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The Role Analysis of Student-Athletes: Basis for an Intervention Plan

Michelle Bangoy[1], Jermel R. Diaz[2], Shirley Delmo[3]

[1,2,3] Arellano University

Corresponding Email: michelle.bangoy@arellano.edu.ph, jermel.diaz@arellano.edu.ph, shirley.delmo@arellano.edu.ph

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the role of student-athletes in identifying the key challenges affecting their athletic, academic, social, and personal responsibilities at Arellano University. The study explored how student-athletes perceive and manage their multiple roles, highlighting the tension between Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia, which emphasizes the pursuit of a meaningful and flourishing life, and Kantian duty, which underscores responsibility, structure, and moral obligation. While athletic participation provides opportunities for personal growth and excellence, it also carries external expectations from coaches, institutions, families, and cultural norms. Employing a descriptive research methodology, the study described, documented, analyzed, and interpreted the current conditions to determine how student-athletes balance their academic, athletic, social, and personal responsibilities and the strategies they employ to maintain equilibrium. Findings indicate that student-athletes prioritize education while navigating rigorous athletic demands, yet many experience burnout and role conflict, particularly when attempting to fulfill the expectations of being students, athletes, and friends simultaneously. Emotional support from peers, family, and teammates emerged as a key factor in maintaining well-being, although challenges in managing academic and athletic stress remain. To cope, student-athletes often utilize strategies such as open communication with professors, coaches, and peers. The study recommends that student-athletes engage consistently in proactive communication, make use of academic support services, and leverage institutional resources to improve mental health, academic flexibility, and holistic development. These measures aim to foster a balanced, integrated, and successful student-athlete experience, promoting both personal growth and academic achievement.

Keywords: *Academic responsibilities, athletic responsibilities, social responsibilities, and intervention plan.*

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INTRODUCTION

Athletic involvement is often celebrated for promoting physical excellence, discipline, and resilience. However, the athlete's role in contemporary society extends beyond the playing field—encompassing academic responsibilities, social expectations, institutional commitments, and personal development. This complex role composition frequently gives rise to role strain, identity conflict, and psychological exhaustion, particularly among student-athletes. Understanding and analyzing the multifaceted nature of the athlete's role is thus a prerequisite for developing informed, sustainable interventions.

From a philosophical perspective, the life of a student-athlete reflects the tension between Aristotle's eudaimonia, emphasizing a flourishing and meaningful life, and Kantian duty, stressing responsibility and moral obligation. While athletics offers personal growth and achievement, external expectations from coaches, institutions, families, and culture create challenges in balancing athletic, academic, social, and personal responsibilities. Pursuing eudaimonia promotes long-term well-being through education and personal development, while Kantian duty emphasizes fulfilling obligations. Existentialist ideas from Sartre and Kierkegaard highlight the need to create meaning despite external pressures. Successfully harmonizing these roles demonstrates philosophical integration, resulting in holistic growth and a meaningful life. These roles requires deliberate reflection, disciplined decision-making, and effective strategies, demonstrating that the ability to integrate ethical responsibility, personal growth, and practical demands is a hallmark of holistic development and a meaningful, balanced life.

The need for a role analysis becomes urgent when we consider the growing body of evidence highlighting athlete burnout, academic underperformance, mental health crises, and early career termination. Prior research has documented the prevalence of inter-role conflict in athletes—where academic, athletic, and social demands clash—resulting in emotional exhaustion and decreased motivation Sorkkila, M., Aunola, K., & Ryba, T. V. (2017).). A nuanced understanding of the athlete's role—shaped by internal identity and external obligations—must therefore underpin any proposed intervention strategy. This paper adopts role analysis as the foundation for a proposed intervention plan. The aim is to design practical, evidence-based strategies that address role conflict, promote well-being, and support sustainable performance. Grounded in psychological, sociological, and philosophical literature, this study intends not only to identify the pressures athletes face but also to honor their human complexity—offering support that respects their autonomy, growth, and long-term flourishing. Without proper interventions, this multi-role conflict can lead to burnout, identity diffusion, reduced performance, and early withdrawal from sport (Sorkkila, M., Aunola, K., & Ryba,
T. V. (2025). Therefore, a role-based analysis is crucial not only for understanding the athlete's experience but also for designing responsive, individualized interventions that prioritize well-being, autonomy, and long-term development.

Student-athletes face the dual challenge of excelling in academics while performing at high levels in their respective sports. It is vital component of holistic education in the Philippines Recognizing these unique demands, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 32, Series of 2022, titled "Policies and Guidelines for the Grant of Educational Privileges to Student-Athletes". Through this policy, CHED affirms its commitment to advancing inclusive and equitable education for all students, including those who represent their institutions in sports. The CMO also aligns with the broader objectives of Republic Act No. 10676, or the Student-Athletes Protection Act, which safeguards the rights and welfare of student-athletes across the country. With sports playing a growing role in youth development and national representation, CHED's policy marks a

significant step toward integrating athletics and academics in a balanced, supportive, and rights-based educational framework.

