

Exploring The Lived Experiences Of Young *Arnisadors*: The Curricular & Co-Curricular Challenges

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Abstract— Arnis has been identified as a combative, full-contact sport in the context of the school's co-curricular activities, in which students may have acquired meaningful learning, skills, and physical well-being. This qualitative study explores the experiences of arnis players or arnisadors in their curricular and co-curricular pursuits; has utilized non-probability purposive sampling; and employed Colaizzi's seven-step phenomenological method as a reference in interpreting and formulating relevant themes that reflect the curricular and co-curricular experiences of the participants. Data collection was carried out employing interviews and observation methods. Relative themes that emerged from this study were commitment, milestones, physical development, self-discipline, realization, pride and passion, training, competition, camaraderie, support, and aspiration. Curiosity and peer influence were the main factors that led participants to join the arnis team, and the rigors of the training changed their perspective towards the fulfillment of curricular and co-curricular objectives. Significant benefits from joining Arnis have been highlighted, such as sound health, asthma healing, physical and character development, and other positive attributes have been enhanced. Their aspiration as senior practitioners would be to share the kind of discipline, advancement, and expertise they have achieved with the beginners to express gratitude to the team. Furthermore, it was revealed that the ideal peer influence would lead to something beneficial, such as an affiliation to a sport like Arnis. At the same time, the loco parentis is essential for the role modeling to student-athletes who have been successful in managing difficulties due to genuine friendship and love. And the support of teammates, coaches, family, and school.

Keywords- loco parentis, student arnis player, sportsmanship, arnis

INTRODUCTION

Co-curricular activities are those which complement the formal learning experience set out in the curriculum. They facilitate the development of different areas of mind and facets of student personality development, such as sports participation as the focus of this study, in particular, Arnis. Like other sports, Arnis can teach fair play, self-discipline, sportsmanship, and sports skills to students, according to Caballes[2]. Similarly, Carrol[3] described Arnis as striking, thrusting, parrying, and blocking techniques primarily used to score in the competition. Arnis sport develops

not only physical and mental strength but also the character of its practitioners. Roslan & Abdullah [10] affirmed that students must have a good mastery of basic motor skills. DECS Order No.58 S.1990 initially included Arnis in the Philippine Physical Education and School Sports Program[5] until the R.A. 9850 in 2009 was signed into law by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, which declared Arnis as the National Martial Art and Sport of the Philippines.[12] The Department of Education (DepEd), the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) shall lay down the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of the provisions of this Act according to Yap[18].

Likewise, Martin & Santos[9] maintained that the declaration of Arnis as a national sport would impact education, promotion, and propagation of R.A. 9850 in the broadest perspective. Since then, Arnis became a popular sport in different schools due to its various advantages and uniqueness. From local to regional sports events, young arnisadors from all over the country would come and play, once in a year, in the Palarong Pambansa from which the winning athletes from different sports events, including Arnis, would emerge and have the potential to compete in the international level. Student-athletes competing in Pambansa Palarong are the best players who represent their respective regions. The student-athletes who fulfilled the series of competitions from the school intramural up to the national level, and whose character and self-determination to win for their ambition in life have forged with self-discipline and hard work. Arnis or Eskrima is an indigenous and only traditional sport of which origin is classified as Filipino.

In the portals of history, Arnis had long been part of the Philippines' culture and tradition, a long way back to, during, and beyond the time of Datu Lapulapu. According to some accounts, Arnis was the art of defense and physical development of the poor man or the commoners, who may have lacked formal education but were very proud of their expertise. In modern times, the mastery of Arnis that had been developed by the masters for years has yet to be instilled in the hearts and minds of the new breed of young practitioners along with the sense of dedication, self-esteem, respect for tradition and authority, self-control, focus, perseverance, character, and strong will, as ideally described by Cynarski[1]. Furthermore, Rogowska & Kuśnierz[13] emphasize knowledge, which is significantly related to the favorable attitude of discipline towards full-contact sports. Constant practice reduces misbehavior and aggression. In addition, Al Pelgone, the National President of the Department of Education Arnis Association of the Philippines (DEAAP), clarified that the integration of Arnis in the Philippine schools is indispensable because it would bring awareness to students the recognition and appreciation to Arnis as national martial art and sport, Fabrero[7].

