Long-term perspectives of participating in extracurricular activities in an extreme context in Madagascar.

1 Laurie Décarpentrie[1-5], Claude Bélanger[1], Bryan Rakotondramanana[2], Sitraka Rakotondrasoa[2], Olivier
2 Rakotomalala[2], Jose-Luis Guirao[3], Tegwen Gadais[4-5]

3 [1] Department of psychology, Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal (Québec), Canada

4 [2] Department of psychology, Université Catholique de Madagascar, Antananarivo, Madagascar

5 [3] ONG Bel Avenir, Toliara, Madagascar

6 [4] Department of science of physical activity, Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal (Québec),
7 Canada

8 [5] UNESCO, Chair in Curriculum Development

9

14

15 **ABSTRACT**

16 In recent decades, extreme development contexts (i.e., extreme poverty, refugee camps,
17 conflicted areas, areas affected by climate change, sexual exploitation) are gaining ground,
18 increasingly affecting youth throughout the world. It is crucial to examine how youth optimal
19 development can be sustained in these extreme contexts. Extracurricular activities are
20 considered a potential avenue, yet there is limited research on their impact, especially
21 concerning long-term effects in adulthood. This collaborative study aims to explore and gain a
22 deeper understanding of the long-term perspectives of young adults who engaged in
23 extracurricular activities (specifically art-music and sports) during adolescence in the
24 challenging southern region of Madagascar. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with
25 eight participants (M=4; F=4), aged 19 to 27. The results indicate the value of these programs
26 during their involvement, supporting basic psychological needs, acting as a protective factor
27 against risky behaviors, providing a meaningful time investment, offering a nurturing
28 environment for developing personal values, fostering personal growth, and focusing on
29 education. Importantly, the programs appear to have a lasting impact, influencing participants'
30 adult lives. They contribute to the development of enduring relationships, promote the
31 acquisition of transferable cognitive and non-cognitive skills, facilitate the pursuit of new
32 personal projects, and open doors to employment opportunities. Overall, the findings offer
33 valuable insights into the significance of participating in extracurricular programs for youth in
34 extreme contexts of development, both during and years after their involvement. Results
35 underscore extracurricular programs as a valuable means to sustain optimal youth
36 development over time, emphasizing their importance in challenging environments.
37
38 Keywords
39   Youth; Extreme context; Madagascar; Extracurricular activities; Art and Sport for
40 development; Sustainable impacts
41
42

43   This collaborative research project focuses on the long-term experience of participation
44   in extracurricular activities for young people living in extreme conditions. Young adults who
45   participated as adolescents in extracurricular activities, like art-music and sport, within the
46   challenging context of the southern region of Madagascar were met by our research team to
47   discuss their personal experiences in the activities. They offered valuable perspectives on their
48   involvement in these activities amidst the difficult situations they were encountering in their
49   everyday life.
50

1. INTRODUCTION

52   In the last few decades, extreme development contexts are gaining ground, affecting
53   more and more youth throughout the world. Indeed, factors such as climate change (Sanson et
54   al., 2019) and the rise of conflicts throughout the world (Corral et al., 2020) have direct impacts
55   on the world population, and particularly on youth who are trying to build a future for
56   themselves while developing in extreme conditions. Difficulties like malnutrition, arduous work,
57   lack of freedom, limited access to healthcare, insecurity, and scarcity of basic resources are
58   difficulties faced by youth on a daily basis in extreme contexts of development (Bettelheim,
59   1943). To support youth optimal development in these challenging environments,
60   extracurricular activities are considered as a fruitful avenue (United Nations, 2010). While
61   multiple studies have emphasized the connections between participation in extracurricular
62   activities and diverse positive outcomes (Berger et al., 2020; Boelens et al., 2022; Bohnert et al.,
63   2010; Farb & Matjasko, 2012; O'Flaherty et al., 2022; Shulruf, 2010), little information exists
64   regarding these impacts within extreme contexts of development, and even less so concerning
65   the long-term effects of the participation in extracurricular activities on youth living in these
66   contexts.
67   Therefore, the present research intends to gain a better understanding of the long-term
68   perspectives of young adults who engaged as adolescents in extracurricular activities (e.g., art-
69   music and sport), within the challenging context of the southern region of Madagascar, in
70   Africa.
71

1.1. Activities

73   Multiple literature reviews have examined the positive links between the participation of
74   youth in extracurricular activities and various positive outcomes. Domains like education,
75   academic achievement, enhanced psychosocial competencies, well-being, interpersonal
76   relations, mental and physical health, as well as diminution of risky behaviors like substance
77   abuse, delinquency or unprotected sex have all been positively linked to participation of youth
78   in extracurricular programs (Berger et al., 2020; Boelens et al., 2022; Bohnert et al., 2010; Farb
79   & Matjasko, 2012; O'Flaherty et al., 2022; Shulruf, 2010). Regarding long-lasting impacts,
80   researchers have shown that participating in these activities during adolescence is a protective
81   factor regarding drug use in adulthood, an important predictor of psychological adjustment, as
82   well as both educational and occupational outcomes in young adulthood (Barber et al., 2001).
83   According to O'Flaherty and colleagues (2022), there is four mechanisms in

84   extracurricular programs that facilitate these positive outcomes for youth. The first mechanism
85   would be the transfer paradigm. This mechanism assumes that cognitive and non-cognitive
86   skills acquired in extracurricular programs are transferred to different contexts, as example,
87   formal educational settings. The second mechanism suggests youth would have the
88   opportunity to develop meaningful relationships both with peers and adults, and fostering a
89   sense of belonging within the larger community (e.g., school). Change in youth status is
90   encompassed by a third mechanism: participation in extracurricular activities signals to key
91   figures (e.g., teachers or peers' parents) that youth have the sufficient cultural knowledge and
92   skills to actively participate in social networks and environments that offer significant
93   advantages and opportunities. As a fourth mechanism, engaging in extracurricular activities
94   offer a structured alternative with greater benefits than unstructured time that may foster risk-
95   taking behaviors and delinquency. Extracurricular activities are presented as structured and
96   organized as they follow a regular schedule, involve peer integration, are supervised by adults,
97   are typically voluntary, focus on the acquisition of specific skills, foster positive youth
98   development, and are not part of the school curriculum (Bohnert et al., 2010; Mahoney et al.,
99   2005). They are distinguished from other activities that youth may engage in like watching
100 television, listening to music, resting, hanging or socializing with peers, that would be
101 characterized as unstructured activities (Mahoney et al., 2005). Sports, arts and community
102 programs are examples of structured and organized activities (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Hansen
103 et al., 2003). The present research conceptualise extracurricular activities as an opportunity to
104 enhance youth development (Lerner et al., 2015) as well as a mean to prevent from adverse
105 outcomes (Eccles et al., 2003). In addition, participation in activities is commonly measured by
106 the quantity of activities a young person engages in or the level of participation, often
107 quantified by the time spent in an activity within a specific timeframe (Denault & Poulin, 2009).
108   Despite the large number of studies interested in the outcomes of participation in
109 extracurricular programs for youth, one criticism that could be given is that, to our knowledge,
110 the large majority have been done in global north contexts. Indeed, very little is known about
111 the effect of those programs in other parts of the world, where living conditions can be very
112 different and rougher, like countries of Africa. There has been scarce exploration into contexts
113 characterized by extreme poverty, refugee camps, conflict zones, areas affected by climate
114 change, or sexual exploitation, which are considered extreme developmental contexts for
115 youth. Constraints like distance, time, security or instability of the context (Gadais et al., 2021),
116 to just name a few, can partially explain why these contexts have been neglected by
117 researchers. Nevertheless, basing theories and world-wide recommendations (United Nations,
118 2010) on research done mostly exclusively on individuals living in Western, Educated,
119 Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies (Henrich et al., 2010) seems quite
120 insufficient. Therefore, more research is necessary across diverse environments, including
121 extreme contexts, like the current research setting within the southern region of Madagascar.
122
123 *1.2. Context*
124   The context of this research is located in the African continent, in the southern region of
125 Madagascar, precisely in the region of Toliara. The young inhabitants of this region face
126 numerous challenges on a daily basis. From the perspective of Bettelheim (1943) on the life in

127 concentration camps during World War II, malnutrition, arduous work, lack of freedom, limited
128 access to healthcare, insecurity, and scarcity of basic resources characterise an extreme
129 context of development. Numerous reports (Mirandraibe & Losa, 2023; Sachs et al., 2023; Silva-
130 Leander, 2020; UNICEF, 2014, 2018; United Nations Population Fund, 2017) describe the dire
131 situation of young Malagasy people and testify to the extreme conditions in which they develop.
132 Indeed, Madagascar is recognized as one of the world's poorest countries, ranking 173rd out of
133 189 countries on the Human Development Index (United Nations Development Program,
134 2022). Among the 29 million country population, 66.45% is living under the poverty threshold of
135 US$2.15 a day in 2023 and nearly 80% survives on less than US$3.65 per day (Sachs et al.,
136 2023). The situation is even more critical for people residing in rural region (Mirandraibe &
137 Losa, 2023). In the southern and western regions of Madagascar, including the Toliara region,
138 the situation is particularly alarming for children, with 49.3% living in poverty (Silva-Leander,
139 2020). To supplement family income, children are frequently engaged in work. In 2018, 37% of
140 children aged between 5 and 14 years old were involved in economic activity or, at least, in 28
141 hours per week of household chores (Sachs et al., 2023). Children's work in Madagascar ranges
142 from selling goods on the streets or to tourists, to working in salt or sapphire mines, or even
143 engaging in prostitution to support their families or themselves (Brial, 2011). Involvement of
144 children in these types of activities clearly endangers their security. Also, poverty and child
145 labor significantly impact school enrollment, with only a 35% completion rate for the lower
146 secondary education level (Sachs et al., 2023). Regarding malnutrition, in 2022, nearly 40% of
147 the country's children up to the age of 5 years were stunted (Sachs et al., 2023). Issues like
148 access to basic resources like proper housing, drinking water services or basic sanitation
149 services impacts population health. According to Sachs et al. (2023), in 2020, 67% of the urban
150 population is living in slums, less than 54% of the population had access to a basic drinking
151 water service, 12% used a basic sanitation service and around 65% of the urban population
152 have access to improved drinking water piped on premises. Also, inequalities in access to
153 health care is still a major issue. Budget cuts to the health sector in 2012 led to the closure of
154 several public health facilities (UNICEF, 2014). Due to inadequate vaccination coverage among
155 children, diseases like measles persist, along with malaria, tuberculosis and the re-emergence
156 of plague, (UNICEF, 2014; United Nations Population Fund, 2017). With an estimation at 64
157 years in 2021, life expectancy in Madagascar is fairly low (World Bank, 2023). When it comes to
158 gender inequalities, access to health care is not spared (UNICEF, 2018). Indeed, women's ability
159 to avail themselves of public health services is hindered by limited household resources and
160 the absence of women's autonomy in decision-making, which includes requiring permission
161 from an elder family member to access reproductive health services. From latest numbers in
162 2017, early pregnancy rates are high, with 15% of pregnancies occurring among young women
163 aged 15 to 19 years old (Sachs et al., 2023).
164   Attempts to overcome these difficulties and accomplish sustainable development are
165 often hindered by natural disasters like persisting drought, flooding, or cyclones hitting the
166 country, every year, several times a year. The intensity of these phenomenon is expected to
167 increase in the coming years due to climate change. Coupled to diverse events like, political
168 crisis within the country, the COVID-19 pandemic or wars around the world that threaten the
169 global economy and impact the price of basic resources, these repeated crises exacerbate

