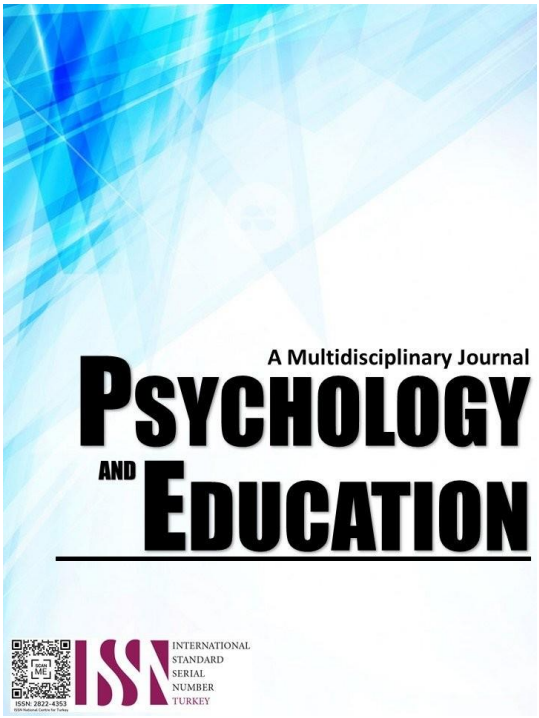
JUGGLING THE CLOCK: EXPLORING THE TIME MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AMONG STUDENT-ATHLETES



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Research Article

Juggling the Clock: Exploring the Time Management Strategies among Student-Athletes

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Abstract

Engaging in physical activities is vital for every student's educational progress; however, student -athletes face the dual challenge of managing academic responsibilities and athletic commitments, often leading to difficulties in balancing their time effectively. This study aimed to determine and understand the time management strategies of student-athletes at Tagugpo National High School. It employed a qualitative research design utilizing a phenomenological approach to explore the challenges, coping mechanisms, and insights of the student-athletes. The study was hinged on the Eisenhower Matrix Theory of Dwight D. Eisenhower (1954), which posits that student-athletes prioritize tasks by urgency and importance, enabling them to balance academic and athletic responsibilities effectively. There were eight (8) student-athletes as participants in this study, selected through purposive sampling. The research utilized semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions to gather rich data. Results revealed four major themes regarding their challenges: struggles with overcommitment, falling behind in classes, conflicting time schedules, and feeling overwhelmed. Student-athletes coped by adopting strategies such as establishing priorities, setting deadlines, managing time efficiently, balancing sports and academics, and limiting distractions. Additionally, their insights highlighted four themes: a sense of fulfillment, respect and humility, self-improvement, and setting personal goals. The study emphasized that while some student-athletes utilize effective time management strategies, others face significant difficulties due to demanding schedules and limited support systems. These findings emphasize the need for targeted programs and resources to help student-athletes develop better time management skills. Furthermore, improving time management can boost student-athletes' academic performance, athletic success, and overall well-being, supporting their growth in both school and life.

Keywords: *time management, strategies, student-athletes, qualitative-phenomenological research*

Introduction

Engaging in physical activities is vital for every student's educational progress. Many sports contribute to student's well-being, and these activities still discipline and teach management skills and teamwork. However, the time management of student-athletes are often more hectic and difficult than what most people would perceive it to be that may negatively impact their ability to effectively manage these responsibilities (Storey et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, student-athletes who focus on both sports and academics struggle to manage their busy schedules. Although they do well in sports, their academic results often fall short. This issue points to a need for better support that balances both their training and education (Suroto et al., 2024). Moreover, in one organization in Malaysia which is the Malaysian Sports School (MSS) stated that it is crucial to enhance sports proficiency at the school level to optimize the performance and achievements of student-athletes in various sports disciplines (Rahaman et al., 2024).

In the Philippines, student-athletes face unique challenges in balancing their academic and athletic commitments. These challenges include limited time for interactions with teachers and coaches due to frequent practices, resulting in fewer face-to-face meetings. Furthermore, being a student-athlete in the Philippines requires significant commitment, with strong determination and effective time management being crucial for maintaining balance and achieving success (Gray, 2022).

