

Conceptualizing rural local youth sport systems: Two cases from the All Sports for All Kids project



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BACKGROUND

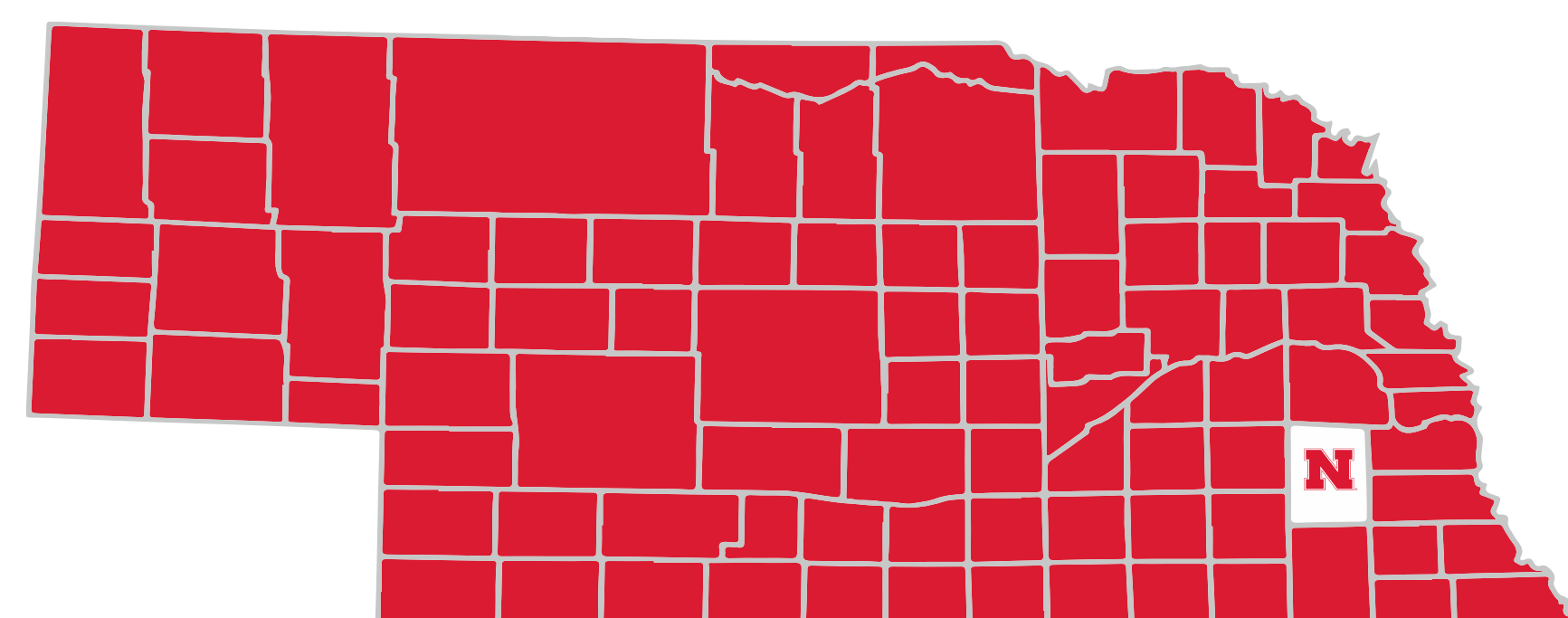
Youth sports are an important community system for physical activity promotion, chronic disease prevention and creating healthy communities^{1,2}.

Inequalities in exposure and access to youth sport opportunities (YSO) exist based on geography, ethnic minority status, and economic disadvantages.

This inequalities in YSO may be due to local social structural disadvantages that create health preventable health inequities in physical activity (PA).

