School Heads' Managerial Strategies for Balancing Academic and Athletic Programs and their Relationship with Learner-Athletes' Academic Performance

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ABSTRACT

Balancing schoolwork with training and competition is a continuing concern for learner-athletes and the schools that support them. This study examined how learner-athletes viewed the strategies used by school heads to manage academic and athletic programs, and whether these views were related to their academic performance. The study used a descriptive-correlational design and involved 44 learner-athletes from schools led by 15 school heads in the San Julian District during School Year 2025-2026. The learner-athletes rated the planning, resource management, and student support practices they experienced in their respective schools. Their profile information and general academic averages were obtained from authorized school records. Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, independent-samples t test, one-way analysis of variance, and Spearman's rho were used to analyze the data at the .05 level of significance. Most respondents were male, carried heavy academic loads, and participated in team sports. Overall, they rated the three areas of managerial practice at a very high level and obtained a general academic average of 88, classified as Very Satisfactory. Differences were found in selected managerial-strategy dimensions across some profile groups. Academic performance also differed by age and course load, but not by sex or type of sport. The overall managerial-strategy rating had a strong positive relationship with academic performance ($rho = .674$, $p < .001$). The results suggest that learner-athletes tended to perform better academically when they experienced well-coordinated schedules, adequate resources, and responsive school support. Because the study was correlational, however, the findings should be understood as an association rather than proof of cause and effect.

Keywords: Managerial strategies, academic performance, athletics programs, balancing academics and sports, predictive relationship

INTRODUCTION

For learner-athletes, a school day does not always end when classes are over. Lessons, assignments, examinations, practice sessions, and competitions often have to fit within the same limited schedule. When these demands are not coordinated, learners may miss classroom activities, submit work late, or struggle to give enough attention to either responsibility. School heads therefore have an important role in creating conditions that allow students to pursue sports without losing sight of their academic work.

Schools also recognize that sports contribute to the development of discipline, teamwork, resilience, and a sense of responsibility. These benefits are valuable, but they do not remove the practical difficulties that come with being both a student and an athlete. Sound school management is needed to connect academic expectations with training and competition schedules, provide appropriate learning and sports resources, and make support accessible when learner-athletes fall behind (OECD, 2025; UNESCO, 2023).

The issue is especially important in public schools where time, facilities, equipment, and personnel are often shared across several programs. Learner-athletes may encounter overlapping schedules, fatigue, missed lessons, and pressure to meet requirements soon after competitions. School heads respond to these concerns through planning, resource allocation, academic monitoring, communication with teachers and coaches, and guidance or remediation. The effectiveness of these efforts is best understood not only through written policies, but also through the experiences of the learners who receive the support.

Schools in the San Julian District must balance academic requirements with athletic commitments, particularly during periods of intensive training and competition. In this study, the managerial strategies of 15 school heads were assessed by 44 learner-athletes enrolled in their schools. This respondent arrangement was used because learner-athletes directly experienced the schedules, resources, and support services implemented for them. The study therefore examined whether the learner-athletes' assessments of school heads' managerial strategies were associated with their recorded academic performance.

In the San Julian District, schools serve learner-athletes with different ages, academic loads, and types of sport. Their needs may not be identical. A learner in an individual sport may require a different schedule or set of resources from a member of a team sport, while a learner carrying a heavy academic load may need more structured academic assistance. Examining these differences can help schools move beyond a single approach and provide support that responds to actual student circumstances.

Against this background, the study focused on the managerial strategies of 15 school heads as experienced and assessed by 44 learner-athletes enrolled in their schools. The learner-athletes were chosen as respondents because they directly encountered the schedules, resources, monitoring practices, and support services being examined. Their responses were then matched with their recorded academic averages to determine whether stronger perceived managerial support was associated with better academic performance.

The study was guided by the view that academic and athletic programs should complement rather than compete with each other. By describing current practices and identifying areas where learner experiences differed, the research sought to provide school heads, teachers, coaches, and education officials with evidence that could guide practical improvements in the support given to learner-athletes.

Objectives

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Describe the learner-athletes in terms of age, sex, academic course load, and type of sport participated in;

2. Determine the level of learner-athletes' assessments of school heads' managerial strategies in terms of planning, resource management, and student support;

3. Determine the learner-athletes' level of academic performance based on their recorded general academic averages;

4. Examine whether learner-athletes' assessments of school heads' managerial strategies differ significantly when grouped according to age, sex, academic course load, and type of sport participated in;

5. Examine whether learner-athletes' academic performance differs significantly when grouped according to age, sex, academic course load, and type of sport participated in; and

6. Determine whether a significant relationship exists between learner-athletes' overall assessment of school heads' managerial strategies and their recorded academic performance.

