



LIVED EXPERIENCES OF ATHLETES' DUAL CAREER: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Jay Mark D. Sinag¹, Alonzo L. Mortejo²

^{1,2}Bataan Peninsula State University Orani, Bataan Philippines 2112

alonzomortejo@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to examine to investigate the variables influencing the dual role of student athletes. This qualitative study used a phenomenological research design which examined the needs of student athletes at particular state colleges and universities performing dual roles. The researchers discovered that obstacles that make it difficult for individuals to fulfill their obligations in both athletics and academics are time management, money problems, and internal issues such as parental and teachers support. Policy for counselling interventions among athletes is necessary for development sports program.



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Correspondence Author:

Author's Name, Alonzo L. Mortejo

Institution, Bataan Peninsula State University Orani

Email: alonzomortejo@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Students in higher education are required to handle a range of stressors, including monetary, social, and academic obligations. In addition to the grind that other college students endure, college athletes must dedicate a significant amount of time and energy to advancing in their chosen sports. It can be difficult to strike a balance between academic obligations and athletic commitments (European Commission, 2004).

Sport psychologists view athletes as whole people who value other aspects of life besides sports, like their education, careers, families, friendships, and hobbies. A person's journey through several "landscapes," such as historical eras, physical locations, and developmental phases (childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age), is considered to be the essence of human existence. We rarely travel alone in life. Expectations might be set by our parents, siblings, instructors, coaches, teammates, and classmates. These obligations may increase a collegiate athlete's risk of developing both physical and emotional issues that may have an impact on their general health and wellness, in addition to the typical stress of college life (Li et al., 2017; Moreland et al., 2018).

For these reasons, in order to assist collegiate athletes in managing the potentially harmful effects that stress may have on their performance in both athletics and the classroom, coaches need to be aware of the many demands that they encounter.

Statement of the Purpose

This study acknowledges the relationship between two competing goals: athletes' academic performance and sports performance, and it seeks to investigate athletes' participation in sports affects their academic performance. This research also aims to comprehend the relationship between the demands of sports and academic studies. The goal of this study is to investigate how athletes cope with balancing sport and academic responsibilities.

The following research questions form the basis of this investigation: (1) What is the connection between academics and athletics according to athletic students? (2) How do students who participate in sports balance their obligations to their academic performance? (3) What obstacles must student-athletes overcome in order to facilitate their entire development in terms of their performance in sports and their academic obligations?

METHOD

The strategies the researcher employed to carry out the objectives of the current study are discussed in this chapter. It speaks of the procedures and plans the researcher has in place to carry out the current investigation.

The researcher tries to be as specific as possible in this chapter on the study plan, sample, demographics, data gathering methods, and data analysis approaches.

Methods and Techniques of the Study

The methodology chapter outlines the researcher's approach to achieving the study's objectives, including research strategy, population, sample, data collection techniques, and data analysis methods. This section provides critical details about the methodology utilized in the study. The researcher relied on the Phenomenology design. According to Hugh Good (2023), phenomenological research is a type of qualitative research that necessitates a thorough understanding of the audience's thoughts and perceptions of the phenomenon under consideration. It is based on the assumption that the universal essence of anything is ultimately determined by how its audience perceives it (Putra et al., 2020).

Phenomenological research analyzes the audience's beliefs, feelings, and perceptions of a subject. The researcher must set aside their personal biases and solely consider the audience's perspectives. This type of qualitative research requires a thorough comprehension of the audience's thoughts and perceptions of the phenomenon.

The purpose of this study is to know the significance of athletes academic and sports performance, Researcher gather information and data by interviewing different athletes from different sports, The data will be collected through the use of survey questionnaire and interview, after the data has been collected it will identify if there is any effect on the student and playing sports on their academic performance.

In addition, the researcher will collect secondary data from academic journals, articles, and books to support the study's findings and conclusions. Purposive sampling will be used to select individuals with experience in both academic and athletic performance for this study's sample population. Athletes from various sports, including basketball, volleyball, football, and track and field, will be chosen by the researcher.

The data collected through survey questionnaires and interviews will be analyzed using qualitative research methods such as content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis involves analyzing the responses to open-ended questions in the survey questionnaire and interview transcripts, while thematic analysis involves identifying recurring themes and patterns in the data.

Beyond that, the researcher will employ the triangulation method to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. To cross-check the study's findings, the triangulation method relies on multiple data collection techniques, data sources, and data analysis methods. The researcher will also maintain ethical considerations throughout the study by ensuring that participants' confidentiality and privacy are protected and that they have the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

Respondents of the Study

All of the participants of this study came from select athletes in state colleges and universities who are bonafide students and are currently enrolled in the second semester of academic year 2022-2023. All of the Research Participants are informed and are consented before giving them the research instrument.

