

**FOCUS IN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENT-ATHLETE IN  
UNIVERSITY OF NUEVA CACERES**

# CHAPTER I

## THE PROBLEM

### **Introduction**

A number of research studies have been undertaken to predict the academic performance of students. During the last decade some research has also been carried out on the performance of student athlete. These studies assume importance because they have an important impact and influence on the academic performance of students. Universities and colleges today have a number of students from countries all over the world. These students come with diverse cultural background and societal traits. It is therefore important to identify the factors that motivate the students to improve their academic performance and also ascertain the reasons for athletic motivation. This assumes importance because Sports Administrators at universities and colleges are faced with the difficulty of encouraging students to participate in sports, in spite of the benefits and scholarships that have been provided. Over a period of time, educators and administrators have taken up the challenge of improving the academic performance of students. However, there is a common misconception that only academic performance matters. Consequently, students who excel in academics tend to give a low priority to athletic performance.

The benefit of sports is the character-building element. "Sports builds character", is an acceptable slogan for many sports advocates. Aside from positive physical effect of sports, Cakir & Acet (2015) claimed that sports can yield desirable psychological effect. For Bloom, et al. (2005), sports changes individuals with regard to their well-being, social networks, sense of social

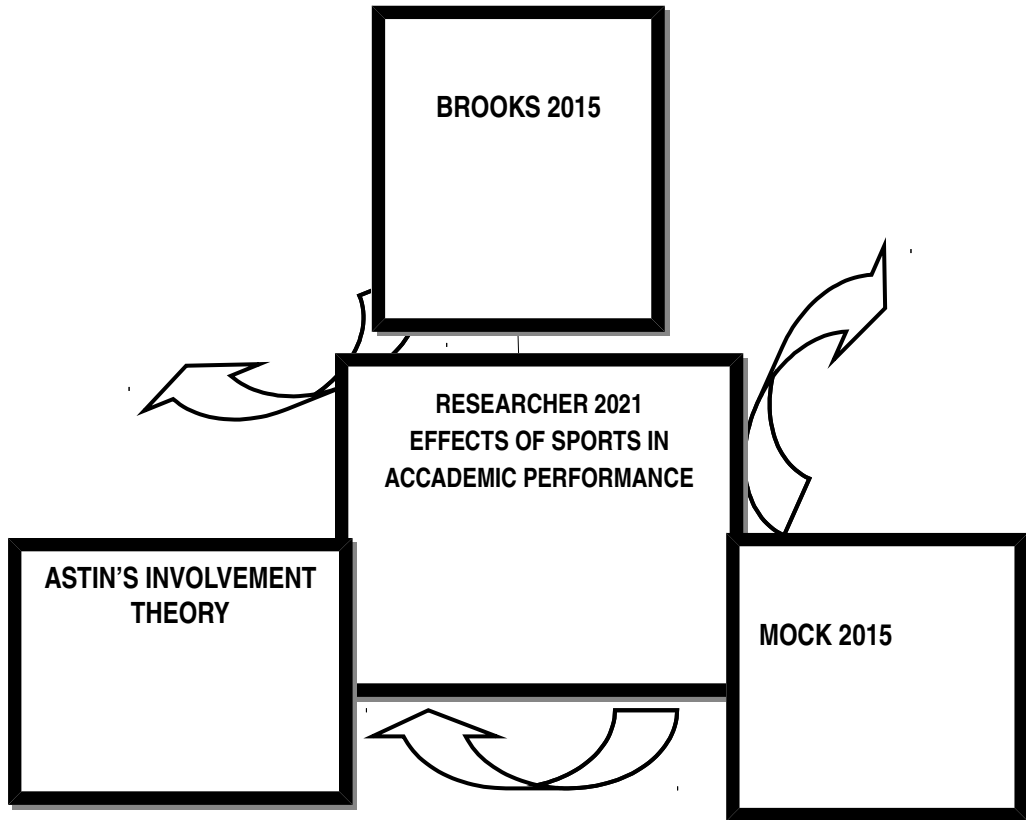
connection and skills. According to Yetim (2011), sporting activities help people to be mentally vigilant, disciplined and conscious. Brooks (2012) acknowledged that athletic participation helps develop basic values such as self-confidence, self-respect, self-esteem and competitive spirit.

