

An Exploration of How Immigrant Youth Develop a Leadership Identity
Through Sport Participation

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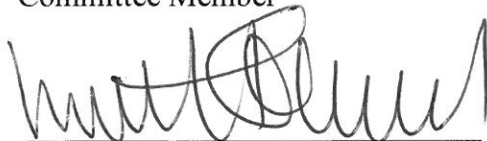
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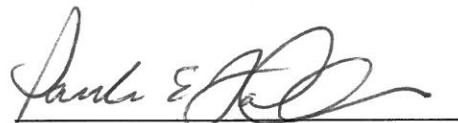
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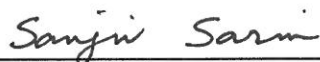
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Biographical Sketch

Adem Kaya has worked as athletic director, health and physical education teacher, and head wrestling and soccer coach at a local high school for the last eight years. His research interests include youth development and coaching through sports, sports management, and sports marketing. Prior to his current position, he worked as an assistant wrestling coach at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and at Lock Haven University in Pennsylvania. His duties included: athletic administration, development of practice instructions for the teams, and interacting with student-athletes on a day-to-day basis. Furthermore, he gained extensive knowledge in recruiting, planning, budgeting, and NCAA rules and regulation.

After coaching at the college level, he worked at a Fortune 500 company as a sports event marketing manager, which entailed organizing many sports and marketing events for NASCAR and for the NCAA. Before beginning a coaching career in the United States, while living in Turkey, he was a very competitive student-athlete. He served on the Turkish National wrestling team for several years and won several international recognitions. These included: winning a gold medal at the World Championship, winning a silver medal at the World Cup, and winning a silver medal at the University World Championship. He also has several years of sales and marketing experience in a variety of industries. He is actively involved in the Turkish-American community in North Carolina and serves as a volunteer to help new immigrants and refugees settle in the United States. He is married and has two children.

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative instrumental case study was to explore how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sport participation. Data were gathered through two in-depth individual interviews and one group interview with 15 immigrant youth in central North Carolina. Five major themes emerged through microlevel and macrolevel analyses: (a) immigration, (b) challenges in the new country, (c) facilitators in the new country, (d) sport participation, and (e) leadership. These themes contribute to an understanding of how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity. Findings of the study revealed that immigrants leave their country for several reasons, with war and family being the primary ones. Participants shared how, after moving to the new country, they faced many sociocultural and economic challenges. The immigrant youth also identified some facilitators played a central role in during their adaptation process, especially coaches who used the youth's sport participation to inspire them towards effective leadership and positive interactions with the mainstream society. Participants expressed how sport participation helped them define leadership as a set of dispositions and skills. Findings indicate that development of a leadership identity for immigrant youth who play sports is complex. This study has several implications for schools, community-based organizations, and youth sport clubs that provide programs for immigrant youth. Based on this study, it is clear that sport participation can help immigrant youth (a) develop a range of leadership dispositions and skills, (b) increase confidence in social interactions, (c) set goals for the future, (d) serve as role models for teammates and family members, and (e) be a change agent in their family and communities as they move through the stages of leadership identity development.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Human migration is a global phenomenon. Throughout human history people have moved from one place to another in search of political, social, or economic opportunities and freedom. Some migrations are voluntary, while at other times social and political persecutions force the exodus of individuals as refugees from their ancestral residences. Immigrating to a different country, such as the United States, can be a long, tedious, and often stressful process (Rumbaut, 1994; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004). Finishing the immigration process and becoming a legal resident of another country is a huge milestone in the life of the immigrant and their family and is cause for celebration. However, the journey is not over yet. Once immigration is complete, the immigrant must face the challenges of adapting to the new country's society and culture (Doherty & Taylor, 2007).

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) showed that the United States' immigrant population (documented and undocumented) grew by 1.4 million from July 2010 to July 2013 (Zeigler & Camarota, 2014). According to the data, the immigrant population, referred to as foreign-born by the Census Bureau, was comprised of all those who were not U.S. citizens at birth, including undocumented immigrants. The 41.3 million total immigrant population in 2013 was double the number in 1990; nearly triple the number in 1980; and quadruple that in 1970. According to the data, as a share of the population, all immigrants comprised 13.1% of U.S. residents (about one out of every eight), the highest percentage in 93 years. Immigrants were 16 % of the adult population (18 years and older) in 2013, nearly one out of every six adults (Zeigler & Camarota, 2014). Also, in 2013, U.S. Census

Bureau data showed that immigrant youth accounted for one-fourth of the nation's 81 million children. By 2050, they are projected to make up one-third of U.S. children (Passel, 2011).

Recent research has not only identified the unique risk factors for immigrant youth, but some studies indicate that how well these youth do today will affect the success of future generations (Hunt, Morland, Barocas, Huckans, & Caal, 2002). During the period of transition and integration, sports engagement, sport-based youth development programs, and physical activity models can play fundamental roles in many communities across the world in helping immigrant youth adapt to their new environments; these activities can also help immigrant youth develop social and cultural skills, such as leadership skills (Olliff, 2008; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004). A better understanding of how participation in sports can help immigrant youth navigate a new environment would be of value to all who are committed to helping them excel in the mainstream of the United States. This study was designed to advance such understanding through an exploration of how participation in sports can help immigrant youth develop a leadership identity.

Clarification of a few key concepts undergirding this study is prudent at this point; these concepts are leadership, leadership development, and leadership identity. It should be noted that leadership identity and leadership development are not synonymous concepts, although both are grounded in the concept of leadership. Northouse (2010) defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). Leadership, then, is commonly perceived as a process by which one individual is able to guide a group of other individuals toward a collective goal, action, or accomplishment. It is the ability to lead others and to get others to work together toward a common goal and vision (U.S. Department of Health and Human Service, 1996). Astin and Astin (1996) identified a social

change model of leadership development which involves individual dimensions for growth (consciousness of self, congruence with one's own values, and developing commitments) as well as group dimensions for growth (learning to be collaborative, handle controversy with civility, and develop a common purpose). Franko (2015) describes leadership identity as one's physical and mental presence, attitude, and readiness to take on new challenges and make an impact; it drives one's decisions toward big-picture leadership goals and reflects one's values, mindset, actions, and responses. This study used Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, and Osteen's (2006) developmental approach to leadership identity which will be further discussed in the "Theoretical Orientation" section.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Most immigrants predominantly settle in major urban centers and build barriers between themselves and the mainstream population, based on their cultural background, social norms, and family structure (Alba & Nee, 1997). After settlement, they are challenged with the struggles of adjusting to life in an unfamiliar country, recovering from past trauma, and finding appropriate education and employment opportunities (Whitley & Gould, 2011). Schmidt, Morland, and Rose (2009) highlighted that more than a third of all immigrants resettling in the United States are under the age of 18, and the number of children of immigrants is close to one-quarter of all children and youth in this country.

In immigrant and refugee communities, all too often, children and youth live in disadvantaged conditions and are at risk of long-lasting psychological and emotional damage may eventually lead to deviant behaviors and a sense of hopelessness (Fitzpatrick & LaGory, 2000). The impact of the immigration process is more traumatic for children and youth while they experience cultural shock, separation from family and friends, inability to communicate,

feeling of helplessness and vulnerability, unexpected fears, and loss of their motherland (Coventry, 2002; Schleifer & Ngo, 2005). In addition, they struggle with a sense of marginality and exclusion both from their old homeland and host country, embarrassment about their heritage and native language (Jablensky et al., 1994), difficulty of conflicting cultural values and social norms of their families and homeland against their host country (Coventry, 2002).

Olliff (2008) claims that it is important to note that immigrant youth often make remarkable progress and bring a wealth of resources and strengths to the American community. He further argues that immigrant experiences can produce qualities such as resilience and resourcefulness, adaptability, strong commitment to the family and community, and strong desire to achieve educationally. Newly arrived immigrant youth often have brought international knowledge, multicultural skills, and awareness of many cultures and communities into their new countries. If well supported, in the transition period, immigrant youth demonstrate a strong capacity to rebuild their lives, achieve their goals, and contribute dynamically to the broader American community.

It is important to understand how immigrant youth acquire effective social and cultural skills as they resettle and adapt to the environment of their host country, especially through participation in sports. A number of researchers have studied the adaptation of immigrants to the new social and economic environment of the host country and their participation in sports, emphasizing the importance of sport participation in helping immigrant youth develop social and cultural skills needed for successful adaptation (e.g., (Aizlewood Bevelander, & Pendakur, 2006; Caperchione, Kolt, & Mummery, 2009; Hancock, Cooper, & Bahn, 2013; Olliff, 2008; Peguero, 2011; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004).

Development of leadership skills is one possible strategy for addressing problems that immigrant youth face in adapting to a new environment. Extejt and Smith (2009) indicated that youth can better acquire leadership skills through sports. Similarly, Danish, Forneris, Hodge, and Heke (2004) outlined some of these skills gained through sports as the ability to perform under pressure, solve problems, meet deadlines and challenges, set goals, communicate, handle success and failure, work in a group and within a system, and receive feedback and benefit from it. Additionally, some researchers (Martinek & Hellison, 2009a; Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006; Schilling, Martinek, & Carson, 2007) have offered a model of compassionate and caring youth leadership that can be developed through structured sports programs.

The importance of developing leadership in youth is strongly supported in past research (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Hellison, Martinek, & Walsh, 2008; Holt, 2008; Jones, Dunn, Holt, Sullivan, & Bloom, 2011; Klau, 2006; Komives et al., 2009; Martinek et al., 2006). Over the past decade, research has also addressed the need for development of leadership in immigrant and refugee communities as they face challenges during and following resettlement (Olliff, 2008; Schmidt, Morland, & Rose, 2009; Teasley, Tyson, & House, 2007). Franko (2015) believes that by developing leadership identity, youth reflect on their values, mindset, actions, and responses, as well as driving their decisions toward big-picture leadership goals. Underlying the notion of developing leadership identity lies a complicated array of personal values, group norms, cognitive development, and perceived need to realize a particular vision ((Renn & Bilodeau, 2005). The research of Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, and Osteen (2005) has made major contributions to understanding how young adults develop a leadership identity. Utilizing a grounded theory study involving undergraduate students, these researchers advanced a leadership identity development (LID) theory that explains the internal and external factors affecting how

students develop a leadership identity. Details regarding this theory are presented in the Theoretical Orientation section below.

While many researchers have focused on recreational and sport participation and youth leadership development in general, there is inadequate research on how participating in sports can affect the development of a leadership identity among the youth in immigrant communities. In addition, there is little or no research about how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity. Thus, the aim of this study was to explore how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through participation in sports. Given the positive impact sport participation can have on youth, further research is needed to understand how sport participation influences the development of a leadership identity for immigrant youth.

1.2 Theoretical Orientation: Leadership Identity Development (LID)

Recognizing the need for scholarly work about how a leadership identity develops, Komives et al. (2005) conducted a study by using a grounded theory methodology to understand how undergraduate students develop a leadership identity. They constructed their study based on a relational definition of leadership, which has five components: purposeful (building a collective commitment toward a common goal and mission); empowering (sharing responsibility, authority and information and power); inclusive (welcoming people with different background); ethical (having a commitment to socially responsible behavior and decision); and process oriented (understanding the systematic perspective of organizations and change).

Thirteen undergraduate students who held leadership position at their college comprised the participants in Komives et al.'s (2005) study. These students were considered to be exemplary examples of the relational approach to leadership and were nominated by higher education professionals who had the opportunity to observe them in leadership situations. The

student group represented diversity in racial/ethnic backgrounds, gender, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, and academic majors. Each student participated in three individual interviews of one to two hours each, with the same interviewer from the research team. Interviews followed a structured protocol to ensure continuity. The first interview asked students to describe their lives to the present, reflecting on how they became who they are. The second interview focused on the students' experiences with leadership and working with others. The third interview explored how the student's view of leadership had changed over time and what the influences of that change were. The research team used the students' descriptions of their leadership journey, reflections on the ways they had previously conceptualized leadership, and explanations of their current approach to leadership to develop leadership identity development (LID) model. Komives presented the details of their LID model in the 2006 article, "A Leadership Identity Development Model: Applications from a Grounded Theory."

(Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006) describe young adult leadership development as an intersection between both relational leadership and student development theory, "Both psychosocial and cognitive developmental stages have elements that are congruent with the developmental processes necessary to establish leadership identity" (p. 402). The LID model has six stages in which individuals define leadership and see themselves as leaders in increasingly complex ways (Komives et al., 2006). Each stage explores changing views of leadership, developing self, group influences, and developmental influences:

Stage 1: Awareness involves being aware that there are leaders around you, external to self (such as athletic coach, teacher, or a credible relative). In this stage, there is a recognition that leaders exist and those people are generally adults such as their athletic coach and teacher. The focus is on others in terms of recognizing leadership in national figures and other authority

figures. Students are uninvolved followers at this stage. They demonstrate behaviors that are associated with seeking friendship and affirmation, feelings such as “I am not a leader” or “I do not have the capacity to influence others.”

Stage 2: Exploration/Engagement emphasizes the intentional participation in group activities to learn and engage with others, such as athletic teams. In this stage, more participation and exploration takes place in group activities by taking some responsibilities. Motivation is driven by friendship and belonging, and encouragement by peers. Students get involved in a variety of activities, developing personal skills and abilities, and start to see the need for change. They demonstrate behaviors that are associated with building confidence. They may begin to see themselves as a leader and have a desire to do more to make a difference.

Stage 3. Leader Identified is where leadership is seen as a positional role held by self or others, and recognizing hierarchical nature of relationships in groups. In stage three, groups are observed to have clearly distinguishable leaders and followers, based on whether a person holds a formal leadership position. At this level, participants are more willing to be part of groups they choose to join, and get more specific of selecting a group by narrowing down their interest. This stage is particularly important because of accepting differences while developing interpersonal skills and consciousness. The experiences youth gain in this stage spark a shift in student consciousness about others and change their view of leadership (Komives et al., 2005). One's self-view as a leader not only influence proactive attempts to gain leadership experience, it may also be important cue to access knowledge related to the leadership ((Lord & Hall, 2005)

Stage 4: Leadership Differentiated refers to views of non-positional leadership and leadership as shared group process. In this stage, students recognize a difference between being a leader and holding a leadership role. They realize that everyone in the group depends on

everyone else, anyone can make a difference in the group, whether they have the leadership position or not. They recognize that leadership is a process, not a position. Those who hold the leadership position will share the responsibility and encourage others to participate. Those who don't hold the position seek a way to contribute to the team.

Stage 5: Generativity involves a commitment to developing leadership in others and having passion for issues and development of others, team learning, and influencing others. In this stage, students come to see themselves as an “elder” with a responsibility to younger members. They become committed to causes they believe in and to the groups and people who address them. They demonstrate behaviors associated with sharing responsibility, awareness of the future, looking for meaning in peer relationship, and reflective practices.

Stage 6: Integration/Synthesis is where individuals develop personal capacity for leadership in diverse contexts and claim their identity as a leader without having to hold a positional role. In this stage, leadership is seen as consistent aspect of student's self-concept, continued self-development and lifelong learning, striving for congruence, and internal confidence. They are confident that they can contribute to new groups they may join (Komives et al., 2006). They demonstrate behaviors associated with leaving things better than when they found them, influencing in multiple contexts, and role modeling for others.

Komives et al. (2006) argue that the key transition is at the end of the stage three because young adults begin to value working independently with others rather than having a dominant leader with followers. So, I used this LID model in my exploration of the impact of sport participation on development of a leadership identity for immigrant youth because immigrant youth who participate in sports can experience and develop many leadership characteristics and skills; they may go through the personal and social changes outlined by Komives et al. (2006).

Furthermore, the LID model explains the developmental process of the leadership as it relates to youth.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The intent of this instrumental case study was to understand how participation in sports helps immigrant youth develop a leadership identity. An instrumental case study is designed to examine a particular case in order to illuminate specific issues; this type of qualitative research design is also used to enhance an existing theory or examine a certain pattern of behavior (Creswell, 2012b; Stake, 1994). Participants in this study were 15 immigrant youth in central North Carolina, who had participated in sports during the last three years and were registered students in grades 8 through 12 during the 2015-2016 academic year. More details regarding the case study design and selection of the participants are presented in Chapter 3.

1.4 Research Questions

The central research question for this qualitative study was: How do immigrant youth explain the influence of participation in sports on their development of a leadership identity? The following sub-questions also guided the study:

1. How do immigrant youth describe the reasons for leaving their home country and their adaptation in the new country?
2. How do immigrant youth describe their experiences in sport participation?
3. What are the perceptions of immigrant youth about leadership?
4. How do immigrant youth connect their participation in sports to the stages in their development of a leadership identity?

1.5 Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined specifically for use in this study.

First and second generation immigrant youth: While first generation refers to the immigrant youth who were born abroad, second generation immigrant youth refers to the immigrant youth whose at least one parent was born abroad (Enchautegul, 2014)

Immigrant refers to an alien who has been granted the right by the USCIS to reside permanently in the United States and to work without restrictions in the United State (IRS, 2014).

Futbol refers to the original name for the sport, "soccer." It is most commonly used in British English and around the world (Urbandictionary, 2017). In the current study, soccer was used in reference to futbol; with the exception of quotes from the participants.

Immigrant population: (a) *the foreign-born population* (immigrants to the United States) is considered to be the first generation. (b) *The native population* includes the second generation (U.S.-born with at least one immigrant parent) and the third and higher generations, generally referred to as the third generation (U.S.-born with two U.S.-born parents) (Passel, 2011).

Leadership is commonly known as a process by which one individual is able to guide a group of other individuals toward a collective goal, action, or accomplishment. It is the ability to lead others and to get others to work together toward a common goal and vision (U.S. Department of Health and Human Service, 1996).

Leadership identity is one's physical and mental presence, attitude, and readiness to take on new challenges and make an impact, and it drives one's decisions toward big-picture leadership goals and reflects his/her values, mindset, actions, and responses (Franko (2015)

Refugees refer to persons granted legal status due to persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries. Refugee status is granted before entry to the United States (IRS, 2014)

Soccer refers to a game played on a field between two teams of 11 players each with the object to propel a round ball into the opponent's goal by kicking or by hitting it with any part of the body except the hands and arms. It is the term that is used in American English (Merriam-Webster, 2017).

Sport is an activity involving physical exertion, skill and/or hand-eye coordination as the primary focus of the activity, with elements of competition where rules and patterns of behavior governing the activity exist formally through organizations (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011).

Sport participation is defined as having taken part in sports or physical activities, but not limited to being a player, on at least one occasion (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). For the purpose of this study, in the last two years prior to data collection and interview will be considered.

Youth development is a process which prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences that help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent (Larson & Osman, 2013).

Youth leadership development refers to the ability to analyze one's own strengths and weaknesses, set personal and vocational goals and possess the self-esteem to carry them out (Wehmeyer, Agran, & Hughes, 1998), and as well as ability to envision a goal, to take initiative or action to achieve the goal, to take responsibility for outcome, to work

well with, and to communicate effectively with others (Edelman, Gill, Comerford, Larson, & Hare, 2004).

1.6 Delimitations and Limitations

Participation in this study was delimited to participants who (a) resided in the central North Carolina, (b) were in grades 8 through 12, (c) had played sports for three years, (d) were proficient in basic standard American English, and (e) were first and second generation immigrant youth.

There are several limitations to this study. First, although this was an instrumental case study with 15 participants, each individual was a not separate case; the case was the group of individuals. The case was bounded by a particular group of immigrant youth at a local youth sport program in one region of North Carolina. As a result, the findings may not be transferable to the other youth sport organization and club settings. Individuals who participate in other youth sport programs may reveal different experiences in their development of a leadership identity.

Secondly, this study focused on exclusively on the experience of the immigrant youth at the local youth sport club; thus, the perspective of the participants of this study would not address the experience of all youth who play sport. The heterogeneity of the immigrant youth also does not mean all immigrant youth experience the development of a leadership identity the same way as youth in this study. This study did not explore the similarities or differences among individual immigrant youth at the local sport club; it is possible that individuals from different cultural backgrounds may have experienced development of a leadership identity in different ways.

Thirdly, even though it was not the intention of this, all of the participants were male immigrant youth. So, the findings are not going to be generalizable to female immigrant youth.

Further study is needed to explore how female immigrant youth might develop leadership identity through sport participation.

1.7 Significance of Study

This study has significance for practitioners, policy makers, and scholars in several fields. To adequately serve immigrant youth, youth programs and educational institutions should look beyond demographic characteristics to see immigrant youth as individuals and to understand their perceptions, social worlds, and experiences from their own perspectives. My study provides a fresh and more complete picture of how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through participation in sports. Organizations and institutions dealing with immigrants should be able to use the findings from this study to (a) examine basic issues related to the nature and purpose of youth programs and the role of educational institutions within their communities and (b) to review their policies and programs to assess how they might better serve the needs of immigrant youth and their families.

Furthermore, this study may prove to be significant in contributing to research and scholarship in leadership studies, sports science, and adolescent development--in terms of the underdeveloped area of research related to the relationship between sport participation and immigrant youth leadership identity development. Knowledge about the impact of sport participation on immigrant youth leadership identity development may provide additional insight into their motivation to gain leadership skills as they experience the pressures of adapting to the new environment and fitting into the mainstream society.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

This chapter reviews literature pertaining to six key areas that provided a foundation for my study. The purpose of the study was to understand how participation in sports helps immigrant youth develop a leadership identity. The first section in this review analyzes challenges facing immigrant and refugee youth. The next section describes assets-based youth development models. In the third section, sport participation in general is reviewed, while immigrant and refugee youth sport participation is reviewed in the fourth section. The fifth section highlights programs that focus on youth leadership development. In the final section, youth leadership identity development is examined.

2.1 Challenges Facing Immigrant and Refugee Youth

Life for new immigrants and refugees is full of hurdles that result from a number of sociocultural factors. For instance, embarrassment about their cultural heritage, native language, feeling of rootlessness, and confusion in their new culture and environment are commonly mentioned in the literature. Coventry (2002) underlined that immigrant youth wrestle with unbearable challenges in the new host country while they experience culture shock, separation from family and friends, not being able to communicate, feelings of helplessness and vulnerability, lack of self-esteem, and loss of their motherland. Chatty (2007) also found that after settlement in the new country, immigrant and refugee youth often struggle with a sense of marginality and exclusion both from their old homeland and their new country. Some other critical challenges for immigrant youth are time crunch, problems with language, being unfamiliar with the ways of life in the host country, inadequate access to known and desired

forms of recreational activity, and experiences with discrimination (Amara et al., 2004; Holt, Kingsley, Tink, & Scherer, 2011; Whitley & Gould, 2011).