In one of the schools in Pantukan, Davao de Oro, student-athletes struggle with time management due to their busy schedules. They need to balance tough academic work with demanding sports commitments, which often leads to problems managing their time effectively. This can cause stress, tiredness, and a drop in performance in both school and sports. The pressure to do well in both areas makes it hard for them to prioritize tasks, meet deadlines, and get enough rest. This highlights the need for better strategies and support to help them balance their busy lives.

Several studies have been conducted about time management among student-athletes, but few have employed a qualitative research approach to understand their personal experiences in managing their time. This gap highlights the need for more in-depth qualitative research to better understand the nuanced challenges and strategies of student-athletes face in balancing their academic and athletic commitments.

With this mentioned gap, it is essential to study how student-athletes manage their time. This research would help understand their challenges and strategies for balancing school and sports. The findings could lead to better support and tools to help student-athletes manage their time more effectively. Improving time management can boost their academic performance, athletic success, and overall well-being, supporting their growth in both school and life.

Research Questions

This study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the challenges experienced by the student-athletes in their time management?
2. How do the student-athletes cope with the challenges they experience?
3. What are the insights or lessons learned shared by the student-athletes in their time management?

Literature Review

Experiences of Student-Athletes in Their Time Management

Elite student-athletes face a significant time conflict as they juggle the rigorous demands of their athletic pursuits and academic responsibilities. With both athletics and education requiring substantial time and attention, they often struggle to allocate sufficient time to each. The need to meet competing deadlines and commitments in both areas creates a constant challenge, where one responsibility often encroaches on the other, making it difficult to balance both effectively (Mateu et al., 2024).

In addition, research revealed that student-athletes face considerable time pressures due to rigorous training schedules and competition obligations, which frequently conflict with their academic duties. Consequently, maintaining strong academic performance during the sports season becomes a challenge as they navigate competing demands on their time and energy. Promoting a culture that values holistic development is crucial to ensure academic success is not overshadowed by athletic goals. This requires encouraging student-athletes to prioritize balancing their academic and athletic commitments and to utilize available resources to support their studies during the season (Hamatani et al., 2019).

Similarly, in Canada, student-athletes encounter various challenges, including navigating the demands of university life, which often involves managing their time effectively to balance academics and sports commitments (Crocker et al., 2021). While some student-athletes benefit from positive outcomes such as academic achievement, athletic competence, and social support, others struggle with difficulties like balancing education and sports, dealing with injuries, and limited free time (Thompson et al., 2023). Additionally, they face challenges related to the pandemic, personal growth, school responsibilities, and career development. Successfully addressing these issues requires effective time management, balancing training with academics, and thoughtful career planning (Wei, 2023).

A study by Lopes Dos Santos et al., (2020) identifies two primary sources of stress among student-athletes: academic stress and athlete-related stress. Academic stress arises from the demands of maintaining a specific GPA to retain their scholarship, as well as the challenges of managing school requirements such as homework, exams, and projects, all while also participating in rigorous daily training. Moreover, Gray (2022) shows that student-athletes usually experience the highest levels of stress during periods when academic demands are great, causing them to have sleep problems, become more prone to injuries, and experience mental health problems.

Additionally, student-athletes face stress from balancing academic, athletic, and social demands, dealing with unhealthy team environments, and encountering stigma that hinders help-seeking for mental health issues (Harris & Maher, 2023). For instance, for students who are involved in college athletics, the likelihood of facing stress and anxiety is further increased (Lopes Dos Santos et al., 2020). This increase in stress for student-athletes is often attributed to a heavy training load, balancing athletics and academics, and stressors related to athletic performance (Herman, 2021).

Furthermore, according to Miranda-Comas (2022), student-athletes often experience a conflict between their athletic commitments and academic responsibilities due to the significant time demands of practice and training. This ongoing tension can lead to negative results, as the conflict between athletic and academic commitments may cause one field to suffer. When time constraints are particularly severe, there is a possibility that either academic performance or athletic performance will be compromised due to the lack of sufficient focus and energy for both.

