

Unpacking Teachers' Sports Coaching Experiences

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ABSTRACT

Teacher-coaches play a vital role in secondary education by balancing instructional responsibilities with the demands of developing student-athletes. As schools increasingly rely on teachers to fulfill both academic and coaching roles, they encounter complex professional and personal challenges that influence their effectiveness and well-being.

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of teacher-coaches in sports coaching to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges they encounter, the coping strategies they employ, the rewarding aspects of their work, and the insights they have gained throughout their coaching journeys. The study involved ten junior and senior high school teacher-coaches from different schools in Davao del Norte who were selected through purposive sampling.

Data was gathered using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions and analyzed through thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes. Findings revealed that teacher-coaches experienced numerous challenges, including inadequate sports equipment and facilities, financial and coaching resource constraints, insufficient training and professional preparation, self-doubt arising from setbacks and competitive losses, and difficulties in balancing teaching responsibilities with coaching obligations.

Despite these challenges, participants demonstrated resilience by building strong support systems, practicing effective stress management, and drawing motivation from their athletes' dedication, achievements, and positive feedback. They also found fulfillment in mentoring athletes, witnessing their personal and athletic growth, strengthening teamwork and collaboration, pursuing continuous professional development, and cultivating perseverance. The study further highlighted valuable insights into holistic and athlete-centered coaching, ethical and service-oriented leadership, goal-directed athlete development, and the importance of maintaining role balance through effective time management and self-care.

These findings underscore the need for stronger institutional support through accessible coaching development programs, adequate sports resources, responsive workload management, and policies that promote the well-being, professional growth, and long-term effectiveness of teacher-coaches in secondary schools.

Keywords: teacher-coaches; sports coaching; lived experiences; phenomenological study; secondary education.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Teaching and coaching are both essential in promoting students' physical, personal, and athletic development; however, many teachers face difficulties when they assume coaching responsibilities because coaching requires specialized knowledge and skills beyond classroom instruction. In the Philippines, particularly in the Davao Region, teacher-coaches encounter challenges such as limited coaching preparation, inadequate facilities and resources, insufficient institutional support, and the difficulty of balancing teaching and coaching responsibilities.

International and local studies consistently emphasize that structured coach education, continuous professional development, and organizational support are crucial for improving coaching competence, athlete development, and coaching effectiveness.

Despite these findings, many teacher-coaches continue to experience role strain, inconsistent coaching practices, and limited confidence due to fragmented coaching systems and the absence of comprehensive coaching frameworks.

Although previous research has examined coaching competencies and sports education, there remains a limited understanding of the lived experiences of teacher-coaches as they navigate the long and challenging journey toward coaching success.

Therefore, this study seeks to explore the lived experiences of teacher-coaches in Davao del Norte to provide insights that can inform coaching development programs, institutional support, and educational policies aimed at strengthening teacher-coach effectiveness and student-athlete development.

Statement of the Problem

The following research questions are designed to explore the lived experiences of teachers who have served as sports coaches in Davao del Norte, Philippines, for more than five years. This study specifically aimed at responding to the following inquiries:

1. What are the lived experiences of teachers-coaches on their delayed triumphs?
2. How do teacher-coaches cope with the challenges they encounter?
3. What insights can teachers-coaches draw from their experiences?

Objectives of the Study

General Objective: To explore and understand the lived experiences of teacher-coaches in sports coaching in secondary schools in Davao del Norte.

Specific Objectives

1. Explore the challenges encountered by teacher-coaches in fulfilling their coaching responsibilities.
2. Identify the coping strategies employed by teacher-coaches in managing the demands of their dual roles as teachers and coaches.
3. Describe the rewarding experiences that motivate teacher-coaches to continue coaching despite the challenges they face.
4. Examine the insights and lessons learned by teacher-coaches from their experiences in sports coaching.

5. Develop recommendations that may contribute to improving institutional support, coaching development programs, and policies that enhance the effectiveness and well-being of teacher-coaches.

Significance of the Study

Teacher-coaches: By reflecting on and articulating their lived experiences, particularly their encounters with repeated setbacks and eventual progress, they may gain deeper self-awareness and validation of their professional journey. The findings may also encourage resilience, continuous learning, and the improvement of their coaching practices.

Student athletes: By understanding the challenges and growth experienced by their teacher-coaches, they may develop greater respect, trust, and appreciation for their mentors. This may strengthen coach-athlete relationships, improve teamwork, and enhance athletic performance.

Schools, Colleges, and Universities: The findings may serve as a basis for developing more responsive coaching training programs, stronger institutional support systems, and more effective athlete development initiatives. These improvements may contribute to the overall quality and sustainability of school sports programs.

Department of Education (DepEd) and Policymakers: The insights from this study may provide evidence for developing policies that strengthen teacher-coach preparation, professional development, and sports education programs. They may also guide the allocation of resources and support mechanisms that enhance coaching effectiveness.

Future Researchers: The study may contribute to the existing body of knowledge in sports psychology, education, and coaching by providing empirical evidence on the lived experiences of teacher-coaches. It may also serve as a reference for future studies exploring resilience, professional growth, and coaching development.

Parents, Local Communities, and Other Stakeholders: By gaining a better understanding of the challenges and successes of teacher-coaches, they may be encouraged to provide greater support for school sports programs and athlete development. The findings may also promote values such as perseverance, teamwork, and community involvement in fostering young athletes' holistic development.

Scope and Limitation

This study is limited to exploring the lived experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and instructional practices of ten teacher-coaches with over five years of experience in public junior and senior high schools within the Division of Davao del Norte during the 2024–2025 academic year. Data collection relied on standardized interviews, follow-up questions, and member checking to maintain trustworthiness and credibility. However, the study is inherently restricted by its small sample size of ten participants, which may not fully represent the broader diversity of experiences among all sports coaches across the region.

Definition

Unpacking: The process of examining and analyzing complex experiences to reveal their underlying components and meanings.

Coaching Experience: The knowledge, skills, and insights gained through active training and mentoring athletes over time.

Setbacks: Obstacles, failures, or unexpected difficulties that impede progress toward a goal.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

The Role of Coaching and Teacher Development

According to Shanlax and Kasetsart (2022), coaching-based professional development, particularly when implemented through collaborative and collegial learning environments, significantly enhances teaching quality. Such professional development initiatives strengthen teachers' competencies in classroom management, deepen their subject matter expertise, and improve their pedagogical content knowledge, thereby promoting more effective instructional practices.

Teacher's Coaching Resilience

Studies have shown that resilient teachers are more likely to engage in professional development opportunities, which contribute to improved instructional effectiveness and overall quality of life. Furthermore, teachers who possess strong professional support networks and receive resilience-focused training experience lower levels of burnout and higher levels of job satisfaction. These findings underscore the critical role of institutional support systems and resilience-building initiatives in promoting teacher well-being, professional growth, and sustained effectiveness in educational settings (Mansfield et al., 2021; Ebersöhn et al., 2020).

Delayed Gratification and Achievement of Teacher-Coaches

Teacher-coaches maintain unshakeable resolve and fidelity toward their teams even after extended periods of limited success, highlighting that resilience and the capacity to recover from setbacks are central to achieving ultimate success. By cultivating a growth mindset and continuously recalibrating their strategies, these educators effectively transform failures into valuable opportunities for ongoing development. Furthermore, research indicates that teacher-coaches who remain optimistic and dedicated to continual improvement are significantly more likely to attain long-term achievement, collectively underscoring the critical importance of resilience and a proactive disposition in overcoming coaching obstacles (Carter & Wilson, 2021; Baruani & Binghai, 2021).

Overcoming Failures of Teacher-Coaches

Studies examining the coping strategies of teacher-coaches during prolonged periods of competitive setbacks have highlighted the importance of maintaining a growth mindset, in which failures are viewed as opportunities for learning, reflection, and professional development rather than as barriers to success. Teacher-coaches who embraced this perspective demonstrated greater resilience, enabling them to recover from setbacks, adapt their coaching practices, and persist in pursuing long-term coaching excellence (Smith & Walker, 2021; Lee & Thompson, 2022).

Impact of Unsuccessful Coaching Season

Unsuccessful coaching seasons can adversely affect the emotional well-being of teacher-coaches as well as the overall functioning of their teams. Research has identified several barriers to coaching effectiveness, including the voluntary nature of coaching assignments, gender-related challenges, and organizational factors such as school size and institutional support. These barriers may diminish coaches' motivation, contribute to emotional exhaustion, and underscore the importance of providing mental health support and resilience-building interventions. Furthermore, persistent underperformance has been shown to weaken coach-athlete relationships by increasing interpersonal conflict and reducing trust within the team. Consequently, fostering open communication, collaborative problem-solving, and supportive team environments is essential for addressing performance challenges and strengthening team cohesion (Carter & Blackman, 2023; Jones & Wallace, 2024).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of Physical Education teachers serving as sports coaches. Through in-depth interviews, this approach gathered rich, non-numerical data to deeply understand and contextualize the essence of their coaching roles within their professional environment.