Garrett (2006) conducted a focus group study of immigrant and refugee communities in the U.S. to look at challenges immigrants and refugees face during adaptation in the United States. The researcher identified several themes that could help immigrant and refugee overcome those hurdles. The research also revealed that people and organizations wishing to help immigrants and refugee populations need to be aware of the best ways to share information. Garrett categorized his findings in three themes: (a) social issues (the education system, learning English, educating their children, stuck in low-level jobs with barriers to advancement, lack of safe, affordable housing); (b) isolation of immigrant and refugee communities (not enough support from social service, unaware of their rights, impact of transportation, culture clash); and (c) prejudice, discrimination, and lack of understanding at the workplace. In order for immigrants and refugees to overcome these obstacles, the researcher argued that it is vital to restructure existing services by targeting immigrant and refugee needs, build new services, and provide more and better information. He concluded with these specific recommendations: (a) use English as a Second Language (ESL) as a window to other services and information, (b) create more supports for immigrants and refugees in school, (c) offer more affordable and culturally sensitive health care options, (d) create more activities for immigrant and refugee youth, (e) make refugee orientation programs ongoing and address longer-term needs.

Since most immigrants arrive from poor countries where education is limited, the possibility of finding a good job is limited. Zhou (1997) argued that immigrants with some level of education and financially secure families can gain access to good schools, safe neighborhoods, and other supportive organizations. On the other hand, immigrants with a poor education and

unskilled parents grow up in underprivileged neighborhoods where poverty, poor schools, violence and drugs, and generally disruptive social environments are felt the most. Zhou (1997) also pointed out that unlike adult immigrants whose levels of adaptation are often indicated by occupational attainment and income, levels of adaptation among young immigrants are generally measured by educational attainment (academic orientation, aspiration, and performance). Attending school to gain knowledge and skills that may be capitalized upon in future labor markets is a crucial first step toward successful adaptation to American society for immigrant children and children of immigrants.

Parents often find that their children are quickly “Americanized,” which may be at odds with their own culture (Nunez, 2014). Additionally, the author claimed that children tend to pick up English much faster than their parents. This disrupts the parent-child dynamic, and teens often use this to their advantage. Family disruption is considered as one of the overwhelming reasons affecting immigrants’ adaptation process. According to Hernandez (1993), when children face a family breakdown, it significantly distresses their socioeconomic circumstances, psychological function, behavioral problems, education, and health. Research shows that such disadvantaged family situations have worsened for poor immigrant families who have lived a longer time in the United States. For instance, Landale and Oropesa (1995) warned that the rise of single-parent families intensifies the overall poverty trends for immigrant children; they highlighted the significant increases of children living in single-parent families across generations in the United States, including many Asian and Latin American nationality groups. In a more recent study, Mather (2010) concluded, from an analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey (CPS), that even though single-father families had increased in recent years, single-mother families still accounted for the overwhelming majority of children living in single-

parent homes. About one-sixth (16%) of White children live in single-mother families, compared with one-fourth (27%) of Latino children and one-half (52%) of African American children.

The United States is not known for being a multilingual culture. Without having a mastery of standard American English, some of the basic daily works such as getting a job, making friends, or even completing basic tasks like buying food or filling out forms are very frustrating for immigrants and refugees. To address this, many refugees and immigrants take ESL classes; but for most, finding the time for this between jobs and caring for kids can be difficult (Nunez, 2014). Without proper communication and not understanding other people, the rules, and task, it is difficult for immigrant youth to participate and engage with others, and be knowledgeable about the new culture. For instance, Caperchione, Kolt, and Mummery (2009) reported, after evaluating over 50 empirical studies, that language barrier is the most common barrier between migrant groups and host community or country. Rotich (2011) found that not only can their inability to effectively communicate ideas and feelings cause confusion, frustration, anger, and alienation, but the lack of language and cultural limitation can also result in a high probability of immigrant children and their families not receiving sufficient education and human services. Language has been often cited as one of the most, if not the most, crucial and common challenges in terms of acculturation of immigrant youth and their adaptation into the new life (Aizlewood, Bevelander, & Pendakur, 2006; Berry, 1997; Garrett, 2006; Passel, 2011; Rotich, 2011; Spaaij, 2015; Stodolska, 1998).

Berry (1997) conceptualized acculturation in four different contexts: assimilation, separation, integration (i.e., biculturalism), and marginalization. Berry's (1997) model was originally developed to represent two attitudes: maintaining heritage culture and adopting heritage culture. The researcher noted that from the point of view of non-dominant groups, when

individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures, they employ the *assimilation* strategy. In contrast, when individuals place a value on holding on to their original culture, and at the same time wish to avoid interaction with others, then the *separation* alternative is used. When there is an interest in both maintaining one's original culture, while in daily interactions with other groups, *integration* is the option. Finally, when there is little possibility or interest in cultural maintenance (often for reasons of enforced cultural loss), and little interest in having relations with others (often for reasons of exclusion or discrimination) then *marginalization* is emphasized. Berry argued that the integration strategy can only be pursued in societies that are explicitly multicultural, in which certain psychological pre-conditions are established such as the widespread acceptance of the value to a society of cultural diversity, relatively low levels of prejudice, positive mutual attitudes among cultural groups, and a sense of attachment to, or identification with, the larger society by all groups. Berry concluded that the availability and success of adaptation strategy depends on the willingness of the dominant society to allow it, and the wish of co-ethnics to pursue it.

Some researchers have emphasized the immigrants can make positive contributions to their new country, despite their adaptation challenges. Their resourcefulness, adaptability, strong commitment to family and community, and strong desire to achieve educationally can inspire other oppressed groups (Olliff, 2008; Teasley et al., 2007). If immigrant youth receive enough support during the transition, such as through sport participation, they can develop a strong capability for achieving their goal of restructuring a sustainable life (Coventry, 2002).

2.2 Positive Youth Development Approaches

Youth development has been a top priority for sustainable societies and it has been in the spotlight for the last several decades (Hellison et al., 2008). Youth development is both a

philosophy and an approach to policies and programs that serve young people. The tendency in youth development had been to view adolescence as a time of storm and stress was associated with a deficit-reduction approach, whereby researchers examined ways to prevent and/or reduce the problems adolescents may encounter (Martinek & Hellison, 1997). However, over the past 20 years a new vision of youth development has emerged; this vision has been labeled positive youth development (PYD) (Holt, 2008). The underlying philosophy of PYD is holistic, preventative and positive, focusing on the development of assets and competencies in all young people (Martinek & Hellison, 2009c).

Common understandings of PYD views all youth as having the potential for positive developmental change and regards youth as a resource to be developed rather than a problem to be solved. Youth development scholars (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesma, 2006; Hellison, 2011; Lerner, 2005) consider PYD as an assets-based conception of development rather than a deficit-reduction approach. Martinek and Hellison (2009c) claimed that the deficit model did not support principles of the youth development field. An assets-based model builds on youth's strengths, it is inclusive and realistic, it views the community as a whole to preserve and enhance, and it gives people a sense of ownership and empowerment. Practitioners, policymakers, funding organizations, and researchers have developed strategies and theories to promote implementations of PYD.

In an attempt to find out what types of programs encourage positive growth in young people, a committee of youth policy experts at the Institute of Medicine at the National Research Council of the undertook a two-year review of theoretical research and promising programs to determine which features of positive developmental settings were most effective (Goodman & Gawad, 2004). They found that programs were more successful if they provided youth with:

1. Physical and psychological safety – Safe and health-promoting facilities; practices that increase safe peer group interaction and decrease unsafe or confrontational peer interactions.
2. Appropriate structure – Limited setting, clear and consistent rules and expectations, firm enough control, continuity and predictability, clear boundaries, and age-appropriate monitoring.
3. Supportive relationships – Warmth, closeness, connectedness, good communication, caring, support, guidance, secure attachment, responsiveness.
4. Opportunities to belong – Opportunities for meaningful inclusion, regardless of one's gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities; social inclusion; social engagement and integration; opportunities for socio-cultural identity formation; support for cultural and bicultural competence.
5. Positive social norms – Rules of behavior, expectations, injunctions, ways of doing things, values and morals, obligations for service.
6. Support for efficacy and mattering – Youth-based, empowerment practices that support autonomy, making a real difference in one's community, and being taken seriously. Practices that include enabling, responsibility granting, meaningful challenge. Practices that focus on improvement rather than on relative current.
7. Opportunities for skill building – Opportunities to learn physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, social skills; exposure to intentional learning experiences; opportunities to learn cultural literacy, media literacy, communication skills, and good habits of mind; preparation for adult employment; opportunities to develop social and cultural capital.

8. Integration of family, school, and community efforts – Concordance, coordination, and synergy among family, school and community (Goodman & Gawad, 2004).

As a result, the positive youth development field includes several approaches or models for assets-based youth development. Two of these models are discussed here: teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR), and the 5Cs.

2.2.1 TPSR model. TPSR is a physical activity-based youth development approach designed to promote pro-social values, social skills, and resiliency among underserved youth on (Hellison, 2003). The model has been used by many researchers and programs. It has been applied in a broad variety of physical activity settings (school physical education, after-school programs) with children and adolescents from diverse backgrounds. Consistent with a positive youth development approach, the program consists of trained teachers who provide a caring environment and engage in autonomy-supportive behaviors that encourage program acceptance by youth, balance empowering students with teaching explicit values, and optimize conditions in which youth can succeed. Hellison defined five levels of responsibility for the model:

1. Respect for the rights and feelings of others (self-control, including others, resolving conflicts in a democratic way)
2. Effort (self-motivation, trying new tasks, on-task persistence);
3. Self-direction (working independently, goal setting progression, courage to resist peer pressure)
4. Helping others and leadership (caring and compassion, sensitivity and responsiveness, inner strength)
5. Taking it outside the gym (trying these ideas outside physical activity program, being a role model).

According to the TPSR model, respecting others lays the foundation for developing social responsibility, because controlling one's negative emotions, resolving conflicts peacefully, and including everyone in activities are required for recognizing the rights of all participants. Activities, teacher behaviors, and implementation strategies are designed to optimize students' achievement of self- and social responsibility goals. These methods and activities are designed to integrate physical activity and life skills within the same lesson, facilitate transfer of life skills learned in physical activity to other domains, shift responsibility from the teacher to students, and build relationships with students founded on respect for individuality. Specific teacher strategies include awareness talks, direct instruction, individual decision-making, group evaluation meetings, and reflection time. (Hellison, 2003) suggested several principles that should be taken in consideration in order to set the foundation for the model.

1. Focus on relationships. If the program staff cannot build and sustain trustful relationships that acknowledge participants' individuality and strength, then the program would fail in accomplishing program goals.
2. Implementation of TPSR from physical activity to gradually shift to an emphasis on life. The purpose of the program is not to engage kids in physical activities but to be able to live a social responsible life focusing on enhancing their own well-being and the well-being of others.
3. Gradually shifting the responsibilities for planning and carrying out the program from program leaders to participants. (Hellison et al., 2000)

Evaluation studies show that programs based on the TPSR model are effective in achieving positive youth development goals. For instance, Walsh (Walsh, 2008) implemented an after-school physical activity program for at-risk adolescents that focused on creating a vision for

their future selves and careers. Session activities, goals, and teaching methods stemmed from responsibility model principles, and researchers assessed program impact with a variety of methods including weekly journals, field observations, and formal interviews. Findings revealed that program participants developed skills for coaching younger students as well as skills for envisioning an individualized career and job.

Similarly, Hammond-Diedrich and Walsh (2006) examined the effectiveness of TPSR in a program called the Urban Youth Leaders that taught various physical activity skills. Findings of their study suggest that the program met the goals it initially set, including providing advanced leadership opportunities. In addition, TPSR was effective in providing the program an avenue to improve teaching skills, being familiar with a university context is a plus, within the program participants gain new friendships, and become confident leaders. Hammond-Diedrich and Walsh concluded that the program was effective in providing the urban youth leaders a venue to become confident leaders.

2.2.2 The 5Cs Model. The 5Cs is one of the most prominent models in the emerging vocabulary of PYD and has been recognized as a useful framework for assessing PYD in sports (Fraser-Thomas, Cote, & Deakin, 2005; Jones et al., 2011). The Five Cs model emphasizes the strengths of adolescents and, as a consequence, enables youth to be seen as resources to be developed. The 5Cs model was originally developed by Lerner et al. (2005), based on five constructs:

- **Competence:** Positive view of one's actions in domain specific areas including social, academic, cognitive, and vocational. Social competence pertains to interpersonal skills (e.g., conflict resolution). Cognitive competence pertains to cognitive abilities (e.g., decision making). School grades, attendance, and test scores are part of academic

competence. Vocational competence involves work habits and career choice explorations, including entrepreneurship.

- Confidence: An internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy; one's global self-regard, as opposed to domain specific beliefs.
- Connection: Positive bonds with people and institutions that are reflected in bidirectional exchanges between the individual and peers, family, school, and community in which both parties contribute to the relationship.
- Character: Respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity.
- Caring: A sense of sympathy and empathy for others.

The model has been used in different contexts by many researchers. For example, Jones et al. (2011) modified and used the 5Cs to find out if these characteristics can be gained through sport. They classified the set of 5C indicators as (a) measures of positive identity and self-worth (to represent confidence), (b) academic and social competence (to represent competence), (c) personal values and social conscience (to represent character), (d) sympathy for disadvantaged and for those in pain (to represent caring/compassion), and (e) connection to family and community (to represent connection).

2.3 Youth Sport Participation

The role of sport participation has been widely accepted and increasingly acknowledged in international policy and research related to socialization and youth development. Research shows that sport is correlated with numerous positive developmental signs, such as improved self-esteem, emotional regulation, problem-solving, goal attainment, healthy development, social skills, and academic performance (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007; Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt,

2003; Hellison & Martinek, 2006; Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn, & Wall, 2008; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003; Martinek & Lee, 2012). While sport participation has increased in emerging and developing countries such as Turkey and India, some researchers report that sport participation has been declining in developed countries (Janssen et al., 2005). For instance, in Canada, only 9% of the boys and 4% of the girls in the 6-19-year-old group participate in 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on at least six days a week (Colley et al., 2011).

The Physical Activity Council (PAC) issues a report on sport participation in the U.S. every year. The 2015 report showed that the participation rate has been declining in the last six years respectfully and Americans continue to struggle with physical activity commitment. Instead, more people choose other commitments than physical activity. According to the data, the percentage of inactive 6-12-year-olds-- youths involved in no physical activities over a 12-month period—rose to nearly 20% in 2012, from 16% in 2007; inactive 13-17 year-olds rose from 17% to 19% (PAC, 2015). Similarly, Wallerson (2014) reported that combined participation in the four most-popular U.S. team sports—basketball, soccer, baseball, and football—He warned that declines in youth sport participation could bear long-lasting consequences. Wallerson addressed some of the causes of this decline such as social networking, videogames and other technology that may be drawing children away from sports. In addition, he pointed out several important factors affecting why kids leave youth sport and do not return: single sport specialization, overuse, overworking kids (burnout), and searching for the elite athletes.

Fisher, Juszczak, and Friedman (1996) focused on reasons youth might participate in sports. They found that many children believed that they would be extremely likely to receive an athletic scholarship. Specifically, 52% of males and 20% of females reported that they would

most likely receive such a scholarship. This belief in the ability to receive significant benefits from sports, and thus ranking sport participation higher than academic achievement, was a troubling finding from the study. The authors indicated that most of the participants engaged in sports, but that a significant percentage of them had unrealistic expectations for their futures. Finally, no association was found between sport participation and academic performance.

Youth participate in sports at different levels depending on the type of program. One type is instructional programs that are offered free of charge to a selected group of youth during or after school (either at school, community centers, church organizations, or non-profit organizations). These type of programs are mostly for low-income youth to promote physical activity and gain life skills (Hellison et al., 2008). The aim of such programs vary but mostly it is to help youth develop socially, personally, cognitively, and to improve leadership skills (Lieberman, Arndt, & Daggett, 2007). Another type of sports program is one that requires membership and certain fees for registration and participation (e.g., athletic teams at school, youth teams in leagues) (Holt, Tamminen, et al., 2008). According to data provided by the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN, 2013), these pay-to-play programs are increasing among middle and high schools across the nation (ESPN, 2013). These programs charge parents a flat rate fee for their child to participate in school sports. Of the 9% who responded having children playing a sport in middle/high school, over half contribute to a pay-to-play program. Researchers predict these fees will increase in the future due to the cost of the equipment, facility, and field as new regulations about safety and rules are implemented. In addition to membership and registration fees, parents have to spend more money for equipment, travel, tournament entry fees, transportation, and lodging. Financial hardship is one of the main

reasons why low-income families cannot send their kids to these programs (Clark, 2008; Holt & Neely, 2011).

2.4 Immigrant and Refugee Youth Sport Participation

As immigrants and refugees move into new places, their engagement and participation in recreational and sport activities plays an important role in their adjustment to the new society. Sport participation has been valued by many countries and researchers as a vehicle to create opportunity for the sustainable integration process of immigrants (Kennett, 2005).

Several theories have been developed to explain why and how cultural differences affect sport participation and leisure behaviors in immigrant communities; these include marginality theory, opportunity theory, ethnicity theory, and identity theory. Based on marginality theory, recreational participation among ethnic groups is influenced by the forces of social inequality, poverty, unequal resource distribution, and discrimination (Washburne, 1978). Similar to the marginality approach is the opportunity approach which assumes that as costs increase, opportunities for marginalized groups decline (Aizlewood et al., 2006). Since ethno-cultural minorities are presumed to occupy the lower steps of the social ladder and are often spatially disadvantaged, they lack the means to access opportunities for recreational and sport participation. While marginality and opportunity theory deals with the socioeconomic status of immigrants, ethnicity theory deals mostly with values and beliefs, which are the sets of subcultural norms that significantly affect people's leisure and sport participation rate (Allison & Geiger, 1993). One of the most influential theories related to sport participation is identity theory which suggests that members of ethnic groups deliberately choose to participate within their own communities and not in so-called 'mainstream' activities because they wish to preserve their ethnic identity and heritage (Karlis & Dawson, 1995). Ethnic groups, upon recognizing that

the host culture cannot meet their sociocultural needs, create their own associations and organizations to fill these needs (Karlis & Dawson, 1995).

Aizlewood et al. (2006) studied recreation and sport participation among racial/ethnic minorities and immigrants in a comparison study between two countries: Canada and Netherlands. They concluded that the strongest determinants of participation in social activities (i.e., recreation and sport) are sociodemographic factors such as participants' age, education, and employment status. The researchers argued that while immigrant youth cannot readily change their origin, their education level can be raised and socioeconomic status can be increased since recreation and sport participation in multicultural societies; this has the potential to increase the engagement and interaction of like and unlike groups. Higher participation leads to higher interaction, which in turn leads to higher trust among individuals and between groups. In addition, Aizlewood et al. (2006) argued that socioeconomic attributes of immigrants vary from country to country; for instance, employment in the Netherlands had less impact on immigrants' sport and recreation participation than in Canada. They underlined several key points in concluding that while adaptation takes place, sport and recreation participation has the potential to other social benefits such as raising understanding within the diverse groups and increasing a sense of belonging to the immigrant's new community.

Gender differences in the rate of sport participation varies from culture to culture. So, sport participation is perceived differently between men and women in immigrant communities. Several researchers (Aizlewood et al., 2006; Kennett, 2005; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004) reported that women participate less than men; sport participation is not even encouraged as women are often expected to spend their time at home and take care of family responsibility first (Caperchione et al., 2009). This may be due to lack of parental approval, parental enforcement of

strict dress codes, inadequate availability of single-sex facilities, and their own religious belief and about proper behavior of females (Alba & Nee, 1997).

Religion and tradition are also factors that affect immigrant youth sport participation. For instance, some Muslim communities exemplify the need for cultural sensitivity as many of their religious practices and tradition (such as praying five times a day, fasting during the holy month of Ramadan) have particular influence on their physical activity behavior (Caperchione et al., 2009). Moreover, Islamic faith puts limitations on cross-gender participation, and dress code. Amara et al. (2004) surmised that many Muslim women experience considerable difficulties accessing programs and services that meet their religious requirements and consequently feel systematically constrained in their sport and recreation participation. Aizlewood et al. (2006) also found that ethno-cultural characteristics and religious attendance are also strong predictors of sport participation. Religious attendance was most common in Muslim immigrant communities since inappropriate dress code and bio-sex attendance are seen as main reasons for low participation rates, especially for Muslim women.

Olliff (2008) identified three main factors for low rate of recreational and sport participation: structural, mediating and personal barriers. Structural barriers include a lack of inclusive and accessible programs, inconsistent referral of young into sport by settlement services, and restriction around accessing athletic fields. Mediating barriers are lack of inclusive practices in existing sport and recreation providers, negative resettlement experiences, lack of parental/guardian support. Personal barriers are lack of time, financial difficulties, and not knowing the rules.

Grey (1992)'s ethnographic study addressed the issue of immigrants and their sport participation at school from two different perspectives. One was assimilation/social band and the

other was democratization in the student body at the school level. In both categories, it was noted that the school administration and staff lacked the mechanism to accommodate immigrants' athletic interests in the school athletics program. He also mentioned that when immigrant students do not participate in a school activity program, they maintain a lower status within the student body and fail to seek to become "better citizen" and achieve "tolerance and understanding of others" (1992, p.). The researcher concluded that emphasis upon immigrant youth participation in sports, as a means to achieve status, not only contributes to the relatively isolated status of these minorities who do not participate but also reifies creation of an elite status which further stretches the spectrum of possible relations among different groups in the school.

Rotich (2011) conducted a study of a service learning mentoring program related to engagement in recreational and sport activities. She highlighted important points for the role of mentors who are involved in the development of youth, especially immigrant youth. She argued that mentoring is a crucial springboard for fostering positive outcomes in youth development. She also underlined the necessity of appropriate interventions for immigrant youth and warned that if such services are not provided, these young people will face the possibility of being undereducated, underemployed, and unprepared to participate fully in society. She suggested that a culturally sensitive mentoring program has the potential to significantly enhance positive development related to the acculturation and schooling of diverse at-risk immigrant and refugee students entering America's school systems.

Accessibility and availability to culturally appropriate community programs for immigrants is crucial in facilitating participation in sports and physical activity. In 2006, the Commonwealth of Australia (2006) issued a report on immigrants' participation rate in sports and physical activity. The study showed that mixed grouping in exercise classes and the swimming

pool or the presence of male instructors is seen as inappropriate by female immigrant youth. In addition, the overall lower level of participation in sports and physical activity by the immigrant population is also reflected in nearly all other social and community activities. Age and gender have a major impact on level of participation across all groups regardless of country of birth. Moreover, birthplace is associated with lower participation rates in sports and physical activity. For example, people who reported their birth place as “non-English speaking countries” had a lower participation rate in sports and physical activity than those from English speaking countries.