Sports help the athletes to make decisions that they feel is right and to believe in these decisions. Participation in athletics takes a considerable amount of dedication by athletes, especially to make choices regarding athletic, academic and personal commitments. As student-athletes often must follow a code of conduct, this code of conduct includes following appropriate behaviors and maintaining minimum grades in order to maintain eligibility.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The questions that guide the study are as follows:

1. What are the effects of sports related engagements of student's athletes' scholar in their academic performance?
2. What coping strategies are being manifested by these athletes scholar in their studies?
3. What supplemental programs may be implemented to maintain productivity of varsity players?



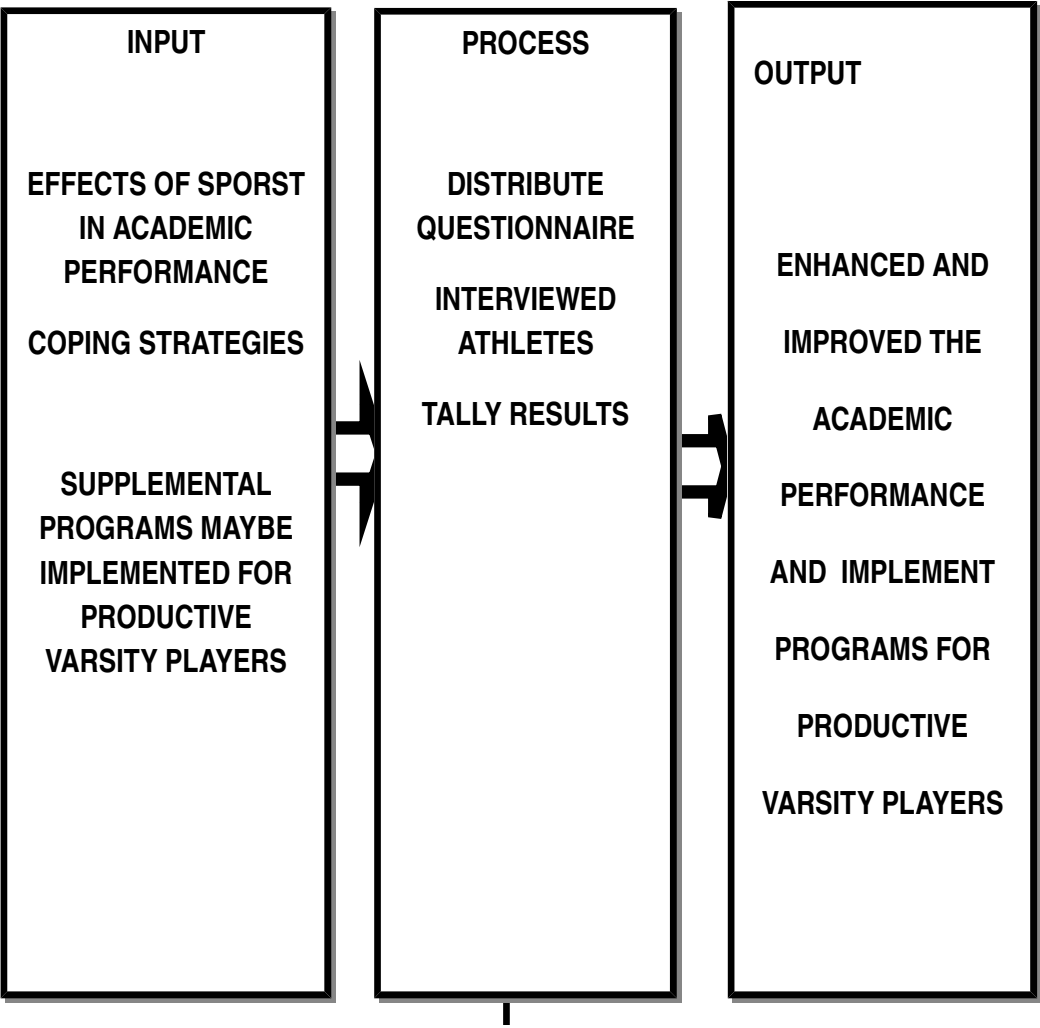
**Theoretical Paradigm**

*Figure 1*

## **Theoretical Framework**

Astin's Involvement Theory (1984), is one of the most important and best known theories in student affairs. Alexander Astin's 1984 theory of Student Involvement explains how desirable outcome for institutions of higher education are viewed in relation to how students change and develop in result to being involved co-curricularly. The core concepts of the theory are composed of three elements. The first, a student's "inputs" such as their background, and any previous experiences. The second is the student's "environment", which accounts for all of the experiences a student would have during high school. Lastly, there are "outcomes" which cover a student's characteristics, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values that exist after a student has graduated high school. Astin describes involvement as participation in the classroom as well as involvement in activities outside the classroom.

This theory is closely relevant to this study for it states that student-athletes, playing a particular sport started as mere fun before turning out to be their passion. Many student athletes may find it a rewarding experience if they are able to balance both activities inside and outside the classroom (academics and athletics).



**Conceptual Paradigm**  
*Figure 2*

## Conceptual Framework

INPUT.

PROCESS.

OUTPUT.

## Assumptions

### Scope and Delimitation

Conclusions of findings to larger populations of athletes would be missed due to the fact that this study was undertaken through a case study that purposely only investigated the college students of UNC for academic year 2020-2021 as a whole, acting as a single bounded system. However, outcomes of the study can inform qualitative research.

The study is conducted to determine on how participating in sports affects the academic performance of the college students of UNC. This study is focused on the factors that can affect the physical and mental well-being of the college students. The respondents are picked randomly. The researchers will conduct an interview and survey to the student athletes of UNC athletes only.