Participants

This qualitative phenomenological study involved public secondary school teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte, with five participating in in-depth interviews and four to seven taking part in focus group discussions. Following established research guidelines, this sample size of three to ten participants was selected to reach data saturation and comprehensively capture their lived experiences.

Data Collection Methods

In-Depth Interviews (IDIs): Individual face-to-face, semi-structured interviews lasting under an hour were conducted using an approved interview guide to gather detailed lived experiences from five teacher-coaches, which were audio-recorded, note-taken, and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Focus Group Discussion (FGDs): Semi-structured group sessions involving four to seven teacher-coaches were conducted and audio-recorded using the interview guide to explore shared perspectives and reach data saturation, with responses transcribed verbatim for thematic analysis.

Instrument Validation

To ensure methodological rigor and qualitative trustworthiness, four main criteria were explicitly applied: (1) Member Checking (Credibility) was conducted by returning interview transcripts to participants to verify that thematic interpretations accurately reflected their lived experiences; (2) Triangulation (Credibility & Dependability) was established by comparing individual narratives from In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) with group perspectives from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); (3) Reflexivity (Confirmability) was maintained through researcher journaling to mitigate personal biases; and (4) Audit Trails (Dependability) were documented by logging all raw recordings, transcripts, and Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic coding steps.

Data Analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis framework to identify, code, and define core themes. To ensure rigor and accuracy, the researcher iteratively coded the transcripts, discarded irrelevant data, and verified the emerging patterns with a data analyst. Finally, the findings were structured into essential themes and core ideas, supported by textual discussions and direct verbatim quotes from the participants.

Ethical Considerations

This research strictly adhered to established ethical standards to ensure responsible conduct, data trustworthiness, and the security, anonymity, and confidentiality of all participating teacher-coaches in the Division of Davao del Norte. Formal ethical approval for conducting this study involving human subjects was officially granted by the Institutional Research Ethics Committee (REC) prior to data collection. The study was

executed in full compliance with core ethical parameters, including social value, informed consent, participant vulnerability assessment, risk-benefit balancing, privacy and confidentiality, justice, transparency, researcher qualification, facility adequacy, and community involvement.

RESULTS

Lived Experiences of Teacher-Coaches

Table 1 presents the five essential themes and core ideas derived from the participants' accounts of their experiences with setbacks and delayed triumphs. These themes were identified through the thematic analysis of both in-depth interviews and focus group discussions and are supported by verbatim statements from the teacher-coaches.

ESSENTIAL THEMES	CORE IDEAS
Limitations on Equipment and Facility	- Experiencing training difficulties due to outdated and substandard sports equipment - Dealing with uneven athlete development caused by inadequate facilities - Suffering training-related injuries due to outdated and insufficient equipment - Struggled with extra expenses caused by a lack of sports facilities - Went through challenges of learning without proper physical training resources - Encountered constraints in training and recruitment caused by a lack of equipment - Handled insufficient support for equipment and facilities.
Experience of Self-Doubt and Setbacks	- Struggled with personal expectations in coaching outcomes - Undergo periods of frustration and self-doubt despite consistent effort - Struggled with periods of defeat before achieving victories - Dealt with periods of uncertainty, self-doubt, and early losses
Lack of Training and Preparation	- Witnessed the consequences of minimal practice - Encountered challenges from lack of structured coaching programs - Faced the demands of long-term, consistent training - Struggled with learning beyond just the rules to master techniques
Challenges Related to Financial and Coaching Resources	- Felt the weight of responsibility to compensate for inadequate resources - Felt overwhelmed by the lack of proper training and resources - Sacrificed personal money and resources to ensure regular practice. - Felt the burden of making critical decisions on financial and resource allocation
Time Management Challenges Across Academic and Coaching Roles	- Struggling to manage time between school, family, and coaching duties. - Went through adjustments in daily routines to accommodate teaching and coaching - Encountered moments of confusion when balancing dual responsibilities. - Facing the challenges of keeping focus between teaching and coaching duties

Coping Mechanism of Teacher-Coaches

Table 2 presents the coping strategies employed by teacher-coaches in managing the challenges they encounter.

ESSENTIAL THEMES	CORE IDEAS
Establishing Strong Support System	● Having family time as a means of stress regulation ● Gaining confidence from administrative support in sports ● Gaining stability through parental financial assistance ● Seeking emotional support from family and students
Developing Mechanisms to Manage Stress	● Using physical activity to release stress. ● Finding clarity through reflective viewing of motivational content ● Organizing outings to help players release stress ● Solving instructional challenges to reduce stress
Drawing Inspiration from Athletes Dedication and Positive Feedback	● Gaining motivation from athletes' passion for sports ● Putting athlete gratitude at the center of personal motivation ● Finding inspiration in athletes' desire for consistent coaching ● Creating connections through bonding with athletes
Guiding Athletes in Their Growth and Journey	● Gaining fulfillment through students' victories ● Sustaining commitment through students' development ● Committing growth by prioritizing athlete support ● Maintaining commitment through consecutive competition involvement ● Teaching discipline and humility to athletes ● Motivating athletes to train harder after losing
Sustaining Motivation Through Purpose and Positivity	● Finding fulfillment through athletes' victories ● Drawing inspiration by observing an athlete's passion ● Engaging in emotional release to prevent negativity from affecting internal motivation ● Regulating emotions through hopeful thinking ● Celebrating and recognizing small successes and steady improvement as meaningful reminders of progress
Strengthening Collaboration in Coaching	● Establishing foundational relationships through reciprocal effort and mutual respect ● Creating collaboration between parents and coaches ● Seeking advice from experienced co-coaches ● Collaborating with fellow teachers and coaches
Developing Positive Outlook and Attitude	● Seeking guidance from the lord during challenges ● Anchoring in hope through a faith-based relationship with God ● Sustaining optimism despite exhaustion ● Adopting flexibility to address unexpected issues
Engaging in Personal and Professional Development	● Gaining knowledge through professional development programs ● Searching the internet for updated training methods ● Studying athletes daily to improve coaching effectiveness ● Gaining guidance through peer coaching insights
Cultivating Resilience and Perseverance	● Using defeats as motivation for continued practice ● Creating structured coaching plans ● Seeking external resources to support athlete training ● Striving continuously for athlete improvement ● Creating innovative approaches via peer collaboration

Insights of Teacher-Coaches

Table 3 details the core insights drawn by teacher-coaches from their coaching experiences.

ESSENTIAL THEMES	CORE IDEAS
Developing a Holistic and Athlete-Centered Coaching Philosophy	- Teacher-coaches view effective coaching as intentional, planned, and pedagogically grounded rather than rushed or reactive - Coaching is understood as individualized, rejecting a one-size-fits-all approach to athlete development. - Holistic coaching integrates technical training, discipline, personal growth, and athlete well-being - Strong coach-athlete relationships are perceived as a strategic foundation for long-term development amid delayed success
Sustaining Commitment through Ethical and Service-Oriented Coaching	- Coaching is framed as service rather than the pursuit of immediate victories - Ethical decision-making prioritizes athlete welfare over personal recognition or short-term performance - Personal and financial sacrifices are interpreted as investments in athletes' long-term futures - Commitment is sustained by aligning coaching practices with values of care, responsibility, and purpose
Embracing Process-Oriented and Goal-Focused Development	- Teacher-coaches emphasize process goals over immediate competitive outcomes - Structured planning, monitoring, and reflection provide direction during prolonged periods without visible success - Delayed triumphs are interpreted as signals for refinement rather than failure - Trial-and-error strategies are normalized as part of long-term athlete and team development
Balancing Multiple Roles through Time Management and Self-Care	- Effective time management is essential in sustaining the dual roles of teacher and coach - Flexibility allows teacher-coaches to navigate competing professional demands without role conflict - Conscious role transitions help prevent burnout and emotional exhaustion - Protecting physical and mental health is recognized as necessary for coaching longevity
Drawing Strength from Reflection, Support Systems, and Collaboration	- Reflection helps teacher-coaches re-anchor their purpose during periods of stagnation or frustration - Emotional, social, and spiritual support systems function as critical coping mechanisms - Collaboration with mentors and fellow coaches mitigates isolation and sustains motivation - Seeking help is perceived as professional maturity rather than weakness
Reframing Failure and Delayed Success as Part of Growth	- Failures and setbacks are reframed as necessary learning stages rather than endpoints - Accountability and self-evaluation inform continuous improvement in coaching practice - Athletes' and coaches' sacrifices are understood as shared investments toward future success - Delayed triumphs are viewed as integral to developing resilience, competence, and long-term achievement

DISCUSSION

Lived Experiences of Teacher-Coaches in Secondary Schools from Delayed Triumphs

This phenomenological study explores the lived experiences of secondary school teacher-coaches navigating prolonged setbacks before achieving delayed sports triumphs. Specifically, this section presents the primary findings on their coping mechanisms, illustrating a narrative of profound resilience. The emerging themes demonstrate how teacher-coaches rely on internal fortitude, collaborative networks, and continuous self-improvement to transform sustained pressure into eventual success through emotional and psychological mastery.

