

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

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ABSTRACT: Sound mind and body is an important factor for greater winning opportunities for student-athletes in participating to school-initiated, district level, division, regional and up to national level sports competition. In order to come up with an appropriate sports training program, the researcher focused the study on the challenges being faced by the studentathletes on personal health particularly to mental, physical and emotional health and how do they cope with it. The study used descriptive research design participated by one hundred student-athletes from Recto Memorial National High School purposively chosen and enrolled during 2023-2024 school year. Based on the tallied responses, equal number of male and female studentathletes are the respondents who are in the age bracket of 14-15 and are Grade 8 students. As revealed, student-athletes did not have any physical challenges when participating in sports but underscores a significant emotional struggle which is handling pressure during competitions, which adversely affects athletic performance. They are also challenged emotionally that the findings highlight prevalent issue of nervousness and worry among participants during sports activities. Similarly, they are challenged emotionally that the prevalence of nervousness suggests underlying mental stressors impacting their performance. Further, it is depicted that there is no significant correlation between challenges of student-athletes in sports participation and studentathletes' achievement. Finally, the correlation between coping mechanisms and student-athletes' achievement are significantly related to each other as well.

KEYWORDS: Coping Mechanisms, Emotional Health, Mental Health, Physical Health

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Cornelissen and Pfeifer as referred to by Kumar and Mohammad, 2019, engaging in sports can have some tangible beneficial impacts on students' academic achievement [1]. For instance, improved athlete health could enhance efficiency and lead to increased commitment in athletic development. Additionally, sports teach soft competencies such as taking and making decisions, working with others, accomplishing training and play in a monitored system, and societal integration in addition to functional skills such as strength and balance among other health and skill-related fitness. Furthermore, sports can help students develop their attributes by teaching them social behaviors such as motivation, discipline, determination, competitive spirit, accountability, perseverance, confidence, and self-esteem, which cannot always be learned in a classroom setting. These aspects of behavior should decrease dropping out, boost motivation to succeed in school, and promote relationships with fellow learners, all of which has been linked to higher learning efficiency because time is used more productively. In contrast, Sharma (2020) pointed out that student-athletes face a number of distinctive difficulties as both students and athletes [2]. Scheduling, pressure from schoolwork, psychological and physical demands, injury, and monetary strain are examples of these.

Gomez, Bradley, and Conway as cited by Magdato, 2021, supported Sharma's statement by revealing in their research that student-athletes faced problems such as inadequate availability of sport facilities and equipment, lack of funding and incentives, time constraints for training, and academic expectations, all of which could impact their performance in sport and academics [3].

Cosh and Tully (2015) also further noted that studentathletes face multiple stresses, particularly those related to schedule conflicts, exhaustion, financial strain, and coach rigidity [4]. Athletes disclosed some coping mechanisms but emphasized the importance of parental and coaching support. Athletes would gain advantages from learning new skills in areas such as time management, self-care, time management, increased self-efficacy, and specific stresscoping mechanisms if teacher-coaches can be critical to ensuring the effective merging of sport and academics.

Furthermore, coaches must assist student-athletes in acknowledging ways to cope with the difficulties that arise in their lives. Since the athlete-coach relationship is so essential for student-athletes and may possess an effect on their stress levels and mental health. Coaches need to be aware of how their relationships with athletes can influence their sense of self-worth and psychological stress

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

levels in both positive and negative ways. Moreover, coaches must work with student-athletes to help them recognize their full athletic abilities while balancing the stresses and challenges of both academics and sports.

In the context of the school, there were 156 student-athletes in Recto Memorial National High School. It has student-athletes competing in almost every sport at the interschool, division, regional, and national levels. Subsequently, student-athletes had relief in their training and preparation due to schedule adjustments, lack of available sports facilities and equipment, and physical and mental exhaustion. The school sports committee had difficulty convincing student-athletes to participate in sports training or practice and demonstrate a strong interest in sports. After conducting a focus group discussion of the school's teacher-coaches on the continuous training of student-athletes in school, they discovered the following reasons why student-athletes no longer want to participate in sports: apprehension caused by the COVID-19 virus, a focus on learning first rather than participating in sports training, age limitation, preferring to stay indoors, and a lack of facilities and equipment for sports training and coaches' assistance [5].