Moreover, according to the records, student-athletes often experience the highest levels of pressure during periods of heavy academic demands. This pressure can lead to challenges such as sleep problems and an increased risk of injuries. In addition, it can negatively affect their mental health (Gray, 2022). Similarly, student-athletes face mental health challenges due to stigma and overwhelming schedules. Performance pressure and a reluctance to seek help further exacerbate these issues. As a result, these factors can significantly impact both their well-being and athletic performance (McCabe et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the students allocate less time to academic activities than expected, leads to academic setbacks. Time allocation is crucial, as insufficient investment in academics negatively impacts performance, especially when balancing extracurricular commitments with academic responsibilities (Kot, 2019). In addition, student-athletes often report falling behind academically due to the demanding nature of their training and competition schedules. The time required for training and competitions leaves them with limited time to focus on their academic responsibilities, leading to setbacks in their studies (Mitic et al., 2020).

Coping Mechanism of Student-Athletes in Time Management

Student-athletes cope with time management through a variety of strategies. Specifically, they employ goal setting, structured routines,

task prioritization, feedback utilization, and effective communication to balance sports and academics efficiently (Liu, 2024). In addition, making lists, setting schedules, creating downtime, and exercising are crucial for their success in athletic training programs (Singe et al., 2022). The importance of time management is highlighted in how student-athletes manage stress through strategies like social support, which is essential for balancing academics, sports, and mental health (Fogaca, 2021).

Moreover, Quimbo (2023) stated that student-athletes often set deadlines by scheduling training sessions after class, which helps them manage their time effectively. This structured approach allows them to balance academic responsibilities with athletic commitments, promoting better organization and efficiency in their daily activities. Similarly, Santos and Sagas (2023) also added that student-athletes can manage their schedules by following a normal school program and participating in sport training during leisure periods, or by having special teaching conditions where school requirements are adapted to accommodate their training commitments.

Furthermore, Linnér et al., (2021) stated that student-athletes face unique challenges by balancing their academic and athletic commitments. They cope by prioritizing their responsibilities, ensuring that they can focus on both their studies and sports without neglecting either. This requires a high level of discipline and effective time management, as they juggle demanding schedules. As a result, to maintain this balance, they often must make sacrifices, including saying no to non-essential activities, to stay focused on their dual roles as students and athletes.

Likewise, students, including those in accelerated programs, often use avoidance strategies such as engaging in athletic activities to cope with academic stress, suggesting that managing distractions is a common approach to balancing sports and academics (Santos et al., 2020). In addition, student-athletes cope with their responsibilities by managing distractions and setting clear boundaries between academics and athletics. Strategies such as limiting social media, avoiding unnecessary commitments, and prioritizing tasks help student-athletes stay focused and organized, reducing stress and enhancing performance in both areas (Liu & Taresh, 2024).

The study of Steele et al., (2020) indicates that self-management significantly affects sports coping among student-athletes, suggesting that effective time management is likely a component of their coping strategies to handle challenges encountered in their athletic careers. Furthermore, Healy et al., (2020) emphasizes that student-athletes prioritize goals that align with their personal values and interests, focusing on what truly matters to them in both sports and academics. This reflects their tendency to pursue objectives that support their overall well-being and long-term happiness.

Moreover, student-athletes cope with their responsibilities by balancing their time effectively, which helps them manage both their training and competition commitments alongside their schoolwork. This approach prevents confusion and overload, ensuring that neither aspect of their life is neglected when the demands of both become intense (Sæther et al., 2022). In addition, student-athletes prioritize goals that align with their personal values and interests, focusing on what truly matters to them in both sports and academics. This reflects their tendency to pursue objectives that support their overall well-being and long-term happiness (Healy et al., 2020).

Finally, student-athletes employ various strategies to balance their academic and athletic responsibilities, which are crucial for their overall well-being and success. Balancing their time helps them to navigate the demands of both sports and academics (Simons & Bird, 2023).

Insights Shared by Student-Athletes in Time Management

The study of Singe et al., (2024) regarding the time management of student-athletes has shown that the key to success lies in establishing a structured routine, setting clear goals, and employing effective organizational tools. In particular, by delegating administrative tasks, student-athletes can focus on what truly matters—achieving academic excellence and athletic prowess. Thus, embracing these strategies could be the difference between stress and success, making it essential for student-athletes to learn and apply effective time management techniques that cater to their dual responsibilities.