Limitations on Equipment and Facility

The participants perceived that material conditions, particularly the limitations in available equipment, posed significant challenges. The coaches often work with outdated equipment, inadequate training fields, and a lack of essential facilities for proper sports training. They frequently express frustration at having to accomplish as much as possible with limited resources, striving to meet the needs of students who are passionate about sports despite these constraints.

“Ako, I cannot afford man gud to provide new facilities. I know my facilities are outdated man gud. Usahay maglisod mig training kay dili proper ug daan na among equipment.” - IDI 2

(Personally, I really cannot afford to provide new facilities. I know my facilities are really outdated. Sometimes we struggle with training because our equipment is old and not up to standard.) – IDI 2

“Way back 2013 man ko nisuold sa table tennis ako jud ang nagpalit sailing mga gamit, like ingon ni ma’am, ang amoang table kay kahoy lang na gisumpay-sumpay na table kay kulang man ang area for training ug mga gamit, so dagdag gastos napod sya.” – FGD 3

(Way back in 2013, when I first got into table tennis, I had to buy all the equipment. Like what Ma’am said, our table was just pieces of wood joined together because the training area and equipment were so lacking and inefficient. So, it ended up being an extra expense for me.) – FGD 3

The findings of this study are further supported by Dela Cruz and Reyes (2022), who reported that the quality of training facilities significantly influences coaches' emotional well-being and perceived coaching competence. Their study found that coaches working in inadequately equipped or poorly maintained training environments frequently experienced self-doubt, frustration, and diminished confidence in their ability to effectively prepare athletes for competition. These psychological challenges often discouraged coaches from implementing innovative training methods or experimenting with new coaching strategies, thereby limiting opportunities for athlete development and team performance improvement. The authors further emphasized that improving the availability and quality of sports facilities and equipment not only enhances training effectiveness but also strengthens coaches' self-efficacy, motivation, and overall psychological well-being. Collectively, these findings underscore the importance of investing in adequate sports infrastructure as a means of supporting teacher-coaches' professional effectiveness, fostering positive coaching experiences, and promoting sustained athlete development.

Experiences of Self-Doubt and Setbacks

The second theme that was uncovered was that of experiencing self-doubt and personal setbacks that emerged during the process of coaching. The feelings of inadequacy that were shared by the participants, especially

when they or their players did not do well in an important competition, culminated in times when they felt they were either not good at what they were doing or maybe should never have become coaches in the first place. This theme also highlights their ultimate success in overcoming such personal moments of sorrow.

“I’ve experienced of periods of setbacks before achieving wins. I’ve faced countless instances of periods of failure, but later, after that unsuccessful season, I didn’t consider it as failure anymore but rather as an integral part of journey towards success.” – IDI 5

(I have experienced periods of setbacks before achieving victories. I have faced countless instances of failure, but later, after that unsuccessful season, I no longer considered it a failure but rather an integral part of my journey toward success.) – IDI 5

“Sa una jud lisud kaayo sya, mag sige pakag ingun sa imuha self if kaya ba nako ni na dili man ko kabalo ani na sport. So first try wala jud mi nakarga, napildi mi and wala ko kabalo kung unsaon napod nko sya pag daug sunod. So mao to nangayo kog tambag sa ubang coahes, tas nag tuoon ko sa YouTube and attend ug seminar tas training sa mga bata hangtud sa naka DAVRAA jud mi.” – FGD 3

(At first, it was really very difficult. I kept telling myself and questioning whether I could really do it, especially since I didn’t know much about this sport. During our first try, we didn’t achieve anything—we lost, and I didn’t know how I could help the team win the next time. Due to this, I consulted with other coaches, learned on YouTube, took part in seminars and kept on training the children until at some point we had reached DAVRAA.)- FGD 3

This theme is supported by the study of Bautista (2024), which examined the challenges experienced by educators who simultaneously fulfill teaching and coaching responsibilities. The findings revealed that many teacher-coaches experienced role conflict and feelings of guilt as they struggled to balance instructional duties with the demands of athlete training and competition preparation. This dual responsibility often resulted in physical and emotional exhaustion, limiting their ability to fully perform both roles and potentially delaying the achievement of coaching success. Nevertheless, participants who successfully developed effective time management strategies and adapted to these competing demands demonstrated improved coaching performance and greater competitive success over time.

Lack of Training and Preparation

The next theme is the challenge posed by the lack of formal preparation for coaching. The fact is that the candidate teachers-coaches felt they were hired for coaching positions not necessarily based on any qualifications or knowledge of coaching but perhaps because of availability or passion. Thus, the need was for them to learn coaching skills amid a coaching role without necessarily going through the formal preparation needed for high-profile coaching positions.

“Kinahanglan pa ko magtuon og maayo sa taekwondo, dili lang sa rules kundi sa skills gyud nila. Kay dili man ko player, teacher-coach ra ko, so kinahanglan naa koy kahibalo para maka-share pud ko sa ila.” – IDI 1

(I needed to study taekwondo more thoroughly—not just the rules, but especially the skills themselves. Since I am not a player but only a teacher-coach, I needed to have enough knowledge so I could properly share it with them.) – IDI 1

“First time jud nako mag coach was 2017 sa basketball girls, confident mi ato na madaog mi kay ang mga bata fresh from DAVRAA and ako ang coach ra ang bag o, nya ang mga bata kay kompyansa ra kayo, mag practice ra pag hapit na ang division meet, unya ang uban kay naa nay attitude, dako na ang ulo magsalig na,

as a coach kumpyansa ko saila, magsalig rapod ko, so sa pag-abot sa competition, mao to napildi, mao to ang isa sa experiences na sakit para saakoa, so ang point ato is team lack of preparation and attitude sa players.”

– FGD 2

(My first-time coaching was in 2017 with the girls’ basketball team. We were confident we would win because the players were fresh from DAVRAA and I was the only new one, the coach. But the players were overconfident, only practicing close to the division meet. Some had bad attitudes, became arrogant, and relied on their past skills. As their coach, I also became overconfident and relied too much on them. When the competition came, we lost. That was a painful experience for me. The main problem was lack of preparation and poor player attitude.) – FGD 2

Cagayan (2021) examined the role of experienced coaches in supporting the professional development of novice coaches. The study found that novice coaches who lacked mentorship during their early years required more time to develop effective training methods and coaching competencies. Relying solely on books or online resources proved insufficient for mastering the complex practical and interpersonal skills required in coaching. These findings highlight the importance of mentorship from experienced coaches in facilitating knowledge transfer, strengthening coaching competence, and accelerating the professional growth of beginning coaches.

Challenges Related to Financial and Coaching Resources

The theme highlights how limited funding and inadequate access to coaching support significantly affect both athlete development and coaching effectiveness. Participants emphasized that financial constraints often restrict access to essential resources such as equipment, training facilities, and competitive opportunities. At the same time, insufficient institutional support can lead to gaps in coaching quality, preparation, and program sustainability. These limitations create added pressure on teacher-coaches, who must balance multiple roles while working within constrained environments. Overall, the theme underscores how resource scarcity shapes both the experiences and outcomes of athletes and coaches.

“The principal would talk to you privately to ask, ‘what have you done’ ‘what went thorough.’ So, with that also, hindi naman siya nagbibigay ng advice, ikaw ang dapat magbigay sa kaniya kung ano ang dapat gagawin mo. ... And beyond that, it’s also about healing your inner self. ... The first things you need to consider are money, financial support, facilities, and time.” – IDI 1

(The principal would talk to you privately to ask, ‘what have you done’ what went through.’ He doesn’t give advice; you should tell him what you plan to do. Beyond that, it helps heal your inner self. The first things to consider are money, financial support, facilities, and time.) – IDI 1

“Wala jud, it’s not enough, pila raman nang 3 ka adlaw compared sa years of training. Tas ang lack of training pajud sa mga coaches, so kami nalang mag research mag tan-aw og YouTube.” – FGD 3

(There really wasn’t enough training, three days of training can’t compare to years of proper experience. There was a lack of training for coaches, so we had to research and watch YouTube tutorials instead.) – FGD 3

As stated by Rahmani et al. (2024), it emphasized the critical role of financial support in facilitating athletes’ access to quality training, qualified coaching, and essential recovery resources, all of which directly influence athletic performance and long-term development. The study found that inadequate funding creates disparities in access to high-quality sports programs, placing many athletes at a competitive disadvantage despite their potential. Financial constraints were also associated with increased stress and diminished focus, which may negatively affect both athlete performance and coaching effectiveness. Furthermore, the unequal distribution of financial resources across sports programs and geographic regions continues to hinder equitable sports

development. These findings underscore that financial limitations remain a significant barrier to effective coaching, athlete development, and sustained competitive success.

