

THE ROLE OF SPORT ON THE SELF-ESTEEM OF UNDERPRIVILEGED
ADOLESCENTS

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DECLARATION

Student Number: 35559683

I hereby declare that this thesis, which is based on my research on *The Role of Sport on the Self-Esteem of Underprivileged Adolescents* is my own work and all the information that I have utilized or mentioned have been acknowledged by the process of inclusive references.

I have committed myself to avoid plagiarism on every level of my research and have fully cited every source that I used, including books, articles, internet sources, and images.

22 January 2024

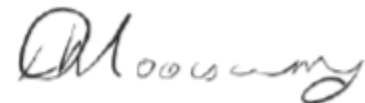
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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the role of sport in enriching the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents. The research was based on in-depth interviews with underprivileged adolescents who participate in sports programs, as well as coaches who work with this population. Through the process of thematic analysis, the study uncovers how involvement in sports can positively impact the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents by providing opportunities for skill development, social connection, and a sense of accomplishment.

The first theme, Sport Activities' Influence on Wellbeing, highlights the importance of the notion that engaging in sports and physical activities has shown to have numerous benefits for both physical and mental health. As such, it places emphasis on finding activities that are enjoyable, gratifying, and sustainable with the intention of reaping the many benefits that sports and physical activities have to offer.

The second theme, Adolescence's social network influence, suggests that adolescents are highly influenced by their social networks, which can include friends, family, classmates, and other peers. These influences can impact various aspects of an adolescent's life, including their behavior, attitudes, beliefs, and decision-making. As such, it becomes vital that parents, teachers, and other adults are aware of these influences and provide the relevant guidance and support to help adolescents navigate their social relationships in a healthy and positive manner.

The third theme, Process of Sport Participation, typically encompasses several stages, from initial involvement to continued involvement in sports activities. This is due to various factors which can have influence on an individual, such as, personal motivation, family support, access to facilities and resources, coaching quality, and the influence of injuries or other life changes.

Furthermore, the findings emphasize the importance of sports as a tool for empowerment as well as self-improvement among marginalized youth in the South African context. This research contributes to the understanding of the potential benefits of sports programs for underprivileged adolescents and provides insights for educators, coaches, and policymakers on how to support the self-esteem of this vulnerable population. Organized sporting activities not only offer a safe and structured environment for adolescents but also serve as a vehicle for social inclusion and personal development. The perceptions collected from the participants emphasize the transformative ability of sports in promoting a positive sense of self-worth and accomplishment among underprivileged adolescents.

In conclusion, the study highlights the significant positive impact that sport participation can have on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents, emphasizing the importance of access to sports programs for this demographic. This research demonstrates the need for continued support and investment in sports initiatives for underprivileged communities to help nurture confidence and resilience in young individuals.

AFRIKAANSE ABSTRAK

Hierdie kwalitatiewe studie ondersoek die rol van sport in die verryking van die selfbeeld van minderbevoorregte adolessente. Die navorsing was gebaseer op in-diepte onderhoude met minderbevoorregte adolessente wat aan sportprogramme deelneem, sowel as afrigters wat met hierdie bevolking werk. Deur die proses van tematiese analise ontbloom die studie hoe betrokkenheid by sport die selfbeeld van minderbevoorregte adolessente positief kan beïnvloed deur geleenthede vir vaardigheidsontwikkeling, sosiale konneksie en 'n gevoel van prestasie te bied.

Die eerste tema, *Sport Activities' Influence on Wellbeing*, beklemtoon die belangrikheid van die idee dat deelname aan sport en fisiese aktiwiteite getoon het dat dit talle voordele vir beide fisiese en geestelike gesondheid inhou. As sodanig plaas dit klem op die vind van aktiwiteite wat aangenaam, verblydend en volhoubaar is met die doel om die vele voordele wat sport en fisiese aktiwiteite bied, te pluk.

Die tweede tema, *Adolescence se sosiale netwerk invloed*, dui daarop dat adolessente hoogs beïnvloed word deur hul sosiale netwerke, wat vriende, familie, klasmaats en ander eweknieë kan insluit. Hierdie invloed kan verskeie aspekte van 'n adolessent se lewe beïnvloed, insluitend hul gedrag, houdings, oortuigings en besluitneming. As sodanig word dit noodsaaklik dat ouers, onderwysers en ander volwassenes bewus is van hierdie invloed en die relevante leiding en ondersteuning bied om adolessente te help om hul sosiale verhoudings op 'n gesonde en positiewe manier te navigeer.

Die derde tema, *Proses van Sportdeelname*, sluit tipies verskeie stadiums in, van aanvanklike betrokkenheid tot voortgesette betrokkenheid by sportaktiwiteite. Dit is as gevolg van verskeie faktore wat invloed op 'n individu kan hê, soos persoonlike

motivering, gesinsondersteuning, toegang tot fasiliteite en hulpbronne, afrigtingskwaliteit en die invloed van beserings of ander lewensveranderinge.

Verder beklemtoon die bevindinge die belangrikheid van sport as 'n instrument vir bemagtiging sowel as selfverbetering onder gemarginaliseerde jeug in die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks. Hierdie navorsing dra by tot die begrip van die potensiële voordele van sportprogramme vir minderbevoorregte adolessente en bied insigte vir opvoeders, afrigters en beleidmakers oor hoe om die selfbeeld van hierdie kwesbare bevolking te ondersteun. Georganiseerde sportaktiwiteite bied nie net 'n veilige en gestruktureerde omgewing vir adolessente nie, maar dien ook as 'n voertuig vir sosiale insluiting en persoonlike ontwikkeling. Die persepsies wat van die deelnemers ingesamel word, beklemtoon die transformerende vermoë van sport in die bevordering van 'n positiewe gevoel van eiewaarde en prestasie onder minderbevoorregte adolessente.

Ten slotte beklemtoon die studie die beduidende positiewe impak wat sportdeelname op die selfbeeld van minderbevoorregte adolessente kan hê, wat die belangrikheid van toegang tot sportprogramme vir hierdie demografie beklemtoon. Hierdie navorsing toon die behoefte aan voortgesette ondersteuning en belegging in sportinisiatiewe vir minderbevoorregte gemeenskappe om vertrouwe en veerkragtigheid by jong individue te help koester.

SETSWANA ABSTRACT

Patlisiso eno ya boleng e sekaseka seabe sa metshameko mo go nonotsheng go itshepa ga basha ba ba humanegileng. Patlisiso eno e ne e theilwe mo dipotsolotsong

tse di tseneletseng tse di neng di dirwa le basha ba ba humanegileng ba ba nnang le seabe mo dithulaganyong tsa metshameko, mmogo le bakatisi ba ba berekang le batho bano. Ka thulaganyo ya tshekatsheko ya ditlhogo, patlisiso e senola kafa go nna le seabe mo metshamekong go ka amang ka teng go itshepa ga basha ba ba humanegileng ka go ba naya ditshono tsa go tokafatsa bokgoni jwa bone, go nna le kamano le batho ba bangwe le go ikutlwa ba fitlheetse sengwe. Setlhogo sa ntlha, Sports Activities Influence on Wellbeing, se gatelela botlhokwa jwa kgopolo ya gore go nna le seabe mo metshamekong le mo ditirong tsa mmele go bontshitse gore go na le mesola e mentsi mo boitekanelong jwa mmele le jwa tlhaloganyo. Ka jalo, e gatelela thata go batla ditiro tse di itumedisang, tse di kgotsofatsang le tse di tla nnelang ruri ka boikaelelo jwa go bona melemo e mentsi e metshameko le ditiro tsa go itshidila mmele di nang le yone. Setlhogo sa bobedi se se reng, Adolescence's social network influence, se bontsha gore basha ba tlhotlhelediwa thata ke ditsala tsa bone, ba malapa a bone, ba ba tsenang le bone mo tlelaseng le balekane ba bone. Dilo tseno di ka ama dikarolo tse di farologaneng tsa botshelo jwa mosha, go akaretsa tsela e a itshwarang ka yone, maikutlo a gagwe, dilo tse a di dumelang le ditshwetso tse a di dirang. Ka jalo, go botlhokwa thata gore batsadi, barutabana le bagolo ba bangwe ba itse ka ditlhotlheetso tseno mme ba ba kaele le go ba ema nokeng ka tsela e e tshwanetseng go thusa basha gore ba nne le dikamano tse di siameng le batho ba bangwe. Setlhogo sa boraro, e leng Tsamaiso ya go Nna le Seabe mo Metshamekong, gantsi se akaretsa dikgato di le mmalwa, go tloga ka go nna le seabe mo metshamekong go ya go go nna le seabe mo go yone. Se se bakwa ke mabaka a a farologaneng a a ka nnang le tlhotlheetso mo mothong, jaaka, tlhotlheetso ya botho, tshegetso ya lelapa, phitlheetso ya ditlamelo le

metswedi, boleng jwa katiso, le tlhotlheletso ya dikgobalo kgotsa diphetogo tse dingwe tsa botshelo. Mo godimo ga moo, diphitlhelelo di gatelela botlhokwa jwa metshameko jaaka sedirisiwa sa go maatlafatsa le go tokafatsa mo gare ga bašwa ba ba kgaphetsweng kwa thoko mo maemong a Aforika Borwa. Patlisiso eno e thusa go tlhaloganya melemo e e ka nnang teng ya dithulaganyo tsa metshameko mo basheng ba ba humanegileng mme e naya barutisi, bakatisi le batlhami ba melao tshedimosetso ya gore ba ka thusa jang batho ba ba bokoa bano gore ba itshepe. Ditiro tsa metshameko tse di rulagantsweng ga di neye fela basha tikologo e e babalesegileng le e e rulagantsweng mme gape di ba thusa gore ba nne le seabe mo setšhabeng le gore ba gole. Dikakanyo tse di kgobokantsweng go tswa go batsayakarolo di gatelela bokgoni jwa metshameko jwa go fetola batho ka go rotloetsa boikutlo jo bo siameng jwa go itsaya o le botlhokwa le go fitlhelela sengwe mo basheng ba ba humanegileng. Fa re konela, patlisiso eno e bontsha kafa go nna le seabe mo metshamekong go ka nnang le diphelelo tse di molemo ka teng mo go direng gore basha ba ba humanegileng ba itshepe, e bile e gatelela botlhokwa jwa gore basha bano ba kgone go tsenela dithulaganyo tsa metshameko. Dipatlisiso tseno di bontsha gore go tlhokega gore go nne go na le tshegetso e e tswelletseng le go belediwa madi mo maitekong a metshameko a a dirwang ke batho ba ba humanegileng go thusa go godisa go itshepa le go kgona go itshokelana mo basheng.

KEY TERMS

Adolescents

Self-Esteem

Sport

Underprivileged

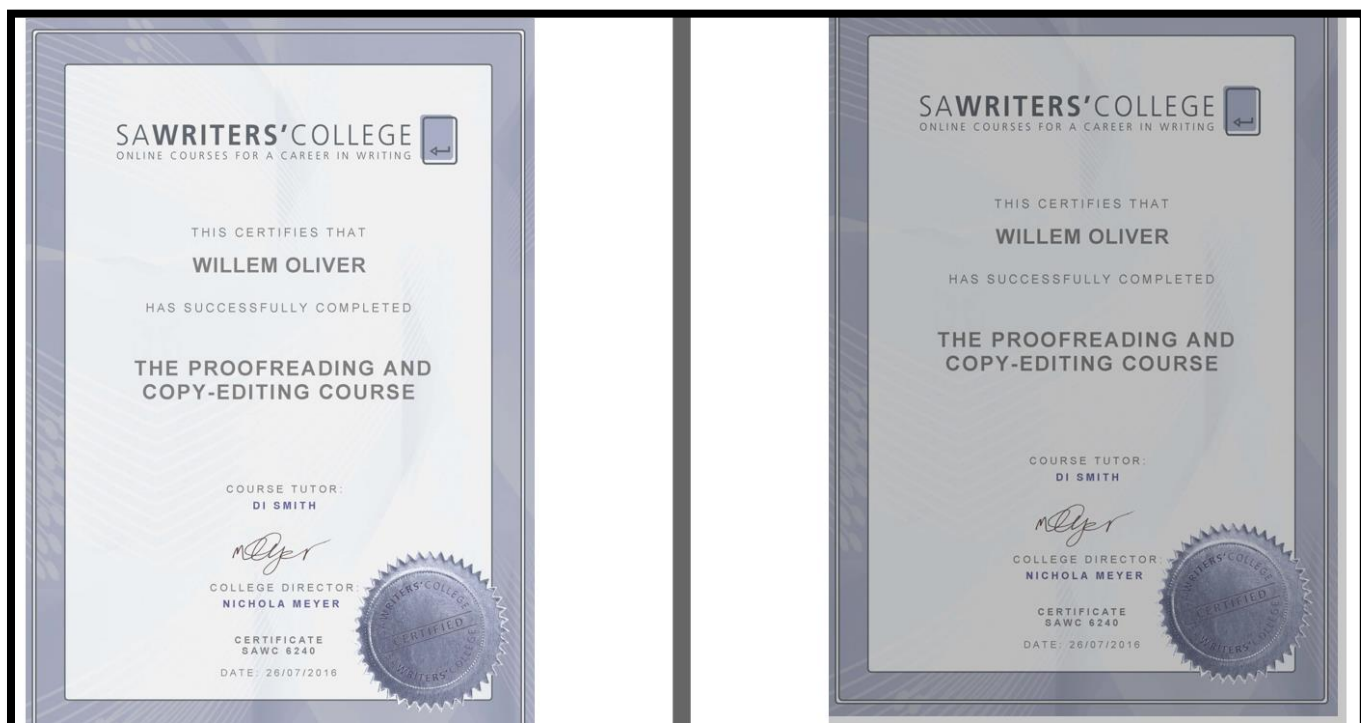
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	-	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HIV	-	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KAD	-	Knowledge, Advocacy and Development
LVA	-	Lenasia Volleyball Association
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSRP	-	National Sport and Recreation Plan
PSD	-	Pro Sport Development
UNICEF	-	The United Nations Children's Fund

CERTIFICATE OF EDITOR



CHAPTER 1

Orientation of the Study

“Sport has the power to change the world...it has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than government in breaking down racial barriers.”

(Nelson Mandela)

Introduction

The self is a critical aspect that influences a person’s life overall. (Bang et al., (2020) define “self” as “all judgements regarding the person himself/herself.” This suggests that self-concept encompasses an individual’s views, attitudes, and ideas about themselves. Self-formation occurs throughout life and evolves. Knowing yourself refers to a person’s connection with themselves and their emotions and ideas, as well as a comprehension of the emotional and cognitive actions that takes place in the person. At the outset, self-concept refers to the entirety of the feelings, perspectives, and actions that characterize an individual and distinguishes them from other individuals. Concisely, the idea of self refers to how individuals see and judge themselves as well as their comprehension and identification of the self (Bozkuş, 2021). Throughout a person’s life, they are constantly developing themselves, and this pattern is repeated on the path to self-awareness. However, self-esteem, in contrast, can be described as “the sentiments of love, respect, and trust that a person has for

himself/herself as a consequence of his/her recognition of himself/herself and acceptance of his/her qualities and powers as they are” (Karagün et al., 2018).

