

Physical and Mental Health Challenges of Student Athletes in the Midst of Pandemic: A Lockdown Chronicles



A Research Proposal of
Davao del Norte Regional Sports Academy
Schools Division of Davao del Norte
Presented to

DIVISION RESEARCH MANAGEMENT TEAM
Region XI

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June 2022

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the qualitative study was to describe the lived experiences of the student-athletes in their physical and mental health challenges in the midst of pandemic, their coping mechanism on the challenges they have experienced and the different hopes and aspirations that can be derived from their experiences. This study was conducted using phenomenological qualitative study through in-depth interview and focus group discussion among the 14 participants in the Schools Division of Davao del Norte which offered Special Program in Sports. On the lived experiences of the student-athletes there were nine themes emerged such as tiredness and lost of interest, anxiety and nervousness, lack of self-confidence, difficulty in training, observance to sound mental health, weariness and fatigue, irregularity in sleeping and restlessness and lost of focus, discontentment. Meanwhile as to their coping mechanism, there were eight main themes which emerged such as watching YouTube for training tutorial, coaching support, developing self-discipline, maintaining physical fitness, setting positive attitude, asking family support, fostering teamwork and updating and communicating with teacher. Moreover, hopes and aspirations of students-athletes were: develop persistence and perseverance, provide training and facility support and pursue dreams and aspirations. In view of the above, this study also offers great propositions to the Department of Education as they portray an important role in helping the student-athletes in this pandemic. They should be conducting a series of psychosocial support and training for parents, teachers, and school heads that aims to engage in protecting the health, safety and well-being of the student-athletes in the midst of pandemic.

Keywords:- Physical and mental health challenges, student-athletes, qualitative.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research study would not have been possible without the support of many people. I would like to express my endless thanks and gratitude to the following groups and individuals who have helped me in the development and the realization of my study.

First and foremost, the Immeasurable and Most Omnipotent Almighty Allah, for giving me the knowledge and wisdom, courage and strength to finish the research;

Dee D. Silva, DPA, CESO V, School Division Superintendent, for the challenging words to pursue and finish this research and for allowing me to conduct the study;

Rebecca C. Sagot, CESO VI, Assistant School Division Superintendent, for the words of encouragement she has shared;

Dr. Eduard C. Amoguis, Chief Curriculum Implementation Division, Ramil M. Pilo, Chief School Governance and Operation Division, Dr. Grace Santa T. Daclan, Education Program Supervisor and Ms. Melanie O. Mandin, Education Program Specialists and Research Coordinator, who have profusely helped and offered invaluable assistance, constructive criticism and professional guidance for the completion of my study;

To the Members of the Panel of Examiners, Dr. Janice A. Fernandez, Dr. Excelsis Deo Deloy, Dr. Dominic Dizon, Mr. Ryan Digan and Ms. Melanie O. Mandin, whose knowledge, constructive comments have greatly contributed for the improvement and fulfillment of my study;

Dr. Excelsis Deo Deloy, my analyst, for the expertise in the data analysis of the study;

To. Mr. Ricardo Olmedo, Jr, Principal IV of Sto. Tomas National High School for allowing me to conduct the study;

To my all teachers of Davao del Norte Regional Sports Academy who have those attitudes that can convincingly convey a spirit of perseverance with regards to research;

And to everyone who are in one way or the other had meaningfully contributed their never-ending support and prayers in my journey for the completion of my study and helped me to always keep my focus in the light of my success.

Thank you and Godbless!

Eric Indie

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION OF THE RESEARCH

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared a public health emergency in January 2020 due to the spread of a new coronavirus illness, COVID-19. COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization in March 2020. Because of the stress caused by the crisis throughout the world, the WHO created messages and resources to help communities get through this difficult period. Despite the toll that this epidemic may have on people from all walks of life, addressing mental health requirements and reducing chronic stress and anxiety can be accomplished via the use of good coping techniques. Integrating mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) into the COVID-19 response is a key pillar of the WHO's effort to combat negative effects on mental health as a result of the pandemic (Stoll, 2020).

In Indonesia, for athletes the restriction policy reduces activity in sports, symptomatic athletes are also asked to isolate themselves, cannot play an active role in the sports community, decreases interaction with coaches, lacks social support, causes emotional stress and even psychological disorders. In addition, athletes also complained of feelings of sadness and frustration due to changes in training routines and postponement of sporting events. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for a competitive athlete felt they had lost their community which was a source of social support and changed their routine activities, which is one component of managing depression or anxiety. Further, the results of research on athletes in Bengkulu province show that the psychological abilities of athletes are related to how they perceive the COVID-19 pandemic. The existence of good psychological abilities can prevent the emergence of mental health disorders in athletes (Reardon et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic not only has an impact on changes in the psychological condition of athletes but also changes related to training activities. It was found that in this pandemic situation, athletes were still asked to carry out their routine activities such as training but carried out at home. Some of these athletes said that the tutorial on training techniques and monitoring of exercises by coaches for a number of sports was carried out by a WhatsApp video call service. This is similar to the results of research that training from home (TFH) during a pandemic situation, exercise is carried out through the zoom application and google meet. This of course has an impact on changing the way athletes train. As stated by athletes during preliminary research, this change in the way of training causes them to have to prepare supporting facilities and infrastructure. The conducted training from home requires several things that athletes must prepare, such as the need for a strong internet network, the availability of capable gadgets, an online meeting application and a supportive home environment. The condition of TFH in athletes causes some athletes to complain of decreased motivation so they often skip training, and feel bored and confused because they are not used to doing exercises online (Divina et al., 2020).

In the Philippines, the year 2020 could be the most traumatizing year in modern-day history. Economies collapsed, livelihoods were devastated and, above all, lives were lost; all because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic. Not only were governments and businesses worldwide affected by the pandemic, but even the sports industry, locally and internationally, was heavily impacted by the killer coronavirus. One by one, sporting events got canceled as players, coaches, league officials and even fans got infected by Covid-19 (Ocampo, 2020).

In Davao del Norte, the impact of Covid 19 has a detrimental effect on the lives of student-athletes. The cancellation of their training and other sports related activities has affected their physical and mental health abilities. Many studies have explored aspects of mental health, but there was no specific study that described the physical and mental health challenges of student-athletes in the midst of pandemic. That is why, this study is conducted which aimed to build a rich and in-depth perspective on the physical and mental health

challenges of student-athletes during the COVID-19 pandemic so as to be able to expand the literature related to strategies for solving physical and mental health problems in student-athletes. The result can be used as a basis for preparing preventive and curative programs for physical and mental health problems that arise in student-athletes during the midst of pandemic.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The **Self-determination Theory of Motivation (SDT)** specified that people are able to become self-determined when their needs for competence, connection, and autonomy are fulfilled. Further, self-determination can have a significant impact on how people function in a variety of areas. People who feel in control and naturally motivated are more dedicated, enthusiastic, interested, and satisfied with their work. Fostering a sense of self-determination can drive people to achieve in competitive contexts such as sports and athletics. Athletes who believe they can achieve their goals and overcome obstacles are often motivated to improve their performance. Furthermore, succeeding permits people to develop a strong sense of competence and mastery in talents that they like and value (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Moreover, the social environment that can either help or hinder a self-determined perspective. Poor social support can disturb inner experiences, whereas strong social support might provide opportunity for growth. Furthermore, one of the fundamental components of self-determination theory is social connectedness. Poor social interactions can contribute to a poor sense of self and lack of motivation, whereas strong social ties can create motivation and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

On the other hand, an individual's behavior can be explained by his or her behavioral intention, which is jointly influenced by attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Attitude refers to an individual's positive or negative evaluation about performing a particular behavior. Subjective norms refer to an individual's perceptions of other people's opinions on whether he or she should perform or not, a particular behavior, and perceived behavioral control refers to an individual's perceptions of the presence or absence of requisite resources, or opportunities necessary for performing a behavior (Ajzen and Madden, 1986).

Moreover, the theory of planned behavior holds that all actions are controlled by intentions. This theory holds that the individual's intention to perform or not to perform a particular behavior is prerequisite to any action. This intention however, can be affected by time and other confounding factors, whether internal or external that dictates the individual's willingness to carry out the intention. Intentions are defined as the motivational factors that indicate the extent to which people are willing to go to perform a particular behavior, hence the stronger the intention to perform a behavior, the higher the likelihood that an individual will perform it (Ajzen, 1991).

Furthermore, after trying to determine the differences between attitude and behavior. The first change from the integration theory is behavioral intention. This also acknowledges that there are factors that can limit the influence of attitude on behavior. For example, if our attitude leads us to want to go out clubbing but our bank account is suffering, the lack of money will change that attitude to staying in for the night. Therefore, theory of reasoned action predicts behavioral intention, an in between for stopping at attitude predictions and actually predicting behavior because it separates behavioral intention from behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Finally, the competence motivation theory in the physical achievement domain developed by sport psychology provided support for the model itself but also for the importance of competence as a motivational construct. Specifically, individuals who perceive themselves as having high competence in any particular sport or physical activity context exhibit higher intrinsic motivation to participate in that activity and experience more positive affective reactions (e.g., pleasure, satisfaction, enjoyment) when participating than do their peers who hold lower perceptions of competence (Bandura, 1975).

Physical Health. Physical well-being is described as an ideal condition of functioning and is an important component of a two-continuum model of mental health. Well-being as a theoretical notion is distinguished by psychological and social factors. Stress, which is negatively associated to well-being, happens when a person feels overwhelmed or unable to manage as a result of pressures, necessitating a preventative and therapeutic reaction. Because of competing scholastic, social, and sports demands, student-athletes (or collegiate athletes) are prone to stress. Student-athletes, for example, cite academic and athletic stress, a limited social life, relationship troubles, and examination pressures. When compared to non-athletes, student-athletes had higher clinical and sub-clinical risks for behavioral mental health issues (e.g., drug abuse, eating disorders, gambling) (Moreland et al., 2018).

Furthermore, physical wellness, which encourages principles of good health and knowledge, is demonstrated in overall physical health and participation in physical activities (Powers et al., 2006). It is described as action taken by individuals to enhance the body's ability to maintain a healthy lifestyle through physical exercise, self-care and proper nutrition (Hettler, 1984). Numerous physical disorders, emotional problems, diminished self-esteem and non-communicable diseases have been found to be strongly associated with unhealthy lifestyles. Optimal physical health requires eating well, exercising, maintaining recommended body weight, getting sufficient sleep, avoiding harmful habits, making responsible decisions about sex, learning about and recognizing the symptoms of disease, getting regular medical checkups, and taking steps to prevent injuries (Hoeger, 2017).

Moreover, student-athletes are at least as likely as non-athletes to suffer from mental problems. Furthermore, due to the physical and frequently violent character of sport, student-athletes may sustain bodily injuries as well as emotional and physical exhaustion from competition and over-training. Athletes may face performance expectations from coaches, teammates, and fans, and they frequently strive for success at the price of their personal well-being. When such stresses go untreated, they can lead to reduced functioning, emphasizing the importance of mental health self-management strategies (Moreland et al., 2018).

On the other hand, everyone in the sports community is feeling the impact of COVID-19. Events and competitive seasons at all sport levels are being canceled and training facilities are closing. Athletes, coaches, parents, and sport stakeholders are scrambling to develop contingency plans. With no live events to cover, media sources are focusing on the Coronavirus pandemic, which could be further exacerbating everyone's concerns. Fortunately, mental performance and mental health practitioners and organizations are helping to mitigate the effects of this extremely fluid situation through online support (Ruibley, 2020).

Further, in the midst of the current global crisis, it is normal to feel like you are on an emotional rollercoaster; the continual flood of information, changes in daily routines, concern about one's own and others' health, and swiftly shifting reports, is characteristic of the ups and downs of a rollercoaster. All of which is physically and emotionally draining. The first step in managing your experience is to recognize how you feel. COVID-19 is impacting everyone differently, and the impact it is having on you is completely normal and valid (Li, 2020).

Moreover, some common feelings are fear, anxiety, loss, relief, confusion, disappointment, exhaustion, frustration, and anger. In cities and towns across the globe, mandates to stay home and socially distance may cause you to feel physically alone, however, you are not emotionally on an island. Plenty of other people are feeling just like you and it is important to stay virtually connected. Acknowledge what you're feeling, identify those emotions, and work on trying to understand and accept them. Anticipate that your emotions will also likely change over time as the Coronavirus pandemic evolves (Moreland, 2018).

On the other hand, the National Collegiate Athletic Association published the results of its study "Well-being of Students-Athletes" on athletes' physical and mental well-being with about 25,000 athletes participated in the survey. It showed that in general, students reported that as the pandemic progressed, they had less difficulty sleeping and lower levels of loneliness, loss, anger, and sadness than at the beginning of the quarantine. Still, there was an increase in her anxiety, hopelessness, mental exhaustion, and feelings of depression (NCAA, 2020).

Aside from that, among the biggest concerns of athletes are their grades (43%), not being able to practice their sport (33%), COVID-19 (31%), and financial concerns (24%). Regarding the Coronavirus, 64% of those surveyed confirmed that they almost always follow social distancing rules (masks, physical distance, not attending large meetings). During the fall semester, 37% isolated themselves due to the virus's symptoms, being exposed to someone infected, or because there was an outbreak of cases at their university. Moreover, 51% said that a family member or friend tested positive at that time and 9% have or had someone close to them hospitalized or died (Hatamleh, 2018).

Additionally, it is difficult for athletes to focus on their sports and reach their peak performance with all this situation. Anxiety can extend to problems with sleep, relationships, or school performance. For those whose seasons continue to be delayed or suspended indefinitely, one thing that will help them improve their mental health is to stay connected with their teammates. It helps to normalize the experience and feel heard and supported as they go through the same thing. On the other hand, athletes have done a great job exercising independently in their experience. Still, it is recommended for those out of shape: for runners or endurance athletes, start slow and increase mileage or intensity by 10% per week to avoid injury. Those who practice basketball or sports requiring bursts of energy should gradually increase and pay attention if they have muscle pain or discomfort since the second end in injury and is not normal. Eating nutritious meals and staying hydrated to support your body and the immune system is also super important to get your level back (Earl, 2021).

Mental Health. The World Health Organization defines mental health as more than just the absence of mental illness, and refers to 'a condition of well-being in which each individual fulfills his or her own potential, can cope with regular life challenges, can work effectively and fruitfully, and can contribute to her or his community. Mental health is determined by co-existing and interacting individual and social factors. For example, mental well-being is associated with positive physical health, pro-social behavior and the ability to self-regulate and cope with adversity. Conversely, mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety, and are ranked as the 1st and 6th largest contributors to global disability. As one in four individuals experience a mental health problem during any given year, it is a public health concern, wherein more information to assist help-seeking behaviors should be made available to the public. Consistent with the general population, mental illness estimates are also visible in athlete populations, with a lack of help-seeking behaviors being attributed to stigma wherein help-seeking is considered a sign of weakness in a culture of competition and high performance (Putukian, 2015).