Stodolska and Alexandris (2004) found that no matter what their ethno-cultural or socio-demographic background, the first few years after settlement in the new country is usually associated with low levels of voluntary physical activity because sports and physical recreation are not the first priorities of immigrants who struggle to adjust to a new environment. They often hold several low-wage but physically demanding jobs, and hardly have any free time available. Therefore, it is easier for newcomer immigrants to settle in an ethnic enclave, establishing a social network and maintaining their cultural identity (Aizlewood et al., 2006). Aizlewood et al. also argued that personal and socio-demographic characteristics influence immigrants' recreation and sport participation since most of the newcomers settle in or around big urban cities. Even though the researchers concluded that readily available sport and recreational facilities accelerate social networks and sport participation within the immigrant communities, they warned that while spatial concentration facilitates the creation of social networks, residential segregation caused by the spatial concentration may also limit the potential for immigrants to participate fully in the broader society. Kennett (2005) further illuminated this point when he highlighted the impact of social exclusion and inclusion on the opportunity for immigrants to participate in

sports. He argued that social exclusion is multidimensional process that affects certain groups at the margin of mainstream society. These groups include the homeless, at-risk youth, mentally and physically disabled people, single parents, and racial/ethnic minorities. According to him, poverty is the center of social exclusion and prevalent in urban areas where most immigrants settle after coming to a new country. Therefore, sport participation in such an environment is out of reach for many immigrant youth since most sport organizations charge a fee for facilities and urban equipment.

2.5 Youth Leadership Development through Sports

Northouse (2010) defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 3). In the social change model of leadership development (SCM), Astin and Astin (1996) categorize leadership values around individual dimensions for growth (consciousness of self, congruence with one’s own values, and developing commitments) as well as around group dimensions for growth (learning to be collaborative, handle controversy with civility, and develop a common purpose). Similarly, leadership is commonly known as a process by which one individual is able to guide a group of other individuals toward a collective goal, action, or accomplishment. It is the ability to lead others and to get others to work together toward a common goal and vision (U.S. Department of Health and Human Service, 1996). These conceptions of leadership reflect the principles of positive youth development discussed in the previous section. Following is a description of some positive youth development programs and activities that (a) include a focus on youth leadership development and (b) in some way incorporate sports to accomplish their goals.

Project Effort is an example of a program that focuses on improving leadership skills for youth through the TPSR model. It is an afterschool program at the University of North Carolina,

under the supervision of faculty. Teachers refer students that have frequent behavioral problems to the program. The purpose of the program is not just recreation or sport skill development but to use sports to teach participants how to be more responsible for themselves (Hellison, 2003). Each student is matched with a mentor who visits them at school every week and helps them focus on life values and skills; the program provides underserved youth with an opportunity for self-growth and improvement in self-confidence, grades, behavior, and empowerment (Lee & Martinek, 2009).

Many sport-based development programs establish goals and try to use best youth development practices to foster healthy and contributing youth for now and in the future. To recognize and evaluate how such programs implement their practice and goals, Wicks, Beedy, Spangler, and Perkins (2007) conducted an extensive empirical study on three programs and presented the technical side of these leadership programs. The three programs were: (a) Team-Up for Youth that focused on training and education, coaching corps, grant making, public policy, and knowledge creating and sharing in the San Francisco Bay Area; (b) Sports PLUS Global that emphasized educational training for communities, using sports to promote human development, social change, and human rights; and (c) National Recreation and Park Association that engaged national partners and local park and recreation agencies to improve the quality of youth development and sports nationwide. The common goal of these programs was to provide strategies for enhancing leadership and personal growth in youth (Wicks et al., 2007). While each of these programs offered different approaches to building and operating youth development programs, they all recognized the use of sports as a powerful tool for transferring leadership skills to the youth.

Petitpas, Cornelius, and Van Raalte (2008) evaluation study focused on two programs that use sports to help youth develop leadership skills. The programs targeted personal development goals; emphasized positive social relationships and a caring, supportive environment; and demonstrated data-based evidence of effectiveness. While they identified several challenges--such as consistency management, the recruitment, training, and retention of the caring adult mentors, and supervision--they asserted that youth development programs are only as effective as the adults who deliver them. Furthermore, they emphasized that individuals who are not able to establish trusting relationships with youth are unlikely to create an environment where participants are willing to take risks and where they know that making mistakes is part of the learning process.

Weiss, Bolter, Bhalla, and Price (2007) examined the First Tee program that uses golf as a context whereby life skills are taught and developmental outcomes are promoted through nine core values: honesty, integrity, respect, responsibility, courtesy, sportsmanship, confidence, judgment, and perseverance. The program relied upon coaches, peer mentors, and community volunteers as external assets, with structured training to educate coaches on how to maximize youth development. Coaches are trained to apply four building blocks: (a) activity; (b) mastery-driven; (c) empower youth; (d) continuous learning. These building blocks are endorsed along with a deliberate life skills curriculum designed to teach internal assets related to leadership such as interpersonal, self-management, goal setting, and resistance skills.

2.6 Leadership Identity Development (LID)

Continuing evolution in the social sciences, the fields of leadership and leadership development have been enriched, especially related to how youth learn leadership skills through various stages of development (Day & Harrison, 2007). In addition, several leadership scholars

have begun to focus on leadership identity development, especially in terms of how young adults develop a leadership identity. Franko (2015) describes leadership identity as one's physical and mental presence, attitude, and readiness to take on new challenges and make an impact; it drives one's decisions toward big-picture leadership goals and reflects one's values, mindset, actions, and responses. Through a study of students' descriptions of their leadership journey and reflections on the ways they conceptualized and approached leadership, Komives et al. (2005) and Komives et al. (2006) developed a leadership identity development (LID) model that explained how a leadership identity develops over time. Their LID model was explained in detail under the "Theoretical Orientation" section of Chapter 1 of this dissertation. Following is an analysis of how other scholars have applied the LID model.

A brief recap of the LID stages is needed before discussing studies related to the model. In Stage One – Awareness, individuals become aware that there are leaders "out there" who are external to self. Stage Two – Exploration/Engagement is where individuals engage with others and participate in a wide variety of groups. In Stage Three – Leader Identified, group participation is more intentional and individuals begin to view leadership as the actions of a positional leader, emphasizing the hierarchical nature of relationships in groups; one sees oneself as a leader only when in a specific leadership role. In Stage Four – Leadership Differentiated, individuals understand that leadership is also non-positional and is a shared group process; they recognize the difference between being a leader and holding a leadership role—leadership is relational, not positional. Stage Five – Generativity is where a person makes a commitment to developing leadership in others and moves toward influential leadership. Stage Six – Integration/Synthesis is where "leaders" acknowledge their personal capacity for leadership in

diverse contexts and claim a leader identity without having to hold a positional role; here, the person has developed leadership efficacy and “earned” a leadership identity.

Komives et al. (2006) described student leadership identity development as an intersection between both relational leadership and student development theory, “Both psychosocial and cognitive developmental stages have elements that are congruent with the developmental processes necessary to establish leadership identity” (p. 402). Franko (2015) study supports this argument. He identified several important building blocks for leadership identity development and argued that leadership identity development starts with a personal brand: (a) market (what distinguishes an individual from the crowd), (b) act (self-initiated behaviors), (c) respond (emotional intelligence in handling situations), (c) look (one’s physical presence), (d) sound (how well one organizes thoughts and articulate orally or in writing), (e) play (strictly playing by rules or taking risks and playing near the boundary lines?), and (f) think (the mindset or belief system).

Odom, Boyd, and Williams (2012) examined students who completed a Personal Growth Project in a university leadership course. One of the objectives of the course was for students to become more aware of, apply, and reflect upon personal leadership capacities. The researchers analyzed 90 assignments through the lens of LID model. Over one-half of the students gained self-confidence in their ability to complete new and challenging tasks. More than half of the students were also able to see how the skills they developed in the course could be transferred to a leadership role. The researchers concluded that the LID model was an effective way in helping students develop a leadership identity.

Researchers have found relationships between leadership identity development and gender, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Gonda (2007) case study focused on what women

experience as their awareness of their leadership abilities develops. The study involved five subjects who were mid-career professional women and who demonstrated a relational leadership approach. The study highlighted the importance of exploring the intersection of gender and leadership identity development. Findings showed some support for the LID stages, especially exploration/engagement and leadership differentiated. Contrary to subjects in the Komives et al. (2005) study, transition between the leader identified and leadership differentiated happened much later for the women in Gonda's study. Dugan, Komives, and Segar (2008) conducted a qualitative study with students who had multiple social identities, where factors in developing self were central to developing leadership identity. They showed that race was the most salient identity factor for students of color. The participants in the study also developed a leadership identity over time, consistent with Komives et al.' (2005, 2006) LID model. Renn and Bilodeau (2005) conducted a grounded theory study with 15 LGBT college students. The overarching finding from their study was that the context of involvement with LGBT student activities provided rich opportunities for development in each of the six stages of the LID model. Their data analysis not only supported development of a leadership identity in each stage, but also documented the impact that leadership identity development has for fostering a positive LGBT identity.

Komives (2011) carried out a large-scale student leadership study that examined the relationship between LID and socially responsible leadership. Results indicated that students who were in LID Stage Four (leadership differentiated) scored significantly higher on all eight values of socially responsible leadership than students in other stages. Komives suggested that having a non-positional definition of leadership and an interdependent approach to working with others contributes to development of the values of socially responsible leadership.

Dugan, Kodama, Correia, and Associates (2012) connected leadership identity to socially responsible leadership through a study of community service activities. They argued that while community service activities are great opportunities to enhance students' leadership development, students should be encouraged to develop mentoring relationships with community members. Through fostering positive mentoring, meaningful developmental relationships make a significant difference in student leadership capacity. The researchers concluded that sociocultural conversations with peers are the single strongest predictor of socially responsible leadership capacity for students across demographic groups. Sociocultural conversations may impact leadership development because they require students to (a) clarify and articulate their own perspectives, (b) seek a better understanding of others' world views, (c) comprehend how personal values fit into larger social structures and perspectives, and (d) discern how to work with different communities to initiate positive change.

Hall (2015) also looked at the connection between LID and socially responsible leadership and also highlighted several implications and challenges in applying the LID model in athletics and recreation. He underlined an important strategy for athletics and recreation programs about building socially responsible leadership capacity in youth: sociocultural conversations with peers are an influential experience for students as they build socially responsible leadership skills. He warned that professionals who deal with students should be equipped to use the LID in daily work, these professionals should be a role model because they are influential in the leadership development of the others. He indicated that middle and high school students mostly shift to Stage Two (exploration/engagement) even though developmental stages take place at every age. Hall encouraged professionals to inform students about the concepts of leadership and leadership identity so that they can enhance their understanding of

leadership development. In addition, professionals should create opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences to help them build leadership skills.

2.7 Summary

In this chapter, I presented a review of the literature that examined six themes related to understanding how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sport participation. Immigrant youth face many challenges as they try to settle and adapt in their new country. These challenges include new language development, lack of understating the new culture, financial difficulty, transportation, separation from family and friends, and the loss of their homeland (Aizlewood et al., 2006; Caperchione et al., 2009; Coventry, 2002; Garrett, 2006). They also struggle with marginality and exclusion in school and within the societies they live in ((Berry, 1997, 2005; Chatty, 2007)... Therefore, immigrant youth have a limited participation in sports and physical activities in their new host country because of the challenges and difficulties they face (Spaaij, 2012, 2015; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004).

Since youth development has been identified as the top priority to have a sustainable society in the world, practitioners, policymakers and researchers have developed instructional youth development programs and models to promote physical activity, gain life skills, responsibility, and leadership--especially through sports (Aizlewood et al., 2006; Hellison et al., 2008; Hunt et al., 2002; Kalemis, 2012).. Research shows that youth sport participation is correlated with numerous positive developmental signs such as high self-esteem, problem solving, goal attainment, improved personal and social skills, and character development (Goodman & Gawad, 2004; Hellison, 2011; Holt, 2008; Holt, Tink, Mandigo, & Fox, 2008; Lerner et al., 2005).. Thus, sport has been used to create an opportunity for immigrant youth to

develop personally and socially since it is believed to have an essential role in the assimilation and adaptation process (Olliff, 2008; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004; Teasley et al., 2007).

The process of leadership identity development is well defined in the leadership identity development (LID) model developed by (Komives et al., 2005). The LID model emphasizes how youth learn leadership skills through various stages of development. The researchers identified six stages of the LID model. While in stage 1 (awareness) youth are aware that there are leaders around them, they try to participate in group activities to learn and engage with others in state 2 (exploration/engagement). In stage 3 (leader identified), they see leadership as positional role held by self or others, recognizing hierarchical nature of relationship in groups. In stage 4 (leadership differentiated), they recognize a difference between being a leader and holding a leadership role. They realize that everyone depends on everyone else, anyone can make a difference whether they have a leadership role or not. While in state 5 (generativity), they are committed to developing leadership in others and having passion for issues and development of others, team learning and influencing others, youth develop personal capacity for leadership in diverse contexts and claim their identity and a leader without having to hold a positional role.

In order for policy makers, institutions, and organizations to be effective in this realm, they must increase their understanding of how immigrant youth develop as leaders, specifically the factors that contribute to the progression of their leadership identity development. There is a gap in the literature addressing the experience of immigrant youth and their development of a leadership identity through sport participation. My study provides rich data can help increase this understanding.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The purpose of this instrumental case study was to understand how participation in sports helps immigrant youth develop a leadership identity. In this chapter, I describe the methodology used in this research, addressing (a) the rationale for qualitative research, (b) case study design, (c) role of researcher, (d) participants, (e) data collection procedures, (f) data analysis procedures, and (g) strategies for establishing trustworthiness (i.e. validity and reliability) in qualitative research.

3.1 Rationale for Qualitative Research

A qualitative approach was chosen to conduct this research because I wanted to understand how sport participation helps immigrant youth develop a leadership identity, from their perspective. The aim of qualitative methods is to study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research allows a researcher to study participants within their natural environment in order to understand their perceptions and the way in which they come to understand, account for, take action, and otherwise manage their day-to-day situations (Huberman & Miles, 2002). Qualitative research is an inquiry process where the researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2012). In this approach, the researcher calls on inductive as well as deductive logic, appreciates subjectivities, accepts multiple perspectives and realities, and recognizes the power of the research on both participant and researchers (O'Leary, 2010).

3.2 Strategy of Inquiry: Instrumental Case Study

The qualitative strategy of inquiry I chose for this study was an instrumental case study design. Case study involves a detailed description of the setting or individuals followed by the data analysis for themes and issues (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative case study research helps researchers to facilitate exploration of the phenomenon within its context, and guarantee that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allow for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

There are a variety of types of case studies from Yin-like designs that examine causal links between interventions to Stake-like designs that focus on the complexity of phenomenon from multiple perspectives (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Because the purpose of this study was to understand how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sport participation, I chose Stake's (1995) instrumental case study design. An instrumental case study "provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 549). Stake (1995) argued that an instrumental case study is expected to catch the complexity of a single case. The boundary of my case was 15 immigrant youth who participated in sports through a youth sport club in central North Carolina. This particular sport club served many immigrant youth in the region.

3.3 Role of the Researcher

It is important that the qualitative researcher describes his or her biases and explains how s/he will resolve them (Creswell, 2012). Following is a description of my experiences and views on immigrant youth, their participation in sports, and connections to their leadership development.

I have been involved in sports all my life. I have particularly specialized in every aspect of wrestling, not only as a competitive athlete at the international level on the Turkish National Team and coaching at colleges at the NCAA Division I level in the United States, but also as a physical education teacher in a public school in the United States. Throughout my career, I have gained many life skills and lessons that positively shaped my personality and the ways I see the world and people as well as the ways I accomplish my goals.

Through my experiences in sports, my beliefs about personal and social responsibility and leadership are grounded in responsibility; obligation; respect for people; and respect for my physical, mental, and moral health. To me, these should be foundational beliefs in a modern society. As an immigrant to the United States, participation in sports has been a very beneficial tool for me to utilize for interacting and socializing with people from different cultures. It has allowed me to explore cultural differences and values and beliefs, and to accept and respect them. Through interaction in sports, I found myself acculturating and adapting easily into the mainstream American society, without losing my personal values and beliefs. Therefore, as an immigrant researcher, coach, and teacher, I have found that I prefer to be a positive role model for athletes and constructively teach them the developmental and leadership skills they need to succeed in sports and life.

According to Patton (1990), the credibility of the researcher is especially important in qualitative research because that individual is the major instrument of data collection and analysis. There are several strategies that qualitative researchers need to employ to establish credibility, including ensuring trust with participants and adhering to ethical standards for conducting research with human subjects (Creswell, 1998, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Patton, 1990). Establishing trust between myself and the immigrant youth was a key method of verification in

the study. This is an important aspect of verification in the study, so that the immigrant youth felt comfortable sharing their reflections on how sport participation experiences helps them develop a leadership identity. I established trust with the participants by being genuinely interested in their perceptions and not disregarding their comments and observations as being important.

The main assumptions of ethical research behavior are (a) voluntary participation, (b) no physical and emotional destruction, (c) integrity, and (d) privacy, anonymity and confidentiality (Creswell, 2013). These criteria are required by the North Carolina Agricultural and State University Institutional Research Board (IRB). I adhered to ethical research standards by obtaining IRB approval before beginning my research and then obeying all guidelines for human subjects research. I maintained confidentiality of data and anonymity of participants and the research sites. Each participant and parent was given an abstract of the study and consent and assent forms that explained the research protocol. In addition, an extensive verification process, including triangulation of data sources, member checking, and rich description were used to establish the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2012a, 2012b, 2013). More importantly, my research was carefully monitored by my dissertation advisor and members of my dissertation committee.

3.4 Participants

I used the purposive sampling strategy to select participants for my study. Purposive sampling involves intentionally selecting individuals who will help the researcher to understand the central phenomenon (O'Leary, 2010). Tongco (2007) suggests that researchers employ purposive sampling after making a decision regarding what needs to be discovered, and then finding participants who meet the criteria and willing to provide the information because they have the experience and knowledge. After I decided that I wanted to explore how sport

participation by immigrant youth helps them develop a leadership identity, I looked for resources that could help me identify and recruit immigrant youth who participate in sports. Upon the recommendation of my dissertation committee members and based on my own experiences with sport activities in the region, I targeted immigrant youth who play soccer in a local youth sport club, which was a full-service soccer association offering playing opportunities for all ages and level throughout year.

Selection criteria for participants included: (a) had played sports for the last three years, (b) identified as first and/or second generation of immigrants, (c) demonstrated proficiency in basic English, and (d) were enrolled in 8th through 12th grades. A gatekeeper from the youth sport club assisted me with gaining access to the participants and their parents/guardians. The gatekeeper set up an initial group meeting with potential participants and their parents for a recruitment presentation. Fifteen participants were selected for in-depth interviews. Since almost all of participants were under the age of 18, I provided IRB approved consent forms for their parents/guardians and assent forms for the participants. The participants choose their own pseudonyms that are used for reporting results of the study in Chapter 4.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Xu and Storr (2012) maintain that although qualitative studies utilize a broad range of information gathering techniques, the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. Interviewing was the primary data collection procedure for this study. I also kept a researcher journal comprised of (a) notes taken during the interviews and (b) reflections after the interviews; this journal helped me remember things about the interviews as I thought through the emerging themes and indicators during data analysis. I collected the data from July 20, 2016 through August 15, 2016.

I used semi-structured interview questions to facilitate data collection. I conducted two in-depth individual interviews with each participant and a one group interview with all them. The participants were all asked the same set of questions. I conducted the interviews face-to-face; this mode allows the researcher to distinguish the nuances in both verbal and non-verbal responses of the participants (McMillan, 2007). Interviews took place in participants' setting of choice.

Thirteen of the individual interviews took place in public libraries while two of the interviews took place in a restaurant. The group interview took place at the club house next to the club's soccer field, where the participants usually meet for different activities such as tutoring and social gatherings. Verbatim language was used in the quotes from participants in order to show exactly what they were saying. According to Curry, Nembhard, and Bradley (2009), verbatim language is often preferable method in case study and grounded theory in order to reflect true meaning of phenomenon and the sample's experience.

The interview questions were developed in accordance with Seidman's (2012) interview guidelines. The interview protocol was reviewed by a panel of individuals (including teachers and students), who were not associated with the study, in order to gain and incorporate feedback on clarity and relevance for gathering the desired data. The interview protocol was submitted to IRB for approval prior to conducting any interviews; approval for the study was granted on July 11, 2016. A copy of the interview protocol is included in Appendix X. After the IRB approval, an initial group meeting was set, and consent and assent forms were collected at the meeting. And then, each participant was contacted to set up a time and place that I can meet with them at their preference location.

The first individual interview focused on the backgrounds and sport participation of the participants. The second individual interview focused on participants' understanding of how

sport participation had helped them develop a leadership identity. The follow-up, clarifying questions for the group interview were developed after I have completed analysis of the individual interview data (Creswell, 2013). These questions were submitted to IRB for approval as an addendum before conducting the group interview. The group interview triangulated the participants' perspectives on how sport participation has helped them develop a leadership identity.

With the permission of participants, all interviews were audiotaped; they varied in length from 30 to 60 minutes. The interviews were informal and open-ended, and carried out in a conversational style to allow participants the freedom and flexibility to express their views on their own terms (Creswell, 2013). Participants had an opportunity to review and, if necessary, correct the contents of the interview after it had been transcribed. I wrote researcher notes in conjunction with the interviews. Memoranda were written while listening to the audiotapes, typing transcripts, and reflecting upon a particular interview.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis was completed in several phases, based on the Creswell (2012) guidelines for qualitative analysis: (a) preliminary exploration of the data by reading through the transcripts and writing memos; (b) coding the data by segmenting and labeling the text; (c) using codes to develop themes by aggregating similar codes together; (d) connecting and interrelating themes; and (e) constructing a narrative and compiling the report. Ongoing data analysis took place throughout the study. All of the taped interviews, memoranda, and researcher notes were entered into computer files. The information was maintained on a computer in a spreadsheet to help code and re-categorize new concepts.

Upon completion of each round of interviews, I transcribed the audiotapes and engaged in data analysis. After transcribing each participant's interview, I made analytic notes on the transcripts, looking for relationship and patterns, and attempting to fit them into concepts, categories, and themes. In an effort to describe the perspectives, beliefs, and practices of immigrant youth, I used inductive reasoning to analyze the data. While re-reading the transcripts, and comparing the responses of all participants, I looked for key words or phrases, time, relationships, feelings, and perceptions. I then looked through these concepts to determine how they were related and could be aligned with certain categories. After that, I studied the categories to determine the emergent themes. An example of how I moved from the raw data to categories and themes is provided in the appendices.

Connections between categories and themes were used to further my understanding of the how sport participation helps immigrant youth develop a leadership identity, and to shape organization of the data for portrayal in my final document. McMillan (2007) warns that the researcher must be very careful in creating concepts, categories, and themes that form the basis for descriptions of participants' experiences because the focus should be on shared meaning and consciousness. The researcher may reflect on his or her own experience and integrates it with those of the participants. In the end, an overall description of the meaning of the experience is constructed. Data analysis involved developing a detailed description of each participant's experiences as well as the participants' collective perspectives regarding how sport participation helps them develop a leadership identity. Figure 3.1 depicts the themes that emerged during the analysis of the individual interviews (microlevel) and the group interview (macrolevel). These themes and their related indicators will be discussed in Chapter 4.