170 prevailing deep-seated inequalities faced on a regular basis by vulnerable fringe of the
171 population like youth.
172   To sum up, it seems evident that the recurrence of numerous simultaneous extreme
173 conditions poses a serious threat to the well-being of young individuals in Madagascar and
174 hinders their optimal development. Understanding the impediments to optimal development in
175 challenging contexts prompts exploration into the psychological factors that foster such a
176 growth.
177
178 *1.3. Basic psychological needs*
179   For decades, researchers in positive psychology have been reflecting on factors that
180 influence human's optimal development. One of the avenues explored concerned the three
181 basic psychological needs (BPN), namely, autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci,
182 2017a). Autonomy is the need to decide voluntarily and for oneself on one's experiences and
183 actions. Competence is the need to feel effective in one's interactions with its environment.
184 Relatedness is the need to be socially connected, close to others, by caring for and being cared
185 for. The basic psychological needs mini-theory as proposed by Ryan and Deci (2017a) suggests
186 that the satisfaction of these three basic needs would foster a person's well-being and optimal
187 development, whilst the frustration of these needs would hinder it.
188   From a Self-Determination Theory (SDT) perspective, BPN are considered universal.
189 They are deemed not be tied to specific developmental stages or cultural environments (Ryan
190 & Deci, 2017a). Nevertheless, the manifestation and fulfillment of these needs may differ across
191 various cultures (La Guardia & Ryan, 2000). The concept of autonomy often faces criticism, one
192 of which might be related to the confusion between autonomy and independence. Autonomy
193 relates to one's self, while independence pertains to the external world and others.
194 Independence refers to an individual's lack of dependence on something or someone (Chirkov
195 et al., 2003). According to SDT, an individual can be both autonomous and dependent (Ryan &
196 Deci, 2017b). The concept of autonomy also often faces criticism by perspectives like cultural
197 relativism, which suggest that depending on cultural background, the composition and
198 arrangement of the self can significantly vary (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Autonomy is often
199 associated more closely with individualistic cultures (e.g., North America, Western Europe, and
200 Australia), in contrast to the more collectivist cultures (e.g., Asia, South America, Africa, and
201 indigenous societies). Numerous studies have been testing the validity of the BPN model (Chen,
202 Van Assche, et al., 2015; Chen, Vansteenkiste, et al., 2015; Chirkov et al., 2003). Despite
203 potential disparities in the level of support for these needs across cultures (Chirkov et al., 2003),
204 neglecting these needs may adversely affect an individual's development, well-being, and
205 integrity, irrespective of cultural context (La Guardia & Ryan, 2000).
206   Previous quantitative study conducted with young Malagasy people involved in art-
207 music and sport extracurricular activities showed interesting effect of their participation on
208 their basic psychological needs over a period of sixteen months (Author1, Author2, et al.,
209 Submitted). Results of a qualitative research also illustrate the role played by extracurricular
210 programs in supporting the process of socialization of youth, their personal growth, in giving
211 them a sense of protection and support their psychological well-being in a challenging and
212 quite insecure environment and attempt to bridge the gap in basic resources (Author1, Author

213   2, et al., Submitted). In light of these previous findings, an interesting question arises: what
214   enduring benefits youth living in an extreme context of development gain from their
215   engagement in extracurricular activities centered around art-music, and sport?

216

217   *1.4. Objective of the study*
218   This research aims to explore and gain a deeper understanding of the long-term
219   perspectives of young adults on their experience of engaging as adolescents in extracurricular
220   activities within the challenging context of the southern region of Madagascar. More
221   specifically, this research aims to explore the potential influence of participating in activities on
222   individuals' basic psychological needs, that is to say, autonomy, competence and relatedness.
223   The study seeks to gain knowledge on the influence of engagement both during the period of
224   involvement and over the long term.

225

226   **2. METHODS**

227   A qualitative methodology is proposed to meet this objective. The present research is
228   part of a collaborative project between three organisations, namely the MALAGASY NGO, THE
229   NORTH AMERICAN UNIVERSITY and THE MALAGASY UNIVERSITY. It is part of a larger mixed
230   method research project focusing on the participation in extracurricular activities of young
231   people living in extreme conditions (Author1, Author2, et al., Submitted; Author1, Author 2, et
232   al., Submitted).
233   This study focuses on two types of organized activities (Mahoney et al., 2005): art-music
234   activities, including a percussion group and a marching band, as well as sport activities,
235   specifically soccer and basketball groups. These activities are scheduled at fixed times and on
236   specific days of the week. Young individuals gather twice a week for sessions lasting between
237   one and a half to two hours. Adult supervisors oversee these collective activities, which aim to
238   foster the positive development of young people and cultivate their artistic, sporting, and social
239   skills.
240   The research team is composed of the principal investigator (PI) and two senior
241   researchers supervising the PI from THE NORTH AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, three research
242   assistants and one co-researcher from THE MALAGASY UNIVERSITY, and one co-researcher
243   from the MALAGASY NGO.

244

245   *2.1. Participants and data collection*
246   A total of eight semi-structured interviews were conducted in May 2019 and February
247   2020. The interviews involved four (n=4) participants who identified as female and four (n=4)
248   participants who identified as male. Four (n=4) participants were engaged in sport activities and
249   four (n=4) participants were engaged in art-music activities. All participants fell within the age
250   range of 19 to 27 years old (see Table 1). These young adults had been engaged in
251   extracurricular activities, namely soccer, basketball, marching band or percussion group
252   activities, which were offered by a Malagasy NGO, for a duration of three to eight years with a
253   mean of 5.9 years (see Table 1). Interviews were conducted in French and in Malagasy with a

254 simultaneous translation offered by the research assistants, when necessary. This procedure
255 allowed the participant to validate that the idea that was translated was actually what they
256 meant to say and if not, correct it or elaborate (see Appendix A for precision on procedures). All
257 interviews were audio recorded.
258
259   Table 1: Participants descriptive data

Participant	Interview Languages	Gender	Age (years)	Interview length (minutes)	Years spent in the activity	Activity type	Activities
P1	FR	F	25	56	4	Sport	Basketball-Soccer
P2	FR	F	19	57	7	Sport	Basketball
P3	FR-MA	M	27	104	7	Art-Music	Marching band
P4	FR-MA	M	26	60	7	Art-Music	Marching band
P5	FR-MA	F	23	65	5	Art-Music	Percussion
P6	FR-MA	F	20	56	3	Art-Music	Marching band
P7	FR-MA	M	23	57	6	Sport	Soccer
P8	FR-MA	M	24	69	8	Sport	Soccer
M (SD)			23.4 (2.8)	65.5 (16.3)	5.9 (1.7)		

260
261 *2.2. Analysis*
262   For analysis purpose, all interviews were transcribed. A thematic analysis, following the
263 six phases of analysis (see Table 2) suggested by Braun and Clarke (2020), was performed by a
264 researcher from THE NORTH AMERICAN UNIVERSITY (Initials) and a researcher from THE
265 MALAGASY UNIVERSITY (initials). The analysis process was supported by Nvivo12TM. Each
266 interview was coded independently by the two researchers.
267
268   Table 2: Analysis process based on Braun and Clarke (2020)

Phase 1	Data familiarization and writing familiarization notes:	Reading and annotation of all the interviews
Phase 2	Systematic data coding:	Identification of two standing out interviews: richest in terms of content and diversity of profiles among the interviewees (activity, age, gender)

Phase 3	Generating initial themes from coded and collated data:	Elaboration of a common code book based on the analysis of the two selected interviews. Engagement of coders in discussions to reach a consensus on each of the codes proposed
Phase 4	Developing and reviewing themes:	Adjustments to the codebook as needed throughout the analysis of each interview
Phase 5	Refining, defining and naming themes:	Once all interviews coded by both coders, revision of the content of each code was made. Discussion on the included extracts. Iterative process that led to further adjustments of the codebook and the extracts
Phase 6	Writing process:	Adjustments to the codebook were still made and were again corroborated by both coders

269

270   This approach sought to anchor the analysis within the cultural context, as seen through

271 the lens of the Malagasy researcher, while also capitalizing on an outsider's perspective to

272 better understand the experiences presented by the participants. Throughout the whole

273 research process, the researchers dedicated time to engage in deep discussions regarding

274 their values, identity, preconceptions, and inclinations as researchers, in a self-reflexivity

275 perspective (Tracy, 2010). The reflections extended beyond the scope of analysis to scrutinize

276 the interview procedures and the overall project development.

