

Training challenges and academic performance of student athletes

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ABSTRACT

This survey-correlational study aimed to identify the training challenges and the academic performance of the student- athletes from the five (5) national high schools in the District of Pilar, for the Academic Year 2025-2026. The 222 student- athletes were chosen as the participants and total population sampling was considered by the researcher. The instruments used in this study were the researcher-made survey questionnaire. The independent variable in this study was the training challenges, while the dependent variable was the academic performance, measured in terms of time management, mental stress, fatigue, injury, training schedule conflict, facility and the general weighted average of the student- athlete. Descriptive statistical methods, such as mean, and standard deviation, used to summarize the data, while inferential statistics, including Pearson's r was applied to assess the strength and significance of the relationships. A significance level of 0.05 was set for all statistical tests to ensure the reliability of the findings. All inferential data was set to .05 alpha level of significance. Based on the results, the major findings of the study were: The level of training challenges experienced by student-athletes as a whole was moderate. The level of training challenges experienced by student- athletes in terms of facility, fatigue and training schedule conflict was high. On the other hand, the level of training challenges experienced by student athletes in terms of time management, mental stress and injury was moderate. There is no significant relationship between the training challenges and the academic performance of student- athletes in the District of Pilar.

Keywords: Training challenges, academic performance, student-athletes.

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INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions increasingly recognize the importance of developing learners who are not only academically competent but also physically, emotionally, and socially well rounded. Within this context, student athletes occupy a unique position because they are expected to fulfill dual responsibilities as students and athletes. Participation in sports provides numerous benefits, including the development of discipline, teamwork, leadership, resilience, and physical fitness. However, the demands associated with athletic participation may also expose student athletes to challenges that can affect their academic performance if not properly

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managed. As educational systems continue to promote holistic development, understanding the experiences of student athletes becomes essential in ensuring that both academic and athletic success are achieved simultaneously.

Existing literature highlights the complex realities faced by student athletes as they attempt to balance the demands of training, competition, and academic responsibilities. Dipasupil et al. (2024) emphasized that coaches, sports organizers, and stakeholders recognize several challenges commonly encountered by student athletes, including time management difficulties, academic stress, injuries, burnout, and social isolation. Their study underscored the importance of adaptable training programs that consider academic schedules and personal circumstances while promoting effective communication among coaches, athletes, and academic advisers. These findings suggest that support systems and flexible athletic programs play a critical role in helping student athletes navigate the competing demands of their dual roles.

The challenges encountered by student athletes are often linked to barriers that may hinder academic achievement. Among the most frequently reported concerns are difficulties in managing time, physical fatigue, mental stress, injuries, training schedule conflicts, and limitations in athletic facilities. These challenges are supported by Goode's Role Strain Theory, which explains that individuals occupying multiple roles may experience strain when the demands of one role interfere with the successful fulfillment of another. Student athletes are particularly susceptible to this form of strain because they must simultaneously meet the expectations associated with academic performance and athletic participation. The theory suggests that the finite nature of time and energy may create conflicts that place student athletes at risk of academic difficulties when athletic obligations intensify.

Empirical evidence further supports the potential influence of athletic demands on academic outcomes. The NCAA Goals Study (2020) found that student athletes who experienced higher levels of fatigue and stress demonstrated lower levels of academic involvement, engagement, attention, and overall academic performance. These findings indicate that excessive physical and psychological demands may reduce students' capacity to effectively participate in academic activities. Consequently, the provision of adequate support mechanisms becomes essential in minimizing the negative effects of training related challenges and ensuring that student athletes remain academically engaged.

The relevance of these concerns is particularly evident among student athletes in the District of Pilar, where participation in sports competitions has become an important source of school recognition and community pride. Several student athletes from the district have competed at the national level, highlighting the significance of athletic participation within the local educational setting. While involvement in sports contributes positively to physical development, character formation, and discipline, teachers and coaches have observed that some student athletes encounter academic difficulties during periods of intensive training and frequent competition. Extended practice sessions, travel requirements, and the physical demands associated with competitive sports may reduce the time and energy available for studying, completing assignments, and preparing for examinations. Furthermore, prolonged exposure to training demands may result in physical fatigue and mental exhaustion, which can adversely affect concentration, memory retention, classroom participation, and overall academic engagement.