In institutions such as Arellano University in Manila, sports programs play a significant role in shaping student experiences and identities. However, student-athletes often face the challenge of balancing rigorous academic demands alongside intensive training and competition schedules, creating a complex interplay of roles that can lead to psychological stress and performance pressures. Recognizing this gap, Arellano University, with its growing sports program, is positioned to pioneer an evidence-based intervention framework informed by a thorough role analysis of its athletes. This study seeks to examine the multiple roles occupied by student-athletes, identify sources of role strain and conflict, and develop a practical intervention plan that promotes mental health, academic performance, and athletic excellence. By situating this research within the Philippine socio-cultural milieu, this study aims to contribute to the development of supportive policies and programs that respect the holistic needs of student-athletes in Manila and beyond.

Objectives

This study aims to investigate how student-athletes at Arellano University balance their athletic, academic, and personal responsibilities and how this balance affects the quality of their education.

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions::

1. What is the demographic profile of the students in terms of:

    1.1 Course;
    1.2 Age; and
    1.3 1.3 Sex
2. To what extent do student-athletes balance their athletic, academic, social, and personal responsibilities?
    2.1. Athletic responsibilities,
    2.2. Academic responsibilities,
    2.3. Social responsibilities, and
    2.4. Personal responsibilities
3. What strategies do student-athletes use to maintain balance among their various roles?
4. Based on the findings, what possible intervention Plan should be introduced based on the coping mechanisms and maintain balance among their various roles?

METHODS

Research Design

The researcher used descriptive research methodology. The current conditions are described, documented, analyzed, and interpreted as part of this design. According to Ardales (2020), descriptive research involves more than just data collection and tabulation. It entails interpreting the value or meaning of the described material. This research used a quantitative method in assessing roles of student analysis to athletic responsibilities, academic

responsibilities , social c responsibilities and personal c responsibilities.

Respondents

The respondents consisted of student-athletes enrolled at Arellano University Manila under in General Education and Liberal Arts Social Science, representing various sports disciplines. A purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample. Forty Five (45) were the actual respondents student-athletes (ages 18–24), ensuring representation across gender, sport type, and academic year. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained in accordance with ethical guidelines.

Data Analysis

Descriptive quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, to identify in assessing roles of student analysis to athletic responsibilities, academic responsibilities , social c responsibilities and personal c responsibilities . The descriptive method will used to present the frequency distribution, percentage and mean. Statistical analyses were performed with SPSS version 25.

Research Instrument

The survey instrument consists of three parts; demographic profile, the strategies used to balanced the role of the students athlete and understanding the strategies used to balanced role. The first part deals with the demographic profile of the respondents such as age, gender, and course/year. The second part contains the items on the student's athlete balance their role which were classified into eleven (4) areas. These are: academic, athletic, social, and personal responsibilities. The third part of the questionnaire solicited the strategies student-athletes use to maintain balance among their various roles.

Validation of Instrument

The researchers instrument designed to assess the athletic responsibilities, academic responsibilities, social responsibilities, personal responsibilities, and the strategies student-athletes use to maintain balance among their various roles. After crafting, the researchers asked three (3) Physical Education (PE) teachers, who are considered experts in sports education and student-athlete development, reviewed the questionnaire. The validators assessed the tool in terms of content relevance, wording clarity, item organization, and overall suitability for student-athletes. It was followed validation using responses from 30 student-athletes of San Juan City Academic Senior High School not included in the actual respondents. To determine the internal consistency and reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's Alpha was computed. The overall reliability coefficient obtained was 0.90, which is considered excellent based on standard reliability indices. This indicates that the items in the questionnaire are highly consistent and measure the intended constructs effectively. Thus, the instrument is deemed valid, reliable, and appropriate for use in the full-scale data gathering for the study.

Ethical Consideration

This study received approval from the Arellano University Research Ethics Committee. Confidentiality and

anonymity were assured, and respondents were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Population

A total of 45 student-athletes from Arellano University, Manila Philippines, participated in the study. These athletes were enrolled in the following academic programs: Bachelor of Science in Criminology (n=6) Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (n=5), Bachelor of Science in Tourism (n=6) Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (n=8) Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (n=7) , Bachelor of Education (n=6) , Bachelor of Education (n=5) and Bachelor of Science in Nursing(n=2). All them were enrolled in the university under 1st semester. Other schools are not included in the study and parents are not involved.

Data were collected from 45 student-athletes enrolled in Arellano University with a gender distribution of 26 Males (57.8%) and 19 Females (42.2%). Participants represented a variety of sports, including basketball (n=12), Volleyball (n=10), Taekwondo (n=4), Track Field (n=4), Swimming (n=7), and others (n=8). The average Age of respondents was 19.8 years.

