponsored sport or out-of-school sport, and 3) type of sport. Also, relationship with only three specific substances were studied: alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana.

All in all, this study yielded results pointing to more negative behaviors than positive. In particular, participation in seven specific sports, namely school-sponsored football, swimming and wrestling and out-of-school dance/cheerleading/gymnastics, skateboarding, surfing and tennis, was linked with an increased likelihood of alcohol use and the use of some other drugs for one or both genders (Moore & Werch, 2005). Meanwhile, participation in four other sports, namely school-sponsored dance/cheerleading/gymnastics and out-of-school basketball, rollerblading and swimming, was linked with a decreased likelihood of substance use (Moore & Werch, 2005).

Therefore, this study does indeed paint a very complex picture of the relationship between sport and substance use. There are many factors that play a role in influencing an adolescent to use various substances that may not be just limited to the three factors enumerated earlier. Culture and peer influences, for instance, also play a very important role. Parental sport involvement was already earlier identified as a key factor.

Much recently, a systematic review of existing studies, mainly in the United States, was made by Lisha and Sussman (2010) to examine the relationship between involvement in high school and college sports and substance use. In particular, it looked at the relationship of youth sport

participation with the use of substances like cigarettes, alcohol and illicit drugs. However, the study does indicate that there are very little studies pertaining to illicit drug use. Thus, they grouped together multiple types of drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines and inhalants as ‘illicit drugs.’ There was also no differentiation between sport types but most of the studies involved organized sports while some studies involve recreational sport or exercise.

Surprisingly, in most studies involving alcohol, high levels of sport participation positively relates to higher alcohol consumption. Various reasons for this were identified such as the competitive nature of athletes, stress-related drinking, environmental influences and heavy exposure to alcohol advertising.

However, an expected inverse relationship between sport participation and the use of cigarettes and illicit drugs was found in most studies. Both for cigarette smoking and illicit drug use, the more obvious reason for the inverse relationship is that consuming such substances tend to have immediate detrimental effects to athletic performance. Nevertheless, unlike the relationship with cigarette smoking which was consistently inverse, the relationship between youth sport participation and illicit drug use was less consistent. A few studies found that the inverse relationship

depended on sport type or gender. The study concluded that more research on the relationship between sport and drug use needs to be done to examine factors such as type of sports, level of physical activity, type of drugs, time of the year (in season or off season). Furthermore, the focus of this study was more towards high-level competitive sports.

Another study by Terry-McElrath, O'Malley and Johnston (2011), still in the United States, examined the relationship of exercise and school athletic team participation in high school with substance use. Essentially, the results were similar in that higher levels of exercise were associated with lower levels of cigarette and marijuana use. However, in this case, higher levels of exercise was also associated to lower levels of alcohol use. On the contrary, higher levels of athletic team participation was associated to higher levels of smokeless tobacco, alcohol and steroid use but lower levels of cigarette and marijuana use. It was further observed that exercise and athletic team participation worked hand in hand to lower cigarette and marijuana use.

Arguably the most comprehensive and recent study done to examine the relationship between sport and substance abuse was conducted by Kwan and his colleagues. Their systematic review of longitudinal studies revealed the common conclusion that youth sport participation is associated with

increased alcohol use but reduced illicit drug use, especially non-marijuana related drugs (Kwan, Bobko, Faulkner, Donnelly, & Cairney, 2014).

Moreover, Kwan et al. (2014) also noted that participation in sports reduced the risk of overall illicit drug use particularly during high school. This presents an opportunity to focus illicit drug use reduction and prevention programs using sport at this critical stage in an individual's life. However, their study did note that existing research does not fully explore the conditions necessary for sport participation to have beneficial outcomes in terms of preventing alcohol and/or illicit drug use. Furthermore, longitudinal studies outside the United States do not exist and, as such, the relationship between sport and alcohol and illicit drug use may not hold true (Kwan, Bobko, Faulkner, Donnelly, & Cairney, 2014).

Interestingly, a new study by Rambaree, Mousavi and Ahmadi (2017) similarly explored the relationship between youth sport participation and drug use but this time in the small East African country of Mauritius. However, the conclusion was that "the more the use of drugs, the less the sport activity" (Rambaree, Mousavi, & Ahmadi, 2017). Although seemingly different, it still corroborates the findings from previous studies that sports can protect young people from getting into drugs. Furthermore, in this particular context, gender was an important factor in determining the degree

of sport activity. This may simply be because of the highly patriarchal culture in the country. The same cannot be said for other countries in this day.

2.2.2. Physical Activity-Related Interventions on Substance Use

Another approach towards exploring the relationship and impact of sport and physical activity towards substance use is by looking into actual intervention programs that were implemented to prevent substance use or rehabilitate substance users. Collingwood, Sunderlin, Reynolds and Kohl III (2000) evaluated a physical training program which consisted of exercise and education modules. The findings indicate that after the 12-week program's implementation, there was a significant increase in level of physical fitness/activity among the participants. Moreover, participants who used cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and alcohol also significantly reduced. Key factors that made the program successful include not only the modules per se but also the utilization of peers and parents who have an important contribution as role models (Collingwood, Sunderlin, Reynolds, & Kohl III, 2000).

A study which similarly implemented an intervention program but this time specifically among high school American football teams yielded positive results in that the use of alcohol and other illicit drugs and

associated harmful activities can be prevented through a gender-specific, team-centered education program (Goldberg, et al., 2000). The intervention program consisted of interactive classroom and exercise training sessions conducted by peer educators and facilitated by coaches and strength trainers. In addition, it was mentioned that “school athletic teams provide an optimal environment in which to provide drug prevention and health promotion education (Goldberg, et al., 2000).

On the other hand, a study that evaluated a sport-based program as a means to address alcohol prevention resulted in the significant reduction of alcohol initiation, quantity of use and incidence of heavy drinking while also significantly increasing moderate physical activity (Werch C. , et al., 2003). The method in this program was to conduct “a brief sport-based screen and consultation tailored to adolescents’ health habits, with and without parent materials” (Werch C. , et al., 2003). The positive results of this study encouraged the researchers to explore the impact of the same sport-based program towards drug use prevention.

Werch et al. (2005) again “evaluated the efficacy of a brief, multi-health behavior intervention program integrating physical activity and alcohol use prevention messages for high school adolescents.” Similar results were observed where three months after the intervention, significant

positive effects on alcohol consumption, drug use behaviors, and exercise habits occurred (Werch C. , Moore, DiClemente, Bledsoe, & Jobli, 2005).

Physical activity-related interventions were largely effective by purposely educating the youth on the effects of substance use and abuse. In addition, the involvement of parents and peers was a helpful tool in ensuring that the youth had sufficient positive pressure to couple with the information being given to them. Such intervention programs were not only effective in substance use prevention but also in increasing the levels of physical activity. It may be practical to require all sport activity programs to incorporate substance use prevention components as the youth who participate in sports are likely to be at an increased risk for substance use.

2.3. Substance Use and Socioeconomic Status among the Youth

Initially, a fair assumption is that the higher the socioeconomic status (SES), the more educated the parents and the youth are. Thus, substance use among the higher-income youth are less likely in the presence of a multitude of protective factors. However, in the past few decades, this may no longer be the case. While the prevailing notion is that lower SES relates to poorer health, the relationship between SES and substance use among the youth is far more complex.

A study conducted by Goodman and Huang (2002) identified a number of points regarding the multifaceted relationship between SES and specific substances such as cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana and cocaine. Their study also pointed to varying dynamics between SES and substances depending on age, race and other sociocultural factors. The particular focus for this research, however, is on usage during adolescent up to young adulthood years.

First, adolescents' use of cigarettes decreased as parental education and average household income, indicators of SES, increased (Goodman & Huang, 2002). This was similarly supported by a study conducted by Friestad, Pirkis, Biehl and Irwin (2003). However, race and ethnicity also affected the veracity of this relationship.

Next, alcohol use was positively related to SES; the higher the SES, the higher the alcohol intake (Goodman & Huang, 2002). This relationship follows the law of demand where higher prices lead to lower demand. For higher-income youth, price is less of a concern which is why they tend to take in more alcohol than the lower-income youth. Bellis and his colleagues (2007) concluded that adolescents with more spending power were more likely to consume more alcohol while Martin and her colleagues (2009)

observed that college students with less spending power consumed less alcohol.