277

3. RESULTS

279   From the transcribed verbatim of the eight interviews, various themes were extracted

280 regarding the common long-term experiences of young adults who engage as adolescents in

281 extracurricular activities, like art-music and sport within the challenging context of the southern

282 region of Madagascar. Four main thematic were identified based on participants narratives (see

283 Figure 1): context of development, context of the activity, participants experience of the

284 activities and participants' recommendations for enhancing the activities. The results section is

285 presented according to these four thematic[1]. Participants' experience of activities was

---

[1] The main manuscript includes only the most illustrative quotations for presenting the results. Additional quotations, categorized by themes, can be found in Appendix A.

286 regrouped around seven themes: relationships, learnings, responsibilities, vision for the future,

287 sense of purpose, prioritizing education, health as well as structure and material. Themes are

288 presented in order of importance[2].

289

290   FIGURE 1: Study findings diagram

291

292
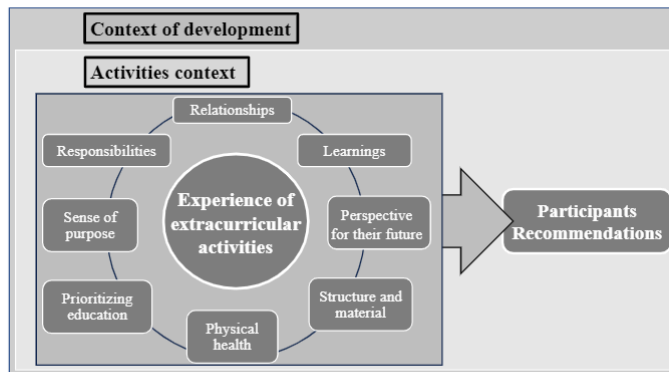
293 *3.1. Extreme context*

294   Participants describe the harsh conditions they are living in by giving some day-to-day

295 examples of their experience. On average, seven people live under the same roof in our partici-

296 pants families. Most of their parents do not have a paid job, especially the mothers who take

297 care of the house and the children. They mention the important lack of employment in the Toli-

298 ara province, characterizing it as the worst in whole country. Due to financial constraints, they

299 are forced to put on hold their education, or stop a passion, to find a job.

300

301   *"I'm not studying now, but I'd like to continue my studies. But as my parents can't afford to*

302 *pay for my studies, I'm currently working. I work as a waitress in a restaurant. I don't work full time. If*

303 *there is a service, I get a call and come in."* P5-Female

304

305   Some participants mention that they have been employed by international projects,

---

[2] That is to say that the thematic "relationships" had the most references and the thematic regarding "structure and material" had the least references

306   albeit for short durations. They explain that these projects are typically funded for a single year

307   and then discontinued.

308

309   *"I was employed (in another organization) for foreign-funded projects, only for a year, then it*

310   *was over because the Director who wrote the project had already gone back abroad and there was*

311   *no other person to continue it".* P3-Male

312

313   Participants go as far as connecting the dearth of job opportunities to the insecurity

314   experienced by girls. They explain that the absence of employment and, consequently, financial

315   resources, compels girls to seek a partner, get married, and abandon their education.

316

317   *"Regarding work, it is the worst province of Madagascar. And insecurity as well, especially for*

318   *girls. Because there's no work here, and if someone comes along and gives the girl money, she leaves*

319   *school and follows him to get married. But for me, studies are important".* P1-Female

320

321   In the pursuit of finding a partner, some end up experiencing early pregnancies. Access

322   to resources and information about sexual and reproductive health is limited. While some

323   participants mention having received a certain level of information, they consider it to be

324   insufficient. A few discuss the presence of organizations dedicated to this topic, employing peer

325   educators to conduct educational sessions on the subject in secondary schools. Some attribute

326   precocious sexuality to the influence of pornographic movies shown in villages, where there is

327   little age control for viewers. In terms of sexual and reproductive health, participants recount

328   witnessing clandestine pregnancy terminations among their peers, often involving unsafe

329   procedures that put the young person's life at risk. Lacking financial resources, they face

330   difficulties in accessing medical care when necessary.

331

332   *"I had a friend who got pregnant, but she had an abortion. There is a plant called Aloe that*

333   *you boil in water, put in a bottle, and she drank that every morning. But she didn't tell me. It was for*

334   *the abortion that she was drinking it. /.../ After that, she became sick because of the abortion. She was*

335   *in a lot of pain but didn't want to tell her parents, so she left with friends and stayed at their place.*

336   */.../ Her parents didn't know about it. She said she didn't want to tell them because her mother is*

337   *mean. I went to her boyfriend's place and found her in a very bad condition. She had lost a lot of*

338   *blood. /.../ I left to sell my phone to get some money and take her to the hospital. At the hospital, the*

339   *doctor gave her injections."* P2-Female
340
341   Participants note a certain insecurity in the remote region of Toliara and the police are
342   perceived as ineffective in addressing this issue. The prevailing insecurity leads some parents to
343   become concerned about their children's safety on their way back from the activities, which
344   acts as a barrier to youth participation.
345
346   *"There is insecurity here. For example, there are people that own cattle and that get stolen by*
347   *Dahalo (cattle thief). It's because here, it's far from the capital. Yes, there is the police here, but...*
348   *Hmm! It doesn't work".* P1-Female
349
350   **3.3. Experience of the activity**
351   *3.3.1. Relationships*
352   Participants express that the activities are a good place to develop relationship with
353   peers. Some say it is easy to make friends in the group and some even find very close friends in
354   their activities. These friendships seem to develop between people of same or different gender,
355   and most importantly to last over time. They still friends with people they met in the activities
356   even years after the end of their participation.
357
358   *"I had many friends, but I had one very good friend who stood out from the rest. We used to*
359   *go to practice together, share everything, and sometimes he even came over to my place. We are still*
360   *friends to this day".* P8-Male
361
362   They even developed side projects together. They mention sharing common interests
363   with other participants that united the group.
364
365   *"For those who were in the same group as me, until now, we are all very good friends. We are*
366   *still members of a music group together".* P6-Female
367   *"We got along well, especially when we had to play the match, all with the same morale, the*
368   *same desire to win. We were more united".* P1-Female
369
370   From the participants discourse, they seem to genuinely care for each other. If someone
371   is sick, hurt, goes through a difficult time or is simply absent to a training session, they will
372   inform themselves, make sure the person is all right or visit them at home.
373
374   *"If one of us didn't show up, I would say, 'Where is she?' And the other day, when she arrived, I*
375   *asked her questions: 'Where were you? What's wrong?"* P1-Female
376   *"In 2014, I broke my collarbone during practice. Afterwards, since I was sick, the whole team*
377   *came to my house".* P2-Female
378
379   Connections are not only developed with peers but with adults also. Indeed, the person

380 in charge of the activity, that could be either the coach or the band/orchestra conductor, seem
381 to be appreciated by the participant. They develop a genuine relationship were participants feel
382 cared for. Some even mention these adults are a source of inspiration.
383
384   *"He is in charge of everything, he's the coach, responsible for the equipment, all of that. He*
385 *also protects the girls, especially when the boys... Sometimes, he gets angry when we don't listen. But*
386 *he's cool".* P2-Female
387   *"At that time, there were only two military professors who taught music, and Mister supervised*
388 *some classes because he was a multi-instrumentalist. He writes music scores; he also teaches trumpet*
389 *and saxophone. He's also my idol because I learned a lot of instruments from him. What he does is*
390 *what I do now. He inspired me to do all of this"* P3-Male
391
392   Participants mention that they would incite others, like siblings or cousins, to participate
393 in the activities as it gives structure to youth and offers opportunity to further develop oneself.
394
395   *"The NGO has brought a lot to me, so I raised awareness among my cousins to go there. /.../ I*
396 *would say to them, 'The NGO is not just about financial help, it's not just about success in terms of*
397 *money, but it's truly about developing oneself as a human being, discovering more things, learning to*
398 *live with others, discovering more than what you see in your daily life'. That's what I encouraged*
399 *others to go and see".* P6-Female
400
401   The participants' narratives suggest that the perspectives of both their families and
402 communities towards them seem to have changed. They note that their families encouraged
403 them to pursue their activities. Families and community members, like neighbors and friends,
404 often attended their matches or public performances to support them and were somewhat
405 impressed by their accomplishments. Participants share that their families express
406 contentment take pride in these achievements. The participants got a certain notoriety in their
407 community.
408
409   *"My parents are proud too because after a year in the group, I'm the only one paying for all*
410 *my studies until now /.../ Even the neighbors in the village. It's through the NGO that everyone knows*
411 *me. Yes, because with the NGO, I've played music, gone on outings, appeared on television".* P3-Male
412   *"My father was really proud of me. It got to a point where when he was working and came*
413 *across flutes or something like that, he would buy them for me. /.../. So, my father was really happy*
414 *that I was into music, and he was very proud of me".* P6-Female
415
416   Ultimately, participation appears to foster the development of social skills. Participants
417 mention that when they initially began the activities, they were rather introverted. Engaging in
418 these activities aided them in becoming more open to others and feeling more at ease in social
419 interactions. They learned to live together, be calmer, adapt to each other, and better deal with
420 conflict and emotions, like frustration or anger.
421
422   *"I am quite introverted by nature. I am not the type who will approach someone to talk, fight,*