THEME	ATTRIBUTE S	MICROLEVEL INDICATORS	MACROLEVEL INDICATORS
IMMIGRATION	Reasons for Leaving Home Country	War	War
		Family	Family
		Lack of resources	
		Opportunity for education	
CHALLENGES IN NEW COUNTRY	Sociocultural Challenges	Language	Language
		Cultural shock	Cultural Shock
		Lack of social interaction	
		Discrimination	
		Lack of father in the home	
		Safety	Safety
	Economic Challenges	Lack of job opportunities	
		Transportation	Transportation
		Lack of food	
FACILITATORS IN NEW COUNTRY	Social Facilitators	Coaches	Coaches
		Family	Family
		Peers/teammates	Peers/teammates
		Neighbors	
		Social services	
SPORT PARTICIPATION	Sociocultural Factors	Social interaction	Social Interaction
		Physical activity/health benefits	Physical activity/health benefits
		Competition and recognition	
		Opportunity for travel	
	Economic Factors	Potential for scholarships	Potential for scholarships
		Potential career/make money	Potential career/make money
LEADERSHIP	Leadership Dispositions	Caring	Caring
		Respect and trust	Respect and trust
		Confidence	
		Humility	Humility
		Responsibility and accountability	Responsibility and accountability
	Leadership Skills	Communication	Communication
		Serve as role model	Serve as role model
		Technical and tactical sport skills	

Figure 3.1. Themes with related attributes and indicators that emerged during microlevel and macrolevel data analysis.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the Study

Qualitative researchers refer to validity and reliability as trustworthiness. Creswell (2013) suggests four different strategies for establishing trustworthiness of findings: (a) triangulation

(converging different sources of information such as interviews, documents, artifacts); (b) member checking (getting the feedback from the participants on the accuracy of the identified categories and themes); (c) providing rich, thick description to convey the findings; and (d) external audit (asking a person outside the project to conduct a thorough review of the study).

In terms of triangulation, I used multiple sources of data (individual interviews, group interview, and field notes). I then examined and compared the multiple data sources to uncover common themes and descriptions for confirmability and validity. Thurmond (2001) explains that data source triangulation consists of time, space and person. Data sources can vary based on the time the data were collected, the place or setting, and from whom the data were obtained. Thurmond further argues that variance in events, situations, times, places, and persons add to the study because of the possibility of revealing atypical data or the potential of identifying similar patterns, thus increasing confidence in the findings. So, for the current study, microlevel and macrolevel analyses established credibility via two individual interviews and one group interview with 15 different participants at several different places over time.

After transcribing the interviews, I gave the participants an opportunity to review the data to suggest corrections, additions, and comment on interpretations (member checking). I also shared my description of their experiences in order to clarify misperceptions of what was presented. This is not only an ethical strategy to ensure the participants' experiences were presented fairly and accurately, but is also a method to ensure that the study is trustworthy.

Furthermore, I used peer debriefing to bring in a fresh perspective that challenges the assumptions in order to support the validity of the findings (external audit). Two of my professional colleagues, who were teachers and worked with immigrant youth, reviewed the findings to see whether or not I had overemphasized or underemphasized a point.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how sport participation helped immigrant youth to develop a leadership identity. The data were collected through interviews with 15 immigrant youth at local youth sport club. In this chapter, I will present the following: a description of demographic characteristics for each participant; a microlevel analysis conveying emergent themes from the individual interviews; a macrolevel analysis conveying emergent themes from the focus group interviews; and a summary discussion of the similarities and differences between the microlevel and the macrolevel analyses. It should be noted that quotes from the participants are verbatim; minimal editing as employed in order to (a) preserve the authentic voice of participants and (b) maintain anonymity (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006). Readers should keep in mind that the immigrant youth who participated in this study were at varying levels of English language proficiency.

4.1 Demographic Profile of Participants

Table 4.1 provides a summary of participants' self-identified demographic data. Participants were from nine different counties: Congo (n=4), Central African Republic (n=1), Niger (n=1), Sudan (n=2), Burundi (n=2), Tanzania (n=1), Liberia (n=2), Mexico (n=1) and Ivory Cost (n=1). All of them were born abroad and immigrated to the U.S. While some of the participants immigrated with their whole family, about half of the participants immigrated without fathers because their fathers had died in conflict or had voluntarily stayed behind. Additionally, participants were asked if they played any other competitive sports besides soccer. They reported seven different sports: soccer, football, wrestling, track and field, baseball, basketball, and volleyball. Twelve of the participants reported that they had played and/or play

more than one competitive sport. All 15 of the participants were males. The average age of the participants was 15 and the average number of years in the U. S. was 4.5.

Table 4.1

Demographic Profile for Participants

Participants	Country of Origin	Number of Years in U.S.	Age	Gender	Type of Sport Participation
Abdaul	Niger	2	18	M	Soccer, Basketball
Abdoulaye	Ivory Coast	6	16	M	Soccer and Baseball
Coudra	Burundi	1	16	M	Soccer
David	Congo	2	16	M	Soccer, Volleyball
Fidele	Congo	2	15	M	Soccer
Gus	Liberia	2	16	M	Soccer and Track
Ines	Central Africa	5	17	M	Soccer, Volleyball, Track
Jonathan	Congo	2	18	M	Soccer, Volleyball
Louis	Burundi	7	13	M	Soccer, Football, Basketball
Makryous	Sudan	7	16	M	Soccer, Baseball, Football
Mohamed	Sudan	8	16	M	Soccer and Baseball
Nema	Tanzania	7	15	M	Soccer, Wrestling, Football
Raul	Mexico	8	14	M	Soccer, Basketball, Baseball
Sadock	Congo	6	15	M	Soccer, Wrestling, Baseball, Football
Victor	Liberia	7	14	M	Soccer

Information regarding grade levels was also collected from the participants. Table 4.2 provides a summary of participants' grade levels, which ranged from 8th grade to 11th grade.

Table 4.2

Summary of Grade Levels for Participants

Grade	# of Participants	% of Grade Level
8	1	7%
9	3	20%
10	6	40%
11	5	33%
Total Number of Participants	15	100%

4.2 Microlevel Analysis

During the content analysis of the data collected, I continually reviewed and revised emerging themes. Even though the participants' responses were unique and specific to each of his own personal experiences, repeated commonalities in data analysis of the individual interviews led to the emergence of five major themes with related attributes and indicators: immigration, challenges in the new country, facilitators in the new country, sport participation, and leadership. Following is a discussion of each microlevel theme along with its corresponding attributes and indicators.

4.2.1 Theme 1: Immigration. The first theme that emerged from the individual interviews focused on immigration, with the attribute of reasons for leaving the home country. Participants talked about the following reasons (indicators) for leaving their respective home countries: (a) war, (b) family, (c) lack of resources (e.g. food, jobs, etc.), and (d) opportunity for education.

The occurrence of an active *war* was the most common reason that immigrant youth left their home country in order to seek refuge, often in a neighboring country. Many of the

participants stated that they had experienced traumatic events such as prolonged periods of deprivation or loss of family and friends. These traumatic occurrences were often under violent circumstances and resulted in the perilous escape of these individuals from their homelands. Finding a safe place to live in a new country was hard to achieve for most immigrants in the study. After they immigrated to another country, they were placed in a refugee camp with many other refugees where they lived for a long time. Jonathan described it in this way:

Because there was a war, we left our country, Congo, to go to Uganda. We stayed there 7 years. And then we came here (US). In Uganda, life was difficult, and no food. We were in camp for a long time and life was not easy. We were going to public school but difficult life. In Uganda life was tougher than my home country, Congo. I had good life and had everything in our old country. But because of war we had to leave. However, the life was tougher in new country, Uganda. We had to start all over. We had more problems there. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Louis explained:

My family was born in Burundi and but they immigrated to Zambia because there was war at that time in our country. They were put in a ship to go to Zambia. That is where I was burn. After a while, we were signed to go to different countries such as United States, Britain, and Australia. They chose a country for us to go to. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

Fidele mentioned:

Because there was war in our country, we had to move. I hardly remember all of these because I was too young though. In Uganda, I was in refugee camp for 6 years but my parent told me it was not easy (Personal Communication, 8/9/16).

Similarly, Nema shared:

We left our village because of war in my country. A lot of people just fight against the government because it is a corrupt system, because it is always conflict between government and local peoples. Killing was everywhere. So, we had to run away from that. We got picked to come here. We were in refugee camp about eight years. (Personal Communication, 7/27/16)

Jonathan told me:

There was a war, so we left Congo to go to Uganda. We stayed there seven years. And then we came here. In Uganda, life was difficult, No food. We were in camp in Uganda

and Life was not easy. We were going to public school but difficult life. In Uganda life was tougher than my country Congo. I had good life in our country and we had everything but because of war we had to leave. But the life was tougher in new country, Uganda. We had to start all over. We had more problem (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Political turmoil is a ubiquitous etiology that forces people out of a country to seek safer places in a different country. Abdoulaye described “Because of the war in Ivory Coast, we had to move to other country, Mali, in Africa. It was hard living on different places in Mali “(Personal Communication, 8/9/16). Fidele also explained, “There was a war. I was too young to remember all of that tough. In Uganda, I was in referee camp for six years” (Personal Communication, 8/9/16).

Even though war seemed to be the dominant reason for immigration among the participants, another reason for immigration was to re-unite with the *family* member(s) who had left their host country at an earlier time. For example, Gus shared, “I don’t know but my father told me that we came here to see grandparent who came here long time ago” (Personal Communication, 7/28/16). David and Abdaul, two brothers, mentioned that they came here to re-unite with their father who came to work in the United States a while ago. David said “because there was no job opportunity in my country, my father left our country and came here three years ago. After he found job and made some money, he brought us too” (8/9/16)

In addition, due to unstable governments and injustice, *lack of resources* in the home country was common in many of the participants’ home country. Participants experienced constant vandalism, looting, burglary in their old country because of no law in place. So, lack of vital resources was another factor contributing the participants’ immigration. Raul mentioned:

It was hard to find a job there. There is a kind of dangerous to live there too. It took a lot of work. Most of the time, we worked in the field at farms, crabs, corn fields. Besides crime and gang activities, robbery was a common crime too. One time my grandparent

got robbed when we visited them. But it has been very calm right now. It was mainly because there were job opportunities there though. (Personal Communication, 8/4/16)

Likewise, Fidele said:

In addition to war, there was a big shortage of water in our country too. We had to go far away to get water. So, we went to a refugee camp in Uganda. At the refugee camp, they were serving food and water but we had to walk far away just to get food and water. So, it was the same difficult life in refugee camp. (Personal Communication, 8/9/16)

Some of the participants reported that their immigration was related to *opportunities for education*. Due to a poor education system, going to school and getting a good education were a big challenge for participants in their original country. The participants reported that because ongoing conflicts and crime activities jeopardized the educational systems every day, getting a good education was almost impossible. Ines mentioned “besides war, because schools were like so crowded, unorganized in my country, my parents wanted me to live and get a good education here” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16) Similarly Abdaul said, “You know when you finish your school there, there is no job available. My father came here first, and then we came here because he wanted us to go to school here and get a good education (Personal Communication, 8/9/16)

4.2.2 Theme 2: Challenges in new country. The second theme that emerged from the microlevel analysis centered on challenges in the new country. The two attributes of this theme were: sociocultural challenges and economic challenges. Participants enjoyed using their voices, even though they displayed their frustration, fear, sadness, and uncertainty when talking about the challenges that they have had to deal with after they arrived in the new country. Even those who had come to the U.S a long time ago showed these emotions.

Indicators of *sociocultural challenges* included language, cultural shock, lack of social interaction, discrimination, lack of fathers in the home, and safety. During the individual

interviews, the participants told many stories about the problems they have encountered in the United States due to *language barriers*. They stated that the lack of English skills inhibited essential daily activities such as getting a job, making friends, or even completing basic tasks like buying food or filling out forms are challenging. Therefore, language was the most common challenge among the participants. All of the participants explained that they tried to overcome these barriers by taking ESL classes but they mostly joined a newcomer school in their first year in the country. Several of them expressed that it took up to two years to get comfortable with speaking English, depending on their age. They indicated that their language skills affected their sport participation and leadership roles significantly. For instance, Ines said “It was hard in the first few years because no language or poor language skills” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16).

David, one of the recent newcomers, expressed his uncertainty due to language barriers:

Because I don't know English very well, I don't want to be leader. If my coach calls me and I do not understand him, it is problem. I cannot listen coach all the time, he can talk to others and then they tell me. I listen for a while, then later I cannot listen and understand (Personal Communication, 8/3/16)

Jonathan said:

At first we went to newcomer school and met bunch of people over there. At that time, my English was not good. I knew some but little bit. I learned English and worked hard to improve my English. I did not participate in any sport at school until my English got better because I was afraid and did not want anybody laugh at me. I did my homework, always listened my teachers. Now nine month past, I can speak English well and feel comfortable talking. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

One significant finding is that the participants often described having to co-exist between two cultures without fully identifying with either group. While the participants came to know the norms, values, and customs their parents promoted at home, they also had to assimilate to their host society as well; this had resulted in *cultural shock* or conflict between their home culture and mainstream culture. Ines shared his thoughts about the difference in food: “after I came here,

I was not able to drink and eat from outside for a long time because everything tasted so different. I could not eat the food they were serving at school sometime because it did not taste good to me” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16). Participants were often forced to make a painful and emotional choice between their parents’ culture and adaptation to mainstream culture. Mohamed mentioned, “When we came to the United States, we used to wear our traditional cloths sometime but people were looking at us weird. So, we stopped wearing. My father wears for holidays and Friday prayers though” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16). Gus mentioned “We used to wear uniform at school in our country but I like it here because you wear whenever you want to wear” (Personal Communication, 7/28/16).

Individual interviews revealed that there was always somebody else from their own country who had immigrated earlier. So, they tried to settle in the same neighborhood with them since they spoke the same language and had more in common. However, some of the immigrants lacked *social interaction* with other cultures in their neighborhood or wider community. As a result, they were potentially impeding a positive adaptation to mainstream culture. For instance, Fidele mentioned, “I like my neighborhood because it is quiet. I have a few friends at school but not much” (Personal Communication, 8/9/16). Similarly, Ines briefly addressed how he lacked a social life in the neighborhood and school;

Everything was so hard. Everything was new to you. You don’t know where to go and hang out with. It was hard in first few years because of no language or poor language skills. So, you just got stuck at home and no social life. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16).

Some of the participants emphasized that they faced some challenges because they were foreigners and immigrated as adolescents. As a consequence, they felt their peers had already built friendships at school or in the neighborhood and it was almost impossible for them to be accepted and build a friendship. For instance, Sadock mentioned “I did not have friends for a

long time at school. I mean they all had friends already” (Personal Communication, 8/7/10).

Abdaul said, “I just have a friend who is also immigrant. We hang out together at school”

(Personal Communication, 8/9/16)

Several of the participants addressed *discrimination* in neighborhoods while some addressed discrimination in school or both. Luis expressed his frustration and sadness and was very emotional when he shared how discriminatory incidents affected his life:

Here in the United States, it was so stupid at first because all other Black people in the neighborhood were telling us “go back to Africa, where you came from”. Besides, they used to throw rocks at us. Whenever we went to play on the playground, they used to tell us get out or something. So, we did not have a real friend for a long time. I mean there were some good people there. In the first neighborhood, they were nice to us because there were many immigrant and refugee like us. After living there about one year, we moved to a different neighborhood. That is where people used to throw rocks at us. When I was like 5th grade, it started. I don’t know why they did not like us..... They did not threaten White, Asian, Mexican. I just wondered why they just did to us. They were Black too. They called us poor but they robbed us one time. Who is poor then? Does it make sense? But other Americans were nice to us. We had one neighbor who was African American but they were cool with us. They had a daughter, who played with us (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

Mohamed stated;

I felt different in elementary and middle school. When I was 5, 6, 7 grades I feel that more because I am Black and Muslim, that just add to it. They called me terrorist among. I was like “not all Muslim are terrorist”, you know. All the extremists out there are not right. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16).

Sadock talked about discrimination in school:

As refugee, I attended the newcomer school where everybody was the same. When I went to my first regular public school, I got bullied and picked on a lot. I hated it, I tried to keep myself out of any trouble, I got bullied mostly for being small, and my cloths staff like that (Personal Communication, 8/7/16).

It was also evident that *lack of fathers* in the home had been challenging for participants in terms of efforts to remain strong and hopeful for their futures. Six of the participants had lost their fathers in war or their fathers had chosen to stay in their home countries. Without a father

present in the home, the participants struggled to figure out how to survive, stay safe, and get to certain places without getting lost, which slowed down their adaptation process in the new country. Ines pointed out;

My mom got married when she was 18. She had 8 kids. Her first husband passed away and then she remarried to my father. It was a big struggle since she left all her stuff back in village in Cameroon. We were sort of fall apart like my sister went somewhere, my mom went somewhere. So life was hard for a while as a family. My father stayed in Africa since he wanted to protect our village and follow his father footstep in the tribe. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16).

Fidele stated:

I got one brother older and two sisters, one older and one younger. I lost my dad in the war back in Congo long time ago. I do not actually remember when I lost him. I do not have much friend around. So, I just sit home, watch TV, and then I go to soccer practice. (Personal Communication, 8/9/16).

Similarly, Gus mentioned:

We live with grandparents with three brothers. My father stayed in my country to help my uncles in the village. My father came to visit us for a short moment here but went back to my country to do some work over there. My brothers play soccer as well. So, they come to watch me sometime. (Personal Communication, 7/28/16).

Findings of the study revealed that the participants have experienced many challenges concerning their *safety*. When they were brought to the United States, they were placed in underserved neighborhoods by government organizations or nonprofit organizations. While they were resilient, they did experience substantial hardships that threatened their safety. Most of the participants witnessed many crimes and illegal activities in their neighborhoods. They expressed concern about gun violence, murder, drug use, alcoholism, and robbery in their neighborhoods. When I asked Nema about his current neighborhood, he described several incidents including shootings that took place in his current neighborhood:

The neighborhood we live in is a place nobody else wants to live in. If you call me out, and you want to meet me, you hear like “bung, bung, bung”, gun shot. When we first move in, some of my siblings were getting beat, getting picked on in the bus because

some of us were in different school. But all of them who picked on us were living in our neighborhood. And we could not do anything about it. Until 2-3 years later, we got comfortable with them. We started knowing them. They were smoking a lot, use drugs, and we almost got rubbed. One night one of those teens in this gang banging drove into my dad car and smashed. Until my dad got out, caps got him and now he is in jail. So, our neighborhood we live now is so bad you do not want to live there (Personal Communication, 7/28/16).

His parents moved to a different neighborhood in order to find a safer place for their family, but it was worse in their new neighborhood. He cited, grunting with vexation:

Our first neighborhood was very bad too. People were fighting, shooting. So my dad got scared because he thought we would get shut or something like that. So we had to move from there to here. But he did not know that this neighborhood was worse. Police has to be there 24/7 since there is crime every day. We have been in the current neighborhood last three years (Personal Communication, 7/27/16)

Moreover, several of the participants feared gang activity in their neighborhoods and the easy access to drugs. For instance, Makryous stated:

Our neighborhood is ok. But most of the time police are here because people back here do some stuff and some people get in trouble. I guess that they sell weed and guns stuff like that. They do not bother us but back there it is kind of not safe. (Personal Communication, 8/5/16)

Similarly, Victor commented:

It is not all right. It is kind of bad. But now it is growing to be like good. They just got doing bad stuff in the neighborhood. For example, when we got here at first, they used to throw rocks at our door. We just kind of kept our head down. My mother and I kept praying to God that one day we would find a house safer to live in. After living a short time in our first neighborhood, we moved to this current neighborhood. They sell different stuff like weed (Personal Communication, 8/7/16).

Additionally, the participants mentioned a high level of drinking that appeared to be increasing in their neighborhoods. For example, Ines said, “In our old neighborhood, people drunk and caused destruction a lot. One time, they ran into our car because they were driving drunk” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16). Similarly, Nema said, “people drink a lot in our

neighborhood. As a result, they randomly yell, talk loud and scare people, especially in the evening” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16).

Economic challenges were significantly experienced by all of the participants, and listed as one of the most common barriers in the host country. These challenges included lack of food, lack of job opportunity, and transportation. For example, Nema described how he and his family struggled with the *lack of food* while trying to survive in cramped living quarters in one of the poorest neighborhoods in the area:

We are total of 11 kids, living with my parents in five-bedroom apartment, which is a pain most of time. We all share rooms since we do not have choice. So, they tell us do this and you have to do it. It is very crowded in the house. My dad works as hard as he can just to provide food on the table. You do not understand how much food we eat in that house. All of my siblings are athletes except my two siblings. That is a pain like for my dad. We drive him crazy because everybody got practice, my sister, my brothers, myself, all play different sport and at different times. (Personal Communication, 7/27/16)

Similarly, Coudra mentioned, “when we came here, they gave us some cloths and food, but food was not enough because we were big family like 10 people. So we struggled at first. Later, somebody from the church brought food for us for a while” (Personal Communication, 8/1/16). Mohamed expressed, “the case worker helped us to find a house and some stuff. She gave us a card to purchase food at the grocery store but it was not enough most of the time” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16)

Lack of job opportunities was also identified as challenge for the participants’ life in the new country. Since all of the participants came from underdeveloped countries with poor education or low skills, it was challenging for them and their families to find a decent job. Because they already struggled with a language barrier, they usually ended up working for very low wages. Raul mentioned, “I do not remember exactly but my father told me that he could not find job for a long time because he just did not have good skills. So, he said he started to work

for a painting company” (Personal Communication, 8/4/16). Makryous said, “In Egypt, we were immigrant too but we had everything. My mom was working at school. But here she could not find a job for a long time. Now she is working at a hotel”. (Personal Communication, 8/5/16).

Participants revealed that trouble with *transportation* was a major issue that affected nearly every aspect of their lives in the new country. They shared that at the beginning they mostly relied on public transportation to go to the places such as grocery stores, work, or shopping malls. Because their parents did not have driving licenses or cars to drive, they had to rely on public transportation or rides from other people. Sadock said, “We did not have car for a long time. So we had to ask people around or wait for bus to go to places” (Personal Communication, 8/7/16). Likewise, Ines mentioned. “It was hard at the beginning. One time my father quitted a job because the person he was riding with moved out. But now we got a car” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16). As for the participants, it affected their participation in sports. Participants reported that most of the time, they had to rely on one of the family members to take them to the practice site, or rely on the public transportation. Only a few of them were able to walk or ride a bike to the soccer field. Coudra mentioned “Most of the time, someone give you a ride or take a bus. If not, you don’t get to go to practice. Then, I don’t like it if I don’t go to practice because I could not get a ride” (Personal Communication, 8/1/16). Abdoulaye emphasized his frustration about transportation: “You know that we have practice almost every weekend, sometime you cannot find a ride or bus and you just miss practice. I hate it when I miss practice because I cannot get to go to” (Personal Communication, 8/9/16)

4.2.3 Theme 3: Facilitators in the new country. Facilitators can build important bridges between immigrant youth and the host country. I asked participants some questions about facilitators in their new country that encouraged them to participate in sports, helped them to

settle in their new environments, and helped them to develop leadership skills. The third theme that emerged from data analysis only included the one attribute of socioeconomic facilitators.