Instruments

The study of the Dual Career of Athletes at the select colleges and universities was conducted using an effective tool that will explore and produce the best results. Prior to administering a self-made questionnaire The researchers validated the information and data they collect, and they will do so with the utmost secrecy. A preliminary data collection effort or interview will also be made as part of the validation of the study instrument in order to strengthen its validity. The accuracy of the information will be kept by carefully handling errors and acts and taking counterproductive measures. The researcher will then go over the interview schedule and the research tool.

Data Analysis

Data from the interview will be encoded and analyzed in order to solve study-related concerns. It will be processed and encoded by hand. A thematic analysis will reflect the key ideas of the participants. During the data collection phase, questions will be asked in order to generate a conclusion for the qualitative section of the study.

A qualitative data analysis technique called thematic analysis includes reading through a set of data and searching for patterns in the meaning of the data to identify themes. Making sense of the facts involves an active reflective process in which the researcher's personal experience is significant.

The most common method for thematic analysis consists of six steps: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and labeling themes, and writing up. By using this process, you might be able to improve your analysis without succumbing to confirmation bias.

Step one: Familiarization - The researcher becomes acquainted with the data by reading over all of the participant accounts multiple times.

Step two: Identifying relevant statements - The researcher finds any statements in the reports that are directly relevant to the phenomenon under examination.

Step three: Formulating meanings - Following a comprehensive examination of the significant statements, the researcher deciphers meanings that are relevant to the phenomena. To remain as close to the phenomenon as

feasible, the researcher must reflexively "bracket" their presuppositions (though Colaizzi acknowledges that perfect bracketing is never possible).

Step Four: Categorize formulated meaning- the researcher groups the identified meanings into themes that run through all of the narratives. To avoid any potential impact from current theory, premises must be bracketed once more.

Step 5: Excessive description development- The researcher merges all of the ideas created in step 4 into a full and all-encompassing account of the phenomenon.

Step Six: Developing the core structure of phenomena by chord - The researcher condenses the thorough description into a concise, dense statement that captures only those characteristics deemed vital to the phenomenon's structure.

Step seven: Structure verification by returning to participants- The researcher returns the fundamental structure statement to all participants (or, in bigger studies, a subset of participants) to inquire if it captures their experience. In light of this feedback, he or she may go back and adjust earlier steps in the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The following are the three research topics that motivated this study: (1) How do athletic students describe the relationship between sports and academics? (2) How do athletic students manage their time in sports and academic performance responsibilities?; lastly, (3) What challenges do student-athletes face in supporting their overall growth and development in academic responsibilities and sport performance?

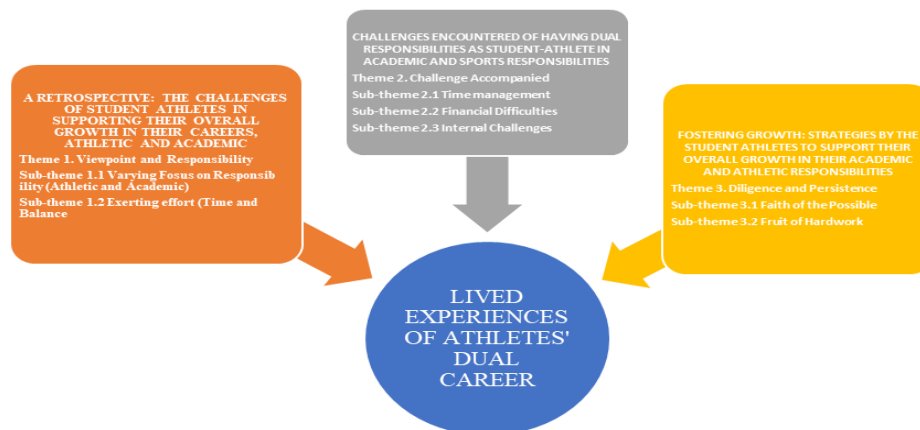


Figure 1. The relevant factors on the athletes dual career.

In this study, evaluating the experiences, challenges and measures taken by the participants to overcome the hurdles that they had identified in supporting their overall growth in both their career (academics and sports), indeed it paved the way in gathering the result.

The study revealed two (3) themes and seven (7) sub-themes that most correlate to the participant's responses in this study examining the Dual Career of select student-athletes experiences and the challenges in their respective fields, and these are the prior experiences and observations of the participants. These are the essentials that we are seeking for prior to the topic, and these will assist us in learning more and going deeper with the material at hand.

