The Academic Impact of Sports on Teenagers: A Special Focus on a Brazilian Population

Felipe Rocha

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THE ACADEMIC IMPACT OF SPORTS ON TEENAGERS: 
A SPECIAL FOCUS ON A BRAZILIAN POPULATION

by

Felipe Rocha

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of sports participation on students between the ages of 12 and 17 years old in their academic performances, attitudes, and study habits. Furthermore, the study focuses on sports involvement’s positive and negative outcomes. Following high school, students have difficulty determining if they should further their education or go straight into the workforce. Those who play sports can consider opportunities in athletics.

The study is conducted through purposive sampling which identifies and selects individuals with information related to the study. These individuals are pre-determined for more reliable data. There are six open-ended questions conducted in Portuguese via an online platform, then transcribed and translated into English. Finally, the results are coded and key phrases and similar sets of answers are identified and analyzed.

The data displays three ways academics are impacted by sports: positively, negatively, or not at all. There are additional findings in the study that impact student-athletes’ lives: academic concerns, life skills, and academic benefits. The study concludes that sports are more of a fun and healthy extracurricular activity for student-athletes and it is up to them on how to make the most out of it. Student-athletes need to have strong support from their community. Emotional and practical guidance can be a crucial aspect of a student excelling in sports.

The study raises awareness about the academic impact of sports on teenagers. The findings help student-athletes to be the best version of themselves inside and outside the classroom. The study provides data on how to prepare student-athletes to excel beyond high school.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Practicing sports is a lifelong activity and a way of staying healthy that can also provide life opportunities as well as positive lessons. Sports can be introduced to people of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, and gender. Many individuals start practicing sports as children barely knowing the principles of their activities. It is a natural type of activity that many people tend to familiarize themselves with easily when they are kids and teenagers. In the United States, about 22 million people between the ages of 6 and 17 years old participate in collective sports (Newman et al., 2018).

Third-world countries (also known as developing countries) are countries that are characterized by their low economic and socioeconomic status. These nations have a low GDP growth, GDP per capita, and employment rate. Developing countries typically export low-value products, in which most cases are assembled industrial products with lower quality technological and design levels compared to rich countries around the world (Yülek & Santos, 2022). Third-world and developing countries can see a positive effect on how sports can bring great opportunities and a better future to some people. For example, a study conducted in Europe by Nelson et al. (2022) revealed that children and teenagers who participate in sports activities are more likely to have better social and soft skills compared to children and teenagers who do not participate in any sports activities. These opportunities at an early age can be tools that change one’s life (Nelson et al., 2022).

A lot of adolescents face a problem as they increase in age in Brazil: as they finish high school, they do not know what career path they should take or how to even start a career. Some of them transition into a university, enroll in a major, and start their college experience. However, what stays in the minds of these incoming students is
their lack of confidence in the path that they have chosen. Since only 12.6% of the higher education universities in Brazil are public, many people transition into finding a job due to a lack of financial support and the inability to afford a private college education (Salto, 2018). Immediate jobs after high school meet one’s financial needs, but they limit his or her career path choice in the long-term.

After graduating high school, teenagers are recommended to pursue a college degree in a field that fits the career that they want to pursue for them to have a better future. With a college degree, there is a higher chance for these individuals to become future leaders and make a positive impact in their communities. In Brazil, only 5.1% of the population has earned a college degree (Retrieved from Estadão, 2022). On the other hand, in the United States, 37.5% of the US population has graduated from college or another higher education institution. Surprisingly, in 1960, this rate in the US was at 7.7% which is higher than the Brazilian rate in the 21st century (Korhonen, 2023). This statistic shows that there is a significant lack of university access for the Brazilian population nowadays.

The opportunities that students have when attending a university can open many doors, such as more jobs in the future. Many relationships are developed during college. These relationships help students receive internships and field experience during their undergraduate and graduate years before finding a full-time job. Many of these experiences are a direct result of the ability to attend college by playing sports. A lot of middle-class youth start playing a sport in community-sponsored facilities, recreational leagues, and school sports. However, as they get older, they start using sports as a way to get into college and have a successful future (Hextrum, 2020).

Public schools in Brazil mainly have students whose parents or guardians do not have a high income and cannot afford a private school education for their children.
Families with limited financial resources are not able to spend any extra money on sports participation expenses for their children. Therefore, sports are a great extracurricular activity for students to partake in because there are no costs associated with participating. A study presented that without financial aid, parents cannot afford for their children to play club team sports due to the high costs (Sulz et al., 2023). In addition, in average or below-average socioeconomic areas of Brazil, young adults need to find a way to have a better future on their own. They hope that more opportunities will arise through the practice of sports, such as earning athletic scholarships in other countries or professional sports contracts in Brazil or overseas.

