

## Sports Coaching in Times of COVID 19 Pandemic: Physical Education Instructorslived Experiences

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### Abstract

The epistemology of this study lies in the actual lived experiences of the participants who performed sports coaching during COVID 19 pandemic in one of the State University in the Northern most part of Leyte in Eastern Visayas. Henceforth, this study explored the lived experiences of the Physical Education Instructors who served as sports coaches in times of pandemic. A descriptive phenomenology design utilizing the Collaizi's phenomenological data analysis based on the selection criteria set by the researcher was used. This was validated and approved by qualitative research experts. The main instrument of this study was a semi-interview which was recorded using a digital device, transcribed using Microsoft Word, coded and extracted using a macro program embedded in the MS Word. Informed consent from the participants was sought before the conduct of the interview. The anonymity of the interviewed participants was upheld. To augment the veracity of the data, this study collected documents from the State University and Colleges where the Physical Education instructors belong. The results revealed themes about the qualities of skills training, ways of communication, health and safety and stakeholder's aspects are the challenges met by the sports coaches and the provision of skills training development, ways of communication, safety, health and stakeholder's support facets are the coaches' coping mechanisms. Therefore, improvement in personal, technical, safety and health and stakeholder's support system are highly encouraged as recommendations.

**Keywords:** *Descriptive Phenomenology, Lived Experiences, Sports Coaching, Coaching Challenges, Coping Mechanisms*

### Introduction

A global pandemic interrupted the sports world in 2020, resulting in the cancellation of most athletic tournaments. The respiratory disorder known as COVID-19 is caused by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) virus, which can cause pneumonia-like symptoms and trigger an inflammatory cascade affecting the bronchioles, alveoli, circulatory system, and myocardial tissue (Ding et al., 2020; Lovato and De Filippis, 2020; Manfredi, et al., 2020; Giordano, et al., 2020). Social isolation, limits on public meetings, and stay-at-home were among the preventative measures taken. The majority of athletic training facilities and community fitness centers were closed, denying athletes access to strength and conditioning equipment. As a result, sport coaches and athletes were forced to drastically alter their training routines and environment due to a lack of time to procure proper training equipment.

The practice of inspiring, leading, and preparing an individual in preparation for any sporting pastime,

career, or event is known as sports coaching. Athletes are helped to reach their greatest potential by sports coaches in the concept of Life Coach Directory (2022). They are in charge of coaching athletes in a sport by analyzing their performances, teaching relevant skills, and encouraging them. However, sports coaches are also in charge of the athlete's life and sport-related guidance (Wood, 2010). As a result, one of the main goals and objectives of sports coaching is to enhance numerous aspects of physical and skill-related fitness, such as strength, speed, coordination, endurance, and flexibility. Physical education teachers and athletes must devote a significant amount of time and effort to this.

Furthermore, because physical contact is frequently regarded as an important pedagogical tool, sports coaches are becoming more aware of the potential negative consequences of its use in these settings, where social restrictions linked to the global public health challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic are present (Caldeborg, 2021). How

sports coaching has come to re-evaluate social interactions is relevant to this modern shift of how social practices relate to physical contact and social distance. It has a significant impact on the athletes because the sport focuses more on demonstration and practical performances (Kirbas, 2020). It is the point at which theories and knowledge are transformed into skills that can be honed through consistent practice.

Moreover, the field can learn from this unprecedented stoppage in sport and seek strategies to better prepare in the event of future pandemics of this nature. A study conducted by (Jagim, et. al. 2020) stated that, the field can learn from this unprecedented stoppage in sport and seek strategies to better prepare in the event of future pandemics of this nature. Results of the current study indicate that athletes did not have a diverse array of resistance training equipment available to them at the time of the shutdown measures. Athletes also reported significant decreases in training frequency and time spent on sport-specific activities. An essential caveat to the current situation is that athletes and coaches did not have enough time to properly plan in-home training regimens, especially for a long period of time, or to get sufficient home-based training equipment.

Athletes and coaches can learn from this circumstance as the present pandemic situation evolves, or in the event of another worldwide pandemic, to have contingency preparations in place if home-based training is required again in the future. Moving forward, strength and conditioning professionals should plan in-home training programs and incorporate simple training modalities (e.g., body weight, bands, kettlebells, plyometrics, etc.) to elicit the desired training stress required to optimize or at least maintain training adaptations in the event of another shutdown period. Additionally, athletic departments may want to explore purchasing mobile training equipment packs that athletes can check out in the case of a lockdown. During a pandemic or lockdown, the ability to sustain training adaptations and fitness levels would likely contribute to enhanced injury resistance and a safe return to sport after an extended period of reduced physical activity.

A survey conducted by (Masen, 2019) stated that the top three sports coaching challenges faced are as follows: understanding individual athlete's personality and how to best motivate them; personal life balance – managing sport, career, home and social; and team or squad dynamics and managing relationships within the team or squad. This means that when coaching in sports it needs a constant monitoring to the athletes. However, this survey is taken before the pandemic. With these, we all know the context of pandemic restrictions. As a result, this study is carried out for obvious reasons, especially in light of current events in the world that are causing problems that arises.