Objective

This qualitative research explores and highlights the valuable experience and challenges of former student-athletes in curricular and co-curricular activities; and seeks to raise awareness of Arnis as a national sport that has a remarkable impact on its practitioners, as one of the blueprints for coaches in dealing with their athletes, and as a significant outlet for character building, and perhaps self-perfection. A Filipino martial art, lethal and intended for self-protection and self-preservation; however, Arnis is generally discussed in this study as a sport.

METHOD

Research Design

Phenomenology inquiry studies the everyday life experiences of people from all walks of life. This research study aimed to revisit and explore the experiences of young people who have

specialized in Arnis, a combative full-contact sport, and whose determination and spirit forged through training struggles, successes, and failures as athletes. Colaizzi's method was used along with a qualitative-phenomenological approach. The research design and direction were actualized on a semi-structured questionnaire that contains key questions used in group interviews to understand the elaboration of experiences:

1. Why did you join the Arnis club as a student with academic commitments?
2. How did you balance the fulcrum of being both a student and a player of Arnis?
3. How did the essence of the sport impact you as an Arnisador/Arnis player?
4. What were your rewards, failures, lessons, learning experiences from the sport?
5. In the face of obstacles and pressure, what pushed you to strive high as an athlete?

The study adhered to the ethical considerations set out in the Belmont Report of 1974, highlighting the unifying ethical principles of research involving human subjects. First in line is the respect for persons, which means to protect the autonomy and consent of all persons. Second, beneficence means maintaining the safety and well-being of people in the course of research. Finally, justice gives assurance that the subjects would not be exploited in the context of a well-tailored research procedure being administered.

Participants

Participants (male, n=5; female, n=3) whose age ranged is between 17-20 years old were selected based on a non-probability purposive sampling approach based on the criteria of being in their legal age and at least have been regional arnis players starting in 2013 during high school, and still current arnis practitioners or junior arnis instructors. Participation in this study was voluntary concerning individuals, considered participants, and data sources. Most of all, the participants were reasonably aware of the study's purpose and direction in general. The researchers were confident that the participants would be able to provide sufficient data based on maturity and continued inclination to the sport of Arnis.

Data Gathering

An electronic message was sent to the participants' email addresses for their consent and the study's nature and purpose. After receiving the reply confirmation, the researchers then forwarded another electronic message containing an open-ended questionnaire in the *Cebuano* language with relevant questions. A few days later, all the answers were retrieved through email and from Facebook messenger. The interview was conducted at a mutually agreed location between the two parties. There were two (2) separate schedules for male and female participants in compliance with the health and safety protocols against the Coronavirus and concerns related to gender confidentiality. The researchers requested permission to record the entire course of the interview and conversation using an android phone based on the questionnaire that contained the participants' written answers.

Their valuable narration and sharing of experiences were recorded spontaneously and carefully as essential terms and jargon have been taken down for further clarification. Participants have been given the privilege of submitting or refusing the researchers' query, both written and interview. And if they were to provide their answers, they would have the total freedom to shorten or elaborate on them. The researchers went over to the same questions and clarified the answers with those that were spoken. In general, the participants were then reminded of their rights to make further changes or withdraw the information provided if they had the slightest possible doubt. The confidentiality of any information disclosed during the interview between the researchers and the participants whose names have been respectfully withheld was ensured.

Data Analysis

As stated, Colaizzi's 7-step phenomenological method has been used in the study. Steps have been followed carefully to maintain impartiality. The first step was transcribing the recorded conversation, merging them into the written data on each participant's questionnaire, and then carefully translating them into the English language. Second, the transcripts have been familiarized and studied. Significant jargon, statements, or sentences have been identified. Third, the meanings of expressed jargon, phrases, statements, and the like identified in the transcripts were formulated. Fourth, themes have been formulated from those clustered meanings or codes that were thoroughly reviewed and matched to the original transcripts to address the experiences' true meaning. Fifth, the experiences have been comprehensively defined and described. Sixth, Participants were notified to verify and validate the outcome of the process to ensure impartiality. Finally, the researchers have encouraged the participants to provide additional comments and suggestions that they perceived as vital to enriching the study's context.

RESULTS

This section presents the themes that emerged from the study's analytical process, which could be enumerated as commitment, milestone, physical development, self-discipline, realization, pride and passion, training, competition, camaraderie, support, and aspiration.