Ordinarily, adolescent psychological health has generally drawn special attention from researchers considering that this stage of life is linked to greater self-consciousness and a propensity for self-criticism (Harter, 1990; Rosenberg, 1979). As such, it becomes critical to identify the elements that support teenagers’ positive psychological well-being since these elements could safeguard them from negative influences, self-doubt, and participation in activities which could be harmful to their health (Irwin et al., 2002). It is a time of major change within the lifeworld of the adolescent. Many people are endeavouring to contend with changes in their bodies, social domain of their lives, and cognitive changes at the same time (Bowker, 2006). Individual self-esteem is in development and in a fragile state as the adolescent is discovering their individuality (Bozkuş, 2021). In the South African context, there appears to be a scourge of low self-esteem linked to mounting concern about the future of South Africa’s youth, according to a 2012 UNICEF report (UNICEF 2012).

The researcher’s attention in this investigation was on exploring the subjective experience of the associations between sport and self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents. In addition, the study looked at factors that contributed to improving the self-esteem as well as development and socialization of these adolescents. With adolescence being a challenging time for most people due to the physical and psychological changes that occur, it becomes vital to further explore this topic.

Background of the Problem

Sporting events often include a range of physical exercises that are regarded to in some way or the other boost self-esteem (Hsu & Lu, 2018). Youth sports accomplishments often occur in public settings, thus, giving participants multiple opportunities to receive prompt feedback on their accomplishments from significant others. It is also theorized that an individual's view and understanding of this input as correct, inspiring, and uplifting in turn affects their perceived athletic abilities, and these various emotions alter their self-esteem (Espinoza, 2020).

Cross-sectional and retrospective studies nearly all the time demonstrated that those who engage in organized youth sports had a better self-esteem than non-participants (e.g., Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Findlay & Bowker, 2009). However, due to the nature of this research, it was not feasible to identify whether these differences were due to sport participation or other confounding factors like gender and age. Since it is impossible to prove a cause-and-effect correlation, longitudinal designs becomes more appropriate than cross-sectional ones for investigating flow directions between e.g., self-esteem and sport participation. Furthermore, longitudinal designs provide significant benefits for evaluating and making conclusions about mediating effects (Espinoza, 2020) as shown in present-day research of the facilitating impact of perceived sport competence (PSC) – a declaration of personal competence that generalises throughout the sport realm (Weiss, 2019). While longitudinal studies provide insights into changes over time, qualitative study aims to reach into the depth and complexity of current subjective experiences of underprivileged adolescents. Accordingly, a qualitative approach addresses a need, that other methods cannot, by

offering immediate, in-depth understanding as opposed to tracking changes over time, which is complementary to what longitudinal data can provide.

According to research by Badayai and Ismail (2012), it was noted that during adolescence, there is a drop in self-esteem. Therefore, it is vital to take cognizance that the most fundamental stages of development through one's life cycle take place during the adolescent phase. With low self-esteem comes negative thoughts and ideas that directly affect not just the way in which one thinks and feels about themselves, but it also impacts everything that an individual encounters and experiences.

Hays (1999) states that

moving our bodies is one way to help move our minds – just as, in turn, our thoughts and feelings can alter the use of our bodies. As such, emphasis is placed on the fact that physical activity does not only improve one's physical health, but mental health too whilst teaching kids to lead an active and healthy lifestyle and learning new skills. (p. xi)

Individuals' who partake in organized sports are likely to experience the many physical and cognitive benefits that arise from regular exercise. In addition, regular sports participation often involves physical effort, which in turn leads to the release of endorphins, and thus, promoting a sense of well-being and enjoyment. Furthermore, the camaraderie of being part of a sports team may likely promote a sense of belonging and social affinity. This in turn is likely to support the feelings of competency and self-worth, as individuals develop skills, achieve goals, and receive recognition for their efforts. These positive experiences and triumphs in sports can enhance and improve one's self-esteem.

As it is widely accepted that a positive self-esteem has far more benefits than a negative self-esteem as such, the researcher placed emphasis on exploring the subjective experience of the associations between sport and self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents. Those who have a high self-esteem are presumed to be psychologically happy and healthy (Branden, 1994; Taylor & Brown, 1988) whereas those with a low self-esteem are believed to be psychologically distressed and perhaps even depressed (Tennen & Affleck, 1993). Additionally, during adolescence, self-esteem can be influenced by various dynamics, for instance, race, gender, puberty and age to name a few. These elements can contribute to the development and or fluctuation of self-esteem in adolescence. Both boys and girls experience a decline in their overall self-esteem during adolescence, and in contrast to boys' self-esteem, girls' self-esteem does not increase until young adulthood (Twenge & Campbell, 2001).

When an adolescent is uncovering their uniqueness and personality, their self-esteem is fragile and in a state of development (Berk, 2009). According to the research by Badayai and Ismail (2012), a decline in self-esteem was understood to take place during adolescence. With low esteem comes negative thoughts and ideas that directly influence not just the way in which one thinks and feels about themselves, but also impacts everything an individual encounters and their experiences. As such, many of these psychosocial concerns can be linked to issues such as high unemployment rates, obesity, delinquent adolescent behaviour/s, and the amount of time in which children are left unsupervised due to social disruptions such as single-parent households or in households where both parents are working, to name a few.

Additionally, the focus and emphasis of adolescents' future potentials are of great importance in the South African context due to the degree of social problems imposed on the country. Many underprivileged adolescents in the South African community are more than often not provided with adequate opportunities to engage in sport activities both in and out of their school environments. Research such as The Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (n = 9,054), conducted in 2002 points to some alarming statistics. It found that over 17% of adolescents were overweight and 4.2% were obese. Hallal et al. (2012) estimate that a high proportion (80.3%) of 13 to 15-year-olds never met the WHO physical activity recommendation in 2012. Prior to 1999, relatively low rates of overweight and obesity among South African children existed, according to a study that examined this topic. However, more recent research has revealed that the mean prevalence with regards to the issue of overweight and obesity combined was slightly over 15% (Rossouw et al., 2012). According to the South Africa's Government Sport and Recreation White Paper policy, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Working Group in Harare made the following observation regarding the influence of sport on society (South African Government, 2011):

It is time that the integral role which sport plays in the process of nation-building is fully recognized. Sport is an investment. It is firstly an investment in the health, vitality and productivity of one's people. It is secondly an investment in their future. The social benefits include an overall improvement in the quality of life and physical, mental and moral well-being of a population. Because of its visibility, sport can play an enormous part in redressing gender and race

inequalities as well as discrimination against people with disabilities and marginalised groups.

Awareness of Problem

The researcher has observed, while being an avid participant in sport, as well as conducting volunteer work, that it is not easy for underprivileged adolescents to partake in sport due to many barriers in the South African context. Most of the time they cannot afford to engage in sport activities, as they are living in single parent households, which leads to insufficient financial income, resulting in just enough or a lack of income to maintain their day-to-day functioning within their households. These financial and systematic barriers are likely to inhibit the individual's involvement in sport.

The benefits of the adolescents engaging in sport activities also go beyond having a good health, as it also promotes their physical, psychological, and social growth. As a result, these advantages not only benefit the individual, but also tend to infiltrate into their communities. The socialization of these individuals and the skills that they acquire from sport participation allow them to positively contribute towards their communities. It is also widely accepted that engaging in sport can influence pro-social behaviour, while mitigating one's exposure to unethical behaviour and involvement in crime and violence or substance abuse by keeping them busy, thus allowing them a more structured and positive usage of their time.

In the South African context, many schools do not have adequate or any access to sport facilities and equipment. On the other hand, many times those schools with the facilities do not have any or insufficient coaches and trainers at their disposal. An

intervention is thus needed to dispel any myths and negative views that could likely occur around sport participation and the self.

Considering the aforementioned, the researcher is of the opinion that there is a need to explore the relations between organized sport and the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents in the South African context to gain insight into the different experiences and views these adolescents may have. The researcher envisages that with the necessary funding, education, and support of NGOs, schools, and sport clubs, more opportunities could be given to underprivileged adolescents in an effort to equal the playing arena and ensure that every child has the opportunity to become a victor.

Statement of the Problem

It is fundamental to have a clear direction for a research study prior to conducting or designing it. This must include the modification of the research focus through the construction of a research problem, problem statement, and research question. By the method of forming a clear research problem, problem statement, and research question, researchers are then able to outline the purpose and objectives of a research study. This in turn provides transparency and simplicity in devising suitable research methods, choosing appropriate data sources, and analysing the discoveries effectively.

Furthermore, it also ensures that the study aims to contributing towards existing knowledge on the research topic as well as examine any research gaps that exist. The relation between physical activity and self-esteem has been studied numerous times. The discoveries indicate that engaging in physical activities throughout the adolescent years “positively affects their self-esteem, body image and physical strength” (Jaffee &

Ricker, 1993). Not only self-esteem, but also goal setting, leadership, competition, and lessons learnt in teamwork are achieved when physical activities and sport are used as a foundation to succeed later in life (Solomon, 2002). Participation in sporting activities and exercise clearly influences the growth of an adolescent's self-concept and perception of self-esteem and competence (Bunker, 1998).

Although several studies have been conducted citing that sport is known to positively contribute towards one's self-esteem, very little is known about the extent, scope, and nature of the role that sport plays in the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents in the South African context. In considering that physical education is not included in the school curriculum in South Africa any longer, it becomes more vital for NGOs, coaches, trainers, and the likes, to find ways to create opportunities that allow for children to have opportunities to engage in sport activities. At the same time, previous researchers who have conducted studies on the influence of organized sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents place much emphasis on the difficulties that NGOs encounter in an effort to aid development among children in South Africa. As such, those results have been limited. Therefore, this research has placed emphasis to understand in what ways do underprivileged adolescents perceive that regular participation in organized sports activities affects their self-esteem.

As a result, the researcher imagines engaging in the development and implementation of various relevant intervention/wellness programmes for underprivileged children in order to promote optimal youth development through the medium of sport.

Aim and Scope of Study

The core of our psychological developments is self-esteem, and this plays a crucial role in personality integration, behaviour motivation, and mental health development (Karagün et al., 2018). Self-esteem and environmental harmony are closely proportional. This study not only investigates the validity of these statements, but also links it to the variables of sport, poverty, and adolescence. The researcher used a pragmatic research approach that made use of both questionnaires and interviews to collect data that answer the research objectives.

Primary Research Question

The purpose of this study is to explore the subjective experience of the associations between sport and self-esteem amongst underprivileged adolescents via qualitative methods. The adolescents in this study engaged in regular organized sport activities. As such, the major question that this research envisages to answer is: *Could an improvement of one's self-esteem from engaging in organized sport activities be utilised as a helping tool for underprivileged adolescents? And how do underprivileged adolescents describe the impact of organized sport participation on their self-esteem?*

Sub-Questions of the Study

The following sub-questions link with the main research question:

- How does self-esteem benefit from sport?
- Which are the perspectives of underprivileged adolescence with regard to sport and self-esteem?
- Which factors influence participation in sport among underprivileged adolescence?

Research Design and Theoretical Framework

Research Methods

Leedy (1997, p. 195) defines research design as a plan for a study, providing the overall framework for collecting data. MacMillan and Schumacher (2001, p. 166) define it as a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the research question(s).

While there are various methods and strategies for research to be carried out, there are also various research approaches that exist. However, the most commonly known and established research methods for collecting data are qualitative research method, quantitative research method and mixed approach research method. These three approaches differ in terms of their strengths and shortcomings, consequently, the choice of research approach one adopts will largely depend on the research questions, objectives and type of data required. Qualitative research emphasizes the importance of understanding and interpreting the subjective reality of individuals | communication and interaction. It provides contextualized understanding of human behaviour as well as contributes to the development of theory that reflects and resonates with the experiences of the research participants. The potential of qualitative research is that it has great capacity to provide a multi-faceted written account as to the manner in which an individual experiences a given research issue. The ability of qualitative data to more fully describe a phenomenon is an important consideration not only from the researcher's perspective, but from the reader's perspective as well: Thus, it becomes crucial to provide individuals with information in a way that they are accustomed to receiving it order for them to comprehend better that they otherwise would. In contrast,

quantitative studies, according to Terre Blanche et al., (2006) begin with a series of predetermined categories usually embodied in standardized quantitative measures and use this data to make broad and generalisable comparisons. Quantitative research also focuses on cause-and-effect relations, including uncovering the facts. It is, however, not such a flexible approach as qualitative research. Kemper et al. (2003) define mixed methods design as a method that includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis in parallel form (concurrent mixed method design in which two types of data are collected and analyzed in sequential form). As such, a qualitative method was adopted as the most appropriate process to obtain comprehensive knowledge into the research topic at hand.

As a means to permit the researcher the chance to answer the research question, descriptive and exploratory research designs were therefore applied to the research process. This was implemented due to the fact that the prevailing knowledge on the role that sport plays with reference to the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents is somewhat deficient.

Descriptive research provides an underpinning of knowledge that aides the researcher to comprehend the current status of an event, while exploratory research helps to create new ideas and hypotheses for additional investigation. Once again, the choice of design will depend on the research objectives as well as the nature of the research phenomena.

In summary, this research was undertaken in order to explore the subjective experience of the associations between sport and self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents within the South African context. Consequently, the researcher envisages

contributing to an in-depth knowledge of this topic in an effort to aid the understanding of NGOs and other interested stakeholders regarding the benefits of sport-therapy as a helping tool for underprivileged adolescents.

Theoretical Framework

While the subject of self-esteem has been one of the most extensively researched topics in psychology for decades, the concepts of sport and self-esteem are clearly central to this study, along with the fact that participation in sport is likely to improve one's self-esteem overall.

In this study, self-esteem is discussed not only to emphasise the role that sport has within the community, but also the influence it has on the adolescent's self-esteem. In conjunction to contributing to ones' physical, psychological, and emotional wellbeing, sport plays a significant role in healthy social development and interaction (Martín-Rodríguez et al., 2024). A sense of social inclusion offered by gangs can also serve as attractive to vulnerable adolescents within the South African context. As such, sport can also provide a sense of social inclusion, away from the destruction that accompanies gang involvement activities. In sport clubs, a community is formed which can provide a much-needed safe space for vulnerable adolescents and provides an alternative social network (van der Westhuizen et al., 2021).

