BSc in Psychology
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The Influence of Sport Participation and Parental Involvement on Alcohol Consumption amongst Icelandic Adolescents

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SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the BSc Psychology degree, Reykjavik University, this thesis is presented in the style of an article for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

This thesis was completed in the Spring of 2020 and may therefore have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The thesis and its findings should be viewed in light of that.
Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between sport participation, organized and unorganized, and parent's involvement and alcohol consumption amongst Icelandic adolescents. Three hypothesis were tested. A cross-sectional self-report study, Youth in Iceland, was used with a sample size of 2106 Icelandic students in 8th to 10th grade in all secondary schools, 48.1% males and 50.7% females. Binary logistic regression was used for data analysis. Participating in unorganized sports is not associated with alcohol. However, participating in organized sports is associated with less likelihood of the Icelandic adolescent having ever been drunk. Icelandic adolescents who participate in organized sports and have their parents involved is associated with less likelihood of the Icelandic adolescent having ever been drunk. Future research should examine cultural differences when it comes to social organization of organized sports. Also, should focus on engaging parents who are not involved in their childrens organized sports activities. More varied choices of organized sports to reach out to more children and parents to increase participation should be discussed.

Keywords: adolescents, alcohol consumption, sports, parents

Útdráttur


Lykilór: ungmenni, áfengisneysla, íþróttir, foreldrar
The Influence of Sport Participation and Parental Involvement on Alcohol Consumption amongst Icelandic Adolescents

Heavy alcohol consumption during adolescence is associated with negative health outcomes. Young adults who did not drink alcohol during adolescence were more likely to report much less health problems than those who drank alcohol during adolescence (Oesterle et al., 2004). People who start drinking early in life are much more likely to experience alcohol abuse and drug abuse later in life (Grant et al., 2006; Hingson & Zha, 2009). In addition, every year that adolescents delay alcohol consumption from age 14-21 makes it less likely to develop alcohol related problems later in life (Hingson et al., 2006). The risk of developing alcohol related problems after the age of 21 was really low (Hingson et al., 2006). Alcohol abuse accounts for 6% of all deaths worldwide or over 3.3 million deaths every year (Sudhinaras et al., 2016) and has been linked with mental disorders such as severe depression and psychosis (Connor et al., 2016). These previous studies have shown the importance of delaying alcohol consumption and harmful effects of alcohol abuse, so it is essential to help prevent alcohol consumption of adolescents.

Iceland has delayed alcohol consumption amongst Icelandic adolescents from 1997. The prevalence of alcohol consumption amongst Icelandic adolescents declined rapidly from 1997 to 2007 (Sigfúsdóttir et al., 2008) and has continued to do so according to recent reports (Pálsdóttir et al., 2016). This decline could be due to the implementation of the Icelandic Model, which is a prevention program that emphasizes the importance of enhancing the protective factors around the individual; social surroundings, parental support, after school activities, sports participation, education, parental involvement in their children’s sports activities, parental monitoring and more (Sigfúsdóttir et al., 2008). Those factors that predict substance use in adolescents are referred to as protective and risk factors for substance use, these factors include individual and social factors (family and friends) and other factors...
around the individual’s community, such as school and sport factors (Hawkins et al., 1992). Protective factors decrease the likelihood of adolescent substance use and mediate the effects of the risk factors and risk factors increase the likelihood of adolescents substance use (Hawkins et al., 1992).

One of the factors of the Icelandic Model was engaging the adolescent’s parents in participating in their children’s sports activities. The sport participation rose from 24% in 1997 to 30% in 2006 (Sigfúsdóttir et al., 2008) and has been growing according to newest reports (Pálsdóttir et al., 2016). It seems to be a strong association between parental support and sport participation in adolescents (Baxter-Jones & Maffulli, 2003; Hoyle & Leff, 1997; Wuerth et al., 2004). The main results of the research made by Hoyle & Leff (1997) was that parental support was strongly associated with adolescent’s enjoyment of the sport. Parental support has also been linked as a predictor of alcohol use in adolescents (Barnes & Farrell, 1992). According Ryan et al. (2010) parental support was linked to decreased alcohol use later in the adolescent’s life.