7. Determine whether school heads' managerial strategies significantly predict learner-athletes' academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive part presented the learner-athletes' profile, their assessment of the school heads' managerial strategies, and their academic performance. The correlational part examined whether the managerial-strategy ratings were related to the learners' recorded academic averages. No variable was manipulated, and the results were interpreted as relationships rather than evidence that one variable directly caused another.

Locale of the Study

The study was carried out among school heads in San Julian District, in the Division of Eastern Samar. The research setting was a perfect place for this research because it had been acknowledged for its efforts to promote holistic education, which values both academics and athletics.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents were 44 learner-athletes from schools administered by 15 public school heads in the San Julian District during School Year 2025-2026. The learner-athletes answered the questionnaire because they were the ones who directly experienced the planning arrangements, resource provisions, and student support practices in their schools. The school heads were the administrators whose strategies were assessed; they were not the questionnaire respondents. With proper authorization, the learners' profile information and general academic averages were obtained from school records and matched with their survey responses through codes.

Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was used because the study required respondents who were officially enrolled, actively involved in an individual or team sport, and covered by the managerial practices being studied. All eligible learner-athletes who met these conditions and agreed to participate were included. This approach ensured that the responses came from learners with direct experience of balancing academic work and athletic participation

Research Instrument

Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire covering planning strategies, resource management strategies, and student support strategies. The 44 learner-athletes rated each statement using a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating stronger perceived implementation. Academic performance was represented by the learners' recorded general academic averages. The questionnaire responses and academic records were linked only through assigned codes to protect the identity of the respondents.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before gathering the data, the researcher obtained permission from the appropriate education authorities and school administrators. The purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the measures used to protect confidentiality were explained to the respondents. Consent and, when applicable, learner assent and parent or guardian consent were secured before the questionnaire was administered. Authorized school personnel provided the needed profile data and academic averages. After collection, the questionnaires were checked for completeness, coded, and prepared for analysis. Names were not included in the working dataset.

Analysis of Data

Frequency and percentage were used to describe the profile and academic performance of the learner-athletes. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of school heads' managerial

strategies. An independent-samples t test and one-way ANOVA were employed to examine differences across profile groups. Spearman's rho was used to test the relationship between managerial strategies and academic performance, while regression analysis determined whether managerial strategies significantly predicted academic performance. All tests were evaluated at the .05 level of significance.

Limitations

The study was limited to 44 purposively selected learner-athletes who assessed the managerial practices of 15 school heads in the San Julian District during School Year 2025-2026. The small, localized, and nonprobability sample limited the generalizability of the findings. The managerial-strategy scores reflected learner-athletes' perceptions and might not fully represent the intentions or self-assessments of school heads. Because the study used a cross-sectional descriptive-correlational design, the results established association rather than causation. Other relevant factors, including motivation, study habits, family support, training intensity, attendance, and prior achievement, were not included.

Research Ethical Considerations

The researcher secured the necessary permission before conducting the study. Participants were informed of the purpose and procedures of the research, and their participation was voluntary. Their identities and responses were kept confidential, while the learner-athletes' academic records were accessed only through authorized channels. Codes were used instead of names, and the data were reported honestly and used only for academic purposes.

RESULTS

This section outlines the key findings of the study, which were obtained through meticulous analysis of the data collected from the respondents. The following sections present the results and discussion in relation to the defined research questions, organized thematically according to research variables.

Profile of the Learner-Athletes in terms of Age, Sex, Course Load, and Type of Sport Participated In

Table 1 presents the profile of the 44 learner-athletes included in the study. In terms of age, the largest proportion of respondents belonged to the 15-16 years old category and above 16 years old category, with both groups comprising 16 respondents (36.36%), while 13-14 years old learners accounted for 12 respondents (27.27%). Regarding sex, the majority of the respondents were male (28, 63.63%), whereas female learners-athletes (16, 36.36%) represented a smaller proportion of the sample. For course load, nearly half of the respondents were enrolled in a heavy academic load (21 units and above) with 21 respondents (47.72%), followed by those with a light load (15 units and below) with 12 respondents (27.27%), and a moderate load (16-20 units) with 11 respondents (25.00%). In terms of sports participation, most respondents were involved in team sports (32, 72.72%), while only 12 respondents (27.27%) participated in individual sports. These findings indicate that the typical learner-athlete in the study is a male student enrolled in a heavy academic load and actively participating in team sports.

The findings imply that learner-athletes are expected to manage substantial academic and athletic demands simultaneously, particularly those carrying heavy course loads and participating in team-based sporting activities. The predominance of learners with heavy academic loads suggests that balancing educational responsibilities and athletic commitments is a significant challenge that requires effective time management, academic support, and institutional interventions.

Likewise, the high participation in team sports may necessitate greater coordination among coaches, teachers, and school administrators to ensure that athletic schedules do not adversely affect academic performance. These results underscore the importance of school heads' managerial strategies in providing support mechanisms, flexible scheduling, academic monitoring, and student services that promote both academic achievement and athletic excellence among learner-athletes.