PURPOSE

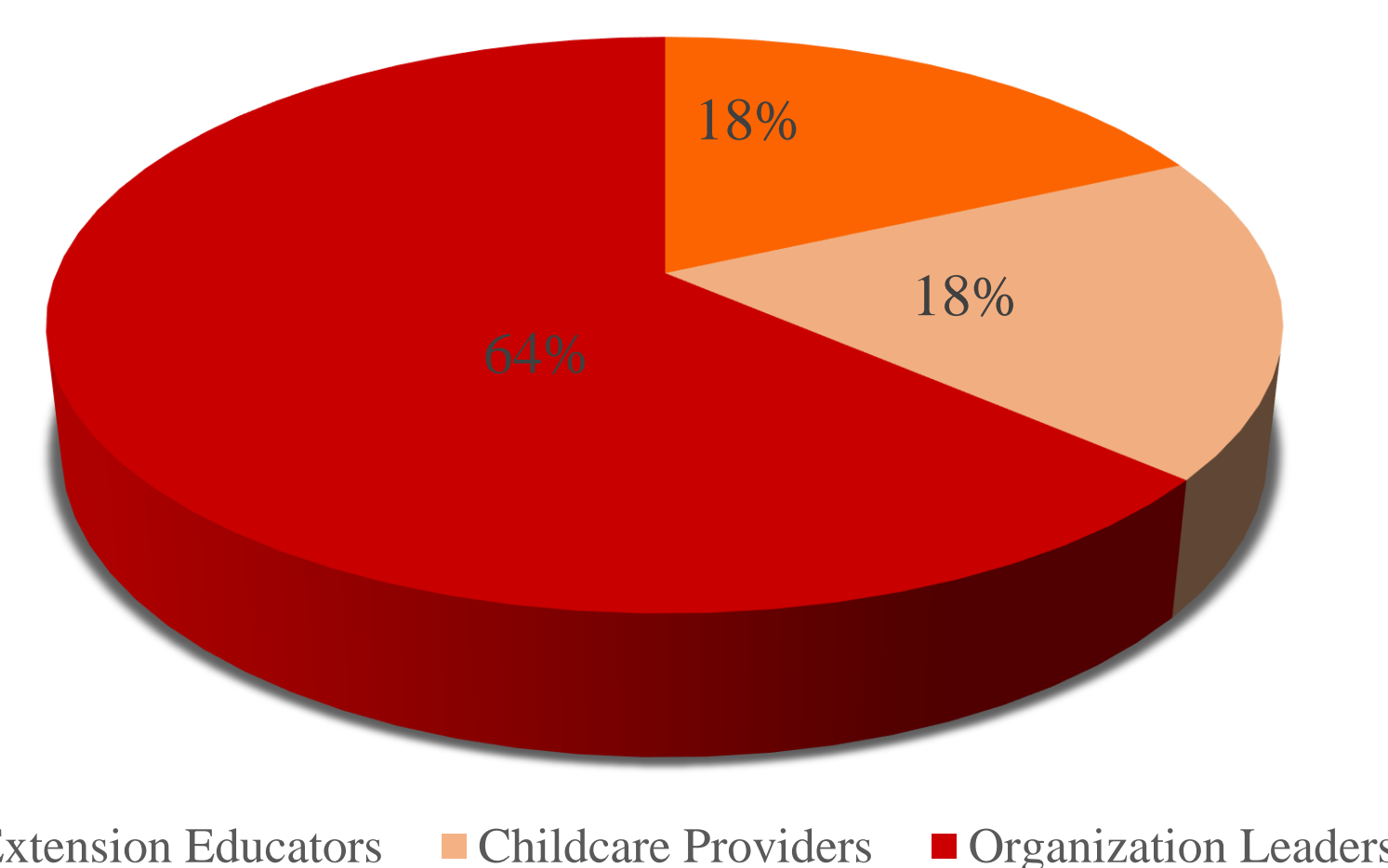
This study aims to identify social system structures for the provision of Youth Sport Opportunity (YSO) in early childhood in rural Nebraska, USA communities.



DESIGN & METHODS

- Qualitative research design.
- Semi-structured interviews conducted virtually with 11 stakeholders from two rural communities in Nebraska.
- Protocol was developed to examine local youth sport systems for three to eight-year-old children.
- Stakeholders involved:
 - Extension Educators (n=2),
 - Childcare Providers (n=2),
 - Organization leaders (e.g., YMCA) (n=7)
- Independent coders (n=2) analyzed results following thematic analysis.

Number Stakeholders Involved (%)



REFERENCES

1. Kellstedt, D.K., Schenkelberg, M.A., Essay, A.M. et al. Youth sport participation and physical activities in rural communities. Arch Public Health 79, 46 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13690-021-00570-y/>.
2. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Physical Activity Guidelines for School-Aged Children and Adolescents. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/health/School/physicalactivity/guidelines.htm>.
3. Braun, V & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology, Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3:2, 77-101, DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

RESULTS

Four main themes emerged from the data.

- **Theme 1. Youth Sport Production Process.** YSO were offered by a primary community organization or parent entrepreneurs rather than a community-wide coordinating body. Decisions about youth sports were driven by community members' perceived needs and the physical infrastructure available to offer YSO.
- **Theme 2. Community Structure.** Both communities acted as a regional hub for youth sport, with community members from nearby towns travelling to the central hub for opportunities. Within each community, multiple opportunities for youth sports were offered seasonally, however, these opportunities often excluded children under age five.