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

As one of the teacher-coaches at Recto Memorial National High School, which is the locale of the study, the researcher has a responsibility to find effective ways to encourage student-athletes to participate in sports despite the challenges they encounter in academics and sports training. The researcher carried out his responsibility by promoting good health and fitness and obtaining a large number of victories among student-athletes by facilitating and administering sports training and exercises through conducting research that determined the challenges encountered by the students-athletes in their participation in sports and their coping mechanisms and its relationship towards their sports and academic achievements. Likewise, the results of the study can be used by the teacher-coaches of the school as a basis for planning and organization of flexible training programs for the student-athletes and teacher-coaches as Matulaitis (2020) stated that the training process can only be optimized and successful with the aid of an efficient and accredited training program [6].

II. METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive-correlational research design, it specifically employed descriptive survey methods in the completion of the study that aimed to identify the challenges in sports participation and coping mechanisms and how these factors relate to student-athletes' achievement. Moreover, the results of the study were the basis for the development of a flexible training program that was helpful to the teacher-coaches of Recto Memorial National High School in facilitating training for student-athletes.

A. Research Instrument

Relevant data for this research were gathered through a researcher's self-devised questionnaire. The questionnaire contained three parts to identify challenges in sports participation, coping mechanisms toward student-athlete achievement, and student-athlete's achievement.

To determine the challenges in sports participation and coping mechanisms toward student-athlete achievement, the researcher prepared a 30-item survey questionnaire. Moreover, a five-point Likert scale was used in identifying the challenges in sports participation and coping mechanisms toward student-athlete achievement, where five is described as strongly agree; four is moderately agree; three is agree; two is moderately disagree, and one as strongly disagree. The basis of the statements and questions in the research instrument were on the different related literature and studies. Further, the last part of the questionnaire was in the form of an identification type of test where respondents will fill-out the questions based on their sports and academic grades.

Validation of the questionnaire was done by the Physical Education, Sports, and Sciences (PESS) coordinator, the department head of MAPEH, and the school head of Recto Memorial National High School.

B. Research Procedure

The researcher followed the protocols required by the Dean's office to assure that the concept to be studied is of good quality to comply with the degree in Master of Arts in Education. The proposal was submitted and defended in front of a panel of experts. All suggestions and comments given during defense were the basis for refining the content of the paper.

The researcher prepared a permission letter addressed to the office of the principal of Recto Memorial National High School for the conduct of the study and dissemination of the research instrument.

After the approval of the principal, a permission letter has been sent to the MAPEH Department Head Teacher and to the School's Physical Education, Science, and Sports Coordinator informing them of the researcher's desire in gathering data in their station.

When the permission letter was approved by the addressed offices, the researcher conducted his study by following the subsequent steps: first, the researcher disseminated the survey questionnaires to the respondents. The respondents have been informed regarding the things they were asked to do, and what the risks are before they agree to take part in the study. They were given ample time to complete the questionnaire so that they can depict their true view on the research questions.

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table I. Challenges encountered by the student-athletes in their sports participation in terms of Physical challenges

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. When I am under pressure during a competition, I'm not able to relax physically resulting in low performance in my sport.	2.85	0.73	Agree
2. When I am doing physical/sports activities and exercises, my body becomes weaker and prone to injuries.	2.02	0.83	Disagree
3. When I am attending sports programs/ training, my body gets tired quickly.	2.17	0.67	Disagree
4. When I am attending sports programs/ training, it limits my urge to buy the food I want, resulting in a breakdown of my body.	2.22	0.69	Disagree
5. When I am doing warmup exercises early in the morning, I get fatigued and hungry faster, as a result, I become weak.	1.94	0.62	Disagree
Overall	2.24	0.78	Disagree