Data analysis revealed several *socioeconomic facilitators* that played essential roles in the subjects' acclimation in the new country, participation in sports, and development of leadership identities and skills: (a) coaches, (b) families, (c) peers/teammates, (d) neighbors, and (e) social services/caseworkers.

During the individual interviews, it was clear that even though most of the participants experienced many difficulties, some of them enjoyed using their voice to explain their excitement and happiness about being in the new country. For example, Mohamed stated:

For some, it may be scary. But being a refugee and not knowing anything about new country is very exciting because coming to new country. Because you know you weren't growing up in this type of society, when you see this type of things in the new country, you are just like amazed. You are happy to be here. When we first got here, we were put in an apartment complex with bunch of other refugees, so it was pretty fun, hanging out with other refugees, listen their background stories, knowing about a lot about them. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16)

Similarly, Coudra explained:

I live in a good neighborhood because people are busy, and nobody wants to know your business. There are some people from our country in the neighborhood and speak the same languages; Burundi and France Swahili. I learned France language because official language is France there. We have good conversation while play together with bunch of other people. (Personal Communication, 8/1/16)

Coaches who played a critical role in their sports participation and leadership development were the most common social facilitators identified during the interviews. All of the participants shared the notion that a coach's role was critical as they relied on the coaches for structure, guidance, life skills, and leadership development. Coaches can be hugely influential in helping kids learn about themselves, build relationships with others, learn technics and

teamwork, and overcome obstacles in the players' daily life. Coudra described how his coach helped him:

I play sport my whole my life. I started playing on the team when I was in 6th grade. After I come to the state, I met someone from Congo who was here for a while already and told me about soccer at Simit Complex. I played there a while. Later on, after I joined the Newcomers school, Dudley coach was watching the practice there. He saw me and asked me if I want to play for him. Coach Michael was there as well. He asked me if I want to play on his traveling team. I had no idea about traveling team until I heard that it was a team with bunch of good players. I was so happy when I learned that. So, I thank Coach Michael a lot for picking me up to be on his team. (Personal Communication, 8/1/16)

Jonathan expressed his happiness about meeting his coach:

When we came to the newcomer school, they told us if we want to play sport. So we filled out some papers, and then I meet Coach Michael. He introduced himself to us. We did try-out there and he said "I need you on the team because you play good. I help you anyway I can to get you better at it". He put me on the team at the newcomer school, and I scored 10 goals in a season. Now, he pulled me out of the newcomer team and put me on the traveling team here. So, I am very happy and grateful to him because he believed in me (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Makryous explained how he appreciated his coach's diligence in making sure that he was able to attend practice:

I was at newcomer school when met coach Michael. He asked me to try out for traveling team. That is how I met him. And then everything got better because he took care of me. Later, we moved in to different neighborhood which is little too far to practice field. It is kind of hard from here to there to practice soccer ever time. However, he gives me a ride often, and I appreciate it. (Personal Communication, 8/5/16)

Participants expressed that their *families* played a significant role in the development of their character and social well-being. All of the participants mentioned that their parents were major facilitators because their parents influenced their attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs. While most of the participants lived in a single-parent home, a few of them lived in a nuclear family setting. For the participants who did not have fathers in the home, it was apparent that it was hard for them to choose good role models. They mentioned that they chose other family members or

relatives as a role model who they looked up to in order to follow in their footsteps. In talking about his family, Mohamed, stated:

My oldest brother went to school here and graduated from high school got little bit of college. But then he used to get in a lot of trouble when he was younger. He did not really like it here. He decided to go back to Sudan in 2013 because it is not good for him over here. My other brother is doing well; he is wrestling in college at UNC Pembroke, studying business and marketing. He will be graduating next year. I love hanging out with him. My mom just started going to GTCC and working. My father is also working. So we are pretty stable right now. (Personal communication 8/3/16)

In talking about his parents, Raul cited:

My family is very religious, very generous. For example, when we see poor people on the street, we gave them money and food. My parents are hard workers and friendly. My father goes to work every day while my mother stays at home and takes care of us. My brother and I stay home and hang out together. We usually clean our own house. Sometime, we go to work with my dad. He works at a mechanic shop. (Personal communication, 8/4/16)

Makryous shared:

We love hanging out as family. My mom and my brothers work. So, we like eating together because she cooks well. My father did not come with us to Egypt. We have not seen him for a long time. My older brother plays soccer like me. I learned a lot from him. We like to chill out together. He graduated from high school and now he is going to college at GTCC. (Personal Communication, 8/5/16)

The athletic background of the family was especially valued by participants as crucial in order for them to gain encouragement to participate in sports. While all participants came from different immigrant background experiences, many felt that their family upbringings and life experiences had a profound impact on the choices that they made, and on their ability to become successful in sports as well as their development of character. Their families instilled in the confidence to believe that they could achieve goals as long as they worked hard and had strong self-confidence. For instance, Victor mentioned:

When I talked to my dad, he told me he used to be professional soccer player. He tells me story about his time and give me good advice. So I wanted to be like him when I grow up. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

Raul claimed:

I really like sports. Ever since when I was a little kid watching TV, it has been only thing I like to do and relaxing for me for fun. My parents played sports. My father played soccer and my mother played basketball. According to him, he was good at playing soccer. He had some picture of him playing soccer. They always encouraged me and signed me in different sports. So, I want to be like him so good at playing soccer. (Personal Communication, 8/4/16)

In addition to coaches and family, *peers/teammates* and *neighbors* influenced the participants. Some of the participants reported that after struggling for a few years to improve their language, they were able to make friends in their neighborhoods and schools, as well as with athletic team members. Participants' language improvements and involvement in athletic activities were also a result of becoming familiar with the norms of the new culture and rules of the athletic activities. For example, Mohamed expressed:

When I was growing up, it was kind of tough. But after I came here, I met some kids in the neighborhood. They were kicking ball around. I was just watching from outside. One day, one of them asked me to play with them. I did not know [how to play] well but I got good at it later on. He and I are good friends now because he helped me start soccer then and get good at it. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16)

Raul said:

In our neighborhood, I have some good friends. One of them lives across our house. They have portable basketball hoop in front of their house because he is a basketball player on their school team. We get together and hang out often, shoot balls stuff like that. He goes to different school. His family is very nice too. I go to his house sometime. (Personal communication, 8/4/16)

Ines mentioned how a neighbor changed his whole life after he came to the United States:

Well, when I was in my village I grew up playing soccer, watching my cousins. After I came to the state, I did not know where to play soccer. One day, a lady gave me a soccer ball on Christmas Day. I played with it and she saw that I was good at it. She told me about Greensboro United and helped me sign up there. I played there three years. Because of like, coming to America, not speaking English, I felt that if I play sport, I might catch up faster living in the State. Also, I played in different places and met so many different people. So, I live playing sports. Besides, because of the lady who gave me a

soccer ball and paid for me to play at Greensboro United, I felt like I had to work harder and be successful not to let these people around me down. Thus, it was a life changing moment for me when she gave me a ball and helped me find this club. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16)

Participants also talked about the role different *social services* helped them settle into the new country. In talking about his settlement experiences, Jonathan related how a social service case worker played a vital role in his staying out of trouble:

I am very proud of this country because we came here first. The life was difficult because we did not know anywhere at first. But we had a case worker who helped us out a lot like taking us to hospital, grocery, back again to home. We did not know all these roads so I got lost a lot. But we had all foods and learned all these things later on. It was hard at first. When we came here first though, I guess our case worker thought that our neighbors may call police since we were big family and may cause some troubles. So, they warned us that we needed to be careful, do not do this, do not do that. Thus, we did not have any problem and we did not have any challenges with our neighbors. Without her help, I do not know how we could learn all that (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Since rigorous sport activity requires a substantial amount of financial and economic stability, some of the participants could not afford to pay for transportation to and from practice or travel with teams without financial aid. Most of the participants expressed that they were not aware of such financial aid. Some of the participants, however, shared that they were provided with available resources and financial aid by the YMCA and several other local community and sport organizations. However, while most the participants experienced economic hardships, some stated that they received some financial help and other assistance, such as clothes and food. For instance, Mohamed explained:

I had some financial and transportation problem. It was not so big deal because I always got financial aid and all that. It was not too bad such as from YMCA and Greensboro United. Besides, many times my coaches take me home. He was my football and wrestling coach. He was always willing to take me home. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16)

Similarly, Louis cited:

At first, it was tough because we did not have car. So, we had to take a bus or rely on somebody to give us a ride. But now we have four cars at home. I like it this way because we can go anywhere whenever we want. Back then when I was little, my brother used to walk me to practice and other places. But, we had a White church that we used to get a lot of help from. They used to give us Christmas present, buy clothes. They still help us out if we need. I like that. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

4.2.4 Theme 4: Sports participation. Sports participation emerged as the fourth theme from the microlevel analysis of their responses. This theme had two indicators: sociocultural factors and economic factors.

Sociocultural factors included (a) social interaction (b) physical activity/health benefits, (c) opportunity for travel, and (d) competition and recognition. Regarding *social interaction*, all of the participants believed that sport participation had led to the development of friendships among the team members, and helped them improve their social and language skills. Participants described how they had achieved social development through sport participation. Some of the participants, who were recent immigrants (last 2-3 years), reported that they had a limited personal and social life due to barriers such as poor English skills, transportation, and finances. They revealed that participation in sports was the only thing available that they enjoyed doing. Their sport participation helped them to develop self-confidence and friendship with people from different cultures as well as the mainstream culture.

Mohamed explained:

I participate in sport because I just love playing... I just cannot stay home because I always want to go out, play sports, and do somethings. I am just that kind of man in sports. Besides, we get to meet different people and socialize with a whole bunch of people from different countries. I met people who are professional. I don't know how my life would have been if I was not playing sport... I don't think I would have had as much friends as I do now. Not just soccer and wrestling, but whole other sports I have many friends from. Besides socialization, I just love competing since I am very competitive. Also, I like going around places, seeing new places. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16)

Victor similarly stated:

I was bored sitting home. One day my mother put a game on TV and I was watching it. I was like “I want to play this game”. I told my mother and she got me one soccer ball, and started playing, practicing over and over. I got good at it. Since then I love playing soccer. Also, I am very active person so I just want to be out of house. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

More than half of the participants saw sports as a way to practice and improve their English skills because they believed that it gave them the chance to demonstrate their language skills by freely engaging in conversation. Ines explained:

Because of like, coming to America, not speaking English, I felt that if I play sport, I might catch up faster living in the State. Also, I played in different place and met so many different people, and you have to talk to your teammates and others. So, I live playing sports. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16).

David and Abdaul, two brothers who immigrated a year ago, both addressed the same issue and made similar comments. Both acknowledged that due to the intense structural curriculum and limited free time for socialization and interaction among peers at their school, it was difficult for them to get involved and socialize with peers with limited English. Abdaul explained, “At school I do not talk much because my English is not good. So, I do not want any others to make fun of me. But here when I play soccer, I do not feel that. I am ok talking and listening to my coach and friends” (Personal Communication, 8/9/16). David expressed, “I feel comfortable talking with my teammates on the soccer team because they are like me. They all come from different country. But at school, I have only a few friends and I don’t talk much. When I talk to my friend, It helps me my English” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16).

It was evident sports not only offered the participants opportunities to experience fun, enjoyment, and challenges; it also provided *physical/health benefits*. Sport participation helped them to maintain a physically and mentally healthy body. They argued that sport participation helped increase their self-esteem and decrease their stress and boredom. Makryous claimed, “Most of time, I have nothing to do. Sport is so fun time for me, something to do and enjoy. It is

something to do afterschool. More importantly, it is something to keep my body healthy by moving around.” (Personal Communication, 8/5/16). Nema laughingly explained, “I play sports to get out of the house. I play sport because reading is not my things, so sport keeps me going. Without sport, I would be like 400 pound. Sport just keeps me healthy, sport is my everything.” (Personal Communication, 7/27/16). Similarly, Sadock said, “Well if I participate in sport, I get to get of my house. I don’t like staying in my house and feel bored at my house. So, I try to do sport a lot. I just like to work-out”. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16).

While sport participation provided the opportunity for them to be socially and physically active, participants also enjoyed the *competition and recognition* which were not available in their home country. Mohamed said, “I just love competition. I also love traveling, seeing different places, and meeting different people” (Personal Communication, 8/3/16). Gus explained the joy of participation as “it is so fun. I want to show people that I got a talent and I am fast. I can do many tricks such as back flip. So I want to show people I got talent” (Personal Communication, 7/28/16).

Jonathan explained;

I like fun things like when you score. When you score, people shout out and celebrate your goal. It means that I am doing good job. Also, I like winning trophies and tournaments. I also like traveling with the team and meet different people. So, I am proud of that. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

The participants reported that *opportunity for travel* provided by sport participation was exciting because they could see different places and get to meet new people while traveling with the team. Coudra addressed such benefits when he said:

I grow up playing sport, because sport helps me move my body. It is my favorite thing to do. One time, I was watching some good players on TV. I just wanted to be like them. At

that time, I was watching world cup. Also, people' life may end up in a tough situation and they may struggle in their life. You just do not know how your life will go. So, if I play sport and get good at, I can prove myself and get on the international team. I also like it because it is fun, because you get to meet new people. You know you travel with the team and meet new people. I know that I ever could get a chance to go so many places and meet new people if I did not play soccer. (Personal Communication, 8/1/16).

Economic factors related to sport participation included the potential for scholarships and the potential make money with a professional career. The participants used sports as a way of pursuing educational opportunities in increasing the *potential for scholarships*. Several participants were aware of athletic scholarships that are offered to student-athletes for a free college education. Gus described, "I participate in sport because I have talent and make sure I don't lose my talent. I would like to keep working and improve it until I get a college scholarship so that I go to college free and graduate (Personal Communication, 7/28/16). Jonathan explained how he learned about scholarship opportunities for athletes:

Back in my country, two white people came to my country and looked for players. They picked my friend and now he plays soccer at a college in England. They told him they would pay for everything. That is when I learned about scholarship. Ever since, I want to play soccer because when you play soccer, you get famous, get scholarship, and everybody will know you. You move to different places. I told myself that if I get good, I may get scholarship for college" (Personal Communication, 8/10/16).

Mohamed conceptualized how playing sports could help him get a good education so that he could eventually become a leader to serve his country:

When you play sport, you go to many places. When you get good at it, you become very famous. Then you play well and you get paid well. If you play good, someday you may become a leader. After being famous and retired, you may become a leader of something like president. People will know that this person was a good player, working hard. For example, I want to become the president of every soccer program [here]. People will know that you were good soccer player and know how to do things. Also, when I play soccer good, I get scholarship for university. My goal is to become a leader of something, maybe a politician. At first though, I need a good education first. But in order to get a good education, soccer will help me get those chances. If everything works out, eventually, I want to be a politician and go back to my own country to help people out. (Personal Communication, 8/3/16).

Participants expressed the hope that participation in sports help them pursue a *professional career and make money* at some point. They believed that playing for a professional team would provide financial security. Nema was determined when he said, “I want to pay back to my dad for what he did for us. I want to buy him a house from the sport money I am going to be making” (Personal Communication, 7/27/16). Likewise, Fidele confidently stated:

If I play sport and become successful, I play for a professional soccer club, and I become famous and can make a lot of money. When you become a rich, you may become a leader of some people or group. That is what would like to be someday” (Personal Communication, 8/9/16).

Makryous pointed out:

I used to watch Ronaldo and Ronaldinio, Brazilian soccer player. Since then I loved playing soccer. I mean after I get good at it, I like to inspire people around in sports. You get to meet new people. I want to be professional soccer player when I grow up. I know it take a lot of hard work. But if I become, I would have a lot of money, then I can help my family and poor people. I mean you have to keep out of trouble first. (Personal Communication, 8/5/16).

4.2.5 Theme 5: Leadership. The fifth emergent theme centered on leadership. It is important to mention 6 of the 15 participants had held leadership positions in the past and some were still captains on their teams. All of the participants seemed to know the meaning of leadership; they explained leadership as a way to lead a group or inspire somebody. They explained that it requires influence with a vision and some level of autonomy whether formal or informal. Two attributes were related to this theme: leadership dispositions and leadership skills.

Leadership dispositions included several indicators: (a) caring, (b) respect and trust, (c) confidence, (d) humility, and (e) responsibility and accountability. Participants maintained that these are critical leadership dispositions that are commonly practiced in sports. They believed that they face these dispositions often and get an opportunity to practice them while they participate in sports.

Caring is one of the pillars of leadership dispositions that arose during the interviews.

Athletes and coaches can demonstrate a caring behavior by taking a genuine and continual interest in each other as a person. In addition to coaches, athletes should willingly counsel, advise, encourage and console without regard to athletic performance, and become knowledgeable about their teammates who may address emotional and social issues that may arise on and off the field. Participants shared how they experienced and modeled caring through kindness, compassion, respect, encouragement, teamwork, being connected, and selflessness.

For example, Ines addressed how he encourages his teammates in a caring manner:

When they make mistake, I try to tell them “hi, do not worry it is ok, you will fix it next time”. Everybody make mistake but we just have to encourage and tell them “you can do better, you fix it next time”. If I yell at him, he would not do it. You just tell him like “what you did was wrong but try better next time, and you will be better”. But the most important part is that you try to do your best even if you do not make it or does not work. I do not care if you make mistake. You just have to learn from that mistake so that you play good next time. We are here for each other. (Personal Communication, 8/14/16)

Mohamed addressed how he would use encouragement with his teammates if he were team captain:

I would try to give players who have not gained opportunity to get on the field or play a lot. I try to get them well known by coaches. I would try to help them out and get good chemistry on the team. I try to get more players on the field, who have not been on the field much or try to help them more team chemistry. (Personal Communication, 8/12/16)

Louis discussed his beliefs encouraging his team:

Number one is to get a good attitude. I would like them to be good to each other and respectful. I do not let them fight. Instead, I tell them “come on guys, we are team, be nice to each other”. They have to lead by hyper the team up like motivating. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Mohamed likewise explained how he encourages his teammates:

A leader should listen and do what is right, and help your teammates who are not on the same page with others. Let’s say that one guy’s skill level is very low and my skill level is higher, I would just help him out and interact with my teammates, making them want to see me every time I get on the field. (Personal Communication, 8/12/16)

Jonathan addressed how he demonstrated his caring attitude as a captain on the team;

I play this sport and do well. I play good so they want to be like me. As a captain, I make sure I work harder than anybody else and help my team teammates. Coach is out there helping but as captain you can help them as well so that they can catch up. I help them improve their technique. Some coaches really do not give a real practice. In Africa, we start playing so young. They know how to play soccer. So, I help my teammates a lot because I have experience and am good at it. Also, I help my team in behavior. For instance, in games, everybody make mistakes. Good thing is that you just have to explain nicely saying “what you did out there was good but you can do better”. If they do something bad, just do not talk bad words. Do not criticize too much. If you do, he will do again next time. Just give him some encouragement and he will be fine. (Personal Communication, 8/13/16)

The participants talked about the value and importance of demonstrating caring through staying connected and building strong friendships; how they care about each other and try to get together and socialize as much as they can. The relationships that the participants developed during sports lead to a lot of different positive outcomes and bonding. All of them expressed that they always call and text each other, go places together, hang out in their homes or in neighborhood, or connect through social media. For example, Sodack said, “I get to go to Nema’s house or he comes to my house all the time because we become good friends and we care for each other” (Personal Communication, 8/1/16). Similarly, Jonathan said;

I met several people at the newcomer school from my country including my teammates Fidele who is also from Congo. Because we play together on the team and speak same language, we become good friend. We talk on the phone almost every day and are friend on Facebook. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Gus mentioned “Our friendship in the team is very good. I mean everybody really care for each other and try to help and have fun together. Most of us are friend on Facebook and Snapchat. (Personal Communication, 7/28/16). Similarly, Makryous expressed “I call my friend, Sadock on the team and snapchat often. Sometime, Nema does group chat since he is the captain.” (Personal Communication, 8/5/16).

Demonstrating *respect and trust* was another valued leadership disposition expressed by the participants. Ines emphasized “leader becomes leader by showing others how to do things right. They become leaders by respecting and helping each other” (Personal Communication, 8/14/16). Fidele said, “You just have to keep working harder and behave yourself good. For example, I have to respect my coach and team so that I may become a leader later” (Personal Communication, 8/11/16). Coudra pointed out how being respectful can help someone be a leader:

I do not know how I became a leader. But I can say that when I think of myself as leader, your teammates look at you, all of them give you award to lead them because they trust and respect you. You respect them too. So, your team gives you leadership. You do not assign yourself as leader. You know you can become a leader but you do not know how you became a leader. They just think “he got a good idea, let’s just listen him”. Then, you tell them what to do. So, I guess that I become a leader because I gained their trust and respect. Also, your behavior and your character all that plays roles too. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16).

Louis explained how a team leader should stay calm and be respectful:

You lead them to be good and respectful, even if you lose the game so bad. You still need to be good, and do not get mad. You just tell them “you just have to practice more so that we can beat them”. Even if the leader is having bad day, he has to put it away and think about the team. He cannot think about himself always. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Jonathan believed that because he always respected his coach and team, he was chosen to be a leader on the team:

I think that I become a leader by respecting my team and coach all the time. For example, when your coach says “be here at 6 pm” you have to be there at 6 pm. So you have to respect whatever you coach says in order to be leader. Your coach is leader. Also, I help your team in different ways. For example, when you save the game or score a goal, you become a leader because you made a difference on the team. (Personal Communication, 8/13/16).

Sadock explained how respect and trust can be tenuous, pointing out how careless comments or thoughtless activities can cause a leader to lose respect:

Maintaining this respectful manner day after day, week after week, season after season separates the leaders from the other players. Let's just say, you play football, so you have a lot of responsibility in school. For example, there is a pep rally at school. Usually, football team is the most responsible to get everybody together since they are the most popular and respected. It can help you become famous if you are on the team. This may go either way. It may go good way or it may go bad way. For example there are some people who are famous but they don't have many followers because they are selfish and no respect.

He went to explain the importance of responsibility for a leader:

I think leadership mean that being a leader to other, taking responsibility, being responsible on your own fault. For instance, if you do something wrong on your team, instead of just saying sorry, you should actually fix that mistake and take your own responsibility. (Personal Communication, 8/9/16)

Louis reflected on the difficulty of maintaining such respect and trust when he said, "earning, and then maintaining respect is a difficult job that requires self-control, sincerity, confidence, and determination" (Personal Communication, 8/10/16).