It is thus imperative to conduct this study for a better understanding on point of view of sport coaches in sport coaching. This can pave way on a quality growth and development of the athletes in the sports that they specialize despite the pandemic outbreak. In conclusion, the objective of this study is to gain a better knowledge and insight of physical education instructors' in the Higher Education Institution experiences in sport coaching in terms of challenges experienced, coping mechanisms employed, and the intervention they choose that best fits the circumstances.

### **Domains of Inquiry**

This phenomenological study aimed to explore the lived experiences of the Physical Education instructors in sports coaching in times of COVID-19 pandemic in order to understand the essence of the phenomenon under investigation.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following queries:

1. What are the challenges encountered by the physical education instructors in sports coaching in times of Covid-19 pandemic?
2. What is the coping up mechanisms employed by the physical education instructors in sports coaching in times of Covid-19 pandemic?
3. What intervention can be proposed based on the results of the study?

### **Methodology**

#### **Design**

In this study, the researcher utilized the descriptive phenomenology created by Husserl wherethe experience of phenomenon is valued as

perceived by human consciousness which should be an object of scientific study (Lopez & Willis, 2004). The descriptive phenomenology used to reach the true meanings through engaging in-depth into reality (Laverty, 2003; Lopez & Willis, 2004). Through this design, it enabled the researcher to reach the true meanings of the lived experiences of the participants through engaging in-depth interviews and putting it into a reality.

#### **Environment**

This study was conducted within the vicinity in one of the State Universities and Colleges in Eastern Visayas positioned at the Northern most part of Leyte, in the Philippines. This State University is comprised of five colleges; the College of Graduate Studies, College of Maritime Education, College of Technology and Engineering, College of Teacher Education and College of Arts and Sciences.

One of the departments belonging to the College of Arts Sciences is the Physical Education department where most of the Physical Education instructors served as coaches during sports events before and during COVID 19 pandemic.

#### **Participants**

There were six (6) Physical Education instructors who participated in this study. They served as sports coaches in the State Universities and Colleges' intramurals and extramural events. They have been serving as coach in a variety of sports events prior to the pandemic and assigned to continue coaching during the COVID 19 pandemic, school year 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. The participants of this study were verified through the Institutional memorandum during the Sports events participation and through the institutional list official Physical Education instructors in the Physical Education department.

#### **Instrument**

In this study, the researcher utilized an individual face to face in-depth interview following the healthy safety protocols, field notes for observations (especially in conducting the face to face interview), and triangulation of the collected documents to showcase the lived experiences of the participants with regards to the challenges met and coping mechanisms performed by sports coaches in sports coaching during COVID 19 pandemic.

The main instrument of this study is an interview guide that elicited the participants' lived experiences about the challenges and difficulties met by the Physical Education instructors in sports coaching during COVID 19 pandemic and the coping mechanisms performed as well. The interview guide includes three phases. The first phase is the preliminary questions about the participants' background leading to the main questions. The second phase are the main questions about the experiences when it comes to the challenges and difficulties met and coping mechanisms utilized by the Physical Education instructors in sports coaching during COVID 19 pandemic. The last phase are the closing questions and recommendations and words of gratitude to the participants for participating the activity.

Validation of the questions utilized was conducted through sending to three qualitative experts. Comments and suggestions were applied as to its validity recommended by the three experts in qualitative research. The three qualitative experts are described as persons in authority because of their expertise and well-experienced in the conduct of qualitative method.

Document analysis was also performed utilizing the conceptual analysis to support the participants' responses in the in-depth interview.

#### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The data for this study was gathered through a face to face interview among all participants following the minimum safety health protocols. An appointment for each interview was done through advanced planning and scheduling according to their availability of time. Advance information was done for appointments.

Before the conduct of interview, the researcher wrote a letter address to the college President, with the recommending approval of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences where the Physical Education department belongs and the Vice President for Research Extension and External Affairs to seek their permission and approval to conduct this study. The purpose, the goals of the research and the proposed schedule for interview were also attached to the letter to sought permission.

Upon approval of the request to conduct the interview, interview proper followed. Starting with an orientation with the participants on what the interview was all about was done by providing essential information and orientation what is to take about. The informed consent form was read and explained to the participants by the researcher and requested to agree by signing the form as proof of their willingness to participate.

In the initial discussions and preliminaries, definition of imagery was provided to avoid bias on their responses. They were informed that all their responses will be kept confidential. They were also oriented that the participation for this study is completely voluntary in nature and participants is free to withdraw once they feel like not to continue.

Afterwards, a semi-structured individual face to face in-depth interview was conducted using the prepared interview guide validated by experts. Participants was encouraged to talk freely and to tell stories using their own words or own dialect.

On the actual interview, the researcher has been observant on the gestures and answers of the participants. Field notes and observation notes were recorded. The researcher guided the participants to fully understand the flow and meaning of the question through a very conventional way of delivering the question. All answers of the participants were recorded using a digital voice recorder or good quality android cellular phone and data transcription was kept and organized in a digital location using laptop.