A Retrospective: The Challenges of Student Athletes in Supporting Their Overall Growth in Their Careers, Athletic and Academic

Student-athletes are valuable members of any team, especially the school community. They are representatives of the university to athletic events and competitions that inspire and motivate the entire school community. Members of the school community frequently look up to them and expect them to be role models. Despite their positive image, they are regarded as a vulnerable group (Yang et al., 2007; Wilson and Pritchard, 2005). Student-athletes' primary responsibility as university students is to meet academic requirements in order to earn a degree (NCAA, 2019). They are usually integrated into the rest of the student body so that they can concentrate on their primary role of being a student. As a result, they are not exempt, also they are not immune to the normal stresses that college students face. College is one of the most stressful and difficult times in a student's life (Okilanda et al., 2021).

The transition from high school to college introduces new types of stress that students must become acquainted with. They must learn to effectively manage stress in order to be successful. Academic pressure, financial concerns, poor self and body image, a lack of leisure activities, problematic living arrangements, relationships with family and friends, and poor sleep quality are some of the common stressors of college students (Chow and Flynn, 2016). While these stressors are common among college students in general, there are

some that are specific to student-athletes, which amplifies their stress. Stress, if not properly managed, can lead to physical, emotional, and mental health issues (WHO, 2004).

Student athletes face a variety of challenges including difficulty balancing time, missing classes due to athletic commitments, burnout, fear of failure, dealing with teammates, anxiety, depression, and self-esteem issues (Wilson and Pritchard, 2005). Furthermore, student-athletes frequently worry about physical injuries, face pressure during competitions, including pressure from spectators, and clash with coaches and referees (Abedalhafiz, Altahyneh, and AlHaliq, 2010).

Theme 1: Viewpoint and Responsibility

The art of fine balance discussed here is frequently a barrier for student-athletes. There are times when it is difficult to strike a balance between sport and study, whether it is maintaining one's sports or one's studies and personal life. A student must be able to transition between these aspects successfully and smoothly, with neither affecting the other. A dual-career balance can be achieved by honing organizational and time management skills, self-awareness, self-discipline, dedication, perseverance, and interpersonal skills. Being proactive and planning are critical strategies for them to manage their lives. In other words, this entails setting aside time for regeneration, prioritizing tasks, communicating with coworkers, and seeking active social assistance.

Sub-theme 1.1: Varying Focus on Responsibility: Athletic versus Academic

One focus of participating sports is that athletes develop increased self-confidence, which can be beneficial - both on and off the field. Students often feel more mentally fit and confident about themselves as a result of developing and maintaining physical fitness. This can then lead to an increase in overall confidence in how one speaks and acts in front of others, including peers, teachers, and other adults.

As the participants revealed that:

"In academic and sports we need to be well responsible, hardworking and most especially we need to have our time management."

Participant C

"All the responsibilities that we have as a student and athlete are both knowledgeable. It gives us confidence to do our task well. Through this responsibility that we have, it may also be the reason leading to our success."

Participant G

Student-athletes are special in that they have full-time academic and sports responsibilities. Their multiple positions impose an abundance of obligations in their everyday lives, but little is known about the elements that may impair their capacity to handle these tasks efficiently. The investigation's theoretical foundation was built from the newly created Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) model of Career Self-Management (CSM) to elucidate the elements promoting and obstructing career planning (Lent & Brown, 2013). SCCT has been a valuable theoretical framework for addressing career concerns, with studies examining professional athletes' career planning and transition (Demulier et al., 2013), middle school and high school students' career decision-making and planning processes (Patton et al., 2004; Rogers et al., 2008; Rogers & Creed, 2011; Zhang et al., 2019), college students' career development (Olson, 2014; Park et al., 2018).

Sub-theme 1.2: Exerting Effort: Time and Balance

Students' time management skills are becoming increasingly important in today's hectic world. While you may long for a simpler time when time seemed to move more slowly, the realities of participation in society require young people to be efficient and productive. Another focus of a student athlete is time management. This adds organization and discipline to the life of a student athlete. The length of time spent on a particular task or assignment allows the days to be organized in a specific way. Sports have their time during the day, and academics have theirs as well. It is part of the daily schedule's balance. On the other hand, balance is essential for any student athlete because competitive sports and academics coexist in a student athlete's life. Balance is difficult to achieve because education is so important in the life of a young athlete (Pratama et al., 2024). However, objectives must be properly organized and prioritized. The most important thing for a student is to know when his exams and midterms are. The most important thing for an athlete is to know when competitions are. The most efficient approach is to start with the calendar.

As the participants revealed that:

"Yes, sometimes I get tired from training, but I must still study because academics are more important than sports. If we have a failing grade, we will not be played with."