Time Management Challenges Across Academic and Coaching Roles

The theme highlights the difficulty of balancing instructional responsibilities with coaching demands, where individuals must constantly divide their attention between classroom tasks and athletic commitments. Participants described how overlapping schedules, extended working hours, and competing priorities often create pressure in fulfilling both roles effectively. They emphasized that managing these dual responsibilities requires careful prioritization, structured planning, and personal sacrifice. Despite these efforts, maintaining a balance between professional duties and personal well-being remains a persistent challenge. Overall, the theme underscores the complexity of navigating multiple roles within limited time resources.

“There were changes in my coaching styles, of course, so you need to develop that spiritual and intellectual aspect also, tapos adjust sa training and practice styles pag dili effective sa bata Kinahanglan sad as coach kabalo ka mag handle sa imong schedule as teacher and coach at the same time.” – IDI 1

(There were changes in my coaching styles, of course, so you need to develop that spiritual and intellectual aspect also, then adjust your training and practice styles when it's not effective for the child. You also need as a coach to know how to handle your schedule as a teacher and coach at the same time.) – IDI 1

“Sa akong pag ka coach, naabot jud ko sa point na maglisod ko ug focus sa pagtudlo sakong mga students kay akong huna-huna naa sa akong mga athletes, kung nag practice ba sila or wala labi na pag hapit na ang game tapos need nko mag tudlo kay ting exam napo sa mga bata. So mao na usahay mawala ko sa focus.” – FGD 2

(In my journey as a coach, I really reached the point where I had difficulty focusing on teaching my students because my mind was on my athletes, whether they were practicing or not, especially when the game was near and then I needed to teach because it was already exam time for the students. So that's why sometimes I lose focus.) – FGD 2

Arcenas et al. (2025) reported that teacher-coaches are required to manage multiple responsibilities, including classroom instruction, athlete training, competition preparation, and administrative tasks, which frequently result in role conflict and heightened stress. Although the study found that teacher-coaches generally demonstrate effective time management skills, they continue to experience poor work-life balance due to the extensive demands of their dual roles. These findings suggest that time management alone is insufficient to mitigate the pressures associated with simultaneously fulfilling teaching and coaching responsibilities. Furthermore, prolonged working hours, frequent task switching, and competing professional obligations contribute to physical fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and diminished overall well-being. Collectively, these findings highlight time constraints as a persistent challenge that can adversely affect both coaching effectiveness and teaching performance, underscoring the need for institutional support and workload management strategies.

Coping Mechanism of Teacher-Coaches in Secondary Schools from Delayed Triumphs

This section presents the primary findings regarding the coping mechanisms utilized by teacher-coaches to navigate sustained pressure and emotional setbacks. The identified themes illustrate a narrative of profound resilience, demonstrating how coaches rely on internal fortitude, collaborative networks, and continuous self-improvement to transform prolonged challenges into eventual success through psychological and emotional mastery.

Establishing Strong Support System

Establishing a strong support system is fundamental to sustaining the well-being and effectiveness of teacher-coaches as they navigate the dual responsibilities of classroom instruction and athletic coaching. Meaningful support from family provides a vital source of emotional stability, enabling teacher-coaches to cope with the stress and fatigue associated with their professional roles. Likewise, encouragement, recognition, and institutional support from school administrators reinforce their confidence, validate their efforts, and strengthen their commitment to athlete development. Financial assistance, whether provided by educational institutions or supplemented by family members, further alleviates economic pressures, allowing teacher-coaches to devote greater attention to both instructional and coaching responsibilities. Moreover, positive relationships with family, colleagues, and student-athletes foster emotional resilience, enhance professional satisfaction, and reinforce a strong sense of purpose. Collectively, these forms of support promote resilience, strengthen self-efficacy, and sustain teacher-coaches' motivation, enabling them to effectively overcome challenges and remain committed to achieving long-term success in both teaching and coaching.

“The principal would talk to you privately to ask, ‘what have you done’ ‘what went through.’ So, with that also, hindi naman siya nagbibigay ng advice, ikaw ang dapat magbigay sa kaniya kung ano ang dapat gagawin mo. And beyond that, it’s also about healing your inner self. ... The first things you need to consider are money, financial support, facilities, and time.” – IDI 1

(The principal would talk to you privately to ask, ‘what have you done’ what went through.’ He doesn’t give advice; you should tell him what you plan to do. Beyond that, it helps heal your inner self. The first things to consider are money, financial support, facilities, and time.) – IDI 1

“Now on managing my stress kay for me is to be with my family, mag give og time for family, kay mao jud na sila akong motivation to keep going, ginadedicat nako akong efforts para saila.” – FGD 5

(Now, for me, managing stress means being with my family, giving time to family, because they are my motivation to keep going. I dedicate my efforts to them.)

The findings of this study are consistent with those reported by Dimapilis and Tanedo (2023), who examined the buffering effect of family support on role strain among dual-role educators. Their study demonstrated that understanding, encouragement, and flexibility from family members play a vital role in mitigating the psychological stress associated with balancing teaching and coaching responsibilities, particularly during prolonged periods of limited competitive success. Similarly, Santos (2022) identified work–family balance as a key determinant of resilience among educators with athletic coaching responsibilities, emphasizing its contribution to sustained well-being and professional effectiveness. Likewise, Lee (2021) argued that emotional support within the family strengthens long-term professional commitment by enabling educators to remain motivated despite recurring setbacks and challenges. Collectively, these studies suggest that family support serves as a critical protective factor that fosters resilience, reduces role-related stress, and sustains teacher-coaches' commitment to their professional responsibilities, even during extended periods of limited success.

Developing Mechanisms to Manage Stress

Sustaining effectiveness in dual roles as a teacher-coach requires the intentional development of practical strategies to manage stress. Participants conveyed that the demands of teaching responsibilities, combined with the pressures of training athletes and navigating competitive outcomes, often created emotional and mental strain that needed to be actively addressed. To cope, they engaged in physical activities not only as part of training but also as personal outlets for releasing tension and restoring energy. They also sought clarity and

renewed motivation through reflective engagement with inspirational content, which helped them reframe setbacks and maintain focus. Beyond individual strategies, organizing team outings emerged as a meaningful approach to easing collective stress, fostering camaraderie, and creating a supportive environment for both coaches and players. Additionally, proactively addressing instructional and coaching challenges allowed them to minimize uncertainties that often contributed to stress, enabling smoother classroom and training experiences. These mechanisms highlight a deliberate effort to balance professional demands with personal well-being, suggesting that effective stress management is not merely reactive but a continuous and adaptive process essential for long-term success in both teaching and coaching roles.

“My number one is for me, not just physical exercise but also to eat more. Yun ang nagpapawala ng stress sa akin. A little physical exercise, eat more, sufficient sleep, and of course time management. Sa exercise kay naga jogging ko or naga gym para mahuwasan ko sakong mga gibati.” – IDI 5

(My number one priority is for me, not just physical exercise but also eating more. That's what relieves my stress. A little physical exercise, eat more, sufficient sleep, and of course time management. For exercise, I go jogging or I go to the gym so I can release what I'm feeling.) – IDI 5

“Isa pud sa makastress kay kanang naa juy specific skills para sa mga bata na dili jud nila makuha, and isa sa nakahelp saako og manage kay sa pagfigure-out kung unsay roots sa problems and i-fix nan a problem, so mafulfill ka pag makalearn ka kung giunsa nimo pagsolve ang problem.” – FGD 3

(One cause of stress is when children cannot master specific skills. The thing that assisted me in coping was locating the root of the issue and rectifying it and when you learn how it is solved you are satisfied.) – FGD 3

The findings of this study are supported by evidence that releasing stress through emotional expression and health-promoting activities is an effective coping mechanism for professionals in high-performance environments. Dela Cruz and Santos (2023), together with Ramirez and Lopez (2022), reported that sports personnel who regularly participated in structured debriefing sessions and physical recovery activities experienced significantly lower levels of emotional exhaustion and burnout. These coping strategies enable teacher-coaches to process accumulated stress following training and competitions, thereby reducing emotional overload and supporting more effective decision-making. Similarly, Johnson and Miller (2021) found that engagement in physical stress-relief activities promotes physiological recovery, enhances emotional regulation, and strengthens psychological well-being among sports professionals. Such recovery practices help sustain motivation and professional commitment despite recurring setbacks and delayed competitive success. Collectively, these findings underscore the importance of integrating physical and emotional recovery strategies into coaching practice as a means of fostering resilience, preventing burnout, and promoting the long-term well-being of teacher-coaches.