Moreover, the study stated that personal goals boost self-motivation, especially when followed by achievable tasks. Success in reaching these smaller goals builds commitment, helping individuals set clear objectives and stay focused, which leads to better performance and stronger intrinsic motivation (Fan et al., 2020). Similarly, Firth-Clark et al., (2019) study stated that self-management, like managing time and tasks well, is important for student-athletes to do well in both school and sports. Staying focused, avoiding distractions, and being disciplined in training and studying are key to reaching their goals as student-athletes.

According to Ault et al., (2024), student-athletes often find their experiences fulfilling due to the strong bonds they form with teammates and the supportive environment fostered by coaches and peers. These relationships contribute significantly to their overall well-being and life skills development, enhancing their collegiate experience. Furthermore, the study of Cho et al., (2020) shows that support from teammates is important for student-athletes because it can boost their mood and well-being. It suggests that forming strong bonds with teammates can make the experience more enjoyable, even with the stress they face.

In consonance to the study of Healy et al., (2024), setting clear, achievable goals enhances motivation and focus, helping them make better decisions in both sports and academics. Aligning these goals with personal values and abilities builds trust in the process, leading to improved performance and success. The theme emphasizes motivating personal goals. Additionally, the study of Abad Robles et al., (2021) indicates that participating in sports can instill important values such as respect and self-control. Programs like Hellison's Personal and Social Responsibility Model encourage young athletes to develop respect, humility, and insights from their sports

experiences. According to Volchkova et al., (2020), the significance of spiritual and moral development in student-athletes, noting that classic literature can promote virtues like respect and humility, which are crucial for their growth and success both in sports and in their personal lives.

To sum it all up, this section presented the studies that is related to the experiences of student-athletes in time management, coping mechanism, and insights. A collection of both foreign and local studies provides information to the researchers that their proposed study has similarities with other studies.

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, the researchers used a qualitative research design employing a phenomenological approach. Qualitative research design referred to various methods like phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and case studies used to collect and analyze data in qualitative research for theory development and interpretation (Hennink et al., 2020). Furthermore, according to Flick (2022), it involved exploring social phenomena through non-numerical data to understand how and why people behave as they did, using methods like in-depth interviewing and ethnographic observations.

Moreover, the researchers employed qualitative research to gain an understanding of the experiences of student-athletes in managing their time. This approach suited the study in the sense that direct interaction with participants provided clear and realistic information about their experiences and how they dealt with them. Specifically, the researchers employed a phenomenological approach because it was concerned with the study of experiences based on the perspective of the individual. Dodgson (2023) pointed out that phenomenological studies emphasized understanding how individuals interpret and give meaning to their lived experiences, focusing on the subjective perspective of participants to explore their unique perceptions and insights.

Thus, phenomenology was a suitable approach for the inquiry since the primary purpose of this study was to understand the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of student-athletes in managing their time. In addition, experience, in a phenomenological sense, included imagination, thought, emotion, desire, decision, and action, which summed up everything that we lived through or performed.

Participants

The participants of this study were eight (8) student-athletes engaged in focus group discussions (FGD) and in in-depth interviews (IDI) selected using a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, was a non-probability sampling method in which participants were selected according to the researcher's selection criteria based on the purpose of the study. Specifically, purposive sampling was used in this study, where the characteristics of the sample were defined for a specific purpose relevant to the study (Andrade, 2021).

The participants of the study were selected using the following criteria: first, participants must have attended the Municipal Meet or have direct experience competing in athletic events; second, participants should have been enrolled in S.Y. 2024-2025; third, participants should have been student-athletes; and fourth, they should have been able and willing to talk about their experiences in managing their time. Students who were not willing to talk about their experiences and were not officially enrolled for the S.Y. 2024-2025 were excluded as participants in the study.

Instrument

The data of the study were taken primarily from the in- depth interview (IDI) and focus group discussion (FGD) using semi-structured interview guide questions. In-depth interviews are useful in gathering detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviors. Interviews offer a complete picture of a person's experiences under a particular situation. Furthermore, an in-depth interview is used when the researcher wants to distinguish individual opinions. It was suited to be used in this study to explore additional and more personal points, where the participants freely and comfortably speak without any unnecessary interruption. Aside from the in-depth interview (IDI), other relevant data which helped support the study were gathered, such as existing related studies and literature from journals, books, and other articles.