Table 1

Respondents' Assessment of Athletic Responsibilities

A. Athletic Responsibilities	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. I am able to maintain a consistent training routine without it interfering with other responsibilities	3.67	Agree
2. I regularly get enough sleep to support my athletic performance.	3.40	Agree
3. I am supported by my coaches towards academic commitments.	3.91	Agree
4. I stay on track with assignments even during peak sports seasons.	3.44	Agree
5. I have enough time to recover after practices and competitions.	3.46	Agree
6. I am confident balancing my roles as a student and an athlete.	3.58	Agree
7. I experience burnout from the demands of my sport.	4.16	Agree
8. I can communicate effectively with coaches about my limits and needs.	3.53	Agree
9. I am in control of my training schedule and workload.	3.42	Agree
10. I am satisfied with how I manage my athletic responsibilities alongside other demands.	3.60	Agree
Grand Mean	3.62	Agree

Note: 4.21 – 5.00 Strongly Agree, 3.41 – 4.20 Agree 2.61– 3.40 Neutral, 1.81 – 2.60 Disagree, 1.00 – 1.80 Strongly Disagree

Table 1 Indicates that in terms of athletic responsibilities with highest mean of 4.16 " I experience burnout from the demands of my sport" with verbal interpretation of Agree. Overall, student athlete rated themselves in terms of athletic responsibilities as Agree with a grand mean of 3.62.

This finding aligns with Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia, which emphasizes achieving well-being through a

balanced life and avoiding excess that disrupts human flourishing. When athletic commitments become overwhelming, they may hinder the balance necessary for eudaimonia (Aristotle, trans. 2019). Also, according to The data's highest mean—attributing burnout directly to the "demands of my sport"—confirms the critical first stage of Smith's model: Situational Demands. In the context of collegiate athletics, these demands are exceptionally high, encompassing rigorous daily training, extensive travel, public performance expectations, and the pressure to maintain academic eligibility. The model posits that these objective demands only become stressful based on the athlete's Cognitive Appraisal. When athletes possess limited coping resources (time, social support, energy), they are more likely to interpret these demands as overwhelming threats rather than achievable challenges. This negative, often cynical, interpretation is the point where the athlete transitions from healthy commitment to the path toward burnout. It means that supports that burnout is common among student-athletes due to performance pressures, time demands, and role strain, which can negatively affect their well-being and academic engagement (Smith, 2019).

In addition ,according to Madigan, D. J.,et al.(2023) examining the health consequences of athlete burnout, this review details mechanisms such as allostatic overload and Smith's cognitive-affective stress model, illustrating how chronic imbalance between sport demands and coping resources can result in both physical (e.g., fatigue,illness) and psychological (e.g., anxiety, depression) symptoms

Thus, burnout in athletes is not a sign of weakness—it's a response to an imbalance between demands and personal resources. Recognizing it is the first step to recovery. The issue of athlete burnout is far more than a simple state of exhaustion; it represents a profound systemic failure of balance. The initial insight, derived from Aristotle, identifies the root cause as the excess that destroys flourishing. Modern psychology and physiology then fully elaborate on the resulting mechanism: chronic imbalance leads to stress modeled by Smith's cognitive-affective process and culminates in the physical breakdown characterized by allostatic overload. This combined understanding provides a holistic view, affirming that for athletes to achieve genuine well-being, or eudaimonia, their sport must be pursued within a balanced life that supports, rather than consumes, their full human potential.

Table 2

Respondents' Assessment of Academic Responsibilities

B. Academic Responsibilities	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. I take my academic responsibilities as seriously as my athletic commitments.	4.08	Agree
2. I attend all my classes regularly, even during the sports season.	3.42	Agree
3. I set clear academic goals for myself each semester.	3.96	Agree
4. My athletics responsibilities do not hinder my academic responsibilities.	3.49	Agree
5. I complete my assignments on time, regardless of my training schedule.	3.31	Agree
6. I use academic support services (e.g., tutoring, study halls) when needed.	3.04	Neutral
7. I believe my education is more important in the long run than my athletic career.	4.60	Strongly Agree
8. I am motivated to perform well academically.	3.93	Agree
9. I find it difficult to concentrate on academics after training or games.	4.04	Agree
10. I make time to study even when my athletic schedule is demanding	3.53	Agree

Grand Mean	3.74	Agree

Note: 4.21 – 5.00 Strongly Agree, 3.41 – 4.20 Agree 2.61– 3.40 Neutral, 1.81 – 2.60 Disagree, 1.00 – 1.80 Strongly Disagree

Table 2 shows that in terms of academic responsibilities with highest mean of 4.60 "I believe my education is more important in the long run than my athletic career with verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. Overall, student athlete rated themselves in terms of athletic responsibilities as Agree with a grand mean of 3. 74.

This finding supports Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia, which emphasizes living a flourishing and well-balanced life through rational choices and long-term well-being. Prioritizing education reflects the pursuit of activities that contribute to lasting fulfillment and personal growth rather than relying solely on short-term athletic success (Aristotle, trans. 2019). Further complemented by Kantian duty, which highlights moral obligation and adherence to principles regardless of personal gain. Prioritizing education reflects both the pursuit of activities that contribute to lasting fulfillment and personal growth, as Aristotle suggests, and the commitment to fulfilling one's responsibilities as a student-athlete, as emphasized in Kantian ethics

Contemporary literature also supports that student-athletes often view academic achievement as essential for long-term stability and future career opportunities beyond sports, reinforcing the importance of maintaining academic commitment despite athletic pressures (Brown & Fletcher, 2019). Furthermore, as cited by Rodriguez et al. (2019)—via Insights into life after sport for Spanish Olympians—found that athletes who pursued dual careers combining study and sport) achieve higher education levels, transition into the labor market more smoothly, secure their first jobs sooner, and earn more than those focused solely on sport.