The participants stated that maintaining high *confidence* is vital to building their strengths and abilities as well as their leadership development. They believed that through sport participation, they got to increase their self-esteem since they had opportunities for different roles as responsible team members. They also emphasized confidence as an essential leadership asset. A few of the participants, who still remembered negative experiences in their original country, seemed to have low confidence due to such recent experiences or trauma. However, almost all of the participants said they felt good and had increased confidence when it came to playing sports. They agreed that having confidence in their knowledge and understanding of leadership traits had increased their passion about sports and motivated them to inspire their teammates. Raul addressed the social aspects of sport participation with regard to building his confidence:

I have more confidence when I play sport. Ever since I started playing, I felt good because it kind of builds up my confidence that I can do it. Some people say that I am

usually very shy. But when I am on the field, some people see me that I am very good at something and I am not so shy. I am very active and I do my best. They want me to show how to do something. On the field, I kind of get loose and very social. I can see this because people ask me to show them how to do some soccer tricks. Another thing is that sport help you build up your confidence, help you be better thinker, prepare you for next games. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16).

In reflecting more on how sport participation helped increase his confidence, he said:

Sometime when our opponent is coming on us, I tell people on my team what we should do such as they should attack or pass back. Some time I do that and take charge, and most of time they do that to me too.... So, my understanding of the game with confidence and result of the game make me a leader. If I can believe in what I can accomplish, I do better. So, I have more confident when I play sport. But, Sometime I can make mistake and some other people take charge as a result. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Makryous shared his perspective on the connection between leadership and confidence:

...leaders tell to do right things or not to do wrong things. They have confidence in what they do, or what they believe is right. That is what I feel too when I play sport. Ever since I played sport, I felt good and because I see my confidence increased. Leaders have high confidence too. They become leader by showing knowledge, experience, high confidence. They tell to do right things or not to do wrong thing because that they have a confidence and experience. To be a leader, you take whatever you do seriously, and do not get in trouble. And these leaders follow dream and set goals. (Personal Communication, 8/13/16).

Humility was another indicator of leadership dispositions for the participants. Beyond personal successes, the participants considered humility as a virtue for their inner well-being. They saw that frustration and loss do not have the same impact if their egos are not involved. They argued that when they combined humility with motivation, they had the ability to drive towards successes without letting the failures knock them off balance—letting them enjoy playing sports and successfully adapt to the new society.

Because they played a sport in their daily life, they faced constant pressure either from coaches, teammates, or opponents. They addressed the necessity of the humility and defined it as a modest or low view of one's own importance. Participants believed that humility was an asset for self-improvement. Recognizing their potential and, more importantly realizing their own

weaknesses, they conveyed a mature understanding of the role humbleness or humility played in their receptivity for continuous improvement. As Nema explained;

You see I want to be a leader on my sport team, but I cannot. I mean like I am younger person than most on my team. I need to be mature enough to be a leader. You see that now this year I am going to be sophomore. There is 12 graders who are bigger than me, know more than me. So I got a lot to learn from them. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

Similarly, when I asked Makryous if he was a leader or not on the team, he responded with humility, realizing he still had more to learn:

I don't know about that. You have to be very serious about that. Most of the people on my team sometime said that I am a leader. But I do not think so. I am not concerned about if am a leader or not. I just want to have fun and help my friend. Some of these friends inspire me still and encourage me all the time too. I stand up for myself and my friends. I try to help my friends get good at something. (Personal Communication, 8/13/16)

Ines reflected on his friend on his school team. He admired his friend' friendship and recognizes his humbleness. He said:

You know some people are shy and do not want to talk in public. But one on one they are different. For example, my friend Richard is very shy in school and in practice but when we are at his house or hanging out together. He is totally different, telling us right things and help us out all the time. He is not that shy but just so humble. So, as I said, you don't have to play sport to be leader. In my case, I am very loud and talk a lot in the game but respect my teammates and other team. (Personal Communication, 8/14/16)

As the participants reflected on their experiences in sports, *responsibility and accountability* were also revealed as a strong two-sided indicator of leadership dispositions. Responsibility was valued as a means of accepting that one has control over his actions and is accountable for the consequences of his actions. The participants addressed that both principles (especially responsibility) were often practiced in a sport setting. Louis pointed out responsibility as one of the vital components of leadership: "Leader is person who get the team up, a person who people can follow, a person who you can count on, a person who can take the responsibility on his action, and help you out" (Personal Communication, 8/10/16). Gus noted the value of

responsibility when he talked about how he became a leader and expectations of him as a team captain:

I become a leader by talking full responsibility of myself and my action. I always do my best. Because I play sport on team, all of my teammates depend on me, and they trust me. If I do not show up at practice or game, they call me why I did not come. If we have games, I am always there and ready to support my team. In that case, it shows you care about it and respect your team. Same thing goes other way around. Because you respect your friends, your coach and captain, they all respect you too. (Personal Communication, 8/9/16)

Similarly, Abdoulaye mentioned the importance responsibility when he talked about leadership and the role of the captain:

Leadership means to be on top of something, and take care of something that you are responsible. For example, as a captain, you have to make sure everybody does the same things and follow the instruction the coach gives. After coach is the captain most responsible. (Personal Communication, 8/11/16).

Jonathan highlighted on responsibility as one of the strongest characteristics of leadership:

Leadership means that somebody leads something like a coach. A coach is the leader of the team. Leadership also means that somebody lead something like a principal and parliament, Members of the parliament lead the country. They are responsible and accountable for their action on their job. (Personal Communication, 8/13/16)

In the same way, Fidele mentioned:

Leadership is that people lead a group of people. The leader is someone who leads a group or team like in military. If I am in a group as leader, I tell people what to do. If I am the leader on the soccer team, I tell you where to play. I am responsible if the coach is not around. (Personal Communication, 8/11/16)

Participants often told the stories about how being responsible can help someone improve their leadership. For example, Nema gave an example of how acting responsibly in school work and on the sports team helped him to be a leader:

First of all, you got to do the right things in school. My coach told me that I got to do well in school, all homework, assignments, tests, and do all that. And just listen to your teachers. When you do all these things as a responsible student, other people around you can see and say” him, he is a good kid”. In our case as student-athletes, we have to make school priority. If we do that, we can play sport and enjoy our life. If you are not making

school first, that means you are failing and you are not going to be eligible to play sports. So, you go to be a leader to put things together in priority like school work even before you play sports. And then, you play sport. Be honest with you though. I don't know if I could have been a leader if I did not play sport. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

Similar to Nema's, Sadock expressed on how responsibility helped him became a leader on his team:

Yes. I say yes because I played on different teams. But on the team of GUSA I consider myself as a leader because a lots of kids look up to me now. That is a big responsibility. I talk a lot on the field. If they do something wrong I correct them, and help them. I listen, take my own responsibility, help people, and look out for opportunity to help people. I watch my attitude and mount. (Personal Communication, 8/9/16)

Leadership skills was the second attribute of leadership discussed by the participants.

They agreed that as immigrant youth playing on a sports team, they had learned many specific skills essential to developing into leaders. They explained that effective leaders have specific skills that set them apart from being average members of a club or athletic team, including: (a) communication, (b) ability to serve as role models, and (c) and technical and tactical sport skills. The participants identified these skills as important for leaders to have, but did not necessarily feel that they had acquired all of them yet.

One of the main leadership skills that the participants experienced through sports participation was *communication*, which is both talking and listening. For many immigrants, communication is an intimidating experience. It was especially challenging for these immigrant youth, who had recently come to find their voice and speak up for their values and beliefs. They acknowledged and understood the importance of communication skills in their daily life, especially in the sports they played. Playing on a team sport not only requires technical skill but also the ability to communicate effectively because they have to talk to each other and listen to each other to accomplish the common goal of winning. Throughout the interviews, participants identified communication as a key factor in their growth as leaders overall. When I asked David,

who just recently came to the U.S. to reflect on the characteristics of leaders, he gave me a short answer saying, “leaders communicate good” (Personal Communication, 8/10/16); when I asked him if they needed any other skills, he reiterated, “They communicate and listen to people good” (Personal Communication, 8/10/16). Coudra explained how he used his communication skills during games:

You lead your team, first of all, by communication. I think that communication is the most important thing. In the game, you have to communicate with them. You can lead them and make them your friend through communication. When I defend, I tell my teammates stay on my line. You know that the stuff you talk with your friend is not the stuff that you just talk with somebody. So, your team got to be your friend that you can trust. Direct communication makes you trustful. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Makryous described the value of effective talking and listening:

Sport gives you opportunity to be a leader because you talk to your teammates and tell them what to do. As a leader, you keep motivate them. You do not get mad, and control yourself when you get mad. Besides, you tell them and listen your teammates so that you work as a team. If you do not listen, you may get in trouble, you may even lose the game. (Personal Communication, 8/13/16)

Ines stated:

Let's just say If am playing game and I am the captain, If I am telling my teammates some direction in the game like “do not go there, pressure, deference”, stuff like that. I mean leadership. So the more you speak in game, the better communication you have in the game. As a result, we win the game since we communicate well. I remember once my coach told me that the way you do things in sport and do right things will represent the way you will do in the future. (Personal Communication, 8/14/16)

Victor explained how good communication skills may be used in the game as a captain:

A leader, the captain has to speak out and communicate with his team, saying “spread out come closer”. He makes his own staff and makes his own games and strategy. He leads them in a fair tread. He also tells them to take tern and switch positions. Essentially, he tries to communicate often in the game or practice because it is important. If he does not communicate effectively, we would lose. (Personal Communication, 8/13/16)

Jonathan reflected on how communication skills may be used even if a player is not a captain;

Even if you are not a leader, you can still do something good to improve yourself and help your team through active communication by talking and listening to your teammates

in the game. You just organize your teammates' position in the games and communicate with them more often. In that case, your coach sees that you do good job. (Personal Communication, 8/13/16)

Participants also highlighted the importance of *role modeling* as a leadership skill in sports. They stated that leaders are role models who can take responsibility for their actions and demonstrate good character through verbal and nonverbal means. More importantly, role models have the ability and capacity to influence others in positive ways. Mohamed described the connection of role models to leadership:

I think leadership is setting an example for people who are younger than you or like general people around you. Let's say you are doing something good, they see you are doing and achieving from it. Then they all follow your footstep, but if you are doing something bad or leaving down the wrong track, they all are going to follow your footsteps. Example would be that you are on the team and you are the captain, you are doing good sportsmanship to other team. After you won the game, other team feels bad so you go over there and shake their hand and they shake your hand, tell him "good game". Then everyone on your team would do the same things. (Personal Communication, 8/12/16)

Mohamed went on to describe how he became a role model on the team:

For instance, last year we were playing on our HS team, and I was a captain. Just that experience got me like made me better leader as a sense. May be, not everybody listen to you. But, the way you get that to happen is to be an example on the team. Then, people would follow you when you get on the same page. You set up your own pace, see what is going on, understanding their side, rather than trying to get everybody accustom to what you trying to do. But transitioning from there to the real world, now most of my friends see me as a good role model because I do not do drug and any of bad things other people do. I am one of the friends they can look up to. They can actually come to talk to me for many things. (Personal Communication, 8/12/16)

Similarly, Ines shared his role modeling experience;

One day there was a fight on the team. I broke the fight and my coach saw me and told me "I like the way you stepped in and handled the situation as a leader". What I did was that I stepped in and pulled my friends away from each other and I said "hi, listen, do not worry about him, calm down". Because I broke the fight on that day, my coach and my friend were proud of me. And I did not know English so good then too. So, for me, without not knowing English well, then, that was the moment I knew I was the leader. I was proud of myself. (Personal Communication, 8/14/16)

Gus mentioned how he sets an example as captain by helping his coach and encouraging his teammates:

Whenever we play sport, if my coach asks me for something, I always raise my hand and ready to help him. My coach always calls for volunteers. So, I always love to help him out and my teammates. Whenever we play game, I make sure everybody in position, make sure everybody on target. I always communicate with them in the game. Also, I always encourage my friends and tell them “we can do it” if we fall behind. (Personal Communication, 8/9/16)

Nema addressed how a role model should act:

Put it this way: if you are a leader, you should be doing well in your classes, working hard, got a good attitude, dress well, not sagging your pants. You are just showing other little kids that you are a good role model. They can look up to you even though you do not know them. When you do well in the field and do other good stuff, it means you are a leader right there. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

Fidele said:

If you are a leader on the team, you do not make yourself special. Instead, you try to be like regular people. I mean you do not think yourself special and force them what to do. Don't be so harsh on people. You take your time, and be patient with them. Every day, you have to be good to them and be a good role model for them. (Personal Communication, 8/11/16)

The participants reflected on how else they could improve their leadership skills if they were not a captain. They argued that there is always a chance to learn from others such as captains and coaches, as well as learn from your own mistakes in order to be a good role model.

Raul emphasized:

Even if you are not a captain, you may be still role model through building your experience and demonstrating positive attitudes. Eventually you may be a captain. Leaders or players who have more experience can tell you what to do best for you and your team. They have positive attitudes but most importantly they motivate you to do better as role model. They set good examples for the people around them. (Personal Communication, 8/10/16)

Similarly, Ines pointed out how someone may serve as a role model:

You know there is always a chance to learn good things in sports. Just because you are not a leader on the team does not mean that you cannot be a leader. You have to work

harder, step up, and do the right things so that people see and respect you as a leader. You just make sure you help your coach, help your teammates, and be positive. Then you will be fine. That is what I would do even if I am not a leader. Then your team sees you doing all. They may say “you know what, I will vote for you because you do good things and try to be role model for a good reason”. (Personal Communication, 8/14/16)

Participants also addressed that *technical and tactical skills* in sports had an important role in their leadership development. They believed that improving their technical and tactical skills correlated with decision making and strategic thinking. By improving their technical and tactical skills, they believed they had a better chance to be a leader. They expressed that even though behaviors of players played important role on choosing a captain, usually persons who had better technical and tactical skills were more likely to become the captain. For example, Jonathan said, “Nema is the captain because he knows better. Besides, he has better skills than anybody else” (Personal Communication, 8/10/16). Likewise, Sadock explained:

I became a captain because I improved my skills and got good at it through hard work and practices. I can see what our opponent is setting up in the game. And then I warn my teammates and we set strategies to stop them. (Personal Communication, 8/7/16)

Abdoulaye mentioned:

No. I just do not think I am so good yet. Sometime I have trouble with the stuff on the field. For example, I do not understand the way the captain is doing it. I think I can do it but I am not ready. So, I try to understand how the captain do the stuff. When I reflect back on his action, I say to myself “Ohh, I see now why he does that way”. If you tell your teammate go to somewhere on the field, it means that something important is going to happen. Somebody is going to pass it that way. I try to do the same thing my captain does it. It is going to take a long time to understand why he is doing stuff in that way. Also, captain should have a good self-control and take it inside. I act crazy sometime. So I am not quite there yet. (Personal Communication, 8/11/16)

4.3 Macrolevel Analysis

This section presents a macrolevel analysis of the group interviews. Analysis of the group interviews revealed the same five themes that had emerged during the microlevel analysis: immigration, challenges in the new country, facilitators in the new country, sport participation,

and leadership. Although the attributes related to the themes were also the same in the microlevel and macrolevel analyses, some of the attributes had difference indicators in the macrolevel analysis. Following

4.3.1 Theme 1: Immigration. The group interviews revealed the same indicator for this theme which was *reasons for leaving the home country*. However, at the macrolevel, there were only two indicators, war and family; lack of resources and opportunity for education did not emerge as indicators at the macrolevel. *War* was the main indicator that affected almost all of the participants' life and forced them to move and seek different places safer for them. During the group interview, participants reiterated that political turmoil and economic hardships turned their country into a war field which caused poverty and forced people to flee to a nearby safer place in neighboring countries. The majority of participants had not come directly from their original countries to the U.S., but had emigrated from neighboring countries. During the group interview participants were a little reluctant to talk about their experiences and reasons for fleeing their original country. They felt sadness, shame, and desperation; they also felt it was too personal. However, all of them indicated that war was the main reason. Jonathan, commented: "*basically we left because there were shooting everywhere. People were looting someone else property every day. We just did not feel it is safe to stay longer, so we left.*" (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Jonathan's remark received support because everyone else implied similar experiences.

The other main reason participants were willing to talk about had to do with rejoining *family* members. They had left their countries to join their family members who had earlier immigrated for job or educational purposes. Two brothers, David and Abdaul, said that their father left their country because of the lack of job opportunities and wanted to pursue other

opportunities in the neighboring country. But he ended up coming to the US first a while ago. So, they came here to reunite with their father in the United States. David said “our father came here first. He left our country back then since there was no job. We came here two years later” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Sadock mentioned that his mother and siblings left the country to live in a safer place while his father stayed back to protect their property and village from rebel groups in the country; they reunited a few years later in the U.S... He explained;

My grandfather is like king in our tribe and he is getting old. He has 14 children and my father is his oldest children in the family. He was expected to be next leader of the tribe. So, he stayed there to help my grandfather and protect our village. But he came to the US a few years later and we reunited again. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

4.3.2 Theme 2: Challenges in the new country. The group discussion regarding challenges revealed three indicators; (a) language, (b) safety, and (c) transportation. The most common determinant that participants mentioned was *language barriers*. Some of the participants indicated that they were not able to participate in physical activities and play games in the neighborhoods or schools because they were afraid and did not know if they would comprehend the rules of the game. So, they missed several months or a year of participating in sports since they did not have good English skills. Ines mentioned, “If you don’t know English well, you may not get what the coach saying in practice or game” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Participants agreed that until they improved their English skills and felt comfortable speaking, they had a tendency to stay away from participating in complicated activities or instructions. Sadock added, “It is also bunch of words that you just do not know because you have already limited English. So you just avoid participation until you get good at speaking and learn the meaning of these words” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

Safety in the neighborhoods that they lived in was a significant challenge. The participants reported that they lived in a neighborhood where illegal activities such as drugs, gun

violations, and break-ins take place. They described that in evening hours and at night, it got more dangerous walking on the sidewalk. Sadock mentioned with a sigh:

In my neighborhood, people sell weed a lot and some other stuff, so cops come over all the time. We do not use that kind of stuff but I have heard one time that there was a person over there who got shut at night. (Personal Reflection, 11/10/16)

Sadock's frustration caused some grumbling among the participants and they began to share similar experiences with regard to such incidents and safety. The dialogue revealed that even though most of the participants experienced similar incidences on a day-to-day basis, some of them had moved into safer neighborhoods and no longer had such experiences. For example, Raul said:

We had such incident in our old neighborhood too. My father said "we are going to move somewhere else where there is less problem". And eventually we bought a small house in a different neighborhood. We do not have any such problem around". (Personal Reflection, 11/10/16)

Transportation was another common challenge that the participants had to face on a daily basis. Getting to practice from home was something that they were constantly concerned about because they lived far away from the practice field and their parents did not have available transportation. Most of the participants mentioned that public transportation was not consistent and not reliable. Because there was no sport facility available in their neighborhood, they constantly searched facilities nearby and had to walk or hitch a ride, if one could be found, to get to the facilities. For instance, Sadock expressed his frustration by saying, "we all love to play soccer but sometime some of us are not here because they do not have a ride to come here" (Personal Reflection, 11/10/16). Mohamed, who rides a bike to practice, said, "I ride a bike here normally but if it is raining it is a problem. I cannot come to practice because my father is working on most weekends and I have nobody else who can take me" (Personal Reflection, 11/10/16). Gus emphasized his frustration about public transportation:

Bus comes to our neighborhood, usually in the morning and afternoon during the week. But in weekend it only comes one or two times. However, it is not reliable since sometime it comes too late and some time it comes too early. As a result, you have to wait too long. It just gets boring. (Personal Reflection, 11/10/16).

4.3.3 Theme 3: Facilitators in the new country. The participants discussed three important *socioeconomic facilitators* that made their adjustment easier after immigrating to the U. S.: (a) coaches, (b) parents, and (c) peers/teammates.