Further, despite an upsurge of population-wide government-funded mental health awareness interventions, mental health stigma remains prevalent. Stigma is the disapproval of a person or group on social characteristics that serve to distinguish them, from other members of society. When applied to health conditions including mental illness, stigma manifests itself in several ways: (i) the experience of actual discrimination on the part of the person affected, (ii) negative attitudes towards the people affected, (iii) self or internalized stigma, and finally (iv) discriminatory and stigmatizing practices in (health) services, legislation and media. As such, mental health stigma functions as a barrier to help seeking behaviors, leading to avoidance of mental health services (e.g. counselling) or self-help techniques (e.g. mindfulness). A recent meta-analysis revealed that many people do not seek help for managing their mental health due to the social stigma associated with help-seeking behaviors (Clement, Schauman, Graham & Maggioni, 2015).

On the other hand, monitoring how one's mental health affects everyday functioning and implementing methods to safeguard and improve mental health are examples of mental health self-management. Many student-athletes say that they lack the skills and resources to self-manage their mental health, which leads to maladaptive coping techniques (e.g., drug abuse). Mindfulness is one example of a self-management strategy that athletes might adopt. Although mindfulness has typically been directed by practitioners in group or individual therapy, increasingly, aural meditation guiding through smartphone applications has made mindfulness programs generally available (Howells et al., 2016).

Further, most mindfulness therapies in sports are designed to enhance performance-related outcomes (for example, enhancing psychological flow during performance) rather than mental wellness. While mindfulness intervention trials for improving mental health outcomes in athletes have so far been positive, none have investigated the theoretical processes of change that may explain the advantages seen. Theoretical constructs are modeled to examine the indirect influence of a treatment (X) on an outcome (Y) via one or more mediators (M) during mindfulness programs in order to determine how changes occur during mindfulness programs (Vidic et al., 2017; Glass et al., 2018).

Additionally, mental health stigma can be understood from a psychosocial perspective using the Theory of Reasoned Action, which is a prominent multi-attribute attitude model in health and exercise behavior research. The TRA specifies that one's attitudes and social norms co-exist and interact, subsequently affecting their and other's behaviors, including seeking help for mental health problems. The TRA offers a theoretical framework, which is a useful tool to help answer why individuals make their decisions. The cognitive component of attitude consists of a person's mental health knowledge and perception (e.g. familiarity with mental health disorders) in relation to the beliefs of those with a mental health problem. Within the present study, mental health knowledge and familiarity with mental health disorders are examined, alongside social norms (i.e. subjective norm) by measuring the athletes' level of exposure to people with mental health problems. Exposure to people, their values and attitudes, influences feelings towards those individuals forming a subjective norm about their behaviors, which can influence behaviors alongside attitudes. In addition to raising awareness, researchers need to determine the demographic predictors of mental health awareness to inform tailored mental health interventions to promote help seeking (Kinderman, 2017).

Besides, The pandemic has been a lengthy and persistent transitional time in an athlete's life and career. Transitions are essential stages in athletic development because pressures must be favorably reacted to in order to maintain success both in and out of sport. The predictability of a transition phase might influence how well an athlete adapts and responds to stresses during this time, with normative transitions often being associated with better mental health outcomes than non-normative transitions. Feelings of despair and anxiety are the most typically seen mental health effects related with non-normative transitions in sport (e.g., injury, de-selection, premature retirement). COVID-19 was predicted to produce similar results due to its non-normative character. Furthermore, athletes have had less opportunity to satisfy their fundamental psychological requirements and/or benefit from sport-related social support networks throughout the pandemic, which can lead to low wellbeing and loneliness (Stambulova, 2020).

Further, when faced with hardship, resilience is frequently regarded as a significant factor of an individual's mental health. To that aim, given sports' long-standing relationship with the development of this favorable psychological feature, players may have an edge over non-athlete. Athletes are more resilient than non-athletes, according to certain research. Given this, it may be claimed that athletes, as a result of their preparation to flourish in tough circumstances and competition, are more suited to deal with the psychological weight of the epidemic than non-athletes. However, current resilience research have looked at samples of athletes who consistently participate in sports, thus the findings may not be reflective of individuals going through a transition time. As a result, more exploratory study in this area is required (Laborde, 2016).

In Addition, another important factor influencing athletes' mental health throughout changes is their sports identity. Brewer and Cornelius (2001) suggest a three-factor model for conceptualizing athletic identity as a multidimensional construct inside the self-concept comprised of self-related information gleaned from psychosocial aspects that accompany the athlete role. Social identity examines how much an individual identifies as an athlete; exclusivity examines how much an individual's self-worth depends on their athletic identity in comparison to other roles they play (e.g., parent, student); and negative affectivity examines the negative emotions that arise as a result of non-participation. For some athletes, long-term participation in sports can lead the athlete's role to become profoundly enmeshed in their personal identity, swallowing their sense of self, social life, and/or work. When going through a transition in which the chance to participate in athletics is absent, these persons are generally the most at risk of suffering from poor mental health (Sanders and Stevinson, 2017).

Moreover, the stoppage of amateur and professional athletic events around the world, including sports such as basketball, football, soccer, rugby, baseball, tennis, and recently the Olympic Games, illustrates that the sport world is also an important part in this scenario and has a fundamental role in the containment of this pandemic. As a result, those directly and indirectly involved with these events have been impacted. For example, sports managers must consider new dates for competitions; sports journalists and TV programs do not have events to broadcast; and stadiums are closed to fans (Andreat0, 2020).

In this context, the training routines of a significant number of athletes around the world have been abruptly interrupted. This adjustment has a significant impact on training quality and quantity, as well as further isolating the athlete from the realities of their everyday training in conventional preparation locations and uncertainty about the future. Physical, technical, and psychological damage is inevitable. To the athlete, significantly reducing training and losing their physical performance capacity can mean loss of competitiveness in the return to competition. Thus, sports science professionals and scientists are challenged to help athletes deal with some of these relevant aspects during this period. This research aims to alert athletes to the need to maintain a conditioning routine during this period with regards to their physical and mental state (Strength Cond, 2020).

Furthermore, mental health is a prevalent issue for most college students, especially student athletes. In addition to the immense stress that comes with being away from home and taking rigorous classes, college athletes are typically under a massive amount of pressure to perform their given sport to the best of their ability every single day. They have more eyes on them than a no-athlete student, especially from their coaches. A recent study reported that overall student athletes have significantly higher mental health stigma compared to their non-athlete peers. One article aimed to study the prevalence of depression in collegiate athletes since the depression prevalence among the college age group is higher than that of other groups. The authors studied 465 participants at a single university over 3 consecutive years to gather their results, using the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) as well as a demographic questionnaire, and calculated prevalence of depressive symptoms and relative risk ratios by gender and sport. The results concluded that nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the student athletes in their large cross-sectional sample exhibited clinically relevant depressive symptoms, and that female college athletes experienced significantly more symptoms than males (Wolanin, et al., 2016).

On the other side, previous studies have shown that women are at least twice as likely to suffer from mental health disorders such as major depressive disorder, social anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder. The present study could help to perhaps fill a gap in the literature on whether or not female athletes have struggled more than male athletes with mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. In general, studies have shown that mental health conditions increase in the early 20s, specifically when people are adapting to college, so this study aims to explore mental health differences among the college continuum by comparing upper and underclassmen (Beiter, et al., 2015).

Moreover, a pre-covid study compared college athletes' personal and perceived public mental illness stigma to nonathlete students based on the participation of 304 different NCAA Division I athletes and 103 non-athletes. The results showed that overall, the athletes reported significantly higher levels of stigma compared to non-athlete peers. Furthermore, the devastating effects of mental health have ultimately taken the lives of many NCAA athletes. After the tragic suicides in 2014 of track star Madison Holleran and OSU football player Kosta Karegeorge, ESPN discussed the treatment disparities between mental and physical health issues for college athletes stating, "Physical injuries such as concussions and knee injuries draw routine and widespread study by doctors and researchers, yet a dearth of information about athletes and mental illnesses exists". Yet, many people with mental health issues, especially athletes, often do not seek help. (Born, 2017)

According to a recent article, 33% of all college students experience significant symptoms of either depression, anxiety, or other mental health conditions and only 30% seek help. However, only 10% of college athletes with mental health conditions seek help. It is likely that athletes are less likely to seek help because they are under the pressure to uphold both physical and mental strength, and no athlete wants to appear weak or injured to their coaches and risk impacting their playing time or their coaches' perceptions of them. For example, stigma has been identified as a main barrier to athletes seeking help and those who seek mental health help may be viewed by coaches and teammates as weak (Gulliver, et al., 2012). The study concluded that athletes may likely benefit from education that can help to reduce the stigma of mental illness and reduce prejudices against those seeking treatment for mental illness (Velasco, 2017).

A study conducted in 2020 examined how the mental health of student athletes associates with their teammate social support, connectedness, and changes to athletic identity before COVID-19 vs. during COVID-19. 234 student athlete participants completed surveys preceding the pandemic lockdown and 135 participated in a follow up a month after lockdown began. The results concluded that the student athletes who received more social support and had more connectedness with their teammates reported less dissolution of their athletic identity as well as better mental health statuses. This article points out that although physical distancing can help the spread of coronavirus, social interactions and support may be key to preventing widespread mental health issues among college athletes. Since COVID-19 has knowingly exacerbated mental health disparities, this study will also seek to evaluate how team cohesion has also been impacted by the pandemic. The team cohesion findings may add to previous literature that team cohesion is associated with a collective sense of confidence (Tenenbaum & Yang, 2015).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the experiences of student-athletes on their physical and mental health challenges in the midst of pandemic?
2. How do the student-athletes cope with the challenges they encountered on their physical and mental health in the midst of pandemic?
3. What are the insights of student-athletes on their physical and mental health challenges in the midst of pandemic that can be shared with others?

CHAPTER 4

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

This study explored the physical and mental health challenges of student-athletes in the midst of pandemic in both junior and senior high school in the schools of Davao del Norte Division which offers Special Program in Sports (SPS). Specifically, this qualitative phenomenological study is delimited to understand the challenges of student-athletes. The data of this study is limited only to the answers of the 14 participants who are the junior and senior high school student-athletes.

The design of this research renders several limitations and shortcomings (Glesne, 1998). First, although member checking was utilized to allow the participants the opportunity to confirm or adjust their responses, the design of this study leaves the door open for these factors to influence the data. Next, all of the participants in this study did so voluntarily. Therefore, it is possible that some opinions or perspectives of those that did not participate in the study differ from those that did voluntarily participate.

Moreover, there are few constraints in this qualitative phenomenological study as the data and results gathered from the interviews cannot be used to generalize the entire population of the student-athletes all over the country. Furthermore, the researcher cannot guarantee that the 14 student-athletes in both junior and senior high school responded honestly to each of the questions to be asked.

In addition, another limitation of the study was the difficulty in knowing the extent of accuracy maybe because the participants still in the midst anxiety, depression and other psychological and physiological experiences and also considering that the participants are still students they may have difficulty in expressing and organizing their thoughts.

Finally, because the subject matter deals with the student-athletes may feel less comfortable talking about certain issues and may give responses that are not completely forthright. It is emphasized that the purpose of the study will solely explore the lived experiences, coping mechanisms and learning insights of student-athletes in the midst of pandemic.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed the descriptive design utilizing qualitative approach in research. In human research, a descriptive study can provide information about the naturally occurring health status, behavior, attitudes or other characteristics of a particular group. In addition, Holstein, J.A and J.F. Gubrium (2012) emphasized that the purpose of qualitative research is to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior.

Creswell (2007) viewed qualitative research as one that is conducted when a researcher needs a complex, detailed understanding of an issue. Considering the nature and purpose of the study conducted, the researcher utilized a qualitative approach since it provided more of a broad approach to the study of this social phenomenon which is determining the varied insights of the research participants regarding the clinical supervision of school administrators and supervisors. Roberts (2010) suggested that the qualitative approach allowed participants to express their experiences from their own perspectives, accordingly by using such methodology it helped the researcher gain an understanding about how teachers were describing their experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Since the sources of qualitative data included interviews, observations and documents (Creswell, 2007; Giorgi, 2009; Locke et al, 2010; Suter, 2012;), emphasizing two ways of collecting data if one wanted information about the lived experience of a phenomenon from another person, the traditional face to face interview and the written account of the experience, both could not be broken down easily by a statistical software. In this study, it uses specific methodologies such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and note-taking, giving much attention to details and importance of the emotional content to open up an array of human experiences of the subjects involved in the study. What one seeks from a research interview in phenomenological research is as complete a description as possible of the experience that a participant has lived through (Giorgi, 2009).

In using a descriptive phenomenological approach, preconceptions about the student-athletes' experiences were documented prior to the onset of the study and were compared to what had transpired and observed during the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The preconceptions, beliefs, and findings of the researcher be revealed unambiguously in the research report. The researcher observed flexibility and openness which was being connected with having learned to maintain a fair amount of ambiguity (Strauss and Corbin, 2008) in order to have a useful and positive output.

Phenomenology, moreover, provided interview methods that allowed me to engaged participants in reflective and reflexive conversation, which provide insight into how individuals experienced and internalized their experience with a given phenomenon (Creswell 2007), in this case, the experiences of the student-athletes during this time of pandemic being observed will be revealed based on how they are being supervised categorically by their coaches and teachers. Indeed, as Sidney and Beatrice Webb (1932) described the method of the interview as being conversation with a purpose. On the other hand, focus group discussion as cited by Carey (1994) provides access to comparisons that participants make between their experiences, this can be very valuable and provide access to consensus or diversity of experiences of the students. Thus, it is likely to be effective in eliciting data and generating broad overviews of the issue at hand, since it's a good way to gather together the student-athletes of similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss the specific topics.

In this study, the researcher also believed that this design is appropriate to this study because fourteen (14) student-athletes who was chosen using purposive sampling. These student-athletes in junior and senior high school have experiences and challenges and thus focus group discussion and in-depth interviews will

serve as mechanisms to obtain relevant information from them. Their encounters and their coping mechanisms as student-athletes are manifestations of a good phenomenological study. With their experiences and challenges, the researcher believes that through thematic analysis, better themes will be obtained from the participants of this phenomenological study, taking into account the trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations.

A. Sampling

This study was conducted to fourteen (14) student-athletes in junior and senior high school in the Schools Division of Davao del Norte with seven (7) student-athletes for the In-Depth Interview (IDI) and another seven (7) student-athletes for the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). In the identification of student-athletes, the researcher asked the school sports coordinator and school principal as to the list of student-athletes who experienced physical and mental health challenges in the midst of pandemic. The responses were gathered from the participants and validated by the sports coordinator and the school head. Moreover, this study agreed to the inclusion criteria: (1) bona fide student-athletes in junior and senior high school; (2) and has played in the division, regional, national and international competitions (3) conducted training routine at home.