Commitment

The participants began their journey as neophyte arnisadors in 2013 as bonafide 7th-grade students in a public secondary school. There was a firm recognition of their interest in Arnis when they saw for the first time the conduct of live regular arnis training at the school grounds. Participant 4 has articulated that he came across several accounts of this particular sport in which practitioners were experts in combative skills using rattan sticks or sword as a weapon. What they witnessed every afternoon was a kind of spectacular, and they signed up out of curiosity. The arnis training started by a faculty member of the school was free of charge.

"My friend, who was then so interested in joining but did not have the guts to do so, asked me if I would like to be a member of the Arnis Team. And that he would only join upon the condition that I would also join." Participant 1 has voiced out that Arnis is a kind sport that helps students discover their capability regardless of gender. She became interested in joining the team because, as observed, there were female practitioners too. *"I was in the 8th grade; the year was 2014. The Arnisadors used to have their regular practice near our classroom, from which I could view the entire conduct of training. I saw several female practitioners. Some of them were my friends; I was amazed until one day, I decided to sign up."* Participant 6 has shared information with the group that she was encouraged too by her friends to join the team; she narrated that she had first modeled on her father, who had been an arnis practitioner in his early days. *"I first learned Arnis when I was in the 6th grade. What motivated me to join was my father, who is also a practitioner of Arnis. Although his style is not quite similar to what I am learning and practicing in the team, I just kept going. I was inspired by my technical drawing teacher, who, at the same time, our head coach- Instructor."*

Milestone

Participant 5 has expressed his views on the significance of being part of the team as arnisadors. There seemed to be a force or motivation that has driven them to keep going. As if it were so impractical to do two tasks simultaneously, and if it were subsequently carried out, the result would not be appealing. However, if two or more tasks were carried out systematically, one after another, good results could be expected. For an arnis player who is high in spirit and full of eagerness to learn and compete, both curricular and co-curricular responsibilities would be equally important. The failure of the former could indignantly compromise the latter or vice versa. He coined Arnis as life-changing. *"I tried to balance time in both my studies and being an athlete. Our practice usually starts at 4:00 p.m.; as a responsible student, I made use of my vacant periods to make assignments in advance to focus during practice. And when I go home, I can rest immediately. Nobody told me to do this. But Arnis inspired and motivated me to be good."* Based on school guidelines for selecting players, a player with a failing grade in any academic subject can no longer compete in either city or regional sporting event. Academic grades are an essential part of being in a team. As a result, participants highly valued the importance of time-framing and management; according to participant 3, *"Both of my being a student and player is my top priority during that time. I never wanted any of the two to get compromised with anything nonsense. It's a personal milestone for me, and I'd like the way it changed me from good to even a better person."* Participant 7 eagerly explained how his P.E (Physical Education) grade was higher than he had never expected it to be. His intramural achievement paved his way to becoming an official arnis player for city sports meet. *"My teacher gave me extra points in P.E. as a reward because of my diligence in Arnis. I was happy and thankful then."*

Physical Development

Participant 6 has spoken of Arnis as a full-contact sport that involves physical rigor and display of combative skills. Well-developed strength, agility, endurance, and stamina are the essential ingredients of victory. However, as an outcome of the continued physical training, it reduced and eventually cured her breathing difficulty. To be specific, Arnis relieved her cardiovascular condition. *"Being an Arnis player, it has helped my body to become stronger. As far as I can remember, since I started training Arnis, my asthma was gone."*

Participant 1 has confirmed the experience of participant 6 concerning her asthmatic condition. *Arnis has done so much to my body. I grew up with asthma, but since I signed up, my body began to get used to the exercises and movements during training sessions. My stamina has developed. I never had the difficulty of breathing anymore."* In addition to acquiring skills, participant 3 has admitted that, as an arnis player, he suddenly became aware of his health and took care of his food intake. A proper diet is essential for an athlete to maintain a specific bodyweight required in the respective weight category. *"I had a sudden experience of awakening, the surprising awakening of my being health conscious. The training is hard and difficult, and in the end, what if I just cannot compete in my weight category because of the extra weight that I carelessly gained? So I need to discipline my food intake. I usually avoid sweets and carbonated drinks."*