In a rich and well-developed area, parents are typically able to assist their kids financially as they get older. These parents normally can afford a private school education for their children; however, that is not the case for many households in Brazil. It is imperative to have socioeconomic growth in some parts of Brazil to transition from childhood to adulthood. The early years of young adults are a critical time when they are discovering a path for themselves and discovering their interests. Many factors in the school setting could positively influence people’s lives as they get older. One of the ways schools could positively impact students’ lives is by sponsoring athletic programs that students would not otherwise be able to participate in due to financial limitations. School-supported athletics encourage students to participate in competitive sports and develop academically, athletically, and socially.

The ultimate goal of this research is to investigate, analyze, and discuss the positive and negative academic outcomes that result from teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years old from practicing sports. In this research project, the target academic institution is the Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Ernesto Alves de Oliveira (EAO School). This organization is a public school located in the city of Santa Cruz do Sul, in
the state of Rio Grande do Sul, southern part of Brazil. The data was collected from the perspective of parents and teachers.

Personally, my participation in sports has positively benefited my life. I started playing basketball at the age of 6 years old. Once I turned 9 years old, I started competing competitively against other kids who were my age. Later, at the age of 13 years old, I received an opportunity to play basketball and attend school in Spain. Two years later, when I was 15 years old, I played basketball and attended high school at IMG Academy, in Bradenton, FL, as a freshman. The very next year, at 16 years old, I attended Life Center Academy in Burlington, NJ. I attended this institution through my sophomore, junior, and senior years of high school, where I also played basketball.

Once I graduated from high school, I obtained a full athletic scholarship to play basketball and attend college at Union University in Jackson, TN. There, I graduated with a bachelor’s in International Business, and a minor in French. Once I graduated from Union University, my time playing basketball ended. Because of my successful academic career, I applied to join the master’s in Sports Commerce program at The University of Memphis. During that time, I was able to graduate with a master’s degree in May 2020. The following summer of 2020, I decided to continue my education and pursue my doctorate degree at The University of Memphis. Basketball gave me an opportunity to leave home when I was 13 years old and allowed me to have an amazing 17 years full of learning and growing opportunities. Not only have I matured as a basketball player but also as an individual and as a student.

Thankfully sports have mainly had a positive impact on my life. However, I have also experienced some hardships that sports bring. For instance, involvement in sports took me away from my family at the age of 13 years old. There were some moments when I did not focus on my academics since I had a very busy and exhausting
basketball schedule which made studying difficult. I also experienced some racial and background discrimination from teammates who were not of the same nationality as mine. In other words, despite the good outcomes that sports may bring, I recognize that sports could negatively impact one’s life as well. Since this research project is purely focusing on the academic aspect, this study concentrates on the positive and negative academic impact of sports on the lives of teenagers.

My desire to conduct this research project comes from my wish to impact others as my life was impacted by sports opportunities. The experience that I have had with sports is a great example of how young players can benefit from the practice of sports. I have seen many of my teammates from multiple different cultures, who came from a low socioeconomic background, use sports as a means to further their education, career, and overall lives. Several of them were able to attend private high schools and pursue a college education because of the opportunity that sports allowed them to have at a young age. Practicing sports not only can teach people life lessons but can also provide academic scholarships as well as unforgettable moments. For instance, when involved in sports, people can travel to places all over the world and meet people with different cultures and backgrounds. All that being said, I am interested in discovering the academic impact that sports have had on the lives of teenagers in Brazil.

Another purpose of this research project is to find out how Brazilian society values youth sports in the 21st century. Even though society may value youth sports differently from country to country, my personal experience has shown me that people in different nations express similar emotional connections through sports, regardless of the country of birth. In the United States in particular, these emotional connections can generate revenue because people want to donate and spend money on athletics. By reviewing peer-reviewed articles from the United States, this research study hopes to
provide data on potential opportunities that student-athletes may have access to because of the support received.

This research project has the intention to assist future researchers, students, parents, and coaches, as well as school and government administrators, in making decisions about sports programs which affect many opportunities that sports can provide to people. In other words, this project will allow society to understand youth sports in Brazil with a different viewpoint. Not only will this paper impact people in Brazil, but it will also show the reality of the Brazilian youth sports system to readers from the United States. These differences between the two countries’ sports systems are significant.