Finally, Goodman & Huang (2002) observed that different illicit drugs have different relationships with SES. For instance, middle-income youth were more heavy users of marijuana. For cocaine, usage was associated with parental education where the more educated the parents were, the less the adolescents used cocaine.

In contrast, a study by Hanson and Chen (2007) categorically revealed that “high SES teens reported more cigarette, alcohol and drug use than low SES populations.” Moreover, among the two indicators of SES, family financial resources was a stronger predictor than family status. The reason for this surprising relationship may be that youth from higher SES backgrounds “may feel safer experimenting with substances” or “may suffer from achievement pressures and isolation from adults” (Hanson & Chen, 2007).

Another study, this time by Humensky (2010), corroborates the link that higher adolescent SES, as measured by parental education and household income, is associated with higher rates of binge drinking, marijuana use and cocaine use in early adulthood. In this study, it is mentioned that a possible reason for this relationship is that teachers and

school administrators in higher SES schools may not recognize substance use and abuse as a threat thereby putting less focus on educating their students.

Likewise, research done by Patrick, Wightman, Schoeni and Schulenberg (2012) and Charitonidi, Studer, Gaume, Gmel, Daeppen and Bertholet (2016) also concurred with Humensky's and Hanson and Chen's findings that higher-income youth are at a greater risk for current alcohol use, frequent episodic drinking, and marijuana use on their way to adulthood. Both studies also reiterated Goodman and Huang's finding that cigarette smoking is more prevalent among low-income youth (Patrick, Wightman, Schoeni, & Schulenberg, 2012; Charitonidi, et al., 2016). This is an important finding as the two studies were conducted in different countries, one in the United States and the other in Switzerland.

While recent studies indicate that higher SES is linked with higher incidence of substance use, most notably illicit drug use, all of the studies were done in developed countries with specific nuances. Furthermore, a number of studies indicated that race was an important limitation to their findings. More studies need to be conducted to examine if such relationships still hold true in a developing country context like the Philippines. The prevailing notion in such contexts is that low-income youth have fewer

choices, are less educated and less supervised leading to higher incidence of substance use.

Reinherz and her colleagues (2000) observed that larger family size and lower SES were risk factors for drug abuse or dependence. Although their study was conducted in the United States, the lower-income population of the Philippines also have larger family sizes. These factors point toward the low-income population, especially the youth, to be at greater risk to illicit drug use. Furthermore, parental supervision, a known protective factor against substance use, may not be as evident among the lower-income Filipino youth as with other SES backgrounds. For these reasons, the focus of this study will be on the low-income youth in the Philippines who, as earlier mentioned, are caught up in the Philippine ‘War on Drugs’ whether as users or become collateral damage.

2.4. Factors Influencing Substance Use among the Youth

A strategic way of shaping substance use prevention programs is to look at key factors that influence the youth in engaging in risk behaviors such as substance use. Stone, Becker, Huber and Catalano (2012) conducted a comprehensive study that reviewed longitudinal predictors of substance use and abuse in emerging adulthood. Among all the factors that were looked into, key factors that emerged include peer substance use, favorable

attitudes and norms toward use, school achievement, and family factors. Social contexts that involve greater freedom and less social control that a young adult receives upon moving out of their parental homes are also related to increased substance use.

The prevailing themes here are the pivotal role that family and peers play in the substance use among adolescents and young adults. Van Ryzin, Fosco and Dishion (2012) conducted a study that focused on these two factors. Their findings suggest that “parental monitoring and deviant peer association were predictive of substance use in early adolescence, but familial relationship quality was a significant predictor across the transition to high school and generally continued to predict use into later adolescence, as did association with deviant peers” (Van Ryzin, Fosco, & Dishion, 2012). Furthermore, an interesting finding from this study was how the parents, and the family, influence an adolescent’s choice of friends and peer group composition.

A further research expanded the scope of factors stating that adolescent substance use is associated with factors across multiple spheres of influence (Cleveland, Feinberg, Bontempo, & Greenberg, 2008). The study identified three risk factors (individual, peer and family) and protective factors (family, school and community) more or less concluding

that risk factors were stronger predictors of substance use outcomes than protective factors. In particular, individual and peer risk factors were linked to recent and lifetime use of substances such as cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana. For protective factors, family and community influence was stronger during the early adolescent years while peer and school factors played a bigger role in the later adolescent years.

These studies all point to an effective strategy at tackling the substance use problem. A sports-based program cannot work in one sphere of influence alone. Ostaszewski (2015) proposed a three-pronged approach in crafting programs that aid in substance use prevention. This approach calls for programs to 1) build protection, 2) reduce risks in primary youth socialization settings (family, schools, peers and local community), and 3) provide support for individual assets development (Ostaszewski, 2015).

Similarly, the Icelandic Model, which was considered by many as a success, studied by Sigfúsdóttir, Thorlindsson, Kristjánsson, Roe and Allegrante (2009) concluded that “prevention efforts need to simultaneously activate the peer group, the school, the family and those who organize youth activities to reduce substance use.” Key to the success of substance use prevention among the youth are the peers, parents and participation in an organized youth activity group such as a sports organization. According to

the same study, these efforts must be initiated in as early as 12 or 13 years old (Sigfúsdóttir, Thorlindsson, Kristjánsson, Roe, & Allegrante, 2009).

These results are quite consistent with the results of physical activity-related programs discussed earlier. Firstly, participation in a sports organization addresses the need for individual assets development. Secondly, education programs whether formally or informally conveyed in school and at home equip the youth against the ills of substance use which, in effect, builds protection. Lastly, involving parents, peers, teachers and other role models help reduce the risk factors in all spheres of influence. Such an integrated approach is pivotal to the success of any sports-based program aiming to prevent substance use.

Chapter 3. Methodology

This chapter will explain the step-by-step procedure the researcher adhered to in order to obtain answers to the three research questions posed pertaining to youth sport participation and substance use prevention. Such is necessary in the interest of transparency.

After looking into relevant literature, a qualitative study through in-depth interviews was chosen to be able to draw out lived experiences by the participants. This was especially important since the study is purely exploratory as literature on youth sport participation and substance use in the Philippines is minimal, if not nonexistent.

The entire study lasted roughly eleven months beginning January until November 2017. From January to August, the research topic, including literature review and methodology was drafted and refined in preparation for the proposal submission and approval on August. Between that period and September, interview questions were also finalized. From September until October, the interviews were conducted and data was collected for analysis. By November, data was thoroughly analyzed and the findings of the study, along with recommendations, were made available for submission and dissemination.

3.1. Qualitative Study

A qualitative method was chosen to be able to understand and reflect on the experience of the participants in their unique point of view. This method will help open the research to multiple realities or truths that each participant lives in. A quantitative method will not have been able to capture the lived experiences of the participants to the details that the research requires. Furthermore, a qualitative method allows for open-ended questions that will enable the participants to freely provide comprehensive responses. Such responses will not have been captured in a survey.

Thus, an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was deemed the most appropriate method for the study. IPA is a qualitative research approach that examines how people make sense of their major life experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Unlike grounded theory, IPA works with a homogenous sample of participants to find similarities and differences in their lived experience. Since the study is particularly on one group, IPA is certainly most appropriate. Furthermore, it is important to keep each interview independent of the other to properly analyze the similar or dissimilar interpretations of shared experiences. It should be noted though that IPA cannot fully capture the participants' personal world and still relies on the researcher's own conceptions about the experiences.

3.2. Sampling Selection

In a sense, the study narrowed down its focus not just to all Filipinos or the Filipino youth, but specifically to the low-income Filipino youth. In particular, youth was defined as between ages 12 to 24 years old in line with previous discussion. Therefore, members of Keni Discs satisfied the stated criterion. While the group is based in but a small portion of the country, interviewing its members go in line with the preference of an IPA method towards a homogenous sample. It should be noted though that members of Keni Discs are or were all school-going youth. The study will not be able to capture the portion of the low-income Filipino youth that are out-of-school.

With regards to the number of participants for the in-depth interviews, the researcher first coordinated with Jimenez, the coach of Keni Discs, to figure out the best and most convenient schedule for the interview. The schedule will have an impact on the number of interview participants since the researcher had to travel from Seoul, South Korea to Manila, Philippines and then from Manila to San Fernando, Pampanga. This meant that there was limited time to conduct the interviews. Hence, the researcher agreed with Jimenez to conduct the interviews simultaneously with the training session of Keni Discs. The researcher then interviewed as many members of Keni Discs in attendance as possible at the agreed upon date.