Drawing Inspiration from Athletes' Dedication and Positive Feedback

A basic type of coping strategy that reflects how teacher-coaches sustained their commitment by anchoring their motivation in the visible passion, perseverance, and appreciation demonstrated by their athletes. Rather than focusing solely on the pressures and setbacks inherent in dual roles, they drew strength from their athletes' enthusiasm for sports, their gratitude toward guidance, and their consistent desire for mentorship, which collectively reinforced the coaches' sense of purpose. These experiences also fostered meaningful interpersonal connections, as bonding moments with athletes became sources of emotional support and professional fulfillment. In this way, motivation was not only internally driven but also relationally constructed, where positive feedback and shared dedication cultivated a resilient mindset. Such dynamics suggest that the reciprocal relationship between coach and athlete plays a crucial role in shaping sustained

engagement, highlighting how affirmation and connection can transform challenges into opportunities for growth and renewed commitment.

“Ang magmotivate jud sa akoo is ang fire sa mga bata, ang passion nila sa ilang sports. Makita nako sailang mata na gusto jud nila ang sports. Makita nako sila na down sila sailang school pero pagabot sa training, mabalik ang ilahang gana.” – IDI 4

(What truly motivates me is the fire I see in my athletes—their passion for their sport. I can see it in their eyes, that deep desire to pursue it. Even when they feel down because of school, the moment they step into training, their energy comes back.) – IDI 4

“Aside from appreciation from other coaches, nakapamotivate jud saako ang appreciation from my own athletes, especially sa kanang mga graduating na, ang ilang words of appreciation kay nagamotivate saako na magpadayon saakong ginabuhay as coach na makapadevelop sad sa mga skills sa mga bata.” - FGD 5

(Beyond appreciation from other coaches, what truly motivates me is appreciation from my own athletes — especially the graduating ones. Their words of gratitude motivate me to continue doing what I do as a coach and to keep developing the children’s skills.) – FGD 5

The findings of this study suggest that athletes' commitment and dedication serve as important sources of intrinsic motivation for teacher-coaches, particularly during prolonged periods of delayed competitive success. Pascua (2023) examined the reciprocal relationship between coach motivation and athlete engagement in long-term sports development programs and found that coaches experienced renewed commitment and perseverance when athletes consistently demonstrated resilience, discipline, and dedication, especially following competitive setbacks. This reciprocal dynamic creates a positive feedback loop in which athletes' sustained effort validates the time, energy, and commitment invested by their coaches, thereby reducing discouragement and reinforcing professional persistence. Soriano (2023) demonstrated that inspirational motivation fosters a shared vision and meaning in coaching, while Kim and Alvarez (2024) noted that transformational leadership enhances coach resilience and self-efficacy during prolonged setbacks. Consequently, this approach serves as a critical coping mechanism that reinforces coaching identity and team resilience amidst competitive struggles.

Guiding Athletes in Their Growth and Journey

Guiding athletes in their growth and journey reflects a coping orientation where teacher-coaches derive fulfillment not merely from victories, but from witnessing the progressive development of their students’ skills, character, and resilience. Their commitment is sustained by actively supporting athletes through setbacks, academic demands, and personal challenges, reinforcing the belief that growth extends beyond the playing field. Continuous involvement in competitions becomes a platform for reinforcing discipline, humility, and perseverance, rather than solely the pursuit of winning. Losses are reframed as opportunities to motivate athletes to train harder and cultivate a stronger mindset, allowing both coach and athlete to evolve together. Through this lens, success is anchored in the transformation of athletes into determined and grounded individuals, making each small victory deeply meaningful. Such a perspective underscores that the enduring impact of coaching lies in shaping life-ready individuals, not just producing competitive outcomes.

“Self-fulfillment pud sa amoang teachers, na naa gani mi studyante na ma daog. Dili gyud siya makambyuan ug prize na feeling, na proud gyud.” – IDI 2

(We, teachers, feel a lot of self-fulfillments when one of our students becomes the winner. That feeling of pride is priceless.) – IDI 2

“Nakita sad nako ang progress sa mga bata, dili stagnant ilang skills, naga elevate gyud ang ilang skills and

kaya na buhaton, malipay sad ko as coach na kaya na diay niya na, and marealize nako na need jud diay ang constant training.” – FGD 1

(I also see the progress of the kids—their skills don’t remain stagnant but keep improving—and when I witness that they can do it, I also feel happy as a coach and realize that constant training is truly necessary.) – FGD 1

This has been identified as a theme within literature, and it is seen to support the finding that the satisfaction derived from an athlete’s victory often surpasses any material reward or recognition received by the coach. Del Rosario (2022) emphasized through a phenomenological lens that witnessing athletes achieve personal milestones provides deeper fulfillment for coach-teachers than winning trophies, helping them cope with the emotional and financial limitations of their role. Similarly, Smith and Lee (2021) highlight that coaching satisfaction is strongly associated with intrinsic rewards such as emotional fulfillment and perceived meaningful impact on learners’ lives. These perspectives suggest that coach-teachers reframe success through the lens of athlete development rather than personal accolades. This mindset reduces occupational stress and reinforces long-term commitment despite limited external compensation. As a result, satisfaction becomes deeply rooted in relational and developmental achievements rather than tangible rewards.

Sustaining Motivation Through Purpose and Positivity

Despite recurring challenges and competitive setbacks, teacher-coaches sustained their motivation by grounding their efforts in a strong sense of purpose and maintaining a positive outlook. They derived profound fulfillment from their athletes’ achievements, viewing each success not merely as a competitive outcome but as a meaningful affirmation of their dedication, mentorship, and guidance. Likewise, witnessing their athletes’ passion, perseverance, and commitment served as a powerful source of inspiration, reinforcing their determination to continue coaching despite adversity. To preserve their psychological well-being, teacher-coaches engaged in healthy emotional coping strategies that allowed them to process stress and disappointment without diminishing their motivation. Hopeful thinking further enabled them to reframe setbacks as temporary challenges and valuable learning experiences rather than permanent failures. Additionally, recognizing incremental improvements and celebrating small achievements fostered a sustained sense of progress, strengthened their resilience, and reinforced their long-term commitment to athlete development and coaching excellence.

“As a coach, maganahan nalang ka sa imong pag ka coach sad kay makita jud nmo ang pag pursige sa mga bata. Ang dedication nila sa sports and training. Kay bisan wala mi schedule sa traing karon, sila na mismo ang mag training-training. Tapos sila pay mo duol sa akua para mangutan ug naa bay practice ron. Kani palng makita na nimo ang passion nila as athlete.” – IDI 3

(As a coach, you start to enjoy being a coach when you see the perseverance of the kids, their dedication to the sport and training. Even when we don’t have scheduled practice, they train on their own. They even came to me to ask if there’s practice today. That’s when you really see their passion as athletes.) – IDI 3

“Biggest satisfaction and fulfillment are madaog ang akong mga athlete. Makarealize ka na mao nani ang results sa tanang kahago, training ug effort nimo as coach sa mga bata. Bisn paman sa kalisod, maabot rajud ang panahon na makmbyuhan nag kalipay ug kadaugan.” - FGD 2

(The biggest satisfaction and fulfillment are seeing my athletes win. You realize that this is the result of all your hard work, training, and effort as a coach for the kids. Even through hardships, the time will come when joy and victory are finally achieved.) - FGD 2

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Marasigan (2024), who explained that the process of

vicarious goal attainment enables coaches to derive a deep sense of fulfillment from their athletes' achievements, thereby serving as a powerful source of intrinsic motivation. The study further suggested that coaches who experienced setbacks during their own athletic careers often transform these experiences into meaningful motivational resources through their mentoring roles. Similarly, Castillo et al. (2022) emphasized that constructing meaning from past failures enhances resilience, strengthens professional commitment, and promotes long-term engagement among sports mentors. Collectively, these studies indicate that teacher-coaches' emotional investment in their athletes' success helps transform experiences of frustration and burnout into renewed purpose, motivation, and professional satisfaction. This psychological process of reframing adversity into meaningful coaching experiences highlights resilience as a dynamic outcome of reflective practice, sustained mentorship, and continued commitment to athlete development.

Strengthening Collaboration in Coaching

Developing strong collaborative relationships emerged as a sustainable strategy for addressing the challenges associated with prolonged periods of limited competitive success. Teacher-coaches emphasized the importance of fostering respectful partnerships and shared responsibility among parents, fellow educators, school administrators, and coaching staff to create a supportive environment for both coaches and student-athletes. Maintaining open communication with parents and academic stakeholders facilitated coordinated efforts in balancing athletes' academic and athletic commitments while reinforcing a unified support system. Likewise, seeking mentorship from experienced coaches provided valuable technical guidance, practical strategies, and emotional support, particularly during difficult competitive seasons. Collaboration with fellow teachers and coaching personnel further enabled the effective distribution of responsibilities, improved coordination between academic and athletic obligations, and reduced role conflict. Collectively, these collaborative practices strengthened professional relationships, enhanced coping capacity, and fostered resilience, enabling teacher-coaches to adapt more effectively to challenges while sustaining their commitment to athlete development and coaching excellence.