Even though participating in sports is considered a protective factor according to the Icelandic Model (Sigfúsdóttir et al., 2008) there are still some questions about whether that is true. Many studies find that participating in sports is associated with increased substance use (Dawkins et al., 2006; Eitle et al., 2003; Lorente et al., 2004) and some say that participating in sports is a protective factor (Hellandsjø Bu et al., 2002; Kristjansson et al., 2010; Steingrímsdóttir, 2014). According to Lisha & Sussman (2010) participating in sports is associated with increased alcohol consumption but decreased use of cigarettes and illegal drugs.

First, the social organization of organized sports vary from country to country. Organization in youth sports in North America is more school-based whereas in other
European countries organization in youth sports is more community-focused and parent-guided (Halldorsson et al., 2014). These mixed results could be because of these differences.

Secondly, these mixed results could also be of poor understanding of what sport activities the individual participates in. In formal or organized sports there are educated coaches and more support from parents and the local community. Organized sports are often sports clubs that have a fixed curriculum. Informal or unorganized sports can be more chaotic and often take place in fitness centers (Halldorsson et al., 2014). According to Halldorsson et al. (2014), those who participate in organized sports are more protected against alcohol abuse than those who do not. Also stated, participating in unorganized sports is a risk factor for increased alcohol use amongst adolescents.

Moore & Werch (2005) conducted a study on 8th graders in Florida and according to them it is important to define what kind of sport or physical activity the individual participates in. It seems to matter if either the sports are organized by schools or if the individuals practice the sport outside of school. For girls, in-school cheerleading, gymnastics and dance were associated with decreased alcohol use, however, participating in the same sports outside of school was associated with increased risk for at least one substance. For boys, out-of-school swimming was a protective factor for heavy alcohol use, however, in-school swimming, football and wrestling were associated with increased risk for at least one substance.

As mentioned above, there are still some questions about whether participating in sports is a risk factor or a protective factor and there is substantial amount of studies that support both. The Icelandic Model emphasizes on organized sports as a protective factor and as previous studies mentioned there are differences in organized and unorganized sports regarding adolescent’s alcohol use. The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between sports participation, organized and unorganized, and parent’s participation in sports.
and alcohol consumption amongst Icelandic adolescents. Based on the literature three hypothesis were tested; (1) Adolescents who participate in organized sports are less likely to drink alcohol than those who do not participate in organized sports, (2) adolescents who participate in unorganized sports are more likely to drink alcohol than those who do not participate in unorganized sports, (3) adolescents who participate in organized sports and have parents that are involved in their organized sport activities are less likely to drink alcohol than those who participate in organized sports but do not have their parents involved.

Since research has shown that parents financial status is associated with alcohol consumption in adolescents (Hanson & Chen, 2007; Patrick et al., 2012) and participation in sports (Clark, 2008), parents financial status was used as a control variable in the data analysis. As stated above, research has indicated that there is a gender difference in alcohol consumption amongst adolescents (Moore & Werch, 2005), so the results were analyzed for the genders separately.

**Method**

**Participants**

Participants of this study were Icelandic adolescents in 8th to 10th grade who answered a questionnaire that Icelandic Center for Social Research and Analysis (ICSRA) distributed in 2016. The birth year of participants was from 1999 - 2004. Valid answers that year were 10,687 and all students, that were present when the questionnaire was distributed, were part of this study. Of those answers, 3,478 were in 8th grade, 3,507 in 9th grade and 3,572 in 10th grade and 130 were missing. The response rate that year was 86.0% (Pálsdóttir et al., 2016). A random sample of 2106 students were used in this study and in that sample, there were 710 in 8th grade, 648 in 9th grade and 720 in 10th grade. Of those 48.1% were male and 50.7% were female.
Measures

The measuring device is a thorough questionnaire for adolescents in 8th to 10th grade in Iceland that ICSRA has been developing since 1998. The questionnaire was developed by social scientist that make sure that the validity and reliability of the questionnaire is always kept. The 2016 questionnaire is 32 pages long and contains 88 questions. The questions are all in relation to various aspects of adolescents lives, for instance; education, culture, social-, sports and leisure activities, health, well-being and substance use (Pálsson et al., 2016). However, only part of the questions was used in this study and they are the following;

Parents involvement in child’s sport activities (two questions were computed together regarding parental involvement in child’s sports activities; they monitor my participation in sports, they take active part in my sports club). The questions had 5 values each, ranging from 1(never) to 5(very much). The question computed together ranged from 0 to 8 with a Cronbach’s alpha of $\alpha = .808$ and that is considered very acceptable.