At the same time, emphasis needs to be placed not just on the role of the community, but to shed light on the influence that the role of sport also has on the adolescent's self-esteem and behaviour. There are numerous published reports on the effect of sport participation on the self-esteem. Gisladóttir et al. (2013) also surveyed adolescents (14–16 years old) to examine the effects of sport participation on mental

and physical health. Results indicated that those who were more involved with sport clubs had better body image and had a higher self-perception of mental and physical health. For instance, (Talbot, 2001) asserts that involvement in sport can help children develop respect for their body as well as respect for others. He adds that sport participation contributes to the positive development of mind and body leading to higher self-confidence and self-esteem.

While examples of theorists have been depicted here, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development which will be covered in more detail in the following chapter, it highlights the importance of understanding the several developmental stages in which an individual evolves and the impact of the various factors such culture, society, and conflict may manifest on anyone of those stages. In considering that adolescence is a challenging period of adjustment and development, both physically and psychologically, both boys and girls could encounter low self-esteem, especially in terms of their academic accomplishments and perhaps even their physical beauty. One must then ask, How do we aim to understand the developmental stages of adolescents as depicted by Erikson, and create a positive relation between sports participation and improved self-esteem?

Operational Definition of Terms

Sport

To understand this term, the notion of sport must first be conceptualized. According to South Africa's Department of Sport and Recreation (South African Government, 2011), sport can be defined as any activity that requires a significant level of physical involvement in which participants engage in either a structured or

unstructured environment, either for the purpose of having a winner, or purely for relaxation, personal satisfaction, physical health, and emotional growth and development.

Recreation

According to South Africa's Department of Sport and Recreation (South African Government, 2011), recreation is a guided process of voluntary participation in any activity which contributes to the improvement of general health, wellbeing, and the skills of both the individual and society. This differs from activity to activity in the sense that its sole purpose is leisure and not competition. Recreational activities may relate to activities or hobbies in which individuals engage in for relaxation, enjoyment or entertainment purposes, and thus may not specifically be associated with sporting activities only. As such, an activity such as going to the gym would be considered a recreational activity.

Adolescence

As there is no specific definition for this term, it is imperative to note that adolescence is predominantly referred to as a transitional developmental life period recognised by factors such as maturity and puberty to name a few, which exists between the stages of childhood and adulthood. In addition, due to the multicultural society of South Africa one needs to further take cognizance of the difficulty of assigning an age bracket to the term "adolescence" based on the differences in cultures and the different rates at which individuals reach puberty. At the same time, in South Africa, adolescence legally ends at the age of 21, when parental consent expires and the person is then held liable for contractual obligations (Louw et al., 1998, p. 385).

Underprivileged

This term most often refers to individuals not enjoying the same standard of living or rights as the majority of people in a society. As mentioned previously, when considering South Africa's societal issues such as poverty, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, and high crime rates that affect the country, one could make the assumption that a large number of individuals are underprivileged. According to a 2011 UNICEF report titled *UNICEF, South Africa's children: A review of equity and child rights* (UNICEF, 2011), which investigated the conditions under which many South African children live, it highlights that 11.5 million out of the country's 19 million children are living in poverty, whilst 7 million children are living in 20% of the poorest households. As a result, the report highlights the plight of these underprivileged children who are more likely than others to not complete their schooling, who are likely to experience hunger, who live in shacks, and do not have access to basic water and sanitation facilities.

Global Self-Esteem

In general, global self-esteem is characterized as an individual's total feeling of personal worth. Several studies report that self-esteem could increase with age (Cairns et al., 1990; Huang, 2010; Labouvie et al., 1990; McCarthy & Hoge, 1982; Mullis et al., 1992; O'Malley & Bachman, 1983; Prawat et al., 1979; Pullmann et al., 2009; Roeser & Eccles, 1998; Twenge & Campbell, 2001), whereas other studies report that self-esteem does not change (Chubb et al., 1997; Young & Mroczek, 2003) or even decreases (Keltikangas-Järvinen, 1990; McMullin & Cairney, 2004; Robins et al., 2002; Zimmerman et al., 1997). With regard to young adulthood, the few available longitudinal studies available suggest that self-esteem increases during young adulthood

(Galambos et al. 2006; Huang, 2010; Orth et al., 2010) while the study of Donnellan et al. (2007) denies it. Additional evidence is provided by cross-sectional data, likewise, suggesting that self-esteem gradually increases during young adulthood (Gove et al., 1989; Pullmann et al., 2009; Robins et al., 2002; Twenge & Campbell, 2001), with the exception of McMullin and Cairney (2004) who report a gradual decrease. Although research on the effects of sport participation on youth development is not conclusive, there is considerable empirical support for the type of learning environment that is most conducive to fostering self-esteem, persistence, and skills development in young athletes (e.g., Duda & White, 1992; Eccles et al., 1998; Roberts et al., 1997). From the above, it is obvious that previous research has produced varying results.

Sport and Physical Activities

Physical activities can be defined as “any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that result in energy expenditure [and can be classified under] occupational, sports, conditioning, household, or other activities” (Caspersen et al., 1985). Adults who engage in regular physical activity boost their physical health in an effort to deter chronic illness and support their treatment. Similarly, adolescents and adults’ psychological wellness is positively impacted when they engage in reasonably intense fitness related activities and exercise. For example, physical activities reduce depression and anxiety symptoms (Carek et al., 2011; Larun et al., 2006).

Chapter Organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the rationale and the background for the study to be investigated. The goal is to offer guidance for the design of the study and the data collection and analysis methods.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a conceptual analysis of the research variables to be studied. The pragmatic associations of the relation between the variables will be discussed.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical foundation for this research study. It sheds light on the concepts and theories that will guide and inform this research process. It furthermore assists in uncovering any research gaps or unanswered questions that may exist.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter will focus on the methodology, data collection, and analysis used in this research study. The measuring instruments will be disclosed and statistical information from the data analysis, pertinent to the study's objective and hypothesis will be discussed.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis

The aim of this chapter is to scrutinise and make sense of the data collected in order to obtain a rich understanding of the research topic at hand. As such, the data analysis chapter places emphasis on sorting and categorizing the data and uncovering

themes and patterns by means of analysis. This chapter as such aims to provide an integrated discussion with the findings and recommendations it presents.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendation

This final chapter consists of a cohesive discussion and conclusion of the findings of the results. Recommendations and limitations that arose during the study will be indicated and suggestions will be made for future research pertaining to the specific topic.

Summary

This chapter revealed the study at hand by discussing the context which motivated the study, the research problem, and the study objectives which served as a guide for this study. Other essential sections such as the study purpose and the importance of the research were discussed. The next chapter will discuss variables of this research through the eyes of past and current scholars. This will aid in further revealing the importance of this study's research gap.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

“Nothing builds self-esteem and self-confidence like accomplishment.”

(Thomas Carlyle)

Introduction

When watching any sport match, it is a given that the participants are satisfied and happy when they win while the opposite holds true should they lose and be defeated. However, not all participants are the same, nor do they all regard themselves as victorious or in the same light. It should however be noted that, children that play sport can benefit from a variety of physical benefits that are associated with regular exercise. While physical activity aims to promote overall physical health, it also tends to improve self-esteem, promote social engagements, praise, and teamwork, which in turn boosts one’s confidence and promotes a positive body image. They may also experience the effects of increased feelings of competence, self-worth, self-esteem, enjoyment, accomplishment, satisfaction, purpose, fulfilment and overall improved mental health. However, according to Smith and Green (2005, p. 241–253), there is a broad consensus that declining participation in sport and physical activity is the main cause of a health crisis said to be emerging among all age groups especially the youth and children. Hence, this served as a motivating force behind the need for this research topic to be further explored and scrutinised on the impact of sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents.

Sport

In an effort to understand the notion of sport, it needs to be conceptualized. According to South Africa's Department of Sport and Recreation, sport can be defined either as any activity that requires a significant level of physical involvement and in which participants engage in a structured or unstructured environment in order to get a winner, or purely for relaxation, personal satisfaction, physical health, and emotional growth and development. Sports participation can be defined as competitive and mental activities in which individual's take part in for the purpose of fun, competition, self-enjoyment or to achieve excellence, skill development, or a mix of these. Sport is also defined by the London Sports Council as "an activity which offers the individual the opportunity of self-knowledge, self-expression and fulfilment; personal achievement, skill acquisition and demonstration of ability; social integration, enjoyment, good health and well-being" (Mhuirheartaigh, 1999, p. 6).

From the above, one can infer that sport and/or physical activities involve diverse modes of activities occurring in a range of settings. Participating in organized sporting activities can have a beneficial impact on adolescents' physical growth, creating positive social experiences and encourage pro-social behaviour and abilities. It fosters a holistic development that goes far beyond physical fitness, as it fosters social connections, community engagements and valuable life skills. As such, individuals who engage in organized sporting activities are more likely to lead healthy, fulfilling lives and become responsible individuals with their communities. Furthermore, organized sport affords parents and adolescents the opportunity to overcome any barrier that may cause the obstruction of the involvement of youth in sport. Sport participation allows individuals

from all lifestyles to come together to engage and socialize around a common activity. As such, the development and implementation of various relevant intervention/wellness programmes for underprivileged children are of extreme importance in order to promote optimal youth development through the medium of organized sport.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a subjective evaluation of one's own worth and competence. A person with high self-esteem generally displays a positive self-image and tends to believe in their abilities. While, on the other hand, individuals with low self-esteem may typically feel inadequate and project a negative view of themselves. As such, the primary goal of this research was to observe the impact of sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents. While engaging in sport participation may improve one's self-esteem with regard to their physical abilities, it in turn can also positively impact their general esteem. It is undeniable that there is a strong relationship between self-esteem and sport participation and while there are benefits that can be attained from sports participation, it should also be noted there are drawbacks as well. It is also imperative to mention that the effect of sports participation on self-esteem is likely to vary amongst individuals and is likely to be influenced by several factors such as personality, socio-economic status and the overall sport environment. Overall, while sport participation can have both positive and negative effects on self-esteem, it is generally credited with playing a beneficial role on one's personal growth, skill development and improved self-perception.

When it comes to adolescents, two important standpoints are vital upon examining the role of organized sport on self-esteem. The first point is centred on

health, while the second concerns the socialization of these adolescents considering that the most important phase of one's developmental lifespan is the adolescent phase. Adolescence is the transitional period where changes take place in the human body and where individuals experience difficulties in high levels of "storm and stress" (Maiano et al., 2004). While adolescents go through various transitions during this phase of their life, they also face various development challenges during this time such as physical, cognitive, emotional and even social changes. In addition, these challenges are likely to have a negative impact on their self-esteem. Sport participation not only promotes a healthy lifestyle, but also aids in an individual's personal vital development in order to succeed. It is commonly believed that when adolescents participate in physical activity, the structured sport programmes will lead to positive experiences and beneficial developmental outcomes (Amorose et al., 2009). While research has identified various theories explaining the mechanisms and development of self-esteem, two major theories which will be discussed here are, firstly, the social comparison theory, which implies that individuals establish their own self-worth by comparing themselves to others. Social comparison theory is predominantly important in the understanding of self-esteem in adolescence, due to this being a period represented by important social and cognitive development, along with increased sensitivity to peer evaluation.

Secondly, self-concept theory, which proposes that individuals develop their self-esteem based on their beliefs and perceptions about themselves. Self-concept theory sheds light on indispensable understandings into the relationship between self-concept and self-esteem during adolescence.

While both the self-concept theory and social comparison theory look at aspects of self-perception and interpersonal evaluation, they confront these subject matters from unique viewpoints.

Self-concept theory proposes that adolescents' self-esteem is shaped by their perceptions of themselves across various spheres such as academic competence, social acceptance, physical appearance, and personal values. Adolescents with positive self-concepts, who see themselves positively in these spheres, are likely to have higher self-esteem.

Accordingly, adolescents' self-esteem is influenced by the congruence between their self-concept (how they see themselves) and their ideal self (how they aspire to be). As such, positive self-concepts that align closely with the ideal self, give support to higher self-esteem, while incongruities between the two may lead to lower self-esteem.

In addition, obtaining feedback from peers, parents, and other significant individuals play a fundamental role in shaping adolescents' self-concept and, thus, their self-esteem. Accordingly, positive feedback that strengthens adolescents' self-concepts can boost and develop self-esteem, while negative feedback may undermine it.

Social Comparison Theory implies that adolescents assess their self-concept and self-worth by comparing themselves to others. These social comparisons can shape adolescents' self-esteem depending on the outcomes of the comparisons.

It follows that, adolescents engage in upward and downward social comparisons with their peers. Upward comparisons (comparing oneself to those perceived as better off) may lead to lower self-esteem if adolescents feel inferior or incompetent, while

downward comparisons (comparing oneself to those perceived as worse off) may boost self-esteem by promoting feelings of dominance and competence.

Moreover, peers and media act as reference points for social comparisons, predominantly in adolescence. Adolescents are likely to compare themselves to peers who are perceived as more successful or attractive, which can impact their self-esteem. Likewise, being subjected to unrealistic and idealized images in the media may also lead to unrealistic comparisons and lower self-esteem.

In essence, both theories acknowledge the importance and value of self-perception and social evaluation in influencing adolescents' self-esteem. While self-concept theory gives emphasis to the internal processes of self-perception and identity formation, highlighting the role of congruence between self-concept and ideal self in self-esteem, social comparison theory gives important to the external processes of comparing oneself to others, highlighting the effect of social comparisons on self-evaluation and emotional responses.

In summary, self-concept theory and social comparison theory offer complementary views on how adolescents' self-esteem is influenced by their perceptions of themselves and their comparisons with others. While self-concept theory emphasizes internal processes of self-perception, social comparison theory highlights the role of external social comparisons in shaping self-esteem during adolescence.

In giving consideration to the above, it is vital to understand these theories as they provide valuable insights into the factors which may contribute to the development and maintenance of self-esteem. By exploring further into these theories, researchers can develop more effective interventions and strategies aimed at promoting healthy self-

esteem in individuals across different age groups and backgrounds. This stronger focus on theoretical explanations can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of self-esteem and pave the way for more targeted approaches to enhancing it. These theories also highlight the importance of addressing self-esteem in educational settings (Du et al., 2017). In acknowledging the educational significance of self-esteem, educators can implement interventions and create supportive environments that focus on nurturing an individual's confidence, motivation, and engagement. Furthermore, by understanding the mechanisms and development of self-esteem, educators can tailor their approaches to meet the unique needs of each individual, fostering a positive sense of self and promoting optimal educational outcomes.