“Makita lang nako sila na naga pursigi, interest, and respect sa akua even though I’m not their trainer. If they show their respect, okay lang sa akua as long as buotan sila sa akua.” – IDI 4

(I see their perseverance, interest, and respect toward me—even though I’m not their trainer. If they show their respect, I’m okay with it if they are kind to me.) – IDI 4

“Dili lang biya all the time kita ra ang always gamotivate sa bata, naa juy time na need nato mismo og motivation, kanang nay mga words of encouragement na naka-acknowledge sad sila saakong efforts as coach, isa na sa nakapamotivate jud saako.” – FGD 4

(It’s not always us coaches who motivate the athletes; there are times when we also need motivation — words of encouragement that acknowledge my efforts as a coach really motivate me.) – FGD 4

The findings of this study are further supported by Dela Cruz (2022), who emphasized that effective coach-athlete relationships are found on mutual respect, trust, and sustained relational engagement. The study highlighted that both coaches and athletes play active roles in maintaining positive interpersonal and professional relationships that foster athlete development and performance. Similarly, Ramirez (2023) explained that resilience in coaching is strengthened through consistent communication, mutual trust, and shared goal setting, enabling coaches and athletes to reframe setbacks as valuable opportunities for growth and continuous improvement. Likewise, Lee (2024) reported that long-term athlete development is closely associated with coaches who engage in reflective practice, using failures and challenges as structured learning experiences to refine coaching strategies and athlete preparation. Collectively, these studies suggest that

perseverance in coaching is not merely an individual characteristic, but a relational process developed through continuous collaboration, reflective practice, effective communication, and trust-building between coaches and athletes.

Developing Positive Outlook and Attitude

Developing a positive outlook and adaptive attitude emerged as a vital psychological resource that enabled teacher-coaches to cope with the emotional demands of competition and the challenges of delayed success. Participants described how seeking spiritual guidance through prayer and maintaining a trusting relationship with God strengthened their ability to remain composed, hopeful, and purposeful during periods of adversity. This spiritual grounding allowed them to reframe setbacks as opportunities for personal and professional growth rather than as indicators of failure. Rather than eliminating the difficulties inherent in coaching, optimism and faith foster emotional stability, sustained motivation, and perseverance in the face of recurring challenges. In addition, participants emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility when responding to unexpected situations, enabling them to adapt effectively to the dynamic demands of coaching and athlete development. Collectively, these findings suggest that resilience among teacher-coaches is strengthened through the integration of spiritual grounding, positive cognitive reframing, and an adaptive mindset, all of which contribute to sustained well-being, coaching effectiveness, and a positive team environment.

“Kanang optimism lang. Kanang kahit kapoy na, positive gihapon. ... So kana jud, be optimistic lang.” – IDI 3

(Just hold on to optimism. Even when you're exhausted, stay positive. So really, just be optimistic.) - IDI 3

“Pag down najud kayo ko, gaseek ko og guidance kay Lord and gapray jud ko always to overcome my challenges.” – FGD 1

(When I feel down, I seek guidance from the Lord, and I always pray to overcome my challenges.) – FGD 1

The findings of this study are consistent with those reported by Estrella (2022), who emphasized the significant role of spirituality in helping coaches cope with athletic setbacks and prolonged periods of limited success. The study found that engaging in prayer, spiritual reflection, and seeking divine guidance enabled coaches to recover more effectively from failures while sustaining hope and commitment to their professional responsibilities. Similarly, Santos and Lim (2023) reported that spiritual coping strategies promote emotional regulation, psychological well-being, and sustain motivation among sports practitioners during challenging competitive seasons. Furthermore, Estrella (2022) highlighted, through qualitative interviews, that coaches who regularly practiced spiritual reflection were more likely to reinterpret failures as opportunities for personal and professional growth rather than as indicators of defeat. Likewise, Santos and Lim (2023) observed that faith-based coping strengthened coaches' perseverance and reinforced their commitment to long-term coaching goals despite recurring setbacks. Collectively, these studies suggest that resilience extends beyond psychological adaptation and is deeply rooted in personal belief systems, with spirituality serving as a stabilizing force that fosters meaning-making, emotional resilience, and sustained commitment to coaching excellence.

Engaging in Personal and Professional Development

Engaging in continuous personal and professional development emerged as a key strategy that enabled teacher-coaches to effectively manage the demands and challenges of competitive sports. Participants emphasized the value of participating in professional development programs, which enhanced their pedagogical competencies and coaching practices while equipping them with updated knowledge and skills. They also highlighted the importance of independently exploring evidence-based coaching methods and emerging training strategies

through online resources, allowing them to adapt to evolving standards in sports and athlete development. Furthermore, regularly observing and assessing their athletes' performance enabled them to design individualized training approaches that better addressed athletes' strengths, needs, and areas for improvement. Participants likewise recognized the significance of learning from experienced colleagues through peer coaching, mentoring, and collaborative knowledge sharing, which strengthened their confidence, informed their decision-making, and reduced feelings of professional isolation. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that sustained learning, reflective practice, and collaborative professional engagement are essential for enhancing coaching effectiveness and enabling teacher-coaches to successfully navigate the complex and evolving demands of their dual roles in education and sports.

“...So tungod pud anang athlete ko, naa koy frustrations na gusto ko modula ani pero wala nako na achieve. So sa mga wala nako na achieve, gusto nako ma-achieve sa mga bata. Also, gusto pud nako na makatabang sa bata. So mao jud na akoang purpose.” – IDI 3

(Because I was an athlete, I have frustrations I wanted to fulfill; for what I didn't achieve, I want my students to achieve them. I want to help the athletes, that is my purpose.) – IDI 3

The findings of this study are supported by Gomez (2023), who emphasized that participation in accredited coaching seminars significantly enhances coaches' technical knowledge, particularly in integrating contemporary tactical approaches and sport science principles into coaching practice. The study highlighted that formal professional development programs provide essential opportunities for coaches to strengthen their competencies through the application of evidence-based knowledge in real-world coaching contexts. Similarly, Chen and Alvarez (2022) reported that sustained participation in professional development initiatives improves coaches' ability to translate theoretical concepts into effective training strategies, particularly within youth and collegiate sports settings. Their findings further suggest that continuous learning enhances instructional quality, decision-making, and adaptability to the evolving demands of athlete development. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that structured professional development serves as a critical foundation for expanding coaching expertise, refining practical competencies, and ensuring that coaches remain responsive to emerging trends and best practices in sports performance and athlete development.

Cultivating Resilience and Perseverance

Cultivating resilience and perseverance emerged as a defining characteristic of teacher-coaches as it has transformed competitive setbacks into opportunities for continuous improvement. Rather than viewing defeats as indicators of failure, participants regarded these experiences as valuable learning opportunities that informed the refinement of their coaching practices and strengthened their commitment to long-term success. This process was further reinforced through the development of structured and goal-oriented coaching plans that provided clear direction for athlete training and performance enhancement. Participants also demonstrated a proactive approach to professional growth by seeking external learning resources, adopting evidence-based coaching strategies, and collaborating with colleagues to improve training practices. Despite delayed or limited competitive success, they remained steadfast in their commitment to athlete development, consistently prioritizing skill acquisition, character formation, and long-term performance over immediate outcomes. Collectively, these findings illustrate that resilience is not merely the capacity to recover from adversity but an ongoing process of reflective practice, continuous learning, innovation, and unwavering dedication to the holistic development of student-athletes.

“You must have a proper plan. You must have a target as a coach. Because without a target, you won't have a concrete plan or goal.” – IDI 1

(You must have a proper plan. You must have a target as a coach. Because without a target, you won't have a

concrete plan or goal.) – IDI 1

“Ang pinaka motivation jud namo na magcontinue og practice kay ang mga defeat na among ma encounter... we realize how painful it is, the kids cry, and as a coach the best thing is to challenge and motivate them to train so they won't be discouraged.” – FGD 1

(Our main motivation to continue practicing comes from the defeats we encounter... we realize how painful it is, the kids cry, and as a coach the best thing is to challenge and motivate them, so they won't be discouraged.) – FGD 1

The findings of this study are consistent with the work of Duckworth and Quinn (2021), who highlighted the importance of grit and perseverance as adaptive coping mechanisms in high-stakes and long-term performance contexts, including competitive coaching and program development. Their research demonstrated that perseverance of effort is more strongly associated with sustained achievement over time than with innate talent or short-term motivation. Similarly, Credé et al. (2022) and Eskreis-Winkler et al. (2023) argued that grit should be understood as a dynamic and developable capacity rather than a fixed personal trait. Their findings suggest that perseverance is cultivated through consistent discipline, reflective practice, and deliberate effort, enabling individuals to sustain motivation despite repeated setbacks and prolonged challenges. Collectively, these studies indicate that grit functions as an active coping mechanism that strengthens resilience, promotes continuous professional growth, and supports long-term success in coaching by encouraging sustained commitment to learning, adaptation, and athlete development.

Insights of Teacher-Coaches in Secondary Schools from Delayed Triumphs

This section presents the core insights shared by teacher-coaches regarding their professional journeys. These findings illuminate how dual-role educators convert material constraints and recurring setbacks into adaptive coping strategies, offering a comprehensive framework for sustaining purpose, passion, and competitive drive through prolonged challenges.