A total of seven members of Keni Discs were interviewed. The general profile of the participants are shown in Table 1. Although prior information was given to the members of Keni Discs regarding the interview, the selection of the seven participants was merely out of convenience. Of the seven participants, three were female and four were male. Three of the participants were under the age of 18 years old while the other four were 18 years old or older. The three participants who were minors are currently enrolled in a public high school. The four participants who were of legal age have all graduated in a local vocational college.

Table 1. General Information of Interview Participants

No.	Name	Gender	Age	Occupation
1	Participant A	Male	13	Student
2	Participant B	Female	14	Student
3	Participant C	Male	16	Student
4	Participant D	Male	18	Unemployed
5	Participant E	Female	18	Unemployed
6	Participant F	Male	20	Employee
7	Participant G	Female	21	Employee

Due to the nature of the topic, ethical considerations were of prime importance. Participants were told of the scope, objectives and outcome of the study prior to the interview. Informed consent was also obtained from all the participants prior to the data collection process. The participants and their parents, for those under the age of 18 years old, were asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix A and B) written in Tagalog that gave them the

option of keeping their identities anonymous and confidential. All participants agreed to reveal their real names in the study but, in the interest of their security, the names were still kept hidden for this research.

Since the IPA approach values rich sources of data, the seven interviews were sufficient enough to draw both diverse and similar experiences from the participants which the researcher was able to reflect upon. In addition, the number satisfies the ideal minimum of six participants for following an IPA approach (Sandelowski, 1995).

3.3. Data Collection

As earlier mentioned, interviews were used as a means to explore with the participants their first hand narratives of lived experiences. The face-to-face interviews provided an opportunity for the participants and researcher to develop a consistent understanding of the meaning of the participants' lived experiences regarding their sport participation. Furthermore, the interviews allowed the participants to relate to the researcher, in his or her own words, the stories as he or she remembers it while also relating to the researcher the meaning of these experiences. A semi-structured interview allowed the participants the free hand in answering questions and developing stories but also enabled the researcher to probe deeper into the answers and stories with follow-up questions.

Each participant took between fifteen to thirty minutes to be interviewed. This was enough time to go through the questions that needed to be answered. An interview protocol (see Appendix C) served as a guide to the flow of the interview. It was crafted in a way that ensured all the necessary topics were touched on. Audio recordings were made upon the consent of the participant with the recording safely kept by the researcher afterwards.

To ensure that the participants were comfortable and confident in telling their stories and answering questions, the interviews were conducted in a private space away from the rest of the members of Keni Discs during their practice. Since the participants were more comfortable expressing themselves in the local language of Tagalog, the interviews were conducted in the said language. The transcript of each interview was then translated by the researcher into English.

The interview was divided mainly into four sections. It began by asking the participants to introduce themselves and their family background. A few key sample questions asked in this section were: “What do your parents do,” “Who do you live with,” and “What do you do in your spare time?” In the second section, the focus was on understanding the participants’ sporting experiences. An example of a question in this section

was: “What is the role or contribution of Keni Discs (or sports) to your life?”

In the third section, questions pertaining to the substance use experience of the participants were asked. In particular, a standard question was: “What are your thoughts on substance use?” Finally, the fourth section examined the relationship between sport participation and substance use. A rudimentary question in this section was: “What do you think is the role of Ultimate (or sports) in forming your opinion on substance use?”

Due to logistical constraints, the researcher was not able to show the participants the transcript nor the final draft of the study for verification of facts. However, participants were ensured that the information obtained from the interviews were to be used solely for academic purposes and results will be furnished to them as soon as available.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. This is a method of identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns in data which clearly organizes and describes the data set (Clarke & Braun, 2017). Such themes must have significant meaning towards the topic.

Preliminary analysis was also conducted for the researcher to easily be able to understand and generate reflections from the interview transcripts. Numerous studies on sport and substance use were studied by the researcher

to be able to draw enough knowledge that equipped him for the analysis of data.

The researcher also listened to the audio recordings multiple times in order to recall the actual interview and familiarize with the content along with the contextual nuances. Along the way, the researcher began transcribing the data before translating it into English. This process is very important so that the researcher can review the things that were said and be able to easily draw meaning. The transcribed data can then be read and re-read multiple times. After the researcher read the transcript multiple times, patterns and meanings were found in accordance with the research questions that the researcher sought to answer.

Data coding was then done in order to have a concrete list of thoughts, notes and reflections. These are then organized to be able to draw out common elements. After grouping the data set, sorting the various codes into relevant themes was done. It is important that data was coded properly in order for the thematic analysis to be effective and efficient.

The emergent themes were then grouped by the researcher according to each research question. As such, a more systematic way of understanding the experiences and answers of the participants was created. This conveniently set the stage for presenting the findings.

Chapter 4. Findings and Discussion

In pursuit of the answers to the research questions, the interview results were grouped into four parts, namely: 1) Family and sporting background of the participants, 2) Impact of youth sport participation, 3) Relationship of sport and substance use, and 4) Factors influencing substance use prevention. The groupings were made by the researcher in order to facilitate easier understanding of the data as well as directly answering each of the three research questions. Findings were enumerated in each section while simultaneously analyzing its significance and discussing its relationship to literature. This was done since the IPA method requires the researcher to interpret and make sense of the interview data while preparing the findings. In other words, the presentation of results already required the interpretation and opinion of the researcher.

4.1. Family and Sports Background of the Participants

Before going into the research questions, the researcher deemed it relevant to understand the profile of the participants and properly contextualize whatever findings arise in the succeeding sections of the study. While it was already known that all the participants come from low-income backgrounds, the interviews revealed a more complex reality regarding their

families. Table 2 briefly summarizes the relevant information regarding the status of the participants' families.

Table 2. Family Background of the Participants

No.	Name	Parental Status	Residing With	Financial Source
1	Participant A	Married	Parents	Parents
2	Participant B	Separated	Mother	Grandfather
3	Participant C	Deceased Father	Mother	Mother
4	Participant D	Deceased Mother	Aunt	Aunt
5	Participant E	Married	Aunt	Aunt
6	Participant F	Married	Parents	Father
7	Participant G	Deceased Mother	Aunt	Aunt

The first characteristic of members of Keni Discs the researcher took note of was the diverse backgrounds of the members. One of the participants noted: “In Keni Discs, we come from different backgrounds. However, everyone here is accepted even if you’re gay or lesbian. It doesn’t matter what religion or gender you have. Whoever you are, we accept you. The rule of Coach is that simple” (Participant C, Personal Communication, October 7, 2017).

An interesting and important finding within the group is that most of the participants do not have the benefit of an ideal or normal family environment. The absence of a parent(s) may be due to the passing of the father or mother or simply the inability of the parent(s) to support their children. Moreover, only two of the participants actually live with their parents while the rest either live with their mother or an aunt. This has more

to do with the financial source of the family than anything. The participants had to reside with somebody who could support their education and living expenses such as an aunt, a grandfather or any other close relative.

Participant E (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) even related how she wanted to stay with her family in Pangasinan but knew that she had to move to Pampanga with her aunt if she wanted to continue her studies.

The unusual family environment extends to their sibling relationships as a number of participants claim to not be close to their siblings (or half siblings) or are only close due to the fact that they needed to take care of their ailing sibling who had health conditions such as cerebral palsy or epilepsy. Furthermore, despite having siblings in the same age group, none of the participants mentioned them in relating about Keni Discs pointing to the dysfunctional relations within the family.

This was an important finding and especially crucial if, indeed, low-income families in the Philippines bear the same familial characteristics. Both Stone et al. (2012) and Van Ryzin et al. (2012) identified familial relationship as a predictor of youth substance use. In addition, Van Ryzin (2012) mentioned how the parents and the rest of the family influence the choice of friends and peer groups among the youth. In the absence of both sufficient parental influence and good sibling relationships, adolescents are

more vulnerable to risk behaviors like substance use. It can potentially reduce the chances of adolescents in expanding their social networks and activities.

Fortunately, the participants did not lack in sporting experiences. Not surprising was the fact that all the boys played basketball before ending up with Ultimate. After all, basketball is the most popular sport in the country. In most cases, they claimed to have started playing basketball with their cousins and neighbors in their communities or with their classmates in school. Table 3 enumerates their sporting experiences as well as the number of years since they joined Keni Discs.