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 strongly agree; 2.50 – 3.49 agree; 1.50 – 2.49 disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

Table 1 displays the challenges encountered by the student-athletes of Recto Memorial National High School in their sports participation specifically on the physical challenges. The overall mean of the physical challenges encountered by the student-athletes is 2.24 with a verbal description of “Disagree”. The results indicate that the student-athletes did not have any physical challenges when participating in sports. The study's findings contrast the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons study on injuries caused by excess among young athletes. It emphasizes the mental and physical demands placed on teenage bodies, as well as the potential effects of prolonged stress (Kerr, 2019) [8]. These studies demonstrate the widely recognized fact that student-athletes suffer bodily consequences as a result of their participation.

Table II. Challenges encountered by the student-athletes in their sports participation in terms of Emotional challenges

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. I'm always nervous and worried every time I play.	2.54	0.67	Agree
2. Participating in sports activities increases my stress level even more.	2.07	0.66	Disagree
3. I get anxious about my health whenever I do sports.	1.99	0.72	Disagree
4. I always thought I was going to lose in a game and be a failure.	2.40	0.78	Disagree
5. I can't bounce back and overcome failure. It discourages me from further action.	2.26	0.75	Disagree
Overall	2.25	0.74	Disagree

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 strongly agree; 2.50 – 3.49 agree; 1.50 – 2.49 disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

Table 2 presents the challenges encountered by the students -athletes in their sports participation specifically on the emotional challenges. The average mean is 2.25 with a verbal description of “disagree”. It implies that most of the respondents do not encounter emotional challenges in their participation in sports. Furthermore, most of the research indicates the opposite of the study's conclusions. Paterno, Taylor, Myer, and Hewett (2022) strengthen Agbor-Baiyee's results by investigating the link between coach-athlete relationships, social assistance, and student-athlete psychological well-being. The study investigates how these qualities may influence emotional difficulties such as tiredness [9].

On the other hand, indicator 1 “I'm always nervous and worried every time I play” obtained the highest mean of 2.54 with a verbal description of “agree”. It indicates that the respondents experienced nervousness and worry every time they played. Pre-competition anxiety, characterized by anxiousness and stress, is common among student-athletes as a result of the pressure to excel, anxiety about failure, and risk of injury. Liu, Wang, and Yang (2020) look into the various psychological well-being therapy for student athletes, with a focus on controlling anxiety [10]. The high prevalence of anxiety among student-athletes, as well as the existence of many studies on how to handle it, highlight the connection to pre-competition circumstances.

These emotional issues can have a substantial influence on student-athletes' well-being and athletic achievement. It is critical that they gain access to support systems, such as sports psychologists and counselors, who can assist them in stress management and developing good coping strategies.

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

Table III. Challenges encountered by the student-athletes in their sports participation in terms of Mental challenges

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. I can't control my emotions when I am under pressure.	2.47	0.82	Disagree
2. I didn't fully accept my role as an athlete in the group, and I didn't think about the long-term impact of sport on my life.	2.13	0.69	Disagree
3. I do not understand and respect the regulations given in training since I know my own abilities in the sport I belong to.	1.98	0.77	Disagree
4. I was always dominated by fear and negative thoughts whenever I participated in sports.	2.25	0.72	Disagree
5. I always think that exercise and participating in sport is one of the tools that add to my stress and problems.	2.15	0.85	Disagree
Overall	2.20	0.78	Disagree

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 strongly agree; 2.50 – 3.49 agree; 1.50 – 2.49 disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

Table 3 shows the challenges encountered by the student-athletes in their sports participation regarding mental challenges. The average mean is 2.20 with a verbal description of “disagree”. This means that most of the respondents did not encounter mental challenges in participating in sports. While anxiety and pressure are prevalent, some student-athletes might not experience them as intensely.

