

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Coping strategies of sport coaches and teachers designated to sports responsibilities

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the lived coping experiences of Filipino higher education teachers designated as sport coaches who simultaneously managed academic and athletic responsibilities. Anchored in Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, the research explored how teacher-coaches cognitively appraised occupational stressors and utilized coping strategies to sustain professional performance, motivation, and personal well-being. A qualitative phenomenological design was employed, and in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve (12) licensed Filipino teacher-coaches from public and private higher education institutions in Zamboanga Peninsula, Philippines. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which generated themes reflecting adaptive coping strategies such as role separation through structured scheduling, purpose-driven reframing, peer support, routine maintenance, and reflective or faith-based practices. Findings indicated that coping strategies influenced effectiveness in both teaching and coaching roles by enhancing emotional regulation, decision-making, and resilience under pressure. Participants reported that structured routines, social support networks, and clear professional boundaries contributed to sustained motivation and reduced burnout. Despite limited institutional support, teacher-coaches demonstrated agency in managing dual-role demands through personal coping mechanisms grounded in cultural and professional values. The study highlights the need for institutional recognition of dual-role workload demands and recommends the development of responsive workload policies, psychosocial support systems, and targeted professional development programs to promote teacher-coach well-being within Philippine higher education institutions.

Keywords: Coping Strategies, Sports, Coaches, Teachers, Sport Responsibilities

1. Introduction

In Philippine higher education institutions (HEIs), sport coaching responsibilities are frequently assigned to regular faculty members as an extension of teaching service rather than as a distinct professional role. Teacher-coaches are expected to manage academic obligations such as classroom instruction, assessment, consultation hours, and institutional service while simultaneously overseeing athletic training, competition preparation, athlete development, and performance evaluation ^[1]. **5** The absence of reduced teaching loads and formal support mechanisms places teacher-coaches in a demanding work environment

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characterized by role overload, time pressure, and emotional strain ^[2]. Over time, these conditions may negatively affect professional performance, motivation, and personal well-being ^[3].

The experience of stress among teacher-coaches is best understood through a framework that recognizes stress as a dynamic interaction between individuals and their environments. Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping in 1984 conceptualizes stress as a process arising from an individual's cognitive appraisal of environmental demands relative to perceived coping resources. According to the theory, stress responses are shaped by primary appraisal, in which individuals evaluate whether a situation is threatening or challenging, and secondary appraisal, in which they assess their ability to cope. Coping strategies are subsequently employed and may be problem-focused, aimed at modifying the stressor, or emotion-focused, aimed at regulating emotional responses ^[4]. This framework highlights coping as a central mechanism that mediates the impact of occupational stressors on psychological and behavioral outcomes, particularly in complex professional roles that require continuous adaptation.

Research on occupational stress among educators has documented high levels of workload pressure, emotional exhaustion, and role conflict, particularly when teachers are required to perform multiple roles beyond instructional duties ^[5]. Studies also indicate that coping strategies significantly influence teachers' resilience, job satisfaction, and emotional regulation. Within the sports context, coaching research has identified organizational demands, performance expectations, and interpersonal pressures as major sources of stress, emphasizing the importance of effective coping for sustained coaching engagement ^[6].

Despite these findings, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding higher education teacher-coaches, particularly in the Philippine context. Most existing studies focus either on classroom teachers or on full-time professional coaches, overlooking individuals who simultaneously occupy both roles. Local research in the Philippines has largely emphasized stress levels, burnout, or job satisfaction among teachers, with limited attention given to the coping processes employed in daily practice especially among those designated to sports responsibilities ^[7:8]. Furthermore, qualitative inquiries that explore how teacher-coaches make sense of their lived experiences, cognitively appraise stressors, and regulate pressure over time remain scarce, despite the growing use of phenomenological approaches in Philippine educational research ^[9]. This lack of context-sensitive research constrains the development of institutional policies and support systems responsive to the realities of teacher-coaches in HEIs.

To address this gap, the present study seeks to explore the lived coping experiences of Filipino sport coaches and teachers designated to sports responsibilities in higher education institutions. Anchored in the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, the study focuses on how teacher-coaches appraise the dual demands of teaching and coaching and the personal coping strategies they employ to manage these demands. The key concepts examined include stress appraisal, coping strategies, professional performance, motivation, and personal well-being. The primary variables involve the stressors associated with dual professional roles, the coping mechanisms utilized by teacher-coaches, and the perceived influence of these strategies on their effectiveness and well-being, particularly within evolving instructional and institutional contexts ^[10:11].

The expected outcome of this study is a nuanced, contextually grounded understanding of how Filipino higher education teacher-coaches cope with occupational stress arising from dual role expectations. By foregrounding participants' firsthand narratives, the study aims to identify adaptive and maladaptive coping patterns and to elucidate how coping strategies contribute to resilience, sustained motivation, and professional engagement ^[12]. Ultimately, the findings are expected to inform university administrators, policymakers, and sports program coordinators in the development of more humane workload policies,

psychosocial support mechanisms, and coach development initiatives within Philippine higher education institutions.