423   *or gossip. But upon joining the activity, I really noticed that I had become much more open. I was*
424   *able to make friends. /.../ also by traveling, I was able to discover new places and new ways of living. I*
425   *was able to bring all that back into my life. I noticed that since then, I am much more open to others.*
426   *I don't stay in my own corner; I approach others more easily".* P5-Female
427
428   3.3.2. Learnings
429   Based on participants' testimonies, it appears that beyond social skills these activities
430   also lead to the development of various competences, knowledge, life skills and values. Most
431   evidently, participants have developed skills in their discipline whether it's to better play in a
432   position on the soccer field, master a technique in basketball, learn strategies in the game or
433   how to properly stretch, play different instruments, read music scores or sing. They evoke that
434   by being involved in the activities they had the opportunity to develop their skills and make real
435   progress with the support of their coach, band/orchestra conductor and music teachers. They
436   also mention that their progression was supported by their own efforts and their perseverance
437   to practice and train.
438
439   *"To become a good passer, you have to practice. Always, always".* P1-Female
440   *"During work when I feel tired, I take the flute, I focus, I try. I make efforts to reach the level like*
441   *the others. We've seen military bands... why can they do it? They are older than us. We are young. So,*
442   *we have to practice"* P4-Male
443
444   Participants evoke that in the context of the activities they learned to follow rules, like
445   being on time, respect materials and infrastructure, follow instructions, notify and justify
446   absence, etc. Some participants evoke that the good atmosphere set by their coach or
447   band/orchestra conductor, helped them to respect the rules.
448
449   *"At the sports school, we had schedules to follow, and outside of those hours, we couldn't*
450   *come in. But we had to inform in case of absence and provide justifications. Discipline was strict*
451   *because it was a school, not a stable or a farm. /.../ It was necessary to respect the rules, follow the*
452   *established discipline. /.../ If someone didn't follow the rules or mishandled the equipment, they were*
453   *punished. For example, they were not allowed to participate in matches for two weeks, or they*
454   *received a warning, or sometimes an exclusion".* P8-Male
455
456   Personal values and identity are slowly forged throughout their passage in the activities.
457   Indeed, participants seem to integrate their activity to their identity and be proud of it and be
458   different from others in their community.
459
460   *"I am strong. I thank sports. I am proud to be an athlete because I am not like all the other*
461   *girls in my neighborhood. So, when I have time, when I am free, I do sports. That way, I am not like*
462   *the others".* P2-Female
463
464   A participant who identified as female also evocated how, for her, sport is a tool to
465   spread messages of gender equity. Values like fair play, tolerance, perseverance, seriousness,

466   morality, openness and respect are evocated by participants.
467
468   *"We play sports, that's what I love. Actually, here in Madagascar, there aren't many girls who*
469   *do it, especially football. I do it for others, to show that football is not only for boys but also for girls".*
470   P1-Female
471
472   The activities appear to provide participants with opportunities to discover unfamiliar
473   sports, musical instruments and also to travel both within the country and abroad to engage in
474   public performances, sports training or matches. These trips are described as chances to
475   discover other places and to broaden the participants' horizons by introducing them to new
476   people, different perspectives and ways of living. Not only participants get to meet other
477   cultures by travelling themselves but also by getting in contact with foreigners, engaged as
478   volunteers in the organisation.
479
480   *"For example, when I went to Tana (short for Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar); the*
481   *NGO gave me the opportunity to go to Tana. I discovered the capital. /.../ I also realized that there*
482   *were lots of young people who weren't going to school and weren't doing anything, and they were*
483   *falling into prostitution. /.../ I saw that if I did nothing, I could end up like that. So, it really motivated*
484   *me to avoid falling into that and pushed me to work hard, to go to school, and to pursue my studies*
485   *as far as possible".* P5-Female
486
487   3.3.3. Responsibilities
488   Participants mention being given diverse responsibilities in their activities. Among these,
489   youth have the opportunity to assist the activity supervisor, lead the group for the practice
490   session and to develop specific skills like managing and supervising youth group. Some are
491   placed in charge of distributing and taking care of the material, the performances outfits or the
492   instruments. When a supervisor was not able to attend a session, participants were put in
493   charge of the session and the group.
494
495   *"I was already the coach's assistant on Saturdays and Wednesdays. We could tell the*
496   *managers that we wanted to do this or that. I led the group in training and matches. That's what I*
497   *did, and sometimes I was the referee".* P8-Male
498   *"The kind of responsibility we had was to be in charge of the instruments and uniforms".* P5-
499   Female
500
501   Co-construction seem to be a method of work between the supervisors and the group.
502   Whether it be the songs to perform or what to do in the training session, activity participants
503   were able to share their ideas. For some, being in the first participants after the creation of the
504   sport school and the art-music centre, they even supported the development of new project or
505   disciplines.
506
507   *"The artistic director was sometimes inspired by a song; he would think, 'Maybe we can use*
508   *this song,' and propose it to the group. He also asked for their opinions, and sometimes it was the*

509 *members themselves who suggested songs. /.../. They would decide together if they could perform that*
510 *song or not".* P6-Female
511
512   With time, some were even able so secure an actual job within the organisation,
513 becoming group supervisors, official supervisor assistants, administrative assistants, social
514 workers, music teachers or other position in other departments of the NGO. For some, these
515 employment opportunities helped them to financially support their life, family and studies.
516
517   *"When I found a job at the center, I wanted to continue my studies. Since I found ways to pay*
518 *for tuition fees, I pursued studies in computer science".* P4-Male
519   *"[By working at the NGO,] I supported my family. I participated a lot and contributed to my*
520 *family".* P3-Male
521
522 3.3.4. Perspective for their future
523   Whether it's taking charge of their own faith or in developing their independent projects
524 after leaving the activities, it appears that the participants have now a forward-looking
525 perspective for their future.
526
527   *"I thank the activity because it is through it that I am doing what I am doing now. It's through*
528 *the activity that I started to have an idea about my future".* P3-Male
529
530   Some even report that the organisation gave them the opportunity to meet with foreign
531 organisation to develop their skills and then share them in the activity centre. The training or
532 job opportunities that some participants had in the activities help them to find jobs in other
533 organisation, win contests, pursue a semi-professional sport career, or start their own band.
534
535   *"It gives young people something to do, to keep them occupied. But not only that, by being in*
536 *the NGO, they gain experience. An experience they would have never discovered elsewhere".* P6-
537 Female
538   *"Engaging in sports was for maintaining my physical fitness, and it also allowed me to have*
539 *the job I am doing currently, as I am now called upon to play football here and there. I am currently*
540 *playing football as a professional. I am playing for a club in another province of Madagascar".* P8-
541 Male
542
543 3.3.5. Sense of purpose
544   One of the main functions of the activities for the participants seem to be occupational.
545 The activity allowed them to stay busy, do something meaningful with their time and, most
546 importantly, stay away from risky behavior that could lead to potential trouble. Participants
547 draw a link between boredom and adoption of risky behaviours. By participating in
548 extracurricular program, participants were busy outside of school time.
549
550   *"The main goal of the NGO is to give something to do to the youth. Because the youth, /.../*
551 *since there are no activities proposed to them, they get bored and therefore do whatever. Some*

552 *engage in prostitution, some misbehave, so the NGO created activities for the youth to keep them*
553 *occupied, /.../".* P5-Female
554   *"The training sessions were on Saturdays, and instead of staying at home doing nothing, just*
555 *sitting around and hanging out in the neighborhood, I had a purpose. When Saturday came, I knew*
556 *we would go for training sessions, and that motivated me".* P7-Male

557
558   They did not had time to loiter with others in the neighborhood and be tempted to
559 adopt risky behavior like drug usage. Participants make a link between keeping busy with
560 extracurricular activities and avoid early pregnancies. Some, push even the link further by
561 saying that the activities keep youth away from getting into sex work.

562
563   *"Where I'm from, there are girls who are 13 years old and already pregnant, or already have*
564 *children. Many of my friends already have children and are married. As for me, I'm not married and I*
565 *don't have children".* P2-Female
566   *"The NGO created activities for young people to keep them occupied, to have them do*
567 *something, but also for those who have the most difficulties, to help financially with their studies".* P5-
568 Female

569
570 3.3.6. Prioritizing education
571   It seems that one of the messages passed through the activities concerns the
572 importance of education. Participants mention that it was a necessity to be enrolled in a school
573 to access the extracurricular program. If they did not have the financial mean to go to school,
574 the organisation would sponsor them with a scholarship. The education seems to be presented
575 as the priority and some participants make this message their own by setting education as a
576 goal to succeed in life. Some shared that they put on hold some activities to prioritize their
577 study.

578
579   *"I was still in school at that time, and I missed a few training sessions, but during the holidays,*
580 *I often came /.../ The supervisors at the sports school did not accept people who were not attending*
581 *school, only those who were going to school. 'The useful things before the pleasant things.' That's why*
582 *we were obliged to go to school".* P8-Male
583   *"[I stopped], I felt that I couldn't take on as many responsibilities as before, as in 2011, I*
584 *started studying at the university".* P5-Male

585
586 3.3.7. Physical health
587   Sports activities seem to carry important teachings for participants regarding their
588 health, as to being active to stay in good health, avoiding or changing behaviors that could
589 compromise their health, like consuming alcohol.

590
591   *"I also learned from the teachings I received in sports that an athlete should not drink.*
592 *However, there are young people in my neighborhood who are very good at football, and they drink.*
593 *But I learned that I should not do it because it's not good for an athlete. It's really a way of life that*
594 *I've learned, a change in behavior as well. For example, people in my neighborhood, if they win a*

match, they immediately go to parties and drink. But I know that it's not good, so I abstain". P7-Male

3.3.8. Structure and material

Appreciation towards a dedicated space and structure in the activities is evoked by the participants. Playing soccer in the street is very different from playing in a structured activity, where everyone is given a position to play, and exercises to evolve.

"In neighborhood football, you take on various roles. As soon as you have the ball, you try to do your best. In the activity, you're given a specific role, like they're telling you that you're in this position, you follow the role of that position, and you don't do anything else besides that. There, it's more structured; they give you exercises, and you can progress". P7-Male

They also appreciate having access to all sort of quality musical instruments that they can practice on and learn about. Indeed, such material is not available to everyone in this economically constraints context, therefore having access to an array of instruments is described as very special by the participants.

"Here, in everyday life, we always hear that instruments are very expensive. However, over there, we were given an opportunity to actually touch these precious instruments; so, everyone was very happy, very interested, and we were all very curious, asking each other, 'How's your instrument?' 'How are you doing?' 'How do you use it?' This made everyone get along very well due to this curiosity about using these new instruments; instruments that are very expensive and that everyone wanted to learn". P3-Male

3.4. Recommendation for improvements

During the interview process, participants provided some noteworthy recommendations to enhance the activities. One of them pertains to the availability of material and human resources. The activities appear to be highly popular among the youth of Toliara, resulting in large group sizes. Those engaged in the sports group noted that the available materials are insufficient, and increasing the number of coaches could be beneficial in effectively supervising these larger groups.