For some student-athletes, the pressure to perform can be a motivating factor rather than a source of anxiety. According to Vallarino et al. (2021), the impact of inspiration and confidence on how young athletes react to adversity. Their findings indicate that athletes with high internal drive and confidence see pressure as a challenge that drives them to achieve more in sports. Amorose, Masterson, and Beighle (2019) further investigated the association between psychological resilience and motivation in collegiate athletes [11]. According to the study, athletes with great mental toughness transfer pressure into increased attention and motivation, resulting in greater efficiency.

In addition, Lubans et al. (2016) investigate the complex connection between physical activity and mental health. It stresses the mood-regulating advantages of exercise and suggests that participation in sports may improve young people's mental well-being [12].

Table IV. Summary of the challenges the student-athletes encountered in their sports participation

Challenges in Sports Participation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Physical Challenges	2.24	0.78	Disagree
Emotional Challenges	2.25	0.74	Disagree
Mental Challenges	2.20	0.78	Disagree
Overall	2.23	0.77	Disagree

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 strongly agree; 2.50 – 3.49 agree; 1.50 – 2.49 disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

Table 4 explains the summary of the challenges that the student-athletes encounter in their sports participation. The overall mean is 2.23 with a verbal description of “Disagree”. It indicates that most of the respondents did not encounter challenges in their participation in sports. It also shows that studentathletes gain valuable skills like teamwork, time management, and discipline in their participation in sports.

Furthermore, there might be specific circumstances where challenges are minimal. For example, studentathletes face difficult hurdles on their road to higher levels of competition in sports, but these challenges also provide opportunities for profound growth and development. The delicate balance between academic obligations and intense sports training regimens is a substantial challenge, as shown in Rutledge's (2023) study, particularly for freshmen, resulting in missed classes, sleep loss, and increased stress [13]. Also, the strenuous activities of intense training programs lead athletes to injuries, needing rigorous monitoring of recovery and preventative techniques, while also increasing mental health difficulties like worry and fatigue.

Despite the obstacles, managing and overcoming these challenges foster the development of essential abilities such as time management, stress resilience, and adaptability, which are invaluable not only in sports but also in academic pursuits and future careers. Thus, while the student-athlete journey is fraught with difficulties, embracing these challenges within a supportive

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

framework stimulates profound personal and professional growth, underscoring the significance of robust support networks to ensure holistic success both on and off the field.

Table V. Perception of the student-athletes in the coping mechanisms in terms of coaching assistance

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. The coaching assistance I received provides effective support in helping me navigate the physical, technical, tactical, and psychological challenges associated with sports participation.	3.37	0.91	Agree
2. Coaches, athletic trainers, and sport staff frequently play a significant part in my support network and coping mechanisms as an athlete, contributing to my overall well-being and ability to navigate challenges in sports participation.	3.40	0.62	Agree
3. The practice of reframing the student-athlete's role, receiving mindful messages, and following intentional instructions positively contributes to my overall athletic performance and wellbeing.	3.18	0.70	Agree
4. Coaches have the potential to create a positive environment, and I have a positive impression of my coaches' ability to build a supportive team climate.	3.46	0.59	Agree
5. Coaches effectively tailor training regimens to the specific needs and goals of athletes, fostering an environment conducive to skill development and overall performance improvement.	3.22	0.73	Agree
Overall	3.33	0.72	Agree

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 strongly agree; 2.50 – 3.49 agree; 1.50 – 2.49 disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

Table 5 illustrates the perception of the student-athletes in the coping mechanisms in terms of coaching assistance. The average mean is 3.33 with a verbal description of “agree”. It indicates that respondents have a favorable opinion of the coaching assistance supplied to them. Coaches are commonly recognized for helping student-athletes grow both athletically and personally. Coaches may provide important teaching, technical knowledge, and inspiring support, which players cherish. Fletcher and Kerr (2018) discovered that student-athletes respect coaches who give precise instruction, encouraging feedback, and a supportive atmosphere, implying a favorable impression of these coaching attributes [14].