2. Literature review

2.1. Dual role professional demands

In higher education institutions (HEIs), teachers designated to sports responsibilities frequently perform dual professional roles that extend beyond traditional academic instruction. These teacher-coaches are expected to balance classroom teaching, student assessment, research tasks, administrative work, and institutional service while simultaneously fulfilling coaching duties such as athlete development, training management, competition preparation, and performance evaluation ^[13;14]. This dual-role structure generates competing expectations and blurred professional boundaries, often leading to time pressure and emotional strain. Similar dual-role arrangements are also observed among healthcare professionals who simultaneously provide patient care and assume administrative or leadership roles. Corporate supervisors who manage operational tasks while mentoring teams encounter comparable pressures associated with divided attention and performance accountability ^[15]. School administrators who continue classroom teaching while handling institutional management experience parallel challenges related to workload imbalance. Social workers who combine fieldwork and program coordination also report difficulties maintaining professional boundaries. These interdisciplinary parallels demonstrate that dual-role professionals across sectors face overlapping expectations that influence stress levels and professional identity formation. The integration of multiple responsibilities often requires constant role-switching, which increases cognitive load and emotional fatigue ^[16]. Unclear role expectations intensify psychological strain and reduce perceived job control. Understanding these shared patterns helps contextualize the experiences of teacher-coaches within a broader professional landscape.

Within the Philippine higher education context, coaching responsibilities are commonly framed as an extension of teaching service rather than as a specialized professional role ^[17]. As a result, faculty members often assume coaching duties without workload adjustments, financial incentives, or structured psychosocial support ^[18;19]. This institutional practice mirrors conditions faced by nurses who undertake managerial responsibilities without formal recognition or additional compensation. Similar situations occur among university faculty who coordinate research programs while maintaining full teaching loads. Professionals in nonprofit organizations frequently manage community programs alongside administrative duties without proportional institutional backing. These cross-sector examples highlight how institutional structures influence professional stress regardless of field. In Philippine HEIs, limited recognition of coaching as a specialized function intensifies role overload and emotional exhaustion among teacher-coaches ^[20]. The absence of formal support mechanisms places responsibility for coping primarily on individuals rather than organizations ^[21]. This pattern resembles experiences reported by project managers in corporate environments who navigate overlapping operational and leadership expectations. Professionals performing multiple roles often rely on personal resilience rather than institutional resources. Such conditions underscore the importance of examining coping processes in contexts where formal structural support is minimal. Situating teacher-coaches within interdisciplinary dual-role frameworks enriches the conceptual understanding of occupational stress.

2.2. Interdisciplinary dual role contexts

Dual-role responsibilities are not unique to education and sports, as professionals across diverse sectors often navigate overlapping duties that require simultaneous cognitive and emotional engagement. Healthcare workers frequently balance patient care with administrative leadership, research obligations, and mentoring

responsibilities, creating multidimensional role demands [22]. In corporate environments, managers often serve as operational leaders while providing employee coaching and performance evaluation. University researchers may simultaneously conduct research, teach courses, and oversee institutional programs. Emergency responders often combine frontline service with training coordination and community outreach [23]. These interdisciplinary examples demonstrate that professionals managing dual roles must continuously shift between different functional expectations. Such transitions require adaptive decision-making, emotional regulation, and effective prioritization. The complexity of dual-role work environments increases vulnerability to stress when institutional expectations are unclear. Similar to teacher-coaches, professionals in these sectors must navigate performance pressures and accountability across multiple domains. Studies of professional coaches emphasize organizational demands and performance expectations as primary stressors. These parallels suggest that coping strategies developed in one field may offer insights into managing stress in another.

Within Philippine higher education, dual-role expectations are intensified by cultural and institutional norms that emphasize commitment and flexibility among faculty members. Teacher-coaches often perform academic and athletic duties simultaneously, reflecting a broader societal expectation that professionals adapt to institutional needs [24]. Comparable expectations are observed among public health workers who manage community outreach while conducting administrative reporting. Research focusing on higher education faculty has historically emphasized teaching stress rather than integrated dual-role experiences [25]. Consequently, teacher-coaches represent a unique yet underexplored professional group facing compounded occupational demands. The combination of physical coaching responsibilities and cognitive teaching duties differentiates teacher-coaches from single-role educators. According to Acosta-Enriquez et al. [26] Institutional expectations may inadvertently normalize excessive workloads, reinforcing self-sacrifice as a professional norm. Recognizing interdisciplinary parallels expands the theoretical foundation for examining coping strategies within teacher-coach populations. Such comparative perspectives support a more comprehensive understanding of professional stress dynamics.

2.3. Stress burnout role theory

Role theory explains how individuals occupying multiple professional positions experience role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload when expectations exceed available resources [27]. Teacher-coaches frequently encounter these challenges as they attempt to meet academic teaching standards while ensuring athletic performance outcomes. Empirical studies demonstrate that excessive workload and prolonged time pressure contribute to emotional exhaustion and burnout among educators and coaches [28]. Similar patterns have been identified among physicians who balance clinical duties and administrative leadership. Corporate executives managing strategic planning alongside operational oversight also report chronic stress and fatigue. Across professions, dual-role responsibilities increase psychological vulnerability when expectations remain unclear. Drăghici [29] supported that burnout manifests through decreased motivation, reduced professional satisfaction, and emotional detachment from work tasks. The cumulative effect of sustained stress undermines both personal well-being and organizational performance. Understanding burnout within an interdisciplinary context strengthens the theoretical relevance of role theory for teacher-coach experiences.