Participant A

"It's also difficult because you need time management. For example, if you do a lot of activities and then think about your training, say you have training on this day, you might think you still have some activities to finish."

When I got home from training, I would just rest for a while and do activities as much as I could; sometimes I just think I have to do it because sports are the reason I can study now and receive allowances and incentives from BPSU."

Participant D

"Because the training is so intense, you may choose to lay down or rest, so time management is essential as a student athlete at all times."

Participant F

"Struggling, as they say, nothing comes easy; you have to work hard to get what you want."

Participant G

Finding a balance between sports and academics can be challenging for students. However, those who can strike this balance frequently succeed in both their academic work and their athletic endeavors. The desire to succeed in sports frequently takes precedence over the desire to succeed in school. However, it's crucial to recognize how important it is for both sports and academics to shape a student's future. Both of these aspects of student life serve as excellent launching pads for rewarding career opportunities. Therefore, it is important for young athletes to not prioritize one sport over another. Finding a careful balance between sports and academics is crucial for their success and overall development. SCCT discusses the impact of both internal and external barriers on people's career development. The SCCT makes an effort to clarify the relationships between values, needs, aptitudes, and interests and how they affect career development. These internal motivations are then incorporated into social processes, according to SCCT (Lent et al., 1994, 2000).

Challenges Encountered of Having Dual Responsibilities as Student-Athlete in Academic and Sports Responsibilities

Challenges can be experienced in different situations depending on the perspective of the people who take it as a challenge. On the theme Challenges Accompanied, the highest count on the challenges is time management whereas supported by the participants answer as challenges as student-athlete. Financial Difficulties are part of challenges in having dual responsibilities either as a student or an athlete. It has different reasons for having financial difficulties but all of them are considered as challenges that are mostly experienced by student-athletes, not enough money. Furthermore, internal challenges are the most common in having dual responsibilities because it challenges the body and mental health of a student-athlete in any aspect. The pressure, tiredness, lack of sleep, lack of focus, criticism, etc. are some reasons that challenged the participants.

Participants described their experiences based on what they have encountered in having dual responsibilities as student and athlete handling the academic and sports responsibilities. Below shows the thematic interlace of experience of the student-athlete with the concepts, meanings and quoted statements of the participants.

Theme 2. Challenges Accompanied

Challenges accompanied refers to the different challenges experienced by the student-athlete in having dual responsibilities, sports and academic responsibilities. Dual responsibilities are very challenging in any aspect because it is a combination of responsibilities of doing sports and academics. Compliance in both careers is a hard time that should be managed accordingly with discipline, focus, and perseverance. The researchers created sub-theme according to the participants' experiences that explain their challenges in having dual responsibilities. There are two sub-themes under the Theme of Challenges Accompanied which are "time management" and "financial difficulties".

Sub-theme 2.1: Time Management

It is about compromising and balancing the two different commitments, sports and academics at the same time and day. In order to have better time management, the most common way of arranging is to split your time between various exercises. If you do it right, even when time is short and pressure is high, you will end up working smarter rather than harder to accomplish more in less time. In this challenge, the majority of the participants experienced having a hard time managing their time because of school activities and training that mostly leads to tiredness and lack of sleep that turns to compromise late. As the participants revealed that:

"It's also difficult because you need time management like for example, you do a lot of activities then you think about your training for example you have training on this day, then you think that you still need to finish some activities. What I did after training, when I got home, I would just rest for a while and do activities as far as I could. Sometimes I just think that I have to do it because it is because of sports that I am able to study now and receive the allowance and incentives from BPSU."

Participant D

“Yes, in academics you just have to persevere, focus, and do what the prof tells you to do. In sports, you just have to comply with what the coach says and do extra work.”

Participant E

“Sometimes because the training is so hard, sometimes you want to lie down or rest, because you are a student athlete, time management is really necessary at all times.”

Participant F

Physical stress and significant time required for practice and training, student athletes also face subjective stressors (Miranda-Comas, Gerardo MD; Zaman, Nadia DO; Ramin, Jonathan DO; Gluck, Ariana DO 2022). Those student athletes are significant for training to enhance their ability but still to achieve their academic performances, it brought a huge choice on what should do first or what will be their priority when it comes to both training and academic performance. Even when they wake up, feel pressure at home and handle some personal matters they need to balance their time so all this can be solved and done. Furthermore, Astin 1984 in Involvement Theory describes that involvement as participation in the classroom as well as involvement in activities outside of the classroom are some factors that emphasizes the active participation of the student in the learning process (Arisman & Agun Guntara, 2021).