As mentioned by the participants the activities target vulnerable members of society, including youth, underprivileged children, girls, and women. Some participants propose that the organization should place greater emphasis on educating boys in relation to the challenges faced by girls. They posit that educating boys would directly contribute to the betterment of girls' circumstances.

"Since it's the boys who impregnate young girls, and the NGO helps a lot of girls, but still, it's important to educate the boys as well in order to help the girls". P3-Male

A final suggestion is for the organization to continue and strengthen their commitment to social work for their beneficiaries. For example, participants highlight the crucial role of social workers who establish a connection between the school, the family, and the activity center.

638 They achieve this by making regular visits to schools and families, discussing the progress of the
639 beneficiaries' education, and offering support when necessary.
640
641   *"They need to continue working; they're doing a good job so far. There are educational*
642 *facilitators who help beneficiaries with problems in their schools. They need to continue improving*
643 *social support".* P4-Male
644

4. DISCUSSION

646   The objective of the present study was to explore and gain a deeper understanding of
647 the long-term perspectives of young adults on their experience of engaging as adolescents in
648 extracurricular activities in an extreme context, namely the southern region of Madagascar. The
649 interviewed participants are adults who were involved as adolescents in an extracurricular
650 activity for several years.
651   Activities are described by participants as organised. Organised activities follow a
652 regular schedule, involve peer integration, are typically voluntary, focus on the acquisition of
653 specific skills, foster positive youth development, are not part of the school curriculum and are
654 supervised by adults. Regarding the supervision, most supervisors are non-officially qualified
655 local teachers, coaches or trainers. Indeed, most of these actors did not receive a formal
656 training or have a degree related to their position. Nevertheless, they receive frequent training
657 from partners of the NGO. Being themselves from the community or former beneficiaries, as
658 some of the participants to this research, they know the local context and its population.
659 Beyond the lack of formal training or degree, they have firsthand experience with the
660 challenges, needs, and dynamics of the community, which can be instrumental in designing and
661 implementing effective extracurricular programs. Their familiarity with the local context allows
662 them to tailor programs to better meet the specific needs and preferences of the community
663 (McLeroy et al., 2003)
664   The specific local context has been described by the participants. Their comments align
665 with numerous reports written by diverse organisation (Sachs et al., 2023; UNICEF, 2014, 2018)
666 describing the extreme living conditions of the Malagasy youth. Despite these challenging life
667 conditions, extracurricular activities appear to positively impact the well-being and
668 development of youth during and beyond their participation.
669
4.1. Fulfill basic psychological needs
671   From our participants narrative, the present research was able to capture that extracur-
672 ricular programs seems to be a space which fulfils basic psychological needs, namely auton-
673 omy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017a).
674   Regarding the need for relatedness, art-music and sport activities seem to give an op-
675 portunity to the participants to develop meaningful connections with others. Whether it is with
676 peers or adults supervising the activities, participants seem to build strong relationships within
677 their program. The activity setting offers the participants a place where they belong; an art-mu-
678 sic or sport group where they become part of something larger than their individual selves. A

679 place where their basic psychological need for relatedness was satisfied, as they genuinely re-
680 lated to and cared for others, where they feel that others authentically care for them (Ryan &
681 Deci, 2000).
682   Regarding the need for competence, participants developed all sorts of new skills or
683 knowledge in these activity groups. Whether it is learning a new instrument, new techniques in
684 a particular sport, take on responsibilities in the activities or open themselves to new horizons,
685 the extracurricular programs seem to offer to young people the structure to develop a multi-
686 tude of skills and grow as individuals. These extracurricular activities support the satisfaction of
687 the need for competence by providing participants with the chance to have a feeling of being
688 good at what they do and to get challenged while developing new skills, as seen in other re-
689 search (Leversen et al., 2012). In other words, this program is a place where their basic psycho-
690 logical need for competence is met.
691   Regarding the need for autonomy, youth enter this activity based on a personal and free
692 choice of which activity they want to get involved in. The co-construction process described by
693 the participants highlight their opportunity to share their ideas and feel a sense of choice in the
694 activity, whether is by contributing in choosing which songs the group will play or which exer-
695 cise to do in the training session. Offering the opportunity toward participants to feel volitional
696 as well as a sense of freedom and choice, such an environment seems therefore to provide the
697 conditions to satisfy the basic psychological need for autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000).
698   It seems that extracurricular environments, as described by the participants, provide a
699 valuable space for youth living in challenging conditions, supporting each basic psychological
700 need. These environments have the potential to foster long-term optimal development by es-
701 tablishing a strong foundation for young individuals as the satisfaction of basic psychological
702 needs is linked to a greater well-being and a better mental health (Ryan & Deci, 2017b).
703
704 *4.2. Influences at the time of participation*
705   Participants have emphasized the distinct impact of engaging in extracurricular pro-
706 grams on the development of young individuals. The experience of the participants is aligned
707 with the theory of the four mechanisms (O'Flaherty et al., 2022) that facilitate positive outcomes
708 for youth involved in extracurricular activities. These four mechanisms are the transfer of skills
709 from one context to another; an opportunity to develop positive relationship; the evolution in
710 youth status; a structured alternative to unstructured time preventing from potential risk-taking
711 behaviors. Addressing this last mechanism, these programs act as a protective factor, deterring
712 participants from engaging in risky behaviors. Activities served as a positive influence by keep-
713 ing participants engaged and enabling them to invest their time in something meaningful. Par-
714 ticipants confirm that the activities helped them to stay away from potential negative influences
715 that could drag them into risky behaviors like substance abuse, delinquency or unprotected sex
716 (Eccles et al., 2003), at the time of participation and up till now. The activity environment is de-
717 scribed by participants as a nurturing space for developing personal values and fostering per-
718 sonal growth.
719   The program in which the research participants took part required that to get involved
720 in extracurricular activities, participants had to be enrolled in school. If they did not have the
721 financial or material mean to do so, the organisation proposed them scholarships or school kits

722   to allow them to attend school. The importance of getting education strongly reflects in partici-
723   pants' discourse to these days. Hence, it is plausible to suggest that the impacts of engaging in
724   extracurricular activities may exert enduring effects on participants' lives. This proposition is
725   further supported by other explicitly mentioned factors in the subsequent point.
726
727   *4.3. Long lasting impacts of the participation*
728   Beyond the effects of activities at the time of involvement, participants have also shared
729   long lasting influence of their participation in the extracurricular activities. Above all, it seems
730   that participant not only have developed strong but also long-lasting relationships with their
731   peers. Other research (Berger et al., 2020; O'Flaherty et al., 2022) showed that the establish-
732   ment of peer relationships within an extracurricular program plays a crucial role in fostering
733   youth development. In this research, the notion of durability of relationships is added. Indeed,
734   participants seem to develop meaningful relationships within the activity context that tend to
735   last for years after they stop their implication. These meaningful and long-term relationships
736   have the potential to fulfil the need for relatedness over time (Ryan & Deci, 2017a). Maintaining
737   long-lasting meaningful connections has been found to be beneficial for human development
738   in the long term. Evidence supports the idea that investing effort in relationship maintenance
739   positively correlates with greater happiness (Demir et al., 2011). On the longer term, findings
740   from research involving older adults showed that those who maintained lifelong friendships
741   tended to exhibit better overall adjustment than their less socially surrounded counterparts
742   (Gupta & Korte, 1994).
743   As highlighted by O'Flaherty et al. (2022) transfer paradigm (transfer of skills
744   from one context to another), participation yields long-term benefits through the acquisition of
745   cognitive and non-cognitive skills transferable to various contexts. These skills, be they directly
746   related to the activity or of a more general nature (like social, organizational, or leadership
747   skills), contribute substantially to participants' personal development.
748   experiences opportunities for using and extending skills and expertise
749   By being given and taking on some responsibilities, participants initiate the third mecha-
750   nisms (evolution in youth status) and demonstrate that they have the necessary cultural
751   knowledge and skills to engage in social networks and environments that offer significant ad-
752   vantages and opportunities (O'Flaherty et al., 2022). In this case, they enable participants to
753   take on new personal projects and sometimes to open doors to employment opportunities.
754   This provides them with the chance to use and extend skills and expertise within an area of
755   their choice, which support their need for competence and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2017a).
756
757   *4.4. Valuing participants insights*
758   This research highlights that participants in extracurricular programs offer valuable feedback
759   about their involvement. They share valuable insights on what benefits them and should be
760   pursued by the organisation, as well as suggestions of improvement. It appears that organiza-
761   tions stand to gain by actively listening to their beneficiaries, working in co-construction and
762   basing the interventions on their needs. Indeed, according to motivation theory (Ryan & Deci,
763   2000), youth are more likely to remain engaged and motivated in an activity when the goals
764   align with their interests. This is especially true when they feel a sense of belonging within the

group, have a degree of choice and perceive themselves as competent, knowing that their in-
put is valued. When participants are driven by a more self-determined form of motivation, the
likelihood of positive outcomes increases. This kind of drive often leads to more fulfilling and
beneficial experiences for individuals involved (Pelletier et al., 1995). Therefore, organisations
working with youth are encouraged to listen to youth recommendations to enhance their over-
all experience and achieve the aimed outcomes of the activity.

4.5. Limitations

Despite the interesting findings that have been uncovered, these must be understood
within certain limitations of the research. Although using a qualitative approach provided ac-
cess to the perspectives of the young adults on their experience as adolescent participating in
extracurricular activities, it's important to note a limitation in terms of potential generalisation
of our findings. Indeed, these results are drawn from a limited sample of the population (N=8),
involved in specific programs. This implies that the insights obtained from the group studied
might have limitations in terms of broader applicability or representation for all comparable sit-
uations or populations. Though, this new knowledge is not fully generalizable, it could be trans-
ferable to other contexts, by shedding light on the potential effects of providing extracurricular
programs to youth developing in challenging conditions. Other community projects in extreme
context that seeks youth well-being and optimal development might benefit from these find-
ings to develop extracurricular programs adapted to the needs of their community in their own
reality.