Procedure

Qualitative research underwent a series of activities in the process of collecting data. As cited by Simpson et al. (2022), data collection in research involved several critical steps, including locating the site, gaining access, and effectively engaging with participants. Thus, the researchers took the following step-by-step process in collecting the data for the study.

First, the researchers secured permission from our subject teacher in Practical Research 1. Next, the researchers wrote a letter of permission to the school principal of Tagugpo National High School.

Second, the researchers selected the sample of the study through the purposive sampling technique wherein target participants possessed the inclusion criteria. To easily determine the sample, the researchers asked for a list of suggested student-athletes of Tagugpo National High School from their advisers, and afterwards, the researchers communicated with the target participants.

Then, the researchers distributed to the participants the informed consent, which contained the participants' right to voluntarily withdraw anytime, the central purpose of the study and data collection procedure, the comments about how confidentiality would be maintained, the known risks and benefits to the participants, and the participants' and researcher's signatures.

Third, the researchers conducted the in-depth interview and focus group discussion in a place that was conducive and quiet, or in any place decided by the participants. To ensure complete data, the researchers asked permission from the participants to audio record the interview and discussion.

Finally, the researchers made sure to have back-up files in our computer for storing data. High-quality audiotapes were also used to ensure clarity of the interview or discussions. Also, the researchers used pseudonyms in the data to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Data Analysis

In this study, the researchers used Braun and Clarke's (2022) six-phase framework which include the following: familiarize with the data, generate initial codes, search for themes, review themes, define themes, and write up the results of the theming process. All the audio recordings that were taken down were transcribed. Then, the results were analyzed according to the research questions using coding and thematic analysis. The researchers applied coding by assigning a word or short phrase that symbolized the summative, salient, essence-capturing, and evocative attribute for visual data and assigned data with categories, eventually, the researchers employed thematic analysis. Furthermore, the researchers sought the assistance of our data analyst and subject teacher to ensure that responses were analyzed carefully based on the core ideas, hence coming up with appropriate conclusions and recommendations.

Ethical Considerations

In this study, the researchers adhered to the Belmont Report, which identifies three ethical principles particularly relevant to research involving human subjects: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Ribeiro-Junior (2023) noted that the ethical principles for scientific researchers encompass respect for participants' autonomy, privacy, honesty in the disclosure of results, and data privacy, aligning with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173).

Furthermore, in order to comply with the ethical standards delineated in the Belmont Report and the provisions of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173), this study involving student-athletes, who are classified as minors and therefore considered vulnerable, prioritized their autonomy, privacy, and safety. Informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians, alongside assent from the minors, ensuring that they comprehended the study's associated risks and benefits, as well as their right to withdraw at any point. Participants were selected based on their willingness and capacity to engage in the study, and permission was secured from the head of the institution prior to the commencement of the research. The researchers upheld integrity by transparently disclosing findings and ensuring the confidentiality of participants' data using pseudonyms and secure file management. The principle of justice was instrumental in guiding the researchers to equitably balance the burdens and benefits associated with the research.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the experiences of the student-athletes, their coping mechanisms with the challenges they experienced and their insights in time management as well as the concepts which emerged from the information gleaned through the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion.

Table 1. *Major Themes and Core Ideas of the Challenges Faced by Student-Athletes in Time Management*

Major Themes	*Core Ideas*
Struggles of Overcommitment	Student-athletes face the struggle of managing their time effectively due to the demands of intense training and academic responsibilities. Student-athletes faced the struggle of being scolded by classmates for not helping. Student-athletes are struggled by time management because teachers do not allow them to leave early for training.
Falling Behind in Classes	Student-athletes fell behind in classes due to a lack of time to complete their activities and projects. Student-athletes fell behind in class because they relied on excuses related to their athletic commitments. Student-athletes fell behind in classes due to training.
Conflicting Time Schedules	Student-athletes experienced conflicts with their time due to having a lot of schoolwork to do and training. Student-athletes had conflicting time due to their studies and athletic responsibilities. Student-athletes experienced conflicting time as their game approached while they faced a heavy workload at school.
Feeling Overwhelmed	Student-athletes often feel overwhelmed by failing grades because they are unable to attend class due to game schedules. Student-athletes experience pressure from failing grades cause by poor time management. Student-athletes feel overwhelmed by the constant struggle between practice and academics, which leads to falling grades.