In the Philippine context, research on teacher stress has primarily focused on classroom demands and job satisfaction among basic education teachers [30]. Limited studies have examined higher education faculty who simultaneously handle sports responsibilities, leaving a gap in understanding compounded stressors. These compounded demands include physical exertion during training sessions, performance-based evaluation during competitions, and extended working hours beyond academic schedules [31]. Comparable stress patterns are evident among hospital administrators who maintain patient care duties alongside

management tasks. Corporate project leaders responsible for both technical execution and team supervision also report role overload. Community development officers managing outreach programs and administrative planning encounter similar dual-role pressures [32]. These interdisciplinary comparisons demonstrate that burnout is often linked to institutional expectations rather than individual capability. Prolonged exposure to overlapping responsibilities increases vulnerability to stress-related health issues [33]. Organizational cultures that normalize overwork may exacerbate burnout across sectors. Addressing stress within dual-role professions requires both individual coping strategies and systemic institutional reforms. Such theoretical insights reinforce the need to examine coping processes among teacher-coaches within broader occupational frameworks.

2.4. Professional coping strategies

Coping refers to the cognitive and behavioral processes individuals use to manage internal and external demands perceived as stressful [34]. Coping strategies are often categorized into problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance approaches depending on how individuals respond to stressors. In teaching and coaching contexts, problem-focused coping includes time management, structured planning, and seeking instrumental support [35]. Emotion-focused coping involves cognitive reframing, emotional regulation, and reflective practices that reduce psychological strain. Similar coping strategies are observed among healthcare workers managing patient emergencies while fulfilling administrative tasks. Coping strategies influence productivity, emotional stability, and professional engagement.

Teacher-coaches in Philippine HEIs rely heavily on personal coping strategies due to limited institutional support structures [36]. Professionals in other fields facing similar structural limitations also depend on informal support networks and self-initiated coping methods. Nurses managing both patient care and administrative tasks often use peer consultation and emotional regulation strategies. Filipino professionals frequently integrate spirituality, social support, and meaning-making into their coping practices [37]. Such culturally grounded strategies enhance resilience and emotional stability in high-pressure environments. Teacher-coaches often reinterpret stress through a sense of purpose tied to student development and community impact. Adaptive coping enables professionals to maintain motivation despite structural constraints [38]. Examining coping through an interdisciplinary lens provides a richer theoretical foundation for understanding teacher-coach experiences.

2.5. Cultural wellbeing outcomes

Filipino professionals often rely on culturally embedded coping mechanisms such as harmony (pakikisama), perseverance (tiyaga), faith (pananampalataya), and strong family support when managing occupational stress. In educational settings, spirituality and collaborative relationships have been identified as significant sources of emotional resilience and professional commitment [39]. Comparable cultural coping practices are observed among community health workers who depend on social support and collective identity during high-pressure service delivery. Cultural coping strategies strengthen emotional regulation and psychological endurance in demanding roles. Professionals who perceive their work as socially meaningful often demonstrate higher resilience [40]. Integrating cultural perspectives into coping research provides deeper insight into occupational well-being within the Philippine context.

Coping strategies significantly influence professional effectiveness, motivation, and long-term well-being across dual-role professions. Adaptive coping has been associated with improved decision-making, sustained commitment, and positive psychological outcomes, whereas maladaptive coping increases vulnerability to burnout [41]. For teacher-coaches, effective coping contributes to teaching quality, coaching performance, and overall career sustainability. Comparable findings have been reported among medical

professionals balancing clinical and managerial responsibilities, as well as corporate leaders managing operational and strategic roles. Professionals who employ structured routines and collaborative support networks often experience improved emotional stability.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of Filipino sport coaches and teachers designated to sports responsibilities in higher education institutions (HEIs). Phenomenology was deemed appropriate as it focuses on understanding how individuals perceive and make sense of their experiences. The study aimed to uncover the personal coping strategies employed by teacher-coaches in managing the dual demands of academic teaching and sports responsibilities, and to examine how these strategies influence their professional performance, motivation, and personal well-being. Emphasizing participants' firsthand narratives, the study sought to generate contextually grounded insights into the coping processes of teacher-coaches within Philippine HEIs.

3.2. Population and sampling

The population for this study comprised Filipino licensed teachers who are officially designated as sport coaches in public or private higher education institutions in Zamboanga Peninsula, Philippines. Twelve (12) participants were purposively selected based on the following inclusion criteria: actively handling both academic teaching loads and sports responsibilities at the time of the study, and possessing at least one (1) year of experience in coaching institution-based sports programs. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that participants were information-rich cases capable of providing in-depth and meaningful insights into coping mechanisms developed over time [42]. This sample size is consistent with qualitative research standards, which prioritize depth and richness of data over numerical representation.