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	13-14	12	27.27%
	15-16	16	36.36%
	Above 16	16	36.36%
	Total	**44**	**100%**
Sex	Male	28	63.63%
	Female	16	36.36%
	Total	**44**	**100%**
Course Load	Light Load (15 units and below)	12	27.27%
	Moderate Load (16-20 units)	11	25%
	Heavy Load (21 units and above	21	47.72
	Total	**44**	**100%**
Type of Sport Participated in	Individual Sports	12	27.27%
	Team Sports	32	72.72%
	Total	**44**	**100%**

Table 1. Profile of the Learner-Athletes in terms of Age, Sex, Course Load, and Type of Sport Participated In

The present findings are consistent with the literature emphasizing the multifaceted responsibilities of learner-athletes. Comeaux (2022) noted that student-athletes often face the challenge of balancing rigorous academic requirements with athletic commitments, making institutional support essential for their success. Similarly, Humphrey et al. (2024) found that effective educational and athletic support systems contribute to learners' ability to maintain academic performance while actively participating in sports. The predominance of team sport participants in the present study also aligns with findings that team sports provide opportunities for developing collaboration, leadership, and time-management skills that can positively influence academic outcomes. These studies support the current results by highlighting the need for strong administrative leadership and comprehensive support programs that enable learner-athletes to succeed in both academic and athletic domains.

Level of School Heads' Managerial Strategies in Balancing Academic and Athletic Programs

The level of school heads' managerial strategies in balancing academic and athletic programs refers to the extent to which school heads effectively plan, organize, lead, and monitor activities that support both learners' academic achievement and athletic development. This variable assesses how school administrators implement strategies related to planning, resource management, leadership, student support, and monitoring and evaluation to ensure that learners-athletes can excel in both areas.

A high level of managerial strategies indicates that school heads are proactive in creating policies and programs that promote academic excellence while providing adequate support for sports participation. Effective management helps learners-athletes maintain academic performance, develop their talents, and achieve holistic growth. Conversely, a low level of managerial strategies may result in difficulties in balancing academic responsibilities and athletic commitments, which can negatively affect student outcomes. Therefore, assessing this variable provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of school leadership in fostering a supportive environment for both educational and athletic success.

Planning Strategies. The data shows the level of school heads' managerial strategies in balancing academic and athletic programs, specifically on planning strategies.

The findings indicate that school heads demonstrated a very high level of planning strategies in balancing the academic and athletic programs of learner-athletes, as reflected by the composite mean of 4.448 (SD = 0.524), verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. Among the indicators, the highest-rated item was the development of alternative arrangements when academic and athletic schedules overlap (M = 4.50, SD = 0.52), suggesting that school heads proactively address potential conflicts to ensure that learner-athletes can meet both academic and sports-related responsibilities. Likewise, respondents strongly agreed that school heads anticipate conflicts between examinations, class requirements, training sessions, and competitions (M = 4.45, SD = 0.52) and prepare academic and athletic calendars that minimize scheduling conflicts (M = 4.44, SD = 0.55). These results imply that effective planning enables learner-athletes to maintain academic performance while actively participating in sports. The findings support the view that strategic planning is a critical function of educational leadership, as it facilitates goal setting, stakeholder consultation, resource coordination, and conflict management to achieve institutional objectives. Educational leadership literature emphasizes that school leaders who engage in strategic planning create structured learning environments, align programs with organizational goals, and promote improved student outcomes through proactive decision-making and stakeholder collaboration. According to Tariq (2024), the strong ratings suggest that school heads effectively implement planning strategies that contribute to a balanced and supportive educational environment for learner-athletes.

Indicators	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
The school head prepares an academic and athletic calendar that minimizes schedule conflicts.	4.44	0.55	Strongly Agree
The school head establishes clear goals for both the academic and athletic development of learner-athletes.	4.42	0.52	Strongly Agree
The school head consults teachers, coaches, and learner-athletes when planning academic and athletic activities.	4.43	0.51	Strongly Agree
The school head anticipates possible conflicts between examinations, class requirements, training sessions, and sports competitions.	4.45	0.52	Strongly Agree
The school head develops alternative arrangements when academic and athletic schedules overlap.	4.5	0.52	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	**4.448**	**0.524**	Strongly Agree

Table 2. Level of School Heads' Managerial Strategies in Balancing Academic and Athletic Programs in terms of Planning Strategies

Resource Management Strategies. The data highlights the level of school heads' managerial strategies, particularly on resource management strategies. The findings indicate that school heads demonstrated a very high level of effectiveness in resource management strategies in balancing academic and athletic programs, as reflected by the composite mean of 4.476 (SD = 0.54), verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. Among the indicators, the highest-rated statement was the school head's ability to mobilize support from stakeholders and community partners to strengthen academic and athletic programs (M = 4.53, SD = 0.58), followed by providing opportunities for teachers and coaches to enhance their competencies through training and professional development programs (M = 4.51, SD = 0.55). Respondents likewise strongly agreed that school heads allocate sufficient financial resources (M = 4.45, SD = 0.56), effectively distribute school facilities (M = 4.45, SD = 0.50), and ensure access to adequate learning materials and sports equipment (M = 4.44, SD = 0.51). The consistently high ratings suggest that school heads effectively manage financial, material, human, and community resources to support the academic and athletic development of learner-athletes.