At the end of each interview, the proponent reminded the participants about his need for a second contact with them at their most convenient way to discuss the findings of the study

and to make sure that the study findings reflect their own experiences.

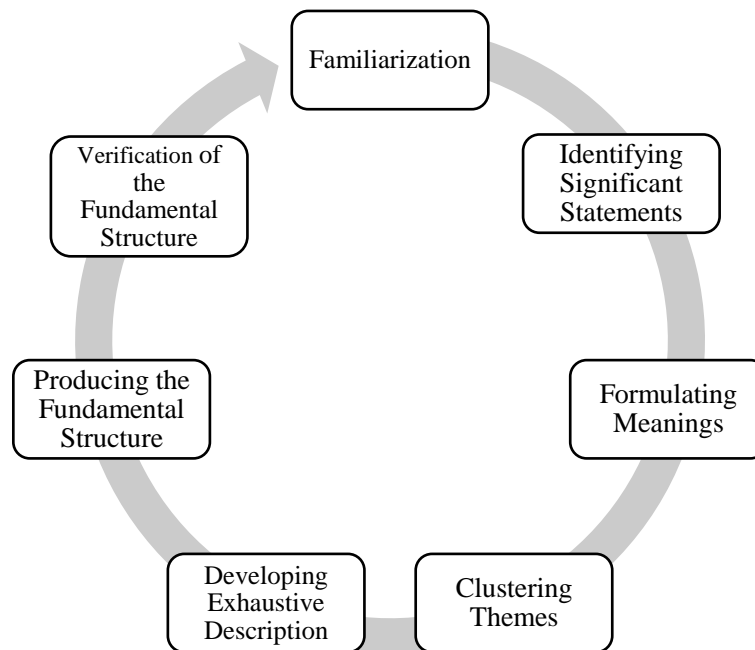
Likewise, the researcher requested a document to support any claim of the participants through an official form validated also by experts.

This is equally important because this information from the document may help augment the analysis of the phenomenon under investigation. Documents can supply supplementary research data and making document analysis is a useful and beneficial method for this research. Also, document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which the researcher interprets documents to give voice and meaning around a phenomenon being studied (Bowen, 2009).

### **Data Analysis**

This study utilized the descriptive phenomenological design using the Colaizzi's strategy for data interpretation and analysis of qualitative information including in-depth interviews and document analysis. This design fits well in the study considering that the description of the lived-experiences of the participants will be explored and will provide exhaustive description to the body of knowledge about their lived experiences in sports coaching during this time. The researcher aims to explore the lived experiences of the participants on their challenges, difficulties, coping mechanisms and recommendations in sports coaching during this pandemic. It is expected that the result of this study will help improve the performance of the Physical Education instructors in the Higher Education Institutions' sports coaching through crafting an intervention plan that will be used not only today but also in the near future.

The stages are illustrated in the diagram below:



**Figure 1. Collaizi's Descriptive Phenomenological Data Analyzing Procedure**

There are seven steps in Collaizi's phenomenological method that uncovers the genuine experience of the phenomenon under investigation (cited in Sanders, 2003; Speziale & Carpenter, 2007).

#### Phase 1: Familiarization

Each transcript was read several times to gain a sense of the whole content. During this stage, any thoughts, feelings, and ideas that arose by the researcher as per experience also in sports coaching during pandemic were added to the bracketing diary. This helped to explore the phenomenon as experienced by the participants themselves.

#### Phase 2: Identifying Significant Statements

In this stage of analysis, significant statements and phrases pertaining to the experiences of sports coaching during pandemic, its challenges and coping mechanisms were extracted from each transcript. These statements were written in separate sheets and coded based on their "transcript, page, and line numbers". After extracting the significant statements from transcripts, the researcher made a peer review to help finalized the codes.

#### Phase 3: Formulated Meanings

Meanings were formulated from the significant statements. Each underlying meaning

was coded in one category as they reflect an exhaustive description to the lived experiences of the physical education teachers coaching sports during pandemic. Similarly, constant consultation with the peers were made. The whole statements and their meanings were checked by an expert researcher who found the process is correct and meanings are consistent and in one direction.

#### Phase 4: Clustering Themes

After having an agreement toward all the formulated meanings, the process of grouping all these formulated meanings into categories that reflect a unique structure of clusters of themes was initiated. Each cluster of themes was coded to include all formulated meanings related to that group of meanings. After that, groups of clusters of themes that reflect a particular vision issue were incorporated together to form a distinctive construct of theme. Indeed, all these themes are internally convergent and externally divergent; meaning that each formulated meaning falls only in one theme cluster that is distinguished in meaning from other structures (Mason, 2002).

#### Phase 5: Developing Exhaustive Description

At this stage of analysis, all emergent themes were defined into an exhaustive description. After merging all study themes, the whole structure of the phenomenon "lived

experiences in sports coaching during pandemic of the physical education instructors' has been extracted. Thereafter, the researcher sought an expert researcher who reviewed the findings in terms of richness and completeness to provide sufficient description and to confirm that the exhaustive description reflects the experiences of the physical education instructors coaching sports during the Covid 19 pandemic. Finally, a validation to this exhaustive description was confirmed with the research experts.