Also, this research has a limited number of participants that were involved in a limited
diversity of activities. Indeed, this research had eight participants in four different activities. For-
mer participants were hard to get in contact with. Out of the 24 individuals the team attempted
to reach, only eight were actually met. Regarding the 16 participants that were not met, since
they left the activities, some had moved house or to another region, changed phone number or
just not be interested in the research project. Some individuals might have chosen not to par-
ticipate in the research due to lower satisfaction with the programs. It is conceivable that this
group may have experienced fewer positive impacts. Others had trust issues regarding the type
of questions that would be asked, or how the information that they would provide would be
used, then did not want to get involved. Even though, we tried to be as transparent and clear as
possible about the research project, some people that were contacted did not seem to feel
comfortable sharing information. One of our hypotheses to explain this reluctance revolves
around the fact that both researchers were viewed as vazah, in other words "foreigners" by the
local population. Even the Malagasy researcher, as she is from another region of the country.
The Malagasy society is marked by rivalries between the country's different regions, which are
more or less economically and politically privileged. This can create tensions between members
of the different communities, making outsiders less trustworthy. Following this hypothesis, it
would have been beneficial to have a research assistant from the Toliara region. Unfortunately,
we could not find suitably trained interviewer for the task. Given the tightly-knit nature of the
Toliara community, described as one where 'everyone knows everyone,' having outsiders may
have helped reassure participants about the confidentiality and anonymity of the interview pro-
cess.

808 **5. CONCLUSION**

809 This research aimed to explore and gain a deeper understanding of the long-term perspectives
810 of young adults on their experience of engaging as adolescents in extracurricular activities
811 whilst in an extreme context, in the southern region of Madagascar. We explored the potential
812 influence of participating in activities on individuals' basic psychological needs, autonomy,
813 competence and relatedness, as well as the influence of engagement both during the period of
814 involvement and over the long term. The present results offer valuable insights into the
815 significance of these programs for youth living in challenging contexts of development.

816 On one hand, findings show that for the participants, these programs were valuable as they
817 support their basic psychological needs of relatedness, competence and autonomy, at the time
818 of their involvement and also in the long term. Building on the satisfaction of the three basic
819 psychological needs by giving the opportunity to develop strong and sustained relationships, as
820 well as use and extend skills within an area of their choice, extracurricular activities also acted
821 as a protective factor, deterring participants from engaging in risky behaviors, possibly by falling
822 under negative peer influence, keeping participants engaged, enabling them to invest their time
823 in something meaningful, then and now. Indeed, this legacy seems to persist over time as
824 participants still want to build a brighter future for themselves by investing in their education
825 and do something meaningful, while staying away from risky behaviors. Participants in the
826 extracurricular activities described this environment as nurturing, allowing them to develop
827 personal values, fostering personal growth and placing education at the center of attention.
828 Importantly, their passage in the activities did leave its mark on participants' adults' lives with
829 long-term impacts, as they developed long-lasting relationships with their peers, they acquired
830 cognitive and non-cognitive skills transferable into various contexts, enabling them to take on
831 new personal projects and sometimes open doors to employment opportunities. Even though,
832 these results are based on a handful of discourses and cannot be generalised, they still
833 support the idea that extracurricular programs have a role to play and long-lasting impact in
834 sustaining youth optimal development in extreme contexts.

835 On the other hand, findings support the importance for organisation to listen to their
836 participants as they have valuable insights on their experience in the organisations' programs.
837 This input can help organisations in aligning their programs more effectively with participant
838 needs, thereby enhancing support for their optimal development. Researchers' teams,
839 equipped with skills and knowledge, may be of a great support to organisations in this task
840 (Décarpentrie et al., In Press). Through collaborative efforts, they can collect the necessary data
841 for the organisation needs while gaining valuable insights that drive scientific advancements
842 forward.

843   Researchers are encouraged to dwell further into these questions and observe quantitatively
844   the long-term effects of the implication of adolescents in extracurricular programs on their
845   adults' life in this challenging conditions. It would be important to examine quantitatively the
846   lasting effect of the participation on the fulfilment of basic psychological needs, the avoidance
847   of risky behaviors (e.g. alcohol or drug consumption), their social sphere as well as educational
848   and occupational outcomes. Delving into the possible connections between the needs
849   satisfaction and the long term avoidance of risky behavior (Zeldman et al., 2004) or the
850   development of specific personal values, could provide insights into the lasting protective role
851   of extracurricular activities in an extreme context.

852   In a co-construction perspective, researchers are urged to collaborate with organisations
853   working closely to the community to better answer their needs. Also, organisations are
854   encouraged to actively listen to their participants valuable insights to enhance their program.
855   Local organizations operating within similar contexts can draw inspiration from our
856   participants' perspectives to enrich their existing programs or aid in the development of new
857   initiatives within their organizations. International organisation and agencies are encouraged to
858   listen to the voices of young people regarding their needs. They are prompted to expand the
859   scope beyond addressing solely physical needs and embrace more comprehensive solutions.
860   This entails incorporating programs, like art-music and sport among others, that aim to fulfil
861   youth's psychological needs and sustain youth optimal development.

862

863   6. REFERENCES

864   Author1, Author2, Leduc, H., Author3, Author4, & Author5. (Submitted). Extracurricular
865   activities as a way to foster development for youth living in an extreme context: a basic
866   psychological needs perspective in Madagascar.
867   Author1, Author 2, Author 3, Author 5, Author 6, Ramarokoto Ny Aina, M. A., & Author 7.
868   (Submitted). Art, Music, and Sport: Catalysts of Growth for Adolescents in Extreme
869   Contexts - A Qualitative Inquiry
870   Barber, B. L., Eccles, J. S., & Stone, M. R. (2001). Whatever happened to the jock, the brain,
871   and the princess? Young adult pathways linked to adolescent activity involvement and
872   social identity. Journal of adolescent research, 16(5), 429-455.
873   Berger, C., Deutsch, N., Cuadros, O., Franco, E., Rojas, M., Roux, G., , & Sánchez, F. (2020).
874   Adolescent peer processes in extracurricular activities: Identifying developmental
875   opportunities.   Children   and   Youth   Services   Review,   118(105457).
876   https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105457
877   Bettelheim, B. (1943). Individual and mass behavior in extreme situations. The Journal of
878   Abnormal and Social Psychology, 38(4), 417-452. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0061208
879   Boelens, M., Smit, M., Raat, H., Bramer, W., & Jansen, W. (2022). Impact of organized
880   activities on mental health in children and adolescents: An umbrella review. Preventive

881   Medicine Reports, 25, Article 101687. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2021.101687

882   Bohnert, A., Fredricks, J., & Randall, E. (2010). Capturing unique dimensions of youth
883   organized activity involvement: Theoretical and methodological considerations.
884   Review of Educational Research, 80(4), 576–610.
885   https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654310364533

886   Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2020). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive)
887   thematic analysis? Qualitative Research in Psychology, 18(3), 328-352.
888   https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769238

889   Brial, F. (2011). Tourisme international et prostitution féminine: le cas de Nosy-Bé
890   (Madagascar). Annales de géographie, 679(3), 334-347.
891   https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3917/ag.679.0334

892   Chen, B., Van Assche, J., Vansteenkiste, M., Soenens, B., & Beyers, W. (2015). Does
893   psychological need satisfaction matter when environmental or financial safety are at
894   risk? Journal of Happiness Studies, 16(3), 745-766. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-
895   014-9532-5

896   Chen, B., Vansteenkiste, M., Beyers, W., Boone, L., Deci, E. L., Van der Kaap-Deeder, J.,
897   Duriez, B., Lens, W., Matos, L., & Mouratidis, A. (2015). Basic psychological need
898   satisfaction, need frustration, and need strength across four cultures. Motivation and
899   Emotion, 39(2), 216-236. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-014-9450-1

900   Chirkov, V., Ryan, R. M., Kim, Y., & Kaplan, U. (2003). Differentiating autonomy from
901   individualism and independence: A self-determination theory perspective on
902   internalization of cultural orientations and well-being. Journal of Personality and Social
903   Psychology, 84(1), 97-110. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.1.97

904   Corral, P., Irwin, A., Krishnan, N., Mahler, D. G., & Vishwanath, T. (2020). Fragility and
905   Conflict: On the Front Lines of the Fight against Poverty. World Bank.
906   http://hdl.handle.net/10986/33324

907   Décarpentrie, L., Bélanger, C., Ramarokoto Ny Aina, M., Rakotondramanana, B.,
908   Randrianarisoa, A., Rakotondrasoa, S., Rakotomalala, O., Guirao, J. L., Volanjary, M. H.,
909   & Gadais, T. (In Press). South-North Research Collaboration to Support Malagasy NGO
910   work. In B. Graeff, L. C. Sambili Gicheha, & S. Safarikova (Eds.), Global South voices on
911   Sport for Development and Peace. Routledge.

912   Demir, M., Özdemir, M., & Marum, K. P. (2011). Perceived autonomy support, friendship
913   maintenance, and happiness. The Journal of psychology, 145(6), 537-571.