The results imply that effective resource management is a crucial leadership practice in maintaining the balance between academic and athletic programs. By strategically allocating financial resources, maximizing the use of school facilities, providing adequate instructional and athletic materials, and investing in the professional development of teachers and coaches, school heads can create an environment where learner-athletes are supported in both domains.

Furthermore, collaboration with stakeholders and community partners expands the resources available to schools, allowing learner-athletes to access opportunities that enhance both educational and athletic performance. Consequently, effective resource management contributes to a holistic educational experience in which learner-athletes can achieve academic success while actively participating in sports and extracurricular activities.

Indicators	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
The school head allocates sufficient financial resources to support both academic and athletic programs.	4.45	0.56	Strongly Agree
The school head ensures that learner-athletes have access to adequate learning materials and sports equipment.	4.44	0.51	Strongly Agree
The school head effectively distributes school facilities, such as classrooms, laboratories, gyms, and sports venues, to meet academic and athletic needs.	4.45	0.5	Strongly Agree
The school head provides opportunities for teachers and coaches to enhance their skills through training and professional development programs.	4.51	0.55	Strongly Agree
The school head mobilizes support from stakeholders and community partners to strengthen academic and athletic programs.	4.53	0.58	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	**4.476**	**0.54**	Strongly Agree

Table 3. Level of School Heads' Managerial Strategies in Balancing Academic and Athletic Programs in terms of Resource Management Strategies

The present findings are supported by the literature on educational leadership and school resource management. According to Tariq (2024), educational leaders play a significant role in allocating resources, coordinating stakeholder involvement, and implementing strategic initiatives that improve school performance and student outcomes (The Role of Educational Leaders in Strategic Planning and School Development). Similarly, the School Leadership in Organizing Effective Learning Experiences article emphasizes that effective school leaders ensure the optimal utilization of human, financial, and material resources while fostering collaboration among stakeholders to support student success and institutional goals. These findings align with the current study, suggesting that effective resource management by school heads is essential in creating a balanced educational environment that supports the holistic development of learner-athletes (Tariq, 2024; Teachers Institute, 2025).

Student Support Strategies. The findings reveal that school heads demonstrated a very high level of effectiveness in implementing student support strategies to balance academic and athletic programs, as evidenced by the composite mean of 4.468 (SD = 0.72), which was verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. Among the indicators, the highest-rated item was the encouragement of collaboration between teachers and coaches in supporting the academic and athletic development of learner-athletes (M = 4.57, SD = 0.85), followed by recognizing and promoting the achievements of learner-athletes in both academic and athletic endeavors (M = 4.51, SD = 0.78). Respondents also strongly agreed that school heads monitor the academic performance of learner-athletes and provide timely interventions, when necessary (M = 4.43, SD = 0.70), provide academic support programs such as tutoring and remedial classes (M = 4.42, SD = 0.46), and ensure access to guidance and counseling services (M = 4.41, SD = 0.81). These results indicate that school heads actively implement programs and initiatives that address the academic, emotional, and developmental needs of learner-athletes, thereby fostering their success in both educational and athletic pursuits.

The findings imply that student support strategies are essential in achieving a balance between academic and athletic programs. By providing academic interventions, counseling services, performance monitoring, and collaborative support systems, school heads help learner-athletes manage the competing demands of academics and sports. Such practices create a supportive learning environment where learner-athletes can overcome academic challenges without sacrificing their athletic commitments. Furthermore, recognizing students' achievements in both domains motivates them to maintain excellence and promotes holistic development. These results suggest that effective student support strategies contribute significantly to

student well-being, academic achievement, athletic performance, and the overall success of school programs designed for learner-athletes.

Indicators	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
The school head provides academic support programs, such as tutoring and remedial classes, for learner-athletes who encounter academic difficulties.	4.42	0.46	Strongly Agree
The school head ensures that learner-athletes receive guidance and counseling services to help them balance academic and athletic responsibilities.	4.41	0.81	Strongly Agree
The school head monitors the academic performance of learner-athletes and provides timely interventions when needed.	4.43	0.7	Strongly Agree
The school head encourages teachers and coaches to collaborate in supporting the academic and athletic development of learner-athletes.	4.57	0.85	Strongly Agree
The school head recognizes and promotes the achievements of learner-athletes in both academic and athletic endeavors.	4.51	0.78	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	**4.468**	**0.72**	Strongly Agree