3.3. Instrument

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, guided by an interview protocol aligned with the study objectives. The interview questions were designed to elicit detailed narratives regarding participants' personal coping strategies and the perceived impact of these strategies on their professional and personal lives. Questions included inquiries about habits, routines, mindsets, and decision-making processes during high-pressure situations, as well as the effects of coping strategies on emotional, mental, and physical well-being. The semi-structured format allowed flexibility for probing and follow-up questions, enabling participants to express their experiences in their own words while ensuring alignment with research objectives. Table 1 presents the list of guide questions used by this research study.

Table 1. Instrument of the study

Objectives	Interview question
1. To identify the personal coping strategies used by sport coaches and teachers in managing the dual demands of teaching and sports responsibilities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you describe how you personally cope when teaching duties and sports responsibilities become overwhelming? 2. What specific habits, routines, or mindsets help you remain focused and emotionally stable in your role as a teacher-coach? 3. Which coping strategy do you rely on most during high-pressure situations such as competitions or academic deadlines, and why?
2. To explore how coping strategies affect professional performance, motivation, and personal well-being among sport coaches and teachers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do your coping strategies influence your effectiveness as both a teacher and a coach? 2. How do your coping strategies shape your decision-making, commitment, or boundaries when balancing academic and sports-related responsibilities? 3. How has your way of coping affected your physical, emotional, or mental well-being over time?

3.4. Data gathering procedure

Before data collection, ethical clearance and informed consent were obtained from all participants, ensuring confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any time. Interviews were conducted individually, either face-to-face or via online video conferencing, depending on participant availability and logistical considerations. Each interview was audio-recorded with permission and subsequently transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy. Field notes were also maintained to capture non-verbal cues and contextual information. Data collection continued until data saturation was achieved, as evidenced by recurring themes and patterns across participant narratives. All materials were securely stored and anonymized to protect participant identity.

3.5. Data analysis

Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's ^[43] reflexive thematic analysis framework. This approach was selected because it emphasizes the active role of the researcher in interpreting meaning from participants' lived experiences, which is consistent with the phenomenological orientation of the study. Reflexive thematic analysis allows themes to be generated inductively from participants' narratives rather than imposed through pre-existing categories, making it suitable for exploring coping strategies that are context-specific and culturally grounded ^[44]. The analysis followed six recursive phases: familiarization with the data through repeated reading of transcripts; generation of initial codes capturing meaningful features of the data; systematic clustering of related codes into preliminary sub-themes; refinement and review of sub-themes to ensure coherence and distinction; defining and naming final themes that represent shared patterns across participants; and producing an analytic narrative supported by verbatim excerpts. This reflexive approach enhanced methodological transparency by explicitly linking participant narratives to theme development and acknowledging the interpretive role of the researcher throughout the analytical process.

4. Results

All participant quotations were edited minimally for clarity while preserving original meaning. Ellipses and brackets were avoided to maintain authenticity. Themes were labeled consistently and presented using uniform numbering to enhance readability and analytical coherence.

Research Objectives 1. To identify the personal coping strategies used by sport coaches and teachers in managing the dual demands of teaching and sports responsibilities.

Question No. 1. Can you describe how you personally cope when teaching duties and sports responsibilities become overwhelming?

1.1 *Strict scheduling*

Four (4) respondents expressed that when responsibilities pile up, they remind themselves that they are wearing two hats but not at the same time. They cope by clearly separating their roles as a teacher and a coach and honoring the boundaries they set. They strictly schedule their academic and sports responsibilities, ensuring that when they are in the classroom, their full attention is on teaching, and when they are on the court or field, they are fully present as a coach. They always avoid checking lesson plans during training hours and thinking about drills during class because multitasking across roles only leads to mental exhaustion. Additionally, they mentioned that separating roles also improves their effectiveness. Students receive clearer instruction when they are mentally present, and athletes respond better when they are fully engaged as a coach. This role separation helps them stay focused, reduces stress, and allows them to give quality attention rather than divided effort. It keeps stress manageable and reminds them that balance is not about doing everything at once, but about doing one role well at a time.

"When responsibilities pile up, I remind myself that I am wearing two hats but not at the same time."

" Separating roles also improves my effectiveness. Students receive clearer instruction when I am mentally present, and athletes respond better when I am fully engaged as a coach."

1.2 Reconnecting With Purpose

Four (4) respondents shared that when burnout sets in, they consciously return to their original purpose for accepting both roles. They remind themselves that teaching and coaching are not separate missions instead they are two ways of shaping the same learners. Reconnecting with this purpose helps them reframe stress. Instead of seeing long hours, losses, or paperwork as burdens, they see them as part of a larger contribution to student growth. Additionally, they mentioned that remembering that both roles serve the same learners allows them to reframe stress as meaningful rather than pointless. This sense of purpose helps them stay patient, grounded, and emotionally resilient during overwhelming periods, even when the demands are heavy.