#### Phase 6: Producing the Fundamental Structure

This step is a bit similar to the previous step, but no exhaustive meanings were sought. In this step, a reduction of findings was done in which redundant, misused or overestimated descriptions were eradicated from the over-all structure. It seems that such attempt was made to emphasize on the fundamental structure. Some amendments were applied to generate clear relationships between cluster of themes and their extracted themes, which included also eliminating some ambiguous structures that weaken the whole description.

#### Phase 7: Seeking Verification of the fundamental Structure

This step aimed to validate study findings using "member checking" technique. It was undertaken through returning the research findings to the participants and discussing the results with them. Participant's view on the study results were obtained directly through electronic mails, messenger, phone calls and face to face discussions. This step was done by the researcher as he took the approval from the participants in advance during the first interview process. Eventually, all participants showed their satisfaction and agreement toward these results which entirely reflect their feelings and experiences.

Essentially, the qualitative research has to demonstrate trustworthiness in providing rigor and strength to the study validity and reliability in all stages including data collection, data analysis and descriptions (Speziale& Carpenter, 2007; Vivar, McQueen, Whyte, &Armayer, 2007). Trustworthiness approaches; credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability were undertaken throughout the study process. A

number of strategies are employed to add rigor to the study such as "member checking" which was achieved by getting agreement from the participants on the emerged results (Creswell, 2003; Creswell 2009; Marshall & Rossman 2006; Speziale& Carpenter, 2007).

In addition, the researcher reflects his own pre-suppositions about the experiences the Physical Education instructors who served as coaches in sports during the COVID 19 pandemic.

As explained earlier, bracketing eradicates any bias inherent in researcher believes and attitudes (Creswell 2009; Marshall & Rossman 2006). Peer review of the emerging ideas through discussions with the experts will also be done. Regarding the process of translation, all transcripts were double checked by a bilingual translator who is competent in both Bisaya and English.

According to Creswell (2009), using of an external auditor who will review the whole process of the study and perform an additional checking for coding process and analysis also applies. Finally, cross checking of the whole analysis process done by the proponent's colleagues in qualitative research.

#### Research Reflexivity and Ethical Considerations

The proponent's reflection and position in this study is an important factor to avoid subjectivity. Reflexive practices focus on examining one's subjectivity and reflecting on how this shapes the research process and to include subjectivity statements (Preissle, 2008). The typology of pathways as proposed by Finlay in reflexivity and will be followed by the proponent are recognize themselves, recognize the others, and authorize the text in "getting it right and transcended their subjectivities and cultural context.

Therefore, in this study, the proponent recognizes its position relative to this study as a Physical Education instructor in the Higher Education institution and Sports Coach for many years already. Possible biases may happen in the interpretation of the qualitative data. However, constant consultation and peer debriefing will be employed to avoid misinterpretation and utmost exact direction of the responses of the participants as the source data.

Without a doubt, ethics is an integral part of conducting research, especially if the people are dealing with the people, the community pertinent documents, animals and the like. An absolute observance will be done and will be followed by the ethical consideration in conducting this study to avoid fallacy or misconceptions of the participant's views and perspectives about the phenomenon under study, it's integrity, and most especially to protect them from any harm by hiding their personal information using the John Doe names. Lastly, the proponent will ask the approval of the consent form from the participants, stating their rights and privileges including their role in the research.

**Risks and discomforts.** There are no known risks associated with this research. Because the researcher wanted only to explore the lived experiences of physical education teachers coaching sports during pandemic as basis in crafting an intervention plan to be used by the division.

**Potential benefits.** This research may help us to improve the coaching styles of Physical Education teachers during COVID 19 pandemic particularly in

the different sports events conducted in the Higher Education Institutions. The potential benefits in this research is an input to craft an intervention plan to be used by the Physical Education teachers and sports coaches during the conduct of Sports events.

**Protection of confidentiality.** Rest assured that your identity will be kept with high confidentiality.

**Voluntary participation.** Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

## Results

### Challenges Encountered in Sports Coaching

The Table 1 below presents the result of the challenges met by Physical Education sports coaches in coaching sports during pandemic. The coaches' experiences were coded, formulated meanings, clustered and bracketed to reach the true meaning. The experiences manifested that the main challenge the sports coaches met are the Qualities of Skills Training, Communication, Safety and Stakeholder's aspects.

