

Social and Physical Preparedness of Athletes in Secondary Schools



Larry M. Corillo, Jr., MAT

Northern Iloilo State University – Concepcion Campus, Concepcion, Iloilo

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-4795-0248>

ABSTRACT: Sports preparation is a critical aspect of athletes' performance improvement in their chosen field. It encompasses both physical and mental aspects of athletes during sports programs such as training, competition, and recovery. This study aimed to determine the level of social and physical preparedness of athletes in Secondary Schools in the 5th District of Iloilo, Western Visayas, Philippines. The study involved 72 athletes who were assessed based on their social and physical preparedness using computer-processed statistics through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software.

Results showed that secondary school athletes have a higher level of social preparedness compared to their physical preparedness. However, there was no significant relationship between the two variables. It can be concluded that if athletes are socially prepared, they are not necessarily physically prepared as well. Social preparedness is innate and can be influenced by an individual's experiences and upbringing, including community norms and moral development.

Furthermore, the study revealed that physical training programs for student athletes were not adequately implemented, possibly due to other academic tasks in schools. In conclusion, developing athletes' physical and social preparedness is essential for their holistic sports development, and implementing rigorous physical training programs alongside academic tasks is vital. These findings can inform the development of sports programs and interventions aimed at improving the social and physical preparedness of adolescent athletes in secondary schools.

KEYWORDS: Athletes, Physical Education, Physical Preparedness, Secondary School, Sports, Social Preparedness

INTRODUCTION

Sport has become a significant social phenomenon in contemporary society, driven by a human need for confrontation and competition (Coakley, 2018). Sport rules provide a framework for these confrontational tendencies, allowing athletes and teams to channel their energies towards achieving the best possible results (Bale, 2020).

To achieve high performance in sport, athletes and teams require appropriate and efficient sport preparation. This involves a complex process of improving all aspects of an athlete's physical and mental abilities, including skills, strength, endurance, and tactical awareness (Jukić et al., 2018). Monitoring and assessing an athlete's progress is an essential part of this process, as it provides valuable information on the athlete's status and areas for improvement (Laborde et al., 2018).

The attainment of high performance in sport also depends on other factors such as nutrition, sleep, recovery, and lifestyle (Saw et al., 2021). Coaches and sports scientists play a crucial role in designing effective training programs that take into account these factors and are tailored to the needs of individual athletes (McMahon et al., 2020).

FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Participation in sports is an important part of physical and mental development for students in secondary schools. However, it is essential that athletes are physically and socially prepared to participate in sports to prevent injuries and ensure their success.

One theoretical framework that can be applied to the social and physical preparedness of athletes in secondary schools is Bandura's Social Learning Theory. According to this theory, individuals learn by observing others and modeling their behavior. Therefore, athletes in secondary schools can learn about the appropriate social and physical behavior for sports participation by observing their coaches, teammates, and other athletes.

Another theoretical framework that can be applied is the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation for sustained behavior change. SDT suggests that athletes who are intrinsically motivated to participate in sports are more likely to engage in preparatory behaviors such as physical training, healthy eating, and restful sleep.

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Research suggests that social and physical preparedness are critical factors for athletic success in secondary schools. A study conducted by Enoksen et al. (2021) found that social support from coaches, teammates, and family members is essential for the social and emotional well-being of athletes. The study also found that athletes who received adequate social support were more likely to engage in preparatory behaviors such as physical training and healthy eating.

Another study conducted by Keeler et al. (2019) found that adequate physical preparation is essential for preventing injuries in athletes. The study recommended that athletes engage in strength training, flexibility training, and aerobic conditioning to reduce their risk of injury.

In addition to the studies mentioned above, other research has explored the social and physical preparedness of athletes in secondary schools.

A study conducted by Jowett and Poczwadowski (2018) found that the quality of coach-athlete relationships is a significant predictor of athlete motivation and well-being. Athletes who reported having positive relationships with their coaches were more likely to be intrinsically motivated to participate in sports and had higher levels of well-being.

Another study by Pons et al. (2019) examined the relationship between physical activity and academic achievement in adolescents. The study found that regular physical activity was positively associated with academic achievement and that the relationship was mediated by factors such as improved cognitive function and reduced stress.

Furthermore, a study by Visek et al. (2018) identified key social and emotional skills that are necessary for athletic success. These skills include teamwork, communication, goal setting, resilience, and emotional regulation. The study suggested that coaches and educators should prioritize the development of these skills in their training programs to improve the social and emotional preparedness of athletes.

Overall, these studies highlight the importance of social and physical preparedness for athletic success in secondary schools. Coaches, educators, and parents can play a critical role in supporting athletes' social and physical development through providing social support, fostering positive coach-athlete relationships, promoting regular physical activity, and emphasizing the development of social and emotional skills.