In line with it is the majority of the participants, which are student athletes, encountered the challenge in managing their time but, still making sure that there will be no responsibility to be neglected. He also defined that an involved student is considered as one who devotes considerable time in studying, spends more of their time on campus, engaging actively and participates in school organization programs, and interacts often with faculty members and other students. The significant factor in prioritizing despite having two careers is balancing and managing the time according to athletic and academic responsibilities.

Through the study, the participants' responses in this study were found out as the factors that contributed to their experiences as student-athletes in college suggested as having involvement, while those that contributed to the students dropping out implied a lack of involvement (Astin, 1984). In line with this part, it also supports the claim from Theory of Learned needs, which motivations will stimulate, facilitate, and manifest behaviors that leads to self-fulfillment and external rewards as a result of congruities in actions determined by socio-environmental and external criteria. More so, student-athletes are still motivated even by the fact of the challenges in their time management because from the help of compensation given by the administration of Bataan Peninsula State University, it lessens their responsibilities to carry on particularly in academic expenses and transportation fees.

Sub-theme 2.2: Financial Difficulties

Financial difficulties or barriers in having dual responsibilities is evidently proven by the majority of student-athletes who experience it around the world. These challenges are the most common reason why can't a student be able to comply with their academic responsibilities and vice versa as an athlete. There are some instances that student-athletes received compensation or incentives in playing for school; however, it is enough to cater their financial needs in terms of attending practice academically and training every day.

As the participants revealed that:

“Lack of sleep, financial, and time management”

Participant A

“Time management and financial problem”

Participant B

“Sometimes in finance (financial). If there is sudden practice for academic performance in academics.”

Participant E

“Pressured, Stress, Financial”

Participant G

Financial problem is a situation where money worries are causing stress. However, student-athletes have been facing financial problems lately and this problem has become a major problem for colleges in covering their expenses academically and sports. Aside from their daily expenses, training and academic practice cause them to have financial difficulties that sometimes affect their physical and mental health.

According to Halliday Wynes, (2014), a student's financial position will affect their commitment in learning which will affect their academic performance. Moreover, due to inflation and trade war, it has made most of the

country facing recession and increases the cases of students facing financial problems. Researchers found out that this challenge is a hinder for the effectiveness of their career transition as student and athlete in having two responsibilities. Based on the goals from Social Cognitive Career Theory, the impact of both internal and external motivations on people's professional development can affect their career growth. Particularly, the goal of SCCT is to identify the relationships between values, needs, aptitudes, and interests whereas these internal motives interact with the social processes of the people. These specific motives can help our student-athletes feel empowered in their career transitions and support their overall wellbeing.

Teachers, coaches, athletic trainers, fellow athletes, family, and school administrators can work together to build a support network (Yang et al., 2010) that would address their academic, financial, social, emotional well-being, and physical concerns that would help athletes with the resources they need as they heal from injury and deal with financial concerns (Podlog et al., 2011). Taken into the context of this research, the student-athlete participants in this study perceived the lack of self-efficacy and social support as they found their financial support as inadequate. Therefore, it is significant to consider the fundamental needs of student-athletes specifically in their financial difficulties that support and assert that if these student-athletes do not receive enough financial support will affect their social and emotional support during their career transition experiences, they may face a variety of life challenges.

Sub-theme 2.3: Internal Challenges

Student-athletes repeatedly expressed the challenge towards the amount of time they had available for academic matters after fulfilling their athletic commitments. With other internal challenges faced by the student-athletes (e.g., pressure, criticism, and lack of focus) it was seen to be the barrier to hindrance the student-athletes credibility.

As the participants revealed that:

"Lack of Sleep, Financial, Time Management"

Participant A

"Time Management and Financial Problem"

Participant B

"Palaging puyat, palaging pagod, Di makapag focus sa pag-aaral dahil pagod at puyat"

Lack of Sleep, Tiredness, Enough focus to studies

Participant C

"Discipline and Financial"

Participant D

"Waking up early, Going to school early, Time Management."

Participant F

"Pressured, Stressed, Financial"

Participant G

"Time Management, Criticism, Academic Failure"

Participant H

From the participants' perspective, internal challenges such as stress, pressure, criticism, lack of focus, etc. are some of their challenges in having a dual career as student and athlete. According to Thomas (2008), the cumulative physical and emotional toll due to sports involvement throughout the academic year in the university could affect the student-athlete's ability to concentrate on studies if care is not taken. Thomas concluded that these physical and emotional strains leave the student-athlete tired all the time which translates to failure to do assignments, doze off in class, miss class to recuperate in bed, poor concentration and mental lapses.