Organized sports participation (How often do you practice sports (practice or compete) with a sports club?). The question had six values ranging from 1(almost never) to 6(almost every day).

Unorganized sports participation (How often do you practice sports which is neither in school activities nor with a sports club?). The question had six values ranging from 1(almost never) to 6(almost every day).

The question used as a dependent variable was; alcohol consumption (How often have you been drunk over your lifetime?). It had 7 values ranging from 1(never) to 7(40 times or more) but was computed into never and one time or often. Never had the internal value of 0 and one time or more often had the internal value of 1.
SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

The question used as a control variable was; *parents’ financial status* (four questions were computed together regarding parents’ financial situation; Your parents’ financial status is bad, Your parents’ cannot afford to own or operate a car, Your parents’ hardly have enough money to pay for necessities (e.g. food, housing, phone), Your parents’ cannot afford the type of leisure activity that you would most prefer to practice (e.g. music or sports)). The questions had five values each ranging from 1(*almost never*) to 5(*almost always*). The questions computed together ranged from 0 to 16 with Cronbach’s alpha of $\alpha = .785$ which is considered acceptable.

**Procedure**

In February of 2016 ICSRA distributed a questionnaire to all secondary schools in Iceland. This was a cross-sectional study conducted by ICSRA. The teacher was in charge of distributing the questionnaire to all students and was conducted the same day in all schools. Students were asked to answer all the questions with the best of their knowledge and ask for help if it was needed. They were instructed to neither write their name nor social security number to withhold anonymity. Every questionnaire came with an empty envelope that students were instructed to place the questionnaire there, after answering, so the answers could not be traced back to them. No participants were paid or received any credits for participating in the study (Pálsdóttir et al., 2016).

Data collection was supervised by ICSRA at Reykjavik University in cooperation with the Icelandic Minestry of Education, Science, and Culture. Procedures were approved by the Icelandic authority overseeing the protection of human research subjects.

**Data analysis**

Descriptive statistics were assessed on the study variables and correlations amongst the variables as well. In the current study a binary logistic regression was used for analysis and six models were tested. To test for significance for each model, an Omnibus test was
assessed and for goodness-of-fit, Hosmer and Lemeshow test was used. Nagelkerke R square was used to assess predictability for each model. The first three Models included organized sports participation as a predictor of alcohol use controlling for parent’s financial status. Model 1 included only male adolescents and Model 2 included only female adolescents. Model 3 included all participants and tested for main effects and interaction effects between gender and organized sports participation on alcohol use. The next three Models included parent’s participation in organized sports activities as a predictor for alcohol use controlling for parent’s financial status and only included those who reported that they participate in organized sports. Model 4 included only male adolescents and Model 5 only female adolescents. Model 6 included both genders and tested for main effects and interaction effects between gender and parental involvement in their children’s organized sports activities on alcohol use.

Unorganized sports participation was not included in the models since there was no correlation between unorganized sports and alcohol consumption amongst Icelandic adolescents.

**Results**

Out of 967 males, 861 (87.9%) answered never and 76 (7.5%) answered that they had been drunk at least once in their lifetime. Out of 1033 females, 959 (89.9%) answered never and 74 (6.9%) answered that they have been drunk at least once in their lifetime.

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the predicting variables, participation in organized sports and unorganized sports, parents’ involvement in their childrens sports activities and the control variable, parents’ financial status.
SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Table 1.