Moreover, item 4 “coaches have the potential to create a positive environment, and I have a positive impression of my coaches' ability to build a supportive team climate” garnered the highest mean of 3.46 with a verbal description of “agree”. Effective coaches play an important role in creating a healthy and encouraging team culture. Their leadership, communication skills, and capacity to foster a feeling of belonging may have a tremendous influence on athletes' experiences. This simply means that coaches who are educated in mental health awareness and coping strategies may be useful tools.

Table VI. Perception of the student-athletes in the coping mechanisms in terms of developing plans and actions and making decisions

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. As a student-athlete, I exhibit a commendable ability to develop strategic plans even when confronted with challenges in my personal life, showcasing resilience and determination in navigating adversities.	2.98	0.84	Agree
2. As a student-athlete with a strong athletic identity, I'm less likely to violate rules and more likely to exhibit fair play and sportsmanship in my competitive behaviors.	3.23	0.71	Agree
3. As a student-athlete who actively participate in experiential learning, shaping plans, actions, and decisions, I can exhibit an enhanced capacity to translate acquired knowledge into practical skills and improvements in my athletic endeavors.	3.09	0.92	Agree
4. As a student- athlete, I should adopt a time-limiting mindset, emphasizing the			

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

importance of setting and adhering to specific time constraints to enhance focus and efficiency in my training and performance.	3.33	0.64	Agree
5. As a student-athlete, I use different plans and strategies such as positive self-talk, mindfulness, effective recovery methods such as proper sleep, hydration, massage, and ice baths to enhance my athletic performance.	3.11	0.90	Agree
Overall	3.15	0.81	Agree

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 strongly agree; 2.50 – 3.49 agree; 1.50 – 2.49 disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

Table 6 presents the perception of the student-athletes in the coping mechanisms in terms of developing plans and actions and making decisions. The average mean is 3.15 with a verbal description of “agree”. It indicates that most of the respondents have positive perceptions of their coping mechanism specifically on developing plans and actions and making decisions. Student-athletes may learn important coping skills including planning and decision-making.

In addition, item 4 “as a student-athlete, I should adopt a time-limiting mindset, emphasizing the importance of setting and adhering to specific time constraints to enhance focus and efficiency in my training and performance” attained the highest mean of 3.33 with a verbal description of “agree”. It denotes that students-athletes being aware of a limited amount of time to complete a task can sharpen their focus and reduce procrastination. It encourages them to prioritize effectively and avoid distractions.

Table VII. Perception of the student-athletes in the coping mechanisms in terms of receptive to new experiences

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. As a student-athlete, I demonstrate dedication to both my sport and academics that contribute to my overall success and well-being.	3.30	0.64	Agree
2. As a student- athlete, I believe that being taught about the benefits of sport psychology at an early age would enhance my mental skills and overall performance.	3.16	0.92	Agree
3. As a student-athlete, I find that a focused approach to competition and performance, coupled with active engagement with my peers and the surrounding environment is a valuable strategy for enhancing my overall athletic development.	3.12	0.67	Agree
4. As a student-athlete, I believe that learning and performing motor skills are integral components of my athletic experience. To participate In competitive sports, I recognize the necessity of acquiring a minimum level of sport skill through many hours of practice.	3.17	0.64	Agree
5. As a student-athlete, I personally acknowledge that my dedication and significant commitment to consistent training and practice play a pivotal role in shaping my athletic pursuits. I believe that investing time and effort into these aspects contributes substantially to my overall development and success in sports.	3.23	0.75	Agree
Overall	3.20	0.73	Agree

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 strongly agree; 2.50 – 3.49 agree; 1.50 – 2.49 disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

Table 7 exhibits the perception of the student-athletes in the coping mechanisms in terms of receptive to new experiences. The average mean is 3.20 with a verbal description of “agree”. It means that most of the respondents have a positive perception of their coping mechanism in terms of being receptive to new experiences. Participation in sports frequently creates a development mentality and a desire to face obstacles. Student-athletes who are used to acquiring new abilities, dealing with varied training techniques, and competing may build beneficial coping strategies that carry over into other aspects of their lives. This willingness to try new things can help individuals manage stress, negotiate academic hurdles, and adjust to changing situations.