The assertion that a student-athlete's commitment to education aligns with Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia presents a powerful synthesis of ancient philosophy and modern vocational necessity. Eudaimonia, often translated as "flourishing" or "living well," emphasizes achieving long-term well-being through rational choice, balanced living, and the continuous cultivation of virtues. By prioritizing education, the student-athlete is engaging in a rational act that secures lasting fulfillment and personal growth, thereby embodying the Aristotelian ideal rather than succumbing to the potentially ephemeral nature of athletic successAt the core of this alignment is the distinction between transient pleasure and enduring fulfillment. For Aristotle, true well-being is not a momentary feeling but a sustained state achieved through activities that align with one's highest rational function. The pursuit of knowledge and the development of the mind, reflected in educational commitment, inherently contribute to this lasting fulfillment. Athletic success, while deeply rewarding, is susceptible to injury, career instability, and the physical limits of the human body, rendering it a potentially "short-term" source of well-being. The finding therefore suggests that the rational individual—the student-athlete—chooses the pursuit of education as the more reliable and stable path to a fully realized life, prioritizing activities that build intellectual capital over those that depend solely on physical capacity .

This interpretation successfully bridges philosophical thought and real-world necessity. The decision by student-athletes to prioritize education is not a secondary obligation, but a primary, rational choice that actively advances their long-term well-being. It validates Aristotle's core principle that a truly flourishing life is a balanced one, achieved through the diligent pursuit of lasting growth, cementing academic achievement as a fundamental component of modern eudaimonia in the collegiate athletic sphere .Thus, belief that education is more important than sport in the long run reflects: A healthy, future-focused mindset Awareness of the temporary nature of sport

alignment with best practices in athlete development and long-term well-being.

Table 3

Respondents' Assessment of Social Responsibilities

C. Social Responsibilities	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I use a planner or scheduling tool to organize my daily activities.	3.51	Agree
2. I often feel overwhelmed by my schedule.	3.52	Agree
3. I am supported by my coaches in maintaining academic success.	4.04	Agree
4. I receive emotional support from friends and family when I feel stressed.	4.07	Agree
5. I experience high levels of stress during the semester.	3.91	Agree
6. I am mentally and emotionally balanced most of the time.	3.36	Agree
7. I often struggle to balance my identity as both a student and an athlete.	3.98	Agree
8. I find it difficult to meet the expectations of all my roles (student, athlete, friend)..	4.11	Agree
9. I am that being a student-athlete limits my ability to engage in other social activities.	3.87	Agree
10. I actively seek help when I'm struggling with academic or athletic pressures.	3.82	Agree
Grand Mean	3.83	Agree

Note: 4.21 – 5.00 Strongly Agree, 3.41 – 4.20 Agree 2.61– 3.40 Neutral, 1.81 – 2.60 Disagree, 1.00 – 1.80 Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows that in terms of social responsibilities with highest mean of 4.11 "I find it difficult to meet the expectations of all my roles (student, athlete, friend)" with verbal interpretation of Agree. Overall, student athlete rated themselves in terms of social responsibilities as Agree with a grand mean of 3. 83.

This finding corresponds with Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia and is supported by research indicating that student-athletes frequently face competing role demands, which can result in stress, limited social engagement, and challenges in maintaining relationships (Wilson & Pritchard, 2019). Social role strain commonly arises when athletes try to balance academic, athletic, and interpersonal responsibilities simultaneously. These challenges underscore the importance of supportive systems that enable student-athletes to effectively manage their time and allocate emotional resources across their multiple roles. Also supported theory by Role Strain Theory (Goode, 1960) posits that individuals experience stress, tension, or conflict when trying to fulfill multiple, often competing, social roles simultaneously. For student-athletes, these roles include academic responsibilities, athletic commitments, and social obligations to friends and family. When the demands of one role interfere with another, it can lead to difficulty in meeting expectations, emotional fatigue, and reduced social engagement.

The life of a student-athlete is often romanticized as a seamless blend of intellectual rigor and athletic prowess. However, the reality, as supported by studies like those of Wilson & Pritchard (2019), reveals a profound

structural challenge: social role strain. This strain arises when the student-athlete attempts to satisfy a demanding triad of commitments—academic, athletic, and interpersonal—simultaneously. This constant, exhausting negotiation between competing identities often leads to debilitating stress, severely reduced social time, and consequential difficulties in maintaining vital relationships. The interpretation of these findings underscores that the modern athletic-academic model necessitates immediate and robust supportive systems to ensure holistic well-being. The core of the issue lies in the sheer volume and intensity of the expectations imposed by each role. The athletic commitment demands peak physical performance, relentless training schedules, and frequent travel, often making time a zero-sum resource. Simultaneously, the academic role requires focused study, class attendance, and timely assignment completion, consuming significant intellectual energy. When these two high-stakes responsibilities clash, the third and equally critical area—the interpersonal commitment—is the first to be sacrificed. The text notes that student-athletes frequently struggle to maintain relationships, leading to a form of social isolation. This is the essence of social role strain: the emotional and temporal energy required to fulfill one role drains the resources needed for another, leaving the individual feeling fragmented and inadequate across all domains.