One of the biggest hopes of this research is that school and government administrators will make decisions according to the results of this project. For instance, if parents and teachers believe that sports have a positive impact on the students’ lives, then more resources and incentives could be devoted to youth sports programs around the country. Compared to Brazil, the United States puts a large emphasis on the importance of sports in youth development, which in turn impacts the classroom. Additionally, academic institutions in the United States offer more athletic scholarships, which influences students, in both public and private schools, to practice sports at an early age. This is not currently the reality for most Brazilian students as academic institutions in Brazil do not offer financial and academic benefits, such as scholarships.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The literature review provides an overview of the relationship between sports, socioeconomic development, and education. Topics covered also include poverty in Brazil, poor higher education in Brazil, the need for high-quality education in Brazil, sports in communities, benefits and opportunities of sports, professional sports impact, parents’ involvement, the negative impact of sports, the difficulties of becoming a professional sports athlete, fundraising, non-profit versus traditional aid athletics organizations.

2.1. Background Information

This study was conducted in Brazil which is considered a developing country, slowly growing day by day, but with some considerable downfalls. Brazil was also considered one of the top 10 best economies in the world between 2006 and 2019, with its highest peak in 7th place between 2010 and 2014. However, in 2021, Brazil dropped to the 13th most powerful economy in the world (Alvarenga, 2022). The reason why Brazil dropped in the world’s best economies ranking was because of the current devaluation of the Brazilian currency and the volatility in its overall economy, especially during COVID-19. During the pandemic, Brazil had the second-highest number of deaths in the world due to COVID-19, behind the United States, which negatively impacted the Brazilian economy (Retrieved from World Health Organization).

In some areas of Brazil, poverty is very noticeable, and the lack of high-quality education is an issue. The average monthly salary in the country of Brazil is 8,560
BRL (Brazilian Real) per month, which is 102,720 BRL per year. According to the exchange rate, this amount is equal to a salary of around 1,751 USD (US Dollar) per month, which is equivalent to 12,012 USD per year. In addition, the Brazilian minimum wage is the minimum amount of payment that an employee needs to receive from an employer. In Brazil, the minimum wage is 1,320 BRL per month (15,840 BRL per year), which is the same as 270 USD per month (3,240 USD per year) in the United States (Retrieved from Time Doctor Blog). Despite the minimum wage being 1,320 BRL per month, a lot of people in Brazil live below the minimum wage. Another statistic has shown that there are 2.9 million Brazilians or 29.6% of the country’s entire population with a monthly income of no more than 497 BRL per month, which is equivalent to 102 USD roughly (Retrieved from Portal FGV, 2022).

Sports, specifically soccer, are a very common activity amongst younger generations as they become a necessary distraction away from the poverty that surrounds them in Brazil. The kids and parents need to realize the importance of participating in these types of sporting activities because they can bring a lot of benefits to people’s lives. A study that discussed sports and people’s well-being concluded that sport is a form of mental healing for people who have already suffered in life as well as it increases an individual’s sense of belonging in a community (Middleton et al., 2022).

Studies from Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) have shown that middle school enrollment in the state of Rio Grande do Sul has been decreasing significantly in the past years. In 2008, middle school enrollment in the state was over 1,600,000. However, in 2020 the enrollment was only at 1,269,309 students (decreasing 21%). On the other hand, the population, the human development index, monthly household income, family expenses, and total number of vehicles keep increasing (Retrieved from IBGE, 2023). Although enrollment
is down, this is still a large number of kids and teenagers who could be impacted positively by athletics sponsored through schools. A study showed that youth school sports participation positively impacts the physical and overall well-being of student-athletes, such as gaining life skills. Some of these skills are teamwork, commitment, and responsibility (Sulz et al., 2023).

2.2. Sports and Education

Earning good grades is an important factor in a child or teenager’s academic success, regardless if they are playing sports or not. Usually, grades are affected by the performance of students. Karagiorgakis and Blaker (2021) found that student-athletes have a significantly lower GPA than non-athletes. However, the non-athletes GPAs are unusually high compared to previous literature and it is considered a limitation of the study. In addition, the authors emphasized that student-athletes who have high levels of stress also have lower levels of sports enjoyment. Finally, for both athletes and non-athletes, as stress increases, GPA also increases which is expected to be from their significant effort to maintain their good grades. A second study would need to be performed to focus on this phenomenon (Karagiorgakis & Blaker, 2021).

Extracurricular activities can impact students’ school grades and performance. Broh (2002) focused on how participation in extracurricular activities affected high school achievement. He utilized data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 to determine this. It was found that participation in sports is positively associated with both Math and English grades of 10th and 12th graders. It was also found that participation in sports benefits scores for math tests but not for reading tests. However, the Developmental Model used in this study reduces the significance of sports’ effect on math grades to an insignificant level (Broh, 2002). So, while
improvement in individual courses is difficult to track, the improvement in overall GPA should be considered when assessing sports participation’s impact on students’ grades.