Self-discipline

Participant 5 has asserted that to overcome one's weaknesses in pursuing the ultimate goal of victory has been inculcated in the minds and hearts of the players. No one, as young as they were, had the idea of a real concept of discipline. For them, a literal situation of a parent who has warned his ill-mannered child was the only manifestation of discipline until they became part of the

team. Discipline emanates in the team, and one of its actuation is the observance of salutation or *pugay*. The practice of discipline and respect has always been observed among teammates, instructors, and coaches. *"Arnis led me to self-discipline and reinforce the practice of good manners, which I first learned at home, which I now am applying too in the group. Like whenever I met my Instructor and whoever of my teammates, I would have to greet them with a snappy salutation by placing my right fist on my chest, with a slight nod while verbalizing "P.O.!" It is our gesture of respecting anyone in the club and those guys from other clubs. Arnis instructors and practitioners around the world have been doing this. I learned to become humble, to keep going whatever I desire to master in our routine, especially the "likha-anyo" or form (referring to a detailed choreographed pattern of arnis movements meant to be practiced alone.) when one has to showcase all his capability as an arnisador and blend it with acrobatics into a spectacular exhibition. I often hear harsh comments from anyone in the team, but I just kept on. But they helped me a lot in any way possible. I also learned how to be patient. The mastery, which is the product of self-discipline, has been essential in Arnis."* Participant 4, who has had a fair share of success in his studies and has been able to manage his co-curricular responsibilities, is living proof of the manifestation of discipline as he relates his experience to the group. *"I always think about my future. That is why I aimed to train hard during practice sessions and be attentive to my teachers during classes. An opponent might not have defeated me, but If I'm no good in academics and being an Arnis player, I entirely am a failure. But I never let that happen."* Participant 2 has emphasized the importance of self-discipline in dealing with others and valuing time and faith in God. *"In this group, I learned self-respect and discipline. I used to hang around wasting time with friends, but now it's too different. I gave time to working out a skill that I feel I'm weak at it. I never stopped unless I have already attained mastery. Most of all, whatever I do, I do it for the love of discipline, and my trust in God always precedes in everything I do."*

Realization

Participant 2 has articulated self-discipline as one of the most remarkable virtues that participants had to internalize in achieving both their curricular and co-curricular objectives. The long hours needed in studies and attendance to regular arnis training sessions constitute a significant challenge for everyone. The combination of both has brought them into a certain degree of physical and mental stress. *"Tons of hard work and patience became my whipping stick, being a student and a player when it comes to how I succeeded. Mastery of Arnis skills simply could not be gained in just a few days of hard practice. You have to sustain and maintain and slowly increase the degree of stress and difficulty every day until it has perfected. Then I would say that I might have shed enough sweat, tears, and blood in the process. I'm not exaggerating, but that's how I describe the feeling. You have to give it all, just like in my B.S. Architecture course, I cannot attain mastery in drawing or making a perfect design of something overnight. There is a proper time for anything. That is why every single task needs reasonable effort and time to fulfill."* Participant 1 also asserted the famous adage "No Pain, No Gain," based on experience in Arnis. She admitted that there were physical pain and enough struggle along the journey of learning the art. Her perseverance and conviction of no pain, no gain got rewarded with victory. It has molded her character and tolerance. *"No pain, no gain. It happened to me. If you want to learn and master Arnis, you have to forget your being finicky. I just kept going until the moment of my first competition, in which I happened to win my first medal. Had I given up just because of pain, I would not have won and worn that medal around my neck with pride and confidence to myself. Pain is part of our life. Arnis is life too."* Participant 3 also stressed out that he had a chance to make his own decision, which he had never done his whole life until he joined the Arnis team. He made his own decisions by accepting or not accepting what is in the line of his priorities. Decision-

making is a physical and spiritual struggle, he added. *"As an Arnis player, I learned the art of decision-making, what is best for me. To know which one to consider as the first to prioritize among priorities. For example, eating is good, but I must self-restrain my appetite because I would be competing soon. I used to drink soda. It's delicious and addictive. But Arnis made me change my ways. Water is just enough. I avoided any form of vices too."* Showing respect for others has always been a sublime act to participant 4.