Considering South Africa's History

The life experiences of South African adolescents who form part of the post-apartheid youth play a crucial role in understanding the development challenges these individuals undergo. With societal issues such as poverty, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, and high crime rates that affect South Africa, one may argue that these issues could negatively impact various domains of an individual's psychosocial development and functioning. Within the various fields of psychology, many scholars agree that intrapsychic, interpersonal, and intergroup processes are all embedded within socio-historical contexts (Bulhan, 1985; Erikson, 1963; Tajfel & Fraser, 1978), and that shifts (or perceptions of shifts) within these contexts could induce changes in such psychological processes. While the merit of sports engagement has received some experiential backing, there is also proof that sports participation can also be harmful to

children and adolescents (Danish et al., 1993). The idea that playing a sport develops character in an individual or causes character disorders depends largely on the sporting organization's philosophy, the calibre of the coaching, the degree of parental engagement, as well as the unique experiences and resources of the participants that it does on the actual skill of the sport (Petitpas & Champagne, 2000; Smith & Smoll, 2002).

In considering South Africa's history of apartheid, it is also necessary to examine what role sport currently plays in the country. One should then consider the manner in which sport has influenced previously disadvantaged individuals in an attempt to understand the likely benefits of organized sport for underprivileged adolescents. In addition, when taking South Africa's past socio-political context into consideration, many youths do not have opportunities or resources to engage in sport activities. While participation in sport can promote positive behaviour and confidence in one's abilities, it can also contribute towards an individual's wellbeing, evoke a sense of belonging and togetherness, and could aid integration into society. In considering the changes which individuals may be faced with during adolescence such as identity formation, moral self, and emotional freedom, Dove's global survey, *The real truth about beauty* (Dove 2010), reveals that six out of 10 girls avoid participating in activities because of poor body confidence. They are specifically avoiding social activities – 23% are avoiding going to the beach or pool and 17% are avoiding physical activities or sport. Additionally, coaches who use constructive criticism, regular encouragement and positive reinforcement create a nurturing environment that fosters the growth of the adolescent's

self-esteem. Through these techniques, individuals can further develop confidence in their abilities, overcome challenges and believe in their self-worth and potential.

In South Africa, sport development was a subject undergoing intense review with the 2010 Soccer World Cup held here (Tomlinson et al., 2009, p. 5). In paying attention to previous literature, there is much stated about the influence of sport on the development of individuals, but what role does it play when it comes to underprivileged adolescents and their self-esteem, and can it be used as a solution? Although the 2010 World Cup in South Africa generated great public interest in the area of sport with the hopes of creating sporting initiatives to enforce social transformation, little has been done to bring sport to rural areas and townships. As a result, sport is still regarded as a luxury whilst eradicating other social ills such as providing water and sanitation facilities still take priority. As van Eekeren (2006, p. 1) claims: "Until recently, research into sport was tantamount to academic suicide," but now there is an increased knowledge of sport as a medium of development, not only from sport administrators but also in fields as diverse as health, education, and governance. There is a dire need of investigation and while much evidence is subjective, there is a clear lack of effort and awareness when trying to comprehend how sport relates to larger social concerns (The International Platform on Sport and Development, 2010).

As sport is synonymous with the South African culture, many scholars claim that sport can alleviate certain of the social problems that underprivileged adolescents may face, such as low self-esteem. However, how then does it actually influence the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents? Self-esteem is intricately associated with an individual's social network, the activities they engage in as well as the feedback they

receive from others. Positive relationships, fulfilling and meaningful activities as well as supportive feedback can all serve as factors that contribute towards boosting self-esteem, while negative influences can diminish it. At the same time, it should be noted that low self-esteem is a considerable risk factor for a range of negative outcomes such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse and eating disorders to name a few. Many characteristics such as race, gender, age, puberty, body weight and participation in physical activities have an impact on adolescent self-esteem (McLeod & Owens, 2004; Powell, 2004). At the same time, global self-esteem declines for males and females during adolescence, and unlike their male counterparts, girl's self-esteem does not increase until early adulthood (Twenge & Campbell, 2001).

Previous researchers (Larson, 2000; Smith, 2003) have emphasised the importance of sport participation for individuals' self-esteem. For example, some researchers argue that sport promotes positive adjustment by offering opportunities to learn, for example, athletic skills, peer relationships, and non-academic competency (Larson, 2000; Smith, 2003). Although there is much literature written about the benefits of sport on the development of children, there is very little about the specific aims and objects that should be utilised in order to achieve the desired, positive outcome.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect and function that sport plays in the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents in the South African context. Although the research presented constraints, the influence of sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents should be considered a vital field of research within the 21st

century for various reasons, with reference to NGOs, individuals, and South Africans in general. The findings of this study could likely help schools in underprivileged environments to encourage adolescents to play and engage in sport. Schools can also acquire students to assist them in sport activities in an effort to promote a healthy lifestyle for the learners while promoting positive self-esteem. The government will also benefit from the study as they are in a position to introduce academic policies that can impact the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents by sponsoring more sport activities. Institutions of higher education can benefit from the study because it covers a specific research gap within the South African context.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

“Youth sports isn’t just about sport. It’s about keeping the fun in the game, and teaching your athletes lessons they can take with them in life.”

(Coach John Burns)

Introduction

A conceptual framework functions as a guide into the development of any study or investigation. Its primary focus is to provide a foundation for interpreting and understanding research findings, thus enabling a researcher to better organize and structure their research process. The conceptual framework serves as a roadmap for the research process, by assisting to identify gaps in knowledge, to determine research objectives and to guide the data collection and analysis process. It therefore provides the groundwork for comparing and contrasting research findings with theories that already exist so as to play a role in further advancing the data in a specific field. A conceptual frame generally comprises of the following elements:

- **Concepts** – These are the key ideas or phenomena that is being studied. They aim to provide the building blocks for the framework and for that reason, define the central focus of the research.
- **Assumptions** – These refer to the underlying principles or beliefs that researchers hold about the phenomena they are studying. As such, assumptions

may be based on prior knowledge, existing theories or a researcher's own beliefs.

- **Expectations** – These are the likely outcomes or results of the research study at hand. Accordingly, researchers create expectations based on their assumptions and the existing literature that is available for the specified field of study.
- **Beliefs** – These pertain to the opinions or values that researchers adopt about the phenomena being studied. Consequently, beliefs are likely to influence the way researchers' approach as well as interpret their findings.
- **Theories** – These concern the existing explanations that have already been developed to explain the phenomena being studied. In short, theories provide a framework for understanding the relationships between concepts and at the same time guiding the development of the research questions.

The Role of Sport

How can we use the medium of sport as an intervention to better the lives of learners from underprivileged areas? In the 2011 policy documented of South Africa's Government Sport and Recreation White Paper, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Working Group (South African Government, 2011) made the following observation with regard to the influence of sport on society:

It is time that the integral role which sport plays in the process of nation-building is fully recognized. Sport is an investment. It is firstly an investment in the health, vitality and productivity of one's people. It is secondly an investment in their future. The social benefits include an overall improvement in the quality of life and physical, mental and moral well-being of a population. Furthermore,

successful athletes serve as role models for the youth of the country, as achievers, as unofficial ambassadors, and as individuals committed to equality and fairness in competition. Because of its visibility, sport can play an enormous part in redressing gender and race inequalities as well as discrimination against people with disabilities and marginalised groups.

In India, Pro Sport Development (PSD) was created in an effort to drive sport initiatives for children within their underprivileged areas (PSD, 2023). As such, sport served as a vehicle for fostering the physical, social and emotional growth and well-being of these kids, emphasizing the need of encouraging them to complete their formal education rather than quitting in order to support their family's financial needs. The results from this programme taught these children about teamwork and comradery and boosted their self-esteem to also encourage individuals into adopting leadership roles for themselves.

Similarly, in the South African context, the White Paper on Sport and Recreation suggests that involvement in sport and recreation contribute significantly towards the values of the country (Republic of South Africa, 2023).

Within the South African context, sport serves as a catalyst in bringing people from all lifestyles together and connecting them. In doing so, it works towards eradicating racial and social barriers via the engagement of teamwork and shared common goals. This could also be based on the actual quality of sport facilities, opportunities, and structures that are in place for all individuals to have an equal footing.

Sport and Self-Esteem

At large, self-esteem, is commonly defined as an individual's overall perception of their worthiness as a person. It encompasses one's overall evaluation and feelings of self-worth, self-acceptance as well as self-respect. It sheds light on how individuals perceive and value themselves in the various aspect of their lives, such as their abilities, achievements, relationships and their identity. With regard to young adulthood, the few available longitudinal studies suggest that self-esteem increases during young adulthood (Galambos et al., 2006; Huang, 2010; Orth et al., 2010) while others argue to the contrary (see Donnellan et al., 2007). Additional evidence is provided by cross-sectional data, suggesting that self-esteem gradually increases during young adulthood (Gove et al., 1989; Pullmann et al., 2009; Robins et al., 2002; Twenge & Campbell, 2001), while other scholars argue to the contrary, reporting a gradual decrease (see e.g., McMullin & Cairney, 2004). Although research on the effects of sport participation on youth development is not conclusive, there is considerable empirical support for the type of learning environment that is most conducive to fostering self-esteem, persistence, and skills development in young athletes (e.g., Duda & White, 1992; Eccles et al., 1998; Roberts et al., 1997). At the same time, numerous research findings suggest that youngsters who have low self-esteem may unlikely emerge victorious in terms of the academic accomplishments (Mann et al., 2004). An increasing body of research from cross-sectional, longitudinal, mediational, and interventional studies demonstrates the beneficial relationship between exercise and self-esteem (Li et al., 2014; Maher et al., 2013).

Erikson (as cited in Mchunu, 2008) predicts that adolescents who do not develop a strong sense of self would enter adulthood with considerable role confusion or identity diffusion. He is of the opinion that one needs to possess a strong sense of personal identity in order to form successful and meaningful relationships with others. From the above, it is obvious that previous research has produced varying results.

Theoretical Framework:

Eriksonian Approach to Psychosocial Development

One lifespan developmental theory of probable importance in comprehending the developmental nature of vocational behaviour is Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory of human development (Erikson 1963; 1968). Erikson (1968) theorises that personality development progresses through stages. During each stage, the individual must resolve conflicts between needs or feelings and external obstacles. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development goes on to explain the impact of social experience across one's entire lifespan by describing this by means of eight stages through which an individual develops from infancy to late adulthood.

Figure 1: Erikson's Eight Psychosocial Stages

Stages	Crisis	Favorable Outcome	Unfavorable Outcome
Childhood			
1st year of life	<i>Trust vs. Mistrust</i>	Faith in the environment and future events	Suspicion, fear of future events
2nd year	<i>Autonomy vs. Doubt</i>	A sense of self-control and adequacy	Feelings of shame and self-doubt
3rd through 5th years	<i>Initiative vs. Guilt</i>	Ability to be a “self-starter,” to initiate one’s own activities.	A sense of guilt and inadequacy to be on one’s own
6th year to puberty	<i>Industry vs. Inferiority</i>	Ability to learn how things work, to understand and organize.	A sense of inferiority at understanding and organizing.
Transition years			
Adolescence	<i>Identity vs. confusion</i>	Seeing oneself as a unique and integrated person.	Confusion over who and what one really is.
Adulthood			
Early adulthood	<i>Intimacy vs. isolation</i>	Ability to make commitments to others, to love.	Inability to form affectionate relationship.
Middle age	<i>Generativity vs. self-adsorption</i>	Concern for family and society in general.	Concern only for self— one’s own well-being and prosperity.
Aging years	<i>Integrity vs. despair</i>	A sense of integrity and fulfillment; willingness to face death.	Dissatisfaction with life; despair over prospect of death.

(Source: [Gawish, 2022](#))

Although each stage plays a significant role in the development on an individual’s personality and skills, Erikson placed great emphasis on examining the way in which children are socialized and what impact it has on their self-concept. As such, the satisfactory resolution of these conflicts leads to a healthy personality and a productive lifestyle (Bukatko & Daehler, 2004, p. 26).

For the purpose of this research, two stages were considered, i.e., “Industry versus Inferiority” (children between the ages of 10 and 12) and “Identity versus Confusion” (individuals between the ages of 13 and 15). As individuals transition from childhood to adulthood questioning the roles they may play in entering adulthood, it is imperative to examine the effects that societal issues may have on one’s development and their ability to integrate into society.

Industry versus Inferiority

This stage of Erikson's theory places emphasis on the world of work and gaining knowledge. During this phase, children spend a great deal of their days learning and practising the skills that are valued by their society, whether these skills are reading, writing, arithmetic, sport skills, fishing, or weaving. Erikson (1985, p. 112) describes this period in terms of industry versus inferiority because he believes that it is important to establish oneself as a responsible, hardworking, and serious-minded person during this time. Figure 1 indicates that the favourable outcome for this stage is for an individual to possess the ability to understand how things work and to organise. It is also an important stage for social development where an individual experiences feelings of inadequacy or inferiority among their peers, and where they are likely to develop problems with regard to their self-esteem and competence.

Identity versus Confusion (Adolescent)

During this stage of development, the focus is directed on what the individual/adolescent does in order to discover who they truly are. During this phase, individuals start to become more independent and start to see the bigger picture of planning their futures, careers, and relationships. It is during this process that they aim to figure out and form their own identity based on their preferences and explorations. Figure 1 reveals that the favourable outcome for this stage is for an individual to possess the ability to see themselves as a unique and integrated person. During this stage most adolescents create a strong attachment and devotion to specific establishments, principles, and friends. Individuals who have difficulty in this stage may experience role/identity confusion and upheaval and may often ask themselves, "Who

am I and what do I want.” This could also result in individuals delaying their progression into adulthood by steering away from their responsibilities.

As (Antshel & Anderman, 2000) state, adolescents may often adopt temporary identities as they struggle to search for their own identity. During this struggle, they are likely to connect and bond with others in a similar situation or activity. As such, sport participation can then act as a temporary identity for them. It thus becomes vital for parents, sport coaches, caregivers, and the likes, to create education and awareness around the benefits of sport participation for these adolescents. Harris (1973, p. 249) states that an understanding of psychological involvement and significance should be conveyed to the learners so that participation will continue, resulting holistically in maximal benefits. Once individuals understand these benefits and the related impact it can have on them, they are then also more likely to engage in these types of activities.

Application of Psychological Development Theory

Developmental psychology is a wide-ranging topic that incorporates the study of human development and transformation throughout an individual’s lifespan. The American Psychological Association (Hays 1999) defines developmental psychology as the study of physical, mental, and behavioural changes, from conception through old age.

As a result, it allows researchers in this field to better understand the series of events and dynamics which influence human development and how these changes occur over time. Consequently, it becomes important to acknowledge the vital insights that developmental psychology offers in terms of beneficial understanding with regard to the succession of growth and advancements during the different stages of our lives.