Developing a Holistic and Athlete-Centered Coaching Philosophy

Developing a holistic and athlete-centered coaching philosophy emphasizes that effective coaching goes beyond technical instruction and is grounded in intentional, well-planned, and pedagogically informed practice rather than reactive decision-making. Teacher-coaches recognize that athletes develop best when coaching is individualized, avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach and instead responding to each athlete's unique needs, abilities, and circumstances. This perspective integrates not only skill development and discipline but also personal growth and overall well-being, reflecting a broader understanding of what constitutes success in sports. Strong coach-athlete relationships emerge as a central element in this process, serving as a foundation for trust, motivation, and sustained development even when progress is gradual or delayed. Such an approach suggests that coaching is not merely about performance outcomes but about shaping well-rounded individuals who are supported both on and off the field.

“Kinahanglan gyud og maayo nga preparasyon—dili magdali, planuhon nimo ang skills timeline ug practical drills para andam ang bata.” – IDI 3

(You'd really should have a good preparation-do not hurry, and you will have to just plan the skills schedule and practice exercises so that the athlete will be prepared.) – IDI 3

“Trial and error gyud. Kuhaa ang weakness sa bata, buhatan og strategy, observe og usba hangtod mofit siya sa bata.” – FGD 5

(It is all trial and error, find out what the athlete is weak at, draw a plan, watch and correct until it works to them.) – FGD 5

The findings of this study are further supported by Capulong and David (2023), who emphasized the importance of collaborative partnerships among coaches, counselors, and teachers in developing individualized support plans for student-athletes. Their study found that interdisciplinary collaboration reduces external pressures on athletes while promoting more consistent performance and holistic development. Similarly, Flores and Dela Cruz (2022) reported that coordinated school-based support systems enable student-athletes to more effectively balance academic and athletic responsibilities, thereby reducing stress-related declines in performance and overall well-being. Likewise, Navarro and Pineda (2025) highlighted that structured institutional support networks foster psychological safety, sustained motivation, and long-term athlete development by creating environments conducive to continuous learning and growth. Collectively, these studies suggest that resilience is strengthened not only through rigorous training and individual effort but also through the presence of coordinated institutional support systems that facilitate collaboration, promote holistic athlete development, and sustain long-term performance outcomes.

Sustaining Commitment through Ethical and Service-Oriented Coaching

Sustaining commitment in coaching emerged as being deeply rooted in an ethical and service-oriented perspective, wherein coaching is viewed not merely as a means of achieving competitive success but as a vocation dedicated to the holistic development of student-athletes. Participants consistently prioritized the well-being, character formation, and long-term growth of their athletes over personal recognition or immediate performance outcomes, reflecting a strong commitment to ethical and athlete-centered coaching practices. Their dedication was further demonstrated through their willingness to make personal, professional, and financial sacrifices, which they regarded as meaningful investments in their athletes' future success and overall development. Core values such as care, responsibility, fairness, respect, integrity, and compassion guided their decision-making and shaped their daily interactions with athletes, colleagues, and the broader school community. Despite persistent challenges, resource limitations, and delayed competitive success, participants remained steadfast in their coaching responsibilities because their work was grounded in a profound sense of purpose and moral commitment. Collectively, these findings suggest that teacher-coaches sustain their professional commitment by viewing coaching as an act of service and ethical leadership, enabling them to positively influence not only athletic performance but also the personal growth, character development, and lifelong well-being of their student-athletes.

“Kung ni-sulod ka sa coaching, kinahanglan mo-set ka ug taas nga standards ug andam mo-karga sa responsibilidad, dili lang kay for personal gain, pero aron mas dali nimo ma-lead ang team ngadto sa klaro nga target. Pag napildi dili dapat ikaw ang una maluya, as coach ikaw ang mag pagaan sa mood sa imong mga bata and make sure imbis mawal-an sila’g hope is ma motivate pa silage work and train sa future.” – IDI 3

(When you enter coaching, you need to set high standards and be ready to take on responsibility—not just for personal gain, but so you can lead the team toward a clear goal. When you lose, you shouldn’t be the first to get discouraged; as a coach, you lighten your mood of your kids and make sure that they will not lose hope but will be still motivated to work and train for the future.) – IDI 3

“Handa jud ko nga mugamit sa akong kaugalingong kwarta aron masuportahan ang estudyante — dili para lang maka-daog sa kompetisyon kundi aron masiguro nga makapadayon sila sa ilang training ug kinahanglanon bisan walay igo nga suporta gikan sa eskwelahan o PTA.” – IDI 1

(I am prepared to use my own money to support students — not just to win competitions but to ensure they can continue training and meet needs even when school or PTA support is insufficient.) – IDI 1

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Lara-Bercial et al. (2021), who emphasized that ethical coaching practices are fundamental to sustaining long-term commitment and effectiveness in sports. The study found that coaches who adopt value-driven approaches are more likely to cultivate trust, mutual respect, and positive relationships with their athletes, thereby strengthening both coach-athlete commitment and the overall quality of the coaching experience. Moreover, prioritizing athlete well-being and holistic development over competitive outcomes fosters a healthier, more supportive, and sustainable coaching environment. Similarly, Jones and Andrews (2022) argued that resilience in coaching is reinforced through reflective practice and ethical decision-making, enabling coaches to remain steadfast in their values despite the pressures associated with competition and performance. Collectively, these studies suggest that integrity, service, and ethical leadership are essential foundations of sustained coaching commitment, supporting teacher-coaches in fostering meaningful relationships, promoting holistic athlete development, and maintaining long-term professional resilience.

Embracing Process-Oriented and Goal-Focused Development

Embracing process-oriented and goal-focused development reflects a coaching perspective grounded in service, ethical responsibility, and long-term athlete growth rather than immediate competitive success. Coaches emphasized that their role extends beyond winning, prioritizing athlete welfare and development in every decision they make. Ethical considerations consistently guide their practice, often placing athletes' needs above personal recognition or short-term performance outcomes. Personal and financial sacrifices are understood as meaningful investments that contribute to athletes' long-term futures and holistic development. Sustained commitment emerges from aligning coaching practices with values of care, responsibility, and purpose, which helps maintain motivation even during challenging or non-winning phases. Overall, this perspective underscores coaching as a developmental and value-driven process that nurtures resilience, growth, and purposeful engagement.

“Kinahanglan ka og klarong skill set sa matag sport aron ma-match nimo ang estudyante ug ma-set nimo ang husto nga goal.”- IDI 3

(You need a clear skill set for each sport so you can match the student and set the right goals.) – IDI 3

“Everytime we had our trainings, every bata is lahi-lahi jud dili pasabot kani na approach sa training kay sakto sa kani na player pasabot applicable sya dayun sa tanan. Isa sa pinaka maka langan jud is kanang mag try-try pami sa mga bata para makabalo mi unsay pede niya, say dili ug asa/unsay pay iimprove. Lahi-lahi man gud na silag needs...”- FGD 4

(Every time we have our training, every kid is different. That doesn't mean that a training approach that works for one player will automatically work for everyone. One of the most time-consuming parts is trying out different exercises to see what they can do, what they can't, and what they still need to improve. Their needs are different.) - FGD 4

The findings of this study are consistent with those reported by Bird et al. (2024), who found that process-oriented goal-setting strategies enable coaches to direct athletes' attention toward controllable aspects of performance, such as skill execution, self-regulation, and continuous improvement, rather than focusing solely on competitive outcomes. Their study demonstrated that emphasizing process goals enhances athletes' self-awareness, accountability, and motivation by encouraging them to monitor meaningful indicators of progress that are within their control. Similarly, Smith and Lee (2023) reported that structured goal-setting practices strengthen athletes' persistence and commitment by providing clear performance expectations and continuous,

constructive feedback. Likewise, Johnson and Ramirez (2022) emphasized that goal-setting systems are most effective when coaches regularly evaluate athlete performance and adjust goals to reflect individual progress and developmental needs. Collectively, these studies suggest that resilience and sustained motivation in sports are fostered through deliberate planning, reflective coaching practices, and process-oriented goal setting. Such findings reinforce the importance of adopting a developmental coaching approach that prioritizes continuous learning, long-term athlete growth, and meaningful progress over immediate competitive success.

Balancing Multiple Roles through Time Management and Self-Care

Teacher-coaches manage the complexity of their dual responsibilities by engaging in intentional time management and prioritizing self-care practices that support both productivity and well-being. Effective scheduling enables them to balance teaching duties, coaching responsibilities, administrative tasks, and personal commitments without experiencing excessive overload. Flexibility in their routines further allows them to adjust to competing demands, minimizing role conflict and maintaining efficiency across settings. Conscious transitions between roles also help them regulate emotional strain and reduce the risk of burnout and exhaustion. In addition, protecting physical and mental health is recognized as essential for sustaining long-term effectiveness in coaching and teaching. Overall, their experiences suggest that maintaining balance is not accidental but a deliberate and ongoing process grounded in discipline, adaptability, and self-awareness.