The competing responsibilities of student athletes often create role conflicts that challenge their ability to allocate sufficient time and attention to academic tasks. Balancing academic obligations with athletic commitments requires continuous prioritization and decision making, which may result in missed deadlines, incomplete assignments, reduced classroom engagement, and lower academic performance, particularly during peak competition periods. These realities illustrate the interconnected nature of athletic participation and

educational outcomes, emphasizing the need to better understand how training challenges shape the academic experiences of student athletes.

This study is anchored on the Self Determination Theory developed by Deci et al. (2017), which provides a valuable framework for understanding how external conditions influence motivation and performance. According to the theory, individuals function optimally when their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied. For student athletes, rigid training schedules, physical fatigue, competitive pressures, and demanding athletic expectations may hinder the fulfillment of these psychological needs, thereby reducing academic motivation and performance. Conversely, supportive training environments that acknowledge and accommodate academic responsibilities can strengthen motivation, enhance engagement, and promote positive educational outcomes. The theory therefore offers an important perspective for examining how training related experiences may influence academic performance among student athletes.

Although a growing body of research has examined the experiences of student athletes, much of the existing literature has concentrated on collegiate populations, leaving limited attention devoted to secondary school student athletes and localized educational settings. This gap in the literature has prompted scholars to advocate for institution specific and context specific investigations that explore how athletic participation affects academic outcomes in diverse environments. Holloway (2017) reported that many educators view extracurricular activities, particularly athletics, as contributors to improved academic performance and personal development. In contrast, Gomez et al. (2025) observed that internal monitoring data from selected schools in Bukidnon revealed consistent academic underperformance among some student athletes during sports seasons. These contrasting findings indicate that the relationship between athletic participation and academic achievement remains complex and may vary according to contextual factors, institutional support systems, and the specific challenges experienced by student athletes.

Despite the prominence of sports participation within the District of Pilar, no formal study has been conducted to examine the relationship between training challenges and academic performance among student athletes in the area. The absence of local empirical evidence creates a significant knowledge gap that limits the development of informed policies, training programs, and academic support mechanisms tailored to the needs of student athletes. Addressing this gap is important because it provides an opportunity to generate context specific insights that can guide educational stakeholders in designing interventions that support both athletic excellence and academic success.

In response to these concerns, the present study seeks to examine the training challenges experienced by student athletes and their relationship to academic performance among students from the five national high schools in the District of Pilar, namely Casanayan National High School, Marciano M. Patricio National High School, San Nicolas National High School, and Yating National High School. Specifically, the study investigates training challenges in terms of time management, fatigue, mental stress, injury, training schedule conflicts, and facility conditions, while academic performance is assessed through the students' general weighted average. By exploring the interaction between these variables, the study aims to provide evidence that can serve as a basis for developing effective training schedules, educational policies, and academic support programs that promote the holistic development and success of student athletes in both their academic and athletic endeavors.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to determine the relationship between the training challenges and the academic performance of student- athletes in the District of Pilar for the academic year 2025-2026.

Specifically, this research sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of training challenges experienced by student-athletes as a whole and in terms of time management, fatigue, mental stress, injury, training schedule conflict and facility?
2. What is the level of academic performance of student- athletes based on their general weighted average (GWA)?
3. Is there a significant relationship between training challenges and the academic performance of student- athletes?

METHODOLOGY

The primary aim of this research was to investigate the relationship between the training challenges and the academic performance of student-athletes. The study sought to explore how training challenges such as time management, fatigue, mental stress, injury, training schedule conflict, and facility influence student-athletes' participation in academic performance. To achieve this, a quantitative method employing survey correlational research was adopted, which enables the collection of numerical data from a broad sample of high school student-athletes from five (5) national high schools of the District of Pilar. This approach is particularly useful for identifying clear, measurable relationships between the variables. Quantitative research, as outlined by Creswell (2014), highlights structured data collection and objective analysis, as these methods are suitable for investigating how training challenges affect student-athletes' academic performance. The study used a correlational research design to examine the relationship between two variables.

Survey correlation, according to Anderson (2016), discusses the use of correlational studies in educational research and defines a correlational study as one that explores relationships between variables using surveys or observations, without establishing cause-and-effect relationships. This type of study is common in fields like psychology, education, and social sciences, where researchers are interested in understanding patterns of association. The independent variable in this study was training challenges while the dependent variable was academic performance, measured in terms of the student-athletes' first semester general weighted average. Descriptive statistical methods, such as mean and standard deviation, were used to summarize the data, while inferential statistics, including Pearson's r , were applied to assess the strength and significance of the relationship. A significance level of 0.05 was set for all statistical tests to ensure the reliability of the findings.