This information not only serves to assist parents and guardians, but the likes of psychologists and educators across the different environmental settings in terms of aiding and strengthening an individual's development to confront issues that may arise across the different developmental stages.

In general, developmental psychology plays an essential role in understanding how individuals evolve and adapt throughout their lifespan, casting awareness on the multifaceted interaction between biology, psychology, and one's environment.

Strengths of Psychosocial Development Theory

First, psychosocial development theory makes available a broad-spectrum framework for understanding human development. It gives consideration to a mixture of psychological and social factors, while placing emphasis on the dynamics between the individual's internal growth and external environment.

Second, what makes the psychosocial developmental theory different from other theories that emphasise one specific time period in an individual's lifespan, is that it gives significant meaning to understanding development continuously, throughout an individual's lifespan. As such, this theory is cognisant of the diverse changes and challenges that take place at different ages, providing a pragmatic perspective on personality development.

Third, one of the main views in the psychosocial development theory is the development of identity. Erikson (1963; 1968) postulates that individuals go through a string of identity crises, which in turn, nurture their sense of self and purpose in life. This contributes towards the lifelong path of insight and knowledge towards how identity evolves and develops over time.

Weaknesses of the Psychosocial Development Theory

One of the major shortcomings in Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, is the vagueness of developmental crises. While Erikson's theory indicates that each stage of development is characterised by a specific crisis or challenge that needs to be successfully resolved, the characteristics of these crises can present as vague, and at the same time, it is unclear how these crises could be resolved by individuals across different backgrounds and cultures and how it impacts personality development in consequent stages.

At the same time, the psychosocial development theory agrees to the idea that individuals go through specific stages of psychosocial development, and the stages must occur during precise and fixed ages. However, consideration is not given to the fact that individuals do not progress through life in a linear method, but rather progress and advance through life stages at different paces and orders based on their individual experiences and backgrounds.

In addition, Erikson's theory does not give due consideration to the influence of cultural and contextual factors on individuals' development. As such, one must be mindful of cultural norms and environmental differences which may pose idiosyncratic stresses and expectations that could potentially influence and nurture an individual's experiences and development. Thus, these can vary significantly from Erikson's universal stages and crises. This can also result in a partial understanding of the intricacies of psychosocial development.

Furthermore, Erikson's psychosocial theory places much emphasis on the different stages of development and the discords that take place for individuals. In spite

of these, he does not detail and stipulate how the process of the outcomes of one stage are likely to impact an individual's personality in later or other stages of development.

Overall, a pivotal point of the psychosocial development theory is that it gives prominence to the idea that middle and late adulthood serve as crucial periods of personal growth. This is in contrast to some other developmental theories which tend to give prominence only to early childhood and adolescence, whereas the psychosocial development theory concedes that individuals continuously develop and grow throughout their lives.

In the process of establishing and acknowledging the importance of personal growth in middle and late adulthood, the psychosocial development theory, as a result, delivers an all-inclusive outlook and evaluation to the lifelong development of individuals.

Summary

While Erikson's theory of Psychosocial Development, offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the development of self-esteem in adolescents, this theory places significance on the interaction between an individual's psychological needs and their social environment, emphasizing the influence of culture, society, and relationships on self-esteem.

As previously stated, Erikson's theory implies that during adolescence, individuals face the challenge of identity versus role confusion and that this is a crucial time where adolescents strive to develop a sense of self and form a coherent identity. As such, this theory maintains that successful resolution of this stage leads to the development of a

strong and positive self-esteem, while failure to do so may result in feelings of inadequacy and low self-worth.

One of the major strengths of the Psychosocial Development theory is that it places major emphasis on the societal and cultural influences that shape an individual's self-esteem. In recognizing the impact of external factors, such as family dynamics, peer relationships, and societal expectations, the theory provides a holistic understanding of self-esteem development in adolescents.

On the other hand, the standout weakness of this theory is its broad and to some extent, its abstract nature, which may lead to challenges when applying in practical settings. One may even contend that the subjective nature of the developmental stages and the lack of specific guidelines for intervention limit the theory's effectiveness towards managing and directing targeted interventions to support adolescent self-esteem.

In summary, the Psychosocial Development theory offers significant insights into the relationship between the individual and their social environment in shaping self-esteem during adolescence. While it offers valuable insights into the complex interplay of internal and external factors that shape adolescent self-esteem, its limitations must be considered in the context of individual variation and a multitude of different experiences.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

“Sports do not build character, they reveal it.”

(John Wooden)

Introduction

In any research study, the research design and methodology form the most vital aspects of the study. This is due to the fact that they present an overall approach and methods used which focus and speak to the research aims or objectives. The research design refers to the comprehensive plan that directs any study, the data collection methods, as well as the data analysis methods employed. While on the other hand, methodology, denotes the detailed procedures and techniques used to collect as well as analyze data within that specific research design. This takes into account how data will be collected, the sampling strategy, the tools or instruments used for data collection, as well as the analytical methods utilized to interpret data. As such, research design and methodology provide the framework for conducting a thorough and organized investigation, while at the same time, conforming to a research study that is well-structured, valid, and reliable.

The study's objective was to explore the subjective experience of the associations between sport and self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents. The role that sports plays in relation to self-esteem is a subjective notion as it can vary from person to person. While some individuals may experience an increase in self-esteem

due to the positive achievements received from sport participation, other individuals may have a different experience to this. These individual experiences as previously discussed, stem from the influence of various factors and characteristics unique to each individual. As such, it then became necessary to further investigate and illustrate these benefits. In Chapter 1, a briefing of the research was highlighted. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to delve into the research methodology that was utilised in order to explore the subjective experience of the associations between sport and self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents. As such, and mentioned in Chapter one, the researcher set out to answer the following questions:

- How does self-esteem benefit from sport?
- Which are the perspectives of underprivileged adolescence with regard to sport and self-esteem?
- Which factors influence participation in sport among underprivileged adolescence?

Research Methodology

A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution of the research (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The main aspect around research methodology is to be able to review and describe the process of data collection, data analysis, and the outcomes of the research process. Babbie and Mouton (2009: 72) describe design as the planning of scientific inquiry, meaning to specify as clearly as possible what you want to find out and to determine the best way to do so.

Research is not conducted in a vacuum: It is framed within a research paradigm (Henning et al., 2004, p. 12), viewed through the lens of a particular mindset and constructed, using specific approaches and techniques. Research methodology as mentioned above refers to the systematic process of planning, conducting, and analyzing research studies to address specific research questions or objectives. As such, this chapter will highlight the selection of utilizing the appropriate research design, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings.

Qualitative Research

By means of qualitative data analysis, this research was conducted to highlight the impact of sport participation on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents. One of the main benefits of utilizing a qualitative approach is that it allowed the researcher to dig deep into the everyday realities of the research participants as opposed to a quantitative approach which would have required categorizing the participants' realities into numerical data. Strauss and Corbin (2008, p. 318), highlight the importance of the main aim of conducting qualitative research is discovery, and not attempting to control variables, but to instead discover them. Flick (2014, p. 542) claims that "qualitative research is interested in analysing subjective meaning or the social production of issues, events, or practices by collecting non-standardized data and analysing texts and images rather than numbers and statistics." This definition focuses on how people make sense of something in the world. Thus, in the process of recognizing the individuals in

the research's lived experiences, it encapsulated the individuals' feelings, thoughts, and emotions. As such, qualitative research involves the collection and analysis of non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, and open-ended survey responses, it seeks to explore and understand complex phenomena, while focusing on subjective experiences and perspectives of individuals.

On the other hand, quantitative research comprises of the collection and analysis of numerical data to categorize patterns, relationships, and trends, it places much emphasis on objective measurements and statistical analysis to obtain conclusions.

Accordingly, both these approaches have their merits and limitations, quantitative research is predominantly utilised to test hypotheses and generalize results and conclusions, while qualitative research is more exploratory and attempts to gain in-depth understandings into a particular phenomenon.

As a result, qualitative research was the most suitable approach to emphasize the subjective experiences and perspectives of the research participants in relation to this study's objectives.

Figure 2. Summary of Differences between Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Table 1. Comparison of quantitative and qualitative research approaches

	Quantitative	Qualitative
General framework	<p>Seek to confirm hypotheses about phenomena</p> <p>Instruments use more rigid style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions</p> <p>Use highly structured methods such as questionnaires, surveys, and structured observation</p>	<p>Seek to explore phenomena</p> <p>Instruments use more flexible, iterative style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions</p> <p>Use semi-structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation</p>
Analytical objectives	<p>To quantify variation</p> <p>To predict causal relationships</p> <p>To describe characteristics of a population</p>	<p>To describe variation</p> <p>To describe and explain relationships</p> <p>To describe individual experiences</p> <p>To describe group norms</p>
Question format	Closed-ended	Open-ended
Data format	Numerical (obtained by assigning numerical values to responses)	Textual (obtained from audiotapes, videotapes, and field notes)
Flexibility in study design	<p>Study design is stable from beginning to end</p> <p>Participant responses do not influence or determine how and which questions researchers ask next</p> <p>Study design is subject to statistical assumptions and conditions</p>	<p>Some aspects of the study are flexible (for example, the addition, exclusion, or wording of particular interview questions)</p> <p>Participant responses affect how and which questions researchers ask next</p> <p>Study design is iterative, that is, data collection and research questions are adjusted according to what is learned</p>

(Source: Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005, p. 3.)

Due to a lack of information on the role of sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents in the South African context, descriptive and exploratory research designs were made use of in order to allow the researcher the opportunity to answer the research question. By making use of this technique, it allowed the researcher to obtain detailed information from the target population regarding their activities, beliefs, and attitudes with regard to the impact that sport has on their self-esteem. Henceforth, the findings from this study can be used to assist teachers, coaches, and parents to promote and encourage sport participation among adolescents

as well as encourage more organisations to contribute towards the development of organized sport activities in South Africa. The framework below was utilised for this research study.

Table 1. Qualitative Research Framework (Researcher’s own design).

Qualitative Research
Research Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploratory Design - Descriptive Design
Population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All underprivileged adolescents engaging in sport participation
Sampling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-probability sampling method and the use of purposive sampling techniques
Data Collection Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Semi-structured interviews
Data Analysis Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tesch’s framework for analysing qualitative data (see Creswell, 2009, p. 186)
Data Verification Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guba’s framework for data verification of qualitative data (see Krefting, 1991, p. 214–222)
Ethical Considerations in this Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informed consent

- Confidentiality
- Not to mislead participants

Data Collection

Qualitative research is generally conducted by using one or more approaches such as content analysis, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and evaluation. However, the most fundamental form of qualitative research entails the analysis of unstructured data, including the responses to open-ended questionnaires, literature reviews, audio recordings, pictures, and the internet.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher utilised adolescents from KAD (Knowledge, Advocacy, and Development) Volleyball Club and LVA (Lenasia Volleyball Association), both within the Gauteng province that run and coordinate extra-curricular development programmes for underprivileged adolescents, as well as underprivileged adolescents who engage in these organized sport activities as the primary population sample. This was done after the researcher acquainted herself with the sample population and explained the purpose of the study. Although the terms adolescence and underprivileged have been briefly outlined in Chapter 1, with regards to the sample for this research, underprivileged adolescents has been categorized to represent young individuals between the ages of 10-16 years, who do not consistently have access or resources to basic opportunities that that may perceive as necessary for their well-being and development. Thus, emphasis was placed on adolescents from lower income households, and those who attended non private schools in South Africa. These individuals often face various economic, social, and environmental challenges that can influence their physical, emotional, and cognitive development.

With regards to frequency in participating in organized sport activities, this was categorized as, participating in structured and planned sports programs for a minimum of two days in a seven-day cycle. These organized programs predominantly comprised of connecting with sports teams or clubs that adhered to a certain schedule (competitions, friendly matches) or training sessions that required the individuals to attend and participate in.

The data for this study was obtained via a semi-structured and an in-depth interview schedule with the relevant adolescents. The purpose of utilizing this method was done so in order to obtain rich and meaningful information from the participants. The process of using semi-structured questionnaires allowed the researcher to consider the variation between flexibility and structure, thus affording the researcher the opportunity to explore the specific research topic and at the same time, it made provision for unexpected insights to come into view. This, in combination with, in-depth interviews and inquiring deeply into the experiences of the adolescents, beliefs, experiences and perspectives, allowed this research study to explore the distinct and personal ways that sports participation may influence their feelings of self-worth and self-perception.

The participants for this study were selected by means of a non-probability sampling method with the utilisation of purposive sampling techniques. This technique is predominantly adopted for use in qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews or case studies. The researchers' main intention was to choose participants who have particular qualities, knowledge or engagements that were pertinent to the research question. This method facilitated the process of obtaining rich and detailed

data that provided a deep understanding of the research topic. The researcher utilised Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, which studies the way in which children are socialized and what impact it has on their self-concept.

As has already been mentioned, two stages of Erikson's developmental theory were considered for this research, i.e., Industry versus Inferiority (children between 10 and 12 years of age) and Identity versus Confusion (children between 13 and 15 years of age). As individuals transition from childhood to adulthood questioning the roles they may play in entering adulthood, it was important to study the effects that societal issues may have on one's development and their ability to integrate into society.

The data for this study was obtained by means of a semi-structured and in-depth interview consisting of 10 participants. This was done in order to better explore and understand the participants' views, behaviours, and experiences regarding the impact of sport on the self-esteem of the participants. As these semi-structured interviews were open-ended, it allowed for flexibility, while the researcher managed to evaluate the participants' responses as well as probe participants whilst still adhering to a particular thematic agenda, and ensuring a sense of direction, while also providing a clear picture of the participants' opinions and ideas about the influence of sport on their self-esteem.

During the interviews, the researcher made use of process notes, audio recordings, transcription of the data of each participant, after the parents/guardians of the adolescents granted informed consent. In order to ensure data integrity, all research information was securely protected, and access limited to authorised personal only. Caution was taken at the hand of Easton et al. (as cited in Groenewald, 2004, p. 15) by ensuring that all equipment functioned accordingly, and background noise and

interruptions were kept to the minimum. The interviews were also recorded in line with the scheme utilised by Groenewald (2004, p. 15):

- Observational notes (ON) – notes utilizing the researcher’s senses depicting “what happened.”
- Theoretical notes (TN) – notes deriving meaning as the researcher reflects on experiences.
- Methodological notes (MN) – notes on the process which includes “reminders [and] instructions or critique.”
- Analytical memos (AM) – progress reviews or a summary at the end of a field-day.

As previously mentioned, due to this study being subjective in nature, a qualitative research method was adopted as most suitable in the interest of the researcher attaining the study’s objectives.