"When burnout sets in, I consciously return to my original purpose for accepting both roles. "

"Remembering that both roles serve the same learners allows me to reframe stress as meaningful rather than pointless. "

1.3 Leaning on Colleagues

Four (4) respondents expressed that they survive overwhelming weeks by asking for help and recognizing that they don't have to do everything alone. They coordinate with co-coaches to share training responsibilities, exchange modules and resources with fellow teachers, and communicate honestly when their workload becomes too heavy. Additionally, they shared that being transparent prevents misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations. They learned that professionalism is not about self-sacrifice to the point of exhaustion. True professionalism includes knowing one's limits, seeking support when necessary, and working as part of a team. This mindset helps them manage stress and remain effective in both teaching and coaching roles.

"I survive overwhelming weeks by asking for help and recognizing that I don't have to do everything alone."

"Being transparent prevents misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations. I learned that professionalism is not about self-sacrifice to the point of exhaustion."

Question No. 2. What specific habits, routines, or mindsets help you remain focused and emotionally stable in your role as a teacher-coach?

2.1 Purpose-driven mindset

Four (4) respondents expressed that they constantly remind themselves that teaching and coaching are extensions of the same mission which is student development. Seeing both roles as part of one purpose helps them avoid feeling torn or overwhelmed. Instead, they feel aligned, knowing that both spaces exist to shape students academically, emotionally, and socially. When stress builds up, they refocus on the bigger picture rather than immediate pressures, interpreting challenges as signs of responsibility rather than failure. Additionally, they mentioned that this mindset allows them to prioritize wisely, remain patient with student mistakes or team losses, and stay emotionally stable during setbacks. By focusing on long-term growth

instead of short-term results, they find meaning in their work beyond grades or medals, making the emotional demands easier to carry and the challenges more manageable.

"I constantly remind myself that teaching and coaching are extensions of the same mission which is student development."

"This mindset allows me to prioritize wisely, remain patient with student mistakes or team losses, and stay emotionally stable during setbacks."

2.2 Faith and reflection

Four (4) respondents expressed that they start and end their day with prayer, which helps ground them emotionally and mentally. It reminds them that they don't have to carry the responsibilities of teaching and coaching alone, especially when expectations from both roles become heavy. Through prayer, they gain perspective and learn to release outcomes that are beyond their control. This practice allows them to approach classes and training sessions with greater calmness, patience, and clarity. Additionally, they mentioned that even during setbacks such as student struggles or competition losses, prayer helps them reset and remain resilient. Prayer strengthens their sense of gratitude and mindfulness. Recognizing the support they receive from colleagues, students, and their own faith helps them maintain balance and prevents burnout.

"I start and end my day with prayer, which helps ground me emotionally and mentally. It reminds me that I don't have to carry the responsibilities of teaching and coaching alone, especially when expectations from both roles become heavy."

"Even during setbacks such as student struggles or competition losses, prayer helps me reset and remain resilient."

2.3 Peer support system

Four (4) respondents mentioned that they regularly consult fellow teachers and co-coaches, especially those who understand the demands of balancing both roles. Talking to people with similar experiences helps them release stress without feeling misunderstood and reminds them that they are not alone in these challenges. These conversations offer practical advice and alternative perspectives, allowing them to respond more thoughtfully rather than emotionally. Additionally, they mentioned that peer discussions help them reflect on their decisions as both a teacher and a coach, improving their judgment and reinforcing professional growth. Through this peer support, they gain clarity, strengthen their resilience, and feel grounded in a professional community built on empathy, collaboration, and shared purpose.

"I regularly consult fellow teachers and co-coaches, especially those who understand the demands of balancing both roles."

"Peer discussions help me reflect on my decisions as both a teacher and a coach, improving my judgment and reinforcing professional growth."

Question No. 3. Which coping strategy do you rely on most during high-pressure situations such as competitions or academic deadlines, and why?

3.1 Returning to a clear sense of purpose

Four (4) respondents expressed that during competitions and academic deadlines, they return to their sense of purpose. Teaching develops students' minds, values, and critical thinking, while coaching builds discipline, resilience, and character. Although the pressures of both roles can feel overwhelming, remembering that they serve the same goal which is student growth helps them reframe stress as meaningful responsibility rather than burden. Additionally, they mentioned that when pressure rises, they ask themselves

what best supports their students' development, which helps them stay grounded, patient, and purposeful. This mindset sustains their motivation and prevents burnout by reminding them that success is measured not only by outputs or medals, but by the kind of individuals students become.

"During competitions and academic deadlines, I return to my sense of purpose. Teaching develops students' minds, values, and critical thinking, while coaching builds discipline, resilience, and character."

"When pressure rises, I ask myself what best supports my students' development, which helps me stay grounded, patient, and purposeful."

3.2 Maintaining familiar routines provides emotional stability

Four (4) respondents expressed that they cope by sticking to familiar routines like early morning training, lesson preparation at night, and a short reflection before sleep. During competitions and academic deadlines, these routines create structure and reduce mental overload when everything feels unpredictable. It helps them transition smoothly between teaching and coaching roles, minimize decision fatigue, and maintain focus throughout the day. Additionally, they mentioned that more than time management, routine supports emotional regulation. It reminds them that even in chaotic weeks, there are constants they can rely on. This stability helps prevent burnout, sustains consistency for their students and athletes, and allows them to show up each day with steadiness rather than exhaustion.