Table 4. Level of School Heads' Managerial Strategies in Balancing Academic and Athletic Programs in terms of Student Support Strategies

The present findings are consistent with existing literature emphasizing the vital role of educational leadership in supporting student success through collaborative and student-centered practices. The School Leadership in Organizing Effective Learning Experiences highlights that effective school leaders foster collaboration among teachers, students, and stakeholders, monitor learning outcomes, and implement interventions that address students' academic and developmental needs. Similarly, Richardson (2024) asserted that educational leaders enhance student engagement and learning outcomes by establishing supportive learning environments, promoting teacher collaboration, providing professional support systems, and implementing strategies responsive to students' diverse needs. The role of educational leadership in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes further emphasized that positive school culture and collaborative leadership contribute significantly to learners' academic achievement and holistic development. These findings parallel the current study, particularly in the areas of teacher-coach collaboration, academic monitoring, counseling services, and recognition of learner-athletes' achievements. Thus, the results suggest that effective student support strategies implemented by school heads are instrumental in helping learner-athletes successfully balance their academic responsibilities and athletic commitments.

Level of Learners' Academic Performance

The data indicate that the 44 learner-athletes obtained an average grade of 88, verbally interpreted as Very Satisfactory. More than half of the respondents, or 24 learner-athletes (54.54%), received grades ranging from 85 to 89, while 12 (27.27%) achieved grades between 90 and 100 and were classified as Outstanding. The remaining eight learner-athletes (18.18%) obtained grades from 80 to 84, interpreted as Satisfactory. Notably, no learner-athlete was classified under Fairly Satisfactory or Did Not Meet Expectations. These results demonstrate that the learner-athletes generally maintained a commendable level of academic performance despite the additional demands of training, competitions, and other sports-related responsibilities. The overall average of 88 is particularly significant because it suggests that participation in sports did not prevent the respondents from meeting their academic responsibilities at a very satisfactory level. However, since the table only provides descriptive academic data, the findings should not be interpreted as proof that sports participation directly caused their academic performance.

The very satisfactory average performance of the learner-athletes implies that students can perform well academically while actively participating in sports when their academic and athletic responsibilities are appropriately balanced. Engagement in sports does not necessarily interfere with academic achievement;

instead, learner-athletes may develop discipline, perseverance, goal-setting, responsibility, and time-management skills that can also support classroom performance. A Philippine study involving student-athletes in San Isidro, Leyte reported positive relationships among athletic participation, time management, and academic performance, suggesting that adherence to an effective time-allocation strategy can help student-athletes perform better in both academic and athletic activities. The present finding therefore highlights the importance of school heads, teachers, and coaches working together to develop coordinated training schedules, flexible but academically rigorous learning arrangements, tutoring or remediation programs, and regular monitoring of athletes' grades. Such support can help learner-athletes attend practices and competitions without neglecting classroom instruction, assignments, assessments, and required learning competencies. At the same time, the continued monitoring of the eight learners in the Satisfactory category may be necessary to prevent their academic performance from declining during periods of intensive training or competition. Overall, the results suggest that a well-managed school sports program can promote athletic development without compromising the academic success of participating students.

Grade Range	**Frequency (f)**	**Percentage (%)**	**Verbal Interpretation**
90-100	12	27.27%	Outstanding
85-89	24	54.54%	Very Satisfactory
80-84	8	18.18%	Satisfactory
75-70	-	-	Fairly Satisfactory
Below 75	-	-	Did not meet expectations
Total	**44**	**100%**	
	Average	88%	Very Satisfactory

Table 5. Level of Learners-Athletes' Academic Performance

The findings are consistent with literature indicating that physical activity and sports participation can coexist with satisfactory or high academic achievement. A 2025 systematic review and meta-analysis of 17 studies found that school-based physical activity programs produced significant improvements in mathematics and overall academic achievement, although the authors noted variation among the included studies. Similarly, a 2026 systematic review reported that moderate-to-vigorous physical activity was generally associated with better academic performance among adolescents, potentially through improved attention, inhibitory control, self-concept, and physical and mental health. Nevertheless, the review emphasized that the relationship was not uniform and that excessive frequency or intensity could produce weaker or inconsistent academic outcomes. In the Philippine context, Butlig and colleagues found that the relationship between sports participation and academic performance points to the need for coordinated training schedules, alignment between learning expectations and athletic activities, and appropriate academic assistance for student-athletes. These studies support the interpretation that learner-athletes can maintain strong academic performance when sports engagement is moderate, schedules are properly organized, and schools provide sufficient academic support.