### Definition of Terms

**Academic Excellence:** Student-athletes who achieve grade point averages ranging from 3.0-4.0 and graduate. Academic Progress Rate: is a metric established by the NCAA to measure the success or failure of collegiate athletic teams in moving student-athletes towards graduation. Division I: The highest level of intercollegiate athletics sanctioned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The NCAA is the governing body of intercollegiate athletics

**Academic Success:** A set of personal and educational goals determined by a student athlete's grade point average, tests scores, and the ability to achieve success in the classroom on a daily basis. (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2008)

**Club Sports:** College teams that compete against other schools but are not regulated by the NAIA or NCAA. They are often student-run, hold tryouts and practices, and do not receive funding from the school. In terms of commitment, club sports require less than varsity but more than intramural teams.

**Co-ed/co-Recreational:** Club and intramural sports teams or leagues in which both males and females can play with and compete against each other. There must be the same number of each gender on a co-rec team, i.e., five male and five female players.

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**Redshirt:** Student-athlete who attends college, practices with the team, and is present at games but does not compete for one year at their coach's discretion in order to further develop their skills and extend their eligibility to play at the collegiate level to five years. A redshirt freshman is technically a sophomore, academically speaking.

**Student-Athlete:** A student that participates on a sanctioned varsity athletic team at the institution in which he or she is enrolled. (Emerson College, 2008)

**True freshman:** Student-athlete who is in their first year of college both athletically and academically; not to be mistaken for a redshirt freshman, who starts competing during their second year.

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## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES**

#### **Review of Related Literature**

University student-athletes are a special population whose university experience is different from those of non-athletes. Student-athletes' college life are faced with new social and academic pressures and are introduced to a new environment where they must navigate many unfamiliar social situations and deal with other student athletes and non-student athlete's varied attitudes and behaviors. Each student-athletes reacts to sports in different way. They, unlike other students, are influenced by various stressors acting together (Surujlal, Nolan & Ubane, 2016).