Indeed, being respectful to others is a reflection of a well-mannered person. Respect is one of the essential elements of personality. Whatever someone has done to anyone in the team is sure to reciprocate around. There is this belief of RHL, which means respect, honesty, and loyalty among teammates. He underscored his reflection of his understanding and related it to the Golden Rule. *"RHL means respect, honesty, and loyalty. I learned how to respect people and my teammates. Be honest in sharing whatever you know. I never hesitate to share whatever techniques I master the most with others. Arnis made me realize that loyalty is important, especially in abiding by the rules and regulations implemented in the Arnis club in which I belong. Do not do unto other people what you do not want them done to you."* Participant 8 has related her observations on human relations. She recounted occasions that there was something wrong, that there seemed to be an unlikely internal conflict or rivalry between teammates, perhaps because of their immaturity and selfishness, but most of the time, RHL and friendship prevailed. Besides, RHL and friendship were the cornerstones of the relationship among teammates. *"I lowered the pride that I used to brag myself to people around about who I am because before I was in the other sports club. I thought I was above them all, but I realized I'm in a different group now and no longer in the former. So I have to set aside and swallow my pride. I emptied myself once more. It was then I came to realize that I found new friends, real friends in Arnis. Friendship makes everything fine."*

Pride and Passion

R.A 9850 requires that Arnis must be integrated into the Philippine school system, specifically in Physical Education subject and other sports clubs, as part of students' awareness of the national sport. Practicing this is the most distinctive way of promoting Arnis to everyone, shared participant 5. *"Arnis is a beautiful sport due to its uniqueness in terms of culture and origin. It is our very own national sport and culture. Therefore, Filipinos must promote Arnis to the whole world. Why I love Arnis? First, it's Filipino by origin. It's ours. Second, by using the correct protective gear, it is a no-injury, and interesting sport, like what the Arphil does."* Participants 1-8 have underscored the importance of promoting Arnis, as in the SEA Games 2019, where Arnis was one of the most popular events that our very own national arnis team won the most gold medals brought honor to the country. This achievement inspires both young and old arnisadors. *"Arnis must be promoted not only in the national level but to the world. To let the people in other countries appreciate and learn Arnis. The inclusion of Arnis in the SEA Games is a breakthrough in promoting the sport. Arnis is our national pride."* Participant 4 has stated his views that the existing various arnis organizations in schools, cities, and around the world had been a manifestation of the legacy. The promotion of Arnis lives on as participants were aware of their responsibility to pass on the newcomers' learning and experience. *"Arnis is cool but tough. I'm more than willing and happy to share my knowledge and skills with the new ones. Teaching is twice learning. That's how we have encouraged by our head coach- Instructor."*

Training

According to participant 1, undoubtedly has been the flesh and bone of the arnis club. The set of routines follows a head coach-instructor program, which serves as the basis for players'

specific day-to-day regular practice. According to the participants in this study, training must be taken seriously to develop the players' physical and mental strength, agility, endurance, and stamina. The diligence of arnis players in training and being respectful at all times is expected. However, character is the most important thing. *Training is the hardest part, especially if you are a beginner. Patience is also an ingredient because learning arnis skills needs focus. The process is constant repetition and slowly increasing stress until the body gets used to it. The reward usually is terrible muscle pain in the first three (3) weeks of training. In this phase, I came to realize how necessary training is. If you want to become better, Arnisador, train regularly, train hard. When the pain is gone, believe me, you see and feel the changes in you which you would love to pursue more.* Participant 5 has insisted that despite the physical demands of the sport Arnis, he had to mentalize his gains, and he found pleasure in it. Also, the passion of the head coach-instructor for sport inspired him to train more. *"I have learned a lot in Arnis because the Instructor taught us well and demonstrated how to properly execute a technique and its advantages to score in the competition. Though I feel tired, sometimes, it did not stop me from keeping my concentration and focus. My body has constantly been looking for it; that is why I never skip training because I enjoy it so much."*

Competition

Competition, according to participant 2, is the ultimate test for the readiness of athletes. The blacksmith must test the sword's sharpness and toughness on different materials to ensure its cutting capability. And so with the competition, as the ultimate test of one's physical and mental strength, agility, endurance, and stamina, which the arnisadors have patiently and painfully acquired during training. The participants have admitted that competition was the most exciting part of their lives as players. Competition is the moment of truth for every player because everything the team has been preparing for the longest time is put to the real test. *"This is when the focus is essential. And there's also the feeling of nervousness. But I did not lose sight of my focus; I just breathe in and out and mentalize my strategy to score over my opponent. The competition had driven my eagerness to win. That was the moment that answered all my why's. Why I trained hard? Why do I always go home late and got scolded sometimes? Why do I control my diet? Why do I sacrifice many things, including my love life (chuckles) Yes, it's true, because that is strictly not allowed in the team. It can simply snatch the precious focus and concentration a player has to maintain because the competition is everything; winning is all. Competition is our judgment day"* There must be winners and losers in competitions.