In phenomenological study, a cut-off point should not be based on randomization but rather, it should be informed by the selection or inclusion of the largest sample variables on the assumption that the largest categories can usually predict or include the smaller ones. Creswell (2009) stressed out that a phenomenological approach would necessitate finding or trying to identify a homogenous sample. Participants for this study should be generally selected who have physical and mental health challenges and are willing to talk about their experiences and are diverse enough from one another to enhance possibilities of rich and unique stories of the particular experience (Creswell, 2009). In this study, fourteen (14) participants are enough for this study. However, the result does not mean to generalize the population of student-athletes in junior and senior high school on a larger scale but findings are only relevant to the participants of this study.

Purposive sampling was used in the selection of the participants. Purposive sampling is especially exemplified through the key informant technique (Lyon & Hardesty, 2005) wherein one or a few individuals are solicited to act as guides to a culture. Key informants are observant, reflective members of the community of interest who know much about the culture and are both able and willing to share their knowledge (Bernard, 2002).

To protect the participant's confidentiality, their names was replaced with pseudonyms. Each participant was given written informed consent to be signed along with the assurance that the data gathered from the interview is solely for the purpose of the study.

B. Data Collection

In all research studies, following accurate results can be done through following the research procedures (Creswell, 2009). The researcher instilled awareness on how the data was obtained and collected. Herewith, the following procedures were carefully followed to attain better results:

First, the researcher wrote a letter of intent to the school principal, requesting permission to conduct a study. The participants were determined using the record provided by the school principal. For the record of student-athletes, the researcher also sought assistance from the class advisers. A letter of intent was also given to the classroom advisers and the school sports coordinator.

Second, the participants were notified, and they were asked if they want to participate in the study. They were asked to sign a letter of consent to document their voluntary participation in the study if they accept to be participants in this research. Third, the research objectives and technique were explained by the

researcher. They were also be given personalized orientations on the study's main goal. The participants in this study were informed about the study's purpose and how it might benefit them.

Fourth, the study's resources, which include interview guides and an audio recorder, were created. The researcher made use of an audio recorder to this study because not all of the participants' responses was written down. As a result, the researcher had some time to rewind the talk, which helped with data transcription.

Fifth, an in-depth interview was conducted, and the participants' audio-recorded comments was transcribed to offer comprehensive information regarding the physical and mental problems faced by student-athletes. Participants were asked to discuss in detail their experiences and the challenges they faced in this study. The precise questions answered were largely open-ended, with follow-up discussion driven by the participant rather than the researcher. Openness is essential, and the discussion may be completely unstructured, with few direct questions addressed. This is done in order to keep the interview procedure as near to the lived experience as possible. The researcher was able to see what the subjects really felt from the inside out, rather than simulations of what they imagined they felt. The researcher also checked for what was said between the lines, rather than what was expressed out loud. As a result, verbatims did not always capture everything mentioned in interviews. In the interview, the researcher will also emphasize the necessity of paying attention to silence, the absence of speech, the quiet of the unspeakable, and the silence of being or life itself, as it is here that one can find the assumed or self-evident.

The researcher collected data through an in-depth interview with each participant and a focus group discussion. The goal is to learn about the participants' physical and mental issues as a result of the pandemic. Virtual interviews were conducted by the researcher to gather important information from the participants. The interview guide covered all relevant questions, ensuring that no information is overlooked. The questionnaire was evaluated by specialists before being administered. In addition, interviews were correctly documented using an audio recording and is kept safe. As a result, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were effective for eliciting participant viewpoints, as they will be acceptable for obtaining people's personal sentiments, opinions, and lived experiences (Mack et al., 2005). Creswell (2009) underlined the need of storing obtained data so that it may be quickly retrieved and secured. Participants' audio responses were captured and transcribed and saved on a laptop and flash drive in this study.

C. Ethical Issues

a) Trustworthiness of the Study

The trustworthiness of a research study is critical in determining its usefulness and significance (Shenton, 2004). The reliability of data collecting is one factor that supports a researcher's ultimate argument about the study's reliability. It also relates to the trustworthiness of the findings, interpretations, and procedures employed to ensure the research's quality (Polit & Beck, 2014). The phrases credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability are used to describe the trustworthiness of qualitative content analysis.

Credibility essentially asks the researcher to provide a clear connection between the research study's findings and reality in order to show that the research study's findings are true. It guarantees that the study measures or evaluates the expected outcomes, as well as the findings' consistency with actual and lived reality (Polit & Beck, 2014). Furthermore, as mentioned by Shenton (2004), Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that ensuring credibility is one of the most significant components in building trustworthiness. They presented a set of methods for creating believability. The researcher will use concrete measurements of the following constructs, as outlined by Polit and Beck (2014), in this study.

To establish credibility, researcher need to take into consideration many factors to come up with an appropriate and well-established research method (Shenton, 2005). Triangulation is something that every qualitative researcher should be familiar with. This entails employing a variety of approaches, data sources, observers, or theories in order to acquire a thorough understanding of the phenomenon. It's utilized to ensure that the research findings are rich, thorough, solid, and well-developed. As previously stated, triangulation may entail the use of the primary method, focus groups, and individual interviews, which are the three basic data collection procedures for qualitative research. While both in-depth interviews and focus group talks have inherent methodological flaws due to their nature as interviews, their various traits also result in distinct strengths (Brewer & Hunter, 1989).

Another pillar for establishing credibility is the tactics for ensuring participant honesty. Research integrity, according to Korstjens and Moser (2018), is the active observation of the ethical principles and professional standards that are essential to research activity. It encourages good qualities such as trust, mutual respect, honesty, accountability, and justice, which are ideal for collaborative work. The participants' honesty will be assured by asking follow-up questions to confirm that their responses are truthful. Furthermore, participants' honesty can be ensured by presenting study goals and purposes, respecting others' work, communicating valid interpretations, and making defensible assertions based on research findings.

Iterative questioning was used in this study to address credibility, as suggested by Shenton (2004), who believes that in order to elicit detailed data, iterative questioning is important, in which the researcher returns to issues previously raised by the participants and extracts related data through rephrased questions. In addition, long-term interactions with participants were conducted to verify credibility. The researcher spoke with the subjects not just once, but several times. The researcher was able to generate better responses and ask for clarifications in this manner, especially if the answers are ambiguous.

Furthermore, in this study, it is critical to create rapport so that the participants feel at ease and secure in responding to the questions that will be posed. Even though probe questions are included in the prepared interview guide, if participants have difficulty figuring out or expressing themselves, these questions were revised or simplified, or if they refuse to answer, we can simply revisit these questions later when participants are more confident or open.

Another strategy that the researcher employed to increase credibility in this study is expert peer debriefing. It entails getting input on the data analysis from an expert peer. It's required for both providing feedback and reducing the possibility of the researcher's beliefs influencing the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Furthermore, the focus should be on whether the participants believe their words accurately reflect what they intended, because if a tape recorder was utilized, the articulations themselves should have been captured accurately. As a result, the participants were given access to the data, interpretations, and conclusions. This allowed them to clarify their intentions, fix any errors, and offer any extra information that is required. This also verifies the accuracy of the summary, confirming that these are all their experiences (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). In addition, reflective notes were used in this study by writing key comments about the participants and personal contacts with these participants, which could contribute extra information to the dense description of the phenomenon under investigation.

In qualitative research, field notes are essential for recording and analysis. They give the researcher the information they need to conduct critical reflection, write descriptions for analytical writing, and reason conceptually (Maharaj, 2015). Apart from the typical things to be written down,

the researcher took down all the things/ideas that will be valuable in this study. The researcher thought about how the data relates to the person and their experiences. The researcher understands that reflecting on the notes taken will aid tremendously in many aspects of this research, particularly in the data collection.

Qualitative researchers use member checking as another significant strategy for establishing trustworthiness. It is a technique in which the study participants are informed of the interpretations, data, and findings. Participants can also clarify their intentions, fix errors, and provide extra information if needed. Furthermore, member checking was, since Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that it is the single most essential provision that can be implemented to improve the trustworthiness of a study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), member-checking is the most important strategy for building credibility in order to improve data collection accuracy and interpretation accuracy; participants should receive a copy of their transcripts after the interview for criticism. By implementing measures on the use of dependable data sources and effective data gathering techniques, data accuracy checks can be improved.

In this study, participants were invited to read any dialogue transcripts in which they took part. To ensure that this concept is followed, each participant was given a copy of his or her transcript and asked to verify, correct, and remark on its accuracy. Each participant was given the task of identifying and correcting the transcript's truthfulness. The interpretation was confirmed or denied by each participant. Participants was invited to read the description carefully for any possible clarifications, revisions, additions, or omissions. The participants were given a form to sign after they have verified for any errors.

Thick description of the phenomenon under scrutiny is another important construct to establish credibility. Holloway (1997) describes thick description as the detailed account of field experiences in which the researcher makes explicit the patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context. Shenton (2004) also argued that thick description is used to characterize the process of paying attention to contextual detail in observing and interpreting social meaning when conducting qualitative research. In this study, a thick description is used as the detailed account of physical and mental challenges of student-athletes in the midst of pandemic in which the researcher will make explicit the pattern of social relationships of their experiences and challenges and put them into the context.

The degree to which the current study's conclusions are consistent with those of earlier research conducted by the same organization (Shenton, 2004). The findings of the linked studies included in this investigation, as well as those that the researcher deems necessary in framing the study's conclusions, will be used in this study.

Dependability on the other hand, validates the research study's conclusions as reliable, dependable, consistent, and repeatable, which is critical to trustworthiness (Patton, 2002). Polit and Beck (2014) defined dependability as the consistency and reliability of the research findings, as well as the extent to which research procedures are documented, allowing someone outside the study to follow, audit, and criticize it. The strong relationship between credibility and dependability, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), is a show of credibility that goes some further to ensuring dependability. Different qualitative methods, such as focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, might be used to achieve this.

The audit trail is crucial to this process because it allows any observer to follow the research's progress step by step using the decisions and processes defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985). From the start of a study until the creation and reporting of the research findings, an audit trail is a transparent record of the research methodologies and procedures used. In addition, according to Duit and Treagust

(2003), inquiry audits are beneficial because they allow an outside researcher to question, explore, and examine how data analysis and interpretation were done. In this case, the researcher undertook an audit trail on the study's findings by having other researchers outside of the data collecting and data analysis process check the data collection, data analysis, and research study conclusions. This strategy provided the researcher with useful information. It aided this research in better articulating the findings and presenting a more compelling argument for the findings. In addition, the researcher preserved all documents of what will be done during the study's conduct so that other staff can check to see if the interpretations and conclusions can be linked back to valid sources.

To address the issue of dependability more directly, the study's methodologies should be disclosed, allowing a future researcher to duplicate the work, albeit not necessarily with the same results. In addition, the researcher used overlapping approaches such as multiple data collection processes such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, as well as evaluating findings in multiple contexts in the early phases to improve trust in the evidence.

In this study, the researcher's goal was to ensure that the conclusions based on his participants' responses are compatible with the raw data collected. The researcher wants to make sure that if other researchers looked at the data, they would come to the same conclusions, interpretations, and conclusions. In order to provide reliable study findings, the researcher ensured that no vital portion or data is overlooked in his investigation.

Furthermore, the reader can judge the amount to which suitable research procedures have been followed by looking at the methodology and methodologies used in detail (Shenton, 2004). In this study, the researcher compared the raw data obtained with the findings based on the physical and emotional problems of student-athletes in the midst of a pandemic. The researcher made sure that if other researchers looked at the data, they would come to the same conclusions, interpretations, and conclusions.

In this study, the researcher should carefully look at how selecting the topic, choosing the methodology, analyzing the data, interpreting the results, and presenting the conclusion have influenced the research process. The researcher will also kept and maintained a reflective journal to provide important statements and decisions related to the processes of the study.

Confirmability this refers to the degree of neutrality, or the extent to which the respondents, rather than the researcher's prejudices, motivation, or interest, shape the outcomes of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The concept of confirmability, according to Shenton (2004), is the qualitative investigator's equivalent concern to objectivity. He also mentioned that confirmability should be considered to ensure that the conclusions of the study are, as far as possible, the consequence of the participants' experiences and thoughts, rather than the researcher's qualities and preferences. To ensure the issue of confirm ability, Lincoln and Guba (1985), cited by Shenton (2004), suggested the following provisions made by researchers to ensure the issue of confirm ability: triangulation to reduce the effect of investigator bias, admission of researcher's beliefs and assumptions, and in-depth methodological description to allow the integrity of research results to be scrutinized.

To lessen the effect of investigator bias, the function of triangulation in promoting such confirm ability must be stressed once more. The extent to which the researcher confesses his or her own predispositions, according to Shenton (2004), is a significant requirement for confirm ability. The researcher shall transparently disclose the research steps taken from the start of the research project to the development and reporting of the findings in the context of this study. Throughout the investigation, records of the research path are kept. Furthermore, the researcher must ensure that the data is inter-subjective. The interpretation should be established in the data rather than the researcher's

personal preferences and viewpoints. The emphasis here is on the interpretation process, which is a part of the analysis process.

To obtain confirm ability, the researcher must show that the findings are clearly related to the conclusions in a fashion that can be followed and duplicated as a process. Its application is comparable to that of credibility, except that confirm ability has special consequences for research that make policy recommendations (Shenton, 2004).

In the context of this study, the findings and results of the study could provide further recommendations on policy and programs of the school and the division and regional on a larger scale, to craft training and policies that will help student-athletes cope with the physical and mental challenges in the midst of pandemic.

The philosophical and epistemological viewpoint of the research was defined by both the problem and the researcher's inclination in terms of categorizing the truth in the confirm ability (Shenton, 2004). In this study, the researcher described the steps taken to manage and reflect on the physical and mental challenges faced by student-athletes in the midst of a pandemic, as well as their philosophical or experiential preferences, to ensure that the findings are based on the research participants' experiences and preferences rather than the researcher's. Shenton (2004) also emphasized that reporting on researcher predispositions, attitudes, and assumptions is an important criterion of confirm ability in qualitative research and should be properly reported on. Such reflexivity does not always imply a lack of bias, but it can help explain how the researcher's bias can show up in the research findings while still generating meaningful information. By providing a clear methodology description and demonstrating how the data, constructions, and ideas that emerge from it may be accepted, the researcher will enable the readers to establish confirm ability in the context of this study.

Transferability is akin to or a synonym for generaliz ability, which relates to the extent to which qualitative research results may be translated to other situations with different participants (Bitsch, 2005). Transferability is a term used in qualitative research to show that the findings of a study may be applied to various locations, circumstances, times, and people.