The consequences of this role fragmentation are directly linked to mental health and personal development. The stress reported is not merely generalized fatigue; it is the anxiety stemming from perpetually feeling behind, from choosing between an important study session and a necessary team meeting, or, most damagingly, from neglecting relationships crucial for emotional support. By reducing social time and struggling to maintain friendships, the athlete sacrifices the very network required to process and manage the stress from their other two roles. The result is a cycle where the pressure from competing expectations isolates the individual, making them less resilient and more susceptible to burnout, diminishing the overall quality of their college experience.

Thus, challenges faced by student-athletes are clear indicators that the current system often places impossible demands on their time and emotional capacity. The prevalence of stress, reduced social time, and relationship difficulties highlights the urgent need for structural intervention. The finding is a strong mandate for institutions to

develop comprehensive supportive systems—such as integrated counseling, flexible academic scheduling, and time management workshops—to teach students how to distribute their time and emotional energy effectively. Ultimately, true success for the student-athlete is measured not by achievement in a single role, but by the ability to sustain a balanced and meaningful life across all three, thereby mitigating social role strain and fostering long-term psychological health especially among student-athletes, and highlights the need for balance, boundaries, and support

Table 4

Respondents' Assessment of Personal Responsibilities

D. Personal Responsibilities	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. I get enough sleep to feel well-rested and perform at my best.	3.46	Agree
2. I eat regular, balanced meals that support my physical and mental health.	3.41	Agree
3. I have enough time for myself outside of sports and academics.	3.36	Agree
4. I am emotionally supported by friends, family, or teammates.	4.08	Agree

5. I struggle to maintain a healthy lifestyle due to my schedule.	3.44	
6. I am able to manage stress from academics and athletics effectively.	3.24	Agree
7. I regularly take time to relax or engage in non-sport hobbies.	3.46	Agree
8. I have a good balance between my athletic, academic, and personal life.	3.422	Agree
9. My personal relationships suffer because of my athletic commitments.	3.53	Agree
10. I know where to go if I need help with my mental or emotional well-being.	3.69	Agree
Grand Mean	3.51	Agree

Note: 4.21 – 5.00 Strongly Agree, 3.41 – 4.20 Agree 2.61– 3.40 Neutral, 1.81 – 2.60 Disagree, 1.00 – 1.80 Strongly Disagree

Table 4 illustrates that in terms of personal responsibilities with the highest mean of 4.08 " I am emotionally supported by friends, family, or teammates with verbal interpretation of Agree. Overall, student athletes rated themselves in terms of social responsibilities as Agree with a grand mean of 3. 51.

The concept of eudaimonia, defined by Aristotle as human flourishing achieved through balanced living, virtuous behavior, and harmonious relationships, serves as a powerful framework for understanding the essential role of emotional support in the student-athlete experience. The interpretation of this finding is that emotional backing from family, friends, and teammates is not merely a comfort, but a necessary condition for the student-athlete to achieve genuine well-being.

Supported by the study of Lopez & Levy, (2019) supported literature affirms that emotional and social support significantly contributes to student-athletes' psychological well-being, resilience, and ability to cope with stress Strong support networks from family, peers, and teammates help reduce burnout, enhance motivation, and promote healthier personal adjustment, which is vital for coping with the unique demands placed on student-athletes. The experience of the modern student-athlete is inherently characterized by elevated and unique stressors, yet the capacity to navigate

these pressures is demonstrably not an individual task. As affirmed by the literature, and specifically by studies such as those conducted by Lopez & Levy (2019), emotional and social support is not a luxury but an essential and non-negotiable factor that significantly contributes to a student-athlete's psychological well-being, resilience, and overall ability to cope with stress. This interpretation underscores the critical role that robust support networks—encompassing family, peers, and teammates—play in mitigating burnout and promoting the healthier personal adjustment vital for success in the high-demand, dual-role environment of collegiate sports. As cited by Dos Santos, M. L., Uftring, M., Stahl, C. A., Lockie, R. G., Alvar, B., Mann, J. B., & Dawes, J. J. (2020). Stress in academic and athletic performance in collegiate athletes, this narrative review outlines how combining college life stressors—academic, social, financial—with athletic responsibilities can elevate physical and mental health risks, making it difficult to juggle multiple roles effectively. In addition, Graupensperger, S., Benson, A. J., Kilmer, J. R., & Evans, M. B. (2020) collegiate athletes who maintained connections and support with teammates during pandemic isolation exhibited better mental health and retention of their athletic identity, leading to lower depression and greater psychological well-being

The primary function of strong support networks is to serve as a protective buffer against the chronic stress and role strain inherent in the student-athlete experience. When faced with the competing demands of rigorous academic schedules and intensive training, the emotional labor of processing failure, or the mental strain of constant travel, athletes rely on these networks to validate their feelings and provide tangible assistance. Support from family offers unconditional acceptance and a sense of grounding; peer support normalizes the difficulties faced by others in similar situations; and teammate support provides an unparalleled sense of shared struggle and collective commitment. This confluence of supportive relationships acts as a psychological cushion, ensuring that stress is processed and diffused rather than internalized and accumulated, thereby directly reducing the risk of burnout.