Interviews

The researcher met face-to-face with each adolescent so as to perform the semi-structured interviews. 10 participants who engaged in organized sport activities outside of the schooling environment in the Gauteng province were selected for the study. The function of the pre-determined questions and thematic framework ensured that there were no distractions while allowing room for probing questions to take place. This in turn provided the researcher with rich and detailed information of the topic at hand.

Data Analysis

An interpretivist paradigm was used to explain and explore the research problem by means of the qualitative approach. According to Terre Blanche et al. (2006), this

paradigm involves “taking peoples’ subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them, making sense of peoples’ experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us, and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyze information.”

Once the interviews were completed and in order to analyze the data, the researcher applied thematic analysis to the responses received. The process of thematic analysis was employed in order to identify, analyze and report patterns or themes within the dataset. As a result, this process allows the researcher to systematically organize and describe the data in rich detail in order to obtain better knowledge of the underlying meanings and concepts of the research topic. The researcher opted to make use of thematic analysis as it is mainly utilized in qualitative research method as it involves identifying patterns or themes within the data to gain insights into the research question. With the application of this method, it allowed the researcher to be flexible in the approach and revise the analysis to the specific research questions and data collected. In addition, thematic analysis permits the researcher to achieve a detailed exploration of the data, uncovering underlying patterns, meanings, and relationships. Thus, providing rich and meaningful insights into the research topic. At the same time, it is fairly straightforward and comprehensible, resulting in it being favourable and practical for researchers with different levels of experience in qualitative research as it does not utilize any specialized software. Furthermore, thematic analysis places significant importance on transparency in the research process, thus ensuring researchers clearly document their analytical decisions and interpretations. This transparency enhances the confirmability and trustworthiness of the research findings.

Reflexive thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke in 2012, is an accessible and flexible interpretative approach to qualitative data analysis. This method allows researchers to identify and analyze patterns or themes within a dataset by engaging in a reflective and iterative process. By integrating reflexivity, researchers can significantly examine their own biases, assumptions, and preconceptions throughout the analysis, enhancing the thoroughness and credibility of the findings. Reflexive thematic analysis provides a well thought out yet flexible framework for interpreting qualitative data, making it a valuable tool for researchers in various fields.

In general, the choice of thematic analysis in qualitative research offers researchers a flexible, in-depth, accessible, and transparent method for analyzing and interpreting data to address their research questions effectively.

A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82.) According to Braun and Clarke (2013), thematic analysis consists of six phases to explain the process of analysing data from within a qualitative study. The phases of thematic analysis are outlined below:

- Familiarising yourself with your data – transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
- Generating initial codes – coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
- Combining codes into themes – collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.

- Reviewing themes – checking if the themes operate in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic “map” of the analysis.
- Defining and naming themes – on-going analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis provides, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
- Producing the report – the final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, and producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Issues of Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are important tools in any research and hold many definitions when using it in a qualitative study. While researchers reject the idea that social research can be detached from the opinions of the researcher, the discipline, and culture, many allude to the belief that personal and professional values are not to be disregarded as they are the lenses through which a phenomenon is observed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) Patton (2001) supports the idea of researcher's involvement and immersion into the research by discussing that the real world are subject to change and therefore, a qualitative researcher should be present during the changes to record an event after and before the change occurs.

However, both qualitative and quantitative researchers need to test and establish that their studies are credible, in qualitative research, “the researcher is the instrument”

(Patton, 2001, p. 14). Hence, the credibility of a qualitative research depends on the ability and effort of the researcher.

Due to the subjective nature of qualitative research in comparison to quantitative research, it makes it more susceptible for the study to be influenced by the researcher. However, just because qualitative study appears to be influenced very easily, it does not necessarily mean that it is.

The aim of trustworthiness in a qualitative inquiry is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Lincoln and Guba (in De Vos et al., 2011, p. 419–421) offer notions that appropriately describe the qualitative model's assumptions which are thereafter adapted for use in this research study:

- *Credibility* is the alternative to internal validity. This study's investigation was executed in a manner that ensured the subject's identification and description were correct and suitable for this research.
- *Transferability* is a substitute term which at times maybe used interchangeably with external validity. While external validity predominantly deals with generalizing the findings of a study to broader populations or settings, transferability places emphasis on the applicability of the findings to other specific contexts or situations. It is recommended that researchers furnish a thorough description of the environment in which their study is carried out.
- *Dependability* is the alternative to reliability. This concept replaces the idea of reliability. The researcher could provide an audit trail (the documentation of data, methods, and decisions about the research) being open for external scrutiny.

- *Confirmability* is the final construct that a qualitative researcher needs to display. The researcher has ensured that traditional concepts of fairness were adopted. Confirmability is the penultimate standard of trustworthiness that a qualitative researcher must establish. This principle deals with ensuring that a strong level of assurance is provided in the study's findings, which are founded on the participants' descriptions as opposed to potential biases from the researcher. Thus, the aim of confirmability, is to make certain that the findings are influenced by the participants rather than the researcher.

In order to establish a degree confirmability, the researcher complied with different strategies. Firstly, maintaining a broad spectrum of in-depth information which was captured during the interview process. The researcher in turn transcribed the interview data herself. Secondly, peer debriefing, whereby feedback was obtained from other experts in the field, to review feedback from other researchers or experts in the field to examine the researcher's interpretations and conclusions. This process aided in removing any possible biases or errors in the analysis process. Thirdly, member checking, which entailed the researcher sharing the findings and discoveries with the research participants in order to corroborate the accuracy and interpretation of the collected data. This allowed for making certain that the participants' viewpoints were depicted correctly. Lastly, reflexivity, throughout the process, the researcher reflected on her own biases, assumptions, and preconceptions. By doing so, it afforded the researcher the opportunity to be aware of her perspective which in turn, alleviated potential biases and enhanced the objectivity of the findings.

In giving consideration to reliability and validity, the researcher engaged a second researcher to code and analyze the data, thus, enabling triangulation of coding. Triangulation makes use of a variety of sources, techniques, researchers and hypotheses to give the researcher substantiating data (Creswell, 2007). The second coder only commenced with the analysis upon signing a confidentiality agreement.

Ethical Aspects

The fact that human beings are the objects of study in the social sciences brings unique ethical problems to the fore, something that is normally not relevant in the pure, clinical laboratory settings of natural science (De Vos et al., 2011, p. 113). As such, due considerations were given to ethical components related to the collection of data, i.e., the researcher's empathic manner and undivided attention towards all participants. Informed consent thus plays a fundamental role in research by ensuring that participants are provided with all pertinent information in order to make an informed and autonomous decision regarding their participation in a research study. It is thus based on the notion that individuals have the right to know the potential risks, benefits, purpose, procedure and any other relevant information relating to the research study they are being requested to participate in. Informed consent was obtained from the relevant institutions as well as coaches/trainers in order to conduct the study and all data and results were handled confidentially (refer to the Annexures for all the consent forms).

The researcher made constant efforts to guarantee that no or any harm was brought upon the participants. This is also known as non-maleficence where the

researcher takes care that no direct or indirect harm befalls any of the participants as a result of the research (Terre Blanche et al., 2006, p. 67).

Conclusion

This chapter gave an overview of the process that guided this qualitative research study. It described how the information was captured and analyzed. The feedback and responses provided by the adolescents (discussed below) provided this study with valuable and rich information.

It is also evident from the literature review that sport participation has multiple benefits with regard to improving self-esteem. However, the schools in the South African context do not always cater for sport participation. One of the reasons for this is the lack of resources and funding. As such, programmes that promote sport participation need to be created and implemented in the South African context.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

“Obstacles don’t have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don’t turn around and give up.

Figure out how to climb it, go through it or work around it.”

(Michael Jordan)

Introduction

Sport plays a fundamental role in influencing the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents. For those who come from disadvantaged upbringings, sport can provide a much-needed path for personal growth, empowerment, and social integration. The positive effect of sport participation on self-esteem cannot be undervalued.

The aim of this study as explained in Chapter 1 was to explore the role of sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents in order to determine if and how self-esteem benefits from sport; to ascertain the perspectives of underprivileged adolescents with regard to sport and self-esteem; and to discover the factors that influence participation in sport among underprivileged adolescence.

Every single day people are faced with data analysis all around them, deciding where to dine or which movie to watch. The choices they make each day are based on data analysis. With regards to research, data analysis is there to make certain that a study is profound while providing beneficial and worthy understandings of the topic.

As such, the process of analysing qualitative data allows a researcher the opportunity to uncover and narrate the stories and experiences of individuals. In this

case, the process provided the researcher with the ways in which people think, feel, and act, as well as the meanings formed by these individuals with relation to the role of sport in their lives.

In order to explore the aim of this study, the researcher conducted individual interviews with participants who come from underprivileged backgrounds and who attend government schools. Semi-structured and in-depth interviews with the relevant adolescents were employed for the aim of collecting data for this study.

The individuals would then unpack and tell their stories with regard to challenges and issues they generally encounter on a daily basis as adolescents allowing the researcher at the same time to better understand the underlying meaning these individuals place on sport participation by exploring the copious narratives provided.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

In order for me to analyze the data that I had obtained via the individual interviews with each participant, I chose to apply thematic analysis to their narratives. The process of thematic analysis involves categorizing, analysing, and discovering patterns or themes from the collected data.

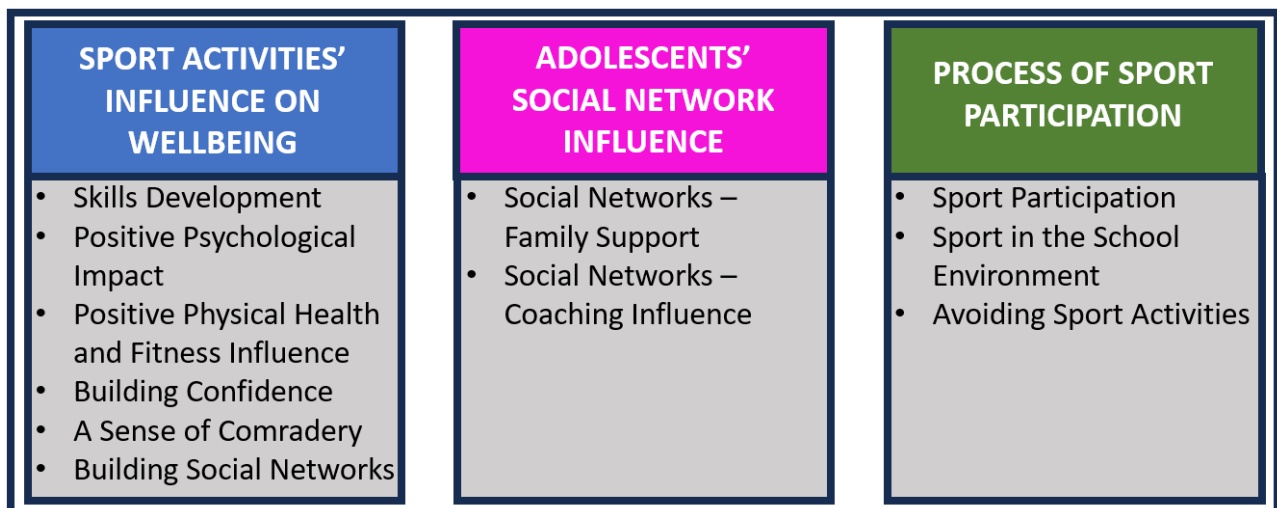
I employed ATLAS.ti v23 for the coding and management of the interview data. The procedure for coding as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), is a fundamental component of thematic analysis, aiming to systematically identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within qualitative data. This means that the approach is based on observing and analysing the data first, without any preconceived notions or expectations. The coding process involves identifying themes and patterns that emerge from the data itself, as opposed to enforcing predetermined classifications or theoretical

frameworks. Thus, placing emphasis on ensuring that the data guides the analysis and interpretation process and that the findings are grounded in the observed data.

Therefore, inductive coding is a valuable approach for exploratory research due to it allowing for an open and non-restrictive analysis of data, enabling the findings of new insights as well as contributing towards a deeper understanding of participants views, opinions and experiences.

Figure 3 depicts a visual representation of the network of themes which were uncovered during this research study and will be discussed in more details afterwards.

Figure 3: Network of Themes



(Source: Personal archive)

Theme 1: Sport Activities' Influence on Wellbeing

Skills Development

Participation in a sport increases skill building and, in many peer groups, is a characteristic of popularity. Perceiving physical, social, or emotional situations from a point of view other than one's own is a perspective defined by Epley et al. (2004, p. 327–339).

Throughout the research, many participants indicated that they feel passionate about the sport that they are involved in and that their continuous involvement and dedication to the sport are important to them. This reflects a sense of skills development where the participants have such great passion for the sport and that they manage to thrive so much that they would even consider this as a defining path in their career at a young age. Participant 5 noted this when he said, “I hope to one day be a professional volleyball player, like the ones I see on TV and the videos online. That must be my job and I can earn money from there.”

Sport participation is also one of the most constructive outlets for any child growing up. It teaches valuable life lessons such as skill building, teamwork, and humility. This was noted by Participant 1 when she indicated, “So at volleyball training you sort of learn different skills and coaches teach you creative stuff when playing volleyball – and volleyball teaches me how to solve problems.”

Another point of discussion noted by the participants, was that the feeling of being good at something impacted their self-confidence, self-worth, and ultimately their own self-esteem, which was noted by Participant 1: “So I try to do the same when it comes to my schoolwork, and it helps. I am also like a little more confident in myself nowadays 'cos my training is getting better and I'm playing better from when I first started.”

The information obtained from this research highlights that through the process of sport participation, there has to be continuous dedication, practice, and reaping the results from competitive scenarios, and these contribute to the increase of confidence levels among these adolescents. Ultimately, this indicates that one of the reasons the

participants are involved in the sport participation process, is to develop new skills and to be able to perform better in the end.

According to South Africa's National Sport and Recreation plan (NSRP), "Sport presents the child at school with life skills in a way unsurpassed by any other activity" (Tshwete, 2011).

In 2010, South Africa's president at the time indicated that the South African government has not made adequate advancements in "creating a better life for all" (South African Government, 2011). As such, in an effort to address this short-coming, an "Outcomes Approach" was designed to make sure that the South African government places more emphasis on achieving and providing a better life of all South Africans (South African Government, 2011). At a government meeting which took place in January 2010, 12 results were approved. The result that has put great emphasis on delivery agreement is Outcome 12 of the NSRP, which acts as a strategy for increasing social capital. The undertakings in the NSRP are likely to afford individuals the chance to overcome social difficulties and at the same time encourage and motivate individuals. Through voluntary activity, it can foster a sense of social togetherness and present opportunities for involvement in local affairs. In addition, well-planned sports and leisure programs can serve as effective means of encouraging the growth of children and individuals, imparting life lessons and positive values, lowering crime and conflict rates, enhancing education and preventing illnesses. These initiatives support the participation and empowerment of marginalized populations, particularly women, young people, and disabled persons living in rural areas. The NSRP gives South Africans a means, to come together, work for shared objectives, and acknowledge our shared humanity.