Everyone, including participant 2, has acknowledged their feelings in the face of victory and defeat. *"I was so happy to win a fight in my category. My efforts were all paid off. Everyone in the team celebrated such an achievement I've been preparing for quite some time. But there's something that I would like to share for the first time. I feel pity for the opponents that I defeated because nobody likes to lose. I always empathize with how bad feeling is. Each one in the tournament desires to win, but that's how life in the competition should be, the winner takes all the fame and honor, and he is the center of attraction for the moment. But most importantly, even in defeat, is the acceptance of one's fate. The outcome of your performance would depend on the level of preparation. There is always a stroke of better luck next time. That's how sportsmanship should be."* Besides, participant 6 has verbalized her feelings of defeat *"It's not easy to lose. I was so frustrated that everything I prepared for has just gone to nothing. I felt shame for my Instructor and coaches, to my teammates, to my parents, and everybody around that I did not make it. But what made me stand up again and believe in myself for the next tournament was the caring hands of my teammates that tapped my shoulder and their comforting words saying it's okay, let's do it next time. Wow, that was amazing."* Participants 4 & 7 have affirmed defeat as a quite painful

experience an athlete would face; however, it's just a matter of acceptance and improvement that leads someone to move on and start all over again in the training pool. Participant 8 has highlighted the importance of sportsmanship at all times. Not only physical strength is challenged in a competition. It also determines how emotionally mature the arnis player has become during this dark moment of defeat and the manifestation of humility in victory. Arnis practitioners never stop, whether, in defeat or victory, they continue to move forward, as there is always another chance of improving. *"I felt bad when I got the first taste of defeat. I was highly expecting to bring home a medal, but I was destined to lose that day. Since then, I promised myself to work hard and be mindful of which part I am weak. I took that defeat as an opportunity to improve more of my performance. It motivated me to train harder; that's why I was careful of my attacks in the next tournament and made sure to score and not get hit by my opponent. I earned a silver medal in my category. Not bad at all, at least I proved something to myself."*

Camaraderie

Sharing an ear to one's problem keeps the balance of friendship. To keep pent-up emotions is unhealthy, according to experts, as described by participant 1. The team's trend is that teammates and coaches would shake hands and hug each other after the tournament, whatever is the competition's outcome, while everyone is looking forward to the next season. Arnis is an event that unites its participants in a strong bond of fraternity and camaraderie. *"We helped each other since day one of the training periods up to the date of the competition. Each one of us has given a chance to lead the training. According to our Instructor, this would develop our leadership traits. For one, I led our training sessions on many occasions beginning from the warming-up, calisthenics, and cooling down. It's like leading a platoon of soldiers under your command where everyone obeys and performs the instruction. We take our daily turn. This way, our respect for each other became stronger because we learn to obey first before making complaints."* Participant 2 has described how they were treating each other as teammates, like family members. *"Yes, I sometimes have a misunderstanding with some of my teammates. I'm the teaser in the team. I love making mischief, mostly to the girls and the young players. But I have limits, though, because I love them all. Families fight and then later reconcile. That's how we are in the team."* Participants 3, 5 & 8 expressed that as responsible individuals, they help each other in the team, especially personal troubles that unlikely would arise from home or even school-related. *"We encourage each other all the time. Problems, in reality, are a part of life. Our Instructor reminded us to be friendly and seek divine intervention at all times."*