Table 3. Sports Background of the Participants

No.	Name	Prior Sports	Yrs. in Keni Discs
1	Participant A	Basketball	1
2	Participant B	None	2
3	Participant C	Basketball, Volleyball & Sepak Takraw	2
4	Participant D	Basketball & Volleyball	1
5	Participant E	Basketball & Volleyball	2
6	Participant F	Basketball & Athletics	3
7	Participant G	Jogging & Badminton	1

Participants have only been with Keni Discs for at most three years due to the fact that the membership of the group relies on school-going youth. In such a case, turnover of members was always an issue. In fact, while the interview participants represented active members of Keni Discs, some participants already found it hard to continue practicing the sport after

they graduated from college and started working. They related how they could not attend as much training sessions anymore due to conflicts with their work schedule.

Despite the participants mostly coming from dysfunctional families, the presence of prior sporting experiences highlighted the role that schools can play in the lives of adolescents. Most of the sports that the participants practiced, other than basketball, were introduced in a school setting. Their initiation to Keni Discs was no different. Jimenez recruited new members through the school system. This only reinforces the findings in literature that schools have a role as protective factors for adolescents (Cleveland, Feinberg, Bontempo, & Greenberg, 2008). By providing the youth with activities like sports, they can possibly reduce the chances of risk behaviors.

Thus far, the researcher was able to establish that for low-income Filipinos, family relationships tended to be weak or dysfunctional. This meant that the youth looked to other venues such as schools for influence. However, the value of family can never be overlooked. Some participants, in fact, still identified ‘family’ as one of their priorities in life.

The succeeding section paints a better picture of how sport participation can play a role in the lives of the adolescents and help in the unconscious longing for a family environment.

4.2. The Impact of Youth Sport Participation

Much has been said about the benefits of youth sport participation in literature. While the researcher did not expect any substantial differences between what has been laid out and with the case of Keni Discs, there were some interesting findings. Apart from explicitly asking the participants what they gained from their sport participation, the findings were extrapolated from various parts of the interview and conveniently organized and categorized by the researcher to answer the first research question: *“What impact does youth sport participation have on low-income Filipinos?”*

All the participants related how their sport participation, particularly with Keni Discs, changed their lives for the better. These benefits were classified by the researcher appropriately in order to understand which benefits are attributable to sport participation in general (Sports-related Benefits), which benefits are attributable to Ultimate as a sport (Ultimate-related Benefits), and which benefits are attributable to the way the group is run by Jimenez (Coach-related Benefits). Regardless, all these benefits come in the context of their sport participation and this must be remembered all the time. Figure 1 shows the summary of all the mentioned benefits of youth sport participation among the participants.

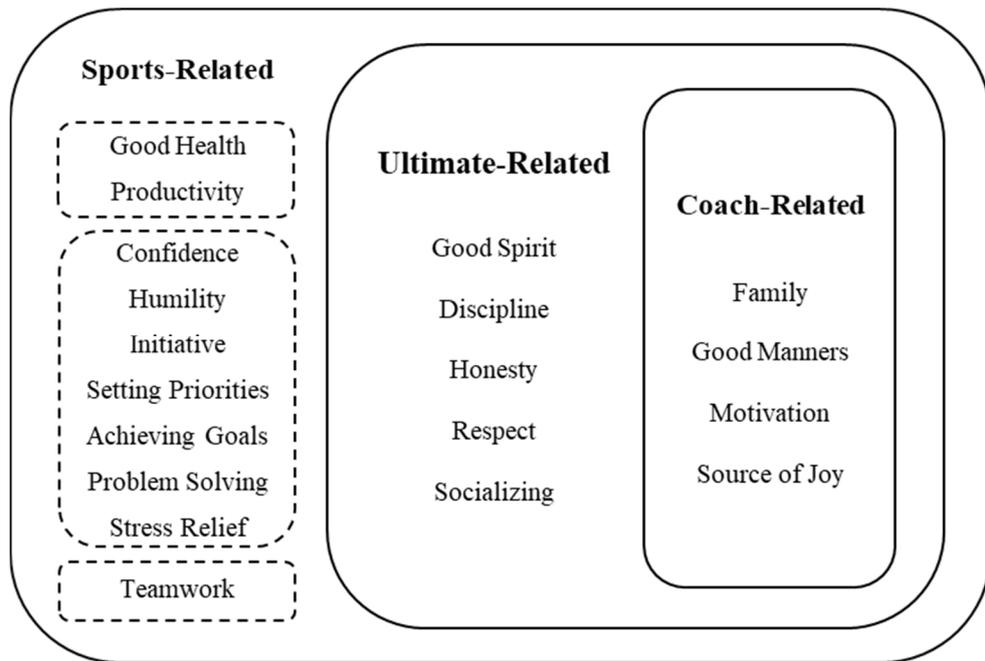


Figure 1. Impact of Youth Sport Participation to the Participants

4.2.1. Sports-related Benefits

The first set of benefits are characteristics that are not specific to any sport. This means that participants can probably gain the same benefits by practicing a different sport like the ones they mentioned as their prior sports such as basketball, volleyball, and badminton. These benefits are mostly the same benefits that were brought up in the literature review. Most of these benefits can be grouped as health and physical, psychological or emotional, and social, consistent with the study done by Blom et al. (2013).

Furthermore, these benefits seem to focus on the self.

For health and physical benefits, a number of participants mentioned that before they joined Keni Discs, they were mostly “idle at home” or, for the boys, “play computer games every day.” Hence, their continuous sport participation meant that they now had a more productive use of their time, as well as an activity that helps them attain good health. This was a significant change from their once sedentary behavior. This benefit was also identified by Blom et al. (2013).

More than the health and physical impact, practicing sports also helped the participants achieve psychological or emotional benefits. Traits such as self-confidence, humility and initiative were a few of the things that the participants picked up from their sport participation. Participant E (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) shared how sports helped in building her confidence such that she now has the initiative to approach new members, help them settle in the group, and teach them the sport. On the other hand, Participant D (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) reflected on how his once boastful attitude turned into a more humble one because of sports.

Sports also helped the participants set their priorities, manage their time, solve problems and achieve goals. A number of participants mentioned how sports enabled them to set their priorities and balance their

time between school/work, family, God and the sport. Participant E (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) stated that she learned how to solve problems in an organization because of this experience with sports. Especially for the participants who have finished schooling, they related how sports made them realize that through persistence and hard work, goals that were set could be achieved.

While all these psychological and emotional benefits were already identified in prior research (Fox, 2003; Light, 2010; Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013), an interesting benefit that was brought up by a participant was how sports became a source of stress relief. Participant B (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) revealed how sports was “an escape from the hardships and problems at home and in school.” This feeling of escape or freedom is distinct from the joy that can be derived from practicing sports.

Another type of benefit resulting from sports is social in nature. In this category, the only benefit identified by the participants was teamwork. Most of the other social benefits can be found in the succeeding section as it is more appropriately attributable to Ultimate than sports in general. All the participants claimed that in sports, they learned how to work together as a team whether during games, trainings or even in their lives outside of sports.

For instance, when one of the members is struggling financially, the team works together to try to find a way to help the teammate. Participants also related how they worked together to organize events for Keni Discs. These are but small ways that teamwork is displayed.

While teamwork is a common benefit identified with sport participation, this still has to depend on the type of sport, whether individual or team sport, and on whether or not it is in the context of an organized, rule-governed setting (Blom, Bronk, Coakley, Lauer, & Sawyer, 2013).

4.2.2. Ultimate-related Benefits

During the course of the interviews, it was clear that the sport of Ultimate Frisbee had a lot to do with the growth and development of the participants. All participants claimed that the sport is unlike any of the other more popular sports. The participants usually began by mentioning that Ultimate was a “self-refereed and non-contact” sport. They then moved on to relate to the researcher the concept of “spirit of the game” or “good spirit.” Having a “good spirit” is “similar to fair play and sportsmanship, but there is much higher emphasis put on it in Ultimate” (World Flying Disc Federation, n.d.).

Multiple participants also claimed that Jimenez was a strict coach who constantly taught them “right from wrong” in accordance with the spirit

of the game. They mentioned how Jimenez would get angry when members of Keni Discs did something bad or wrong. While this was taken negatively by some former members of the group, the participants saw this as a way to build discipline among them. This was absolutely necessary in the sport.