"I cope by sticking to familiar routines like early morning training, lesson preparation at night, and a short reflection before sleep."

"More than time management, routine supports emotional regulation. It reminds me that even in chaotic weeks, there are constants I can rely on."

3.3 Focusing on execution rather than outcomes

Four (4) respondents expressed that during competitions and high-stakes moments, they intentionally focus on execution rather than outcomes. Obsessing over winning or perfect results often creates anxiety that can cloud judgment and affect both their performance and their guidance for athletes and students. By practicing emotional detachment, they can stay calm, think clearly, and make rational decisions in the moment. Additionally, they mentioned that it also models resilience for students and athletes, showing them how to manage pressure, recover from mistakes, and stay composed under stress. Focusing on execution helps them perform their dual roles more effectively, maintain fairness and consistency, and prevent the emotional burnout that comes from over-identifying with outcomes beyond their control.

"During competitions and high-stakes moments, I intentionally focus on execution rather than outcomes."

"It also models resilience for students and athletes, showing them how to manage pressure, recover from mistakes, and stay composed under stress."

Research Objectives 2. To explore how coping strategies affect professional performance, motivation, and personal well-being among sport coaches and teachers.

Question No. 1. How do your coping strategies influence your effectiveness as both a teacher and a coach?

Function as professional tools that prevent burnout

Four (4) respondents expressed that their coping strategy is time structuring and establishing clear boundaries, which greatly influences their effectiveness as both a teacher and a coach. Teaching and coaching both demand significant emotional and physical energy. By carefully planning their week and setting clear limits between responsibilities, they are able to remain focused in the classroom and fully present during training sessions. This structure allows them to manage their workload efficiently and approach each role with intention and professionalism. Additionally, they mentioned that clear boundaries also help regulate expectations from students, athletes, and administrators, enabling them to provide quality instruction and attentive coaching. When they manage their time well, they are more patient, emotionally balanced, and responsive to individual needs. Students benefit from clearer explanations and fair academic guidance, while athletes receive focused training and consistent feedback.

"My coping strategy is time structuring and establishing clear boundaries, which greatly influences my effectiveness as both a teacher and a coach."

"Clear boundaries also help regulate expectations from students, athletes, and administrators, enabling me to provide quality instruction and attentive coaching."

1.2 Strengthens motivation and resilience in managing dual responsibilities

Four (4) respondents expressed that peer support is their coping strategy, particularly through regular conversations with fellow teachers and coaches who understand the demands of balancing academic and athletic responsibilities. Sharing experiences, challenges, and practical solutions allows them to release stress and gain emotional reassurance. Knowing that others face similar pressures reduces feelings of isolation and normalizes the challenges of fulfilling dual roles. Additionally, they mentioned that peer support also contributes to professional growth. Exchanging strategies related to classroom management, training methods, and workload balance helps them improve decision-making and problem-solving in both roles. These interactions strengthen their confidence and reinforce a sense of shared responsibility and teamwork.

"Peer support is my coping strategy, particularly through regular conversations with fellow teachers and coaches who understand the demands of balancing academic and athletic responsibilities."

"Peer support also contributes to professional growth. Exchanging strategies related to classroom management, training methods, and workload balance helps me improve decision-making and problem-solving in both roles. "

1.3 Enhances patience, focus, and emotional regulation

Four (4) respondents expressed that they cope with the demands of teaching and coaching by prioritizing self-care, particularly through adequate rest and regular exercise. These practices help them maintain physical stamina, emotional stability, and mental clarity, which are essential in fulfilling their dual roles effectively. When self-care is neglected, fatigue accumulates quickly, leading to burnout, reduced patience, and diminished performance in both academic and sports settings. Additionally, they mentioned that self-care also enables them to model discipline, balance, and healthy lifestyle habits. Students and athletes observe not only what they teach but how they manage their own well-being. Demonstrating balance reinforces the importance of physical and mental health, particularly in high-pressure academic and competitive contexts.

"I cope with the demands of teaching and coaching by prioritizing self-care, particularly through adequate rest and regular exercise."

“Self-care also enables me to model discipline, balance, and healthy lifestyle habits. Students and athletes observe not only what I teach but how I manage my own well-being.”

Question No. 2. How do your coping strategies shape your decision-making, commitment, or boundaries when balancing academic and sports-related responsibilities?

2.1 Mapping the Week for Balance

Four (4) respondents expressed that they start by mapping their week. Academic deadlines come first, but they also block time for training and coaching sessions. Having a schedule keeps them from overcommitting. This strategy allows them to make informed decisions about where to allocate time and energy. By visually laying out deadlines, class preparations, and coaching sessions, potential conflicts become immediately visible, helping prioritize urgent tasks without compromising either role. A well-mapped schedule provides both structure and flexibility. Additionally, they mentioned that having a concrete plan enhances decision-making. They can objectively evaluate whether to take on extra tasks, ensuring quality is preserved and overcommitment is avoided. It fosters accountability through self-monitoring and offers psychological comfort seeing everything laid out provides a sense of control and reduces anxiety during chaotic periods.