Number of participants (N), the range, Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) of the variables for males and females.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organized Sports</td>
<td>933 / 1018</td>
<td>1.00 – 6.00</td>
<td>3.30 / 3.20</td>
<td>1.99 / 1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unorganized Sports</td>
<td>929 / 1021</td>
<td>1.00 – 6.00</td>
<td>2.82 / 2.49</td>
<td>1.70 / 1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>957 / 1034</td>
<td>0.00 – 8.00</td>
<td>4.52 / 4.72</td>
<td>2.54 / 2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Status</td>
<td>971 / 1034</td>
<td>0.00 – 16.00</td>
<td>1.23 / 1.45</td>
<td>2.35 / 2.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the correlation amongst the study variables for male participants and female participants. The table reveals that there were significant relations between alcohol consumption and participation in organized sports, parents involvement in their children sports activities for both males and females and also parents financial status for both male and female participants. The correlation indicate that if Icelandic adolescents practice organized sports the less likely it is that they have ever been drunk, the same goes for parental involvement. The associations are stronger for females than males.

The correlation amongst unorganized sports participation and alcohol consumption was not significant. According to that, participating in unorganized sports does not increase the likelihood of drinking alcohol amongst adolescents. Therefore, participation in unorganized sports was not analyzed any further and left out of the models.
Table 2.

Correlation amongst study variables for males and females. Males / Females

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Alcohol Consumption</td>
<td>- / -</td>
<td>- / -</td>
<td>- / -</td>
<td>- / -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Organized Sports</td>
<td>-.072* / -.168**</td>
<td>- / -</td>
<td>- / -</td>
<td>- / -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Unorganized Sports</td>
<td>.041 / -.009</td>
<td>.349** /</td>
<td>- / -</td>
<td>- / -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Parental Involvement</td>
<td>-.126* / -.249**</td>
<td>-.566** /</td>
<td>.293** /</td>
<td>- / -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Financial Status</td>
<td>.112* / .227**</td>
<td>-.076* / -</td>
<td>-.026 / -.031</td>
<td>-.174** / -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.214**</td>
<td>.256**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows Model 1 using participation in organized sports as a predictor of alcohol consumption, controlling for parent’s financial status. Model 1 consists of only male adolescents. Model 1 has some predictive capacity since the omnibus test is statistically significant $\chi^2(2, N=904) = 16.653, p < .001$. The model explained 4.4% of the variance of the dependent variable according to Nagelkerke R square. According to the Hosmer and Lemeshow Test the model is a good fit $\chi^2(6, N=904) = 4.402, p=.622$. The b coefficient for organized sports is significant ($p = .010$) so we can assume that participation in organized sports is making a significant contribution to prediction of alcohol consumption for male adolescents. The odds ratio for organized sports participation is .840, so with every one value increase in organized sports participation the predicted odds of male adolescents having ever been drunk decreases by 16.0%.
SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Table 3.

Logistic regression model using organized sports participation as predictor of alcohol use, controlling for parents financial status. Males

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI for Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Status</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>1.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized Sports</td>
<td>-.175</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.200</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>.111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows the main results of Model 2. The omnibust test of model three is statistically significant so the model has some predictive capacity $\chi^2(3, N=995) = 54.446, p < .001$. The model explained 13.1% of the variance of the dependent variable. Hosmer and Lemeshow Test deemed it a good fit $\chi^2(7, N=995) = 10.176, p = .179$. Participation in organized sports is significantly different from zero ($p < .001$), so we can assume that participation in organized sports is making a significant contribution to prediction of alcohol consumption of female adolescents. The odds ratio of the predictor organized sports participation is .726, so with every one value increase in organized sports participation, the predicted odds of female adolescents having ever been drunk decreases by 27.4%.

Table 4.

Logistic regression model using organized sports participation as predictor of alcohol use, controlling for parents financial status. Females

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI for Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Status</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized Sports</td>
<td>-.320</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.085</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>.124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Model 3 (not shown in table) tests the interaction between gender and participation in organized sports, controlling for parents' financial status. The model has some predictive capacity since the Omnibus test is significant $\chi^2(4, N=1899) = 70.644, p < .001$. The model explained 9.0% of the variance of the dependent variable. According to the Hosmer and Lemeshow test the model is a good fit $\chi^2(8, N=1899) = 10.356, p = .241$. However, the interaction was not significantly different from zero ($p = .143$), indicating that the association between organized sports participation and alcohol consumption amongst adolescents does not differ between genders.

To test if parents' involvement in their children's sports activities is related to less alcohol use among those who participate in organized sports Model 4 and 5 was run (see Table 5 and 6) only using data from adolescents who self-reported that they participated in organized sports (598 males and 632 females).