Support

Participants 1-8 have recalled the team being supported by coaches who happen to be teachers by profession and whose assignment was to monitor their progress. They were also responsible for preparing the credentials of the players for the city and regional sports meets. The participants were vocal in awe of their coaches' support, especially their head coach-instructor's passion and dedication to Arnis. *"Our head coach-instructor treated us like his own children by correcting our wrong behavior like tardiness, inattentiveness, and absences. He always reminded us of the value of trust, respect, honesty, and loyalty. Arnisadors, as we are, should be lovers of discipline. He had many connections in his Arnis circuit; that is why we could participate in many off-campus club tournaments and have brought home medals and honor for the team and school that we represent. The other female coach was also very supportive."* The first set of Arnis gears and equipment was provided by the head coach-instructor, recounted the participants. These arnis gears were a great help in the team way back in 2013. It brought a distinct motivation and morale to

the practitioners, explained participant 2. *"I am one of the senior players then—part of those who came to train when our head coach-instructor initiated this team. As I can remember, we never had any kind of gears or equipment in 2013. It was a huge group training of more or less 50 students. I was very young and innocent at that time (chuckles). Our coach used an old tire to carry around as we lined ourselves up and took our turns to rapidly hit it with our arnis stick with all our strength and power. It was fun, although the experience caused me hand blisters. A few pieces of kick pad for taekwondo then served as a substitute for the heavy old tire. We were paired then. Each pair was provided with a kick pad. Someone had to hold the kick pad while the other player would hit it hard with the arnis stick. After several weeks, he brought us two sets of protective gear, and we used it in several sparring sessions. He used his resources for the team. And the rest was history."* Participants 1-8 have revealed that the school administration saw the effort and dedication of their head coach- Instructor, which eventually gained its trust and support for the players by providing them additional gear and equipment, food allowance, and vitamins as the team has continuously participated in many off-campus local club tournaments. They sincerely expressed appreciation and were thankful for the full support during the city and regional sports competitions. *"We are so thankful for the support like food, allowance and vitamins, and the beautiful uniform for us players. Our parents, too, were thankful and proud."*

Aspiration

Participant 1 has enjoined with other participants who have been optimistic that the team, which is currently composed of mostly new aspiring players, would be strongly organized. Their way of expressing gratitude to the team is to share with the beginners the kind of discipline and advancement that senior practitioners, like her, have achieved. They would keep the legacy alive in their hearts and minds. *"As for me, the most important thing is to listen to and support each other's ideas. Help each other to learn and grow. New members were lucky for not having experienced the hardest of our training before with the head coach-instructor. Unlike now, they get instruction mostly from their teammates. I cannot forget those days that made me who I am. I'm proud to be an Arnisador. We're proud to be the pioneers."*

Arnis sport has led participants to develop their social skills and shape their character to be better people in society. Participant 3 has verbalized, *"My hope and aspiration for the team and to its old and new members are that we must continue loving and practicing Arnis to keep us strong, physically active, and agile. Most of all, I wish everyone to be good. Let us not forget the value of RHL, respect, honesty, and loyalty wherever fate would lead us to."* Participants 4, 5 & 6 have concluded that the arnis sport could be a stepping stone to a college education. *"We felt no regret to be a part of the Arnis team. Our achievement in the competitions paved the way for scholarship opportunities. That is why we always encourage beginners to practice regularly. Practice hard and win. Make up your ambitions."*

DISCUSSION

Co-curricular activities, such as sport, have a significant role in developing students' personalities and strengthening their will and fighting spirits. To a greater extent, theoretical knowledge is reinforced by practical experience that would prepare it for unforeseen real-life situations. The impression of Arnis is the motivation of the participants to sign up for the team. Most of them admitted to joining the group because of their curiosity about the sport. The commitment is strong enough and has captured their interest in an effort that they thought they could find fulfillment. Students' impression of the sport was perceived as a form of self-will that

they are most likely to find very satisfying. Simon[15] explained that these impressions of sensations are strongly influenced by knowledge and experience, as is the case with a full-contact sport.