Challenges Faced by Student-Athletes in Time Management

The student-athletes who were chosen as the participants shared the challenges experienced in their time management. From their honest answers, four (4) major themes emerged: 1) Struggles of overcommitment 2) Falling behind in classes, 3) Conflicting time, and 4) Feeling overwhelmed.

Struggles of Overcommitment. Since student-athletes have many responsibilities in terms of training and academics, they have experienced challenges with managing their time. They find it challenging because training schedules often conflict with academic obligations, making it difficult to balance both effectively.

This is supported by Hanatani et al. (2019), who observed that student-athletes face significant time constraints due to rigorous training schedules and competition commitments, which often coincide with academic responsibilities. Consequently, maintaining academic performance during the sports season becomes challenging, as students must navigate competing demands on their time and energy.

Moreover, student-athletes face challenges in negotiating the demands of university life. These challenges likely involve time management struggles, as they must balance academic responsibilities with sports commitments. As a result, managing both areas effectively can be difficult for student-athletes (Crocker et al., 2021).

Falling Behind in Classes. This theme emerged when student-athletes emphasized that they often fall behind in their classes due to the demanding nature of their training schedules. The time required for practice and competitions leaves them with little time to complete assignments and projects, which can result in academic setbacks.

Similarly, a study indicates that students allocate less time to academic activities than expected, leading to academic setbacks. Time allocation is crucial, as insufficient investment in academics negatively impacts performance, especially when balancing extracurricular commitments with academic responsibilities (Kot, 2019). Furthermore, student-athletes often report falling behind academically due to the demanding nature of their training and competition schedules. The time required for training and competitions leaves them with limited time to focus on their academic responsibilities, leading to setbacks in their studies (Mitic et al., 2020).

Conflicting Time Schedules. Managing the time of student-athletes is indeed conflicted, as they juggle the demands of both their academic and athletic responsibilities. They often struggle with balancing a heavy school workload and training schedules, leading to time conflicts.

According to Miranda-Comas (2022), student-athletes often experience a conflict between their athletic commitments and academic responsibilities due to the significant time demands of practice and training. This ongoing tension can lead to negative results, as the conflict between athletic and academic commitments may cause one field to suffer. When time constraints are particularly severe, there is a possibility that either academic performance or athletic performance will be compromised due to the lack of sufficient focus and energy for both.

Furthermore, elite student-athletes face a significant time conflict as they juggle the rigorous demands of their athletic pursuits and academic responsibilities. With both athletics and education requiring substantial time and attention, they often struggle to allocate sufficient time to each. The need to meet competing deadlines and commitments in both areas create a constant challenge, where one responsibility often encroaches on the other, making it difficult to balance both effectively (Mateu et al., 2024).

Feeling Overwhelmed. Student-athletes face numerous challenges that leave them feeling overwhelmed and pressured. These demands often take a toll on their mental health, affecting both their well-being and performance.

According to the records, student-athletes often experience the highest levels of pressure during periods of heavy academic demands. This pressure can lead to challenges such as sleep problems and an increased risk of injuries. Moreover, it can negatively affect their mental health (Gray, 2022).

Additionally, McCabe et al., (2023) stated that student-athletes face mental health challenges due to stigma and overwhelming schedules. Performance pressure and a reluctance to seek help further exacerbate these issues. As a result, these factors can significantly impact both their well-being and athletic performance.

Table 2. *Major Themes and Core Ideas of the Coping Strategies of Student-Athletes for Time Management Challenges*

Major Themes	*Core Ideas*
Establishing Priorities	Student-athletes prioritize education over sports, recognizing its greater importance.
	Setting priorities by learning to say 'no' to non-essential tasks to avoid distractions.
	Student-athletes prioritize what is most important and beneficial to them.
Setting Deadlines	Student-athletes allocate their time, studying on weekdays and training on weekends.
	Student-athletes set a schedule by having training after class hours.
	Student-athletes set a schedule by doing household chores right away and then training.
Managing Time Efficiently	Student-athletes use their time efficiently by practicing during free time.
	Student-athletes manage their time efficiently to ensure they never neglect their studies or practice.
	Student-athletes organize their time efficiently to stay focused on training and studies.
Balancing Sports and	Student-athletes balance their time to avoid confusion about what to do first.