Table 5 shows Model 4 using parental involvement in their children's organized sports activities as a predicting variable and financial status of the parents as a control variable when predicting alcohol use. Model 4 only consists of male adolescents. The omnibus test of Model 4 is statistically significant $\chi^2(2, N=580) = 15.816, p < .001$, so the model has some predictive capacity. However, according to the Hosmer and Lemeshow test the model is not a good fit $\chi^2(7, N=580) = 15.330, p = .032$. The model explained 7.2% of the variance of the dependent variable. The $b$ coefficient of parental involvement is statistically different from zero ($p = .003$), so we can assume that the predictor is making a significant contribution to prediction of alcohol consumption of male adolescents. The odds ratio of parental involvement is 0.797, so with every one value increase in parental involvement the predicted odds of male adolescents having ever been drunk decreases by 20.3%.
SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Table 5.

Logistic regression model using parental participation as predictor of alcohol use, controlling for parents financial status. Males who participate in organized sports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI for Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Status</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>1.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>-.227</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.759</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>.172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows the main results of Model 5, which only consists of female adolescents. Model 5 has some predictive capacity since the Omnibus test is statistically significant $\chi^2(2, N=619) = 36.224, p < .001$. According to Nagelkerke R square, the model explained 19.3% of the variance of the dependent variable. The Hosmer and Lemeshow test deemed the model a good fit $\chi^2(7, N=619) = 13.615, p = .058$. According to the results the coefficient of parental involvement is significant ($p < .001$), so we can assume that parental involvement is making a significant contribution to prediction of alcohol consumption of female adolescents. The odds ratio of parental involvement is .616, so with every one value increase in parental involvement the predicted odds of female adolescents having ever been drunk decreases by 38.4%

Table 6.

Logistic regression model using parental participation as predictor of alcohol use, controlling for parents financial status. Females who participate in organized sports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 5</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>95% CI for Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Status</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>-.484</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.056</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

To test the interaction between gender and the parents’ involvement in their children organized sports activities when predicting alcohol use, Model 6 (not shown in table) was run. Model 6 has some predictive capacity since the Omnibus test is significant $\chi^2(6, N=1199) = 54.468, p < .001$. The model explained 13.3% of the variance of the dependent variable. According to the Hosmer and Lemeshow test the model is a good fit $\chi^2(8, N=1199) = 13.868, p = .085$. According to the model, the interaction is statistically significant ($p = .038$). The interaction indicates that the association between parental involvement and alcohol consumption is stronger for females than males.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between sports participation, organized and unorganized, and parent’s involvement in sports and alcohol consumption amongst Icelandic adolescents. The first hypothesis stated that adolescents who participate in organized sports are less likely to drink alcohol than those who do not participate in organized sports. According to the results, the hypothesis was supported. The more adolescents who practice organized sports the likelihood of them having ever been drunk decreases. This is in accordance to some past studies (Halldorsson et al., 2014; Hellandsjø Bu et al., 2002; Steingrimsdóttir, 2014), indicating that organized sports participation is more of a protective factor than risk factor, especially here in Iceland. However, there are still mixed results from other countries, indicating that organized sports participation is considered a risk factor (Dawkins et al., 2006). That needs to be examined further. The results also indicated that the association between organized sports participation and alcohol consumption amongst adolescents did not differ between males and females. That is in accordance to past research (Kristjansson et al., 2010; Steingrimsdóttir, 2014). However, in Florida male adolescents in organized sports seem to be more at risk for increased alcohol consumption than female adolescents in organized sports (Moore & Werch, 2005). This is an even further evidence that
future research should focus on cultural differences when it comes to association between organized sports activities and alcohol consumption.

The second hypothesis stated that adolescents who participate in unorganized sports are more likely to drink alcohol than those who do not participate in unorganized sports. Since the correlation between unorganized sports participation and alcohol consumption was not significant, the hypothesis was not supported. This is not in accordance to past studies, the results from Halldorsson et al. (2014) indicated that Icelandic adolescents who participate in unorganized sports are more at risk of increased alcohol consumption than those who do not. The difference between organized and unorganized sports could be better explained for future research. Also, it may be helpful to examine the effects unorganized sports participation has on alcohol consumption on older adolescents.