The participants for this study were 222 out of 503 student-athletes from five (5) national high schools of the District of Pilar. The population size was selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique that involves the deliberate selection of participants who meet specific criteria relevant to the research. Purposive sampling was conducted by first identifying the student-athletes at the District of Pilar who met the research study criteria. These criteria include being a current student-athlete enrolled at one of the five (5) national high schools in the District of Pilar, actively participating in competitive sports, and willing to provide informed consent. After determining the eligible participants, the researcher used the Yamane Taro formula in identifying the sample size out of the population size provided by the five (5) national high schools at the District of Pilar.

The demographic profile and the distribution of participants from the five national high schools in the District of Pilar were as follows. Out of the total 222 participants, 122 (55.1%) were male, while 100 (44.9%) were female, indicating a slightly higher representation of male participants in the study. Regarding the distribution of participants across national high schools, Casanayan National High School had the highest representation, accounting for 60 participants or 27.02% of the total. This was closely followed by San Nicolas National High School with 54 participants or 24.83%, and Marciano M. Patricio National High School with 44 participants or 19.82%. Dulangan National High School contributed 37 participants or 16.67% of the total, while a smaller proportion came from Yating National High School with 27 participants or 12.16%, for a total of 222 participants representing 100.0% of the sample.

The data collection for this study consisted of two (2) parts, both of which gathered quantitative information necessary to evaluate the training challenges experienced by the student-athletes. The first part involved a demographic questionnaire designed to collect essential background information from participants, including name (optional), gender, first semester general weighted average (GWA), which served as secondary data, and year level. The second part was a researcher-made checklist assessing the training challenges experienced by the participants.

The Training Challenges instrument consisted of 28 items and was a researcher-made checklist designed to assess the extent to which training challenges affect student-athletes' academic performance at the five (5) national high schools of the District of Pilar. This checklist focused on key aspects of training challenges, including time management, fatigue, mental stress, injury, training schedule conflict, and facility. The interpretation of scores for the Training Challenges instrument was based on a 5-point scale, wherein a score of 5 corresponded to Strongly Agree, a score of 4 corresponded to Agree, a score of 3 corresponded to Uncertain, a score of 2 corresponded to Disagree, and a score of 1 corresponded to Strongly Disagree. The range and interpretation for the Training Challenges instrument were as follows: a mean range of 4.21 to 5.00 was described as Very High, 3.41 to 4.20 as High, 2.61 to 3.40 as Moderate, 1.81 to 2.60 as Low, and 1.00 to 1.80 as Very Low.

Prior to its use in gathering data, the instrument underwent content validation by a jury composed of three members, whose suggestions and recommendations were incorporated in the modification of the instrument. The instrument was likewise pilot tested on thirty (30) student-athletes in the District of Pilar to assess its validity and reliability. Data from the pilot-tested participants were computed using the Cronbach Alpha of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was .907, which implied that it was reliable. According to Calmorin (2015) as cited by Clores (2021), a questionnaire is considered reliable if the computed reliability coefficient is equal to 0.80 or more but not more than 1.0.

Before initiating the study, the researcher formally requested approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of Capiz together with the distinguished School Heads of each National High School through an official letter. This letter outlined the purpose and significance of the research, emphasizing its relevance to the student-athletes. After the letter was granted, the researcher proceeded to the distribution of questionnaires directly to the identified student-athlete respondents through face-to-face interaction. This approach ensured a personal connection, allowing for clear communication of the goals and procedures of the study. In order to identify the level of challenges experienced by student-athletes, the 28-item researcher-made questionnaire was used. The first semester general weighted average, which served as secondary data, was used to identify the student-athletes' level of academic performance.

During the distribution process, the researcher explained to each participant the key aspects of their involvement. Participants were informed that their participation was part of a research study, with emphasis placed on the potential benefits and contributions of their responses. It was made clear that participation was entirely voluntary, and strict confidentiality measures were in place to protect their identities and data. After collection, the responses were carefully organized, tallied, and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to derive meaningful insights.