It's vital to remember that the researcher can't guarantee that the conclusions of the research study will be useful. Instead, a researcher's goal is to produce proof that it may be useful. According to Bassey (1981), if researchers feel their circumstances are comparable to those reported in the study, they can apply the findings to their own problems. Lincoln and Guba (1985), quoted by Shenton (2004), agree, stating that it is the researcher's job to ensure that sufficient contextual information about the fieldwork places is supplied to enable the reader to make such a transfer.

The researcher offered a detailed description of the phenomena to ensure the study's transferability. Thick description, according to Holloway (1997), is a thorough narrative of field experiences in which the researcher makes explicit and contextualizes patterns of cultural and social interactions. Shenton (2004) also said that the term "thick description" is used to describe the practice of paying close attention to contextual details.

To make this study more trustworthy and transferable, the researcher has a clear and thick description of the technique and the phenomena being examined, as well as assurance that the data is be on file. Furthermore, the research's transferability is handled by ensuring the security of backup data and copies of the study and its resources. The researcher is certain that he provided the database that allows potential readers to make transferability judgments.

Moreover, the researcher established to present readers with proof that the conclusions of the research study may be applied to any situation. The researcher, on the other hand, was able to show that the study findings was relevant; rather, the researcher presented evidence that it may be applicable and transferable to possible readers.

As a result, Lincoln and Guba (1985) advocated for the inclusion of background data to define the study's context as well as a full description of the event in issue to allow for comparisons. A detailed explanation of the technique and phenomena can assist to promote trust by conveying the real scenarios that have been done and, to some degree, the surroundings that surround them. It is difficult for the reader of the final report to judge the extent to which the overall findings ring true without this knowledge (Shenton, 2004).

b) Ethical Consideration

The creation of standards for the expanding new fields of behavioral research, in which participants obviously have rights and interests, is an essential duty for the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Behavioral Research. The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research was issued in 1979 to offer a concise overview of the requirement for assessment of human research subjects. The Belmont Report summarizes the basic ethical principles of research that safeguard and guide study subjects. Three fundamental concepts, among those commonly acknowledged in our cultural tradition, are especially pertinent to the ethics of human subject research. The policies and procedures governing the use of human study volunteers are based on the following key components gleaned from the Belmont Report.

The first principle is **respect for persons** it recognizes that each human study subject should be viewed as an autonomous being—a person who thinks about and makes decisions about their own paths and goals before acting on them. The second point is that those who have lost their autonomy are entitled to protection. As a result, the concept of respect for humans is divided into two independent moral obligations: acknowledging autonomy and protecting those with limited agency. Some people require extreme protection, even to the point of barring them from potentially harmful activities. The necessity to safeguard them is inextricably linked to the study's usefulness to them. In qualitative research, respect for people necessitates those participants undertake a research program freely, without compulsion, and with adequate knowledge of the study's goals and objectives.

In this study, the primary concern is the physical and mental health hurdles that student-athletes face in the midst of pandemic. In this study, they are truant pupils that are considered vulnerable. As a result, their safety and complete protection were guaranteed. This is to protect the confidence they have placed in us. As a result, the researcher followed the ethical guidelines outlined in the Belmont Report from 1979 when performing this investigation. This first principle, respect for persons, also states that study participants should be regarded as autonomous individuals—that is, they should be considered as independent, self-governing individuals capable of making their own decisions as long as they are provided the information to do so. Informed consent is based on this idea (Creswell, 2009).

In this study, the researcher got written agreement from the research participants, who were provided complete information about the study, including risks and benefits, and were given the opportunity to decide whether or not to participate. For the dangers, the student-athletes were informed about the potential hazards they may face, such as burnout, stress, and trauma, especially if the questions prompt them to relive their worst prior experiences. They will gain from recognizing what is important to them and improving their ability to respond to their troubles and challenges as student-athletes. The researcher also included the participant's right to withdraw from the study, the study's focus and procedures, participant confidentiality, parental agreement, and a signature from both the

researcher and the study's participants in the consent. In addition, the researcher guarantees that his research subjects cooperate willingly and without compulsion.

The second is **beneficence**, it is linked to an individual's act of doing good. The Belmont Report defines beneficence as the responsibility to do no damage to others while maximizing potential benefits and minimizing potential hazards to the particular study participant. Beneficence ideals bind both society and the individual researcher. Society must consider the long-term advantages and hazards of greater knowledge and the creation of new methods that are the outputs and discoveries of research. Researchers and their institutions must devise strategies to enhance benefits while minimizing hazards to individuals. Because the country is suffering greatly as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, the researcher followed the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) procedure, in which the researcher will conduct a virtual interview to obtain important information from the participants.

Furthermore, the concept of beneficence refers to making measures to ensure the well-being of study participants, or to reduce the research's potential advantages while minimizing its potential damage. The key to this idea is to ensure that the risks and rewards of any research are balanced. Benefits of research may include developing friendships with the researcher or other participants, gaining information or education via involvement, or having the chance to do good for society or gain the respect of others (Creswell, 2009).

In this study, the researcher used coding, specifically IDI and FGD, to ensure confidentiality of their responses and their personal identity through anonymity. In addition, the researcher ensures that the outcome of the research is positive and beneficial to his research participants. Student-athletes can benefit from this study as this may serve as an awareness on how they will deal with their physical and mental challenges of being an athlete. Moreover, this study could help the student-athletes in junior and senior high school and adjust to all the problems that they could encounter. This could also inspire the student-athletes to do their best though they experienced massive transition brought by the pandemic. Just compensation will also be given to the participants for sharing their time with the researcher and for the time they spent for the interview and FGD.

On the other hand, **principle of justice**, is the last tenet of Belmont Report which relates to the benefits and drawbacks to particular study volunteers. According to this belief, the gains and costs of research should be dispersed fairly. Participants must be watched on a regular basis to see whether they are chosen for their susceptibility or ease of manipulation, rather than for reasons relating to the topic being examined.

Moreover, according to the final tenet of the Belmont Report, justice, all classifications of people (race, gender, ethnicity, age, etc.) should be equally subjected to the risks and benefits of research, and people should be included or excluded only for reasons related to research questions or hypothesis (Adams, 2008). As mentioned, the researcher will guarantee that his research participants are chosen fairly. The researcher will guarantee that all of the principles are followed in order to preserve the participants' rights. The findings of this study will be provided to the participants to guarantee fairness.

Furthermore, this study adheres to Republic Act 10173, or the Data Privacy Act, which protects people from the unlawful disclosure of personal information that is private, not publicly available, and identifiable, where a person's identity is only apparent through direct attribution or when combined with other available information (National Privacy Commission, 2012). By regulating the processing of personal information, the National Privacy Commission (2012) safeguards individual personal information and defends the right to privacy. The information provided by the participants in this study must be treated correctly and with the highest privacy and confidentiality.

All tangible measures stated will be addressed and applied correctly under the above-mentioned ethical considerations. The researcher will also ensure that the ethical protocols of his study are followed in order to support the ideals essential in advancing knowledge without causing harm to others.

D. Data Analysis

The data collected during the conduct of the study was analyzed to come up with conclusions to resolve the problem of the study. Analysis of data in research involved summarizing the mass of data collected and presenting the results in a way that communicates the most important features (Hancock et al., 2009 as cited by Harding, 2013).

After the data collection, the data gathered during the in-depth interviews were summarized, transcribed, translated, and analyzed. In the process of data analysis, Creswell (2009) stated the following steps:

The data was organized and prepared for analysis. Transcribing interviews, typing up field notes, or sorting and organizing data into multiple categories, depending on the information sources, are all examples of this. After that, the data was thoroughly examined. The researcher made a broad interpretation of the data and reflect on the overall meaning of the participants' responses. The researcher then undertook analysis using the theoretical approach and method chosen. This entailed coding or categorizing data segments that were connected.

According to Creswell (2009), coding is the process of locating a passage in a text or other data item, searching for and recognizing concepts, and discovering connections between them. The researcher defined what he is analyzing in the context of this investigation. The researcher used an established system of codes to approach the data and hunt for themes or ideas in the text. The researcher studied the data thoroughly at first and then jot down any patterns or themes he notices, as well as a phrase for a common topic.

The researcher then moved on to thematic analysis after coding. Thematic analysis, according to Creswell (2009), is a way of assessing qualitative data that is applied to a collection of texts such as interview scripts. The researcher examined the data carefully in order to identify common themes, which are topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that appear repeatedly on the interview scripts and verbatims of the participants, who are student-athletes in junior and senior high school, and identify themes based on their experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights.

The formulation of significant themes follows the thematic analysis. After thematic analysis, one of the most basic tasks in qualitative research, according to Creswell (2009), is the formation of a significant theme. The researcher created significant themes from verbatims and interview scripts by writing them down on a table adjacent to it in this study. The researcher checked the verbatims line by line, laboriously, until a main subject emerges.

Finally, for the formation of the fundamental concepts, the researcher interpreted the data's greater significance. To overcome these issues, the researcher meticulously classified, clustered, and categorized the data after a thorough study, with the clustered concepts leading to core ideas. Furthermore, outcomes were documented and examined in accordance with the researcher's theory. Under each topic, major topics were extracted, discussed, and documented, along with necessary citations to support these themes.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Presented in this section are the experiences of the research participants, their views of knowledge and observations and as well as the constructs which rose up out of the data accumulated through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion.

A. Lived Experiences of Student-Athletes on their Physical and Mental Health Challenges in the Midst of Pandemic

From the data gathered on the practices of the study participants, nine (9) themes emerged as presented in Table 1 such as (1) tiredness and lost of interest, (2) anxiety and nervousness (3) lack of self-confidence (4) difficulty in training, (5) observance to sound mental health, (6) weariness and fatigue, (7) irregularity in sleeping and (8) restlessness and lost of focus, and (9) discontentment.

Theme	Core Ideas
Tiredness and Lost of Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt boredom and disinterested in my sports. Lost eagerness in playing and do not have enough training and resources. • Tired and bored because of this pandemic. • Bored in the house and about to quit because it was hard to practice without a pool. • Tired physically and emotionally my energy was drained. • Tired because my body was not use to it and came to my mind to stop playing my sports. <p>Felt uninterested to play anymore with my sports, thought of almost quitting playing gymnastics.</p>
Anxiety and Nervousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thought negatively during the time of pandemic because of not being able to achieve the goal as an athlete. • Nervous due to COVID not being able to play and go to another place to compete. • Felt afraid for not being able to play Table Tennis. • Felt scare for not being able to handle the training. • Felt scared for not being able to play in the Palarong Pambansa. • Felt anxious, but still stive to do best.
Lack of Self-confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggled and having no confidence. • Felt no confidence because of the house training and not on field. • Felt no confidence during the training because no sees if it done right. • Started to lost hope and felt no confidence for being productive. • Experienced low confidence due to weight gained and thought of not being able to perform anymore. • Felt low self-esteem for not performing the skills correctly.
Difficulty in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced difficulty and felt weak due to the difference of face to face and home exercise. • Drained for not being able to do anything, such as training die to pandemic. • Experienced difficulty in self-training and practice. • Struggled combining sports and academics because of lack of

Training	focus.
Observance to Sound Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kept up happiness despite practice done at home and being physically and mentally healthy. Considered being fortunate for having sound physical and mental health. Felt of being physically active and mentally alert. Felt physically healthy for doing the training at home. Felt of being physically and mentally healthy for being able to remember the basic skills. Felt affected but nee to continue the training and doing best.
Weariness and Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lost interest in playing due to weight gain and being bored during training at home. Felt scared to what will happen to the training if pandemic will not end. Felt bothered and though of not being able to endure the training.
Irregularity in Sleeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced big difference and slept late at night due to having no class the next day because of pandemic. Had sleeping irregularities and gain weight due to unhealthy eating habits. Slept late at night. Bothered due to weight gain. Used to slept late at night and gained a lot of weight. Wake up late in the morning due to having no class because of pandemic.
Restlessness and Lost of Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lost of focus and tended to forget workout routines. Affected concentration due to the different situation. Lost of focus on training due to the absence of coach and teammates. Experienced lot of changes in doing the training, such as lost of strength and focus
Discontentment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felt not satisfied depending upon the interest. Felt not so satisfied due to training at home. Felt sometimes satisfied for not being sure of the routine. Felt not satisfied fully.

Table 1: Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Physical and Mental Health Challenges of Student-Athletes in the Midst of Pandemic

B. Tiredness and Lost of Interest

Responses to the questions asked on experiences of student-athletes on physical and mental health challenges. Almost all the key informants disclosed a high level on the different experiences they have encountered in the midst of pandemic. The same is true for the focus group participants where a good number of them had experience the same physical and mental health challenges.

IDI_02 did not have any hesitations about the challenges she experienced; she said,
Makabati ko ug kalaay sa akong sports most of the time, because it's been a while sukad sa akong training, wala na gyud kabalik. Nawala akong eagerness sa pagdula.

I can feel boredom and disinterested in my sports most of the time, because it's been a while that I was not able to practice. I lost my eagerness in playing.

FGD_01 revealed that she felt bored during the time of pandemic when she had a practice at home; she exposed that.

Boring kaayu, nawala akong ganan, kay walay practice kaayu ug wala pud resources.

It was boring, I lost my eagerness because we don't have enough practice and resources.

IDI_01 also said that;

Gikapoy gyud ko ug nabored tungod aning pandemic kay lahi ra gyud ang face to face.

I am tired and bored because of this it was really different from face to face.

During focus group discussion one of the participants FGD_05 shared without reluctances about his experiences on physical and mental health challenges as student-athletes. He uttered that,

Naluya ko sa balay ug hapit nako mu quit tungod kay naglisud ko ug practice kay walay pool.

I am bored in the house, and I almost quit, because it is really hard to practice without pool.

IDI_03 also mentioned that,

Gikapoy ko physically and emotionally, murag nahurot akong energy.

I am tired physically and emotionally my energy was drained.

Another participant FGD_06 expressed that;

Gikapoy ko tungod kay akong lawas wala na anad ug niabot sa point nga muundang na gyud ko ug dula.

I am tired my body was not used to it and it came to my mind that I will stop from playing my sports.

FGD_03 she expressed that,

Nawala akong interest sa pagdula, naghuna huna na gyud ko nga mag undang sa gymastics.

I felt uninterested to lay anymore with my sports, I thought of quitting from playing gymnastics.

Most of the responses of the participants during the in-depth interview and focus group discussion exposed that, feeling of tiredness and lost of interest were experienced by them during the pandemic. This an indication that they have struggled so much on their trainings conducted in home during the pandemic as a

student-athletes. They have felt boredom and disinterested to play in their sports. Apparently, because of tiredness and lost of interest their physical and mental health has been challenged.