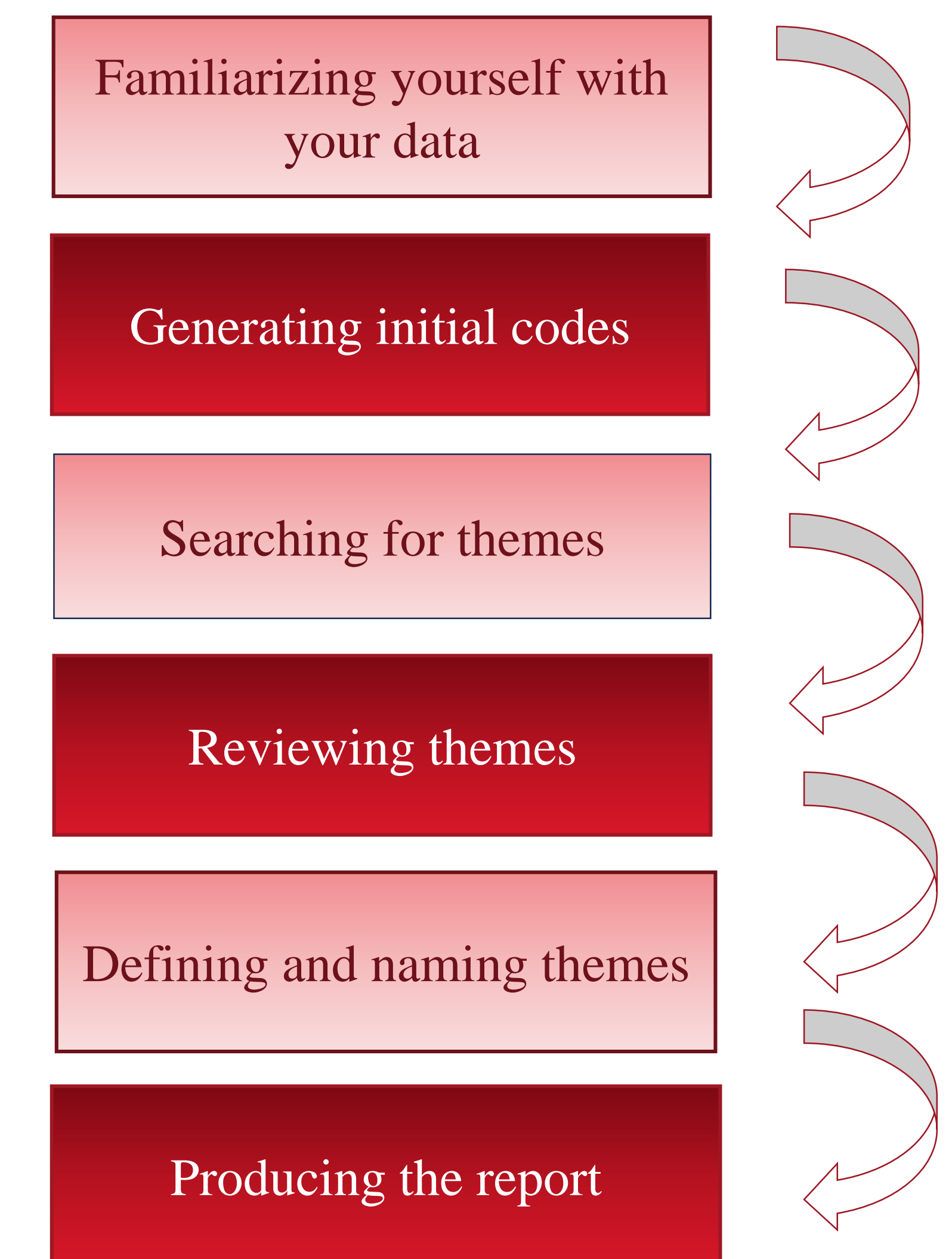
- **Theme 3. Consumer Demand Process.** Parents and community members viewed YSO as an avenue for youth to become competitive athletes as they grew up, with a focus on participating in local high school sport teams. Challenges to youth sport participation included travel distance, time commitments, and cost at the household level.

- **Theme 4. Information Flow.** Information about YSO flowed from the organization to community members through schools, social media, physical advertisements, and word-of-mouth.

Questions about the study?

If you have any further questions about the study, please send email to: medlincm2@unl.edu

Phases of Thematic Analysis³



Cited from: Braun, V & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology, Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3:2, 77-101, DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

CONCLUSIONS

Rural communities did not have a recognized coordinating system for YSO. A system for the coordination of community YSO, consisting of a coalition, community process, and data monitoring and feedback to inform decision-making, may aid in improving equitable access to youth sport for all children.

IMPLICATIONS

The implications of this study emphasize the possible advantages of implementing a planned, neighborhood-driven strategy for youth sport opportunities in rural locations to foster fair access and equitable access to YSO for all children.