Moreover, indicator 1 “as a student-athlete, I demonstrate dedication to both my sport and academics that contribute to my overall success and wellbeing” acquired the highest mean of 3.30 with a verbal description of “agree”. It suggests that student-athletes are inherently dedicated to managing academics and athletics. This dedication to competence in both areas builds important abilities such as time management, discipline, and resilience, which influence greatly to holistic success and well-being. They not only thrive in the sport they chose, but they also acquire a strong work ethic and the capacity to cope under pressure, which leads to academic success and a well-rounded feeling of accomplishment.

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

Table VIII. Summary of the perceptions of the student-athletes in their coping mechanisms

Perception:	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Coaching Assistance Developing plans and actions and making decisions	3.33	0.72	Agree
Receptive to new experiences	3.15	0.81	Agree
Overall	3.20	0.73	Agree
Overall	3.23	0.75	Agree

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 strongly agree; 2.50 – 3.49 agree; 1.50 – 2.49 disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 strongly disagree

Table 8 illustrates the summary of the perception of the students-athletes of Recto Memorial National High School in their coping mechanism in their sports participation. The overall mean is 3.23 with a verbal description of “agree”. It shows that most of the respondents have a positive perception of their coping mechanism in participation in sports. The result is supported by the study of Kim and Han (2023) as they highlight how positive social support from coaches can strengthen the use of sports participation as a coping strategy for student-athletes dealing with stress [15]. Wang, Zhang, and Liu, (2021) explore how sports participation can improve self-esteem in college students by influencing perceived stress and coping styles, suggesting a positive perception of sports as a coping mechanism [16]. Moreover, among the indicators, coaching assistance obtains the highest mean of 3.33 with a verbal description of “agree”. This means that most of the respondents have a positive perception of the coaching assistance provided by the school. Effective coaches provide guidance, feedback, and training plans to help student-athletes improve their skills and reach their full potential. Good coaches create a supportive and motivating environment that fosters confidence and a sense of belonging. Encouragement, positive reinforcement, and belief in an athlete's abilities can be highly valued by student-athletes.

Table IX. Level of student-athletes' achievement in sports according to level of competition

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Municipal	40	40.00
Congressional Division	23	23.00
Provincial	14	14.00
Regional	22	22.00
National	1	1.00
Total	100	100.00

Table 9 presents the level of student-athletes' achievement in sports. 40 respondents reached Municipal Meet, 23 respondents have experienced Congressional Meet, 14 respondents reached Provincial Meet, 22 respondents experienced the Regional Meet, and 1 respondent achieved the National Meet. This result means student-athletes' interests and dedication in sports lead them to different level of sports competition. The presence of positive behaviors, such as an exemplary work ethic and a supportive attitude towards teammates, not only fosters enjoyment and achievement in sports but also ignites an intrinsic desire for continual progress among student-athletes, suggesting that their academic and athletic performance may thrive concurrently as a result of this well-rounded approach to life. These behaviors also facilitate consistent training, leading to skill refinement and increased confidence. These positive behaviors not only prepare student-athletes for higher competition but also equip them with essential attributes like discipline and communication skills, enhancing their prospects for success and attracting attention from college coaches and scouts. Thus, positive behavior serves as a cornerstone for student-athletes, propelling them towards higher levels of competition and future triumphs.

Table X. Academic performance of the student-athletes in the following subjects

Grade	Physical Education		English		Mathematics		Science		Remarks
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
96 and above	6	6.00	-	-	5	5.00	1	1.00	Excellent
91 to 95	55	55.00	26	26.00	23	23.00	32	32.00	Very Satisfactorily
86 to 90	35	35.00	45	45.00	43	43.00	44	44.00	Satisfactorily
81 to 85	4	4.00	23	23.00	19	19.00	17	17.00	Poor
80 and below	-	-	6	6.00	10	10.00	6	6.00	Needs improvement
Total	100	100.00	100	100.00	100	100.00	100	100.00	

Table 10 shows the results on the academic performance of student-athletes in Physical Education, English, Mathematics and Science.