**Table 1. Qualities of Skills Training, Communication, Safety and Stakeholder's Challenges Aspects**

Formulated Meanings	Theme Clusters		Emerging Theme
Difficulty in training	Training Preparations	Techniques	Challenges on Qualities of Skills Training, Communication, Safety and Stakeholder's Aspects
Challenged on physical training			
Monitoring challenged			
Difficulty in following the schedule			
Difficulty in granting the request			
Difficult process on finance			
Difficult communication	Communication Impediment		
Unavailability of internet			
Poor internet connection			
Less parents support in training	Parental Support		
Lack of support from parents			
Following the health protocols	Health Protocols		
Health restrictions			
Getting vaccinated			
Laziness in Training	Athlete's Personality		
Unresponsive to instructions			
Difficulty in looking for training venue	Facility Concerns		
Limited mobilization for trainings			

Limited variations due to social distancing		
Time constraint		
Lack of equipment		
No guarantee of good skills training	<b>Training Barriers</b>	
Not continued training		

Sports coaching activities during pandemic came with a lot of difficulties and challenges both in the aspect of coaches and athletes. Sports coaches identified essential aspects in the development of the athletes in terms of sports performance. The coaches described their challenges in sports coaching as follows:

**Coach 1.** *“Dile man ta ka pugosgudsa training naato gusto buhaton because we were bound by the health protocols.”* [Page 1, Line 2-3]

*[We cannot force to implement the training design that we would like to because we were bound by the health protocols.]*

**Coach 2.** *“Second, the schedule of the training because naa man taygesunodnga protocol so dilijudmaka everyday ug training, there is no guarantee that the training conducted to them is enough for them to compete.”* [Page 1, Line 15-17]

*[Second challenge is the schedule of training because we have to follow the health protocols. With that, we cannot conduct it every day. Likewise, there is no guarantee that the training conducted to them is enough for them to compete.]*

**Coach 5.** *“Even ang communication between coach and athletes lisodkaayotungodsawalawalanga internet connection.”* [Page 2, Line 14-15]

*[Even the communication of the coaches and athletes is difficult because of the poor internet connection.]*

**Coach 6.** *“Second kay lisod e monitor ang mga players kung ni follow pa baclasaimuhangmga rules ngagi set as their coach like for example ang need nilanga diet, kung nasunod pa ba.”* [Page 2, Line 22-23]

*[It's difficult to monitor the athletes if they were able to follow the instructions set by the coach, for example maintaining the diet, if they were able to follow it.]*

The theme created is the Challenges on Qualities Skills Training, Communication, Safety and Stakeholder's Aspects. This was described by the participants as difficulty in the training techniques preparation, communication impediments, the lack of support of the parents, following the strict health and safety protocols, the athlete's individual differences and attitudes, the venue of practices, and the training styles barriers.

#### Coaches Coping Mechanisms

The Table 2 below presents the result of the coping mechanisms did by Physical Education sports coaches in coaching sports during pandemic. The coaches' stories and perspectives were analyzed, clustered and bracketed to reach the true meaning. The experiences the sports coaches showed that the Provision of Skills Training Development, Ways on Communication, Safety and Health Considerations and Stakeholder's Support Facets are the coping mechanisms they performed in sports coaching during pandemic.

**Table 2. Provision of Skills Training Development, Ways on Communication, Safety and Health Considerations and Stakeholder's Support Facets**

Formulated Meanings	Theme Clusters	Emerging Theme
Constant motivations	Emotional Conditioning	Provision of Skills Training Development, Ways on Communication, Safety and Health Considerations and Stakeholder's Support Facets
Inspiring athletes to continue training		
Mind conditioning		
Encouragement to athletes		
Giving time to talk to athletes		



Creating space for athletes		
Adjustment on the style of training	Quality Training Routines	
Giving of structured program		
Giving time to physical training		
Virtual trainings		
Correcting attitude focused		
Giving reinforcement, techniques and updates		
Strategizing techniques		
Setting activities at home		
Giving training schedule		
Goal setting	Goal Setting Techniques	
Holistic development		
Continue to be resourceful		
Determining methods		
Online Monitoring	Virtual Training Skills Development	
Continued communication		
Monitoring progress through video calls		
Staying connected		
Keeping in touch through virtual platforms		
Credible online programs		
Virtual techniques and activities		
Encourage parents to support	Parental Support System	
Coordinating with parents		
Parents support and consent		
Mental health consideration	Health Support System	
Taking care of athletes' responsibility		
Constant reminders of health protocols		
Recognize how health is important		
Getting vaccinated		
Find ways to let the athletes enjoy	Athlete's Positive Outlooks	
Go with the flow		
Understand the athletes		
Correcting attitude focused		
Imposing discipline to athletes		

During the COVID 19 pandemic, the coaches performed many strategies to create and innovate coaching styles for the athletes be engaged in different sports training. Athletes' were forced to adapt what is being offered in the performance of their trainings with the assistance of the coaches. As described by the coaches:

**Coach 1.** "Kung giunsanakoaronmakalabang ra jud me saamomgabuhatunon, was a constant

*motivation jud sa elaha. Pagpa sabot nabisagenani ang panahon, we still have to continue to do the training and task in any way."* [Page 3, Line 2-4]

*[On how we did it, just to go across the task of coaching was a constant motivation to the athletes. To let them understand that despite of this COVID pandemic, we still have to continue to do the training and tasks in any way.]*