A study by Van Boekel et al. (2016) also contended that sports participation positively affects grades. The authors utilized the 2010 Minnesota Student Survey to study how school sports participation affects academic achievement, families, teachers, community support, and school safety. It was found that GPA is positively related to participation in school sports. Also, the authors concluded that when students participate in school sports, it encourages their sense of belonging amongst school’s stakeholders and their overall involvement increases. In sum, when students participate in sports, it helps to increase their welfare and academic achievements (Van Boekel et al., 2016). In another study by Trudeau and Shephard (2008), the authors found that school physical activities and extracurricular sporting activities affect kids’ academic success. Some physical factors influence academic performance. For instance, behavior in the classroom, self-esteem, self-love, and school affinity are some ways that academic performance can be impacted. Furthermore, the authors mentioned in the research project that sports tend to be more beneficial for academic achievement when it takes place at school rather than outside of school (Trudeau & Shephard, 2008).

Additional research showed positive impacts on student-athletes’ well-being: physically, emotionally, and academically. Wretman (2017) stated, in his research project, that sports can promote child development. It has been proven that students who participate in school sports activities show an increase in school academic grades. Interestingly, students’ self-confidence and bodyweight perception can positively influence the relationships between sports participation and academic success in the classroom. Finally, the authors stated that when students participate in sports more
often, their grades improve and their physical activity increases. This is also important because it affects nonacademic factors, such as the students’ well-being and self-esteem (Wretman, 2017). Not only well-being and self-esteem are affected, but also, students’ sense of self and identity can be influenced.

Several studies focused on the effects of athletic involvement on students’ goals and character development. Hwang et al. (2016) studied the relationship between sports involvement and the social influences on high school students’ academic achievements, specifically expectations and attainment. It also focused on whether sports engagement has any effect on future academic outcomes. Participation in sports is associated with the building of an athletic and academic identity. However, academic identity is only significantly associated with youth educational expectations. Another important finding is that athletic involvement does not have a negative impact on education. Sports have a positive impact on academics and athletics. It was concluded that expectations, participation, and support from the student-athletes’ parents, coaches, teachers, and peers are important factors to determine their athletic and academic characteristics. These types of support are key factors for educational achievements. (Hwang et al., 2016).

Following the same idea as the previous source, Quinaud et al. (2020) studied student-athletes’ motivation and identities in Brazilian and Portuguese universities. The study showed a higher academic motivation for Brazilian student-athletes. However, the study showed a higher career and athletic motivation in Portuguese student-athletes when compared to Brazilian student-athletes. Furthermore, the research project showed that student-athletes’ incentives towards athletics and academics are determined by the type of university as well as the hours spent training. For instance, student-athletes who
attend private higher education institutions are more likely to have higher values for social identity, sports motivation, and affection compared to student-athletes who attend non-private universities. This difference in values was discussed to be due to the overall cultural athletic structure. Youth in Portugal participates more in club-based sports leagues while youth sports programs in Brazil tend to be school-based. Lastly, in this study, it was concluded that it is important for athletes to be able to develop academic careers in great sports environments. This is also one of the main aspects that athletes take into consideration when choosing a higher academic institution to attend (Quinaud et al., 2020).

Sports may not only impact the academic performance of student-athletes in the short-term but also their long-term commitment to education. Müller (2014) performed a cross-cultural study to understand the impact sports have on the promotion of academic motivation, which focused on students in the countries of Brazil and the US. The author stated that in countries that are still developing, such as Brazil, there is a high volume of school dropouts. On the other hand, in developed countries, such as the US, there is a huge emphasis on education as well as pedagogical improvements. This study aims to show readers how athletic activities can contribute to academic motivation for youth. Furthermore, there are some recommendations that the author gave to readers: (1) promoting inclusion in physical education and sports; (2) making sports more significant in schools; (3) creating sports classes divided by skill level; (4) maintaining appropriate academic standards to participate in sports in Brazil; and (5) developing a scholarship system for Brazilian athletes. Finally, it was concluded that both in Brazil and in the US, students drop out of school or are not motivated to pursue an education due to many different reasons. These reasons include issues in the economic, social, and curriculum areas (Müller, 2014).
The same author conducted a follow-up study in 2019 and concluded that the number of student dropouts is extremely high in developing countries, such as Brazil. The issues that contribute to this matter range from poor eating habits, social issues to differing environments (home life vs. life at school). There are about 2.8 million people from 4 to 17 years old not attending school. In Müller’s study, it was added that, despite one’s social, racial background and gender, a student’s participation in sports helps them avoid problems that involve drugs, violence, pregnancy, obesity, boredom, and many other bad life circumstances (Müller, 2019).