The data collected for this study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, employing several statistical tools to answer the research questions. The mean was employed to describe the levels of perceived training challenges in terms of time management, fatigue, mental stress, injury, training schedule conflict, and facility as assessed through the researcher-made questionnaire. The standard deviation was used to assess the variability of responses, allowing for the measurement of how consistent or divergent the views of the participants were regarding the training challenges and the academic performance of every student-athlete. Pearson r correlation was conducted at a 0.05 alpha level of significance to explore the relationship between the training challenges and the academic performance of student-athletes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This Results and Discussion chapter presents the findings of a study investigating the training challenges experienced by student-athletes and their level of academic performance across five National High Schools in the District of Pilar. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, and data were gathered from student-athletes using a structured survey instrument. Descriptive statistical analyses, specifically mean and standard deviation, were used to determine the level of training challenges and academic performance, while Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used as the inferential statistical tool to test the hypothesized relationship between the two variables. All statistical inferences were tested at the .05 level of significance. The chapter is organized into two parts: the first addresses descriptive data analysis covering the level of training challenges and the level of academic performance of student-athletes, and the second presents the inferential analysis examining the relationship between the two variables. All results and interpretations presented in this chapter are grounded entirely in the data gathered from the respondents and are discussed in direct relation to the objectives of the study.

Level of training challenges of student-athletes

The overall level of training challenges experienced by student-athletes across the five National High Schools in the District of Pilar yielded a grand mean of 3.37 and a standard deviation of 0.57, which corresponds to a "Moderate" level of training challenge based on the scale descriptor assigned to the range of 2.61 to 3.40. Among the six dimensions assessed, facilities obtained the highest mean score of 3.53 with a standard deviation of 0.70, followed by fatigue with a mean of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 0.72, and training schedule conflict with a mean of 3.44 and a standard deviation of 0.80, all three of which fall within the "High" range of 3.41 to 4.20. The remaining three dimensions registered moderate levels of challenge: time management obtained a mean of 3.37 with a standard deviation of 0.76, mental stress received a mean of 3.23 with a standard deviation of 0.78, and injury obtained the lowest mean of 3.14 with a standard deviation of 0.87, all falling within the 2.61 to 3.40 range designated as "Moderate."

The overall moderate level of training challenges indicates that student-athletes in the District of Pilar are generally able to manage their dual responsibilities, although they occasionally encounter difficulties that require effort and conscious adjustment. This finding reflects the capacity of the district to provide psychological support and effective training programs that address the physical and technical needs of athletes, creating conditions that are conducive to favorable outcomes in both academics and sports. The moderate aggregate result is consistent with the interpretation that challenges are present but not at a level severe enough to prevent student-athletes from meeting the demands of both academic and athletic life. Importantly, the challenges observed at manageable levels may themselves contribute to the development of essential personal qualities among student-athletes, including discipline, perseverance, time management, and mental toughness, as consistent exposure to demanding but navigable challenges can foster individual growth, resilience, and the capacity to function under pressure. With continued support through effective institutional strategies, proper scheduling, and well-designed training programs, these challenges can be further minimized, enabling student-athletes to perform optimally in both domains. These findings are consistent with Smith (2018), who emphasized that student-athletes commonly experience moderate levels of training-related challenges arising from the demands of balancing academics and sports, and that such challenges can enhance resilience and overall performance when properly managed. However, the present findings diverge from Johnson (2016), whose study found that higher levels of training challenges, when not adequately supported by institutional interventions, may lead to decreased performance and increased stress among student-athletes, a contrast that underscores the importance of the support structures in place within the District of Pilar.

Among the specific dimensions, facilities registered the highest mean of 3.53 at a "High" level of challenge, indicating that student-athletes in the district face a significant challenge in terms of the availability, quality, and accessibility of sports facilities and equipment. This result is attributable in part to limited training venues and insufficient sports equipment that do not adequately support the needs of all athletes. In some schools within the district, most notably Yating National High School, athletes are required to share training spaces, travel to neighboring barangays, or adjust their training schedules to accommodate the lack of facility availability, all of which further compound their training difficulties. The implication of this finding is that inadequate facilities may reduce training efficiency, increase the risk of injury and accident, and extend the time needed for athletes to develop their skills. Moreover, the absence of adequate equipment and space means that athletes may spend longer hours in training than would otherwise be necessary, potentially reducing the time available for academic tasks.