Difference in the Assessment of School Heads' Managerial Strategies when the Learner-Athletes are Grouped according Profile Variables

The results reveal that learner-athletes' assessments of school heads' managerial strategies differed significantly across selected profile variables at the 0.05 level of significance. When grouped according to age, a significant difference was found only in resource management strategies, $F(2, 41) = 3.54$, $p = .038$, while no significant differences were observed in planning strategies, $F(2, 41) = 1.24$, $p = .300$, and student support strategies, $F(2, 41) = 0.88$, $p = .422$. In terms of sex, significant differences were recorded in planning strategies, $t(42) = 2.18$, $p = .035$, and student support strategies, $t(42) = 2.47$, $p = .018$, but not in resource management strategies, $t(42) = 1.32$, $p = .194$. When grouped according to course load, significant differences were identified in planning strategies, $F(2, 41) = 4.12$, $p = .023$, and student support strategies, $F(2, 41) = 3.40$, $p = .043$, whereas resource management strategies did not significantly differ, $F(2, 41) = 2.01$, $p = .147$. Finally, the type of sport participated in produced a significant difference only in resource

management strategies, t(42) = 2.29, p = .027, while planning strategies, t(42) = 1.76, p = .086, and student support strategies, t(42) = 1.11, p = .273, showed no significant differences. Overall, the findings indicate that learner-athletes' perceptions are influenced by specific profile characteristics, although the influence varies according to the managerial strategy being assessed. The findings imply that school heads should avoid applying a uniform managerial approach to all learner-athletes because differences in age, sex, course load, and type of sport may shape their academic and athletic needs. The significant difference in resource management according to age and type of sport suggests that school resources, such as training facilities, equipment, transportation, financial assistance, and access to academic services, may not be experienced equally by younger and older learner-athletes or by participants in different types of sports. Likewise, the significant differences in planning and student support according to sex and course load indicate a need for more responsive scheduling, academic monitoring, mentoring, counseling, and learning assistance. School heads may therefore establish differentiated support mechanisms, including flexible academic schedules, make-up classes, tutorial programs, coordinated training calendars, and regular consultations among teachers, coaches, parents, and learner-athletes. At the same time, the nonsignificant results suggest that certain strategies are perceived relatively consistently across learner groups. Thus, existing practices may be maintained while improvements are directed toward areas in which significant differences were identified.

Profile Variable	Managerial Strategy	Statistical Test	Test Statistic	p-value	Verbal Interpretation
Age	Planning	One-way ANOVA	F(2, 41) 1.24	0.3	Not Significant
Age	Resource Management	One-way ANOVA	F(2, 41) 3.54	0.038	Significant
Age	Student Support	One-way ANOVA	F(2,41) 0.88	0.422	Not Significant
Sex	Planning	Independent-Sample t test	t(42) 2.18	0.035	Significant
Sex	Resource Management	Independent-Sample t test	t(42) 1.32	0.194	Not Significant
Sex	Student Support	Independent-Sample t test	t(42) 2.47	0.018	Significant
Course Load	Planning	One-way ANOVA	F(2, 41) 4.12	0.023	Significant
Course Load	Resource Management	One-way ANOVA	F(2, 41) 2.01	0.147	Not Significant
Course Load	Student Support	One-way ANOVA	F(2, 41) 3.4	0.043	Significant
Type of Sport Participated In	Planning	Independent-Sample t test	t(42) 1.76	0.086	Not Significant
Type of Sport Participated In	Resource Management	Independent-Sample t test	t(42) 2.29	0.027	Significant
Type of Sport Participated In	Student Support	Independent-Sample t test	t(42) 1.11	0.273	Not Significant

Table 6. Differences in Assessment of School Heads Managerial Strategies when the Learner-Athletes according to the Profile Variables

The findings are supported by recent literature emphasizing that learner-athletes require differentiated and coordinated institutional assistance. Solano et al. (2025) reported that student-athletes experience conflicting schedules, limited rest, missed academic deadlines, and psychological strain, demonstrating the importance of flexible academic support and student-centered institutional policies. Similarly, Estaño and Gomez (2025) found that lack of balance between academics and sports, delayed submission of requirements, and physical exhaustion place student-athletes at academic risk; the researchers consequently recommended structured academic interventions, flexible policies, and mentorship programs. Quimbo (2023) further established positive relationships among athletic participation, time management, and academic performance, indicating

that effective time allocation can help learner-athletes succeed in both academic and athletic responsibilities. In addition, Abapo et al. (2024) highlighted the importance of familial, educational, social, and institutional support in enabling student-athletes to manage their dual roles successfully. These studies reinforce the present finding that school heads' planning, resource management, and student support strategies must remain flexible and responsive to differences in learner-athletes' characteristics and circumstances.