In sum, sports can be seen as a pathway to educational and social opportunities, rather than only be used as an end in itself. All these studies showed that athletic involvement is more likely to positively impact students’ grades than it is to adversely affect them. Therefore, schools should encourage students’ participation in sports to promote healthy opportunities in life.

2.3. Poverty in Brazil

Poverty can be defined as a “lack of the means of providing material needs or comforts” for families and/or households (Yoshikawa et al., 2012). The minimum standard of living in Brazil is considered the minimum wage which is 1,320 BRL per month (Retrieved from Time Doctor Blog). This is the same as 270 USD per month in the United States, which is equivalent to 3,240 USD per year. Some unemployed people in Brazil live below this financial standard. Some other authors define poverty as low levels of income, which can lead to low savings and investments (Dhume & Deshpande, 2022). People below the poverty line often have difficulties earning a fair living wage, and these financial resources are essential for the minimum standard of living. The
minimum standard of living includes basic personal needs, such as shelter, clothing, food, and hygiene.

People who often do not have money to live in proper conditions also experience energy poverty which is the lack of access to energy. Energy should not be considered as something that populations consume like a normal good, but rather as a need to access a necessary service that affects people’s wellbeing. In other words, it can be called “energy services” for households, and not “energy consumption.” Energy is used daily without active recognition for essentials such as cooking, heating, and cooling to improve one’s overall well-being at home (Dubois & Sinea, 2023). In sum, people who are facing poverty have many difficulties in life to have access to necessities. Poverty can impact societies socially, economically, and politically. Many government aid organizations aim to assist people in desperate need.

A lot of communities in Brazil have faced poverty issues for many decades, which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Brazil, there are many low-income villages known as favelas, where there is a lack of appropriate resources daily. These poor neighborhoods are examples of how much assistance is needed to better develop these villages. This need extends to economic, social, educational, and infrastructural levels. The Brazilian government created a unified health system called Sistema Único do Brasil (SUS), which translates to Unique Health System. This federal, state and municipal government-approved program was created to have free access to the Brazilian health system for any citizen. However, ever since the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, the federal government has faced many economic issues leading to improper management of health-related activities and services to these low-income communities. This lack of action had a poor effect on the population. Even with the
high number of deaths, the government almost took away the social distancing and quarantine regulations. This was because the government did not know how to properly manage the pandemic at that time, especially in poor communities with a lack of infrastructure, such as the *favelas* (do Rosário Costa et al., 2021).

In Brazil, the main way that the government fights against poverty is through the program called *Bolsa Família* (Family Support). This is a type of support that people receive as a conditional cash transfer for essential daily expenses. Interestingly, this program has the highest number of beneficiaries in the world. It provides resources to help families that are extremely poor to have the minimum conditions to buy food and essential items. Furthermore, people from Brazilian communities struggle to express psychological issues which decreases social connection among each other. Therefore, one of the best ways to build social connections is by developing more relationships based on social support (Moura et al., 2021). In addition, data showed a correlation between income, nutritional status, and enteric parasitic infection in kids and adolescents who live in urban areas in Brazilian capitals. This shows that it is necessary to improve the income of families who live in poor areas and the hygiene situation in poor communities (Calegar et al., 2021).

There are many poor people all over the world. However, the community type that poor individuals reside in (rural, urban, suburban) is something that different society leaders must take into consideration when making decisions. Stankiewicz et al. (2021) stated that there are fewer poor people closer to a city rather than those in rural areas. In other words, the closer people are to an urban area, the less poverty is noticeable in its surrounding areas (Stankiewicz et al., 2021). Poverty is a difficult subject in itself that societies need to face. Having poor structures and resources makes
learning even more difficult for students in middle and high school. It also makes a difficult scenario for school teachers and administrators to work. Athletically speaking, not having adequate materials and spaces for student-athletes to perform makes high athletic performance a challenging condition as well.

### 2.4. Poor Higher Education in Brazil

Brazil struggles with providing high-quality education for the entire population. Da Silva (2019) stated that only 11% of the people who work in Brazil have a college education. Statistically speaking, 39.9% of professors have a master’s degree, followed by doctorates (35.1%), and specializations (23.6%). On the other hand, only a few professors have just an undergraduate degree (2.1%). An estimated 55.8% of professors who have a doctorate work in public institutions. In addition, most of these positions are in the public (42.5%) and nonprofit (32.7%) areas. The remaining 24.8% of positions were in for-profit organizations (Salto, 2018). These numbers show the high need for public organizations for students in Brazil. In other words, federal resources are critical to Brazilian academic success.