Academics	Viewing both studies and sports as equally important. Student-athletes divide their time equally between studies and sports.
Limiting Distractions	Student-athletes do not lie down or chill; instead, they focus on advancing their studies. Student-athletes avoid multitasking and learn to say "no" to non-essential task. Student-athletes utilize their time for training rather than using their cellphone.

Coping Strategies of Student-Athletes for Time Management Challenges

Students shared their time management strategies highlighting how they coped with the challenges they experienced. From their responses, five (5) major themes emerged: 1) Establishing priorities; 2) Setting deadlines; 3) Managing time efficiently; 4) Balancing sports and academics; and 5) Limiting distractions.

Establishing Priorities. To overcome challenges, student-athletes set priorities by focusing on what is most important. They prioritize what is most beneficial to their goals and well-being.

Linnér et al. (2021) stated that student-athletes face unique challenges by balancing their academic and athletic commitments. They cope by prioritizing their responsibilities, ensuring that they can focus on both their studies and sports without neglecting either. This requires a high level of discipline and effective time management, as they juggle demanding schedules. To maintain this balance, they often have to make sacrifices, including saying no to non-essential activities, in order to stay focused on their dual roles as students and athletes.

Additionally, student-athletes prioritize goals that align with their personal values and interests, focusing on what truly matters to them in both sports and academics. This reflects their tendency to pursue objectives that support their overall well-being and long-term happiness (Healy et al.,2020).

Setting Deadlines. In managing time, student-athletes cope with challenges by setting deadlines and allocating their time efficiently. They often schedule training after class hours to balance both academic and athletic responsibilities.

This is in consonance with the study of Quimbo (2023) who stated that student athletes often set deadlines by scheduling training sessions after class, which helps them manage their time effectively. This structured approach allows them to balance academic responsibilities with athletic commitments, promoting better organization and efficiency in their daily activities. Also, Santos and Sagas (2023) stated that student-athletes can manage their schedules by following a normal school program and participating in sport training during leisure periods, or by having special teaching conditions where school requirements are adapted to accommodate their training commitments.

Managing Time Efficiently. Student-athletes already have time management skills, but not efficiently. To cope with their challenges, they need to manage their time more efficiently by using their free time effectively.

The study of Steele et al. (2020) indicates that self-management significantly affects sports coping among student athletes, suggesting that effective time management is likely a component of their coping strategies to handle challenges encountered in their athletic careers.

Furthermore, the study of Brito et al. (2021) confirmed that effective time management significantly affects academic performance among student-athletes. By managing their time wisely, they can balance athletic participation and academic responsibilities, leading to higher success rates in both areas despite the challenges they face.

Balancing Sports and Academics. Student-athletes cope with demands by balancing their time between sports and academics. This helps them avoid confusion about what to prioritize.

Student-athletes cope with their responsibilities by balancing their time effectively, which helps them manage both their training and competition commitments alongside their schoolwork. This approach prevents confusion and overload, ensuring that neither aspect of their life is neglected when the demands of both become intense (Sæther et al., 2022).

Additionally, student-athletes employ various strategies to balance their academic and athletic responsibilities, which are crucial for their overall well-being and success. Balancing their time helps them to navigate the demands of both sports and academics (Simons and Bird, 2023).

Limiting Distractions. Student-athletes cope with demands by limiting distractions and focusing on what matters most. This allows them to effectively manage their time between sports and academics.

The students, including those in accelerated programs, often use avoidance strategies such as engaging in athletic activities to cope with academic stress, suggesting that managing distractions is a common approach to balancing sports and academics. Student-athletes cope with their responsibilities by managing distractions and setting clear boundaries between academics and athletics (Santos et al., 2020). Strategies such as limiting social media, avoiding unnecessary commitments, and prioritizing tasks help student-athletes stay focused and organized, reducing stress and enhancing performance in both areas (Liu & Taresh, 2024).