While the studies mentioned provide valuable insights into the social and physical preparedness of athletes in secondary schools, there are still some research gaps that need to be addressed.

One gap is the need for more research on the specific strategies that coaches, educators, and parents can use to promote social and physical preparedness among adolescent athletes. While the studies suggest that positive coach-athlete relationships, regular physical activity, and the development of social and emotional skills are important, more research is needed to identify effective approaches for promoting these factors.

Finally, there is a need for longitudinal studies that follow athletes over an extended period of time to examine how social and physical preparedness relates to long-term athletic success, as well as to broader outcomes such as academic achievement, mental health, and overall well-being. Such studies could provide important insights into the long-term benefits of promoting social and physical preparedness among adolescent athletes.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the level of social and physical preparedness of athletes in secondary schools in the school year 2022-2023.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

- The level of physical preparedness among athletes in secondary schools,
- the level of social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools,
- significant difference in the level of physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools, and
- the significant relationship between physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

The study aimed to investigate the social and physical preparedness of athletes in selected secondary schools located in the 5th District of Iloilo, Western Visayas, Philippines. A descriptive-survey approach was used to collect data from the participants, who were purposively selected to fit the needs of the study.

A survey questionnaire was administered to the athletes to gather information on their social support, well-being, preparatory behaviors, and self-efficacy. The survey questionnaire was anchored from the Social Support, Well-being, and Preparatory Behaviour Among Adolescent Athletes in Norway study by Enoksen et al. (2021), as well as the Self-Efficacy Scale by Bandura (1977).

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To determine the level of social preparedness physical preparedness, a 10-item researcher made test using the Likert (5-point) scale. This was obtained through the following responses: 5 – Always, 4 – Often, 3 – Seldom, 2 – Sometimes, and 1 – Never. At the same time, to describe the level of social and physical preparedness of athletes, the following scale was used: 4.21 – 5.00 Highly Prepared, 3.41 – 4.00 Prepared, 2.61 – 3.40 Moderately Prepared, 1.81 – 2.60 Developing, and 1.00 – 1.80 Poorly Prepared.

The said questionnaire was a researcher-made questionnaire and presented it to the selected jurors of experts for content validation using the Carter V. Good and Douglas F. Scates set criteria for validation. The instrument used in this study was rated “very good” with mean score of 4.67 which meant that the instrument is valid. For reliability, the researcher administered the questionnaire to respondents. The questionnaire established alpha value of 0.893 which meant that the questionnaire was reliable.

Data collected from the survey questionnaire were analyzed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of this study could inform the development of programs and interventions aimed at improving the social and physical preparedness of adolescent athletes in secondary schools in the 5th District of Iloilo, Western Visayas, Philippines.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants

Classification of Participants	No. of Participants
Male	38
Female	38
Total	76

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher followed ethical considerations in conducting the study. Prior to the data collection, the researcher obtained the necessary permission and informed consent from the appropriate authorities of the academic institution and concerned agencies. The participants were also informed about the purpose and nature of the study, and they were given the assurance that their participation was voluntary, confidential, and anonymous.

In collecting data, a self-administered questionnaire was used, and the participants were given ample time to complete it, which took around 5-10 minutes. Before answering the questionnaire, the participants were given detailed instructions and were encouraged to ask questions if there were any parts that they did not understand. The researcher made sure that the participants understood that their responses would be kept confidential and that the results would only be used for research purposes.

In the final analysis, only valid questionnaires were considered. The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using appropriate statistical.

Statistical Data Analysis Procedure

To determine the data needed for the investigation, mean, standard deviation, Friedman Test, and Spearman correlation coefficient were used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Data Analysis

Level of Social and Physical Preparedness of Athletes

The mean and standard deviation results show the level of social preparedness of athletes (4.4 ± 0.35) as “Highly Prepared” and level of physical preparedness (4.05 ± 0.38) as “Prepared”.

Table 2. Level of Social and Physical Preparedness of Athletes

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Social Preparedness	72	4.4	0.35405	Highly Prepared
Physical Preparedness	72	4.05	0.37642	Prepared

Note: 4.21 – 5.00 Highly Prepared, 3.41 – 4.00 Prepared, 2.61 – 3.40 Moderately Prepared, 1.81 – 2.60 Developing, and 1.00 – 1.80 Poorly Prepared

The results indicate that the athletes are highly prepared in terms of social preparedness, with a mean score of 4.4 out of 5 and a standard deviation of 0.35, suggesting a relatively high level of consistency in the responses. In contrast, the athletes'

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physical preparedness was rated as "prepared," with a mean score of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.38, indicating a somewhat lower level of consistency in the responses.