The most mentioned indicator was *coaches*. It was evident that the coaches were well-respected and valued as a building bridge between participants' current life, their dreams, and adaptation process. The coaches were among the most influential people in the participants' lives. The relationship that they had developed with their coach was very important to the success of their leadership development and the team. The participants believed that by providing wisdom and encouragement, coaches were very good role models. They emphasized that the coaches at the youth sport club brought the team together, and gave players the right tools to push themselves academically, physically, and mentally. Because coaches recruited them from surrounding local schools, the participants were to be grateful that they were found, chosen, and given an opportunity to be on the team, and meet new friends who had similar immigrant and athletic backgrounds. Fidele shared:

I was playing somewhere else with bunch of different friends. Then, I met Coach Michael at the newcomer school. He said that he wanted to form another team, gave us a chance to try out. After that, I made the team. I was so happy because finally I was able to be on a real team here in the United States. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Makryous mentioned:

I was at newcomer school when met Coach Michael. He asked me if I wanted to try out for traveling team. And then everything got better because he took care of us. He does not just tell how we should play in the game, but he tells us different other things like how to stay away from trouble. He helps us a lot. So, sometime he gives us a ride too. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

All of the participants indicated that if they had not met the coaches, they would have never met each other and gotten the privilege to be on the traveling team. Nema summed up this feeling: “if Coach Michael and Sari did not reach out to us, we would not be here, we would not know each other” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

Most of the participants mentioned their *family* as a major source of support and inspiration in their life. The participants not only wanted to go to college but to also become professional players so that they could make their parents proud. They also wanted to support their parents who had done so much for them and their family. The participants felt that their parents supported their sport participation and academic goals. Due to time constraints and busy work schedules, the parents were not always able to provide transportation, take them to the practice and pick them up, or go watch the games. However, they encouraged their kids to sustain in playing sports and do well in school. Abdoulaye expressed:

Because my father works as truck driver and my mam works at a barber shop, my sister usually takes me around. She is about to go to a college. I have also 4 little brothers. I am the one on the middle. I am the only one who plays sport at this moment. So they come to watch my games sometime and have fun together. Even though my father hardly comes to watch my games, he always tells me to work harder in soccer because he wants me to be good at it. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Sadock responded:

My family is Christian and very religious. So, at home we pray together before every dinner and going to sleep. My brother played soccer for Page High school. He was very good but he quitted after high school because he started going to college two years ago. He studies engineering. He basically did not have time to play during college. However, whenever he comes home from the college, we go somewhere and play soccer together. He wants me to get good at by improving my skills. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Influence of *peers/teammates* during the adjustment process was evident among the participants. Because they played sports on a team now, the participants had built strong friendships through sharing stories, often hanging out together, calling or texting, and connecting

through social media. The participants mentioned that because some of their teammates had come to the United States earlier, they had more experience and were more familiar with the new culture. So, those who had come earlier shared their stories and told their new teammates about their experiences in the new culture. Abdoul who had just immigrated a year ago said, “I met some people from my country at the newcomer school and they told me that they played soccer in their neighborhood” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

Additional findings from the group interviews indicated that once they met and got to know each other, they embraced friendships through not only social interaction off the field but also helping and learning technical skills from each other on the field. For instance, Victor acknowledged: “Nema is good at playing soccer and knows a lot. He taught me some tricks. We hang out together at school too” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

4.3.4 Theme 4: Sport participation. The participants discussed about *sociocultural and economic factors* that encouraged them to participate in sports. The group interview revealed five indicators that played significant roles in their sport participation: (a) social interaction, (b) potential for future career/fame, (d) physical activity/health benefits, (e) potential to make money, and (f) potential to attain scholarships. During the group interview, participants argued that participating in sports gave them an opportunity to fun through *social interaction* in individual or group endeavors. Some of the participants who were newer immigrants expressed that since they were intensely required to follow certain curriculum and guidelines at school and had limited English skills, they did not have enough free time to socialize and have free-flow conversations with their peers. However, the participants emphasized that sport participation provided them an opportunity to interact and socialize in a non-stressful environment. For instance, Sadock mentioned: “I just love to play sports because it is fun, because you get to talk

your friends” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Mohamed reflected on the social benefits of sport participation and responded: “I just love sport because for me, it is the only way to get away and do something fun” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Ines highlighted the benefit of sport participation for newcomers in improving their English through non-stressful social interaction; he described how sports participation changed his life as an immigrant:

Because I did not speak English well, I had accent, I got picked on, laughed at when I was in middle school. But later, it stopped. By playing sports, you can show those people that you are doing something they cannot do. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Abdoulaye responded “That is not a problem here because everybody is similar. We are all here to play game and have fun. We all have the similar goals” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

Nema addressed the importance of bonding friendships among the team members:

I know we all have brothers and siblings. But when you play sport, you have brothers who you can depend on. Just in case, if you get picked on, you can depend on them. You have real brothers like you can do teamwork, but he is your second brothers who care for you also. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

Participants also considered *potential for a career* afforded by sport participation. They indicated that they had goals of being professional soccer player in the future. Fidele said “my goal is to become a pro player” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Makryous added, “I want to be professional soccer player. I know it takes a lot of hard work. I mean we have to keep out of trouble” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Mohamed contributed, “I think that everyone should try to participate in at least one sport. You get to meet new people, go different place, eventually if you are good enough, you be a professional and making good money”. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Similarly, Jonathan chimed in, “Soccer is my favorite game since it is the most famous sport in the world. So, at some time, I like to be famous soccer player” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

In addition, it was evident that the participants valued sports as a way of getting athletic *scholarship*. They hope that they got good at playing sports so that they could have a chance of getting a free education. Gus said, “I would like to get a scholarship and go to college” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Mohamed highlighted, “I know you have to pay to go to college. But if you get a scholarship, you don’t have to pay. Why not get free education while you enjoy playing sports” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Coudra emphasized, “I don’t know but participation in sport may help you go to college, by getting scholarship to go to a college, And later on , something good may happen in your life and may become a leader” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Nema emphasized his objective as an athlete who valued sports as a vehicle to achieve his goals:

To be honest, academic is not my thing. Without sport, I would want to kill myself. I cannot live without playing sport or exercising. When I play sport, I just see myself as my future, I would not able to play sport if was not planning to go to the collage. I do not have anything else in my mind in the future accept for playing sport. So, I am working so hard to be as good as I can and get a scholarship. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

In addition to social reasons and tangible benefits of sport participation, most of the participants also talked about *physical/health benefits* of sport participation as well. David cited, “sport is my favorite. If I don’t play sport, I feel like so lazy and fat” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Sadock added “Because I want to stay in shape and to be faster, I work out at school and here. So, when I play sports, I feel good and energized” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Ines said “when you play sports, you feel happy and healthy because it helps you to not only release stress from school or other stuff and but also give you a chance to do something fun. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

The participants thought that they did not have much of a chance as a group or as individuals to engage, learn, develop, and have fun if they did not play sports. They believed that

sport participation taught them the essential lesson of team spirit, not playing for selfish reasons but for their team as a whole. As a result, playing a sport helps them to be more social and responsible, make friendships, and have healthy body. More importantly, they believed it helped them to develop different leadership dispositions and skills as well as adapt to the mainstream society.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Leadership. In the group interview, the two attributes of this theme that had emerged from the individual interviews: leadership dispositions and leadership skills. Indicators of leadership dispositions included: (a) caring, (b) trust and respect (c) confidence, (d) humility, and (e) responsibility and accountability. Indicators for *leadership skills* included: (a) communication, (b) serve as a role model, and (c) ability to influence others.

Findings of the group interviews revealed that the participants saw *caring* as an essential element of leadership. The participants emphasized that caring climate on their teams was significantly important for enjoyment and development of leadership. They argued that players and coaches who demonstrated caring behaviors generated more positive attitudes towards their coaches/teammates, generated greater commitment to the sport. They believed that motivating, encouraging, and promoting friendships among the team should be a priority of a sports leader. For instance, Coudra emphasized, “A Leader should be encouraging his teammates even if he made mistake by saying like “It is ok, you can do it, do not give up” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Makryous told how a leader should demonstrate a caring behavior to encourage his teammates:

Leaders should tell his team what is right to do. He got to show his teammates and coaches positive attitudes while talking and playing. He got to show the team that he sincerely cares about the team. The leader tell his team to work as a team and give the team some encouragement (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

Ines expressed a similar idea in describing how caring contributes to friendship and leadership development:

Leaders understand people's opinion and care about them. For instance, as a leader if I see some players goofing around, I tell them "hi, stop playing around. Otherwise you are going to get hurt." I also tell them "warm up and stretch well. If you do not stretch your muscle, you get hurt. So, they see me telling them good things for them (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Participants recognized that success as an individual and credibility as a leader depended on earning it day after day with *respect and trust*. The participants agreed that in order to be trustful, you must be respectful. Fidele said "I think being respectful is very important for a leader. Leaders are leaders because they are respected (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Gus explained how he demonstrated respect during games: "I respect everybody on the team and on the field. I respect other players when we play them. For example, I shake hands after games finish. So, my team follows me" (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). David explained:

You just have to respect your friend and coaches. Then, they can trust you because you are respectful. If anybody likes you and wants to be friend with you, it means they respect and trust you. And they expect you to be beside them. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Sadock mentioned that leaders learn from their mistakes:

Because in sport you do a lot of wrong and those wrongs help you make right decision. By making the right decision, you can gain your teammates and coaches' trust and become a leader. Once you do all those things, it teaches you discipline and things like that. It teaches us a lot more like what to do and what not to do. For example, if your coach is talking and you are talking, it is disrespectful. Then, everybody see you are not respectful. As a result, they are not going to respect you. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Louis explained in a similar way:

If you are good, people will respect and follow you. You can still be leader if you are not playing. But if you play, it is better and easier to be leader because you get to practice these traits. For example, if you are playing a sport, you have to be respectful to your teammates and other teams. When you go to the school, you have to be respectful to your teachers. Otherwise, you may get off the team. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

The participants viewed *humility* as a disposition that helps a leader inspire and lead the team. The participants argued that the humble athlete is courteous in defeat, and modest in victory. When the humble players lose, they recognize that their opponents played better, and sincerely congratulate them on their win. On the other hand, when the humble athlete wins, there are no excessive celebrations, no inappropriate behaviors. Mohamed pointed out that being a leader was not an individualist role in which a leader orders around and acts unfairly, but rather is necessary working together with a humble attitude on the team. He added, “Effective leaders learn from mistakes and take advice, maintain humble behaviors, recognize his limit, and be sincere” (Personal communication, 11/10/16). Victor shared, “leaders maintain calm, respectful manners, and do not to follow the flow. For example, if everybody gets mad for something in the game, he stays calm and uses his logic” (Personal communication, 11/10/16).

Regarding ***leadership skills***, participants interpreted *communication* as a vital tool for leaders because they used their communication skills to connect to the team. They argued that exchange of ideas and interaction with others through effective communication is essential for those thinking about leading social and sports activities. The participants emphasized that effective leaders are good at inspiring because they are good at communicating through speaking, listening, and writing. Louis reflected on the necessity of effective communication for a leader:

If you are a leader in a group, you have to tell your group what to do in an active communication. Here in sport, if you work with little kids, you tell them and teach them good stuff. Same goes with captain on the team, he has to constantly communicate effectively during the game. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

Moreover, communication skill was valued as a necessary skill not only just for their sport activities and adaptation in their new country, but also as an immigrant for success in other endeavors such as a professional job. For instance, Louis mentioned, “it is the same in jobs; If

you are a boss, you have to communicate with your worker what to do” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Abdoulaye, who works at a fast food restaurant part-time, said, “I sometime work part time at a restaurant too. When I take order, I have to listen well and take the order. If I get it wrong, my boss blame me” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16).

During the group interviews, the participants emphasized serving as a *role model* as a valuable leadership skill. Role models in sports are respected not only for their athletic abilities, but also their humility, generosity, respect, passion, and morality. Athletes who have a strong sense of integrity with strong values are great role models for young generations. They help children understand the importance of values and the reasons that motivate others to become advocates for social change and innovation. Makryous said, “Leaders should be role model serving with passion and kindness” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Gus remembered his grandfather, who played sports, as a role model, and reflected on how his advice shaped his personality: “I always take my grandfather advice because he is my role model. He tells me that I always do the right thing, respect people, and stay away from trouble” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Nema underlined that leaders as role models take responsibility for their actions and demonstrate good character and behaviors. He gave an example of a good leader by addressing something outside of the field to broaden the case:

For example, as a leader if you see somebody up there smoking, you got to tell them that is not right. Besides, I always try to have good attitude by looking at somebody in his eye, shaking his hand, and just being a positive guy. You do not want to go out sagging you pants. Wrong person will follow the wrong crowds. I see that type of person in jail in five-six years. I just try to be nice guy, have nice posture, say “yes mam, no mam, yes sir, no sir” And be kind. When you are kind, people like you. If other people do not like you, and they do not think that you are not cool enough, let them be. When you do that in about 10 years, you see yourself on the top, other people who think they are cool are still on the street. (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Nema's comments demonstrated that a leader should be humble and serve as role model. He argued that not only speech, but manner, posture, and behavioral actions of leaders play an important role as well. Jonathan made a connection between respect and trust and serving as a role model:

I think that in order to become a leader, you have to be respectful and be role model to everyone. You have to be good to everyone. You got to go to school to get educated, learn different things and eventually you may become a leader (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

Other interrelated perceptions of leadership emerged from the group interview. Several of the participants expressed popular understandings of leadership, most often related to having an influence on others or having a charismatic personality. The participants referred to leadership according to traditional definitions of a leader. Nema described the leader as "someone who can take part of responsibility and lead the others, the guy who can stand in front of others and tell what to do" (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Makryous identified leadership in a more traditional definition "leadership means that to be depend on. They get peoples' attention and inspire them" (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Raul's concept of a leader reflected the idea that leaders act in the interest of the larger good, as opposed to self-interest: "leadership is being able to take charge, making right decision, getting people getting through, help them being able to successful" (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). For the many of the participants, the primary role of leader was to have a positive influence on others and reach certain goals. They need to analyze things differently by taking opportunities, acting in a timely way, and playing a role in decision making. Leaders make a difference in the group and society. Gus summed it up this way: "Leaders become a leader by working hard. They can become a leader by doing stuff that you do not do. For instance, they do it right away rather than delaying. They are on target

and do it right” (Personal Communication, 11/10/16). Likewise, Louis underlined how leaders develop ability to influence others, giving an example from sports:

Number one is that leaders should get a good attitude and demonstrates in his action. For instance, you have to listen your coach because your coach kind of helps you through and assign you as leader. If you develop a good attitude, you can influence others by making good decisions for yourself and the team, and saying positive stuff. For example, if you see a fight in the team, you can break it out by saying “come on guys, we are team, be nice to each other”. They have to lead by hyper them up like motivating (Personal Communication, 11/10/16)

The participants conceived of leadership as more than an individualized experience where they got opportunities to practice certain traits of leaders on their team and try to reach certain goals and outcomes. For them, leadership was a team-oriented endeavor where leaders’ actions were for the good of their team development, rather than individual. They argued that being a leader meant making right decisions, acting responsibly, being respectful and trustful in one’s own life, stepping up to help the team reach a goal, learning from mistakes, and removing oneself from the attention and allowing others to practice their own leadership. Therefore, the participants concluded that a leader was someone who was primarily concerned with members of the team, and acted in the interest of the team’s goals and needs. They warned about selfish behaviors and argued that a leader was not someone who was leading the team for personal reasons or let their own individual goals interfere with the goals of the team. So, a leader should think about the team that he is representing and envision his role as helping other people.

The participants’ statements clarified that they paid a great deal of attention to dispositions, skills, and development of the leader. They agreed that the best leaders bring out the best in their teammates. Instead of being all about themselves, their stats, and their individual success, they consciously connect with their teammates to help them take it to a higher level. Furthermore, leaders are one of the team’s hardest workers. If they were not, they probably

would not have the full respect of their team and would surely dilute the team's work ethic and culture. They further believed that leaders encourage their teammates to work hard, build their confidence, promote friendship, and keep going when times are tough. For the participants, leaders also create a positive atmosphere around their team because they look to build on people's strengths rather than harping on their weaknesses.

4.4 Similarities and Differences across Microlevel and Macrolevel Analyses

Five major themes emerged across the microlevel (individual) and macrolevel (group) analyses: (a) immigration, (b) challenges in the new country, (c) facilitators in the new country, (d) sport participation, and (e) leadership. While these themes and their related attributes were consistent in both the microlevel and macrolevel analyses, there were some differences in indicators between the two levels of analysis.

With regard to the understanding the reasons for immigration, there were two common indicators were (a) war and (b) family. While war and family appeared in both levels of analysis, education and job opportunity were only present in the microlevel analysis because participants seemed reluctant to discuss issues in the group setting.

At the microlevel, indicators for sociocultural challenges in the new country included (a) language, (b) cultural shock, (c) lack of social interaction, (d) discrimination, lack of father in the home, and (e) safety. Indicators for economic challenges at the microlevel were: (a) lack of job opportunities, (b) lack of food, and (c) transportation. At the macrolevel, however, indicators for sociocultural and economic challenges only included: (a) language, (b) cultural shock, (c) safety, and (d) transportation.

While challenges reflected participants' experiences they faced in adapting to the new country, the theme of facilitators in the new country concerned mediators who played essential

roles in participants' adaptation progress as well as their participation in sports. A comparison of the microlevel and macrolevel analyses of sociocultural and socioeconomic facilitators in the new country yielded three common indicators (a) coaches, (b) family, and (c) peers/teammates. The indicators of neighbors and social services were only emphasized in microlevel analysis.

Concerning the theme of sport participation, the participants' individual experiences were echoed in the group interview. The common indicators of the comparison of sociocultural and economic factors related to sport participation were (a) social interaction, (b) potential for future career, (c) physical activity/health benefits, and (d) potential to attain scholarships. However, indicators of competition and recognition and potential for a professional career to make money were only discussed at the microlevel. In both interviews, the participants discussed on how sport participation gave them an opportunity to interact, learn, practice, and develop personally and socially while having fun and playing games and activities.

Regarding the leadership theme, (a) caring, (b) respect and trust, (c) confidence, (d) humility, and (e) responsibility/accountability, were common indicators for leadership dispositions in both analyses. Indicators for leadership skills included (a) communication and (b) ability to serve as a role model across both levels of analysis; the indicator of technical and tactical sport skill only appeared at the microlevel analysis. Participants reflected on the meaning of the leadership, characteristics of the leaders, and how leadership is formed and developed in people. They believed that leadership dispositions and skills can be learned and developed very well through sport participation.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

In the last two decades, much research has focused on youth development in sport; this research has addressed valuable models and recommendations for needs in program development, evaluation, and implementation to serve youth (Hammond-Diedrich & Walsh, 2006; Hellison et al., 2008; Holt & Jones, 2008; Jones et al., 2011; Lerner et al., 2005; Madsen, Hicks, & Thompson, 2011; Martinek & Lee, 2012; Petitpas et al., 2008; Walsh, 2008). Furthermore, a lot of the literature has focused on issues related to the adaptation of immigrants as well as the role of sport participation in immigrant communities (Aizlewood et al., 2006; Berry, 2005; Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Olliff, 2008; Spaaij, 2012; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004; Stodolska & Livengood, 2006). However, little previous research provides an understanding of youth leadership development in immigrant communities.

Utilizing the leadership identity development (LID) model, this study explored how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sport participation. The qualitative instrumental case study methodology chosen for this study included two individual interviews with each of the 15 immigrant youth and one group interview at the end. Participants were from nine different countries, were an average age of 15 years old, and played sports in the last three years.

Detailed findings of this study were presented in the previous chapter. These findings in relation to (a) the research questions that guided this study and (b) existing literature are explored further in this chapter. This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section an alignment of results with the research questions is presented. Implications for practice and scholarship is

the focus of the second section. While the recommendations for further research are presented in the third section, the last section presents a conclusion.

5.1 Alignment of Results with Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. How do immigrant youth describe the reasons for leaving their home country and their adaptation in the new country?
2. How do immigrant youth describe their experiences in sports participation?
3. What are the perceptions of immigrant youth about leadership?
4. How do immigrant youth connect their participation in sports to the stages in their development of a leadership identity?

5.1.1 RQ 1: Reasons for leaving home country and challenges in new country. The findings of the study showed that immigrant youth had similar reasons for leaving their home country and faced similar experiences in adapting to the new country. Their primary reasons for leaving the home country were: war and family. Almost all of the participants reported that due to unlawful activities, corrupt justice systems, and day-to-day political turmoil related to war in their home countries, they were forced to find safer places in nearby countries before finally immigrating to the U.S. A 2016 United Nations' report stated that war remains the biggest reason for immigrants to leave their home countries. Participants also reported that they came to the new country to reunite with family members who left their country earlier to work and provide financial support for their family back home. These findings align with previous research that pointed out the debilitating effects family disruption has on immigrant youth (Coventry, 2002; Schleifer & Ngo, 2005).

In adapting to the new country, the immigrant youth and their families had some sociocultural challenges, but they also had some support in terms of social facilitators. The main sociocultural challenges they faced in the new country were language, cultural shock, and safety. These findings are consistent with previous studies that show language is most challenging in the first few years, resulting in reduced opportunities for immigrants to get a decent job or a good education (Chatty, 2007; Coventry, 2002; Garrett, 2006; (Chatty, 2007; Coventry, 2002; Garrett, 2006; Nunez, 2014). In addition, the immigrant youth experienced cultural shock during the first few years in the new country. From grocery stores to classroom settings to sport participation, not knowing the rules of the games and not understanding the norms of the mainstream society were so frustrating for them. Stern, Seifert, and Vitiello (2008) explained that if immigrants experience severe cultural shock, they are less likely to participate in activities and take advantage of established cultural organizations. They show high cultural engagement in their community, but low formal participation in organized events in the mainstream society. It was also evident in the current study that most of the participants lived in neighborhoods where sociocultural and economic hardships are felt the most. Safety in the neighborhood in which they settled was a major concern for many of the immigrant youth, resulting in limited social interaction and physical activities with others in the neighborhood. This finding is consistent with results reported by Garrett (2006) and Spaaij (2012); their studies showed that because newcomer immigrant youth are hesitant and scared in a new society at the beginning of their settlement, they lack social interaction and participation in sport and recreational activities.

The youth in this study and their families also faced economic challenges in adapting to the new country. A primary economic challenge was transportation, which severely affected their sport participation. This is discussed in detail in the next section. In addition to challenges, the

immigrant youth also talked about social facilitators that eased their adaption, especially in terms of sport participation. These included coaches, family, and peers/teammates. These facilitators are also discussed in the next section.

5.1.2 RQ 2: Immigrant youth experiences in sport participation. Some of the challenges they faced in the new country did affect the sport participation of immigrant youth. While challenges such as cultural shock and safety were significantly present, my study showed that language and transportation were the most common challenges that affected the immigrant youth's sport participation. This information is consistent with findings in previous research that showed limited resources and lack of facilities make the immigrant youth's sport participation very challenging in the communities or organized sport programs (Aizlewood et al., 2006; Olliff, 2008; Stodolska & Alexandris, 2004). My study revealed that although the participants had a similar experience, they were still able to overcome most of challenges and showed a strong desire to take part in athletic activities if opportunities and support were provided. This finding reflects results from previous studies. For instance, according to Goodman and Gawad (2004), youth benefit most if the organization provides them with physical and psychological safety; appropriate structure; supportive relationships; opportunity to belong; positive social norms; support for efficacy and mattering; and opportunity to skill building, integration of family, school and community.

After immigrants arrive and settle in the new country, facilitators played a significant role in connecting and inspiring them to participate in sport activities. Coaches, family members, and teammates/peers, were the key facilitators who influenced and motivated the immigrant youth to participate in sports. As a result of the nature of the coach-player relationship, coaches play a critical role in immigrant youth' sport participation and development (Nesbitt & Grant, 2015).

While coaches guide and teach immigrant youth technical and tactical aspects of the sport, they also serve as mentors and role models. According to Nesbitt and Grant (2015), coaches help immigrant youth learn about the new culture; they facilitate a faster adaptation by providing a welcoming sport atmosphere and building a bridge between immigrant youth and their sport participation. This was evident in my study; participants reported that coaches facilitated social interaction, built bridges of friendship among members of the team, and encouraged them to meet new people from different cultures. The coaches also inspired them to move into mainstream society for their own good, so that common goals could be achieved. This finding is further supported by Erickson, Wilson, Horton, Young, and Côté (2007) who pointed out that through sports, coaches can provide a safe environment for youth where they (a) teach them teamwork and character development skills and (b) help them with social and personal development.

This study also showed that the sport participation of immigrant youth is positively influenced by (a) the athletic background of family members and (b) their peer/teammates, resulting in the maintenance of sustainable participation in sports activities among the immigrant communities. This is consistent with the findings reported by Olliff (2008) and Spaaij (2015) who argued that sport participation is significantly correlated with peer/teammate's support and encouragement. Olliff (2008) also found that lack of parental/guardian support was a mediating barrier for sport participation of immigrant youth. This study seems to expand Olliff's finding, in that participants pointed to support from their families as a facilitator, not a barrier.

Participants in this study reported several sociocultural factors and economic factors that motivated them to participate in sports. The primary factors were social interaction, physical activity/health benefits, potential for scholarships, and potential to make money through a professional career. The immigrant youth participated in sports because they saw it as a fun

activity and opportunity to interact with others in an enjoyable way. In addition, they were highly motivated to go to college and obtain a good education, thereby making a better life for themselves or their family. Getting a scholarship through sport participation was important because they considered higher education as one path out of poverty. Another important pathway that they identified was making money as a professional athlete. Consequently, the findings from this study are consistent with previous research that found participation in sports has a positive effect on immigrant youth' adjustment and acculturation in the new country; their social and personal development is influenced by the level of their participation in sports at the school, club or neighborhood (Aizlewood et al., 2006; Coventry, 2002; Kennett, 2005).

5.1.3 RQ 3: Immigrant youth's perceptions about leadership. This study showed that immigrant youth see leadership as a complex, multifaceted concept with two dimensions: leadership dispositions and leadership skills. Most of the participants understood leadership as a collective process rather than an individual set of skills or characteristics; a collective process that requires strong dispositions and skills such as caring, respect, trust, accountability and responsibility, good communication, and role modeling. The participants perceived that development of leadership dispositions and skills benefitted their team-oriented goals. As a result, the participants' understanding of leadership aligned with Northouse (2010) definition of leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.