Table 3. *Major Themes and Core Ideas of Student-Athletes' Insights on Time Management Strategies*

Major Themes	*Core Ideas*
Sense of Fulfillment	Student-athletes enjoy going out with their teammates and friends, creating meaningful connections and strengthening bonds.
	Student-athletes enjoy going to other places to play, gaining valuable experiences and creating lasting memories.
	Student-athletes find enjoyment in meeting new people, expanding their horizons and building new relationships.
Respect and Humility	Student-athletes accept their loss in the game.
	Student-athletes are humble about their skills.
	Student-athletes trust in God and pray before playing the game.
Self-Improvement	Student-athletes stay on top of their schedule.
	Student-athlete continue training to improve
	Student-athletes utilize using cellphone for self-improvement
	Student-athletes avoid playing Mobile Legends; use that time for training.
Setting Personal Goals	Student-athletes set clear and personal goals for continuous improvement.
	Stay motivated by believing that they can advance to higher athletic meets.
	Trusting the process, remaining determined to achieve success.

Student-Athletes' Insights on Time Management Strategies

From the insights or lessons learned shared by the student-athletes on time management, five (4) major themes emerged: 1) Sense of fulfillment; 2) Respect and humility; 3) self-improvement; and 4) Setting personal goals.

Sense of Fulfillment. Student-athletes find their experiences fulfilling, as they enjoy meeting new people and bonding with their teammates. According to Ault et al. (2024), student-athletes often find their experiences fulfilling due to the strong bonds they form with teammates and the supportive environment fostered by coaches and peers. These relationships contribute significantly to their overall well-being and life skills development, enhancing their collegiate experience. Moreover, the study of Cho et al., (2020) shows that support from teammates is important for student-athletes because it can boost their mood and well-being. It suggests that forming strong bonds with teammates can make the experience more enjoyable, even with the stress they face.

Respect and humility. Student-athletes develop the virtues of respect and humility through playing sports, despite the challenges of being a student-athlete. This is supported by a study which shows that playing sports can teach values like respect and self-control. Programs like Hellison's Personal and Social Responsibility Model help young athletes build respect, humility, and learn from their experiences in sports (Abad Robles et al., 2021). Additionally, a study emphasizes the importance of spiritual and moral development in student-athletes, noting that classic works can foster virtues like respect and humility, which are essential for their growth and success both in sports and in personal life (Volchkova et al., 2020).

Self-Improvement. Student-athletes promote self-improvement by continuing their training, staying on top of their schedules, using time effectively, and avoiding distractions. Firth-Clark et al., (2019) study stated that self-management, like managing time and tasks well, is important for student-athletes to do well in both school and sports. Staying focused, avoiding distractions, and being disciplined in training and studying are key to reaching their goals as student-athletes. The study revealed that student-athletes can improve their skills in both sports and academics by following the four P's: plan, prioritize, pack, and persevere. By concentrating on essential tasks and minimizing distractions, they enhance their performance in both areas (Pierce et al., 2020).

Setting Personal Goals. Student-athletes motivate themselves by setting personal goals, such as defining clear objectives, staying focused and motivated and trusting the process to achieve success. This is supported by the study of Ang (2024) which states that for student-athletes, setting clear, achievable goals enhances motivation and focus, helping them make better decisions in both sports and academics. Aligning these goals with personal values and abilities builds trust in the process, leading to improved performance and success. The theme emphasizes motivating personal goals. According to Fan et al., (2020), personal goals boost self-motivation, especially when followed by achievable tasks. Success in reaching these smaller goals builds commitment, helping individuals set clear objectives and stay focused, which leads to better performance and stronger intrinsic motivation.

Conclusions

The most challenging part of this research was analyzing the responses from participants. The wide variety of answers made it difficult to identify clear patterns, requiring significant time and effort to thoroughly examine each response. Despite these challenges, the researchers discovered that student-athletes often struggles to balance their academic, athletic, and personal commitments, with time management playing a crucial role in their success.

Moreover, the study revealed that while some student-athletes utilize effective time management strategies, others face significant difficulties due to demanding schedules and limited support systems. These findings emphasize the need for targeted programs and resources to help student-athletes develop better time management skills. Educational institutions may address these challenges by implementing time management workshops and academic support programs for student-athletes. The Department of Education could

promote policies that offer flexible schedules, academic accommodations, and increased access to resources. To enhance the validity of the findings, future research should include a larger sample size and diverse settings, considering variables such as academic performance, mental well-being, and personal experiences. Overall, the research process, though tough, proved rewarding, offering valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by student-athletes.

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