“Ako gi-set ang akong oras 50/50—dili nako ihatag tanan sa coaching, kay teacher pud ko; balance gyud.” – IDI 4

(I set my time 50/50—I don’t give everything to coaching because I’m also a teacher; balance is essential.) – IDI 4

“Bisan unsa kadako ang responsibilidad, dili nato dapat isakripisyo ang atong physical ug emotional well-being; nagpasabot kini nga magbantay ka sa imong kaugalingon para makapadayon ka sa pagtabang sa uban.” – FGD 5

(Whatever the responsibility, we should not lose our physical and emotional health; it is taking care of oneself to be able to take care of other people anymore.) – FGD 5

The findings of this study are supported by Arcenas et al. (2025), who reported that effective time management practices are closely associated with improved work-life balance among teacher-coaches. Their study found that teacher-coaches who systematically planned, prioritized, and organized their responsibilities experienced lower levels of role conflict and greater professional satisfaction despite the demands of balancing teaching and coaching responsibilities. The authors further emphasized that inadequate time allocation often results in the neglect of rest, personal well-being, and recovery, thereby increasing the risk of stress, emotional exhaustion, and burnout. These findings are consistent with the experiences of the participants, who highlighted the importance of deliberate time management in sustaining both coaching effectiveness and personal well-being. Similarly, Schaufeli et al. (2021) emphasized that structured self-regulation strategies enable educators to manage their workload more effectively, improve emotional regulation, and reduce the risk of burnout. Likewise, Kim and Park (2022) found that proactive scheduling, reflective planning, and effective prioritization contribute to higher occupational well-being, sustained work engagement, and greater resilience among educators working in demanding professional environments. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of time management and self-regulatory practices as essential strategies for promoting resilience, maintaining work-life balance, and sustaining long-term effectiveness among teacher-coaches.

Drawing Strength from Reflection, Support Systems, and Collaboration

Teacher-coaches sustain their professional practice through an ongoing process of reflective practice,

supportive relationships, and collaborative engagement that strengthens both their resilience and coaching effectiveness. Participants described reflective thinking as an essential strategy for reaffirming their sense of purpose, particularly during periods of stagnation, disappointment, or competitive setbacks, enabling them to transform challenges into meaningful opportunities for personal and professional growth. Emotional, social, and spiritual support from family members, colleagues, mentors, administrators, and student-athletes likewise emerged as vital resources that promoted psychological well-being, sustained motivation, and resilience in the face of adversity. Furthermore, collaboration with fellow coaches and experienced mentors facilitated the exchange of knowledge, shared problem-solving, and collective learning while reducing feelings of professional isolation. Participants also viewed seeking guidance and assistance not as a sign of inadequacy but as an indicator of professional humility, openness to learning, and commitment to continuous improvement. Collectively, these findings suggest that resilience among teacher-coaches is cultivated through the dynamic integration of reflective practice, strong interpersonal support systems, and collaborative professional relationships, all of which contribute to sustained commitment, enhanced coaching effectiveness, and the holistic development of student-athletes.

“Kung mabug-atan ka, balik-balika gyud ang rason nganong nagsugod ka; pag-revisit sa imong purpose makapukaw pag-balik sa motivation ug makahatag og klaro nga direksyon kung unsaon pagpadayon.” - IDI 3

(When you get tired of yourself, go back to the reason you had to be here; reminding yourself of why you began will help you get going again and give you a sense of direction as to how to proceed.) - IDI 3

“Dili ko mahadlok mangayo tabang sa akong mga kauban nga teachers, kung busy kaayo ko sa meet, mangayo ko nga motan-aw sa practice ang usa ka teacher para safe ang bata ug para maka-focus ko sa competition.” – IDI 4

(I’m not afraid to ask my fellow teachers for help — if I’m very busy with a meet, I ask another teacher to watch practice so the students are safe and I can focus on the competition.) – IDI 4

According to Ramirez and Torres (2023) found that structured reflective practices strengthen decision-making skills and promote adaptive expertise, enabling coaches to respond more effectively to the dynamic demands of competitive sports. Likewise, Kim et al. (2022) reported that reflective practice not only enhances technical coaching competencies but also improves emotional regulation, allowing coaches to manage repeated setbacks with greater resilience and composure. Collectively, these studies suggest that reflective practice serves as a critical foundation for resilience by enabling coaches to reinterpret failures as valuable learning experiences, refine their coaching strategies, and sustain long-term professional growth and coaching effectiveness.

Reframing Failure and Delayed Success as Part of Growth

This highlights how participants understand setbacks and delayed successes not as dead ends but as meaningful stages within their development journey. Findings reveal that participants perceive failures and setbacks not as endpoints but as essential learning stages that contribute to their overall development. These experiences foster reflective evaluation and accountability, enabling both coaches and athletes to continuously adjust and improve their practices and strategies. Moreover, the sacrifices made by coaches and athletes are collectively understood as shared investments that strengthen commitment toward future success. Delayed achievements are likewise interpreted not as shortcomings but as meaningful processes that cultivate resilience, competence, and long-term growth. Overall, this perspective underscores the value of embracing challenges as integral to development, reinforcing the idea that success is built gradually through persistence, reflection, and shared effort.

“Kung ni-sulod ka sa coaching, kinahanglan mo-set ka ug taas nga standards ug andam mo-karga sa responsibilidad, dili lang kay for personal gain, pero aron mas dali nimo ma-lead ang team ngadto sa klaro

nga target. Pag napildi dili dapat ikaw ang una maluya, as coach ikaw ang mag pagaan sa mood sa imong mga bata and make sure imbis mawal-an silage hope is ma motivate pa silage work and train sa future.”- IDI 3

(When you enter coaching, you need to set high standards and be ready to take on responsibility—not just for personal gain, but so you can lead the team toward a clear goal. When you lose, you shouldn’t be the first to get discouraged; as a coach, you lighten your mood of your kids and make sure that they will not lose hope but will be still motivated to work and train for the future.) – IDI 3

“Kung napildi ko or sayop ko, akong i-review ang akong gibuhay ug i-figure out unsa akong kulang kay para kabalo nako unsa dapat buhaton sunod para mas maayo. Dili lang ko mo padayon basta-basta, kinahanglan klaro ang next steps.”- FGD 2

(When I lose the competition or make a mistake, I review what I did and figure out what I lacked so I know what to do next to improve. I don’t just go on blindly; the next steps need to be clear.) – FGD 2

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Morgan (2023), who reported that reframing setbacks as opportunities for learning enhances resilience, promotes adaptive coping, and sustains performance over time. Similarly, Galli and Gonzalez (2022) emphasized that structured reflection and intentional coaching plans enable coaches to respond more effectively to competitive pressures by fostering goal-oriented decision-making and continuous performance improvement. Their study further highlighted that deliberate planning supports adaptive coaching practices, allowing coaches to modify training strategies in response to athletes' evolving needs and performance demands. In addition to reflective planning, participants actively sought external learning resources and collaborated with fellow coaches to strengthen training approaches and broaden their professional perspectives. Their sustained commitment to athlete development, even when competitive success was delayed, demonstrates that resilience is cultivated through continuous learning, innovation, and collaborative practice rather than through immediate outcomes alone. Collectively, these studies suggest that resilience is an ongoing developmental process characterized by reflective practice, evidence-based adaptation, and unwavering dedication to the long-term athletic and personal growth of student-athletes.

CONCLUSION

This phenomenological study illuminated the complex lived experiences of secondary school teacher-coaches in Davao del Norte, revealing how they navigate severe resource constraints, administrative burdens, and personal setbacks to achieve delayed athletic success. To enhance the transferability and contextual relevance of the findings, future research should expand the participant sample across multiple regions and different school types (such as private schools and higher education institutions). Additionally, broadening the participant pool to include teacher-coaches from a wider variety of individual and team sports, distinct educational levels, and varied demographic backgrounds will yield a more comprehensive understanding of coaching experiences.

To support these educators, educational institutions and administrators must implement targeted interventions—such as tailored professional development, mental health support, and formal mentorship networks—anchored in Growth Mindset and Resilience Theories. Furthermore, future research should expand upon these qualitative findings by employing mixed methods designs, engaging broader geographic samples across Mindanao, and incorporating the perspectives of school heads, athletes, and parents. Such comprehensive approaches will inform better policy formulation, workload management, and targeted administrative funding for school athletic programs.

Overall, this study underscores that competitive triumphs and student-athlete development are built upon the sustained dedication and adaptability of teacher-coaches. Reframing initial failures as essential learning milestones enables these practitioners to maintain their passion, prevent burnout, and foster holistic student growth. By addressing the identified structural and emotional needs of teacher-coaches, the Department of Education can cultivate a more supportive environment that empowers educators to thrive in their dual responsibilities and achieve long-term success.

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