In addition, the particular emphasis of the sport towards “good spirit” lead the participants to learn the values of honesty, respect and even to socialize with both teammates and opponents alike. These were all values that helped the participants relate to others. Participant F (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) shared that being good spirited meant that “you should make sure that nobody is harmed, even your opponents.” Furthermore, the same participant related how in Ultimate, one must “maintain good relations with teammates and opponents.” Also, Participant A (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017), who used to play basketball and got into fist fights, reflected on how much more he enjoyed Ultimate simply because there is “no physicality and bullying” in the sport. Furthermore, Participant B (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) expressed how mutual respect was evident in the sport as reflected in the fact that it had no bias against religion, gender, sexual orientation, athleticism, etc. Everyone was welcome to participate in the sport.

Whereas sports-related benefits seemed to contribute more health and physical and psychological or emotional benefits, the sport of Ultimate seemed to provide more benefits that are social in nature. In other words, sports, in general, tended to develop the self while Ultimate tended to focus on relating to others. Indeed, Blom et al. (2013) noted that sport “expands a young person’s experiences and relationships.” The participants claimed that these values of “good spirit,” discipline, honesty and respect is not unique to Keni Discs alone but is present in all Ultimate teams.

In Keni Discs, with regards to social benefits, Ultimate was able to help the participants cultivate good relationships within and outside of the team. This was crucial for the members of the group as they were already lacking in positive relationships at home.

4.2.3. Coach-related Benefits

Seemingly the most meaningful impact that sport participation had in the participants’ lives can be attributed to the way Jimenez organized and supervised Keni Discs. On top of “spirit of the game,” Jimenez enforced rules in Keni Discs he called “CONTROL G.” According to the participants, “CONTROL G” is an acronym that stands for the following: 1) Consistency in attendance, 2) On time for all activities, 3) No cursing in and outside of the game, 4) Things should always be properly cared for, 5) Respect for

each other, 6) Offering help every time you can, 7) Listening during huddles because the rules are for our own good, and 8) Gratitude for all the blessings received including the ability to play the sport.

These rules translated to good manners among the participants. It enabled Keni Discs to foster a positive culture for the otherwise disadvantaged members of society. Thus, the participants unanimously identified Keni Discs as a family. Two participants even recalled how Jimenez explicitly told them to “treat each other like siblings.” In turn, most of the participants considered Jimenez as a father. In this case, Keni Discs served as a proxy to the influence their families were supposed to give them.

One other impact repeatedly stated by the participants is how through the sport, they continuously gained motivation not only to do well in the sport but also to get through their struggles in life. In Keni Discs, Participant B (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) claimed that she had “somebody to lean on” all the time. The participant even mentioned how they kept in touch with each other every single day.

Thus, it did not come as a surprise that most of the participants claimed that Keni Discs is, for them, a source of joy. This joy goes beyond that of playing the sport and towards that of the joy of belonging to a community and, more importantly, a family.

This is especially important since it was established how the participants mostly had problems and issues at home. Blom et al. (2013) mentioned in their study that sport provides the youth access to role models or adults who can help them with their questions, issues and problems in life. This is exactly what Keni Discs or Jimenez provided for them.

In summary, the impact of sport participation to the youth is to provide them a venue for individual assets development. Furthermore, it also provided a socialization setting for the youth from which they can be positively influenced. For members of Keni Discs, it also served as their proxy family in light of the poor family environment at home. Jimenez served as their father-figure while their teammates served as their siblings. These are pivotal influences in the lives of the youth in terms of reducing risk behaviors as introduced by Ostaszewski (2015).

4.3. The Relationship of Sport and Substance Use Prevention

In light of the impact youth sport participation has had in the lives of the participants, the second research question naturally comes into mind:

“What relationship does youth sport participation have with substance use prevention among the low-income Filipinos?” In order to answer this

question, the researcher had to explicitly ask each participant if they used or are using any substance whether it be alcoholic beverages, cigarettes,

tobacco, or any of the illicit drugs. This was done after the researcher established rapport and gained the trust of the participants.

Of the seven participants, none of them have tried any illicit drug or smoked cigarettes and tobacco. Only two of the participants claimed to have experience with alcoholic beverages. One of them tried alcohol but did not like the taste and therefore, chose never to drink again. Another participant claims to drink alcohol only when the occasion calls for it. In this regard, one can say that members of Keni Discs are more or less substance use free.

These findings are consistent with what literature suggested in that sport participation is linked to lower cigarette smoking and illicit drug use but higher alcohol usage (Nelson & Gordon-Larsen, 2006; Moore & Werch, 2005; Lisha & Sussman, 2010; Kwan, Bobko, Faulkner, Donnelly, & Cairney, 2014). For Keni Discs, “higher alcohol usage” meant that at least two of the participants have tried drinking alcoholic beverages.

A problem with the literature available was that most of these studies employed quantitative methods or surveys that only studied the correlation between sport and substance use among youth. It would have been more helpful to know the reasons for such relationships. This study, being both qualitative and exploratory in nature, was able to draw out the possible reasons why sport participation is or is not related to substance use After

getting acquainted with the participants' substance use history, the researcher proceeded to ask their opinion regarding the role of sport participation in substance use prevention.

A few of the participants claimed that sports and substance use had no relation with each other at all. To quote Participant F:

Sport is not related to substance use. I know people who use substances and don't do sports but I also know people who use substances but do sports. What matters is what they see around them. Users usually start with curiosity and then they get hooked. (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017)

Participant D related a similar experience:

I don't think sports has anything to do with substance use. I have friends in basketball who use illicit drugs. They told me that when they use drugs, they feel stronger and that they feel like they can fly. Even if they ask me to try, I won't because my dad will get mad at me. (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017)

Meanwhile, Participant A (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) concurred this view on sports and substance use by explicitly saying that "Sports has no relation to drugs."

However, this view on sports and substance use came from their common experience of seeing people in their neighborhood who use substances but practice sports. Interestingly, the sport the participants consistently identified with substance users was basketball. When these

participants were asked if they knew somebody in Keni Discs who use or used substances, they all claimed that if there were, they do not actively participate in Keni Discs anymore or have long left the group.

It must be noted that these participants who observed substance use behaviors among people who played sports, occurred in the context of unorganized or unsupervised sport. In short, unlike Keni Discs which has both an organized setup and is supervised by an adult, these neighborhood settings possibly lacked the necessary elements to protect the youth from substance use behaviors.

In contrast, some of the participants confidently claimed that their sport participation had a lot to do with their being free of substances.

Participant B related the following:

Joining sports is a way for me to stay away from drugs because my mind is solely on sports instead of substances. I want to be addicted to sports instead of being addicted to something that can be harmful to my health. (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017)

Another interesting response from a different participant indicated how sports has everything to do with her being substance use free.

Participant E (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) observed that

“You get sickness from substance use but you get physically fit in Ultimate.”

On the other hand, Participant C elaborated the following:

Our coach does not want us to follow the example of players who have vices. Instead, he told us to be good examples to them so that they can stop. There used to be some players who used substances before. However, because of Keni Discs, their bad attitudes turned to good. While we influenced them to be good, sports also has something to do with this. (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017)

This last remark pointed to the fact that Jimenez, as a policy, does not tolerate the use of any substances. This much was clear among all seven participants, even those who believed that sport participation has nothing to do with substance use. The participants also revealed how Jimenez reminded them every chance he got, whether through formal or informal means, that they should stay away from substances like alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, tobacco, and illicit drugs.

4.4. Factors Influencing Substance Use Prevention

Ultimately, the study leads to the most important research question: *“How can youth sport participation aid in substance use prevention among low-income Filipinos?”* Unlike the previous cases, there was no actual question posed to the participants that directly answered the research question. Instead, the researcher had to look at all the interviews to arrive at these common themes. To sum up, these findings relied on the ability of the researcher to interpret and synthesize the interview data.

The fact that all members of Keni Discs who were interviewed were relatively substance use free suggests that there is something about the organization or the sport that discourages substance use. After bringing together and sorting out all the responses of the participants in the interviews, four significant factors that promoted an individual to be substance use free were identified. A number of these factors were actually brought up in the previous sections already. Figure 2 illustrates these key factors.