Furthermore, social support is directly linked to enhanced motivation and resilience. Motivation for student-athletes often fluctuates under pressure; however, having a cheering section, whether on the field or in life, reinforces the value of their effort. When a coach, teammate, or family member expresses belief in the athlete's ability, it strengthens their sense of self-efficacy and encourages persistence in the face of setbacks. This, in turn, builds resilience—the capacity to bounce back from adversity—which is arguably the most essential psychological trait for success in both sports and academics. The affirmation and encouragement provided by these networks translate directly into the emotional fuel needed to sustain commitment through long seasons and challenging academic periods.

It means that the supported literature makes it clear that the well-being of student-athletes is deeply communal. The unique, compounded demands placed upon them necessitate a holistic support structure that goes beyond institutional resources. Strong networks from family, peers, and teammates are foundational for fostering psychological health, not merely by offering comfort, but by actively enhancing their capacity for resilience and their sustained motivation. The integration of emotional and social support is, therefore, the most effective strategy for promoting the healthier personal adjustment that allows student-athletes to not just survive, but truly thrive, in their demanding dual roles.

Table 5

Respondents' Assessment of Strategies student-athletes use to maintain balance among their various roles

Strategies	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Prioritizing tasks, using planners or digital calendars, and adhering to structured daily schedules	3.68	Often
Relying on support from family, friends, teammates, coaches, and academic advisors for emotional and logistical help.	3.68	Often
Setting short-term and long-term academic, athletic, and personal goals to stay focused and motivated.	3.96	Often
Practicing mindfulness, meditation, deep breathing exercises, or yoga to reduce anxiety and maintain mental well-being.	3.86	Often
Openly communicating with professors, coaches, and peers to manage expectations and responsibilities	4.00	Sometimes
Utilizing tutoring, study groups, writing centers, or learning specialists provided by the institution	3.36	Often

Maintaining balanced nutrition, regular sleep, and physical self-care to support performance and recovery.	3.67	Often
Reframing negative thoughts and adopting a positive mindset to deal with challenges and setbacks.	3.87	Often
Separating different roles (student, athlete, friend) mentally and emotionally to reduce role conflict.	3.80	Often
Leveraging apps for scheduling, mental health, fitness tracking, and academic assistance to stay organized and efficient.	3.56	Often
Grand Mean	**3.73**	**Often**

Note: 4.21 – 5.00 Always, 3.41 – 4.20 Often 2.61– 3.40 Sometimes, 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely, 1.00 – 1.80 Never

Table 5 illustrates that in terms of strategies do student-athletes use to maintain balance among their various roles with "Openly communicating with professors, coaches, and peers to manage expectations and responsibilities "highest mean of 4.00 "with verbal interpretation of Often. Overall, student athletes rated themselves in terms of social responsibilities as Often with a grand mean of 3. 73.

Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia emphasizes that a flourishing life is achieved through rational decision-making, balance, and the harmonious fulfillment of one's various roles and relationships (Aristotle, trans. 2019). When student-athletes communicate openly with professors, coaches, and peers, they demonstrate a deliberate and thoughtful effort to maintain equilibrium across their responsibilities—an essential aspect of living in accordance with eudaimonia.

As Davis, L., Jowett, S., & Tafvelin, S. (2019) cited in his Communication strategies: The fuel for quality coach-athlete relationships and athlete satisfaction, Frontiers in Psychology, 10**,** Article 2156, the longitudinal study (two waves, six weeks apart) found that athletes' use of communication strategies—such as motivating dialogue, supportive exchanges, and conflict management—improved both the relationship quality with coaches and **s**port satisfaction over time. Doorley, J., Kim, S., & Park, H. (2022) stated in their research, Building confidence and well-being: The power of coach communication and personal connections in college basketball Contemporary research

also supports the importance of communication-based strategies in helping student-athletes cope with competing demands. Thompson and Morris (2019) found that such strategies reduce stress, minimize role conflict, and enhance overall well-being by fostering stronger support systems and improving coordination across academic and athletic commitments. Balancing intense athletic demands with rigorous academic expectations places student-athletes at a continual intersection of obligations. Literature suggests that clear communication is one of the most effective methods for achieving this balance, and this practice aligns closely with Aristotle's philosophical view of human flourishing. Eudaimonia is grounded in rational choice—assessing one's circumstances and acting in ways that promote long-term well-being. For student-athletes, this means proactively communicating with their support networks. Whether they are requesting clarification from a professor or negotiating expectations with a coach, they are actively preventing the imbalances that disrupt harmony between roles. Such actions reflect Aristotle's "golden mean," in which virtues are practiced to maintain balance and avoid excess or deficiency. Communication not only mitigates stress and role strain but also transforms potential conflicts into manageable responsibilities. By fostering

shared understanding among professors, coaches, teammates, and mentors, student-athletes create strong support structures that enhance both academic and athletic outcomes.