The statement of most student-athletes was supported by Dangi & Witt (2019) they mentioned that, there are three sets of reasons or limitations for children and young people quitting sports. They are personal limitations, which include a lack of enjoyment, low perception of own physical capacity, internal pressure (e.g. stress) and a negative atmosphere in the club, i.e. negative feelings towards the team or the coach. Interpersonal limitations include parental pressure and loss of independence, and insufficient time to participate in other age-appropriate activities. And ultimately, structural limitations include time (training and travel), injuries, expenses and inadequate benefits.

On the other hand, Lack of energy, increased fatigability and feelings of lassitude, decreased feelings of motivation and alertness, and changes in perception and mood are all associated with mental fatigue. It has been proposed that the consequences of mental fatigue may be twofold: it may hamper performance by increasing feelings of fatigue 'I cannot do it, I am exhausted,' or by reevaluating the importance of success at that specific task 'I cannot do it, I am exhausted,' The 'strength of self-control hypothesis,' on the other hand, contends that ego-depleting tasks drain a single global metaphorical strength with finite capacity, hence impairing subsequent performance (Dantzer et al., 2014).

Finally, boredom is an unpleasant experience that results in decreased attention both in terms of thoughts and feelings and interactions with the environment that cause dissatisfaction During the COVID-19 pandemic, athletes complained of feeling bored. This boredom is caused by the boredom associated with independent exercise routines (Eastwood et al., 2017).

C. Anxiety and Nervousness

The second most frequent thought given by the participants in the in-depth interview and focus group discussion they revealed of having experienced anxiety and nervousness. They mentioned different thoughts about their experiences during the pandemic with regards to experiencing anxiety and nervousness. These were the statement of the student-athletes:

FGD_03 expressed feeling of sadness and negative thought as she revealed,

Lain gyud akon paminaw sa time sa pandemic, kay basin dili nako maka abot akong giapangandoy.

I think negatively during the pandemic time, because I might not be able to achieve my goal.

IDI_07 also shared her experienced. She narrated,

Medyo nakulbaan ko, tungod kay basin dili na mawala ang COVID ug dili nako kadula tapos dili nako kaabot sa lain nga lugar para mag compete.

I was a little nervous, because maybe COVID won't be gone and I won't be able to play and go to another place to compete.

FGD_02 mentioned also that,

Nahadlok ko kasy basin dili nako kadula ug Table Tennis.

I am afraid, I might not be able to play Table Tennis.

FGD_05 mentioned that,

Nahadlok ko, basin dili na nako makaya ang training.

I was scared, maybe I couldn't handle the training anymore.

IDI_05 expressed that,

Nahadlok ko basin dili nako kadula sa Palarong Pambansa

I am scared, I might not be able to play in the Palarong Pambansa

IDI_03 disclosed her feeling of having anxiety. She said,

Lain gyud akong paminaw, pero, kinahanglan nako maningkamot.

I felt so anxious but then again, I always strive to do best.

The student-athlete's responses were noted to have psychological impacts from the pandemic and feel isolated and disconnected all the time. This affected their training performances at home. They have feelings of anxiety and nervousness that made them felt, afraid, scared, thought of negatives things.

As COVID-19 is a rapidly evolving more research is needed to fully understand the impact this pandemic has had on high school athletes. High school athletes are susceptible to undergoing adverse mental health symptoms due to their age and stage in brain development and how it is able to react and cope with stressors, thus anxiety, depression, feeling of isolation was felt during this time. (Romeo, 2017). Though there is limited research on high school athlete's perceived mental health due to the disruption of COVID-19 on sports engagement, there is research to support the negative impact on collegiate athlete's mental health. Research has shown that 19.4% of young adults aged 18-25 years, experience negative mental health symptoms consistent with anxiety, depression, or another form of a mental health disorder (Cuff & Logan, 2019; Locke, et al., 2016).

Furthermore, in regards to this population, in the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) conducted a poll of over thirty-seven thousand students which indicated that the participants had perceived high levels of negative mental health symptoms due to the unpredictability that COVID-19 had caused to their lives and sports engagement (O'Hara, 2020). From this poll it was concluded that specific stressors felt by the student athletes were fear of exposure to COVID-19 (43%), feelings of stress and or anxiety (21%) lack of motivation (40%), feelings of stress or anxiety (21%), and sadness or depression (13%) and participants; additionally, 80% reported they had difficulty completing their athletic training partially because they did not have access to the correct facilities From this it can be deduced that there are likely many student athletes not included within these numbers that have had their mental health negatively affected from the repercussions of COVID19 on sports and sports engagement (O'Hara, 2020).

D. Lack of Self-confidence

Another idea shared by the participants is having lack of self-confidence. From the student-athletes perspective during the FGD and IDI it was exposed that some of the students lost confidence during their training at home. In which their physical and mental state were being affected. These were some of their thoughts:

FGD_01 revealed to the group how she hurdled the challenges during the training at home. She said,
Wala koy kumpyansa usahay sa akong kaugalingon, kay nagalisud gyud ko.

I don't have confidence in myself sometimes, because I'm really struggling.

FGD-05 supported the sentiments as he uttered his experienced at home. He said,
Ako pud dili, kay lahi ra ang training sa balay ug sa field.

I am also not confident because the training at home and on field is different.

IDI_04, IDI_05, IDI_06 and IDI_07 were also developing lack of confidence as they continue thriving the challenges brought about by pandemic. They said that, *I am not confident during my training, because no one sees me if I am doing it right. [IDI_04] I am not that confident because I was and I lost hope, because I am not that productive.[IDI_05]My confidence is not that high it was a bit low, because I gained weight, maybe when I go back to training, I cannot carry my body anymore [IDI_06], I have low self-esteem; I was not able to perform the skills correctly during my training. That is why I called my coach if I am doing it right. [IDI-07].*

In summary, the level of confidence among students seems to be highly affected in this pandemic. It was found out that if one constantly views their experiences as successes, an increase in self-confidence is observed. Conversely, viewing experiences as failures leads to a decrease in self-confidence levels. Indeed, online training or home training poses threats to self-confidence as it could instill fear, shame, and dissatisfaction. The majority of students had voiced out that the pandemic has greatly affected their self-confidence, especially towards sports training. The students stressed that it is significantly harder to focus by merely staring at the screen following the steps for almost the entire day than doing it in a physical setting where both coaches and teammates were present. For this reason, it is a struggle for most student-athletes as physical activities play a major role in their learning and it simply cannot be carried out online and at home alone (Blanco, 2020).

However, since self-efficacy centers on an individual's self-belief on a specific task, it is not tantamount to one's confidence as the former is more particular depending on one's objectives while the latter is more of an inherent trait. One's self-efficacy beliefs are directly dependent on one's specific goals (Artino, 2018). Briggs (2020) supports this citing that self-efficacy is centered on the interaction between a person and a task while subsequently, self-confidence is more of a personal characteristic.

E. Difficulty in Training

The responses of the participants to the succeeding sub-questions point out the different challenges of student-athletes in the physical and mental health. There were those participants who shared that it hinders them from performing well in their respective routines. In general, most of the participants really have the difficulty about their physical and mental health.

According to FGD_03 that she really finds it difficult to undergo trainings at home due to the limited movement and space. She uttered that,

Lisud gihapon sir, maluya ko kay lahi ra gyud ang face to face, kay dili makahunat dri sa balay kay dili, sa mental pud kay makalimot ko usahay sa routine.

It was difficult, I am felt being weak sometimes, it was really different from face to face than doing exercise at home, because my movement at home was limited, and I tend to forget sometimes the routine.

The same is true with IDI_05 she explained what she felt everytime she is doing her workout at home.

Nadrain gyu dko, dilinako kaya mabuhay ang mga work out nga ginabuhay nako sa una, Sama sa pagtraining, sa una malingaw ko sa training, karun dili gyud tungod sa pandemic. Wala kaayu ko focus, mabati nako nga wala nakaayu ko interest mudula.

I am drained, I cannot do anything like the thing I used to do. Just like trainings, because before I am enjoying the training, but now due to pandemic, I don't have focus. I feel like I am not anymore interested to play.

FGD_01 described her experiences during pandemic. She said that,

Lisud gyud kaayu, kay ako ra man sige ug practice pero displina lang gyud sa sarili ang kinahanglan para maovercome ang kalisud.

It's very difficult, because I'm the only one who is doing the training and practice, but I just need to have self-discipline to overcome the difficulty.

IDI_01 also shared that,

Maski maglisud ko usahay sa akong training, pero naningkamot gihapon ko nga makabalo, mangutan nako sa akong teammates ug coach.

Though sometimes I find it difficult to perform the training, but I still continue for me to learn, sometime I asked my coach advice and well as to my teammates.

IDI_07 disclosed that,

Lisud kaayu isabay ang sports ug academics kay mawala ka sa focus.

It is hard to combine sports and academics, because you will not have your focus.

For the students, pandemic has brought different difficulties in both physical and mental aspects. To them they find it hard to do the home work out for several reasons. But on the other side, they also revealed a positive side wherein they divulged, though it was difficult but they will still continue to be doing the training.

The COVID-19 condition causes changes in the mental condition of athletes such as the emergence of feelings of boredom, disappointment, confusion, decreased ability to concentrate and a decrease in motivation. During the COVID-19 pandemic, athletes complained about the emergence of boredom and confusion because they are not used to doing online exercises, this condition also results in a decrease in motivation so that they are often absent from training (Divina et al., 2020).

Although it is likely that athletes will train less during the pandemic, some of them may increase the number of daily sessions in an attempt to alleviate the stress of confinement. In addition, changes in routine, diet, and increased stress and anxiety can be factors that aggravate the recovery of athletes. Therefore, it is essential that athletes remain active to decrease the magnitude and speed of detraining, which should occur due to changes in training routines. In addition, attention should also be steered toward athletic fitness. Thus, it is critical that players attempt to do the technical motions of their sport, while this is limited in many circumstances due to dependability on the opponent, such as team sports, equipment requirements, or practice location, such as swimming (Coimbra, 2020).

F. Observance to Sound Mental Health

Apart from those emerging ideas and thoughts by the student-athletes it was also gleaned from the responses though they have experienced challenges in the physical and mental health, they still strive at maintaining physical fitness.

According to FGD_04 she said that,

Lingaw man gihapon sir maski isa ra sa balay, physical healthy ug mentally healthy gihapon kay lami ang pagkaon.

I am still happy though I am the only one who is doing the practice at home, I am still physical and mentally healthy because I ate healthy food.

FGD_02 likewise revealed also that,

Swerte lang gihapon ko sir, kay bisan pa sa pandemya, healthy gihapon ko physically ug mentally pud.

I am still fortunate, though it was pandemic, I am still healthy physically and mentally.

IDI_01 also shared his experiences during his training at home. He said that,

Normal ra man, kaso limitado ang lihok kay naa ra sa balay, physically active and mentally alert usahay kadugayan man gud maluya man ko kay walay outside training.

It is just normal, but somehow my movement at home is limited. Physically I am active and mental alert, but sometimes I get so tired and weak because I don't have outdoor training.

FGD_06 added that,

Physically healthy gihapon ko, kay padayun man gihapon akong training, mentally alert pud kay makahinumdom pa man ko sa mga basic skills nag gitudlo.

I am still physically healthy, because I always continue doing my training, as to my mental health I am mentally alert because I can still remember the basic skills that was taught to me.

IDI_07 has the same though with Jam (not her real name) she revealed that,

Sa pisikal usahay maluya, pero padayun lang gihapon, sa Mental normal ra man akong huna huna naa gihapon focus.

In my physical health I am affected sometimes, but still, I need to continue. Mentally I am good, I just think positively.

The student-athletes experiences during pandemic have also developed them to become aware of their own health and wellness. To them, the observance of sound mental health is important as this will help them in realizing their goals as an athlete. Perhaps they were scared in some other ways, but they are still hopeful and positive.

The COVID-19 pandemic situation also has a positive impact, such as athletes having longer time to train due to event delays. This is supported by the results of research which states that during a pandemic, athletes have a longer time to improve their quality, redesign goals, and improve techniques that are still poorly mastered (Latella & Haff, 2020).

In addition, students who were more active were older and more invested in schooling in general, but parents expressed concern about their children's increased sedentariness. In studies of older persons, for example, researchers looked at the promotion of physical exercise in nursing homes during the pandemic and discovered that this service needs to be more thoroughly integrated into the organizational structures of these facilities (Frahsa, 2021).

G. Weariness and Fatigue

The participants in the study unfolded that weariness and fatigue were some problems they have encountered during the pandemic period. They emphasized during the focused group discussions and in-depth interview that they somehow lost interest in playing due to having fatigue. Most of them exposed of being bothered during the home training workout they conducted.

According to IDI_07 voiced out how she experienced fatigue and weariness during the home training and workout. She mentioned that,

Kadtong nawad an ko ug gana, kay ning dako naman ko, nag gain nako ug weight, dili nako magtraining, kay lay gyud sir sa balay lahi ra sa pool.

The time I lost my interest in playing, because I gained weight and I do not undergo training anymore, because I so bored doing at home.

FGD_07 also pronounced how she felt scared during her training at home. She noted that, Perti gyud nako kahadlok, kay magunsa na lang akong training kung dili mawala ang pandemya, dli nako maka swimming ug balik.

I was really scared, because what will happen to my training if this pandemic will not end, I could no longer swim.

IDI_01 also uttered without hesitation, how he felt worried because he thought he could no longer practice and could no longer continue the game, because it might not go back to normal.

IDI_03 also mentioned that,

Nabati ko ug kalibog, tungod kay basin dili nako makaya nag training sa balay.

I felt bothered, because I thought of not being able to endure the training at home.

The student-athlete responses clearly demonstrated that pandemic has brought many challenges to them. They disclosed their feelings and emotions during the FGD and IDI how detrimental it was. They also noted that they don't have the same energy unlike before, they sometimes forget the routine and somehow, they thought they could no longer endure the training.

This is true that a negative emotion that appears in athletes during the COVID-19 pandemic is weariness and fatigue. The emergence of this feeling of is caused by unexpected conditions which resulted in the athletes not being able to apply the results of their current training and potential due to the postponement of the race event. This is in line with research which states that weariness and fatigue appears as a form of individual response to unexpected and uncontrollable negative events (Zeelenberg, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unexpectedly negative situation and has resulted in a lot of changing sporting activities for athletes. In this condition, athletes are not able to take measurements of their potential, so fear and anxiety arise in themselves to achieve the targets that have been set before the pandemic. Disappointment has a relationship with the emergence of feelings of anger and sadness in someone. This condition will certainly have an impact on the mental health and motivation of the athletes in actualizing their potential (Ruffault et al., 2020).

H. Irregularity in Sleeping

Majority of the student-athletes described that during pandemic they certainly experienced irregularities in sleeping. They shared that due to no face-to-face class they intend not to sleep early. FGD_02 clarified her experiences in the midst of pandemic. She narrated that,

Daku kaayu ang pag bag o, dugay nako makatulog kay nagsalig kay walay klase, sige ra ug selpon, mag training, maluya man kay ako ra isa.