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

In Physical Education, several student-athletes received the following grades: 6 achieved scores of 96 and above, earning an "Excellent" rating; 55 obtained scores between 91 to 95, marked as "Very Satisfactory"; 35 scored between 86 to 90, labeled as "Satisfactory"; and 4 received scores between 81 to 85, categorized as "Poor." It clearly stated that most of the student-athletes maintained high grades in Physical Education which indicates that physical exercise, particularly sport, enhances student behavior and increases numerous elements of academic achievement, particularly mathematics-related skills and reading.

In English, student-athletes received the following grades: None achieved scores of 96 and above, marked as "Excellent"; 26 obtained scores between 91 to 95, labeled as "Very Satisfactory"; 45 scored between 86 to 90, categorized as "Satisfactory"; 23 received scores between 81 to 85, marked as "Poor"; and 6 attained scores of 80 and below, categorized as "Needs Improvement." This implies that weaknesses in English skills, such as reading comprehension or verbal expression, can hinder effective communication among teammates, coaches, and support staff, leading to misunderstandings and decreased team consistency.

There were studies suggesting that balancing athletics with academics can be demanding, potentially leading to lower grades in English for student-athletes compared to non-athletes. Time constraints due to practice, travel, and games can limit the time available for studying and completing English tasks and activities. However, some research contradicts this notion. Certain institutions report student-athletes performing equally well or even better than their peers in English. This could be due to factors like strong academic support systems offered by athletic departments, promoting time management and study skills.

In Mathematics, student-athletes received the following grades: 5 achieved scores of 96 and above, earning an "Excellent" rating; 23 obtained scores between 91 to 95, marked as "Very Satisfactory"; 43 scored between 86 to 90, categorized as "Satisfactory"; 19 received scores between 81 to 85, labeled as "Poor"; and 10 attained scores of 80 and below, categorized as "Needs Improvement." This implies that success in Mathematics often correlates with strong problem-solving skills.

These skills can be transferable to sports, where athletes are frequently required to analyze game situations and make quick decisions under pressure. Similarly, Anum and Tetteh (2018) revealed that student-athletes largely agreed sports had no negative impact on their math grades. They even reported improvements in concentration and overall activity in math class while participating in sports [17].

In Science, student-athletes received the following grades: 1 achieved a score of 96 and above, earning an "Excellent" rating; 32 obtained scores between 91 to 95, marked as "Very Satisfactory"; 44 scored between 86 to 90, categorized as "Satisfactory"; 17 received scores between 81 to 85, labeled as "Poor"; and 6 attained scores of 80 and below, categorized as "Needs Improvement." This implies that Science skills can provide student-athletes with valuable knowledge that can enhance their athletic performance, injury prevention, and overall understanding of the scientific principles underlying sports participation

Table XI. Relationship Between Challenges and Students' Achievement

Challenges	Students' Achievement				
	Level	P.E.	English	Math	Science
Physical	-0.22*	-0.17	-0.08	-0.08	-0.16
Emotional	-0.03	-0.16	-0.14	-0.13	-0.12
Mental	-0.16	-0.35*	-0.20*	-0.16	-0.17

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 11 shows the relationship between studentathletes' challenges in sports participation and their academic achievement. The result revealed that few of the

challenges are significantly related to student-athletes' achievement, using 0.01 and 0.05 levels of significance.