Fatigue also obtained a "High" mean of 3.48, indicating that student-athletes frequently experience physical exhaustion arising from the combined demands of intensive training schedules and academic requirements. As student-athletes are expected to perform at a high level in sports while simultaneously meeting academic obligations, they are at times pushed to their physiological and psychological limits. Continuous training sessions, competitive events, limited recovery time, and academic workloads collectively contribute to both physical and mental exhaustion. The implication of this finding is that fatigue can negatively affect concentration in class, reduce academic output, and increase the risk of injury during training, while chronic fatigue, if left unaddressed, may eventually lead to burnout in which motivation and performance in both sports and academics deteriorate simultaneously.

Training schedule conflict similarly obtained a "High" mean of 3.44, indicating that student-athletes frequently struggle to balance academic schedules with the demands of

training and competition. This challenge commonly manifests when examinations and academic activities overlap with training sessions or sports events, compelling student-athletes to prioritize one set of responsibilities over another or to multitask under considerable pressure. The result implies that such conflicts may lead to absenteeism, the submission of incomplete academic work, and heightened stress arising from the simultaneous demands being placed on the athlete. Athletic performance may also suffer when student-athletes are compelled to miss training sessions in order to fulfill academic obligations.

Time management obtained a moderate mean of 3.37, indicating that while student-athletes experience difficulty in organizing their time, the challenge remains manageable and does not critically impede their ability to meet the demands of both academia and sport. This result may be attributed to the fact that many student-athletes have already developed basic time management skills through sustained experience in balancing dual roles, and that support from school administrators, coaches, teachers, and peers helps them organize their responsibilities more effectively. The moderate level result thus reflects that most student-athletes are coping relatively well and are able to maintain a functional balance between academic requirements and athletic commitments.

Mental stress was found to be at a moderate level with a mean of 3.23, indicating that while student-athletes experience psychological pressure arising from competition demands, performance expectations, fear of failure, and the strain of managing dual roles, such stress remains manageable rather than dominant. The moderate rating suggests that many athletes have developed coping strategies such as peer support, motivation derived from coaching, or personal resilience that help mitigate the intensity of psychological pressure. Nevertheless, the result also carries an important cautionary implication: if mental stress is not proactively managed, it can escalate into anxiety or burnout, adversely affecting both athletic performance and overall well-being.

Injury obtained the lowest mean of 3.14, placing it at a "Moderate" level of challenge, which suggests that while injuries do occur among student-athletes, they are neither as frequent nor as severe a source of challenge as facility limitations or scheduling conflicts. This comparatively lower rating may be attributed to heightened awareness of preventive measures, including proper warm-up routines, coaching supervision, and the application of appropriate training techniques. However, the moderate level of challenge associated with injury still carries meaningful implications, as even non-severe injuries can disrupt both academic and athletic performance, particularly when recovery periods are prolonged.

Taken together, the findings indicate that student-athletes in the District of Pilar are most significantly challenged by facilities, fatigue, and training schedule conflict, while time management, mental stress, and injury, though present, exert comparatively lesser effects on the athletes' overall functioning. The convergence of these challenges underscores the need for targeted institutional interventions that support the holistic health and competence of student-athletes in both academic and athletic domains.

Level of academic performance of student-athletes

The academic performance of student-athletes across the five National High Schools in the District of Pilar yielded a grand mean of 88.80 with a standard deviation of 3.54, which places the respondents within the "High" category as defined by the scale descriptor assigned to the range of 85 to 89. This result indicates that student-athletes are able to maintain a high level of academic achievement despite the considerable demands of their athletic responsibilities.

The high level of academic performance reflects that student-athletes in the district are academically competent and capable of sustaining their studies alongside sports commitments.

Their performance embodies discipline and the ability to manage time and handle multiple responsibilities simultaneously, qualities that are characteristically developed through sustained involvement in sports activities. Athletes at the five National High Schools in the District of Pilar are expected to perform not only at the institutional level but also in district, unit, division, and higher-tier sports competitions, all of which necessitate specific and intensive training programs requiring substantial time and effort. In this context, it is notable that coaches and teachers must collaboratively design effective training programs that develop athletic skills without compromising academic requirements, a balance that the high mean grade of 88.80 suggests is being achieved with considerable success. When athletes perceive that the institution is genuinely invested in their development, they are more likely to remain engaged in both athletic and academic pursuits, thereby producing outcomes that benefit the individual and the institution alike.