**Coach 1.** *"So akobuhaton, akosila e encourage to watch over youtubessa video san aka assignsaela ha na sports development bah. Then tagaannakosila structure unsaon."* [Page 3, Line 10-11]

*[So, what I did, is to encouraged them to wathc over youtube videos on what sports assigned to them to be developed. Then, I give them structures how to do it.]*

**Coach 2.** *"So, it is important as a coach to motivate athletes labinatongmgatapolanmo training to give reinforcement for them to also give their best and para maganahansilamo training na."* [Page 3, Line 22-23]

*[So, it is essential to motivate the athletes especially if they are not motivated to go for training, and to give reinforcement also for them to give their best for them to gain enthusiasm for the training.]*

**Coach 4.** *"Una, stay connected. Keep in touch with my athletes collectively and individually via text, video, and social media."* [Page 4, Line 16-17]

*[First, is to stay connected. Keeping in touch with the athletes collectively and individually via texts, videos, and other social media platforms.]*

Under the theme, "Provision of Skills Training, Ways on Communication, Safety and Health Considerations and Stakeholder's Support Facets", several distinguished coping mechanisms were identified. Coaches believed that athlete's physical, mental and emotional conditioning is essential for them to be confident doing the routines despite of the present problem. The provision of quality training routines also was described such as performing what is being instructed by the coach. Goal setting techniques, virtual trainings skills, external and parental support system, following the safety health protocols and athlete's positive outlooks were also among of the coping mechanisms utilized by the coaches.

#### Coaches Coaching Recommendations

The Table 3 below presents the various recommendations the Physical Education sports coaches would like to have in coaching sports during pandemic. The coaches' views on recommendations were coded, formulated meanings, clustered and bracketed to reached the true meaning. The views revealed that the sports coaches strongly recommend are the Improvement in Personal, Technical, Safety, Health and Stakeholder's Support System.

**Table 3. Improvement in Personal, Technical, Safety, Health and Stakeholder's Support System**

Formulated Meanings	Theme Clusters	Emerging Theme
Providing mental health activities	Strengthening Mental Health	Improvement in Personal, Technical, Safety, Health and Stakeholder's Support System
Strengthening mental health		
Mental health considerations		
Advising for vaccination	Boosting Health Immunity	
Requiring vaccination		
Boosting immune system		
Work with the LGU	External Stakeholder's Support Structure	
Work with the community		
Coordinating with the government		
Coordinating with school officials		
Coordinating with local government officials		
Quality physical training	Training Techniques Strategies	
Preparing facility ahead of time		
Monitoring progress through videocalls		
Specific in-home virtual trainings		

Strategized training techniques	Athletes Development	Emotional
Providing equipment for home trainings		
Giving focus and assistance to athletes		
Provide quality time		
Empathy		
Reminding them to pray always		
Counseling		
Act like a parent		
Developing patience		
Giving orientation with the athletes		
Paying attention to athletes' needs		
Seeking permission from the parents	Parent's Support System	
Work with the parents		

Despite of the challenges the coaches encountered in sports coaching during this pandemic, the coaches are resilient enough to continue to give an ample time for their athlete's benefits. During the interview, it came out for them to have these recommendations in sports coaching to achieve the goal amidst the challenges and difficulties. They described these recommendations as:

**Coach 1.** "As coach, dapatjudnimotagaan ug oras and care ang athletes. Mura bag musawo ta saelamgagibati like frustrations and others." [Page 5, Line 8-9]

[As coach, you should give time and care for them. You have to show empathy and understand what they feel especially if it entails frustrations and disappointments.]

**Coach 3.** "I address it to all the concern people. LGU's, parents, students and community. Kay lisodjud ang batakaronnga di nahapit mugawas or makagawasmaonangakojudgi consider ilang mental health." [Page 5, Line 19-21]

[I address it to all the concerned people. LGU's, parents, students and community. Because the present situation is difficult, and the athletes are restricted in moving out of their homes, mental health must also be given considerations.]

**Coach 4.** "And also, mag ask sad permission sa parents nganaay training ang mgabata. I think I address nisiyasa school head/ principal para pod mapasaadtosaDep.Edog mag wait og approval

pod sa government to conduct training." [Page 5-6, Line 28-2]

[And also, seeking permission from parents about the training of the athletes. I think, this has to be coordinated with the school head or principal so that they can coordinate also with the agency and approved by the local government unit to conduct physical training.]

Improvement in Personal, Technical, Health, Safety and Stakeholder's Support System was the main theme described by the participants when it comes to recommendation for them to continually trained athletes amidst pandemic. Strengthening the mental health of the athletes was emphasized to be the dominant aspect. This was followed by boosting health immunity of the athletes to avoid infection and contamination of the COVID 19. A help and support from the government was also emphasized, improving the training techniques strategies of the coaches by crafting creative and innovative trainings virtually, improving the athlete's emotional development and the parent's full support system.

## Discussion

### Challenges Encountered in Sports Coaching

For a training session to be successful it must be a well-planned and well-prepared. Training preparation will help trainers to explain and emphasize the importance of the practice.