914   Denault, A. S., & Poulin, F. (2009). Predictors of adolescent participation in organized
915   activities: A five-year longitudinal study. Journal of research on adolescence, 19(2), 287-
916   311. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2009.00597.x

917   Eccles, J. S., & Barber, B. L. (1999). Student council, volunteering, basketball, or marching
918   band: What kind of extracurricular involvement matters? Journal of adolescent
919   research, 14(1), 10-43. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558499141003

920   Eccles, J. S., Barber, B. L., Stone, M., & Hunt, J. (2003). Extracurricular activities and
921   adolescent   development.   Journal   of   social   issues,   59(4),   865-889.
922   https://doi.org/10.1046/j.0022-4537.2003.00095.x
923   Farb, A. F., & Matjasko, J. L. (2012). Recent advances in research on school-based
924   extracurricular activities and adolescent development. Developmental Review, 32, 1-
925   48. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2011.10.001
926   Gadais, T., Décarpentrie, L., Webb, A., Ayoub, M.-B., Bardocz-Bencsik, M., & Bélanger, C.
927   (2021). A Method for Conducting Preliminary Analysis of the Nature and Context of
928   Sport for Development and Peace Projects in Fieldwork Research: An Illustration With
929   a Malagasy Non-Governmental Organization [Original Research]. Frontiers in Sports
930   and Active Living, 3. https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2021.658496
931   Gupta, V., & Korte, C. (1994). The effects of a confidant and a peer group on the well-
932   being of single elders. The International Journal of Aging and Human Development,
933   39(4), 293-302.
934   Hansen, D. M., Larson, R. W., & Dworkin, J. B. (2003). What adolescents learn in organized
935   youth activities: A survey of self‐reported developmental experiences. Journal of
936   research on adolescence, 13(1), 25-55. https://doi.org/10.1111/1532-7795.1301006
937   Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world?
938   Behavioral   and   brain   sciences,   33(2-3),   61-83.
939   https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X0999152X
940   La Guardia, J. G., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). Buts personnels, besoins psychologiques
941   fondamentaux et bien-être: théorie de l'autodétermination et applications. Revue
942   québécoise de psychologie, 21(2).
943   Lerner, R. M., Lerner, J. V., Bowers, E. P., & Geldhof, G. J. (2015). Positive youth
944   development and relational-developmental-systems. In W. F. Overton, P. C. M.
945   Molenaar, & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), Handbook of child psychology and developmental
946   science: Theory and method (7th ed., Vol. 1, pp. 607-651). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
947   https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118963418.childpsy116
948   Leversen, I., Danielsen, A. G., Wold, B., & Samdal, O. (2012). What they want and what
949   they get: Self-reported motives, perceived competence, and relatedness in adolescent
950   leisure activities. Child Development Research, 2012.
951   Mahoney, J. L., Larson, R. W., & Eccles, J. S. (2005). Organized activities as contexts of
952   development: Extracurricular activities, after school and community programs.
953   Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
954   Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition,
955   emotion,   and   motivation.   Psychological   Review,   98(2),   224-253.
956   https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.98.2.224
957   McLeroy, K. R., Norton, B. L., Kegler, M. C., Burdine, J. N., & Sumaya, C. V. (2003).
958   Community-Based Interventions. American Journal of Public Health, 93(4), 529-533.

959   https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.93.4.529

960   Mirandraibe, J., & Losa, F. (2023). Qui est laissé de côté à Madadagascar? Analyse de
961   classification sur les données du Recensement Général de la Population et de
962   l'Habitation   2018.   https://madagascar.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-
963   11/UN_LNOB_FINAL.pdf

964   O'Flaherty, M., Baxter, J., & Campbell, A. (2022). Do extracurricular activities contribute to
965   better adolescent outcomes? A fixed-effects panel data approach. . Journal of
966   adolescence, 94(6), 855–866. https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.12069

967   Pelletier, L. G., Vallerand, R. J., Green-demers, I., Brière, N. M., & Blais, M. R. (1995). Loisirs
968   et santé mentale: les relations entre la motivation pour la pratique des loisirs et le
969   bien-être psychologique. Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne
970   des Sciences du comportement, 27(2), 140-156. https://doi.org/10.1037/0008-
971   400X.27.2.140

972   Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic
973   motivation, social development, and well-Being. American psychologist, 55(1), 68-78.
974   https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68

975   Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017a). Basic psychological needs theory: Satisfaction and
976   frustration of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in relation to psychological
977   wellness and full functioning. Self-determination theory In R. M. Ryan & E. L. Deci (Eds.),
978   Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and
979   wellness (pp. 239-271). The Guilford Press.

980   Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017b). Self-determination theory : basic psychological needs in
981   motivation,   development,   and   wellness.   The   Guilford   Press.
982   https://doi.org/10.1521/978.14625/28806

983   Sachs, J. D., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G., & Drumm, E. (2023). Implementing the SDG Stimulus.
984   Sustainable Development Report 2023. Paris: SDSN, Dublin: Dublin University Press.
985   https://doi.org/10.25546/102924

986   Sanson, A. V., Van Hoorn, J., & Burke, S. E. (2019). Responding to the impacts of the
987   climate crisis on children and youth. Child Development Perspectives, 13(4), 201-207.
988   https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12342

989   Shulruf, B. (2010). Do extra-curricular activities in schools improve educational
990   outcomes? A critical review and meta-analysis of the literature. International Review of
991   Education, 56(5), 591-612. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-010-9180-x

992   Silva-Leander, S. (2020). Multiple deprivations in children in Madagascar, Briefing note.
993   UNICEF.   https://www.unicef.org/madagascar/en/reports/multiple-deprivations-
994   children-madagascar

995   Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight "big-tent" criteria for excellent qualitative
996   research. Qualitative inquiry, 16(10), 837-851. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780041038

997   UNICEF. (2014). L'enfance à Madagascar, une promesse d'avenir. Analyse de la situation

998   de   la   mère   et   de   l'enfant.
999   https://www.unicef.org/madagascar/media/1056/file/SITAN%202014%20(full)%20(20
1000   14).pdf
1001   UNICEF.   (2018).   Défis   et   opportunités   des   enfants   à   Madagascar.
1002   https://www.unicef.org/madagascar/media/1241/file
1003   United   Nations.   (2010).   World   programme   for   action   for   youth.
1004   https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf
1005   United Nations Development Program. (2022). Human development report 2021/2022.
1006   Uncertain   times,   unsettled   lives.   Shaping   our   future   in   a   transforming   world.
1007   https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2021-22
1008   United Nations Population Fund. (2017). Rapport annuel UNFPA océan indien. Une
1009   ambition   renouvelée.   https://madagascar.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-
1010   pdf/UNFPA%20RAPPORT%20ANNUEL%202017.pdf
1011   World Bank. (2023). Life expectancy at birth, total (years). Retrieved March 1, 2023 from
1012   https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN
1013   Zeldman, A., Ryan, R. M., & Fiscella, K. (2004). Motivation, autonomy support, and entity
1014   beliefs: Their role in methadone maintenance treatment. Journal of Social and Clinical
1015   Psychology, 23(5), 675-696.
1016
1017
1018

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

LD: Conceptualization, methodology, software, validation, formal analysis, investigation, data curation, writing original draft, writing -review and editing, visualization, project administration. CB: Conceptualization, methodology, validation, writing -review and editing, supervision, funding acquisition. BR: data curation, formal analysis, writing -review and editing. SR: Investigation, writing -review and editing. OR: Conceptualization, methodology, writing -review and editing. JLG: Conceptualization, methodology, review and editing. TG: Conceptualization, methodology, validation, writing -review and editing, supervision, funding acquisition. All authors did read and approve the final manuscript.

Funding

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This research project was reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee for student projects involving human beings of the Faculty of Human Sciences of the Université du Québec à Montréal (Ethics approval number: 2020-2635). Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

Data availability

Interview respondents were assured raw data would remain confidential and would not be shared.

Declaration of interest

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose. Jose Luis Guirao receives a salary from the NGO Bel Avenir where he is the Executive Director.

Appendix A: methodological precisions

1054

Data collection procedures

1055

1056 The PI and two research assistants were involved in the interview process. Two interviews

1057 were conducted by the PI only. One research assistant   accompanied the PI for five interviews.

1058 These seven interviews were conducted face-to-face with the participants. One interview was

1059 conducted over the phone by the PI and the other research assistant. Interviews were audio

1060 recorded.

1061 The first two interviews were conducted in French only by the PI. Even though, all the

1062 participants were fluent in French, it appeared that there were some limits posed by the French

1063 language in the expression of certain ideas by the participants. Therefore, it was decided to

1064 conduct all the next interviews in French with a simultaneous translation in Malagasy offered by

1065 the research assistants, when necessary. This way, participants had the opportunity to express

1066 themselves in Malagasy whenever they felt like it. This procedure allowed the participant to

1067 validate that the idea that was translated was actually what they meant to say. If translations

1068 were not precise enough, participants would correct the translation and elaborate, either in

1069 French or in Malagasy.

1070

Analyses specification

1071

1072 This approach sought to anchor the analysis within the cultural context, as seen through

1073 the lens of the Malagasy researcher, while also capitalizing on an outsider's perspective to

1074 better understand the experiences presented by the participants. The disagreements in the

1075   coding process mainly arose from the cultural lenses of each coder, as they did not share the

1076   same perception of the context. These varying perceptions had an impact on their

1077   comprehension and, consequently, their interpretation of the data. The encounter of these

1078   interpretations substantially enhanced the comprehension of the investigated phenomenon.

1079   Throughout the whole research process, the researchers dedicated time to engage in

1080   deep discussions regarding their values, preconceptions, and inclinations as researchers, in a

1081   self-reflexivity perspective (Tracy, 2010). In these discussions, every coder discussed their own

1082   sense of self, attempting to articulate their identities and how these identities might have

1083   impacted the research process, specifically in relation to, but not limited to, the analyses. The

1084   reflections extended beyond the scope of analysis to scrutinize the interview procedures and

1085   the overall project development. Each coder posed questions to one another in an effort to

1086   encourage deeper contemplation and to further explore the connections that were brought

1087   up. The collaborative analysis process between the two researchers primarily took place online

1088   via a videoconferencing platform, SkypeTM.

1089

1090   **Limitations of procedures**

1091   The initial two interviews were conducted by a single researcher who lacked proficiency

1092   in Malagasy. This circumstance potentially impacted the data quality due to certain ambiguities

1093   in the participants' discourse that were challenging to clarify. Consequently, some ideas might

1094   not have been fully expressed, thereby limiting the depth of the discussion. Following an

1095   iterative process, it has then been decided to introduce a second researcher, fluent in

1096   Malagasy, in the interview process for the next six interviews. One researcher was leading the

1097   interview and the other one was assisting the participants to express themselves in Malagasy, if

1098   they wished to. This support involved direct translation of the participants' responses into

1099   French, allowing the participants to validate and make adjustments to their statements if

1100   necessary. Even though this strategy was time-consuming, both for the participant and for the

1101   research team, it became apparent that this method provided the best opportunity for

1102   participants to fully express and ensure understanding of their experiences.   An alternative

1103   approach could have involved training the Malagasy researcher to conduct interviews entirely

1104   in Malagasy, subsequently translating them for analysis. However, this method would have

1105   introduced a different set of limitations (Author1, Author 2, et al., submitted).