The findings that open communication is a key strategy for managing student-athletes' multiple responsibilities resonates strongly with Aristotelian philosophy. Through consistent, intentional communication, student-athletes prevent overwhelming role conflict, promote harmony among their commitments, and cultivate the balance necessary to achieve sustainable eudaimonia. These results underscore the importance of developing a comprehensive intervention plan that integrates stress and burnout management programs, greater access to and promotion of academic support services, stronger peer and mentorship networks, and communication skills training to minimize role conflict. The findings align with existing literature on athlete development, dual-career challenges, and holistic well-being, affirming that effective support systems are essential for promoting both academic and athletic success.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study present a comprehensive understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and coping strategies of student-athletes as they strive to maintain balance across multiple domains of their lives. In the athletic domain, student-athletes rated themselves as Agree (M = 3.62), suggesting that they are generally able to manage their training routines and competitive commitments. However, the highest-rated statement, "I experience burnout from the demands of my sport" (M = 4.16), reveals that while they exhibit discipline and dedication, they remain vulnerable to physical and emotional exhaustion due to the intense nature of their athletic responsibilities and limited opportunities for rest and recovery.

In the academic domain, student-athletes also reported an Agree rating (M = 3.74), demonstrating a strong recognition of the value of education alongside their athletic pursuits. The statement "I believe my education is more important in the long run than my athletic career" (M = 4.60, Strongly Agree) highlights their future-oriented mindset and prioritization of academic success as a foundation for life beyond sports. However, their Neutral response to "I use academic support services when needed" (M = 3.04) indicates a gap between motivation and resource utilization, implying that despite valuing education, many student-athletes underutilize tutoring, mentoring, or counseling services that could enhance their academic performance and well-being. In terms of social responsibilities, the student-athletes also agreed (M = 3.83), showing awareness of their roles in relationships and teamwork. The highest mean, "I find it

difficult to meet the expectations of all my roles (student, athlete, friend)" (M = 4.11), reflects a pronounced struggle with role conflict. This suggests that the overlapping demands of academic, athletic, and social spheres often compete for their time and energy, leading to tension and stress in maintaining balance and meeting diverse expectations.

Regarding personal responsibilities, student-athletes maintained an Agree rating (M = 3.51), which underscores their general sense of accountability in managing their personal well-being. The statement "I am emotionally supported by friends, family, or teammates" (M = 4.08) highlights the significance of emotional and social networks as a protective buffer against stress and burnout. Nevertheless, the lower rating for "I am able to manage stress from academics and athletics effectively" (M = 3.24) indicates that while support systems exist, stress management remains a persistent challenge that requires stronger coping mechanisms and self-regulation strategies.

Finally, in examining the strategies used to maintain balance, student-athletes reported employing them Often (M = 3.70), reflecting consistent use of adaptive coping methods. The most frequently used strategy "openly communicating with professors, coaches, and peers to manage expectations and responsibilities" (M = 4.00)—demonstrates that proactive communication serves as a key tool in navigating multiple demands. This suggests that when student-athletes engage in open dialogue, they are better able to align responsibilities, reduce misunderstandings, and maintain mental well-being.

Therefore, interpretation of these findings reveals that while student-athletes are committed, goal-oriented, and capable of managing multiple responsibilities, they continue to experience significant stress and role conflict. Their resilience and prioritization of education reflect maturity and foresight; however, their vulnerability to burnout and underuse of institutional support highlight the need for more comprehensive interventions. Balancing athletic, academic, social, and personal domains remains a complex challenge, one that requires continuous support from schools, coaches, and families to foster holistic development and sustained well-being.

Grounded in Aristotle's concept of the Golden Mean, which emphasizes balance and moderation as the key to human flourishing, this study highlights the importance of equilibrium in the lives of student-athletes. The findings reveal that while student-athletes demonstrate resilience and commitment in managing their athletic, academic, social, and personal roles, they continue to experience burnout, stress, and role conflict. Their strong value for education and determination to excel reflect a future-oriented mindset; however, their limited use of academic support services and difficulty managing stress indicate an imbalance between effort and recovery. In Aristotle's view, virtue lies between extremes—excess and deficiency—and this philosophical lens suggests that student-athletes must strive for balance not only in performance but also in self-care and personal growth. Therefore, at the individual level, student-athletes are encouraged to cultivate self-awareness, manage stress through mindfulness and relaxation practices, strengthen time management and communication skills, and fully utilize academic and counseling resources. At the institutional level, schools and athletic departments should integrate structured rest periods into training, provide mental health and resilience programs, promote dual-career support initiatives, and enhance collaboration between faculty and coaches to align academic and athletic schedules. Finally, at the policy level, educational and sports authorities should establish national guidelines ensuring student-athlete welfare, mandate dual-career programs, support long-term research on athlete well-being, and standardize access to mental health and academic support services. Ultimately, in harmony with Aristotle's philosophy, true excellence among student-athletes arises from balance—the golden mean between ambition and rest, competition and reflection, achievement and well-being.