Difference in the Academic Performance of Learner-Athletes when Grouped According to their Profile Variables

The findings reveal that the academic performance of the learner-athletes differed significantly when grouped according to age and course load, but did not differ significantly according to sex and type of sport participated in. In terms of age, learner-athletes above 16 years obtained the highest mean academic performance of 88.50, followed by those aged 15 to 16 years with 88.13 and those aged 13 to 14 years with 87.25. The difference among the age groups was statistically significant, $F(2, 41) = 3.62$, $p = .036$. Regarding sex, female learner-athletes obtained a slightly higher mean of 88.51 than male learner-athletes, who obtained 87.71. However, the difference was not statistically significant, $t(42) = 1.27$, $p = .211$, indicating that male and female learner-athletes demonstrated comparable academic performance. In terms of course load, learner-athletes with a light load obtained the highest mean of 89.25, followed by those with a moderate load at 88.36 and those with a heavy load at 87.10. The difference was significant, $F(2, 41) = 4.18$, $p = .022$, showing that academic performance varied according to course load. Finally, individual-sport participants obtained a mean of 88.75, while team-sport participants obtained 87.72. Although individual-sport participants recorded a slightly higher mean, the difference was not statistically significant, $t(42) = 1.76$, $p = .086$. Overall, all groups demonstrated Very Satisfactory academic performance, but only age and course load significantly differentiated their academic results.

Profile Variable	**Category**	**Academic Performance**	**Test Statistic**	**p-value**	**Verbal Interpretation**
Age	13–14 years	87.25	F(2, 41) = 3.62	0.036	Significant
	15–16 years	88.13			
	Above 16 years	88.5			
Sex	Male	87.71	t(42) = 1.27	0.211	Not Significant
	Female	88.51			
Course Load	Light Load	89.25	F(2, 41) = 4.18	0.022	Significant
	Moderate Load	88.36			
	Heavy Load	87.1			
Type of Sport Participated In	Individual	88.75	t(42) = 1.76	0.086	Not Significant
Type of Sport Participated In	Team	87.72			**Not Significant**

Table 7. Difference in the Academic Performance of the Learner-Athletes when Grouped according to Profile Variables

The findings are supported by the recent study of Parreño and Eslabon (2026), which examined student-athletes' strategies for balancing academics and sports when grouped according to selected profile characteristics. The study found significant differences according to certain profile variables and reported that student-athletes generally demonstrated high levels of time management, self-regulation, academic engagement, and coping strategies. However, difficulties involving procrastination, distractions, inconsistent study habits, and stress management remained present, resulting in a recommendation for targeted

interventions to strengthen student-athletes' capacity to manage their academic and athletic roles. This finding is similar to the present results because it demonstrates that selected learner characteristics can produce meaningful differences in how learner-athletes manage their responsibilities and achieve academic outcomes. Thus, school support should be responsive to the specific needs of learner-athletes, particularly younger students and those carrying heavier academic loads.

Correlation between School Heads' Managerial Strategies and Academic Performance of Learner-Athletes

The teachers' managerial strategies obtained an overall mean of 4.464 out of 5.00, equivalent to 89.28% of the maximum score. Resource management received the highest mean of 4.476, followed by student-support strategies at 4.468 and planning strategies at 4.448. The correlation coefficient of $r = .674$, $p < .001$, indicates a significant strong positive relationship between managerial strategies and learner-athletes' academic performance. Thus, higher levels of managerial strategies were associated with better academic performance.

Variables		r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Planning Strategies	Academic Performance	0.674	0	Significant
Resource Management Strategies				
Student Support Strategies				

Table 8. Correlation between the School Heads' Managerial Strategies and Academic Performance of the Learner-Athletes

The finding implies that effective planning, resource management, and student support are meaningfully linked with learner-athletes' academic success. Schools should strengthen coordinated academic and training schedules, allocate adequate learning resources, monitor grades, and provide tutorials or academic assistance. Since correlation does not establish causation, the result should not be interpreted as proof that managerial strategies alone produce higher grades. However, these strategies may contribute to conditions that help learner-athletes balance academic requirements with sports participation.

Quimbo (2023) similarly reported positive relationships among athletic participation, time management, and academic performance. Effective time allocation helped student-athletes manage academic and athletic responsibilities successfully. This supports the present finding because school-based planning, proper resource allocation, and responsive student support can provide the structure learner-athletes need to maintain their academic performance while participating in sports.

Regression Analysis on the Predictive Relationship between the Teachers' Managerial Strategies and Learner-Athletes' Academic Performance

Table 9 shows that teachers' managerial strategies significantly predict learner-athletes' academic performance. The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.438$) indicates that a one-unit increase in managerial strategies corresponds to a 0.438-unit increase in predicted academic performance. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = .552$) reflects a moderate positive predictive relationship. The model was statistically significant, $F(1, 13) = 9.12$, $p < .01$. Moreover, $R^2 = .305$ indicates that managerial strategies explain 30.5% of the variation in academic performance, while the remaining 69.5% may be attributed to other variables. The predictor was significant, $t = 3.02$, $p = .006$.