There was a big difference, I slept late at night for I know that there will be no class the next day, instead I kept playing my phone.

IDI_04 also has the same feelings with FGD_02. He also shared to me that,

Pagkagabi dugay gyud makatulog, dugay pud makamata, nag gain ug weight, Kay sige ug kaon.

During night time I slept and wake up very late. I was able to gain weight, because I ate too much.

IDI_05 and IDI_06 have the same emotional state as well during the time predicament.

IDI_05 told me that,

Sa panahon sa pandemic, dugay ko makatulog, nagguol nako kay nadungagan akong timbang.

During this time of pandemic, I slept late at night and I was a bit bothered because I gained weight.

IDI-06 also mentioned that,

Naanad na ko ug pulaw, tapos nagain ko ug weight, grabee nidako akong timbang.

I got used to sleep at night very late, I gained a lot of weight.

FGD_05 also expressed that,

Dili ko ganahan mu mata ug sayo kay walay klase, dugay nako mu mata, kay dugay man makatulog, makasab an ko sa akong mama kay sige ra ug selpon, makalimot na ko sa akong training.

I don't like waking up early in the morning, because there is no class the next day and my mother get mad at me, because I used to play my cellphone most of the time and I do not anymore do the training.

Judging from the impressions, narrative and thoughts shared by the participants, it can be opined that a lot of factors why they have lack of sleep or having irregularities in sleeping during the pandemic. It was clearly stated that some of them has affected the routines of their exercise due to lack of sleep. This could be noted that pandemic certainly affected the physical and mental health of the student-athletes.

Mental health is an important aspect for athletes, because they are often exposed to uncertain situations (Henriksen et al., 2020). Athletes have several risk factors related to mental health. Some of these risks include the incidence of injury, performance that does not meet expectations, overtraining, stress, depression, mental strength, and the type of sport where individual sports are riskier than team sports, adverse events, lack of social support and sleep problems (Purcell, 2019)

Further, the COVID-19 pandemic, which causes restrictions and even lockdowns, has an impact on the mental health of athletes. The lockdown due to COVID-19 has had a negative effect on the mental health of young Spanish athletes, negative effects such as anxiety, depression, loss of self-confidence, sleep disturbances, and social dysfunction (Monl, 2020).

I. Restlessness and Lost of Focus

Gathered from the responses of the participants, it was gleaned that there were several reasons why they felt restless and losing focus during their training in the midst of pandemic. Most of them expressed feeling of sadness as they shared their experiences. They felt restless and having no focus on training. Other said, their concentration was extremely affected. It was hard for them to combine academics and sports. But there is one participant articulated that he was then strong, but when the pandemic happened, he became weak and experiencing loss of focus.

The statement of the student-athletes holds true, as FGD_01 enunciated that,

Mawala ko sa akong pokus, makalimot nako usahay sa akong mga routine sa work out nga gitudlo nako, mao nga sige ug balik balik sa uno.

I lost my focus; I sometimes forget my work out routines that is why I go back from the beginning again and again.

FGD_02 expressed that,

Akong concentration usahay kay apektado, dili gyud lalim ang sitwasyon kay nag inusara ra ka ug training, murag ang kalaban nimo permi kay imuhang sarili, labi na sa akong dula nga table tennis, walay gamit, magbanda banda ra ko sa bola sa wall.

My concentration is sometimes affected, the situation is not different this time because you are doing alone the training it seems like your opponent is always on yourself, especially my game of table tennis, useless, I will band the ball in the wall of our house.

Moreover, IDI_04 said that,

Nakaapekto siya sa ako kay Nawala akong focus sa training, lisud kaayu kay, walay team mutabang sa imuha ikaw ra isa.

It affected me because I lost focus in training, it was so hard because, no one will help you to perform the training.

FGD_07 even added that,

Makaingun ko sir, nga dako kaayu ang kabag uhan sa panahon nga permente ang training, nindut kaayu mulangoy, apan pag abot sa pandemya, nawad an ug kusug, wala na kaayu pokus.

I would say, that there was a lot of changes during the training period, before it was very nice to swim with my team, but when the pandemic came, I lost my strength, I didn't have much focus.

The data presented revealed that students were undoubtedly experiencing loss of focus during the time of pandemic. It can be assumed that the pandemic has brought physical and mental health challenges to all student-athletes.

Mental health conditions are not only marked by the absence of mental disorders in a person, but how the individual is able to recognize the potential in himself so as to improve his mental wellbeing (Schinke & Stambulova, 2017).

Further, mentally healthy individuals can be defined in two ways, namely from the absence of mental disorders in individuals and on the other hand the presence of characteristics of mentally healthy individuals. The characteristics of mentally healthy individuals refer to positive conditions or traits, such as good psychological well-being, strong character and good qualities in oneself. The inability to solve a problem can lead to excessive stress, which makes the individual's mental health more vulnerable and eventually is declared to have a mental health disorder (Putri et al., 2015).

J. Discontentment

The result of the student-athletes discontentment and dissatisfaction during the training at home definitely have an impact on their physical and mental health. Perhaps some student-athletes expressed discontentment during the midst of pandemic as they thrive to continue doing the workout at home.

Moreover, it was uttered by the participants without hesitations that they are certainly not satisfied with their home training, it depends somehow on their interest. One said, that he is not satisfied indeed and he thought there were still missing. Other were also one thing in common, as they said, they are not fully satisfied due to limited movement and having thought of quitting instead.

According to FGD_01 expressed that,

Dili ko satisfied permi, depende sa gana nako.

I am not always satisfied; it depends upon my interest.

IDI_01 also shared that,

Satisfied man pud, pero bation gihapon ug kaluya.

A little bit satisfied but I felt so tired most of the time.

IDI_02 and IDI_03 have one thing in common.

IDI_02 said that,

Usahay satisfied ko sa result sa akong training, pero kablo ko kulang gihapon.

I am sometimes satisfied with the result of my training, but I know it is not enough.

IDI_03 also mentioned that,

Usahay satisfied ko, pero dili permi, naa man gud mga routines nga dili ko sure kung tama ba akong pag execute.

Most often I am satisfied, but not all the time, there are routines which I am not sure, I executed it correctly.

FGD_05 expressed his feelings of not being satisfied, but somehow hopeful to the result of the training he conducted at home during the pandemic. He revealed that,

Satisfied pero dili kaayu taas, pero kabalo ko kaya nako.

I am not fully satisfied, but I firmly believed I can do it.

The student-athletes in these instances are clearly having feeling of unsatisfied due to some constraints during the pandemic. This prevented them to having better performances during their training at home that affected much to their physical and mental health.

The effect of dropping out of sports on children's mental health for example may contribute to increased psychosocial and emotional distress and difficulties (Vella, et al., 2015). The restriction on sport participation and tightened local and state wide regulations to limit the spread of COVID-19 is not in any high school athlete's control. The restrictions vary from state to state and many student athletes are undergoing feelings of loss and discontentment due to feelings of disengagement, fear of catching the virus, anxiety, depression, and other psychological disorders (Mehrsafar et al., 2020).

Further, research has shown how the impact of occupational deprivation can cause a conundrum of negative health outcomes within a person. The model of occupational empowerment analyzes how the inability to engage in empowering occupations or in environments that allow one to thrive can lead to maladaptive habits and unhealthy living (OT Theory, 2018). According to research, an environment that does not facilitate success for individuals can lead to adverse conditions such as violence, poverty, physical abuse, substance abuse, minimal social support, etc. (OT Theory, 2018).

K. Coping Mechanism on Physical and Mental Health Challenges of Student-Athletes in the Midst of Pandemic

From the data collected there were eight (8) main themes which emerged from the responses as shown on Table 2 such as (1) watching YouTube for training tutorial, (2) coaching support, (3) developing self-discipline, (4) maintaining physical fitness, (5) setting positive attitude, (6) asking family support, (7) fostering teamwork and (8) updating and communicating with teacher.

Theme	Core Ideas
Watching YouTube for Training Tutorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing work out and watching YouTube to be able to learn new routines. • Watching YouTube to learn a lot of techniques. • Watching YouTube sometimes, but due to poor connection it will be discontinued.
Coaching Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting message from coach on group chats and keep reminding to continue ten training in order to maintain the speed. • Having been given with a training plan by the coach that serve as training guide. • Having been called by the coach to check if the training and exercise is being done
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being motivated by the coach. • Being encouraged by the coach. • Being followed up by the coach. • Being told not to be weak and should be string all the time
Developing Self-discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing the training very well to develop self-discipline and strengthen the body. • Being told to discipline oneself for improvement. • Disciplining oneself and strive hard.

Maintaining Physical Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing self-training at home so as not to find it hard to perform the routine. • Persevering and continue doing the training even at home. • Being able to handle the pandemic, because of continued prayer and continue the basic footwork exercise.
Setting Positive Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worrying a bit, but being certain because this too shall pass and start doing the training again in order to achieved the goal as an athlete. • Trying hard to doing the training, because everything is not permanent. • Doing the training to become successful and never stop.
Asking Family Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being supported by parents during the training, encouraging to continue and not allowing to go out from home. • Being encouraged by the family in order to maintain the endurance during the game. • Being motivated by family. • Being supported by parents during the training at home and not being pressured to do the training. • Having been supported by parents though sometimes felt of being tired and losing interest but still need to continue.
Fostering Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having been called by teammates and keep asking about the training. • Having fun in the group chat by exchanging ideas and kept updating each other. • Helping each other during the training at home and having done video call sometimes. • Encouraging each other to continue and never quit.
Updating and Communicating with the Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being encouraged all the time. • Having a supportive teacher during the training and even in academics. • Having an understanding teacher.

Table 2: Major Themes and Core Ideas on Coping Mechanism on Physical and Mental Health Challenges of Student-Athletes in the Midst of Pandemic

L. Watching YouTube for Training Tutorial

Collected from the responses of the participants there were several views generated. It was evident that most of the participants during the pandemic resorted to using YouTube as their means of training guide in the absence of their coach and teammates. Some of them revealed that they watched YouTube to learn a lot of techniques in their sports and for them also not to forget the routines they used to do during face to face.

IDI-01 mentioned that,

Naga work out ko, pagkahuman, naga tan aw ko sa youtube para makakita ko ug bag o nga mga routine sa exercise.

I just do the work out, and I kept watching youtube for me to look for new routines in exercise.

FGD_02 and FGD_03 shared the same thoughts about how YouTube helped them learn more on their sports during pandemic.

FGD_02 shared that,

Nagatan aw ko ug youtube, kay para makakita ko ug uban pa nga pamaagi sa execute sa akong dula sa table tennis.

I watch YouTube, so that I can find other ways to execute my table tennis game.

FGD_03 articulated that,

Nagayoutube ko, kay dghan kaayu ko makita ng abag o nga Teknik.

I watch on YouTube, because I can see a lot of help or technique.

FGD_04 added without indecisions but with feeling of disappointments. He said,
Youtube pud ko kaso usahay maputol kay hinay ang net.

I sometime watch YouTube, but to due to poor connection I got lost.

The athletes said that YouTube videos could be accessed any time at any place and could be repeatedly watched during the pandemic. The YouTube also provided new and more recent methods of doing things and this give an athlete an edge over their peers who are yet to use the YouTube videos as another technology driven resources for developing athletes' physical fitness and daily routines. Further, the use of YouTube, it seems, is being seen as the new method of coaching and learning where lessons are delivered and learned online.

Therefore, because it stimulates social contacts and shares interests, hobbies, and real-life connections, social media has become a vital part of people's lives. It considered one of the most essential elements that might affect people's health and behavior favorably or badly. As quarantine and lockdown orders are extended, many people, particularly those who are physically active, frequently respond to this stressful situation by accessing social media sites (Yousfi, 2020).

This study also highlighted the favorable opinions of physically active people about the use of social media for exercise and physical activity The effects of social media usage on physical activity as a beneficial tool for keeping participants informed and connected with individuals who may help them with their physical activities. Despite the favorable views discovered and the influence of social media shown by several research, the findings revealed that the degree of physical activity with home activities is insufficient to satisfy their regular physical activity patterns. Such considerations should be taken into account while developing and promoting physical activity programs during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kaur et al., 2020).

M. Coaching Support

Gleaned from the responses of the participants, they expressed feeling of security as they shared how their coaches helped them with their training during the pandemic. All of them without reluctances enunciated that their coach has given them training plans to serve as their guide during their home workout. They were also encouraged to do better and continue doing the workout at home even in the midst of pandemic.

Based from the statement of FGD_01 she shared how her coach supported her during her training in the midst of pandemic.

She said,

Naga message sa GC nga magpadayun gydu ug training para ma maintain ang speed.

My coach message me on our group chats and kept reminding me to continue my training in order to maintain my speed.

Seemingly, IDI_01 also narrated that,

Gihatagan ko ni coach ug training plan para guide nako sa akong training maski naa ko sa balay, Naga message siya sa GC namo nangumusta kong ginasonod ban ko ang work out plan. Gina encourage pud ko niya nga muadayun dili gyud daw muundang.

I was given a training plan by my coach that will served as my guide during my home training. He made a follow in our group chat if I did follow the plan. He also encouraged me to continue playing my sports and never quit.

On the other hand, FGD_02, FGD_03, FGD_04 and IDI_02 had one thought on coaching support given by their respective coaches during their training at home.

FGD_02 stated that,

Manawag si coach, kung naga exercise ba daw ko.

My coach called me, just to check if I am doing the training and exercise. [FGD_02]

FGD_03 added that,

Motivate ko ni coach.

I am being motivated by my coach.

FGD_04 expressed that,

Encourage ko ni coach.

I am being encouraged by my coach.

IDI_02 cited,

Gina follow ko ni coach permi, ginavideo nako akong routine, ginapakita nako sa iyaha if tama ba ang akong pagperform.

I always being followed up by my coach, I took a video of my routine then I sent it to him if I did it correctly. [IDI_02]

And finally, FGD_05 disclosed,

Dili daw maluya, strong daw dapat.

I was told not to get weak; I should be strong all the time.

This implies that coaches play a main role in leading student-athletes and sports teams. Their objective is to lead and assist athletes to enhance athletic abilities, gain the best athletic achievement, as well as maintain peak athletic performance for as long as possible. They deal primarily with matters relating to

people- the athletes. Whether it is during the training, living, interpersonal, or competition related, everything must be taken care of, because these are possible factors that could affect performance.

The coach-athlete relationship, according to the literature, implies a mutual and causal interconnection of their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors based on their closeness (i.e., emotional attachment), commitment (i.e., their intention to maximize their athletic relationship), complementarity (i.e., cooperative interactions), and co-orientation (i.e., empathic understanding). The current study's findings, in particular, confirm the literature demonstrating that athlete-coach relationships in individual sports are tighter, more devoted, and more complementing than those in team sports (Wachsmuth & Jowett, 2020).