Moreover, as what Involvement Theory emphasizes is that every individual's learning process begins with their active participation. Student-athletes have a difficult time in facing and dealing with its internal challenges (i.e., lack of sleep, tiredness, discipline, careers, etc.) but still managed to balance different areas of their goals - to accomplish their task in both psychomotor and cognitive activities. As per the fact that motivation plays a vital part in dealing with students' performances, many areas can be the rationale for those student-athletes to have a drive in doing different careers at the same time. Intrinsic Motivation is when an individual is intrinsically motivated, meaning engaging in activity solely because you get a personal satisfaction from it such as enjoyment.

Given that these student-athletes has this motivation, although they are doing their part to accomplished requirements both in academics and in sports, they still have a hard time to balance, but, with the help of this theory and motivation, it is proven and justified that student-athlete can do both at a single time because they know the significant of having two responsibilities. Sports and academic responsibilities need a well-balanced management in being actively engaged, complying with the requirements and to be involved and motivated to their career as student and athlete.

Fostering Growth: Strategies By The Student Athletes to Support Their Overall Growth in Their Academic and Athletic Responsibilities

These student-athletes from Bataan Peninsula State University - Orani Campus demonstrated the need to concentrate on coping and appropriately helping careers by providing assistance, solutions, and support in managing the multiple career duties. To promote their general progress in all areas, it is essential that they understand how to manage their time, effort, and balancing the two identified careers. If sufficient support is not provided, the work put forth in their academic and athletic careers will be in vain.

Theme 3: Diligence and Persistence

Being Diligence and Persistence is the foundation of the athlete. If they don't have diligence and persistence, they can't just do the things they want because they have to be hardworking and patient in their studies before they can be qualified to be athletes.

The participants shared the following:

"Lack of sleep, Financial, Time management are usually I encountered dealing with both academic and athletic responsibility and also its complicated to manage my time in both areas because sometimes I'm tired of training but still need to go to campus early but sometimes tired of campus but still need to attend the training for upcoming competitions."

Participant A

"Waking up early, going to school early, devoting time to training as an athlete are usually I encountered dealing with both academic and athletic responsibility and also it's complicated to manage my time in both areas because sometimes I'm tired from training that's why I'm having trouble with the other things I should do."

Participant B

"Time management and financial problems are usually encountered dealing with both academic and athletic responsibility and also its complicated to manage my time in both areas especially now I'm a 3rd year college student under a busy program that's why I'm struggling with time management."

Participant C

Almost all athletes have the same problem such as lack of sleep, tiredness, financial and time management but they have different strategies on how to handle it and how to overcome it. Being a student athlete is extremely difficult; you must work extremely hard at everything. As a student-athlete, your duties are doubled because you must also focus on academics in addition to sports responsibilities. These can be traced back to Involvement Theory which reiterates the involvement in both sports and activities outside of the classroom. The theory emphasizes active participation of the student in the learning process (Astin, 1984). Also, Astin further clarified that involvement refers to behavior, what students do rather than the feelings or thoughts. Which shows our study participants, in relation to Astin's Involvement theory, are actively engaging not just in academics but also in outside the classroom activities which is sports. They are aware of the facts and the possibilities of workloads and additional tasks, despite this, they still are actively engaging.

The researchers then identified the study participants with the basis of this theory as involved students who "devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students" (Astin, 1984). However, it is an honor for all student athletes to be athletes who participate in various sports because there is a lot to learn. Student athletes learn to be more responsible in all aspects of their lives.

Sub-theme 3.1: Faith of the Possible

Student athletes learn the discipline and willpower that make them better players by having faith in the possibility, which enables them to use their profound wisdom and compassion to handle some obstacles that may seem unattainable to professionals.

According to the participants their specific goal in their academic and athletic career are:

"Yes. In academics you need to persevere, focus, and do the tasks given by the prof (professor). In sports, you need to just comply with the coach and put in extra work."

Participant C

“Yes, I always remind myself of the Bible verse Philippians 4:13 that I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. The Lord is giving me strength even though I cannot do it, I am motivated that I can do it because of the strength and gift of the Lord, all (I) have to do is to trust in Him because all my suffering is to be rewarded.”

Participant D

“I just did my best to achieve my desired goal which is to be a successful woman that will help other people to also succeed in life YES, I just did my best to achieve my desired goal which is to be a successful woman that will help other people to also succeed in life”.