The third hypothesis stated that adolescents who participate in organized sports and have parents that are involved in their organized sport activities are less likely to drink alcohol than those who participate in organized sports but do not have their parents involved. The current results supported this hypothesis by indicating that the more the parents were reported to be involved in their children’s organized sports activities the less likely it was for the adolescents to report having been drunk. As stated above, organized sport participation is a protective factor, but having the parents involved also, is according to these results, more preventive. The parent’s involvement is extremely valuable when it comes to alcohol prevention. This is in accordance to past studies, Hoyle & Leff (1997) mentioned, that parental support was strongly associated with adolescent’s enjoyment of the sport and that could be a strong factor of why the adolescents are more protected if their parents are involved. Also parental support in general has been linked with decreased alcohol consumption in adolescents (Ryan et al., 2010). Finally, the current results indicated that the association between the parent’s involvement and alcohol consumption was stronger for
females than males. This means that female adolescents are more protected by their parents involvement in their organized sports activities when predicting alcohol use. Future research should focus on explaining why it is that these effects are stronger for females than for males. Female adolescents seem to get more effective attention than male adolescents (Svensson, 2003) and male adolescents get less parental support and are less monitored than female adolescent (Kristjánsson & Sigfúsdóttir, 2009). However, there are few studies that explain why these effects are stronger for female adolescents. In addition, future research should try to find a way to engage the parents that are not participating enough in their children organized sports activities.

The biggest strengths of this study are that all the secondary schools in Iceland took part in this research, so the sample size was large and representative. Another strength of the research was that the gender ratio was pretty equal. The data collection was anonymous, and the situation was controlled. However, the present study is not without its limitations. First of all, this was a cross-sectional study, so causal conclusions cannot be drawn. Also, it relied on data that is self-reported by adolescents, so there is no way of knowing if they answered truthfully. Second, the questionnaire was long, and participants may have become tired after several pages and just want to get out and play. This could have led to dishonest answers or no answer at all. Fourth, you cannot rule out all the other possibly influential factors these adolescents started drinking, such as peer pressure (Bauman & Ennett, 1996; Sigfúsdóttir et al., 2008), poor academic achievement (Barnes & Welte, 1986; Bryant et al., 2003) or something else entirely.

For future research, it could be wise to examine the association between the same predictors and alcohol consumption on older adolescents. The likelihood of drinking onset grows after the age of 16 (Steingrimsdóttir, 2014). There are few studies about the parent’s involvement in organized sports of older adolescents or young adults (18 years and older).
SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

This is something future research could focus on. Also, in the present study, the predictors are controlled for by the parent’s financial status. Current results indicated that the lower the perceived financial status is the more likely it is for the adolescent to have become drunk. This is in accordance to some past research (Goodman & Huang, 2002). In addition, Hamilton et al. (2009) suggested that with higher family income the adolescent is more protected against harmful drinking. Also, it has been shown that sport participation is most prevalent in children that come from high-income households (Clark, 2008). To increase the likelihood that all children have access to organized sports activities, regardless of finances, the Icelandic government gave parents access to vouchers that only works for organized sports activities for their children. Past research has indicated a growth in participation in organized sports after the government started giving out these vouchers (Guðmundsson, n.d.). This is something that other countries could take into account. With financial help and finding a way to engage the parent’s involvement should engage children more in organized sports and therefore, decreasing the likelihood of adolescents drinking. Also, as stated above, these results can only be generalizable to Icelandic adolescent. The results could be different in other countries as the social organizations of organized sports are not the same everywhere. Cultural differences should therefore be taken into account when it comes to research in organized sports participation and parental involvement. Also, to reach out to more children and parents, more varied choices of organized sports could be introduced to increase participation and therefore the parent’s involvement.

To conclude, unorganized sports participation is not associated with alcohol, but organized sports participation is associated with less likelihood of the adolescent ever having been drunk. Furthermore, the results suggest that parental involvement in organized sports activities is important when it comes to delaying alcohol consumption amongst adolescents. The preventive effect from parental involvement is stronger for female adolescents than male
adolescents. Why that is, is something future research should focus on. Parents should be
engaged to encourage their children both in organized sports and other organized leisure
activity the child prefers.
References


SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION


SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

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