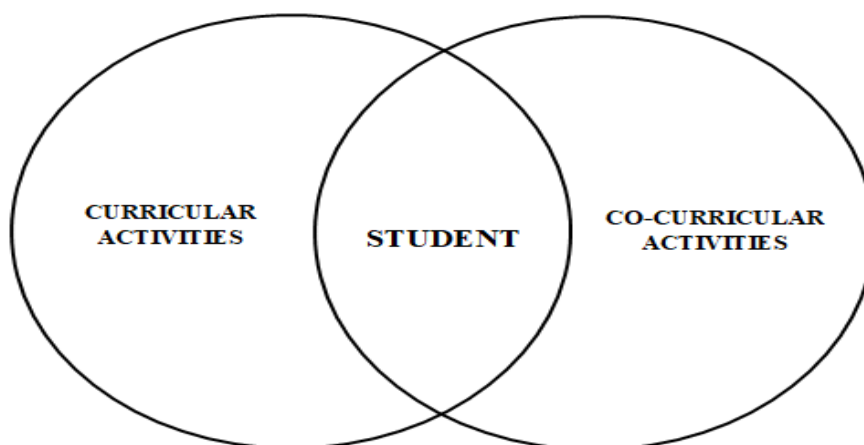


Figure 1. Curricular and Co-curricular activities and the Student

The participants demonstrated that, despite the difficulties, they managed to balance their curricular responsibilities with those of the co-curricular. The life of being a student and an athlete is not easy. Both, according to them, are equally important, and they could not afford to miss out on any of them. It concerns Thorndike's Law of Readiness, which refers to the individual's preparation to acquire the necessary skills, according to Singh[16]. The participants were directly taught the values of self-discipline in a one-on-one dialogue setting. It was observed, learned, and inculcated through daily hands-on interaction during the training session. It proves that visual learning most likely affects deeply more than verbal instruction, as postulated by Daniels[4]. Experience of difficulty was surprisingly seen and felt not as an ordeal but as a satisfying experience for the student-athletes.

They also demonstrated the value of dedication to one's responsibility since the participants were students under a government-run institution, mostly from middle-class families who experienced financial constraints, so that hardship is no longer new to them. If they were sons and daughters of wealthy parents, they would have been attending elite private schools instead. It also answers the question, why do they have to face hardship when they already have enough of it? A participant told the researchers that there was always a feeling of excitement in taking an adventure. Joining the Arnis team is seemingly a kind of adventure. The No-pain, No-gain, is perceived as delightful perseverance, which gives an unforgettable experience and adrenaline rush. Maattanen et al.[8] have affirmed this phenomenon in the study that performing a task could form two perseverance factors: "physical" and "mental" perseverance. At a young age, socialization or going among peers to try out something new is the norm. Many of the benefits of sports can change one's perception of life in a profound way. Sport promotes health, builds self-discipline and trust, and keeps the mind and spirit in harmony, underlining Caballes'[2] statement and supported by the Herren studies[17] that sport reduces the tendency to go into some vices, such as smoking, drinking, and taking drugs. According to Sayyd et al.[14] sports improve health status as it facilitates a longer life span if done regularly.

Young people are susceptible to giving in to something attractive and exciting, regardless if it can make or break them. Furthermore, coaches' and instructors' dedication is the result of the seminar-workshop and training described by Yap[18] initiated by the collective efforts of good people at the Teacher's Camp in Baguio, Philippines, in 2010 to tailor-fit the National Curriculum

for Arnis. What transpired in that milestone resulted in Arnis' inclusion as a regular sport in Palarong Pambansa, based on the context of R.A. 9850. Subsequently, a series of seminars and workshops have been initiated by Deped to train teachers to harmonize, unify, and implement the rules and conduct of Arnis sport in all city and regional competitions. The schools must carry out seminar-workshops to develop the coaches' technical and physical skills, as suggested by Panganiban[11].

CONCLUSION

Co-curricular activities would strengthen theoretical knowledge, which provides a distinct picture of reality that teaches students how to deal with life as they grow up. Both young people and students are vulnerable to peer influence in their choice of affiliation. Therefore, constant parental monitoring is recommended so that students would be guided to choose their friends wisely as they might do something detrimental rather than the tremendous influence of affiliation to a sport like Arnis. That their decisions are a manifestation of perception, interest, and appreciation of the activities surrounding them, with which, if they are satisfied, there is less or no hesitation in giving in as much as any struggling young individual does. Despite academic pressure, their participation in Arnis sport is equally meaningful and satisfying. They are raising the banner of Arnis, the national sport, martial arts, and the Philippines' culture, for the people and the world. Also, adults' presence and behavior are sufficient to influence young people's behavior in a group or team; if they are continuously exposed, this would be part of their character. That is why teachers (instructors and coaches), the *loco parentis*, or second parents at school should be morally upright and good role models for students. According to Hagan et al.[6] coaches must regulate and harmonize their behavior to influence coaching roles to athletes' better performance.

To NagaNHS Arnis Team



Pugay Po!

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