"I start by mapping my week. Academic deadlines come first, but I also block time for training and coaching sessions."

" Having a concrete plan enhances decision-making. I can objectively evaluate whether to take on extra tasks, ensuring quality is preserved and overcommitment is avoided."

2.2 Sticking to Familiar Routines

Four (4) respondents expressed that they stick to familiar routines such as early morning training, lesson prep at night, and reflection before bed. Maintaining consistent routines provides them with a reliable framework amidst the unpredictability of academic deadlines and sports schedules. Additionally, they mentioned that predictable patterns reduce stress, help maintain consistent commitment to both teaching and coaching, strengthen professional discipline, and provide emotional balance. It also streamline daily tasks, allowing them to manage time efficiently and sustain resilience despite overlapping responsibilities. Regular routines act as an anchor, improving decision-making under pressure.

"I stick to familiar routines such as early morning training, lesson prep at night, and reflection before bed."

"Predictable patterns reduce stress, help maintain consistent commitment to both teaching and coaching, strengthen professional discipline, and provide emotional balance."

2.3 Consulting Fellow Teachers and Co-Coaches

Four (4) respondents expressed that seeking guidance from colleagues who share similar responsibilities provides emotional support and practical insights. These interactions help clarify priorities, identify potential challenges, and explore alternative ways to manage overlapping academic and sports commitments. By sharing experiences and strategies, they feel less isolated and more confident in their decisions. Additionally, they mentioned that consulting peers enhances decision-making by introducing new perspectives, reduces

stress, prevents overcommitment, and fosters professional growth. It also strengthens emotional resilience, enabling them to maintain commitment to both teaching and coaching while respecting personal boundaries.

" Seeking guidance from colleagues who share similar responsibilities provides emotional support and practical insights."

"Consulting peers enhances decision-making by introducing new perspectives, reduces stress, prevents overcommitment, and fosters professional growth."

Question No. 3. How has your way of coping affected your physical, emotional, or mental well-being over time?

3.1 Consistent routines in teaching and coaching reduce anxiety

Four (4) respondents expressed that establishing routines like early training sessions, structured lesson planning, and quiet reflection at night has helped their body and mind adjust to the demands of both teaching and coaching. Routines give them a sense of stability and control, which reduces feelings of overwhelm and helps them respond calmly to unexpected challenges. Additionally, they mentioned that these routines have not only enhanced their productivity but also created space for mindfulness and self-reflection, which strengthens resilience, prevents burnout, and reinforces a sense of purpose in both roles. The consistency of these habits also serves as a model for their students and athletes, showing them the value of discipline, balance, and self-care.

" Establishing routines like early training sessions, structured lesson planning, and quiet reflection at night has helped my body and mind adjust to the demands of both teaching and coaching."

"These routines have not only enhanced my productivity but also created space for mindfulness and self-reflection, which strengthens resilience, prevents burnout, and reinforces a sense of purpose in both roles."

3.2 Returning to one's purpose

Four (4) respondents shared that whenever burnout sets in, they return to their purpose which is developing students inside and outside the classroom. This reframing has helped them endure physically demanding schedules without resentment, because they view challenges as opportunities to make a positive impact rather than burdens. Additionally, they mentioned that this purpose-driven perspective has not only reduced feelings of exhaustion and frustration but also reinforced a sense of fulfillment and professional identity, reminding them why they chose both teaching and coaching in the first place. It also encourages a mindset of resilience, enabling them to recover faster after intense periods and maintain long-term well-being.

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3.3 Reduces isolation and stress and fosters a collaborative professional network

Four (4) respondents mentioned that regularly consulting fellow teachers and co-coaches has had a strong positive effect on their overall well-being. Mentally aspect it reassures them that their struggles are shared and normal, which reduces overthinking and self-doubt when making decisions under pressure. Additionally, they shared that these interactions have strengthened their professional support network,

enhanced their problem-solving abilities, and reinforced a sense of belonging within both the teaching and coaching communities. This collaborative approach not only improves their resilience but also models teamwork and mutual support for students and athletes.

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5. Discussion

This study offers a nuanced interpretation of how Filipino higher education teacher-coaches navigate occupational stress arising from the convergence of academic and athletic responsibilities. Rather than viewing stress as a simple outcome of excessive workload, the findings indicate that stress is shaped by ongoing cognitive evaluations of role demands, perceived control, and available coping resources. This interpretation aligns with the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, which emphasizes that stress responses are not inherent to situations but emerge through appraisal and meaning-making processes. Contemporary educational research similarly underscores that professional strain is best understood as a dynamic interaction between institutional demands and individual coping capacity, particularly in roles characterized by multiplicity and ambiguity ^[45].