The implications of these findings are that while the athletes are generally well-prepared in terms of their social skills, they may benefit from further training and development in the area of physical preparedness. This could include additional training on conditioning, strength, and agility, as well as mental preparation and sports psychology techniques.

Related research has found similar results in terms of the importance of both social and physical preparedness for athletes. For example, a study by Poczwardowski et al. (2019) found that social support and coping strategies were important predictors of athletic success, while physical fitness and technical skills were also crucial factors. Another study by Garcia-Mas et al. (2018) found that athletes who were well-prepared in terms of both physical and psychological factors were more likely to experience positive outcomes, such as increased confidence and satisfaction.

There is an importance of psychological characteristics such as motivation, self-regulation, and resilience in facilitating elite performance in sports. These mental skills can be developed and enhanced through deliberate practice and training (MacNamara et al., 2018). The need for mental health support for elite athletes, as they are often under significant pressure to perform and may face unique stressors related to their sport. Mental health concerns can impact athletic performance and overall well-being, and early detection and treatment is crucial (Reardon et al., 2019). Additionally, the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to injury rehabilitation in sports. This involves collaboration between medical professionals, coaches, and athletes to ensure a safe and effective return to play. In addition to physical rehabilitation, mental skills training can also be beneficial in the recovery process (Thornton et al., 2017).

Overall, these studies suggest that physical and mental preparedness are both important for sports performance and that a holistic approach to training and preparation can maximize an athlete's potential.

Inferential Analysis

Difference between the Levels of the Physical and Social Preparedness

A non-parametric Friedman test of differences among levels of the physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools was conducted and renders a Chi-square value of 23.529 which was significant ($p < .05$) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Difference between the Levels of the Physical and Social Preparedness

Friedman Test	Mean Rank	N	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Social Preparedness	1.78	72	23.529	1	.000
Physical Preparedness	1.22				

The significant Chi-square value of 23.529 obtained from the non-parametric Friedman test indicates that there are differences among the levels of physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools. This suggests that not all athletes are equally prepared in terms of their physical and social skills, which may have implications for their performance and overall success in sports.

Further analysis can be done to identify the specific areas where athletes differ in their levels of preparation. For instance, it could be determined whether athletes are more prepared physically or socially, and whether these differences vary based on the specific sport or gender of the athlete.

Related findings in this area of research have shown that physical and social preparedness are important factors for athletic success. For example, a study by Mäkelä et al. (2020) found that social support from coaches and teammates was positively associated with athletes' motivation and performance. Similarly, a study by Kovacs and colleagues (2018) showed that physical fitness was a key predictor of success in sports.

Physical fitness is an important predictor of success in sports. Several studies have shown that physical fitness is a key factor in athletic performance and success. For example, a study by Güllich and Emrich (2014) found that physical fitness was a significant predictor of success in youth soccer, while a study by Meyers et al. (2017) showed that physical fitness was positively associated with performance in high school basketball.

Social support is important for motivation and well-being. Social support from coaches, teammates, and family members has been shown to be important for athletes' motivation and well-being. A study by Liu and colleagues (2018) found that social support from coaches was positively associated with athletes' satisfaction with their sport participation, while a study by Kavussanu and colleagues (2018) showed that social support from teammates was associated with athletes' perceptions of their own competence.

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Mental skills training can improve performance. Mental skills such as goal-setting, visualization, and self-talk have been shown to be effective in improving athletic performance. A study by Weinberg and Gould (2018) found that mental skills training was associated with improved performance in high school swimmers, while a study by Gould and colleagues (2015) showed that mental skills training was effective in improving performance and reducing anxiety in youth soccer players.

Overall, these findings suggest that both physical and social factors are important for athletic success, and that training programs should address both areas in order to maximize athletes' potential.

Relationship between Physical and Social Preparedness

Results in Table 5 using Spearman's rho Correlation Coefficient show the relationship of physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools. This indicates that there was no significant relationship ($\rho = -0.027$, $p = .82$) in the level of social and physical preparedness among athletes in Secondary Schools which can be interpreted as "Negligible Relationship".

Table 3. Relationship between Physical and Social Preparedness

Spearman's rho	N	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
Social Preparedness	72	-0.027	.82
Physical Preparedness			

Note: ± 0.81 to ± 1.0 = Very Strong; ± 0.61 to ± 0.80 = Strong; ± 0.41 to ± 0.60 = Moderate; ± 0.21 to ± 0.40 = low; ± 0.00 to ± 0.20 = Negligible

This means that an athlete's level of physical preparedness does not have a significant impact on their level of social preparedness, and vice versa.

Implications of these findings could include that coaches and athletic departments may need to prioritize social preparedness and team-building activities in addition to physical training, as these may have a greater impact on team performance and success. Additionally, the lack of a significant relationship between physical and social preparedness may suggest that athletes who are physically prepared may not necessarily be socially prepared, and vice versa. This could have implications for team dynamics and cohesion.