Many researchers have identified the detrimental impact of behavior problems (anxiety, aggression and violent activities) of student athletes has on individuals, teammates, and performance. Many student athletes experience anxiety in many ways, such as being sad, shy, nervous, and unhappy about certain aspects of their life (Green & Gabbard, 2017).

For Brooks (2012), the highest cited stressor according to student-athletes is excessive pressure and stress related to balancing the demands of being both a student and an athlete. Pressures associated with sports can promote excessive anxiety and aggressive behavior.

Those that engage in highly competitive contact sports may promote violence among participants (Jones-Palm & Palm, 2015). Cakir & Acet (2016) revealed that student athletes participating in team sport are more aggressive due to the fact that those athletes are much more affected by spectators and they have to encourage team mates to win the game.

Negative consequences and psychosocial problems were found to be associated with collegiate athletic participation (Chen, Synder & Magner, 2016) like violence on and off the court and depression and burnout to mention some.

Aries et al. (2004) reported that athletes struggle with the time demands of completing requirements for school and academic performance with those of their chosen aspiration. Specifically, the authors found that the pressure to perform on the field caused student athletes to perform below their abilities in the classroom (Aries et al., 2015). Further, Aries et al. (2015) reported that there was an increase in the underperformance gap for college athletes as those students advanced through their academic careers.

The literature review found further evidence of the time demands that athletics impose on participating athletes. For instance, athletes at a California university were forced to choose between attending their own graduation ceremonies and participating in their chosen athletic endeavor. Some athletes chose to attend their graduation. Others, however, did not choose to share the once-in-a-lifetime event with their friends and family (Carr, 2015). Instead, the university recommended, overall, that the athletes compete in their sport instead of attending their own graduation.

Mock (2015) also studied college athletes and their performance in the academic arena. The author found that the time required to participate in athletics could potentially have a disproportional, unhealthy impact on the lives of those students (Mock, 2015). In terms of specifics, it was found that over 60% of the GPA scores of male athletes ranked in the bottom third of their class (Mock).

However, (Coral G. 2017) stated that middle and high school students who participate in sports express less hostility toward their classmates and are more likely to graduate from high school and go on to college, according to the preliminary results of an ongoing national study. Involvement in sports appears to enhance a student's academic aspirations, investments, and achievements (c)

The NHSAW (2016) found that participation in sports results in boys performing better than their non-athletic counterparts by a ratio of 2:1. Similarly, the study indicated that female athletes performed better than their non-athletic counterparts by a ratio of 3:1 (NSHAW, 2016). Additionally, the study stated that participation in athletics resulted in a reduced probability of dropping out of school and an increased probability of finishing college (NHSAW).

Sports involvement and academic success of student-athletes had been a topic of discussion long time ago. Critics observed that participation in sports may reduce the time available for studying and learning (Rees, D.I. and Sabia, J.J., 2015), since students-athletes were having difficulties in managing their time

between hectic schedules of sports training and requirements of academic subjects. However, sports enthusiasts claimed that sports participation can motivate student-athletes to achieve harder, raise scholastic ambition, can keep them attending school, can improve students' academic grades, develop awareness the benefits of good health, fitness and exercise, and understanding the spirit of team work, sportsmanship and camaraderie.

In addition, researches showed pieces of evidence that student participating in sports and physical activities lead to developed mental and physical alertness, mentally and physically alert students always improved their performances, accomplished more, and likely to continue attending classes in school (Montecalbo, R. C. and Cardenas, R.C., 2015).

### **Review of Related Studies**

Every athlete dreams of moving onto the professional level and getting paid to play the game that they love, but in reality a majority of the 450,000 NCAA student athletes will not continue onto the professional level. This is causing people to ponder if the sacrifice to the academic progress of athletes is worth the energy to continue playing sports for four more years in college. Many people argue that the academic performance of athletes is troubling considering that after sports they only have their education to fall back on and make a life out of that knowledge.