The coping orientations evident in this study resonate with broader literature on educators managing complex role configurations. Research on teacher workload suggests that individuals handling overlapping professional expectations rely heavily on intentional structuring of tasks and boundaries to preserve role clarity and functional effectiveness ^[46]. In higher education settings, workload fragmentation has been shown to heighten cognitive strain unless mitigated through deliberate planning and prioritization strategies ^[47]. Within sports contexts, similar patterns have been documented among coaches, where structured preparation and scheduling function as stabilizing mechanisms under performance pressure ^[48]. These parallels indicate that structured coping is a cross-contextual response to role complexity rather than a context-specific adaptation. Cognitive appraisal emerged as a central mechanism influencing how teacher-coaches experience and regulate stress. Occupational stress research highlights that professionals who interpret demands as meaningful challenges rather than uncontrollable threats exhibit stronger perseverance and emotional regulation ^[49]. In educational environments, purpose-oriented appraisal has been linked to sustained engagement despite institutional constraints, suggesting that internalized professional values can buffer external stressors ^[50]. This interpretive process is particularly relevant for teacher-coaches, whose responsibilities span intellectual, physical, and emotional domains, requiring constant recalibration of priorities and expectations.

Emotion-focused coping strategies further deepen understanding of how teacher-coaches sustain psychological equilibrium in high-pressure contexts. Studies on educator well-being demonstrate that reflective practices and mindfulness-based regulation reduce emotional exhaustion and enhance professional judgment ^[51]. Within coaching literature, emotional self-regulation has been associated with improved leadership presence and decision-making during competitive situations ^[52]. These findings support the interpretation that coping is not limited to logistical problem-solving but also involves intentional management of emotional responses that accompany sustained performance demands. Educational research consistently shows that collegial interaction mitigates professional isolation and fosters shared sense-making

in demanding work environments ^[53]. In higher education contexts, collaborative coping has also been linked to improved decision-making and sustained motivation, reinforcing the idea that coping is socially situated rather than purely individual.

Despite the effectiveness of individual coping strategies, the findings also reveal structural vulnerabilities that constrain long-term sustainability. Burnout research cautions that overreliance on personal resilience may obscure systemic inequities related to workload distribution and institutional recognition ^[54]. Viewing coping not as a substitute for institutional responsibility but as a complementary process requiring organizational support. The interaction between individual coping and organizational context reinforces the need for systemic approaches to professional well-being. Educational leadership literature emphasizes that supportive workload policies, psychosocial resources, and professional development opportunities significantly enhance coping effectiveness ^[55].

This study contributes to the literature by integrating stress theory, role theory, and culturally grounded perspectives to explain how teacher-coaches navigate dual professional demands. The findings extend existing research by demonstrating that adaptive coping is cognitively constructed, socially reinforced, and culturally situated, yet constrained by organizational structures. Foregrounding the interplay between individual agency and institutional conditions, the study offers a balanced framework for understanding professional well-being among teacher-coaches in higher education and provides a foundation for future policy and research directions.

6. Conclusion

The study examined the lived coping experiences of Filipino higher education teacher-coaches who simultaneously managed academic and athletic responsibilities within demanding institutional contexts. Guided by Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, the findings demonstrated that coping among teacher-coaches is a dynamic process shaped by cognitive appraisal, available social resources, and culturally grounded values. Participants employed a combination of problem-focused strategies, such as structured scheduling, role separation, and time management, alongside emotion-focused strategies, including purpose-driven reframing, faith-based reflection, and peer support. These strategies allowed participants to navigate high-pressure academic and athletic environments while maintaining professional effectiveness and emotional stability. It further revealed that adaptive coping contributed to improved decision-making, clearer professional boundaries, sustained motivation, and enhanced resilience. Structured routines and collaborative support networks enabled participants to manage competing demands without compromising teaching quality or coaching performance. In addition, purpose-centered perspectives helped teacher-coaches reinterpret stress as meaningful professional engagement rather than burden, reinforcing long-term commitment to student development. However, the findings also highlighted the structural challenges faced by teacher-coaches, including heavy workloads and limited institutional recognition of dual-role responsibilities. While participants demonstrated strong personal coping mechanisms, sustained well-being requires organizational interventions that complement individual strategies. Institutions may benefit from implementing responsive workload allocation, accessible psychosocial support programs, and professional development initiatives tailored to dual-role faculty members. Therefore, the study contributes context-specific insights into the coping processes of Filipino teacher-coaches in higher education. Illuminating both adaptive coping practices and systemic challenges, the findings provide an empirical basis for policy development and institutional reforms that promote sustainable professional engagement, holistic well-being, and effective student and athlete development.

7. Limitations of the study

This study presents several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the qualitative phenomenological design emphasized depth of lived experience rather than generalizability; therefore, findings may not represent all teacher-coaches across Philippine higher education institutions. Second, purposive sampling and the relatively small number of participants may have introduced selection bias, as individuals who volunteered for participation may have been more reflective or more actively engaged in coping practices than others. Third, reliance on self-reported interview data may have resulted in recall bias or social desirability bias, where participants described coping strategies perceived as professionally appropriate. Fourth, institutional and regional contexts varied among participants, which may influence coping experiences differently depending on available support structures and workload policies. Finally, the absence of triangulation through observational or longitudinal data limited the ability to examine coping processes across extended time periods. Future research may incorporate mixed-methods designs, larger samples, and multiple data sources to provide a more comprehensive understanding of coping among teacher-coaches.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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