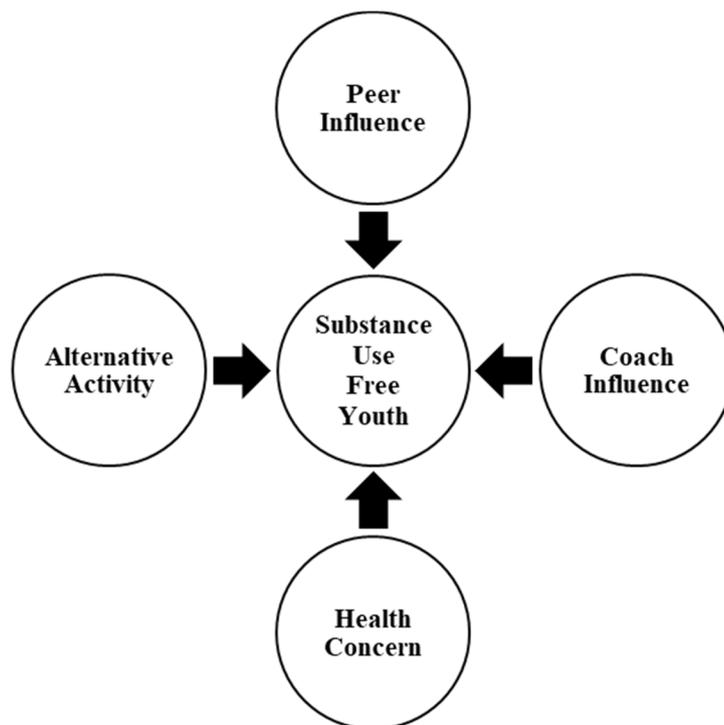


Figure 2. Key Factors of Substance Use Prevention through Sport

4.4.1. Health Concern

One of the top-of-mind answers of all the participants with regards to substance use is how it leads to poor health. This negative perception of substance use, in most cases, began from their homes. Most participants related how their parent(s), close relatives or guardians instructed them not to use any substance for reasons such as “drugs ruin your life.”

This perception is further reinforced by witnessing the death of a parent or close relative due to substance abuse. Other participants claimed that they learned about the negative effects of substance use in the news, through social media or the internet, from mere observation of their neighbors or, ultimately, in school where it is taught in class.

However, sport participation still had a role in forming this perception as some participants also feared of not being physically fit and able to do sports should they suffer the negative effects of substance use. In short, they wanted to stay fit to be able to continue practicing sports.

4.4.2. Alternative Activity

Moreover, while it has already been established that sport participation provides the benefit of good health, it also serves as an alternative activity to risk behaviors such as substance use. For many of the

participants, idle time at home seems to be an issue as it made them more vulnerable to trying out a multitude of things including possibly substances. It did not help that a number of them cited stress-causing issues at home and in school that can eventually lead to trying out addictive substances for relief. Without an alternative activity such as sports, falling victim to substance use does not seem so farfetched.

Sport participation as an alternative activity to substance use is ultimately a form of distraction from the temptations brought about by curiosity. To quote Participant B, “it’s better to be addicted to sports than to be addicted to substance use” (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017).

4.4.3. Peer Influence

Related to the participants’ concern for health is where they learn about the harmful effects of substance use. A number of the participants noted that they heard about it through stories told by their peers and from actually seeing some of their peers who use substances. Peer influence, whether at home or in school, seems to be pivotal in the lives of the participants seeing as how the participants ended up joining Keni Discs through peer invites as well. Most, if not all, of the participants were invited and urged by their classmates or friends to try out Ultimate.

Participant C (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) talked about this ability to influence their peers by expressing that “It’s in the spirit of the person. If there are many of you who want to influence someone, you can do it.” Therefore, in Keni Discs, it was evident that peer influence can play a role in substance use prevention.

4.4.4. Coach Influence

However, this peer influence would not have been possible if the coach had not set the tone appropriately for positive influence. It was mentioned numerous times how the coach reminded the participants to steer clear from substance use as well as striving to serve as role models to their peers. Likewise, the coach was seen by the participants as a role model.

Participant F (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) recalled how “Coach Zab tells us not to do drugs because it ruins your life.” Also, Participant D (Personal Communication, October 7, 2017) indicated that sometimes, in post-game huddles or random get-togethers, the coach reminded them that “drinking and smoking is prohibited.” But all these things stem from the fact that Jimenez, according to a number of the participants, constantly taught them how to have good manners and behavior.

These findings put to light a study conducted by Michaelson, McKerron and Davidson (2015) on shaping health ideas among adolescents.

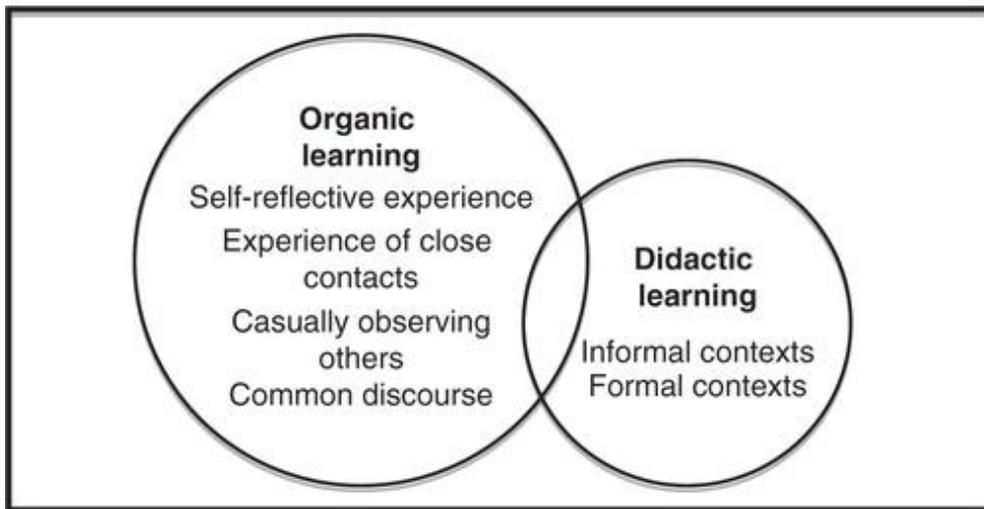


Figure 3. Ways Adolescents Learn About Health (Michaelson et al., 2015)
It concluded that the youth form their opinion on health through organic and didactic ways of learning. Figure 3 shows the different ways adolescents learn about health. These can, in turn, be understood in the context of learning about substance use through sport participation.

Firstly, a way to build protection among the youth is by educating them about the harmful effects of substance use. This was referred by Michaelson et al. (2015) as a didactic way of learning. While they already received this kind of education in formal settings such as the school, it helped that Jimenez, in an informal way, constantly reminded the members

of Keni Discs regarding the harmful effects of substance use as well as how it can ruin one's life.

Michaelson et al. (2015) also identified organic learning, as experienced in everyday life, as a “central way that adolescents receive health knowledge.” For this reason, members of Keni Discs seems to have a negative perception of substance use particularly because they have first-hand experience seeing and finding out about its harmful effects.

Although self-reflective experiences are not common with members of Keni Discs since only a few of them have actual experience with any substance, the experience of close contacts seems to have made a lasting mark in building their perception of substance use. Michaelson et al. (2015) noted that family, especially the parents, are the first people who influence one's thinking. Since the participants identified Keni Discs as their family, their teammates and coach definitely helped in forming their negative view regarding substance use.

Likewise, the negative perception for substance use of the participants may have also been built through casually observing others not directly related to them and through common discourse. A number of the participants did indicate that they know people who played sport and used substances. These are people they considered to have poor health. On the

other hand, they had this common notion that sports leads to good health as promoted in school.

In terms of substance use prevention, peer and family influence were repeatedly identified as factors that aid in successful substance use prevention efforts (Cleveland, Feinberg, Bontempo, & Greenberg, 2008; Sigfúsdóttir, Thorlindsson, Kristjánsson, Roe, & Allegrante, 2009; Van Ryzin, Fosco, & Dishion, 2012; Ostaszewski, 2015). In the context of sports, surrounding the youth with knowledge and people that can help build a negative notion of substance use proved to be effective in substance use prevention outcomes.

With this, Jimenez' emphasis on good manners and good behavior may have well paved the way for his members in Keni Discs to be substance use free. Serving as a role model and creating role models among the peers in Keni Discs also builds protection among the participants from substance use and reduces risks in primary youth socialization settings. Both of which were singled out by Ostaszewski (2015) as essential in substance use prevention outcomes.