In a study conducted by Pascarella et al. (2015), the results found compelling results about the cognitive developments of first year athletes. The study was conducted to determine the effects of college athletics on reading comprehension, math and critical thinking skills. There were 2,416 first year students who took part in the National Study of Student Learning survey, which is a longitudinal evaluation of the factors that affect learning and cognitive developments in college. They discovered that male athletes, in revenue sports such as football and basketball, suffered in reading comprehension and math. They found that these revenue sport athletes struggled compared to non-athletes and male athletes in other sports tested the same as non-athletes in reading comprehension and math. On the contrary, female athletes lagged behind their peers in reading comprehension. Both male and female athletes fell behind non-student athletes in critical thinking skills such as open mindedness, maturity and inquisitiveness (Pascarella et al, 2015). These statistics confirm that some athletes are lagging behind their peers, but have led researchers to believe that revenue sports may be the real source of the low academic progress of athletes.

The hours of practice and preparation for game day undoubtedly take athletes away from their studies. Maloney and McCormick (2016) conducted a study at Clemson University of 595 student athletes in determination of finding the effect of athletics on academic success. They found that academically, athletes do three-tenths of a grade point worse than regular students in three out of 10 classes. They also discovered athletes in revenue sports are lagging

behind their peers. Athletes in football and basketball do one-tenth of a grade point worse than their fellow student athletes (Maloney & McCormick, 2016).

The concern over student athlete success has culminated into millions of dollars being spent at universities for academic support of their athletes along with new NCAA regulations over academic affairs; hours spent practicing, and days off. Burns, Jasinski, Dunn and Fletcher (2015) conducted a survey focused on determining the effects of academic support services on career decision-making skills for athletes. They conducted a study of 158 Division 1 student athletes from 11 different universities. All student athletes in this study were required to attend academic support programs at their universities during their freshman and sophomore years.

All programs were based on the NCAA Challenging Athlete's Minds for Personal Success (CHAMPS) program and contained an online vocational assessment, access to career counselors, and workshops on career planning, resume writing and internships. The results were calculated by surveys that were distributed by coaches to the specific athletes. Satisfaction with academic support services was measured with the Reimer and Chelladurai's Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire whereas the Betz, Klein and Taylor's career decision-making self-efficacy scale was used to measure confidence in making career decisions. The results showed a positive correlation between people who believed academic support services were helpful with confidence in career direction. These CHAMP programs make people feel more confident about their life skills, and certain of their career decisions through resume development and experience in that specific field through internships (Burns et al, 2015). Although these academic support services are an expensive commodity for universities, it is necessary to provide designated people to work with athletes. This will balance both athletics and academics to create a situation that helps athletes succeed in both fields.

On the other hand, many people are firm believers that the positives of athletic participation outweigh the negatives. Studies have shown that participation has a positive impact on learning and development (Bonfiglio, 2016). A study conducted by Byrd and Ross (2015) focused on the influence of athletic participation at the junior high level and showed that, even at a young age, athletics is motivating student athletes in the classroom. Their study was conducted in a rural county in Tennessee and is based off the responses of 379 students with an intermixed number of athletes and non-athletes. These students attended one of two schools in this area and the study consisted of 284 non-athletes and 95 athletes. The study's results showed that 70% of people agreed that being an athlete motivated them to attend school regularly. This study also found that 71% said participation led to better time management. Competing at the collegiate level results in substantial missed class time, but when they are not traveling, athletes are attending classes to ultimately stay eligible to continue playing the sport that they love.

Studies by Pascarella, Truckenmiller, Nora and Terenzini (2015) and Pascarella, Bohr, Nora, and Terenzini (2015) focus on what the positive impacts of athletics have on non- cognitive development. Using the national sample from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program to help with the study, Pascarella et al (2015) found positive correlations with the satisfaction and the overall college experience, motivation to complete degree, bachelor's degree completion, and persistence in college. Being a part of athletics kept these student athletes motivated to continue their pursuit to attain their degree, receive good grades to stay eligible and meet graduation requirements. These statistics shed light on the success of upper level college students, but what is the impact for first year college students on getting acquainted with the university? Pascarella's 2015 study focused on the study of 23 two-year and four-year colleges in sixteen states around the country. This study was conducted to look at the positive outcomes for first year students from participation in collegiate athletics. The study found that participation in intercollegiate sports positively influenced gains in success during their first year of college in regards to feeling at home at the university and success in classes (Pascarella et al, 2015).