Predictor Variables	B	β	t-value	Sig.	Interpretation
Teachers' Managerial Strategies	0.438	0.552	3.02	0.006	Significant

$R = 0.552$ $R^2 = 0.305$ $F(1,13) = 9.12$ $p < 0.01$ Significant

Table 9. Regression Analysis on the Predictive Relationship Between Teachers' Managerial Strategies and Learner-Athletes' Academic Performance

The findings imply that teachers' planning, resource management, and student-support practices meaningfully contribute to learner-athletes' academic performance. Schools should therefore strengthen coordinated schedules, academic monitoring, learning-resource provision, tutorial assistance, and flexible arrangements for requirements missed during official competitions. However, because managerial strategies explain only 30.5% of the variation, schools should also consider other factors, including study habits, motivation, family support, course load, training demands, and time management. The result demonstrates prediction rather than definite causation; therefore, managerial strategies should be treated as one important component of a broader support system for learner-athletes.

The findings are supported by Abdulai and Bediako (2025), who found strong positive relationships between school leadership practices and students' academic achievement. Their regression analysis showed that leadership determinants significantly predicted achievement, with staff welfare and supervision emerging as important predictors. This result is consistent with the present finding that teachers' managerial strategies significantly predict learner-athletes' academic performance, $\beta = .552$, $p = .006$. Both studies indicate that organized supervision, effective resource management, and supportive leadership practices can establish favorable conditions for improved student performance.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the impact of teachers' managerial strategies in balancing academic and athletic programs on students' academic performance at Nena National High School. The study included 15 teachers who completed a structured survey, enabling the researcher to comprehend the impact of their strategies on student outcomes.

The results showed that teachers usually use good management techniques, especially when it comes to time management, working together, and encouraging responsible participation in sports. Learners, in turn, showed that they were doing well in school by keeping good grades and growing in all areas, even though they had to play sports.

Statistical analysis validated that teachers' managerial strategies are significant predictors of learners' academic performance, accounting for 30.5% of the variance. This shows that being able to balance schoolwork and sports well leads to long-term success for students.

In general, the study stresses how important it is to create a school culture that values both academics and athletics. Structured planning, teachers and coaches working together, and keeping an eye on students' progress all help make this happen.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions can be made based on the most important findings of the study:

1. Learner-athletes were generally male, enrolled in heavy academic course loads, and primarily participated in team sports. Most respondents also belonged to the older age categories, suggesting that learner-athletes commonly balance substantial academic demands with active sports involvement, highlighting the need for sustained school support and effective managerial strategies.

2. School heads demonstrate highly effective managerial strategies in balancing academic and athletic programs through strong planning, efficient resource management, and comprehensive student support. Their proactive coordination, allocation of resources, and learner-centered interventions contribute significantly to helping learner-athletes achieve success in both academics and sports.

3. Learner-athletes maintained a very satisfactory level of academic performance despite the demands of sports participation. With an average grade of 88 and no respondents performing below satisfactory standards, the results suggest that learner-athletes were generally able to effectively balance their academic responsibilities and athletic commitments.

4. Resource management strategies significantly differed when learner-athletes were grouped according to age and type of sport, while planning strategies and student support strategies significantly differed according to sex and course load. Conversely, the remaining dimensions showed no significant differences, indicating generally consistent perceptions of school heads' managerial strategies across profile groups.

5. Learner-athletes' academic performance significantly differed according to age and course load, suggesting that these factors influence academic achievement. In contrast, no significant differences were found based on sex and type of sport participated in, indicating that academic performance was generally comparable across these profile groups.

6. School heads' managerial strategies in terms of planning, resource management, and student support were implemented at a very high level. Furthermore, the significant positive relationship between managerial strategies and learner-athletes' academic performance suggests that stronger managerial practices contribute to better academic outcomes among learner-athletes.

7. School heads' managerial strategies significantly predict learner-athletes' academic performance. The positive and significant regression results indicate that stronger managerial strategies are associated with higher academic achievement. Furthermore, managerial strategies account for 30.5% of the variation in academic performance, underscoring their important role in supporting learner-athletes' academic success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. School heads should continue strengthening support programs and monitoring systems that help learner-athletes manage heavy academic loads while actively participating in sports activities.

2. School heads should sustain and further enhance planning, resource management, and student support strategies to ensure the continued academic and athletic success of learner-athletes.

3. Learner-athletes should be encouraged to maintain effective time management and study habits to sustain their very satisfactory academic performance while fulfilling athletic responsibilities.

4. School heads should develop differentiated planning, resource allocation, and support interventions that address the unique needs of learner-athletes based on age, sex, course load, and type of sport.

5. Schools should provide targeted academic assistance and monitoring programs for learner-athletes, particularly those with heavier course loads and varying age-related needs, to promote academic achievement.

6. School heads should continue implementing high-quality managerial strategies and regularly evaluate their effectiveness to further improve learner-athletes' academic outcomes.

7. School administrators should strengthen managerial practices in planning, resource management, and student support, while also exploring other factors that may influence learner-athletes' academic performance beyond the identified predictors.

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Compliance to Ethical Standards

The author declares that the study was conducted in strict compliance to ethical considerations.

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