Moreover, when athletes feel that their coaches are receptive and care for them holistically, they may be more likely to report injuries, mental health concerns, and other difficulties that they may be facing,” the authors wrote. Consistently checking in with athletes, truly listening, and responding empathetically to their concerns helps communicate to the athletes that their health is a priority (Anderson, 2021).

Finally, coaches have been shown to have significant influence over shaping their athletes’ cognitions, emotions, and behaviors, given their frequent interactions on a daily basis. Further empirical inquiries found additional connections regarding the instrumental role of the coach in how gratitude functions for athletes. It was found that higher trait gratitude resulted in greater levels of self-esteem, only when the athlete had higher trust in their coach. In a similar fashion, gratitude negatively predicted experiential avoidance (i.e., an attempt to avoid or escape unpleasant or uncomfortable thoughts, emotions, sensations, or experiences) when perceived coach autonomy support is high, but not when coach support was low. Autonomy support is defined as “the attitude and practices of a person ... that facilitate the target individual’s self-organization and self-regulation of actions and experience”. While this interaction only explained a small percentage of the variance, it acknowledges the breadth of factors related to gratitude within the performance setting (Chen & Wu, 2016).

N. Developing Self-discipline

No matter what sports you play, be it basketball, soccer, volleyball, or even gymnastics, you will come to realize that discipline is one of the most essential keys to succeeding as an athlete. Based from the narratives shared by student-athletes during the FGD and IDI, it was disclosed by all of them that self-discipline is the key to achieving goals as an athlete. IDI-01 shared that he kept doing best during his training to develop self-discipline and maintain body strength.

According to him,

Magtraining ug maayu para madevelop ang self-discipline ug mamahimong lig on ang lawas.

Doing the training very well to develop self-discipline and to strengthen my body.

Moreover, another participant also shared how discipline is important this time of pandemic. Within this thought FGD_03 straightforwardly said,

Displinahon ang sarili para sa kalambuan sa kaugalingon.

I need to discipline myself for my self-improvement.

On the other hand, FGD_04 without hesitation she uttered about her experiences as student-athlete. How she hurdled the challenges physical and emotionally in doing the training at home. She revealed that:

Disiplinahon ang sarili tapos maningakamot gyud ug maayu.

Discipline one’s self and strive hard.

From the viewpoint of the student-athletes it was manifested how self-discipline is significant to their self-development. Furthermore, if you ask any successful athlete about their road to success, the first thing they'll say is, discipline and how it has worked and paved the road for them to be where they are right now. Rightly so, discipline is an essential foundation for any sport. So, when one decides to play any sport, they should come with a prepared mindset to accommodate discipline in their lives. This is clearly the root to being a successful athlete.

It is also anticipated that motivated athletes with a capacity for change and enough psychological support will make the decision to change. The players will then seek to apply the modification in the relevant dimensions of their sporting participation. Athletes will feel in charge and take responsibility for beginning the change when the change is implemented. As a result, they will be more positive about the outcome of the transition process. Samuel (2019).

Furthermore, Athletes can use adaptive coping strategies to effectively deal with uncertainty, such as (a) instrumental support from coaches, fitness trainers, and nutritionists, (b) emotional support from family, friends, and consultants, (c) making action plans and taking direct actions to improve their physical and psychological well-being, and (d) increasing their efforts to be open to new experiences and vent their negative emotions. Athletes might also choose to disregard the uncertain times and withdraw from sports participation (Khanna, 2020).

O. Maintaining Physical Fitness

Physical fitness is a general state of health and well-being, and more specifically, the ability to perform aspects of sports. Being fit doesn't mean being a champion in a particular discipline, or having muscles that pop out from clothes, being fit means living healthy and accordingly being a happy person. Physical fitness is generally achieved through a correct nutrition and a regular training activity. The benefits for being fit are countless, not only the training and the healthy diet will help you to achieve a good body, but it will also clean your mind and make you happier and more relaxed. Further, physical fitness leads to better athletic performance, and persistent training which usually develop physical fitness. From the participants' perspective it gleaned several points of view on matter of fitness. They have revealed how they were able to maintain fitness during the time of pandemic to overcome challenges on both physical and mental aspect.

IDI_06 stressed out,

Nag self-training ko sa balay para in case mabalik ang face to face dili kaayu mabag uhan akong lawas, pero dili gyud kaayu siya totally maka move gyud kay dili man gyud dako ang space.

I do self-training at home, just in case when it will go back to normal, I will not find it hard to perform the routine. But it's really hard because the space is not enough.

IDI_07 also shared,

Nanangkamot na lang ko ug training maski ako ra isa sa balay.

I just persevere and continue doing the training even at home.

According to IDI_05 she was very optimistic in sharing her training workout at home. She even added that she also has time to pray and do training as well.

Sa panahon sa pandemic, nahadnlle nako ang sitwasyon, kay naga ampo ko maski dili sa church ug naga training pud ko sa balay, sa mga basic footwork.

During the time of pandemic, I was able to handle it because we still pray even though it is not being done at the church. In my training, I do exercise that basic footwork.

From the lens of the participants, it was undeniably noted that maintaining physical fitness in the midst of pandemic is significant to them as student-athlete. Daily conditioning training may also help to reduce tension and stress from home confinement as a negative life event affects the mental health of student-athletes. The abrupt change in their daily routine, the adopted home confinement measures, and uncertainty about the date for the return to activities can lead athletes to experience conditions that affect their mental health; such as external sources of distress, including financial problems, bad daily news, and internal sources of distress, such as worry about their performance when they return, and tension due to the routine change.

Moreover, a conditioning routine can help athletes to boost and maintain immunity, minimize the effects of detraining, and facilitate the return to a normal routine, as well as improving tactical knowledge. In addition, attention to the mental health and dietary habits of athletes is needed in this period of home confinement. Strength and conditioning professionals, teams, and athletes who are able to adopt these measures will experience less difficulty when returning to their normal training and competition routines (Andrade, 2019).

In this sense, to deal with these possible emotional concerns during the home confinement, coaches, strength and conditioning coaches, and athletes should pay attention to identifying and managing these experiences and seeking help and social support when necessary. Relaxation techniques, such as meditation, mindfulness, body scan, and deep breathing, are also recommended (Brandt, 2019).

P. Setting Positive Attitude

Serious athletes devote hours to conditioning, honing skills, perfecting techniques for their particular sport, and practice, practice, practice. And it's true that physical training—and inherent talent—can take an athlete far. But another necessary part of maximizing your athletic potential is having the right attitude.

From the responses of the participants, it was clearly manifested that setting positive attitude during this time of pandemic helped them in a way that they were able to practice and do the home training workout. It also helped their physical and mental state to be more active and alert. Though there were some student-athletes shared their difficulty in achieving total fitness but on the side, they are still optimistic they can get through it.

According to FGD_01 articulated that,

Naa koy worry gamay, pero kabalo ko nga dili madugay mawala ra ning covid unya makapadayun ko ug training sa gawas para makaabot nako ang akong gitinguha isip atleta.

I worry a bit, but I am certain that this too shall pass, and then I will start doing my training again outside for me to achieved my goal as an athlete.

IDI_04 also added,

Maningkamot ang sila sa ilahang training, kay dili man permente si covid, mawala ra gihapon ni, mabalik ra ta sa normal.

Just kept trying during the training, because this will not be permanent everything will end and we can still go back to normal.

FGD_05 mentioned as well that,

Dili muundang ug training para mahimong successful.

Do not stop from doing the training to become successful.

These manifestations showed that people with a good mindset think in a more flexible and innovative manner. When presented with a difficulty, they can discover answers fast, allowing them to have a broad and flexible cognitive style and the capacity to integrate numerous aspects.

In addition to broadening, one's mindset, positive emotions can help build and utilize valuable resources to achieve positive outcomes. For example, experiencing the emotion of hope during times of trial may inspire one to draw upon one's strengths during a difficult situation. Consider the challenge of acquiring a new skill in sport; maintaining a positive attitude or bringing humor into the situation may increase "stick-with-it-ness" throughout the challenging process (Wagstaff & Leach, 2015).

Therefore, it is not enough to say that successful people happen to experience more positive emotions, but rather that experiencing positive emotions can, in fact, lead to greater success. It was reported that positive emotions can have an "undoing" effect on negative emotions, even to the point of improving physical health as well as psychological well-being. Researchers found that when people experience positive emotion immediately following a high activation negative emotion (eliciting a physiological response), the cardiovascular system tends to recover more quickly. Athletes may experience an amalgam of positive and negative thoughts and emotions within the context of performance. Therefore, combatting negative self-talk with more positive, productive thoughts may have an enhancing effect on performance and general athlete well-being (Tugade, 2020).

Q. Asking Family Support

Gleaned from the participants' view, they narrated the importance of their family during their training at home. All of them expressed ideas of getting support from their family brought about the challenges of this pandemic as they thrive to continue doing the training.

Seemingly, IDI_01 narrated that,

Ginatabangan ko sa akong pamilya sa panahon sa akong training, gina encourage ko nila, ginabawalan ko maggawas sa balay kay basin matakdan ko.

I was supported by my parents during my training they did encourage me, they didn't allow me to go out I might be infected with the virus.

On the other hand, FGD_01 and FGD_02 shared the same thoughts about family support.

According to FGD_01 she said that,

Gina encourage ko nila, kay para ma maintain nako akong endurance sa dula.

I am being encouraged by my family in order for me to maintain my endurance during the game.

FGD_02 added that,

Gina motivate ko nila.

I was being motivated by my family.

IDI_04 also disclosed that,

Supportive akong parents sa akong pagtraining maski sa balay lang, ug wala ako nila ginapugos, kay kapuyon man ko.

My parents were supportive of me during my training even if I am just at home. And they don't even pressure me to do the training.

IDI_07 also noted that,

Akong mga ginikanan very supportive sa akong dula, mao nga maski ginakapoy nako, mawala na ug gana, padayun gihapon ko.

My parents were very supportive in my sports, though sometimes I felt so tired and lost my interest, I still need to continue.

Participants expressed appreciation for, and acknowledged, unique types of assistance to create a feeling of normalcy and regularity during a difficult and uncertain time, which resulted in familial reunification. Family support plays a major role in their quest in achieving their goals in becoming excellent athlete. The love of their family is a manifestation of great bond between student-athletes and other family members that lifted their spirits as they overcome obstacles in the both physical and mental state brought about by this predicament.

Undoubtedly, parents' influence on a child's involvement in sports and physical activity is significant. As the demands of youth sports participation have become more complex and competitive, so has the role of a parent become more difficult. It is usually parents who provide the first opportunity for their child to take up a sport. They also have significant influence on a child's decision on continuing or quitting a sport at some later point in time. On one hand, parental help seems to be very important bringing their child to a training session, supporting them during competition, motivating them when discouraged, providing them with feedback or sharing a child's success and progress in sports, even up to this time of pandemic the support of family is undeniable (Knight, 2010).

In contrast, as children enter adolescence, they desire more mature interactions with their peers, as well as independence from parents and older people. At this age, coaches become increasingly active in the child's sports development, while parents become less involved in the giving of sporting guidance. However, parents must continue to provide emotional support to their children in order for them to cope with the barriers and problems that are anticipated to arise during the COVID-19 epidemic. The impact of government-mandated behavior modification requirements during COVID-19 occurs at a critical juncture for children in late childhood and early adolescent who are undergoing deep psychological and socioemotional transition (Orben, 2020).

R. Fostering Teamwork

The strength of the whole team lies within the hands of every member. Simultaneously, the ultimate strength of individual members is the team itself. This is true for any sports team. To achieve success, it's important to foster teamwork. Further, sports allow people to learn teamwork and experience succeed-or-fail situations in a safe environment. With each failure comes a lesson, and with every success comes confidence. In addition to healthy physical activity sports provide athletes opportunities to learn life lessons and what it means to be part of something greater than themselves. Through sports, your child will not only learn about teamwork, they will learn the skills necessary to foster it.

These were some of the statements given by participants from IDI and FGD. They narrated as to how important teamwork in the team even though trainings were conducted at home. FGD_01 disclosed that even at home, they are still connected with her team mates. She mentioned that,

Magsige ug panawag ug videocall kung nag unsa ko sa balay, naga training ba ko. Tapos exchange ug ideas.

My teammates kept on calling me asking what I am doing in our house if I am doing the training or not and we also exchange ideas.

According to FGD_04 she also shared how collaboration and teamwork were manifested in their team. She even divulged that her team were having fun while exchanging messages and videos.

Saba kaayu me sa GC, laban lang daw gihapon, walay muatras.

We are having fun in our group chat as we exchange ideas, we kept supporting each other and no one will quit.

FGD_06 and FGD_07 shared without hesitations that their teammates helped and encouraged one another. If someone is about to quit during training, they have to do the videocalls just to lift the spirit of their teammates.

FGD_06 elucidated that,

Tinabangay me, labi na ug lisud na kaayu ang training, mag video call para makita, suportahay.

We kept supporting each other during our home training, we do videocall sometimes for us to see each other.

FGD_07 also shared her experienced that,

Kadtong niingon ko muundang nako, kay naluya sila, mao nga wala na lang ko niinundang, padayun gihapon.

The time that I told my teammates that I will quit they were upset of me, that is why I did not quit instead I just continue.

In summary, the student-athletes believed that fostering teamwork even in the midst of pandemic is uplifting in their part. A team without teamwork will never achieve success. Without teamwork, nothing can be achieved as a group. Respecting alternative player opinions and valuing teammate's contributions to strategies and tactics helps to create team cohesion. Teamwork foster creativity among team members. Teamwork can also help raise the morale of team. When players play as a team, win or lose, it can still be an agreeable and positive experience for everyone. Team's cooperation maximizes strengths and minimize weakness. Work is a lot of fun when we working as team.

Moreover, engaging in high school sports has a large social aspect for the adolescent population as engagement, especially in team settings, has shown to build skillsets in communication, leadership, peer relationships, empathy, conflict resolution, as well as facilitate athletes to bond with other teammates, engage in personal growth/development, and refine their social identity; all of which are crucial for emotional and social health development (Cuff & Logan, 2019).

Accordingly, higher classified athletes favored cooperative/shared programming (e.g., athlete and coach input) and were more open to remote training/coaching, indicating that this was (at least in part) beneficial. As a result, while we recognize the need of keeping fitness and physical attributes during lockdown, it is evident that emotional and motivational components, as well as training safety, require consideration as well (Pillay, 2019).

S. *Updating and Communicating with the Teacher*

Communication was a process of expression, interaction, and influence. In this process, individuals interacted with other individuals through similar expressions to affect their cognition, emotions, and behaviors. During the lockdown, teachers and coaches had to rely on online education and video methods to teach. This allowed students and coaches and teachers to switch from face-to-face communication to video communication, which was a change in the communication medium.