The immigrant youth conceptualized their roles as leaders as holding themselves responsible for their actions and activities on their team and in their community. They saw leadership through sport participation as a way to be a change agent, especially inspiring the new generations in their family and communities. These findings are consistent with Franko's (2015)

research on leadership; he described leadership as a readiness for taking on new challenges and making an impact in one's surroundings by making decisions toward big-picture leadership goals in a multifaceted approach.

Yet, some of the participants were wrestling with what leadership meant to them, especially since the adults in their lives, such as coaches, regularly encouraged them to develop their leadership potential. Hellison et al. (2008) highlighted the difficulty of preparing youth for leadership if they are from low socioeconomic and marginalized communities. The current study showed that some of the participants struggled with the meaning of leadership because they were from such families and communities.

The participants were given opportunities to practice different leadership dispositions that included caring, respect and trust, humility, and responsibility and accountability. This occurred through building effective friendships among the team members. It was obvious that strong relationships were established in a caring manner. For instance, participants indicated that they frequently communicated on and off the field because they cared about each other. Furthermore, they connected through a variety of means, including texting and social media. Such social bonding through sport participation allowed them to gain trust and be mutually respectful. In addition, participants emphasized the importance of being humble as well as accountable for their actions, on and off the field. They knew it was not possible to have a successful team without caring, respect, trust, humility, and responsibility. These findings are consistent with previous research that purported that youth can develop leadership dispositions and can learn social and personal responsibility through sport participation (Hellison, 2003; Jones et al., 2011; Martinek & Hellison, 2009a, 2009c; Petitpas et al., 2008).

My study also revealed that participants had the opportunity to apply their leadership skills in a real-world context through sport participation. They were involved in dynamic, fast-paced athletic activities during practices and games; this required them to use multiple leadership skills, including developing critical and analytical skills as well as tactical and technical skills by taking direct action. They particularly valued good communication skills as critical for their leadership as well as their team's success. They expressed that they had to critically assess the information they received from coaches and teammates and be able to translate the information among them, through different and effective ways of communication.

In addition, the current study showed that the participants knew that socializing, partying, and involvement in illegal activities were no longer priorities for them. Instead, modeling positive behaviors was one of their priorities on the team, in schools, and in their communities. Expectations of the coaches and parents for the participants required them to be more organized and responsible and be their own chance agent. They indicated that role modeling was a strong leadership skill. These findings are consistent with previous research (Hellison, 2011; Hellison et al., 2008; Lerner, 2005; Martinek et al., 2006). According to Hellison (2011), youth gain valuable lessons through sport participation such as respecting others, control one's negative emotion, resolving conflict easily, achieving self and social responsibility goals. Through sport participation, participants learn how to transfer learned life skills from physical activity to other domains.

The immigrant youth in this study knew that playing sports and being a team leader required substantial sacrifices such as time and discipline. The participants often felt different from their peers because of heightened sociocultural awareness, commitment to sport participation, and future goals. They were proud of their accomplishments and knew that their

sacrifices would ultimately serve them and their communities--financially and socially in the future. Through encouragement and support in sports, the participants acted more seriously and responsibly; felt they belonged to something; and they were appreciative of opportunities for development of a leadership identity through the practice of leadership dispositions and skills.

5.1.4 RQ 4: Connection of sport participation to stages in development of a leadership identity. It was apparent that the participants were developing a leadership identity through sport participation. The development of a leadership identity is a dynamic process that is related to the youth development process and the level of involvement in group activities (Komives et al, 2005; Komives et al., 2006). The participants, as a single case, demonstrated they had moved through the first four stages of the LID model. While the macroanalysis showed that the participants, as one case, moved through the first four stages, there was some within case variability—all were in stages 1 and 2, some were in stage 3, and a few were in stage 4. However, it was not within the scope of this study to analyze each individual as a case, so the following discussion will focus on the group as the case. I will first review the main points of each stage as espoused by Komives et al. (2006). After reviewing the main points, I will connect the immigrant youth from this study to each stage. This discussion will focus on the case (group), not individual youth.

Stage 1, *awareness*, involves being aware that there are leaders around you, external to self (Komives et al., 2006). There is a recognition that leaders exist and those people are generally adults, such as an athletic coach or teacher. Youth are uninvolved followers at this stage. They demonstrate behaviors that are associated with seeking friendship and affirmation and express feelings such as “I am not a leader” or “I do not have the capacity to influence others.” The participants in this study certainly demonstrated awareness of leaders around them, including their coaches and even adult members of their family. While they were followers who

sought friendships and affirmation, they also saw themselves as leaders with particular dispositions and skills.

In Stage 2 of the LID model, *exploration/engagement*, youth often have an interest in making a difference in the collective group setting, so they pursue taking on more responsibility and begin to see the leadership skills they need to develop (Komives et al., 2006). Youth are motivated by friendship and belonging as well as encouragement from peers. They get involved in a variety of activities, developing personal skills and abilities; and demonstrate behaviors that are associated with building confidence. This stage emphasizes the intentional participation in group activities to learn and engage with others. In this stage youth may begin to see themselves as a leader and have a desire to do more to make a difference. It was clear that participants in this study had experienced Stage 2 through their participation in the sports, which was a collective group setting. They identified confidence, responsibility, and accountability as leadership dispositions which they possessed. They talked about how friendships among team members helped them develop leader dispositions of caring, respect, and trust. They expressed how sport participation also helped them develop leadership skills. According to research (Hall, 2015; Komives et al., 2006), youth go through Stage 1 and 2 during elementary and middle school since they see examples of leadership around them such teacher and coaches, and have an interest in collective process and taking responsibility, as well as encouragement from peers. This supports that all of the participants in this study were in the first two LID stages.

The collective process began in Stage 2 becomes more important when youth move on to Stage 3, *leader identified*. In the Stage 3, the focus of leadership is on a person in a formal position. In this stage, leadership is seen as a positional role held by self or others, recognizing the hierarchical nature of relationships in the group (Komives et al., 2006). In this stage, groups are observed to have clearly distinguishable leaders and followers, based on whether a person

holds a formal leadership position. At this level, participants are more willing to be part of groups they choose to join, and get more specific in selecting a group by narrowing down their interests. This stage is particularly important because of the emphasis on accepting differences while developing interpersonal skills and a shift in consciousness about others, causing youth to change their view of leadership. The participants in this study had intentionally chosen to play soccer in a sport club. They talked about the nature of leaders and followers on teams. While most of them identified as having been a positional leader (i.e., team captain) on the current team or past teams, they also understood that sometimes they had to be in the role of follower. Their discussion of leader dispositions and skills showed that they were developing a complex and multifaceted concept of leadership.

Research shows that some youth who are involved in group activities and teamwork develop better leadership skills, and they fall under Stage 4, *leadership differentiated*, which refers to views of non-positional leadership and leadership as a shared group process (Komives et al., 2005; Komives et al., 2006). In addition, according to Hall (2015), a key transition in the LID model is the shift from Stage 3 to Stage 4 because individuals making this transition understand that (a) people in the group are interdependent on each other and (b) leadership is a group process, where a leader needs to shift his or her focus to ensure that the entire membership is actively involved in the group's activities. While in Stage 4, individuals recognize the difference between being a leader and holding a leadership position. They realize that everyone in the group depends on everyone else; leadership is a process not a position, and anyone can make a difference in the group whether they have a leadership position or not.

So, considering (a) the characteristics of Stage 3 (the focus of leadership is on a person in a formal position.) and Stage 4 (views of non-positional leadership and leadership as a shared group process), (b) the fact that participants in this study had intentionally chosen to play sports, and (c) the

level of sport participation in the group, it was evident in the current study that most of the participants were in Stage 3 while a few were still in stage 4. For example, while most of them had held the position of team captain on their current team or past team, they saw being a leader as going beyond the position of team captain. It was critically important for them to be willing to help others and the coach without being asked. Those who had a positional role on the team shared the responsibility and encouraged others to participate; those who did not have positional role always sought a way to contribute to the group process. So, the leadership dispositions and skills they gained through sport participation aligned with the Stage 4 notion that leadership is a process not a position, involving collective work where everyone in the group depends on everyone else.

During Stage 3 and Stage 4, the participants developed useful dispositions and skills that not only had an effect on their team's success, but also shaped their viewpoints on life and their future goals in life. For the participants in this study, the development of a leadership identity was transformed from an individualistic process (awareness) to a collective process (shared leadership) through sport participation. So, involvement in a collective sport setting had a profound social and personal impact on the immigrant youth, moving them through the stages in developing a leadership identity.

While the Komives et al. LID model originally provided rich a conceptualization of leadership identity development for college students, it fell short in explaining what kind of experiences people from different ethnic and cultural background may have during this process. Because their 2005 study had only one participant, out of 13, with an immigrant background, Komives et al. (2005) failed to provide any specific information regarding how people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds might experience the development of a leadership

identity. However, some of the findings that emerged from my study do support their 2006 model; this model emerged from their 2005 study. Participants in this current study identified factors that contributed to their development of a leadership identity that in many ways echoed with Komives et al. (2005) illustration of the developmental model their participants experienced. For instance, similar to their findings, the participants in my study identified role models and family members that contributed to their understanding of themselves as leaders as well as wanting to impact positive changes in their role as a leader. Overall, my findings do not contradict prior studies on youth development in sport and implications of the LID model; rather these findings affirm what other studies indicated – sport participation has a positive impact on youth development as well as the development of a leadership identity for immigrant youth.

5.2 Implications for Practice and Scholarship

The findings from this study can inform schools, community-based organizations, and youth sport clubs that provide youth development programs for immigrants. This study highlighted some potential of immigrant youth that needs to be tapped into. Even though these youth are from undereducated and underserved immigrant communities, they still want to contribute to the U.S. society and make it a better place for all living here. These highly achieving immigrant youth have diverse backgrounds and can make valuable contributions by bringing multicultural perspectives to the different environments in which they participate, including schools and sport teams.

This study showed the potential for immigrant youth to develop critical sociocultural awareness in the new country, through sport participation. Such awareness helps immigrant youth smoothly transition from their previous tough life to the new life in the new country. They just need opportunities to develop a leadership identity and practice leadership skills under the

supervision of adults, or with more experienced peers to guide them through this learning process. As with participants in my study, sport participation can help immigrant youth (a) develop a range of skills and competences, (b) increase their confidence in social interactions, (c) set goals for the future, (d) serve as role models, and (e) be the change agent in their family and communities as they develop a leadership identity.

My study can make a valuable contribution to the literature on immigrant youth by providing valuable information about their challenges and potential. While these youth face many challenges, they look for opportunities to adapt, adjust, and improvise in the new country. They have the capacity and desire to have a positive impact and influence the new generations on their sport teams, in their communities, and in schools.

In addition, this study also contributes to the literature on stages of youth leadership identity through utilization of the LID model. Because previous studies that used the LID model mostly focused on the leadership identity development of college students (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Hall, 2015; Komives, 2011; Odom et al., 2012; Wagner, 2011), this study can add new knowledge to the literature to better understand the stages of the LID model in other domains, especially for secondary education. With a better understanding of the LID model, I hope that this study can also help practitioners that deal with immigrant youth rethink the needs of immigrants and provide them with the necessary tools to develop leadership skills and dispositions.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

Further research on immigrant youth leadership development could focus on observing various ways that immigrant youth take direct action in their physical activities at home, school, and community. It would be useful for researchers to directly observe and study how immigrant

youth are taking part in sport involvement as well as their adaptation process in overcoming challenges. This would allow for a deeper understanding of how immigrant youth pursue adaptation in the new country as well as their leadership in sports. Participants in this study were from only one sport setting, soccer, and they were all males. Additional research is needed regarding how youth in different sport settings and from different gender, religious, racial/ethnic, and cultural backgrounds can pursue a leadership identity through sport participation.

In addition, in order to get a broader understanding of leadership identity development in youth, further research using quantitative methodology is needed. A quantitative study with large samples would provide a more generalizable perspective on the process of leadership identity development and understanding on how immigrant youth overcome challenges through in sport participation. Furthermore, many of the studies that have used the LID model as a theoretical or conceptual framework were conducted on college students. My study provided valuable information in understanding the process of leadership identity development by using the LID model at a younger age. However, because this study was limited to immigrant youth, further research is needed to better understand the developmental stages of leadership identity for youth in general during secondary education, especially youth who play sports.

Moreover, it was not within the scope of this research to explore how community-based and non-profit youth sport organizations deal with the immigrant youth and how they help immigrant youth in their adaptation process and development of a leadership identity. It would be worthwhile for researchers to conduct a study to better understand the impact of these youth sport programs on immigrant youth's leadership identity. Similarly, even though the impact of the coaches on the participants was briefly reported in this study, further research is needed to

get a broader understanding of how coaches who deal with immigrant youth in sports help them shape their leadership identity.

Finally, In order to get deeper understanding of sport participation on the development of leadership identity, as a follow-up study a multiple case study with fewer participants is needed. This multiple case study would yield more robustness to the conclusions from the study to see the impact of the sport participation on developing a leadership identity for the long term and to see how the participants move through the stages of the LID model.

5.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sport participation. This topic was chosen because much research has been conducted from the perspective of youth development programs, but there is not enough research available from a youth point of view, especially immigrant youth. With the current focus on dealing with challenges that immigrant youth face in a new country, it is important to look at the process of immigrant youth leadership identity development. The LID model offers a comprehensive approach to guiding organized youth sport clubs and community-based youth organizations in supporting immigrant youth in their development of a leadership identity.

Findings from this study revealed that growing numbers of immigrant youth are trying to participate in individual or team sports; this participation affects them socially, mentally, and physically even though they face numerous challenges in their communities, homes, and schools. Though a difficult and complicated developmental process, these immigrant youth can learn to be leaders and change agents in their own lives and the lives of others. Facilitators such as coaches play critical roles in immigrant youths' adaptation process in a new county, their sport participation, and development of leadership dispositions and skills. For the participants in this

study, sport participation was valuable and important for practicing a variety of leadership dispositions and skills in developing a leadership identity.

Furthermore, during the emigration and immigration process, most immigrant and refugee youth encounter life changing circumstances that although not intended, they may have helped to create leadership skills and dispositions that prepare them to acculturate into their unfamiliar environment. In certain settings during this transition, youth are forced to learn critical skills such as decision making, team work, resiliency, thus contributing and reinforcing their leadership skills. So, experiences they gained during these hard times may have helped them developed leadership dispositions and skill as well.

As an immigrant and scholar, this study had a profound impact on my understanding of how youth develop a leadership identity through sport participation. I have experienced the effect of sport participation on my personal and professional development as well as my leadership in the community and work environments. However, this study gave me an opportunity to develop further as a scholar through comprehensive research related to sport, an area that I love to explore. Furthermore, it allowed me to stretch my understanding of leadership development further exploring my curiosity about how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sport participation. This study helped me to better understand how leadership learning experiences through sport participation can positively impact the social and personal growth of immigrant youth.

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Appendix A Parent Consent Form

IRB # : 16-0040

Study Title: An Exploration of How Immigrant Youth Develop a Leadership Identity Through Sports Participation

Principal Researcher: Adem Kaya

Consent Form for Parents/Legal Guardians of Participants

Title of the Study: An exploration of how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sports participation.

What is the purpose of this research study? The purpose of this study is to *explore how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sports participation.*

What will your child be asked to do? Your child is being asked to complete three semi-structured interviews regarding his/her participation in sports and how this participation affects his or her leadership identity. The third interview is a group interview. Each interview will take approximately 30 to 60 minutes to complete. The interviews will be conducted over a three-week period.

Will the interview be recorded? Yes, the interviews will be audio recorded. After transcribing the recordings with a pseudonym, all the recordings will be destroyed after 6 months.

Who is doing the study? The person in charge of this project is Adem Kaya, graduate (doctoral) student in Leadership Studies at North Carolina A&T State University. He is under the supervision of Dr. Ceola Ross Baber, professor in the Department of Leadership Studies at North Carolina A&T State University.

What are the possible risks? There are no apparent risks for your child to participate in this study.

What are the benefits of this study? The results from this study will help us to understand student-athletes (with immigrant backgrounds) regarding the impact of sport participation on their leadership identity development.

Who will see the information your child gives? Your child's responses to the individual interviews will be kept strictly confidential and not shared with anyone outside of the research team. In addition, your child will not be identified in publications that may result from this research. For the group interview, we cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality because we cannot control what group members may share with others outside of the group; we will ask that everyone in the group keep what is said confidential, but this cannot be assured.

Do you have to take part in the project? It is completely fine for your child to participate or not to participate. It is up to you and him or her. If your child decides to take part in the project, he or she can still decide at any time that he or she no longer wants to continue. He or she will not be treated differently if he/she decides to stop taking part in the project.

What if you/your child have questions? If you or your child has questions about the project, please feel free to contact the investigator, Adem Kaya at 704-737-3309 or email akaya@aggies.ncat.edu, my advisor, Dr. Ceola Ross Baber at [336.285.4363](tel:3362854363), email: crbabar@ncat.edu. We will provide a copy of this consent form for your records if you wish. If you have questions about your child's rights as a participant in research, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance and Ethics at North Carolina A&T State University at 336-285-2961.

I give my agreement for my child to take part in this research project and have the interviews audio recorded.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Printed name of Parent/Guardian

Printed name of Child



Appendix B Participant Consent Form

IRB # : 16-0040

Study Title: An Exploration of How Immigrant Youth Develop a Leadership Identity Through Sports Participation

Principal Researcher: Adem Kaya

Student Assent Form

Hi! My name is Adem Kaya; I am a graduate student in Leadership Studies at North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro. I am working on research and would like to invite you to take part in the study about how immigrant youth develop a leadership identity through sports participation. If you decide that you want to participate, you will be asked to answer some interview questions during three interviews; each interview will 30 to 60 minutes to complete. One of the interviews will be group interview and each interview will be audio recorded.

Your parent (or legal guardian) has already said that it was okay for you to answer these interview questions about your sports participation, but you do not have to answer them if you do not want to. If you decide to answer the questions, but do not want to answer certain questions, that is okay. If you decide to start answering interview questions and then decide to stop, that is okay too. If you do not want to answer questions in the interview, no one will treat you differently.

Your responses will be seen only by the people conducting the study. None of the questions will have your name on them and you will not be identified in any written materials. You can ask questions now or while you are taking part in the interviews.

If you have questions after completing the interviews, you can contact the investigator, Adem Kaya at 704-737-3309 or email adem332@gmail.com, or my advisor, Dr. Ceola Ross Baber at [336-285-4363](tel:336-285-4363), her email: crbabar@ncat.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research study participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance and Ethics at North Carolina A&T State University at 336-285-2961.

I have read the above and agree to be in this study and have the interviews audio recorded.

Your Signature

Print Your Name

Date



Appendix C Individual Interview Protocol

Interview Questionnaire

Introduction	In the beginning of the very first interview, as outlined by the IRB each participant will be made aware in writing of the purpose of the study, any expected benefits to those who participate, the protection of confidentiality of the participants, the procedures to be used for data collection and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. As well, all consent forms will be signed and secured. Each interview will begin with a brief re-introduction of myself, a repeat of the goals of my research study, the purpose of the study, and an outline of what the participant may expect to be discussed.
First Individual Interview Background and Sports Participation (30-60 Minutes)	Questions/Prompts ... <i>Let's begin with you telling me about yourself...</i> How old are you? What grade are you in? When did you and your family come to the United States What was your home country—the country you left to come to the U.S.? Why did you leave your home country? What are some of your experiences as a refugee or immigrant? What's your family like? What kind of neighborhood do you live in? What schools have you attended? Is there anything else about yourself that you would like me to know? <i>Now, let's talk about your participation in sports....</i> How long have you participated in sports since coming to the United States? What kind of sports have you participated in? Why did you decide to participate in sports? What are some things that you like about participating in sports? What are some things that you don't like about participating in sports? Is there anything else you want to tell me about your participation in sports?
Second Individual Interview Perceptions of How Sports Participation Helps Leadership Identity (30-60 Minutes)	Questions/Prompts <i>Let's talk about leadership</i> What do you think leadership means? How do you think people become leaders? <i>Now, let's talk about sports and leadership...</i> Do you think your participation in sports helps you better understand what it means to be a leader? In what ways? Do you think your participation in sports gives you opportunities to be or become a leader? Why or why not? Do you consider yourself to be a leader on your sports team? Why or why not? If you think of yourself as a leader on the sports team, how did you become a leader? If you do not think of yourself as leader on the sports team, how do you think you might become a leader? If you think of yourself as a leader on the sports team, in what ways do you lead your team? If you do not think of yourself as a leader on the sports team, in what ways would you like to lead your team? Is there anything else you want to tell me regarding your thoughts about leadership?
Group Interview	The group interview protocol will be developed after analysis of the individual interview data (Creswell, 2013). Initial themes discovered in the individual semi structured interviews will inform the focus of the group interviews. Once individual interview is completed, a notification will be sent to IRB for approval before proceeding with the group interview.

Figure 1. Interview Protocol



Approved: 11/2/16
Expires: 7/10/17

Appendix D Group Interview Protocol

Group Interview Protocol
North Carolina A&T State University
College of Education – Department of Leadership Studies & Adult Education
Adem Kaya - Principal Investigator

The following protocol establishes the guide for performing a semi-structured group interview. This group interview protocol was developed after analysis of the individual interview data (Creswell, 2013). Two semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with each participant; interview protocols were previously approved by IRB. In designing the interview guides for this study the investigator adapted interviewing techniques described by Seidman (2012). The first interview focused on the background and sports participation of each individual participant. The second interview focused on each participant's perceptions regarding the leadership development. The group interview focuses on the participants' shared understandings of themes (identified in the brackets after the questions/prompts) that emerged from the individual interviews. Open-ended questions will be used to initiate the discussion allowing the participants to explore and clarify their views, build on the responses of other participants, and allow the participants to guide and direct the conversation. At the beginning of the interview I will re-introduce myself and review the goals and purpose of my research study.

Group Interview (45-60 minutes) Focused on Emergent Themes	Questions/Prompts for conversation: During my individual interviews with you, all of you talked about several things related to your thoughts about immigration, sports participation, and leadership. Let's explore that some more... • Tell me some more about your family's reasons for leaving your home country and coming to the United States. [Factors affecting immigration] • What are some things that have made it hard for you to adjust? [Challenges] • What have been some things that have made it easy for you to adjust? [Facilitators] • Tell me about your reasons for participating in sports. [Motivation] • How would you describe the character of a leader? [Leadership Characteristics/Dispositions] • What kind of skills do you think leaders should have? [Leadership Skills] • How do you think leaders can be developed? [Leadership Development] Conclusion: When all topics have been discussed and the designated time for the interview is nearing the time limit, each participant will be asked if there is anything he or she would like to add to ensure participants get to share all they wish to share. <i>Thank you for your participation in this research study.</i>
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