Importantly, considering the context of schools in the District of Pilar where training facilities are insufficient, the high level of academic performance may be largely attributed to the influence of a conducive and supportive school environment, the intrinsic drive of student-athletes themselves, and the guidance of dedicated coaches, administrators, and teachers who play a significant role in facilitating academic success. These findings reinforce the view that while physical facilities play an important role in the athletic development of student-athletes, human support systems encompassing mentorship, encouragement, and academic guidance exert a greater impact on academic performance outcomes.

The standard deviation of 3.54 indicates a moderate degree of variability in the academic performance of the respondents. Although the majority of student-athletes fall within the "High" category, there are slight but discernible differences in individual academic outcomes, with some athletes performing at lower levels within the category and others performing slightly higher. These variations may be attributable to personal factors such as individual study habits, time management practices, and varying levels of pressure from sports and academic obligations. Crucially, however, the variability is not of a magnitude that disrupts the overall consistency of the group, meaning that student-athletes are performing at relatively comparable levels. The findings collectively highlight that student-athletes in the District of Pilar are not struggling academically but rather demonstrate resilience and adaptability in managing their dual roles. The presence of strong support from coaches, administrators, and teachers appears to create a balanced environment in which both sports and academics are nurtured, even in the absence of adequate training facilities. Overall, the high academic performance of student-athletes in the District of Pilar reflects a successful integration of sports and education, emphasizing that with proper support, motivation, and guidance, student-athletes can excel not only in their chosen sport but also in their academic pursuits.

Relationship between training challenges and academic performance

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient computed to determine the relationship between training challenges and academic performance among student-athletes yielded an r value of $(-)0.090$, which was not significant at the .05 level of significance ($p = 0.183$). The negative direction of the coefficient suggests a very weak inverse association, indicating that as training challenges increase, academic performance tends to decrease, and vice versa, but the negligible magnitude of the correlation and the non-significant p value confirm that this relationship is minimal and statistically insignificant. Accordingly, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between training challenges and academic performance among student-athletes is accepted.

The absence of a significant relationship between the two variables implies that the level of training challenges experienced by student-athletes does not exert a direct influence on their academic performance. The finding indicates that student-athletes are capable of managing the demands of both academics and athletics independently of each other. Despite experiencing challenges rated at a moderate overall level, they are still able to maintain a high mean grade of 88.80, a result that suggests the presence of developed coping mechanisms such as effective time management, personal discipline, and the capacity to prioritize responsibilities appropriately. In the specific context of the District of Pilar, where training facilities are acknowledged to be limited, this finding assumes particular significance. It demonstrates that even when athletes encounter meaningful challenges in their training environment, including issues of facility access, fatigue, and schedule conflict, these do not necessarily translate into diminished academic outcomes. The supportive roles of coaches, administrators, and teachers, as well as the overall orientation of the school environment, appear to function as a buffer that allows student-athletes to remain academically focused despite the presence of training-related difficulties.

These findings are consistent with the work of Martinez et al. (2017), who emphasized that individual motivation and academic support systems exert a stronger influence on student outcomes than training-related conditions, and who demonstrated that even when athletes face difficulties in their training environment, they can sustain academic performance through personal effort and institutional support. However, the present results diverge from the findings of Greenwood (2016), who suggested that training-related factors, including challenges and environmental conditions, significantly affect the overall performance of student-athletes, including academic outcomes. The contrast between Greenwood's findings and those of the present study may be explained by the contextual differences in institutional support and the coping capacities of the student-athletes, both of which appear to be meaningful protective factors in the District of Pilar setting.