Preparation for the training can radiate confidence and being competent enough to conduct an effective and efficient training session. Preparation for a training session is one of a technique itself as

training session needs to be updated from time to time given the diverse changes and innovative measures in the world of sports (Issurin, 2016).



**Diagram 1. Challenges on Qualities Skills Training, Communication, Safety and Stakeholder's Aspects**

Training approaches preparation strengthen existing skills and aid in the acquisition of new ones. This strategy helps the body to progressively increase strength and endurance, enhance skill levels, and increase motivation, ambition, and confidence. Athletes can improve their understanding of their sport while also learning about the necessity of maintaining a healthy body through training (Sports Medicine, 2009). With these, in could reduce difficulties or problems that may occur during a training session such as the schedule, availability of facilities and equipment and finances needed in the practice session.

Good cooperation is built on the foundation of effective communication. Trainees are encouraged to be engaged during communication skills training, which includes speaking and listening as well as empathy for other people's thoughts and opinions (Sarı, et al. 2012). One of the most critical talents between a trainer and trainee can have is

communication. It is not enough to be able to exhibit talents and understand the strategy of the sport. It is all about establishing a connection with the individual and as a team (Ishak, 2017). Coaches want to motivate their players and provide them with knowledge that will help them train more effectively and perform better despite the difficulties faced such as the accessibility of internet connection in absence of face to face interaction.

Parents are lauded for their vital role in providing financial and logistical support for their children's participation in sports. However, not all parents support their child in engaging with sports. According to the researchers, parental involvement that includes an active sporting engagement increases the child's level of physical activity and results in a general embrace of a healthy lifestyle (Levi, 2020). With these, any kind of support helps increase happiness, decrease

anxiety and enhance connectedness, all of which help create positive relationships and lead to meaningful experiences in sports and life.

Pandemic outbreak has forced the closure of gyms, stadiums, pools, dancing and fitness studios, physiotherapy centers, parks, and playgrounds around the world. As a result, many people are unable to engage in their usual solo or group sporting or physical activities outside of their homes (Department of Economics and Social Affairs, 2020). However, due to pandemic there are restriction implemented by the government for the safety of everyone such as being vaccinated and following the health protocols. With these, limited time are allotted for the training with the observance of health protocols that leads to problem in the athletes' condition and momentum before, during and after the training session (Latella, & Haff, 2020).

Personality has a significant impact on sport, influencing both the activity that an athlete chooses to participate in and their subsequent performance. Confidence is a crucial factor in how personality affects sports performance; an athlete who feels they will succeed is more likely to succeed than one who is plagued by self-doubt. Understanding the personalities of athletes and coaches can help people overcome unhealthy habits that can affect individual and team performance (Allen, et. al. 2013).

Athletes are typically practical people, which means they enjoy working outside or working on a hands-on activity. Coaches encourage the athletes they deal with by inspiring mind as well as muscle to improve performance and train successfully. However, the athlete must commit to adopting the information provided by the coach because of a genuine faith in that mentor.

Further, for a training session to be a successful, facilities and equipment is one of the important aspects that must be considered. The availability of sufficient and adequate sports facilities has a significant impact on sport participation in any setting. On the other hand, equipment functions as a progress engine that encourages successful involvement in sporting activities. Having a good facility in a training motivates a player in the practice. While equipment helps with their performance during practice and in the focus of honing the skills.

#### **Coaches Coping Mechanisms**

Strengthening supporting muscles, evening out muscle imbalances, increasing mobility, correcting posture, stabilizing joints, learning new movement patterns, improving coordination and peripheral abilities, and so much more are all possible with proper strength and conditioning (Margolies, M. n.d.).



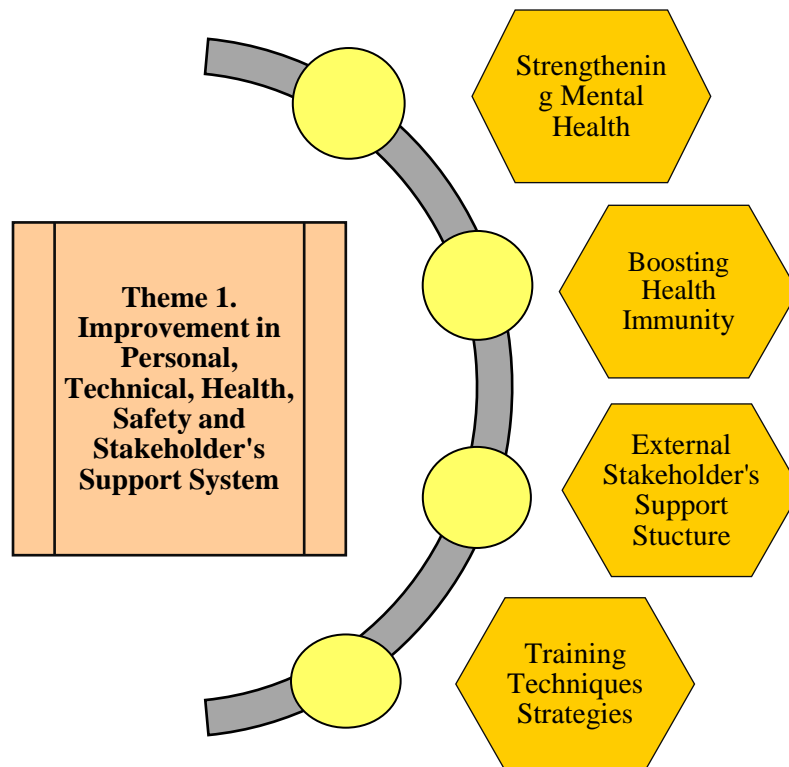
**Diagram 2. Provision of Skills Training, Ways of Communication, Safety, Health and Stakeholder's Facets**