Private higher education enrollment has decreased in Brazil in the past decade, and public higher education enrollment has increased. New Brazilian higher education enrollments in private higher education organizations dropped approximately 30% in 2015, and large profitable corporations are joining with others to buy smaller academic institutions (Salto, 2018). On the other hand, public higher education in Brazil has increased significantly over the past years. Mascherini de Lima (2021) stated that as the Brazilian population increases, more people look to get a college degree. There were 2.2 million people enrolled in college in 2010, and 3.6 million enrollments 9 years later in 2019, a 66% increase. Distance learning is responsible for education growth due to the
increase in technology usage (Mascherini de Lima, 2021). In addition, a lot of students choose to pursue an online college career. When students choose to be enrolled in an online program, frequent contact with the instructor is limited. This limitation forces the Brazilian legislation to require that higher education organizations have technological educational resources available (da Silva et al., 2019). Consequently, it leads to the government allocating resources to more affordable public organizations.

Another limitation that Brazil has faced in the past years is the low youth population enrollment. The government is working towards significant efforts to increase the enrollment number in Brazil. A study conducted by Strauss and Borenstein (2015) shows that only 13.1% of the youth population was enrolled in a university from the 1990s to the mid-2000s. The goal of the Brazilian government is to have 30% of the population between the ages of 18 to 24 years old enrolled in undergraduate programs in Brazil in the future. It is also very important that higher education increases its success rate because it has a direct impact on the economic and social development of Brazil. Different teaching models and learning tools can be implemented to aid in this process (Strauss & Borenstein, 2015). Encouraging students to perform well in middle and high school can be a great first step to assist students in pursuing a successful college education degree in the future.

There are some great initiatives that the Brazilian government tries to provide to students. One of them is called *Ciências Sem Fronteiras*, which translates to Science Without Borders. This program awarded 101,000 scholarships for undergraduate students in Brazil to go to an international university and conduct part of their studies between 2011 and 2015. Dias Lopes (2020) found that students who have parents with a higher education degree and in a high financial situation were more likely to participate
in the Science Without Borders program compared to first-generation college students. This study shows that there is an education disparity among Brazilian undergraduate students in the country of Brazil (Dias Lopes, 2020). Although higher education in Brazil is challenging, sports participation could assist those seeking opportunities to further their education through accessible financial assistance.

2.5. Need For a High-Quality Education

Lee (2020) defines a good education as a “process through which certain outcomes and goals, such as personality, capabilities, and dignity, can be reached through certain institutional instruction, which may be related to both negative and positive rights.” In addition, the author mentions the necessary tools for a successful education such as facilities and funds (Lee, 2020). Therefore, having the necessary resources available will help ignite the interest of the younger people in obtaining a higher education degree while they pursue their athletic goals. It is imperative for student-athletes to know the importance of higher education and know how it could impact their careers. In this case, teachers can assist in the academic development of student-athletes with available and necessary resources for a better future.

The possible disconnect between school administration, teachers, and other stakeholders in a high school or university setting could pose a major challenge to the overall outcome of education. When all stakeholders in education collaborate and work together, it will yield better results and improve education. Eventually, policies and interventions could be implemented. Klimski (2018) stated that the lack of high-quality education not only negatively affects individuals but also their societies. The author encouraged society to think of innovative ways of implementing education to be considered high-quality. It is expected that leaders and teachers offer students open-
minded ideas by showing them new horizons and guiding them with appropriate behaviors. However, it is necessary to constantly update knowledge about the social and natural world for students to keep learning. It is also needed to have critical thinking and a responsible reaction to problems that the world presents regarding high-quality education (Klimski, 2018).

Having a great financial resource can be a determinant factor for teenagers and kids who are pursuing a high school education and want to continue to pursue a college education degree. The author Jvaridze (2020) believed that the aspiration to get a high-quality education is intrinsic. However, this is not the only factor that contributes to eventually obtaining a college degree, as getting a good education requires a lot of investment. Money is the main factor affecting people’s access to a high-quality education. This is the reason why 40% of the people in Asia and 30% in Latin America do not surpass the equivalent of fourth-grade education. The poorer the country, the higher the number of people without a good education. The government should take active measures to stop poverty because it is affecting access to education in many countries (Jvaridze, 2020). Allowing an easy route to pursue a high-quality college education for the youth in these countries could be an important first step for future generations.

Education should be available for all people, despite their life circumstances. Educators who work with students with learning disabilities need a higher knowledge of learning procedures, more instructional plans, and a better understanding of the different needs of each student. It is also necessary to learn about each particular student’s needs and strengths so they are prepared for their college and professional careers (Gartland & Strosnider, 2017). The preparation for a successful academic career starts before
college. Kids and teenagers can have a well-prepared high school education with the assistance of their teachers and parents.