The findings of this study, taken as a whole, provide a coherent and empirically grounded portrait of the training challenges and academic performance of student-athletes across five National High Schools in the District of Pilar. The descriptive results established that the respondents experienced an overall moderate level of training challenges ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.57$), with facilities ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.70$), fatigue ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.72$), and training schedule conflict ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.80$) registered at a "High" level, while time management ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.76$), mental stress ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.78$), and injury ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 0.87$) were at a "Moderate" level. Despite these challenges, student-athletes maintained a "High" level of academic performance with a mean grade of 88.80 and a standard deviation of 3.54. The inferential analysis further confirmed that no significant relationship exists between training challenges and academic performance ($r = (-)0.090$, $p = 0.183$), leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. These results collectively affirm the resilience and adaptability of student-athletes in the district and highlight the critical buffering role of institutional support systems in enabling them to sustain academic excellence amid training demands. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on student-athlete development by demonstrating that training challenges and academic performance can operate as largely independent domains when adequate human support structures are in place, and that facility limitations alone do not determine academic outcomes. These insights provide an important empirical foundation for the conclusions, recommendations, and proposed interventions that will be presented in the subsequent chapter of this manuscript.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide important insights into the training challenges and academic performance of student athletes in the District of Pilar during the School Year 2025-2026. The results revealed that the overall level of training challenges experienced by student athletes was moderate, indicating that while they encounter various difficulties associated with athletic participation, these challenges generally remain manageable and do not substantially hinder their development as students and athletes. Specifically, facilities, fatigue, and training schedule conflict emerged as the most prominent challenges, each registering a high level of difficulty. These findings suggest that limitations in training resources, the physical demands of sports participation, and conflicts between training schedules and academic obligations present significant concerns that may affect both athletic preparation and educational experiences. In contrast, challenges related to time management, mental stress, and injury were perceived at a moderate level, indicating that student athletes have generally developed strategies and coping mechanisms that enable them to manage these concerns effectively.

The study further revealed that the academic performance of student athletes was high, demonstrating their capacity to maintain strong scholastic achievement despite the demands associated with sports participation. This finding suggests that student athletes are generally capable of balancing their athletic commitments and academic responsibilities through effective prioritization, self-discipline, resilience, and commitment to educational goals. The results also imply the presence of supportive factors, such as encouragement from teachers, coaches, family members, and school programs, which may contribute to the ability of student athletes to excel academically while actively participating in competitive sports. Consequently, the findings reinforce the perspective that athletic involvement does not necessarily hinder academic achievement and may, in some cases, cultivate personal qualities that support educational success.

Moreover, the study found no significant relationship between training challenges and academic performance among student athletes. This result indicates that the academic achievement of the participants is not directly influenced by the training difficulties they encounter. Despite experiencing moderate levels of challenge in areas such as fatigue, schedule conflicts, and facility concerns, student athletes were able to sustain high academic performance. The absence of a significant relationship suggests that student athletes possess the ability to compartmentalize and independently manage their academic and athletic responsibilities. It further implies that factors other than training challenges may play a more substantial role in determining academic performance, including personal motivation, effective study habits, family support, institutional assistance, and individual coping strategies. The findings therefore demonstrate that training challenges do not automatically translate into poor academic outcomes and that student athletes can succeed in both domains when provided with appropriate support and opportunities.

Taken together, the results highlight the resilience, adaptability, and determination of student athletes in balancing the demands of sports and academics. Although the overall level of training challenges was moderate, the findings underscore the need to address concerns related to facilities, fatigue, and training schedule conflicts in order to further enhance the experiences and well-being of student athletes. Athletes are encouraged to continue developing effective coping mechanisms, strengthening their time management skills, maintaining balanced schedules, prioritizing rest and recovery, and communicating openly with coaches and mentors regarding difficulties they encounter. Teachers, coaches, and sports coordinators play a critical role in supporting student athletes by providing flexible training environments,

implementing structured yet adaptable training programs, promoting injury prevention and recovery strategies, and maintaining open communication regarding academic responsibilities. Likewise, school administrators are encouraged to strengthen institutional support systems through academic assistance programs, counseling services, wellness initiatives, balanced scheduling practices, and accessible resources that promote both academic and athletic success.

The consistently high academic performance demonstrated by student athletes also highlights the importance of sustaining existing support structures that contribute to their achievement. Teachers are encouraged to continue providing strong guidance and fostering learning environments that enable student athletes to meet academic requirements while pursuing athletic excellence. Administrators may further strengthen policies and programs that support the balanced development of students by ensuring equitable attention to both educational and athletic pursuits. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to investigate additional factors that contribute to training challenges and academic success among student athletes, including academic workload, motivation, institutional support, physical demands, and time management practices. Further studies may also examine intervention programs and support mechanisms that effectively reduce training related difficulties while promoting overall well-being and performance. Through continued research and collaborative efforts among educational stakeholders, student athletes can be better equipped to thrive both academically and athletically, thereby achieving holistic development and long-term success.

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