Strengthening supporting muscles, evening out muscle imbalances, increasing mobility, correcting posture, stabilizing joints, learning new movement patterns, improving coordination and peripheral abilities, and so much more are all possible with proper strength and conditioning. And if correct practice routine is established during training then a quality performance can be achieved during the competition (Surujlal, J., & Nguyen, S. 2011). Moreover, focusing on the purpose or goal that is set is considered as a technique itself through monitoring, thorough analysis, interactive healthy

communication and giving of feedbacks. Also, this can be all possible with support of the parents given that the health protocols are being properly observed. As parents can only fully trust if their children are in the safe and good hands.

#### **Coaches Coaching Recommendations**

When we talk about sports coaches' roles in a training session, there are a lot of things to consider before the training starts, the things that needs to be done during the training and even after the training, there are still a lot of things to do for the players.



Sports coaching during COVID 19 pandemic is very challenging and difficult. The academic institutions together with their Physical Education teachers who act as sports coaches experienced variety of challenges to deliver quality sports coaching in aiming that the athletes maintain their physical, emotional, mental and social health. Although there are a lot of extra efforts these institutions and coaches, still, there a lot of mishaps and glitches, the fact that everyone has to be guided by a lot of protocols that hindrance in achieving the quality performance of the athletes. Also, during this new normal, the shift of the different modalities affected heavily to the entire academic and educational system, including sports development and sports coaching in particular. This proposed plan highlights activities, strategies and techniques which will serve as intervention envisioned to alleviate difficulties and improved outcomes when it comes

to coach-athletes sports relationship in Palompon Institute of Technology.

Intervention Components	Specific Elements	Mode of Delivery	Expected Outputs
<b>Enhancing Quality Skills Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Creativity in training styles</li> <li>-Structured and flexible training programs</li> <li>-Innovative virtual programs</li> <li>-Strategizing techniques, reinforcement and feedbacks</li> <li>-Scheduling physical trainings</li> <li>-Close monitoring on athlete's progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fixed and flexible Virtual Trainings</li> <li>-Scheduled Physical and Face to Face Trainings</li> <li>-Weekly monitoring on athlete's performance virtually and physically.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Enhanced and improved skills performance on each specific sport.</li> </ul>
<b>Modifying Access of Virtual and other Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Scheduled virtual trainings</li> <li>-Improved communication strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Providing wireless modem connections for athletes</li> <li>-Proposing allowance for internet load</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A regular attendance on virtual trainings and sessions</li> </ul>
<b>Improvement in Personal Attributes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Regular motivation and inspirational talks</li> <li>-Regular time session and sharing for personal views and experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sessions on personal and professional development</li> <li>-Strengthened program for motivation and encouragement to athletes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A motivated athletes performing virtual and physical tasks and trainings</li> </ul>
<b>Promoting Health and Safety Protocols</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Working with the local IATF;</li> <li>-Advised vaccination; and</li> <li>-Following safety health protocols.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Virtual talks on mental health programs</li> <li>-Seminars and conferences on safety and health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A healthy body of athletes resulting to an improved physical sports performance</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthening Bond with External Stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Coordination with parents;</li> <li>-Coordination with school officials/ authorities; and</li> <li>-Coordination with Local Government Units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Constant information dissemination involving external stakeholders; and</li> <li>-Involving ideas and practices of the external stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A cooperative parents</li> <li>-A supportive institution</li> <li>-An assistance from the local government sectors</li> </ul>

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Sports coaching has been found to develop the best potentials of sports athletes. The benefits can considerably essential to each of the athlete's future endeavors. Successful sports coaching necessitates coaches' sports quality techniques and high knowledge. During this pandemic, sports

coaching has been one of the most challenging aspects the coaches experienced.

Coaches in the practical scenario serve critical duties in the academic institutions and sports activities. However, because of the challenges meet during this pandemic, coaches and athletes



tend to decrease when it comes to output's performance. Challenges like motivating the athlete's interest, communication barriers, safety and health protocols, stakeholder's sincere participation and support hinders the total achievement of the coaches and athlete's goal. Further, this study suggests that creating and innovating quality techniques and strategies in sports training, assistance in having a good internet connection to the athletes, moral assistance to athletes, sincere participation of the external stakeholders must be given priority to continue achieve the goal of producing quality athlete's sports competitive performance despite of the COVID 19 pandemic.

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