2.6. Socioeconomic Development

Sports have a huge impact on the socioeconomic development within communities. A lot of kids and teenagers who live in undeveloped areas and do not have much to do in their neighborhoods choose to practice sports as a hobby. This hobby gives children a way to effectively use their time focusing on healthy activities. Without these activities, the probability of making daily bad choices could increase because of the lack of opportunities provided in the poor areas of Brazil. Therefore, communities should encourage kids and teenagers to practice sports and join organized sports teams with a coach leading practice every day. A study conducted by Hall and Reis (2019) showed the importance of having a sporting coach in the lives of the youth as they get older, grow and mature in life. The authors mentioned that coaches are the key to instilling the belief that sports are important as a developmental tool and providing overall sports and life education (Hall & Reis, 2019). In addition, parents could also encourage their children to cultivate their habits of participating in sports since it could earn them a better career in the future.

Practicing sports produces engagement and transitions to the spirit of competition. This competitiveness evolves into economic growth within the low economic communities. When it comes to sporting events, concession stands, and ticket costs are the ideal revenue for these communities. During these competitions, funds can be raised to establish a better outcome for that low-economic community. A typical example is community soccer competitions in low socioeconomic areas of Brazil. In these events, it is often organized within small regional teams in which kids and
teenagers play among themselves. Family members come to watch their children and relatives. Usually, the winner receives a trophy for participating in these tournaments. Not only are there costs associated with entry tickets, but there are also other revenue-generation initiatives for these communities, such as sponsorships from local organizations and businesses as well as philanthropic individuals. An interesting research study showed that the country of Brazil has reduced the amount of people living in poverty in the past few years.

According to Calegar et al. (2021), in the early 1990s, 67% lived in poverty (monthly household income less than half the minimum wage in Brazil). Ten years later, in 2000, this number was reduced to 49% of the entire population; and in 2010, it dropped to 34%. Newer estimates showed that the poverty rate dropped from 26.5% in 2017 to 25.3% in 2018. The lowest poverty percentage rate in the past years was in 2012 when it dropped to as low as 22.8%. This means that at least one-fifth of the population in Brazil is living in poverty at any given time. In addition, in 2020, Brazil faced the highest level of extreme poverty in its history with a rate of 6.5% of the entire population with a monthly income below 40 USD. This percentage is equal to 13.5 million people. However, social programs and income policies that have been implemented in recent decades have been very important to the development of many communities, as there is still a need to continue to fight poverty in low-income societies (Calegar et al., 2021).

Following that economic growth, life-development coaching lessons can be used to add value to kids’ and teenagers’ lives. To enhance the image of their communities, the opportunities of having guest speakers and special events could be implemented. The article written by Newman et al. (2018) talked about the importance of having sports in the lives of the youth. They stated that when kids and adolescents participate in
sports, it is expected that they will have a positive developmental outcome, such as higher academic performance, interpersonal relationships with others, and life skills development. Youth sports can provide a motivating and active lifestyle to children and teenagers who have a difficult socioeconomic background (Newman et al., 2018).

2.7. Sports in Communities

Sports can play an impactful role in communities, including in jobs and environmental safety. Moore (2008) concluded in his study that constructing sports facilities in brownfields can be very positive. Brownfields are uncultivated fields that are open to the public or empty and abandoned lots/properties. These constructions and buildings can have a positive impact on communities. First of all, it helps communities with their economic aspects including taxes. It also eliminates contaminated and abandoned property from different communities. Normally children can be more susceptible to harm from contamination. Therefore, building sports facilities in brownfields can help future generations to come by creating a safer environment for the community (Moore, 2008).

Sports facilities could further help communities by making people feel connected through sports organizations. When people go to sports events or watch them on TV, this makes them connected to teams and share a mutual interest with other fans or friends. Studies have shown that many people have an emotional attachment to a sports team or a player which helps them to develop their own identity. When these people identify themselves as “something bigger than themselves,” such as a connection to a group of people or a club, it leads to a sense of uniqueness by being a part of a specific group. It was also concluded that sports consumers contribute to the cultural aspect of societies. Therefore, sports organizations need to always find new and
innovative sources to grow their brands (Mastromartino et al., 2020). When youth start watching and cheering for a professional or collegiate sports team at an early age, it may influence them to want to play sports when they are kids and teenagers at school.

Taking time to have human interaction with others is crucial in people’s lives. Coaches and government leaders can develop strong relationships with youth immigrants by showing different types of sports. Each community has its own culture; therefore, these leaders need to work alongside immigrants and other leaders to best support each kid and teenager with their particular needs. There are many different ways that lives can be impacted through inclusive community sports programs, such as visually showing how to perform a sports skill, learning new vocabulary words, and taking mentorship roles (Middleton et al., 2022).