Participant E

Although there are times when managing their academics and being an athlete is challenging for them, students always remember and remind themselves to trust and prioritize everything (athletic and academic). Various answers emerged from the participants of this study focusing on the bright side despite the challenges that the participants encounter in their respective dual responsibilities. All of these answers as the researchers believed are anchored with the theory of Learned Needs or LNT. The theory generally focuses on the motivations that stimulates facilitates, and manifest behaviors which leads to self-fulfillment and external rewards as a result of congruences in actions determined by socio environmental and external criteria (Beckmann & Heckhausen, 2018; Osemeke & Adegboyega, 2017; Royle & Hall, 2012). With this, the researchers believed that intrinsic or internal motivation is what drives the student-athlete to continue their passion and achieve their goals in both academic and sports responsibilities. They are driven and these motivations are what helps them achieve it and leads to their self-fulfillment. Students and athletes additionally suggested that if you have a goal or career that you want to achieve, stay strong and always be positive. Among all of the answers from the eight participants, one of them mentioned leaving or surrendering yourself and trusting the Lord.

Sub-theme 3.2: Fruit of Hard-work

If there is hard-work, there will surely be fruit. Process and the will to continue something might be tough and challenging, but with the esteemed goal and aim of an individual, the possibility of having something in return and satisfaction would have a great deal of return to their hard-work. Student-athletes are most common to work hard-work in an academy, because not only are they studying and being a learner but also they are competing and training for their specialized sports and respective fields. The responsibility that has been bestowed upon their shoulders is amassed, the pressure that this study’s participants identified is shown that is why being a student athlete is hard and challenging. These ‘fruits’ for the participants are clearly the return of their hard-work from the two fields of their career, academic and athletic. In order to achieve a goal, one must exert effort and be responsible.

The study participants revealed that:

“In academics, you just have to persevere, focus, and do what the prof tells you to do. In sports, you just have to comply with what the coach says and do extra work”

Participant E

“Allotting time to do important things such as training and going to school early.”

Participant F

“It's just courage and a thick face because if you don't have it, nothing will happen in your life if you only have shame in your mind, of course it shouldn't be like that you're always ashamed because it's like that, you just need courage and a thick face so you can move forward in your step.”

Participant G

Evident with the responses of the study participant are their will to continue with their chosen fields and responsibilities. Participants showed passion and even more so – perseverance. These responses could be traced back with one of the sub-theories from Theory of Learned Needs: LNT was created to expound on the satiation of human desires via achievement, power, and connection (McClelland, 1975, 1985). One of the sub-theories is Power Needs. Power desires flourish as a result of overpowering internal motivations to achieve a goal achievement (Pinder, 2014). Individuals with high power needs are extremely concerned with their impact, prestige, social power, and risk-taking abilities (Rybnicek et al., 2019). These people like the study’s participants like competitive and status-driven circumstances, these people do not just stop and give up with the circumstances that are given to them but they continue and they collect status symbols to boost their self-fulfillment (Rybnicek et al., 2019; Veroff, 1992; (Tya Maya Ningrum et al., 2023)). With that, the fruit of hard

work will surely be sweet with the determination of the student-athletes and the grit they show as they remain determined despite the challenges that were thrown to them.

DISCUSSION

The overall goal of the study was to show how well Bataan student athletes balanced their participation in sports and academics. The following inquiries are among those the researchers hope to address through comprehending the experiences of the participants: (1) How do athletic students describe the relationship between sports and academics? (2) How do athletic students manage their time in sports and academic performance responsibilities? (3) What challenges do student-athletes face in supporting their overall growth and development in academic responsibilities and sport performance?

The study uncovered some of the student-athletes' experiences enrolled in select state colleges and universities in the region three Philippines

Difficulties in Time Management have been the most common challenges that were encountered by the student-athletes. The data showed that fifty percent (50% or 4 participants) of the overall total of the study had been finding it hard to cope with their dual responsibilities which were the sports and academic career. Higher years participants even reiterate that they find it hard because of the loads they have and the requirements needed in their year levels. Complying both their academic and sports career had been identified by the study participants especially the colliding schedules from both variables. Looking back on the responsibilities and the pride and honor that these student-athletes give to the university, shall provide a flexible schedule which will enable the athletes to focus on their sporting career when the time and action is needed.

Although time management has been identified as the top challenge, there are also other factors in the participants' career which still makes their responsibilities from both areas tough and challenging. This is the Financial Difficulties: it has been identified by the total of fifty percent (50% or 4 participants) of the overall total of the study's participants. It has been identified by twelve point five percent (12.5% or 1 participant) of the study participant that when there is a sudden practicum in their academic engagements – their allowance is compromised for both academic and sports career, which leads the researcher with the question, "Is there allowance allotted for these athletes?" and if there is, "Was it good enough to cater the athletes' needs?"