Studies by Humphrey, J. H., et.al, (2016) to mental health concerns, many athletes report physical health concerns as well, such as lack of sleep, continuous tension, fatigue, headaches, and digestive problems. 10% of athletes suffer from psychological and physiological problems that are severe enough to require counseling intervention.

Even more alarming is the fact that pupil athletes tend to avoid seeking out available counseling, so the percentage of pupil athletes who may require such intervention is possibly higher than this figure. This is important since Murray M. A. (2015) has learned that in addition to those psychological and physiological issues mentioned above, athletes may also be in particular need of counseling for a variety of additional stress related concerns, including time management, burnout, fear of failure, anxiety, depression, and self-esteem issues. Recent research has supported the contention that time, in particular, is a substantial obstacle for many athletes. Complicating the transition for the pupil athlete are difficulties related to academic success. 95% of male athletes and 86% of female athletes were stressed by factors such as tests and examinations, preparing papers for class, missing classes because of travel, and making up missed assignments. Also, many athletes find they are unprepared for academic life or falsely believe that they will be treated differently in the classroom because they are athletes.

However, few studies have investigated academic and athletic motivation as nontraditional variables and their relevance as factors in predicting academic performance and limited number of studies considered sports motivation as a significant predictor of academic performance (Snyder, 2017). Snyder considered academic motivation, athletic motivation and career motivation as factors in predicting academic performance among university athlete students. The result showed that academic motivation was a significant factor. Interestingly, female athletes had a higher academic motivation scores than their career and athletic

motivation scores. The result further supports existing literature where female athletes can perform better academically than their male counterparts and suggested a further research pertaining to motivation and its impact or relationship to academic achievement needs to be conducted to confirm the findings.

### **Synthesis of the State-of-the-art**

Student-athletes are faced with time demands that maintained to mean that they are tied up with a hectic schedule juggling practice in one hand and education on the other. Athletes are even considered as a special population because of many reasons two most important of which are that they live a stressful life and follow regimented schedule studies by Amundsen, S. A. (2015) claim that student-athletes' being time constraint take away from them the opportunity to take advantages of academic resources.

From the studies of Deniz, S. (2015) the non-athletes are at an advantage over the student-athletes. The latter have divided attention and time as there is a need to allot time for training and eventually for the games. As such, student-athletes are most of the time taken away from their classes and miss discussions thus claimed that student-athletes could hardly compete with non-athletes in school.

### **Gap Bridge of the Study**

A study of the effect of athletics on academics of high school students was important for several reasons. The study examined the factors involved that affect the academic performance of the student athletes. Studies have shown that time and energy are both required for good performance in sports and in studies. There must be proper time management that helps to manage the studies and sports as well. For these students, academics and athletics complemented and reinforced one another. In fact, some student athletes actually encountered problems academically when their sport was in season, and reported that the time and energy demanded by athletics was the main reason why they have no more energy left for doing school works.

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## **CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

Due to the unique geographical locations and dynamics of individual university's sport and academic structure, this study was framed as a case study because it is only pertaining to the impact of student-athletics to the academic performance of the UNC student-athletes. Other universities/institutions may have different outcomes for this research.

### **RESPONDENTS**

The target population for this research defined to include the randomly selected student-athletes of UNC. In addition, the student-athletes were considered appropriate as population of the study area because, as stated in chapter one, they constitute the dramatis-personae for the ones experiencing the stated problem in this research study.

The sample of the population of this study stood at 10 male student-athletes coming from different major and also 10 female student-athletes that gave a total of 20 respondents.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

A letter to the president of the University of Nueva Caceres was prepared to solicit permission for the conduct of the study. Likewise, the researcher sought the approval of the concerned Professor of the target students-athletes.