Positive Psychological Impact

Regular sport participation can have a positive psychological effect on one's self-esteem by fostering achievement, skills development, social cohesion, physical well-being, positive body image and stress management.

During the research process, most participants explained that as a result of doing sport, there has been some positive psychological impact within themselves. One of the main contributing factors for this stems from the simple act of them receiving positive feedback loops from their involvement in the sport and having a network of support around them at all times. This is further supported by Erikson's theory of psychosocial development which speaks to the significance of one's social interactions and the importance of developing relationships over the course of our lifespan not just to aid individual development but to understand the manner in which we function as part of a larger community. Participant 5 narrated, "Teamwork equals dreamwork. We are all always helping each other. The encouragement from my team makes me want to play even better." Participant 2 referred to the positive impact of sport on his struggles of being shy, quiet, and experiencing low self-esteem.

Being offered the chance to socialize and create new friendships, allowed him the opportunity to create a feeling of belonging and self-assurance through sport participation. It allowed him to not just develop his social and physical skills, but also his mental toughness and leadership skills at the same time. These beneficial skills manifest not just on the sport field but are transferred into his schooling environment as well as his community. He added, "It kind of helps me to stay calm when I'm stressed. I used to be much quieter, and my self-esteem was like low, but since I started playing

volleyball my confidence is better nowadays and I think I am not so quiet anymore as I also captain the team. So as the leader I have to be talking to the other kids and also teaching them.”

It thus affords kids the opportunity to build their self-confidence. The fact that they are physically active has a major impact on their psychological health in return by enhancing the quality of their lives. Self-esteem is proposed to be a critical factor in emotional wellbeing while the physical self is a significant component of this more global self (Fox, 1998).

Positive Physical Health and Fitness Influence

It is widely accepted that engaging in physical activities is expected to exhibit a positive impact on a person. While physical activity and sport participation should be easily available and a requirement for every child, this is not always the case, especially in underprivileged and rural areas. According to Gill et al. (2004, p. 21–25) as well as Trudeau and Shephard (2008, p. 10), it is worryingly apparent that children as early as three or four are being adversely affected by lifestyles and education systems that discourage physical activity and are missing out on the benefits reaped by active lifestyles. Participant 1 added, “Playing sport is also a good stress reliever. And it can also help with health conditions by getting kids healthier and fitter.”

With regard to KAD volleyball and LVA, the research participants indicated that this was their only sport club that they had access to, and which allowed them the opportunity to play/train volleyball twice a week. The coaches for these clubs reinforced that the participants had to be present on the required days and be punctual, showing the same discipline and dedication they received from their respective coaches.

Participant 7 added, “I eat better nowadays, so I make sure I eat healthier, not eat so much junk food. Also, I am exercising more because it’s something we must do if we want to continue to play volleyball and if I want to get better at my game.”

Most of the participants understood and believed in the health benefits of physical activities for each of them. They did not require further persuasion from an adult or their schoolteachers. Participant 7 narrated, “I do think all kids should be playing sport. Especially ’cos it will stop the amount of time kids spend on their devices nowadays. And when kids just play with their devices and don’t play or get fit, that’s when they become fat and unhealthy and also sometimes kids end up joining the wrong people and getting into trouble.” Participant 4 added, “Playing sport is my happy place – where I get to forget my problems or for example when you are stressing ’cos you did bad in a test. It also helps to keep kids out of trouble from doing wrong things in our area.” Participant 8 indicated, “So I use volleyball as a stress reliever – like when I’m stressed or anxious; after I play it helps me get over that.”

By affording these underprivileged adolescents with the opportunity to engage in sport, it has also provided a platform for them to, in a healthy manner destress and release any anger and anxiety they may experience. They have found a community to whom they can identify and relate, making them more open to discussing their struggles as opposed to acting out or repressing their feelings. As such, the participation of sport allows these individuals to forget about their stressors and provides them with an outlet to manage these emotional tensions.

Furthermore, in Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development, in the stage of Identity versus Confusion, he refers to what the individual/adolescent does in order to

discover who they truly are: When engaging in sport, individuals start to become more independent and start to see the bigger picture of planning their futures, careers, and relationships. It is during this process that they figure out and form their own identity based on their preferences and explorations. Participant 3 added, “The people who I play volleyball with are more like my family now, and they make me feel like I belong there.” According to Erikson, for most adolescents, during this developmental stage, they create a strong attachment and devotion to specific establishments, principles, and friends.

Building Confidence

During this study, the participants spoke of how their involvement in sport activities has an impact on their confidence in that they get to build character, strength, and friendships whilst being engaged in playing volleyball. For most of these participants, being involved in organized sport not only boosts their confidence levels but it appears to have a positive impact on their self-image too. Participant 4 claimed, “So I was very shy, and volleyball made me happy. The people are always encouraging you when playing and I started to become more confident and outgoing.” The increase in their confidence and self-image has ignited a passion and a love for the game of volleyball among all the participants, narrating that if they could play volleyball every day, they would eagerly do so.

Participant 2 mentioned, “I love being part of a team and winning and it feels exciting. Although we don’t get prizes and stuff it is still exciting.” Another contributing factor towards improved confidence was the act of winning. The idea of winning is one of the aspects that they have indicated that has a major impact on their self-confidence,

while the ability to be able to celebrate their victory with their peers, coaches, and family members is a great opportunity for them to build some confidence due to the fact that they are good at something. However, winning was not limited to just winning a game or tournament, as the improvement in their physical abilities was also considered as a process of winning for these participants. This was echoed by Participant 2 when he stated, "With me, I can also run faster now and feel more powerful." Participant 5 added, "It gives me confidence and I feel like I am capable of doing anything."

A Sense of Comradery

Erikson believes that the main purpose of early adulthood is to create intimate relationships, thereby placing importance on how friendships develop in order to nurture an individual's social development.

All the research participants felt a sense of comradery among the team in that this assists them to feel a sense of belonging. However, even more important is that they felt part of something as important as a team which means that they had a positive influence on each other. This created a sense of comradery between them where they tended to be respectful and kind toward each other and support one another through the process of participation in this sport, They would even stretch as far as having developed a friendship of support and kindness. The participants shared many views in order to support this sub-theme. A few will be given here:

- "I have also made new friends which I struggled with before. Everyone on the team is always kind to each other and respectful, which makes it a nice place to want to go to."

- “Having all these people around also increases my confidence when we are out on the court playing volleyball, ’cos I know there are other people to help me when I am struggling or don’t have a good day.”
- “It was when I was having a bad day, it was some time after my dad passed away, I was really missing him and I was like upset the whole day. That day when I went to volleyball, it just felt like home with all my team members around me, and it made me feel better.”
- “I definitely like team sport. You always have another family. The people here always make you feel welcome. If you are having a bad day you are never alone as you have that support from them.”

Building Social Networks

Being physically active not only has health benefits but can also vastly contribute to one’s social skills. Erikson’s theory asserts that people advance through the stages of development based on how they adjust to social crises throughout their lives. These social crises instruct how individuals react to the surrounding world. Playing sport affords one the opportunity to interact with many other people and learning how to interact and communicate effectively. Thus, it allows children to adopt this kind of learning as they progress through primary and high school, and ultimately the workplace. Thus, their involvement in sport indicates that sport allows them to build social networks such as meeting new friends throughout the process. This allows them to work on their social skills which in return creates a sense of belonging which is a great way to build character and increase one’s self-confidence. Below are a few remarks made by the participants to support this sub-theme:

- “I think if the people were unfriendly or rude I would probably not stay there. I also find it easier to talk to other people nowadays, which I was not able to do before.”
- “When you are a shy, quiet person, it can make you sad most of time 'cos I use to feel lonely and sometimes I use to think people don't like me. But now I know that's not true. So playing sport can just make you happy too.”
- “We get to interact with lots of other kids. When we play tournaments in the other nearby areas you get to meet kids who are not from my exact area and we also learn different techniques from them that maybe we didn't learn as yet.”
- “When you are playing a sport by yourself, you don't have that, you don't have other people to help you, cheer for you, and support you with the hard stuff.”

Theme 2: Adolescent's Social Network Influence

Social Networks: Family Support

One's home situation gives them an indication of their home setting and the environment that the participant is exposed to during their daily and weekly activities. This can have an impact on all levels of performance, psychological functioning, and development as an adolescent, both physically and psychologically. Furthermore, this also has an impact on the psychological development of the adolescent as they are exposed to their home environment and the various social systems that they build around them, thus ultimately impacting their self-esteem.

As adolescents are impressionable and exposed to many new things on a daily basis, that may affect their psychosocial development. The role of the parents or primary care giver becomes more crucial to provide them with a solid foundation for

their growth and development, both physically and emotionally. While they acquire new knowledge, it becomes vital for them to understand right from wrong, and to prevent them from simply acting upon all knowledge acquired simply because it may appear to be fun or cool.

Most young adolescents typically rely on their parents, siblings, and friends for support and guidance. This was also evident during the research, when Participant 8 stated, “The adults have to motivate kids – as we have to make sure we get a better life.” This indicates that adolescents are much reliant on adults and are of the view that the adults in their lives need to direct them in terms of their goals, development, and moral compass.

For most of the participants in this research, their development was supported by their direct family members when it comes to either their sport engagement or their academic setting. This was echoed by Participant 2, “Hmmm, my mum and dad and my coaches – we all have a very good relationship and get on with each other. My parents are also supporting and encouraging, and they also stay fit. My mum plays volleyball and my dad goes to gym and he is very strong. So, I get to learn from them also.” This was further reiterated by Participant 4 who added, “My parents definitely – they are always involved in my activities at home and at school.”

Social Networks: Coaching Influence

Sport coaches, like parents and teachers have a crucial function and responsibility in the lives of young adolescents. This sentiment was echoed by all the research participants, indicating that their coaches have a very important role to play in their social networking process in their school career as well as their sport activities.

They further indicated that one of the main advantages of the sports coaches was the opportunity for individuals to learn and practice new skills both on and off the sports field such as problem-solving, discipline, time management and teamwork during training can be transferred to their academic and personal lives. Participant 5 averred, “I get sad when we don’t get to play volleyball or when training is cancelled. The coaches are always teaching us the basics of the game step by step, and when I am learning new things, I am happy. I also like that more and more people are joining our club.”

Participant 4 narrated, “I like that the coaches make it fun. The coaches don’t scream and don’t show favouritism.” As such, the participants showed that they appreciate their coaches and teachers who motivate and teach them. They enjoy being part of a team and feel that their coaches make training enjoyable. As a result, they keep on playing volleyball.

Theme 3: Process of Sport Participation

Sport Participation

O’Donovan (as cited in Green, 2010) notes how the social involvement goals of young people influence their participation in physical education. This is mainly due to the fact that their first goals of participation in sport is to socialize and have fun.

Many young adolescents find themselves taking part in sport activities within their local community for various reasons. It is therefore important to be cognisant of both the benefits and barriers associated with being involved in a sport activity in underprivileged areas. At the same time, it is important to investigate the support and push for sport activities in underprivileged areas and the problems that they face with having sporting events available for the participants at their schools. As mentioned previously, many of

the participants strongly believe that parents need to do more to encourage and motivate their children to get involved in sport activities. Schools and NGOs need to do more in providing infrastructure, training camps, and organized tournaments for these young adolescents to get more involved.

Sport in the School Environment

The NSRP highlights school sport and the requirements for increased coordination among schools, unions and government. Early exposure to sports, especially in school, is critical for capturing hearts and minds. The NSRP recognizes that school-based sport and physical education promotion is essential in developing enthusiasm for, and dedication to lifetime involvement in sport. Individuals who frequently engage in exercise and sport as children are more inclined to continuing doing so as adults.

Participant 1 argued, “So I think if teachers and coaches at school have basic skills and more resources for sport then they can be able to do more to encourage kids to get involved.” During this research, most of the participants indicated that they need more support from the schools they attended and their physical education staff to allow them to become more involved and a part of sport activities. They have indicated that schools should rethink how they would be able to present certain resources and skills into the schooling system to allow for more variety and involvement in sport activities in the school. This could lead to more children actively becoming involved in sport activities which present a lot of positive influences, both physically and psychologically. This was further reinforced by Participant 7: “My school does try to encourage sport.

Sometimes they manage to have sport activities after school, which is good, but that does not happen all the time.”

Avoiding Sport Activities

It is vital to note that all research participants in this study were already engaging in some form of sport, and no participant started playing sport in order to participate in the research process. In Chapter 2 it was mentioned that little has been done to bring sport to rural areas and townships. As a result, sport is still regarded as a luxury whilst eradicating other social ills such as providing water and sanitation facilities still takes priority. While sport activities are readily available in ordinary suburbs, there is a lack of sport activities, resources, and infrastructure in underprivileged areas. While some well-to-do parents may be able to find a way to get their child involved in sport activities, others are likely to be more focused on provided basic care, food, and shelter for their kids. The implication is that they have little or no time for sport or extracurricular activities. This sentiment was echoed by Participant 3, when she stated, “At home, my family don’t really exercise or talk about it, so having my club volleyball helps me to keep fit.”

Another point of discussion that frequently arose was that a lack of education about what sport activities may consist of, was a likely reason which prevented children from partaking in sport. This was reinforced by Participant 2, “Maybe they don’t have many friends who play sport to encourage them. I think a lot of kids are also scared of getting hurt, ’cos I used to get scared of getting hurt when I played soccer.”

The fear of the unknown prevents many young adolescents from starting to engage in sport, until a peer or friend convinces them to either watch or participate in

sport and then decide if sport was something they enjoyed or not. In many cases, this kind of encouragement from peers lead young adolescents to start taking part in sport activities. This was confirmed by Participant 4, “I tell my friends who don’t play how fun it is and it will make them energetic; and it will help if each of us who does play volleyball now to bring one new person every week to try out the game.”

Conclusion

This chapter attempted to indicate the participants’ view regarding the impact of sport on underprivileged adolescents. The attempt was supported by adolescents’ responses captured during the interview stage of this research. While the feedback provided by the participants indicate a positive effect of sport participation on the self-esteem of underprivileged children, the schooling system in underprivileged areas in the South African context does not always avail sport participation to the learners.

Fundamentally, sport participation is a suitable path to manage and support any decline in self-esteem that may present itself in adolescents. It is important to note that merely engaging in sport may not be enough due to the many barriers these underprivileged adolescents face on a daily basis.