All indicators under student-athletes' achievement was not significantly correlated to physical challenges using a 0.05 level of significance except the level of studentathletes' participation in sports. The correlation between the physical challenges encountered by student-athletes and their level of sports participation is significant, with its strength intensifying as athletes progress to higher competitive tiers, as explained by Faude, Schnittker, Schulte-Zurhausen and Meyer (2013) [18]. This correlation is underscored by several key factors: the escalation of training intensity, leading to heightened risks of overuse injuries and muscle strains; the augmented likelihood of severe injuries in high-level competition due to aggressive play and increased speed; challenges associated with prioritizing recovery amidst demanding schedules and performance pressures; the potential for mental and physical burnout caused by constant strain and expectations; and the added complications faced by student-athletes with preexisting medical conditions. While proper training and healthcare access can mitigate these challenges to an extent, the enduring correlation between physical hurdles and participation level persists, emphasizing the heightened risks and considerations for student-athletes as they advance in their athletic endeavors.

As to Emotional challenges using a 0.05 level of significance, all indicators under student-athletes' achievement were not correlated to student-athletes' achievement. On the other hand, using a 0.05 level of significance, indicators under student-athletes achievement

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

were not significantly correlated to mental challenges except in Physical Education and English. This only means that both sports and English learning require sustained focus and concentration. Additionally, student-athletes sometimes have time management issues as a result of strenuous athletic schedules, which might restrict their preparation time for PE class assignments or activities, negatively influencing academic achievement. However, participation in sports may also promote beneficial mental abilities such as discipline, goal planning, and persistence, which can improve general academic achievement, including PE class grades.

Table XII. Relationship Between Coping Mechanisms and Students' Achievement Experience

Coping Mechanisms	Students' Achievement				
	Level	P.E.	English	Math	Science
Coaching Assistance	0.09	0.26*	0.13	0.12	0.15
Developing Plans and Actions and Making Decisions	0.18	0.24*	0.12	0.06	0.14
Receptive to New Experience	0.15	0.23*	0.14	0.13	0.19

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 12 expresses the relationship between student-athletes' coping mechanisms in sports and their academic achievement. The result revealed that all of the student-athletes coping mechanisms are significantly related to student-athletes' achievement in Physical Education, using a 0.05 level of significance.

All indicators under student-athlete achievement were not significantly correlated to coaching assistance using a 0.05 level of significance except the student-athlete achievement in Physical Education. It suggests that coaches have a significant influence on the development of studentathletes at all levels of academic achievement. Coaches are entrusted with studying the strengths and limitations of individual athletes and teams, which is an important step in developing effective coaching techniques. Coaches at these levels are also accountable for giving athletes guidance and support before and during sporting events, which contributes considerably to their psychological readiness and motivation (Concordia University Chicago (2023) [19].

As to developing plans and actions and making decisions, using a 0.01 level of significance, all indicators under student-athletes achievement were not correlated to student-athletes achievement except in Physical Education. Thus, making good judgments during physical exercise requires student-athletes to examine events, weigh risks and advantages, and select the best course of action. This leads to better performance in tasks that require tactical thinking and responding to changing circumstances.

On the other hand, using a 0.05 level of significance, indicators under student-athletes achievement were not significantly correlated to receptive to new experiences except in Physical Education. This simply means that student-athletes frequently participate in a unique blend of academic and athletic activities. The balance of these obligations can help with their personal growth and impact their openness to new experiences

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, it is concluded that the hypothesis of no significant relationship between challenges in sports participation regarding emotional health and the sports and academic achievement of student-athletes is sustained, while the hypothesis of no significant relationship regarding physical and mental health challenges is partially accepted. Additionally, the hypothesis of no significant relationship between coping mechanisms and sports and academic achievement is accepted except for Physical Education, where it is not sustained. Consequently, it is recommended that coaches, sports organizers, and enthusiasts understand the specific challenges faced by student-athletes, such as time management, academic stress, injuries, burnout, and social isolation, and provide training and tools for stress management. Coaches should create adaptable training plans that accommodate academic schedules and personal needs, ensuring flexibility during exams, injuries, and high-stress periods, and fostering communication between coaches, athletes, and academic advisors. Further research could explore other challenges, such as social and spiritual aspects, using this study as a foundation for systematic and phenomenological investigations within the sports community.

Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

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Challenges in Sports Participation and Coping Mechanism towards Student-Athletes' Achievement: Basis for Flexible Training Program

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