Online education did not limit the time and space of video communication between students, teachers and coaches, which made the communication space and communication time between them change. For the teacher to express communication content through video more clearly, the way of expression also changed. At the same time, due to the prolonged lockdown, the mentality of teachers, coaches and students changed.

As shown in Table 5, the participants believed that updating and communicating to teacher during the time of pandemic is significant. This allows open communication to both to share and to give updates on module submission and many other which concerns student-athletes training and home workout. These are some of their remarks:

According to IDI_01 he exposed that,

Padayun lang bisag lisud kaayu ang panahon, muabot ra man ang panahon ng mabalik ra ang tanan sa normal.

Just keep going even though the time is very difficult, time will come when everything will return to normal.

This was also noted by IDI_04 he uttered that,

Akong mga teachers kay dako pud sila ug tabang, kay wala ud nila ginalisud lisud sa amoang modules, maski dugay me makasabmit, kay kabalo man sila, nagatraining pud me.

My teachers have a big help to my training and even to my academics, they never pressure us to submit modules for they know we find it hard to submit because of our trainings on our sports.

IDI_06 also added that,

Ginasabot ko sa akong mga teachers permi, labi na dugay makasubmit sa module. Gina encourage ko nila nga muapdayun lang gyud.

My teachers kept on understanding me, even if I submitted my modules late. They also encouraged me to continue my training.

The role of the teacher assumes a different shape in times of crisis. The teachers will helped lighten the load of the student-athletes as they thrive to continue both the academic and sports training. Moreover, teacher should possess an attitude of being understanding so as not discouraged the student-athletes in doing their best physically and mentally (Al-shinawi, 2016).

In addition to professional educational help, instructors offered moral and psychological support to students-athletes, which was perceived significantly less frequently than that supplied by coaches. When it comes to the educational function of coaches, there is a need for rigorous collaboration between instructors and coaches in order to assist dual-career players in pursuing both academic and athletic pathways (Publications Office of the European Union, 2020).

T. Insights on Physical and Mental Health Challenges of Student-Athletes in the Midst of Pandemic

From the data collected on the third question, there were five (5) main themes which emerged from the responses as shown on Table 3 such as (1) anxiety and nervousness, (2) lack of self-confidence, (3) develop persistence and perseverance, (4) provide training and facility support and (5) pursue dreams and aspirations.

Theme	Core Ideas
Develop Persistence and Perseverance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn so much from pandemic. • Learn a lot of things and persevere even the training is done at home. • Learn so much during the time of pandemic especially from physical and mental health. • Govern by the motto “Don’t Give Up”.
Provide Training and Facility Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope to be provided by support such as supplies and equipment • Look for the welfare of the athlete by providing the needs to continue the training. • Suggest to provide equipment and to conduct psychological health and wellness seminar. • Conduct online training for athletes. • Conduct virtual competition.
Pursue Dreams and Aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dream to play in the Palarong Pambansa to get silver medal. • Improve as an athlete, love the sports, persevere to reach the dream. • Be one of the professional athletes someday. Try hard to fulfill the dreams and aspirations in order to help the family

Table 3: Major Themes and Core Ideas on Insights on the Physical and Mental Health Challenges of Student-Athletes in the Midst of Pandemic

U. Develop Persistence and Perseverance

Perseverance, also called persistence or effort, can be described as behavior such as pushing through challenges, refusing to quit, and continuing high amounts of pressure over a long period. Perseverance reflects consistency in achieving one’s goals and not giving up when faced with challenges or overcoming adversity it was found as well a strong relationship between more mentally tough individuals and high levels of behavioral perseverance.

The responses of the participants of in-depth interview and focus group discussion is a clear manifestation that most of the student-athletes developed persistence and perseverance in the midst of pandemic. FGD_01 shared her experiences as to the different learnings she developed from the training. She disclosed that,

Dghan kaayu ko ug nakat unan, kinahanglan gyud ta magpursige ug maningkamot para sa atoang kaugmaon.

I have learned so much from the pandemic that is why I persevere most of the time.

IDI_02 and IDI_03 uttered with confidence and pride on their experiences during their training at home.

IDI_02 answered straightforward that,

Dgahn ko nakat unan, dapat maningkamot ka, maski ikaw ra isa naga training, dapat naa kay focus para dili malimtan ang mga basic skills.

I learned a lot of things, you should persevere even if you are the only one doing the training, give much focus so as not to forget the basic skills.

IDI_03 also added that,

Daghan ko nahibal an sa panahon sa training sa pandemic, sa kaong pisikal ug mental. Dili nako kinahangalan nga pasagdan kay tungod ako ra gihapon ang magsuffer.

I have so much learning during this time of pandemic, especially in my physical and mental health. I should not take it for granted, because I am the only one who will suffer from it.

Finally, IDI_06 expressed wholeheartedly how persistence is significant in midst of pandemic. She articulated without reluctances that,

Kaning motto nga “Don’t give up. Mao ni akong guiding principle, tungod sa time nga nibaba akong kumpanyansa sa akong sarili mao nga nipadayun gihapon ko.

I am always guide with the motto “Don’t give up! This is my guiding principle when the time I almost lost my confidence to continue playing my sports.

The participants responses proved that persistence and perseverance is the key to self-fulfillment. They may have struggled much during their training in physical and mental aspects, but they were able to thrive and remain resilient on their chosen sports amidst the predicament brought by COVID-19.

Grit includes the psychological qualities of resilience, ambition, conscientiousness, endurance, and self-control, as well as two components of continuous persistence toward long-term accomplishment and constancy of interest. Gritty people are more self-controlled and will keep a good attitude throughout time despite failure, difficulty, and growth plateaus. Subsequent research has found favorable relationships between grit and mental well-being, as well as good associations between grit and emotional stability amid stressful or unpleasant life events, as well as negative associations between grit and perceived stress (Kannangara, 2018).

In addition, one of the two key components of grit is perseverance toward a goal, which is essential for adopting healthy behaviors. Conscientiousness, as evaluated by grit, is strongly connected to perseverance. The invest-and-acquire model of conscientiousness proposes that persons with high levels of conscientiousness invest in behaviors that allow for future success; in other words, conscientious people will invest in actions that will improve their future health (Hill & Jackson, 2016).

V. Provide Training and Facility Support

Evidence demonstrates that sports participation may protect against mental health symptoms and disorders. Student-athletes physical activity such as training, workouts and other skills related practices has been shown to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. The restriction of sports participation may therefore have a detrimental impact to young people’s mental health and well-being, with periods of inactivity; isolation from athletic teams; distance from the athletic community; less qualified interactions with athletic coaches; and lack of social support having been shown to cause emotional distress and psychological disorders in athletes.

As such participants express their thoughts by sharing that the Department of Education in this time of pandemic should provide equipment, supplies and materials to all student-athletes to be used during their trainings at home. Not all of the students-athletes has the capacity to provide their own equipment. Moreover, they should also conduct virtual activities that allows them participate such as virtual competition and even psychological health and wellness seminar. These are the following answers of the respondents:

IDI_01 cited that,

Hinaut nga musuporta sila sa amoa isip mga atleta, mag supply sila ug equipment para makapadayun me ug training mask isa balay lang.

I just hope that they will support us as an athlete, by providing as supply and equipment for us to continue our training at home.

IDI_02 also expressed that,

Tan awon sa DepEd unsa ang kakulangan sa mga atleta, para mapadayun gihapon ang training maski pandemic.

The DepEd should look the welfare of the athlete by providing our needs for us to continue our training at home.

Likewise, IDI_06 also mentioned,

Masuggest nako, nga moprovide sila ug equipment, tapos magconduct sila ug psychological health and wellness seminar.

What I can suggest is that they provide equipment and they will also conduct psychological health and wellness seminar.

On the other hand, FGD_03 and FGD_04 likewise mentioned some points.

According to FGD_03 he cited that,

Magconduct ug mga online training sa mga athlete.

To conduct online training for athletes.

FGD_04 also added that,

Naa gihapon competiton bahala ug virtual.

They will conduct competition if its virtual.

From the statements expressed by the participants it was emphasized what are the different needs of the student-athletes in the midst of pandemic that must be addressed by the teachers, coaches and Department of Education as a whole.

In addition to professional educational help, instructors offered moral and psychological support to students-athletes, which was perceived significantly less frequently than that supplied by coaches. When it comes to the educational function of coaches, there is a need for rigorous collaboration between instructors and coaches in order to assist dual-career athletes in following both academic and sport pathways. Indeed, mostly international-level athletes reported particular dual-career help in the form of psychological counseling and tutoring. This is hardly unexpected given that eligibility for dual-career programs is frequently restricted to elite athletes (Capranica & Guidotti, 2016).

According to Samuel (2020), in order for athletes to effectively cope with the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, they could use adaptive coping strategies such as (a) relevant support from coaches, fitness trainers, and nutritionists, (b) emotional and psychological support from family, friends, and consultants, (c) making action plans and taking direct actions to improve their physical and psychological well-being, and (d) being open to new e-learning opportunities.

W. Pursue Dreams and Aspirations

The participants of the study believed that every individual aspires to achieve something. As a student-athletes, they hold onto a plethora of aspirations and ambitions. Over time, only a few of their aspirations and dreams remain intact, and they need to work hard to achieve them. It is highly important to have a goal or dream in your life as it motivates you to achieve them. Dreams are essential as, without them, you will not have the motivation or determination to move forward in life. Some kids aspire to become a pilot, some dancer, or a musician. However, to achieve these dreams, one has to stay attentive and work hard. Your goals provide you the strength to face obstacles and motivate you towards achievement.

These were some of the statements made by the participants that revealed their realization about their dreams and aspirations as student-athletes.

IDI_05 narrated that,

Ang akong pangandoy kay makadula ko sa Palarong Pambansa ug maka kuha ug Silver Medal. Dili ko gusto mahimong propesyonal nga atlet sa badminton, kay gusto nako mahimong doctor puhon.

My dream is to play in the Palarong Pambansa and just to get silver medal. I don't want to become a professional badminton player, because I want to become a Doctor someday.

IDI_06 also expressed that,

Maimprove lang ko as an athlete, dili lang mawad an ug gana. Love nako akong sports, mao nga maningkamot ko unsa ang makaya nako makab ot.

I have simple dream just for me to improve as an athlete. I love my sports that is why I will persevere until I can reach my dream.

Furthermore, IDI_01 pronounced that,

Mahimo ko nga propesyonal nga atleta someday, maningakamo ko nag makab aot nako akong mga damgo ug pangandoy sa kinabuhi, para makatabang ko sa akong pamilya.

I can be one of the professional athletes someday. I will try hard to fulfill my dreams and aspirations in life as an athlete for me to help my family.

The results disclosed that student-athletes believed that amidst the challenges brought about by COVID-19 that affected much their physical and mental state. They still have a strong feeling that something good will happen to them as an athlete.

Athletes who have a performance-oriented goal-setting style are likely to define success in terms of their own improvement and learning. As a result, they are likely to set challenging goals with the primary aim being to increase their own competence. In addition, if they experience failure in their goal striving athletes are likely to remain focused and to develop problem-solving skills in order to continue making progress toward their objectives. Athletes with this style would be expected to prioritize process goals, followed by performance, and then outcome goals in the pursuit of their dreams and aspirations (Healy, 2018).

Moreover, active planning, cognitive restructuring and emotional calming were dominant coping strategies that surfaced. Athletes focused on looking into the good that can come out of the bad situation, learning something new, and modifying their goals. Blocking their negative thoughts by being preoccupied with important tasks to do helped them keep a positive mindset and counter the lack of productivity (Iancheva, 2020).

Finally, goals are a reminder to keep going when things get tough, and they promote flexibility and creativity in solving problems. While there are never guarantees that we will meet our goals, it is a coach's job to help athletes remember that the journey itself will bring life more meaning. In what might seem like an impossible timeline to work with, goals will help break down uncertainty into smaller bite-sized pieces. These smaller goals can help reduce athletes' anxiety and feelings of uncertainty, as well as increase motivation, feelings of control, and enjoyment. Coaches can work with their athletes to set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) goals. Goals should be related to things an athlete can actually work on right now considering their situation and should focus on what they hope to accomplish when things get back to normal (Martin, 2021).

CHAPTER 7

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations in order to support the student-athletes in the midst of pandemic in dealing with physical and mental health challenges:

- Provide choices for physical exercise programs using synchronous internet platforms that allow for user participation and body language monitoring.
- Share and disseminate free or low-cost fitness apps, websites, or YouTube channels with adolescents to encourage physical exercise.
- Schools should make it easier for students to seek help from teachers.
- Schools should include mental health and wellness programs.
- Peer support initiatives should be developed in schools and sports groups.
- Youth should be informed about mental health services and supports, as well as how to obtain them.
- Teachers and school leaders, as well as parents and coaches, should use social media to provide information to children.

CHAPTER 8

PLANS FOR DISSEMINATION AND ADVOCACY

The key audiences for this research were the student-athletes, school heads, the teachers, parents and policy makers. The present undertaking was of interest to the school heads and teachers being the ones who handle the student-athletes in their respective school. The policy makers who are the ones who institutionalizes guidelines in sports management.

To ensure that the benefits of the present research was maximized, I observed the following strategy for disseminating the findings of the study. Firstly, the participants were given informed consent wherein the full purpose of this study was disclosed to them. Moreover, the participants were given a copy of the findings of this study.

In addition, this research undergone the various phases of scrutiny from the Division's Research Committee before the actual commence of the study. In addition to this written feedback, face to face interaction was used as one of the means for disseminating findings of this study. I intend to include the following: participation of different research fora Division and Regional levels included. I also consider submitting my manuscript for regional publication in the division and regional research journals. Moreover, I also crafted and submit a policy brief aligned with my research findings.

These strategies allowed a broad coverage of the dissemination to multiple audiences. More researches employing qualitative study also be explored to deepen understanding on the student-athletes physical and mental challenges in the midst of pandemic.

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COST ESTIMATES

Tranche	Deliverables	Activity	Materials Needed	Qty.	Unit Price	Amount
First	1. Work plan	Draft Work plan	a. Office supplies			24,000
	2. Data collection methods	Draft Research Method	bond paper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A4 • Legal • Short 	5 reams 5 reams 5 reams	3,750	
	3. Data collection instruments	Create interview guide	Printer Ink (4 colors/set)	1 sets	1,200	
			Printer	1 pc	7,500	
			CDRW	1 pc	30	
			Photocopy	640 copies	950	
			Art Materials		1,500	
			Speaker	1 unit	2,000	
	4. Initial findings and analysis	Conduct the study Conduct FGD and IDI Meals and snacks, travel and other incidental expenses	1 1TB External Drive	1 pc	5,000	
			Sliding folder	10 pcs	100	
			Ballpen	2 pcs	150	
					1,820	