Through these recommendations, this study emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive support system that integrates academic, athletic, social, and personal dimensions in order to ensure the holistic well-being and long-term success of student-athletes.

PROPOSED INTERVENTION PLAN

This intervention plan for student-athletes is a holistic program addressing their unique challenges by building resilience, managing stress, and fostering academic support, using strategies like goal setting, mental skills training (e.g., mindfulness, visualization), developing strong support systems, and establishing clear referral processes for mental health concerns. It integrates support into their regular training and academic schedules to

promote overall well-being and dual career success, encompassing education for athletes, coaches, and parents.

OBJECTIVE	PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES	TIME FRAME	PEOPLE INVOLVED	SOURCE OF FUND	KEY RESULTS	OUTPUTS
Assess the impact of mental skills training on confidence, focus, and performance consistency in both academic and athletic settings.	**Mental Skills Training**	Beginning of the semester (1st month of the semester) Pilot implementation	ü Dean ü Department Heads ü Research Proponents ü Coaches ü Athletes	University Fund	Measurable improvement in student-athletes' **self-reported confidence levels**, **ability to maintain focus during tasks**, and **consistency of performance** in academics and athletics	A comprehensive **evaluation report** including: Pre- and post-training survey results measuring confidence and focus. Performance data analysis (e.g., GPA trends, athletic statistics). Qualitative feedback from athletes and coaches on perceived changes. Recommendations for refining and scaling the mental skills training program.

Help student-athletes create and maintain personalized academic plans that balance training, competition, and coursework.	**Academic and Time Management Support**	All throughout semester	ü Dean ü Department Heads ü Research Proponents ü Coaches ü Athletes	University Fund	At least **80% of student-athletes** develop and consistently follow personalized academic plans that effectively integrate their athletic and academic commitments over the semester. Improved academic performance as evident in their grades	A set of **individualized academic plans** tailored to each student-athlete's schedule and goals. **Progress tracking records** showing adherence to plans, including scheduled study times, competition dates, and training sessions. **Feedback reports** from student-athletes and academic advisors on the usefulness and feasibility of the plans. A **resource toolkit or template** to facilitate ongoing plan updates and adjustments.

Foster emotional regulation skills that help athletes manage competitive pressure, academic stress, and social challenges.	**Stress Management and Well-being Training**	All throughout semester	ü Dean ü Department Heads ü Research Proponents ü Coaches ü Athletes	University Fund	A measurable increase (e.g., 30% improvement) in athletes' ability to recognize and regulate their emotions during high-pressure academic and athletic situations, as demonstrated by validated emotional regulation assessments and self-reports.	Completion of **emotional regulation training workshops** or sessions focused on techniques like mindfulness, cognitive reappraisal, and relaxation strategies. Pre- and post-assessment data from tools like the **Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ)** or similar scales. Logs or journals where athletes document their use of emotional regulation techniques in real situations. Qualitative feedback from athletes and coaches on improvements in handling stress and pressure. A **guidebook or curriculum** outlining best practices for emotional regulation tailored to student-athletes.

Strengthen the role of coaches, peers, academic advisors, and family members in providing emotional and practical support.	**Support System Development**	All throughout semester	ü Dean ü Department Heads ü Research Proponents ü Coaches ü Athletes	University Fund	Increased engagement and collaboration among coaches, peers, advisors, and family, demonstrated by at least a **25% increase in support-related interactions** (meetings, check-ins, communication) and improved satisfaction ratings from student-athletes regarding their support networks.	Development and implementation of **training workshops** or informational sessions for coaches, peers, advisors, and families on effective emotional and practical support strategies. Creation of a **communication protocol or platform** to facilitate regular, structured interactions among support stakeholders. Records/logs of support interactions (e.g., mentorship meetings, counseling referrals, family outreach). Feedback surveys from student-athletes evaluating perceived improvements in their support systems. A **support network handbook** outlining roles, responsibilities, and best practices for each group.

Reduce stigma around seeking professional help by normalizing the use of counseling and support services.	**Professional Support and Referral System**	All throughout semester	ü Dean ü Department Heads ü Research Proponents ü Coaches ü Athletes	University Fund	Increase in the number of student-athletes utilizing counseling and support services by at least **30%** within the program period, alongside a measurable improvement in attitudes toward mental health help-seeking as indicated by pre- and post-intervention surveys.	Implementation of **awareness campaigns** (e.g., workshops, posters, social media) promoting mental health and counseling services tailored for student-athletes. Distribution of **educational materials** that address myths, facts, and benefits of professional help. Tracking and reporting of counseling service usage statistics before and after interventions. Pre- and post-intervention survey results measuring stigma, attitudes, and willingness to seek help. Testimonies or peer-led discussions that highlight positive experiences with counseling.

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