Related findings may include studies on the impact of team-building and social activities on team performance and cohesion, as well as studies on the relationship between physical fitness and mental health. For example, research has shown that physical activity can have a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing, which may in turn have an indirect impact on social preparedness and team cohesion (Hassmen et al., 2000). Other studies have also suggested that social support can have a positive impact on physical fitness and performance (Sawamura et al., 2020).

Mental preparation has been shown to have a significant impact on athletic performance. Hays and Brownstein (2012) highlighted the importance of goal setting, visualization, and positive self-talk in helping athletes to achieve their performance goals. This suggests that coaches and trainers should consider incorporating mental preparation techniques into their training programs in addition to physical and social preparation.

Leadership has also been shown to be a key factor in team performance and cohesion. Eys and colleagues (2016) emphasized the importance of effective leadership in developing a team culture that prioritizes both physical and social preparedness. This includes promoting open communication and a sense of shared goals and values among team members. Coaches and trainers should therefore prioritize leadership development as part of their training programs.

The impact of social media on athlete development is an emerging area of research. Leaver and Gruzd (2020) explored the potential positive and negative effects of social media use on athlete development and performance. On the one hand, social media provides athletes with increased opportunities for social support and networking. On the other hand, it may also lead to distractions and negative social comparisons. Coaches and trainers should therefore consider the potential impact of social media use on athlete development and incorporate strategies to minimize negative effects while maximizing positive ones.

Athlete development is a complex and multifaceted process that requires attention to both physical and social preparedness, as well as mental and leadership preparation. Researchers and practitioners should continue to explore the relationship between these factors and their potential impact on athlete performance and well-being.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the mean and standard deviation results, the level of social preparedness of athletes is considered highly prepared, while the level of physical preparedness is considered prepared. The results of the non-parametric Friedman test indicate that there are significant differences among the levels of physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools. The significant

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Chi-square value suggests that the null hypothesis, which assumes that there is no difference between the levels of physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools, can be rejected.

Furthermore, the results of Spearman's rho correlation coefficient show that there is a negligible relationship between the levels of social and physical preparedness among athletes in secondary schools. This means that the level of social preparedness does not affect the level of physical preparedness among athletes in secondary schools, and vice versa.

It can be concluded that while athletes in secondary schools are highly prepared socially, their physical preparedness is only at a prepared level. Additionally, there are significant differences between the levels of physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools, but there is a negligible relationship between these two factors.

The findings of this study have several implications for coaches, trainers, and educators working with athletes in secondary schools.

Firstly, coaches and trainers should focus on improving the physical preparedness of athletes in secondary schools, as the results suggest that athletes in this age group are less physically prepared than socially prepared. This could involve implementing more effective training programs that focus on developing the physical fitness and strength of athletes.

Secondly, the significant differences between the levels of physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools indicate that coaches and trainers should develop training programs that address both factors separately. For example, social preparedness could be developed through team-building activities and communication exercises, while physical preparedness could be developed through more intense and focused training programs.

Lastly, the negligible relationship between social and physical preparedness suggests that coaches and trainers should not assume that improving one factor will automatically improve the other. Instead, they should focus on developing both factors separately to ensure that athletes in secondary schools are well-prepared both socially and physically.

Overall, the findings of this study highlight the importance of developing both social and physical preparedness in athletes in secondary schools and suggest that coaches and trainers should address these factors separately to achieve the best results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations can be made:

1. Coaches and trainers: should implement more effective training programs that focus on developing the physical fitness and strength of athletes in secondary schools; should develop training programs that address both physical and social preparedness factors separately to ensure that athletes in secondary schools are well-prepared both socially and physically; should include team-building activities and communication exercises to develop social preparedness in athletes in secondary schools; and should regularly assess the social and physical preparedness of athletes in secondary schools to identify areas for improvement and adjust their training programs accordingly.
2. Educators and school administrators should prioritize the development of both physical and social preparedness in athletes in secondary schools to ensure their overall well-being and success.
3. Future studies should investigate the factors that contribute to the differences in physical and social preparedness among athletes in secondary schools, to identify specific areas where coaches and trainers can focus their efforts.
4. Further research should be conducted to investigate the impact of social and physical preparedness on athletic performance in secondary school athletes.

By implementing these recommendations, coaches, trainers, educators, and school administrators can ensure that athletes in secondary schools are well-prepared both socially and physically, which can lead to improved athletic performance and overall well-being.

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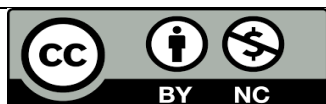
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