1106

1107

1108   # Appendix B: supplementary interview quotations

1109   *Supplementary interview quotations are organized in alignment with the various segments of*

1110   *the results section in the main article.*

1111   **3.1 Extreme context**

1112   "Yes, that's why I'm leaving CITY too, because I don't want to see my class graduating

1113   while I sit here doing nothing. That's why I'm leaving my mother, my brothers, my sisters... I

1114   leave everyone so I don't get married. It's a bit sad, but... But I want to study, especially nursing,

1115   but there's no money for that". P1-Female

1116   "I studied here in CITY for a year after the baccalaureate. But after that, I couldn't go to

1117   OTHER CITY to continue, because it's a bit difficult to go there financially, and that's why I

1118   changed courses". P3-Male

1119   "I had a friend who got pregnant, but she had an abortion. There is a plant called Aloe

1120   that you boil in water, put in a bottle, and she drank that every morning. But she didn't tell me.

1121   It was for the abortion that she was drinking it. Afterward, I asked her, 'Why are you drinking

1122   this?' She told me she had a stomach ache... Eventually, the abortion was done. After that, she

1123   became sick because of the abortion. She was in a lot of pain but didn't want to tell her

1124   parents, so she left with friends and stayed at their place. Her parents came to pick her up from

1125   our place, so I took them to the friend's house where she was staying. However, she had

1126   already gone to sleep at her boyfriend's place. Her parents didn't know about it. She said she

1127   didn't want to tell them because her mother is mean. I went to her boyfriend's place and found

1128   her in a very bad condition. She had lost a lot of blood. I made her some tea to drink, and then I

1129   left to sell my phone to get some money and take her to the hospital. At the hospital, the

1130   doctor gave her injections. Then, she continued the treatment." P2-Female

1131

1132   *3.3   Experience of the activity*

1133   3.3.1.   Relationships

1134   "What I liked about the activity was playing music and having fun with friends". P4-Male

1135   "I am quite introverted by nature. I am not the type who will approach someone to talk,

1136   fight, or gossip. But upon joining the activity, I really noticed that I had become much more

1137   open. I was able to make friends. Not only did I notice that I had opened up, but also by

1138   traveling, I was able to discover new places and new ways of living. I was able to bring all that

1139   back into my life. I noticed that since then, I am much more open to others. I don't stay in my

1140   own corner; I approach others more easily". P5-Female

1141   "When we left the center for the social shelter, it's the coach who guides and watches

1142   over us. Even on the way, he tells us to be careful because 'if something bothers you or hurts

1143   you, I am responsible. Yes, because you are still under my responsibility. Because you have not

1144   yet arrived at the center'. But when we returned to the center safe and sound, it's the Miss at

1145   the center who is the person in charge of us, not him. So, the role of Mister is not only to be

1146   our coach but also our general supervisor. He's the one who watches over us. I still see him

1147   today. We are from the same neighborhood". P1-Female

1148   "Everyone has their own mind, but in the group, we were obliged to be united, even

1149   though we were all very different. We managed to have cohesion to make the group work". P5-

1150   Female

1151 "My best friends were in football because they loved football, so every time someone

1152 found something related to football, they would say, 'Come and see, I found this related to

1153 football". P7-Male

1154 "The NGO has brought a lot to me, so I raised awareness among my cousins to go there.

1155 Regarding the percentage of those I managed to sensitize to go there, 40% went. To them, I

1156 would say, 'The NGO is not just about financial help, it's not just about success in terms of

1157 money, but it's truly about developing oneself as a human being, discovering more things,

1158 learning to live with others, discovering more than what you see in your daily life'. That's what I

1159 encouraged others to go and see". P6-Female

1160 "My father was really proud of me. It got to a point where when he was working and

1161 came across flutes or something like that, he would buy them for me. At one point, I had five of

1162 them. Whether it was plastic or wood, my father didn't really understand the difference

1163 between the clarinet and the flute. To him, it was the same. Each time, he would bring them to

1164 me. Even during the national celebration, if he saw small trumpets being sold, he would bring

1165 those for me too. So, my father was really happy that I was into music, and he was very proud

1166 of me". P6-Female

1167 "My parents used to say to me, 'Oh, but you can do something like that, you who seem

1168 so soft". P5-Female

1169 "Learning to get along well with each other was also difficult. Because it's also about

1170 learning to live together, in the sense that, for example, if someone touches someone else's

1171 belongings, it's learning not to immediately get angry. It's about learning not to get upset and

1172 angry right away about it but to stay calm. It's truly learning to be together because we cannot

1173 be alone on this planet. So, we have to adapt to others and not always be in constant conflict or

1174 get annoyed every time someone does something we don't like". P6-Female

1175 "I am quite introverted by nature. I am not the type who will approach someone to talk,

1176 fight, or gossip. But upon joining the activity, I really noticed that I had become much more

1177 open. I was able to make friends. Not only did I notice that I had opened up, but also by

1178 traveling, I was able to discover new places and new ways of living. I was able to bring all that

1179 back into my life. I noticed that since then, I am much more open to others. I don't stay in my

1180 own corner; I approach others more easily". P5-Female

1181

1182 **3.3.2. Learnings**

1183 "I would highly recommend going there because, for example, I have friends who play

1184 soccer in the neighborhood, and they play well, but I would suggest to them to go there

1185 because it's more structured. There, they give you exercises, you can progress, not just sell

1186 around the neighborhood". P7-Male

1187 "The group leader sets rules that must be followed; internal rules. Also, because he

1188 knows how to animate the group, we have fun with him even if there are rules". P3-Male

1189 "For example, when I went to Tana (short for Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar);

1190 the NGO gave me the opportunity to go to Tana. I discovered the capital. There are many more

1191 people there than here. I also realized that there were lots of young people who weren't going

1192 to school and weren't doing anything, and they were falling into prostitution. That motivated me

1193 in life to do everything I could to not become like that. Because I saw that if I did nothing, I

1194 could end up like that. So, it really motivated me to avoid falling into that and pushed me to

1195   work hard, to go to school, and to pursue my studies as far as possible". P5-Female

1196   "There are many lessons, advice on how to protect the goalkeeper. And in life too. You

1197   have to be serious in what you do, and everything will go very well". P8-Male

1198   "There are many changes. For example, when we play matches, there are different

1199   mindsets, different teams. We make new friends". P1-Female

1200   "I came for football, but I discovered several other sports like table tennis, volleyball, and

1201   ping-pong. I didn't know about them at all before. That's where I discovered and learned all

1202   that". P7-Male

1203

1204   3.3.3. Responsibilities

1205   "When the supervisor had to be absent, he would ask her to lead some exercises for the

1206   children, for the others. He would oversee that". P7-Male

1207   "For example, it was the first time I was managing young people. It was an opportunity

1208   for me to learn, to improve the management of youth". P4-Male

1209   "I told our supervisor that during training hours, I had nothing to do. So, I told her that I

1210   would leave the social shelter to teach the little girls or boys, to help our coach. I assisted him

1211   during training". P1-Female

1212   "As responsible for the uniforms, we were in charge of organizing the uniforms, as well

1213   as conducting inventories to count how many were available. We also washed the uniforms.

1214   Usually, we were supposed to wash everything together in the center, but there were times

1215   when only a few uniforms were dirty. At that point, we could take them home to wash and then

1216   bring them back". P6-Female

1217   "The artistic director was sometimes inspired by a song; he would think, 'Maybe we can

1218 use this song,' and propose it to the group. He also asked for their opinions, and sometimes it

1219 was the members themselves who suggested songs. For example, the latest popular songs,

1220 that could also set them apart from other groups, and people will more easily remember them

1221 because of that. They would decide together if they could perform that song or not". P6-Female

1222   "As a supervisor, every time I want to do something, I ask for their ideas. It's up to me to

1223 plan and organize the ideas they have. We start from their ideas, or if I have an idea, I propose

1224 it to them, and in return, they give their ideas too. We have an exchange of ideas". P3-Male

1225

3.3.4. Perspectives for the future

1227   "When we left, we created our own group, as a continuation, like we saw that it was

1228 working here and we wanted to improve it even more". P6-Female

1229

3.3.5. Sense of purpose

1231   "The main goal of the NGO is to give something to do to the youth. Because the youth,

1232 since there's nothing, since there are no activities proposed to them, they get bored and

1233 therefore do whatever. Some engage in prostitution, some misbehave, so the NGO created

1234 activities for the youth to keep them occupied, to have them do something" P5-Female

1235   "In my opinion, it's an NGO that advocates against early pregnancies. Against children

1236 who go out and do nothing, and precisely this boredom often leads them to do more mischief

1237 than they should... [coming here] gives them something to do, to keep busy. I had marching

1238 band rehearsals on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday. And precisely, these schedules

1239   corresponded to the hours when I didn't have classes. I didn't have classes on Wednesday, so I

1240   went there. On Saturday too, I didn't have classes, so I went there, in the morning for the

1241   marching band and in the afternoon for theater. Instead of doing nothing and wandering

1242   around the city, I always had a goal, which was to go and engage at the NGO". P6-Female

1243   "I didn't really hang around much anymore, or almost not at all, because I was involved

1244   in an activity. I occupied myself with that instead of just hanging out with others. The others,

1245   more than anything else, led me to mischief. And by doing activities, I distanced myself from all

1246   of that". P7-Male

1247   "The goal of the center is to provide activities for children, to prevent them from

1248   spending their time outside school hours on the streets, anywhere, or smoking drugs with drug

1249   users. It's important to create activities for them". P4-Male

1250

1251   ### 3.3.6. Prioritizing education

1252   "In addition to soccer, I also played the piano at the music center. But my teacher asked

1253   me to stop because I was in an exam class. I loved playing the piano, but it bothered me a little

1254   because I was doing it a lot, and I practiced, practiced, practiced to become a professional, but

1255   it was bothering me in relation to my studies. And my teacher advised me to stop playing the

1256   piano because it was disrupting my studies. I didn't have enough time to revise. I was focusing

1257   too much on playing the piano rather than on my studies. That's why I stopped playing the

1258   piano". P1-Female