One of the major barriers is the lack of resources, finances, and infrastructure in these areas. At the same time, participants were all very well aware of the above limiting factors they face, preventing them from engaging in sport. Unfortunately, this point of concern could not be resolved by the parents or adolescents in this study. Due to a lack of production from major role players, government, corporates, NGOs, and other role players who have financial means to come on board should be targeted to

further develop these underprivileged areas in terms of providing suitable sporting resources and infrastructure.

The final discoveries of this research study, in addition to the abovementioned recommendations will be represented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We play for the nation, it's not about us on this field anymore, it's about the people back home and that's what's driving us. Win or lose, they will see this kind of fight that you saw out there today.

(Siya Kolisi)

Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to recap and summarise the research findings which were centred around the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. This chapter will further elaborate on the findings, limitations, and the suggestions for this study make certain that the research process has been adhered to and how the suggestions may benefit underprivileged communities.

Summary of the Study

In Chapter 1, the direction of this research study was provided. The main objective of the study can be found as outlined in Chapter 1, under the heading Sub-Questions of the Study.

In essence, the fundamental goal of this study was undertaken, for the purpose of creating more opportunities for underprivileged adolescents with regard to sport participation. Chapter 2 considered the theoretical and conceptual framework that guided this research study. In considering the challenges that adolescents face during the transitional development period in their lives, it should be acknowledged that sport

participation can play an influential role in potentially eradicating stress and providing them with positive experiences to further enrich their lives. While South Africa's NSRP has tabled policies to take sport to rural and underprivileged areas, the succession and progress of these suggestions have not taken place fast enough.

The research methodology approach was discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 focusing on the gathering of data and a breakdown and evaluation of the research data. Chapter 5 discussed the findings obtained from the participants during the interview phase, and the related themes that transpired from this study.

Findings

Once the thematic analysis was concluded with the data obtained from the interviews, the below themes and sub-themes surfaced with relation to the influence of sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents.

Sport Activities' Influence on Wellbeing

This research study highlighted that sport participation plays a vital role in the lives of young underprivileged adolescents, as it has a positive impact on their overall wellbeing. The participants reflected on many physical and psychological benefits associated with the influence of sport activities among young adults. Being continuously involved in, and dedicated to sport participation, highlighted the importance of their skills development process. While most participants were cognisant of the physical health benefits of sport participation, they were also very much aware of the benefits that physical activities have on their psychological wellbeing. The participants revealed how they embrace receiving feedback from their coaches and their peers resulting in a confidence boost as they strive to always get better. With the participants having the

option and ability to do sport, it meant that they spent less time on their devices or being inactive, which could potentially lead to obesity and other illnesses. With all the participants in this study doing sport for fun, it created a social setting in which it allowed them to forge suitable friendships and relationships. Many of the participants indicated that this was the only place outside of school that they were afforded the opportunity to socialize and meet new people. It not only taught them to be respectful and kind to all people, but it also gave them a sense of hope and belonging, being part of a team. This sense of belonging paved the way for the participants to build character and increase their self-confidence.

Adolescent's Social Network Influence

For the research participants who came from underprivileged areas, sport participation was not at the top of their priority list, due to costs, access, and household situations, to name a few. According to the participants, they showed gratitude and happiness towards having the support of their families, coaches, and friends when it came to sport participation. This was an important factor which influenced whether the participant dropped out or continued with their sport participation. As such, the support provided by parents, coaches, and their peers served as a crucial factor towards encouraging and motivating the participants towards maintaining participation in sport. The role of the coaches goes far beyond just teaching the technical aspects of a sport. They also play a crucial role in developing important life skills in individuals. In the long run, coaching not only enhances one's athletic ability but also contributes to the overall development of individuals. As such, this ensured the growth of the participants' self-

esteem as well as the nurturing and development of healthy competition in the field of sport.

Process of Sport Participation

For all the participants, sport forms a huge and integral part of their lives. Sport serves as fun and an exciting way to keep fit as well as destress. The findings from this research also indicate that the lack of resources and infrastructure had not served as a deterrent to sport participation. The participants utilise the resources they have in order for them to continue with the sport that they enjoy. Many participants also reported the increase in energy levels and concentration after they played sport, which has positively impacted their schoolwork and studying. Unlike private schools in South Africa, the government schools appear to lack the infrastructure and resources to offer children a variety of sporting options to choose from. As such, many of the participants feel that due to the lack of options in the schooling environment, they do not participate in sport at school.

Another point of concern raised by the participants was that sport teachers at their schools lacked the basic knowledge when it comes to physical activities and sport participation. While they all played volleyball outside of the school environment, they did so on unfavourable surfaces, however, due to having the right coaches, they remained dedicated and enthusiastic about playing sport.

Conclusions

This studies purpose was to investigate the role of sport plays on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents by means of qualitative methods. As the adolescents in this study engaged in regularly organized sport activities, the major question that this

research undertook was whether an improvement of one's self-esteem exists from engaging in organized sport activities and if sport participation can be utilised as a helping tool for underprivileged adolescents.

An array of insights emerged from this study. Sport participation was viewed as an ideal platform for the development of skills, be it physical, social, or mental skills which allowed the participants the opportunity to cultivate a sense of being, accomplishment, and competence. It was evident that being part of a team was an influential aspect that led to continued sport participation as it brought about positive outlooks on the participants' self-worth as well as a supportive community structure. Additionally, the study revealed the importance of sport coaches in providing the participants with constructive feedback, guidance, and education in terms of their respective sporting abilities and skills. The feedback given was met with encouragement and motivation, suggesting the paramount importance in strengthening the participants' self-esteem *via* the process of feedback.

Furthermore, the findings also shed light on the need to challenge and oversee major obstacles in underprivileged areas such as a lack of or limited sporting facilities and financial impediments which contribute to the lack of sport participation.

Recommendations

Considering the findings from this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- *Financial funding*: This is the first and most crucial factor, as this will assist in terms of providing basic sporting facilities in underprivileged areas. This can be done by appealing to NGOs, corporates, and other individual sponsors who have

the means to come onboard to support the sport development initiatives in underprivileged areas by highlighting the positive impact of sport. At the same time, teachers and relevant role-players should create open days and market days, first, to host fundraising events, which will generate income, and second, to educate the public and create an awareness on the benefits of physical activities and sport.

- *Marketing and awareness:* Teachers and relevant role-players with access to the internet and smartphones/laptops, should create online campaigns to generate a wider spectrum of audience in terms of gaining more sponsorships. The current generation, which is very much technologically driven, could ensure that this strategy of online marketing is cost effective and less time consuming.
- *Identification of talent within the schooling environment:* As learners spend much of their time at school, it becomes vital for teachers to identify and nurture sporting talent upon recognition. This means that it should become the role of the teacher in the school to appeal to relevant businesses, established sport clubs, and the likes to take these talented sport individuals under their wings as well as foster a “Sponsor an Athlete” programme. The reason for this is that it then becomes an important step in ensuring exposure and sport development for children from a young age onward.

Limitations

The below major limitations of this study were noted.

Sampling

Due to the purpose of this research study, the participants were purposely selected from KAD volleyball club as well as LVA, both of which are located in the Gauteng province. As such, the data obtained may be club specific, and not applicable to all underprivileged areas or children. Due to the fact that all participants were under 18 years of age, parental/guardian consent was first required. This posed a challenge as the signed consent form was not always provided, which resulted in the sample size reducing in numbers.

Qualitative Research

As a result of this study being qualitative in nature, the feedback received from the participants was mainly subjective in nature. This could have potentially prevented participants from providing honest feedback when it came to topics that they may have perceived as unpleasant for them. As such, the researcher may not have gained full or complete insight into the experiences of the research participants with regard to the impact of sport on their self-esteem. At the same time, due to this research being confined to Gauteng, it lacks the ability for generalisation to other regions or provinces in the South African context.

Suggestions for Future Research

Due to the diversity of the South African population, further research needs to be done in the South African context which will also consider crucial factors that impact South Africans, such as socio-economic status, cultural upbringings, the impact of crime, and gender inequality, to name a few. Further study needs to be done on the following:

- The role of the schooling environment in underprivileged areas with regard to the impact (or a lack) of sport participation.
- A longitudinal study to show the growth or progress over a period of time to demonstrate the role of sport on self-esteem.
- To further investigate the role of families and communities with regard to their support, engagement, and enhancing the relation between sport participation and self-esteem.
- To ascertain and uncover policy development which allows for the promotion and opportunities for sport participation in all schools and communities, taking into consideration South Africa's socio-economic status and the inequalities of the past.

It is without a doubt that the above suggestions for future research can provide substantial benefits and a greater understanding of the valuable relation between sport participation and self-esteem on underprivileged adolescents.

Conclusion

The primary goal of this study was to explore the role that sport participation plays on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents within the South African context. While most literature studies on previous research shared similar questions, these findings could not be applied to the diverse South African population.

Sport participation serves to positively influence self-esteem in underprivileged adolescents, while the researcher could not distinguish negative aspects of sport participation on self-esteem. Hence, the recommendations from this study need to be

implemented to address the shortcomings in underprivileged areas and to ensure that all children have resources and opportunities for sport participation from an early age.

In reflecting on the conclusion of the recent Rugby World Cup 2023, it is undeniable that the South African rugby team created a wave of excitement for many young adolescents throughout the country with their diversity, passion, discipline, and dedication to sport.

When Nelson Mandela became the first democratic president of South Africa in 1994, following the end of the apartheid era, the country was still deeply divided along racial lines, and there was a major need for reconciliation and nation-building. The national rugby team of South Africa, known as the Springboks, had long been associated with the apartheid era. The team's emblem and colours were regarded by many as symbols of oppression. Mandela, despite having reasons to resent the team, recognised the potential of using rugby as a tool for unity.

The story of the famous 1995 Rugby World Cup and how its unmistakable effect was able to bring together a broken nation, has been told on numerous occasions by many across the world. When South Africa won the Rugby World Cup in France in 2023, it once again firmly created an affirmative path to reviving South Africa again, building another opportunity to unite our people. Additionally, Nelson Mandela's approach to the 1995 Rugby World Cup has surely left a legacy. It has contributed significantly to the early years of post-apartheid South Africa, by promoting corrective efforts to build a more unified and inclusive nation.

The importance of sport in building the strength of a nation and community is unmatched. In one way, sport can serve to eradicate any cultural barriers by unifying

individuals by means of a shared mutual goal. However, because of the challenges and a lack of resources and infrastructure encountered by underprivileged areas, the realisation for this study was born.

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ANNEXURE A

Consent Form

INFORMED PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

We invite you and your child to take part in a research study being conducted by *Desiree Moonsamy* who is a student at the University of South Africa (UNISA), as part of my research project. The study, as well as your rights as a participant, are described below.

Description

Creating a culture of sport and recreation: An exploratory study into the role of organized sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents in non-private schools. The aim of the study is to better understand the subjective experience of the influence of sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents.

The possible benefits of this study are the improvement of the self-esteem through the medium of sport in underprivileged adolescents who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. There are no foreseeable risks for participating in the study.

Confidentiality

Children's answers will not be associated with their names. Each child will be given an identification number on the interviewer's sheet. The audio tape of your child's participation will be destroyed after it has been transcribed.

I agree to the researchers using an associated name in this research and any publications that result from this research.

Signature

I agree to have you audio (voice record) my child during this study. I understand this audio will only be used for the purposes of research (e.g., analysis of responses, transcriptions of responses, etc.) and will not be available to anyone aside from the researcher.

Signature

Freedom to Withdraw or Refuse Participation

I understand that my child has the right to stop watching the tape at any time, or to refuse to answer any of the interviewer’s questions without prejudice from the investigator.

Questions?

Please feel free to ask the investigator any questions before signing the consent form or at any time during or after the study.

Informed Consent Statement

I, _____, give permission for my child, _____ to participate in the research project titled *The Influence of Sport on The Self-Esteem of Underprivileged Adolescents*. The study has been explained to me and my questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that my child’s right to withdraw from participation or refuse to participate will be respected and that their responses and identities will be kept confidential. I give this consent voluntarily.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Signature Date

ANNEXURE B

UNISA Ethical Clearance



Ethical Clearance for M/D students: Research on human participants

The Ethics Committee of the Department of Psychology at Unisa has evaluated this research proposal for a Higher Degree in Psychology in light of appropriate ethical requirements, with special reference to the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Psychologists of the HPCSA and the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics.

Student Name: Desiree Moonsamy **Student no.:** 3555 9683

Supervisor: Dr Petro van der Merwe **Affiliation:** Dept. of Psychology, Unisa

Title of project:

Creating a culture of sport and recreation: An exploratory study into the influence of organized sport on the self-esteem of underprivileged adolescents

The proposal was evaluated for adherence to appropriate ethical standards as required by the Psychology Department of Unisa. The application was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Psychology on the understanding that

- any and all formal procedures that need to be followed to gain access to the participants and to obtain information for the purposes of research, as required by relevant educational authorities, will be adhered to, and that the relevant authorities are aware of the scope of the research;
- participation will be invited purely on a voluntary basis, with no coercion or undue pressure to participate;

- signed letters of informed consent will be obtained from the schools targeted in the project, and from the parents/guardians of each of the participants in the study;
- the researcher will ensure that during the process of informed consent, participants' rights, including anonymity, confidentiality, and the right of the participants to withdraw from the research project, will be explained in a way that is clearly understood.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'P Kruger', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Date: 20 October 2015

Prof P Kruger

[For the Ethics Committee]

[Department of Psychology, Unisa]

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

- 1) *The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.*
- 2) *Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the Psychology Department Ethics Review Committee.*
- 3) *An amended application should be submitted if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.*
- 4) *The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.*

Please note that research where participants are drawn from Unisa staff, students or data bases requires permission from the Senate Research and Innovation Committee (SENRIC) before the research commences.

ANNEXURE C

Interview Schedule

Gender

Age

Participant Number

Questions

1. Why did you choose to play volleyball/sport?
2. How has playing volleyball made an impact on your life?
3. What do you feel when playing sport/volleyball?
4. How has playing volleyball/team sport helped you through a difficult time or situation?
5. Does playing sport help you with your schoolwork?
6. Do you feel that you prefer to play a team or individual sport?
7. Who are the people in your life/community that are important to you and why?
8. Do you think other kids should be involved in playing sport?
9. What are some of the reasons why some kids do not take part in sport?
10. What are some of the benefits/advantages of playing sport/volleyball?
11. Does your school encourage kids to play sport?
12. How do you encourage your friends and other kids to play sport?
13. What do you think parents and teachers can do to encourage more kids to get involved in sport?
14. What does a normal week look like for you?
15. How are you performing at school?
16. Who do you live with at home?
17. What made you choose volleyball as a sport?
18. How long have you been playing volleyball?
19. What do you like about playing volleyball for this club and what don't you like?
20. What do you want to do after school?

ANNEXURE D

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