Similarly, to explain why the culture in Keni Discs works towards substance use prevention, the Social Learning Theory conceptualized by Bandura (1977) says that "individual behavior is influenced by one's social

environment, including siblings, family and peers” (Ary, Tildesley, Hops, & Andrews, 1993). In Keni Discs, since the coach and members are non-users of substances, new members can come to an understanding that substance use is bad for them simply by observing the people around them.

In addition, members of Keni Discs, after considering the disposition on substance use of those around them and the potential consequences of using substances especially illicit drugs, may feel afraid to use substances not only because of what their parents or coach may do to punish them, but also in light of the recent government crackdown on drug users and pushers. This is explained by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) where it states the following:

Behaviors are based on intentions of an individual or their decisions to act. These decisions are made based on his or her attitude toward the behavior, which is built from their perception of the norms surrounding the behavior, their estimated consequences of this behavior, mainly from important others, and the societal control over this particular behavior. (McKiernan, 2016)

Thus, the youth are said to make decisions on whether or not they will try or use substances based on the attitude of the people around them and the possible punishment. Right now, circumstances surrounding the youth of

Keni Discs ultimately encourages them to stay away from substances like cigarettes, tobacco, alcoholic beverages and illicit drugs.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

5.1. Overview of the Research

Youth sport participation has long been used as a tool in various social development programs. However, it has not been fully understood in substance use prevention applications.

Incidentally, the Philippines is currently undergoing a violent anti-drug war, with illicit drugs being one of the more harmful substances it wishes to eradicate. In a broader view, while this is a campaign to reduce criminality, it can also be seen as a campaign towards better health. Thus, a sport-based substance use prevention program can appropriately aid in the government's efforts.

Data obtained from schools suggest that there is significant incidence of substance use among the youth. This stage in a person's life was also identified as crucial in substance use initiation and building lifelong habits. Furthermore, the sector that badly needs help in substance use prevention, or any development issue for that matter, is the low-income sector which comprises more than half of the population of the country.

While there were no known sports-based substance use prevention programs in the Philippines, Keni Discs, an Ultimate Frisbee group in San

Fernando, Pampanga catering to low-income Filipinos, presented an interesting case study for investigating the viability of using youth sport participation in substance use prevention applications.

Drawing upon semi-structured interviews with seven members of Keni Discs and an interpretative phenomenological analysis, the research critically investigated the impact of sport participation in the lives of the participants, the relationship of youth sport participation and substance use prevention, and key factors of youth sport participation that aid in substance use prevention applications towards low-income Filipinos.

5.2. Summary of Findings

While most of the benefits of youth sport participation as discussed in the literature were present in the case of Keni Discs' members, there were some unique and interesting findings. The research found that there is added value in using the sport of Ultimate Frisbee for substance use prevention applications as the sport's "spirit of the game" culture helps build a stronger character among the members. It also identified the coach's crucial role in creating a positive environment for the members to thrive and consider the group as their family. This effectively filled the void left by the members' dysfunctional family relationships at home.

Findings concerning the relationship of youth sport participation and substance use prevention were consistent with past studies as well in that sport participation is able to prevent the youth from using substances like cigarettes and illicit drugs but cannot fully prevent the youth from drinking alcohol. Moreover, youth sport participation can aid in substance use prevention by promoting health concern among the youth, providing an alternative activity to risk behaviors, surrounding the youth with good peer influences and introducing a role model in the person of the coach.

Most of these factors are relate to how the youth build their notions about substance use. Therefore, by educating them with information about the harmful effects of substance use and the benefits of sport participation, by surrounding them with positive influences in the group, and by promoting a culture that does not tolerate substance use, the members of Keni Discs were able to become free of substance use.

5.3. Importance of the Research

In these troublesome times in Philippine society where the government is struggling to solve the drug problem, it may prove useful to refocus all efforts toward the youth as substance use initiation was identified to occur during the adolescent years. Furthermore, the low-income segment

are often neglected but, in fact, comprises the majority of the population. It is time for this sector to receive the attention it deserves.

The research first set out to understand how youth sport participation can be used for substance use prevention purposes before coming up with an informed recommendation on how to ensure that a sports-based substance use prevention program can be effective.

The research argues that there are three key factors that make youth sport participation an effective tool for substance use prevention. Firstly, sport participation builds character among the youth that make them resilient to risk behaviors such as substance use. Secondly, sport participation, if properly organized and supervised, provides the youth with positive peer influences that reduce risk of substance use. Lastly, sport participation provides an additional avenue where the youth can be informally educated about the harmful effects of substance use.

Sport participation enables the youth to build their character, one that is resilient against negative influences around them. Ultimate, being an easy sport to engage in, presents itself as an effective tool for good character development as it brings along the concept of “spirit of the game” on top of all the other benefits sport participation provides. However, other sports

may also be used provided that the elements of “spirit of the game” can be maintained.

For the low-income Filipino youth, there is a need to provide them with positive influences as they normally have weak familial relationships. Sports groups can provide for them what their families could not and can actually serve as their second families. This reduces the risk of substance use in their primary social networks by providing role models in their peers and coach.

It must also not be overlooked that a sport-based substance use prevention program can be an additional medium for educating the low-income youth regarding harmful effects of substance use. This informal setting might even be better received by the said sector.

Ultimately, youth sport participation was proposed as an ideal and effective way to not only reduce drug use but also substance use in the Philippines beginning with the low-income sector.

5.4. Limitations of the Research

In doing a case study, there were definitely constraints that resulted in limitations to the research. While the ultimate goal of the researcher was to come up with a generalizable understanding of how youth sport participation can contribute to the substance use prevention advocacy

among low-income Filipinos, the case study of Keni Discs meant that a lot of considerations had to be made.

Firstly, the geographic location of Keni Discs in San Fernando, Pampanga makes the study recommendations possibly only applicable to a certain set of urban settings. San Fernando is neither as bustling as the cities in the National Capital Region nor as quiet as urban cities in other provinces. Such a distinction may bring about varying results if the study were applied to different geographic locations.

Secondly, the study only involved participants who were active in Keni Discs. It would have also been interesting to know if the views, the family background, and the lifestyle of inactive or former members of Keni Discs are the same as that of the participants. In as much as the researcher wanted to capture as many perspectives as possible, logistical constraints called for certain decisions to be made that resulted in these limitations.

Furthermore, the researcher relied on the coach to serve as a mediator in recruiting interview participants. This direct contact with the coach may have resulted in a sample bias in that the participants may not be the members of Keni Discs who best represent the group but, rather, members of Keni Discs who the coach felt will present the group in a positive light. It also meant that the members of Keni Discs whom the coach

informed about the interview were possibly only the members he had good relationships with. The researcher further recognizes that unpleasant responses during the interview may lead to a negative perception of Keni Discs which any coach will definitely not want.

It should also be noted that none of the participants of the interviews claimed to smoke cigarettes or use illicit drugs. In the interest of capturing how sport participation affects the youth, the study would have been stronger had there been participants who used substances. Their circumstances may lead to differing results from the ones stated in this research. Therefore, the study may seem one-sided in the absence of substance users.

Finally, the interview proceedings relied heavily on the honesty of the participants. Since the topic of substance use, especially that of illicit drug use, is highly sensitive in the Philippines right now, the researcher is fully aware that participants may be motivated not to fully disclose their experience about the topic or may even be inclined to be dishonest with their responses for fear that they will be punished by their coach, parents, or much worse, government authorities.

Despite this, the researcher is still confident that the results of the study accurately represents the realities of Keni Discs and that of low-

income Filipinos. Steps were taken to ensure that the sample represented a wide range of personalities and backgrounds and that the participants can trust the researcher with whatever they disclose. Most participants were even engaging enough to share sensitive issues in their families not related to the topic of the study. Furthermore, the participants were given enough time to respond to the questions with confidence and were repeatedly assured that their responses will be kept confidential.

5.5. Recommendations for Future Research

While much has been done in this research, much can still be discovered. With the results of this qualitative study, a survey can now be crafted to test the generalizability of the findings across the country. It is important to remember that the Philippines is an archipelago consisting of thousands of islands. The language, culture and religion may greatly vary from province to province. Most, if not all, of the studies pertaining to sport and substance use employ a quantitative method and the same must be done in order to arrive at a more national level conclusion.