Distribution and retrieval of the survey questionnaires was done by the researcher herself. The assistance of the professor was solicited in facilitating the data gathering procedure from the teachers and students in the university. Efforts were done to ensure the reliability of the data gathering process. The researchers' effort was shown to completely retrieve the instrument.

## **Questionnaire**

### **Student Athlete Survey**

This information will be used solely for this study and for my research paper. Your answers are entirely confidential and will not be reported back to your coach or the athletic department. Thank you for taking a few minutes out of your busy athletic schedules to help me conduct my study.

Please circle the answer that best fits you:

1. What is your gender?
  - A. Male
  - B. Female
2. What year in school are you?
  - A. Freshman
  - B. Sophomore
  - C. Junior
  - D. Senior
3. Has Athletics helped you develop better time management skills?
  - A. Strongly disagree
  - B. Disagree
  - C. Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - D. Agree
  - E. Strongly Agree
4. Approximately how many hours per week do you spend between all athletic commitments (film, practice, training room, etc)?
  - A. Less than 10 hours
  - B. 10-15 hours
  - C. 15-20 hours
  - D. More than 20 hours
5. Approximately how many hours per week do you devote to schoolwork?
  - A. Less than 10 hours
  - B. 10-15 hours
  - C. 15-20 hours
  - D. More than 20 hours
6. Do you believe your grades would be if you were not a student athlete?
  - A. Better
  - B. Worse
  - C. The Same
7. If studies proved without a doubt that athletics negatively affected academics, would you still choose to compete at the collegiate level?

- A. Strongly Disagree
  - B. Disagree
  - C. Neither Agree nor Disagree
  - D. Agree
  - E. Strongly Agree
8. What effect does your involvement in athletics have on your motivation to attend classes?
- A. A Great Deal
  - B. Quite a Bit
  - C. Somewhat
  - D. Very Little
  - E. Not at All
9. How would you describe the effect of athletic involvement on your life?
- A. Best Choice of your Life
  - B. Just Ok
  - C. Worst Choice of your Life
  - D. No effect on your life
10. Do you believe that your athletic involvement made your college transition easier?
- A. Strongly Disagree
  - B. Disagree
  - C. Agree nor Disagree
  - D. Agree
  - E. Strongly Agree

Thank You! Have A Great Day!

## Statistics

**Percentage Technique:** The study will use the percentage to describe the profiles of the respondents including their personal, educational and socio-economics. It is calculated using the equation:

$$P = \text{Frequency} / \text{total respondents} \times 100\%$$

**Weighted Mean:** The weighted mean will be used to determine the level of awareness of the respondents, the needs assessment and the validity and functionality of the designed special guidance program. The data will be processed using the internet: on-line weighted mean calculator to facilitate the computation.

The results of the respondents' answers were computed to get the mean score. The items under each category in the study habits questionnaire were given weight using a 5 point Likert scale. This was done for purposes of determining the respondents' study habits as well as for statistical analysis and interpretation. The presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data were based on the Likert scale weighted means following the scale range, as given:

Scale Range	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20 – 5.0	Strongly Agree
3.40 – 4.19	Agree
2.6 – 3.39	Agree nor Disagree

1.8 – 2.59	Disagree
1.0 - 1.79	Strongly Disagree

### **Ethical Consideration**

The research met all the ethical standards required by the University of Nueva Caceres and Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. In case study research, ethical concerns have continued to be debated and often require the researcher to develop their considerations (Gall et al., 2007). However, Mertler (2019) outlined the four areas of ethics that must be considered in research: voluntary and informed participation, protection from harm, the right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues. These are also requirements of the university where our participants attended. We also mindful not to manipulate findings or document information observed or write opinions that were not mentioned by the participants (Metler, 2019). We, therefore, maintained objectivity during interviews, focus group discussion, ongoing interactions with participants, and interpretation of data. Furthermore, we ensured that all four areas of ethics were maintained.