Last for the challenges encountered by the study's participants would be the Internal Challenges of the participants or what the researchers identified based on the participants' responses as: Lack of sleep, tiredness, focus on both careers, discipline, pressure, stress, criticism and academic failure". These answers were identified as internal challenges by the researchers and were answered by a total of eight seven point five percent (87.5% or 7 participants) in the overall number of participants.

These actors in the participants' career played a major part in shaping them, although these can make them resilient and act as a shaper in their overall ability and growth, these issues and problems should be accounted for by the institution, most importantly the schedule and financial aids and assistance which can either help or motivate our athletes.

The study participant as expected are able to cater their responsibilities in both areas; academic vis a vis sports, although there are some instances that the participants find to be challenging their coping and determination in both areas are evident with their answer such as specifically identified by the study participant, participant D, in which she reiterate this, "...what I do after training, when I got home I will just rest then I will be working on my activities as much I can do it" Which shows that the determination and perseverance after all of the hardships are still evident with the athletes (Okilanda et al., 2018).

Student-athletes are valuable members of any team, especially the school community. Being a student athlete faces a variety of challenges including difficulty balancing time, missing classes due to athletic commitment, fear of failure, dealing with teammates, anxiety, depression and self-esteem issues.

It can be difficult for some athletes to strike a balance between sports and studies. According to the first theme, even though some of the respondents are under pressure, they are still able to lift themselves. Student athletes at the Bataan Peninsula State University Orani Campus improved their personalities as a result of the challenges and obstacles they faced. Furthermore, based on the results, the respondents' self-confidence in performing their duties as a student and athlete emerges (Nopianto et al., 2020).

Financial Difficulties is the top-tier problem mostly of the student-athlete experiences. Maybe lack of support from the family because of their state of living, but this included as part of having dual responsibilities either as students or an athlete. Management will play the main part as to comply with those students in their different requirements. They should always prioritize their academics before sports, academics is the foundation of their purpose, and sports will play a vital role to their dreams to be reached at the same time. Compliance in both careers is a hard time that should be followed linear with perseverance, discipline, focus, and determination. In order to be at the best, student-athletes must be consistent in order to give their all to balance this. As the student-athlete reaches their dreams at the same time, other attributes will fall-in-line to be reached and will eventually be successful to their wants.

Lacking the attributes of diligence and persistence can hinder an athlete from attaining their objectives, as these characteristics are vital for success in their academic pursuits as well as in their athletic endeavors. To improve and reach their goals, athletes must constantly apply themselves with hard work and dedication, maintaining a consistent level of effort. From having the necessary grit, determination, and resilience to face obstacles and setbacks, persistence is also a crucial attribute for athletes to possess. Achieving a balance between athletic and academic pursuits necessitates effective time management skills, as well as an unwavering commitment to excellence in both areas. Athletes who strive to achieve outstanding results in both their studies and sports must work tirelessly to enhance their skills while fulfilling their academic obligations, which requires diligence and discipline. However, this is crucial for their future success and will ultimately equip them with valuable skills that can be used throughout their lives. Athletes who are able to seamlessly manage their time and devote the necessary effort to excel in both their sports and academics can develop a strong foundation for their future. By honing their time management skills and prioritizing their commitments, they can achieve success in both domains simultaneously and establish a solid basis for their future endeavors.

Government and Non-Government Organization (NGO) should support and help the student athlete through funding their financial compensation, scholarship and weekly allowance that will cover up their financial expenses.

Local Government should provide funds and invest for supporting and helping student-athletes through allocate more funds for their scholarship. With this, it will help the student-athletes with their financial expenses academically and athletically.

DEPED (Department of Education) should be focused on providing more training and seminars to the teachers and coaches to improve their background learnings to the sports that will help the students and student-athletes. Also, the department of education should provide an amount of budget to build such facilities and safety equipment that the students and student athletes could use.

CONCLUSION

State University sports should implements should assist and support the coaches and athletes, particularly with the necessary equipment. They also need enough resources, a nice environment for their training so that they can practice effectively, and facilities like shower rooms and locker rooms for the safety of their important things. They also need enough incentives, such as scholarships, to meet their other needs.

Sports Administrators and coaches should be focused on how the student will survive academics and sports. Giving some consideration to maintaining the mental health of the athlete is applicable to sustain the achievements for reducing stress. Athletic director should put emphasis program on time management, Teacher-coaches should be applicable to guide the student athlete. This could be a big help to them especially when they feel stress even though they are aware how hard it is to be a student athlete. Students will be motivated to do the task as a student athlete and for their academics.

Parents also should be there for their child in all aspects of sports and academic achievement since student athletes also require parental support. Parental encouragement during games inspires athletes because they know their parents believe in them and want them to succeed, which forces them to put in the effort.

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