During the course of the study, the researcher realized that the sport of Ultimate is a unique and potentially powerful tool for many sport for development applications. Furthermore, there is a gap in the literature with regards to studying sport-specific influence in substance use prevention. As

such, an in-depth study of what makes Ultimate unique and useful is warranted. It may also make sense to compare various sports, including individual sports such as swimming and team sports such as Ultimate, to come up with a set of sports that can be used in substance use prevention programs.

While it was mentioned in the study that the focus of the researcher was more on sports being used for leisure than competitive pursuits, data from the interviews suggest that some participants are in Keni Discs for leisure while some for competition. An explicit distinction between the two types of members must be done to understand in the future how this mindset may affect the role of sport participation in substance use prevention.

There also seems to be a lack of literature with regards to how the youth form their ideas about substance use. Despite the availability of studies concerning how the youth conceive their perceptions on health (Michaelson, McKerron, & Davidson, 2015), figuring out where and how the youth form their opinion regarding substance use may help in configuring not just sports-based but also non-sports-based substance use prevention programs.

Another opportunity for future studies is to explore the thoughts of the youth on each substance: cigarettes, tobacco, alcoholic beverages and

illicit drugs. Furthermore, exploring the knowledge of the youth on what drugs are legal and what are illegal is another venture worth pursuing. The legality or illegality of a substance may affect the attitude of the youth towards using or avoiding it.

Finally, the research began by noting that there were limited studies regarding sport and substance use across the world. By conducting a study in other countries, results may actually vary. For instance, studying substance use prevention in South Korea may yield vastly different results since the culture in South Korea permits alcohol use and, to a certain extent, cigarette smoking especially among the male population. Thus, while the field of sport and substance use needs more attention, applications to each country may greatly vary as the prevailing local culture has to first be known and understood.

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Appendix A

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

(for participants under the age of 18 years old)

I, (Parent's Name) , am allowing my child, (Child's Name) , who is years of age, to participate in the study in the form of an interview as part of the thesis that Mr. Aldo Zelig Uy Tong, a current student in sports management of Seoul National University, is conducting on youth sport participation and substance use prevention.

The results of this interview may be used by Mr. Tong in his thesis and in an article that may be published in a public journal.

My consent is under the condition that:

- our names are kept anonymous and confidential
- our names can be used.

I also agree that a voice recording of the interview with my child can be made as long as the recording is safely kept and that the same is not to be used for purposes other than the study that Mr. Tong is conducting. Furthermore, the interview and its recording cannot be used against the welfare of my child.

Signed:

Conforme:

Parent's Name:
Tong
Date:

Aldo Zelig U.
Date:

Child's Name:

Date:

Appendix B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I, (Participant's Name) , agree to participate in the study in the form of an interview as part of the thesis that Mr. Aldo Zelig Uy Tong, a current student in sports management of Seoul National University, is conducting on youth sport participation and substance use prevention.

The results of this interview may be used by Mr. Tong in his thesis and in an article that may be published in a public journal.

My consent is under the condition that:

- my name is kept anonymous and confidential
- my name can be used.

I also agree that a voice recording of the my interview can be made as long as the recording is safely kept and that the same is not to be used for purposes other than the study that Mr. Tong is conducting. Furthermore, the interview and its recording cannot be used against my welfare.

Signed:

Conforme:

Participant's Name:
Tong
Date:

Aldo Zelig U.
Date:

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Target Participants: Minimum of 6 members aged 12-21 years old

Time Allotment: Approximately 30 minutes each

I. Background Information

- a. Kindly introduce yourself and your family.
- b. What do your parents do? Where are they now?
- c. Where do you study/work?
- d. Who do you live with? Who supports you financially?
- e. What do you do in your spare time?

II. Sporting Experience

- a. Before joining Keni Discs, what sports did you get into?
- b. How long have you been playing sports? How long have you been with Keni Discs?
- c. How did you come to join Keni Discs?
- d. Who or what keeps you in sports?

- e. What is the role or contribution of Keni Discs (or sports) to your life?
- f. How different is Keni Discs (or Ultimate) from other sports?
What makes Keni Discs special?

III. Substance Use Experience

- a. What is your experience with substances/vices (smoking, drinking and use of illicit drugs)? Have you tried any of these substances?
- b. Do you know anyone or have you seen anybody using substances? Kindly tell me more about this experience.
- c. What are your thoughts on substance use?
- d. How did you arrive at this disposition on substance use?

IV. Relationship Between Sport Participation and Substance Use

- a. What do you think is the role of Ultimate (or sports) in forming your opinion on substance use?
- b. Do you know anyone or have you seen anybody in Keni Discs (or other sports) using substances? What did you do about it?

국문 초록

필리핀 저소득층의 약물 사용 예방에 대한 스포츠의 역할:

Keni Discs의 청소년을 중심으로

Aldo Zelig Uy Tong

글로벌스포츠매니지먼트 전공

체육교육과

서울대학교 대학원

청소년 스포츠 참여는 오랫동안 다양한 사회 개발 프로그램에서 도구로 사용되어 왔지만 다양한 사회 발전 프로그램에서는 완전히 이해되지 않았다. 필리핀에서 알려진 스포츠 기반 사회 발전 프로그램은 없었지만 저소득 필리핀 인을 대상으로 하는 산 페르난도 (San Fernando)의 궁극 프리즈 비 그룹 Keni Discs 는 흥미로운 사례 연구를 발표했다. 선행 연구들이 다양하고 복잡한 결과를 가져옴에 따라 물질 사용 방지 응용 프로그램에서 스포츠가 될 수 있는 역량에 대한 추가 조사가 필요하다. 이 연구의 목적은 저소득

필리핀 인을 대상으로 한 물질 사용 예방을 위한 도구로서 청소년 스포츠 참여의 효율성을 모색하는 것이다.

본 연구는 Keni Disc 7 명의 회원과 해석 학적 현상 분석을 통해 반 구조적 인터뷰를 통해 참가자의 삶에 스포츠 참여가 미치는 영향, 청소년 스포츠 참여 및 약물 사용 예방 관계 및 청소년의 핵심 요소를 비판적으로 조사했다.

연구 결과 스포츠의 "게임 정신"문화가 구성원들 사이에 성격을 형성함에 따라 Ultimate Frisbee 의 스포츠를 약물 사용 방지 응용 프로그램에 사용하는 데 부가 가치가 있다는 것을 발견했고, 회원들이 번성하여 가족으로 생각할 수 있는 긍정적인 환경을 만드는데 있어 코치의 중요한 역할을 확인했다. 이것은 효과적으로 집에서 회원의 기능 장애 가족 관계에 의해 남겨진 공백을 메웠다. 코치는 또한 물질 사용에 대한 회원들의 인식을 형성하는 데 중요한 역할을 담당했다.

청소년 스포츠 참여 및 약물 사용 예방 관계에 관한 발견은 스포츠 참여가 청소년들이 담배 및 불법 약물과 같은 물질을 사용하지 못하도록 막을 수 있지만 청소년이 술을 마시는 것을 완전히 막을 수 없다는 과거 연구와 일치하다. 청소년 스포츠 참여는 청소년의 건강에 대한 관심을 증진시키고 위험 행동에 대한 대안 활동을 제공하며

청소년을 좋은 동료 영향으로 돌리려고 코치의 인물에 역할 모델을 도입함으로써 약물 사용 방지를 도울 수 있다.

이 연구는 청소년 스포츠 참여가 물질 사용 예방을 위한 효과적인 도구가 되는 세 가지 핵심 요소가 있다. 첫째, 스포츠 참여는 젊은이들 사이에서 성격을 쌓아 물질 사용과 같은 위험 행동에 탄력있게 만든다. 둘째, 스포츠 참여는 적절하게 조직되고 감독 될 경우 청소년들이 물질 사용의 위험을 감소시키는 긍정적인 동료 영향력을 제공한다. 마지막으로, 스포츠 참여는 젊은이가 물질 사용의 유해한 영향에 대해 비공식적으로 교육받을 수 있는 추가적인 통로를 제공한다.

청소년 스포츠 참여는 약물 사용을 줄이는 것뿐만 아니라 저소득 부문에서부터 필리핀에서의 물질 사용을 위한 이상적이고 효과적인 방법으로 제안되었습니다.

주요어: 청소년 스포츠 참여, 약물 사용, 약물 사용 예방, 울티메잇

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