Professional teams can also benefit local communities tremendously. There is significant evidence that the presence of sports organizations has positive social benefits for communities. The younger generation can see professional athletes as a motivation to themselves to practice sports and stay healthy. From a financial aspect, professional teams can generate more revenue in their surrounding areas. For example, property values may increase when a stadium is built in the area. It attracts more fans and tourists which also contributes to society’s economic aspect (Bradbury, 2022).

Summer school programs in different communities could also support the development and well-being of kids and teenagers. These types of programs can be intended to promote their safety, mental toughness, social development, and most importantly, academic learning and success. Unfortunately, children or teenagers who come from poor backgrounds have a difficult time finding programs that support their needs and give them high-quality program opportunities. It was also found that easier
accessibility of summer programs for children and teenagers can help families have a better quality of life and more adequate nutrition. However, some barriers could include cost and geographic location (National Academies of Sciences, 2019).

Additionally, racial background has been an important topic when it comes to sports in communities. Hextrum (2020) stated that African-American youth are more likely to be involved in athletics than White kids and teenagers. This has to do with their upward mobility. It was also found that sports socialization in different racial groups has to do a lot with the relationship between schools and specific sports. Finally, sports socialization plays a huge role in the educational rejections that Black youth face, which affect their athletic involvement at an early age (Hextrum, 2020). Parents and coaches are determinant factors to make sure kids and adolescents feel welcome and comfortable when they are playing sports, regardless of their race and ethnicity.

2.8. Benefits and Opportunities of Sports

Children and teenagers who come from low-income families and neighborhoods have lower self-esteem and life satisfaction which leads to an increase in mental health disorders compared to children and adolescents with a high-income background. In addition, people who come from poor families have lower rates of sports participation. The reasoning behind lower sports participation includes the lack of availability of activities and appropriate sports facilities. In addition, childcare assistance is another limitation that parents must take into consideration when allowing their kids to play sports. The barriers are evident. However, with more social and government assistance, these barriers to participation can be lowered (Nelson et al., 2022).
Usually, the youth tend to benefit from sports participation when the government assists financially since it creates job opportunities. Dimitrova and Dimitrov’s (2021) conclusion corroborated that practicing sports is an opportunity to increase employment all over the world. When government leaders create incentives for employers to invest in sports, it encourages job creation for others. In other words, sports can incentivize social relations and community development. Since 2013, the number of youths who are employed in sports has increased from 35% to 38% in 5 years. With the increase of job opportunities in sports, the overall economy can also benefit from it (Dimitrova & Dimitrov, 2021). With a high economic involvement and an increase in jobs, more resources may be available to incentivize teenagers to participate in sports.

Regardless of people’s background, sports provide equal opportunities to those who participate in athletic activities. Dixon et al. (2021) indicated that sports in schools offer equal chances for participants of all genders, ethnicities, and social classes, such as the involvement of women. One way to create even more sports participation and awareness is through the introduction of new sports. These authors also found that government leaders have developed different programs to attract more girls to participate in sports (Dixon et al., 2021). Educating teenagers that they have an equal opportunity may incentivize them to play sports at a young age.

Each academic organization represented by athletic departments provides a range of opportunities for all student-athletes. For example, student-athletes may receive great sports facilities, equipment, and coaching staff. However, in some organizations, student-athletes may not only have the necessary needs, but they can also receive additional support, such as great emotional support and a fan base. Despite differences in the amount of assistance offered by different schools, each school should offer the
same amount of assistance to all students within their organization. Equal opportunities for all genders and ages could lead to greater satisfaction and development in sports. Agans and Geldhof (2012) defined the three different ways of practicing sports which include: individual sports, team sports, and dance-type sports. It was found that female youth, who are involved in athletics and participate simultaneously in both individual and team sports, have better developmental results compared to kids and adolescents who do not practice any athletics sports. Children and teenagers can also benefit tremendously from the experience that different types of sports can provide to them (Agans & Geldhof, 2012).

When it comes to women in sports, the number of women in intercollegiate athletic administration has increased since adopting Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 in the United States (Bower & Hums, 2013). It was found that women and men have noticed an increase in career opportunities for women in the past five decades. Not only are these numbers higher in the administrative aspect of the business but also athletics. The number of female athletes competing at the collegiate level has risen from 16,000 in 1968 to over 200,000 in 2012 in the United States. It is predicted that this number will increase in the future (Bower & Hums, 2013).

Similar to the United States, Brazil has also seen female sports rise in the past decades as previous studies have shown. Elsey and Nadel (2019) stated that it has been growing since 1921 when the first official women’s soccer game was played and it was also recorded by the media. It was finally accepted in the population’s social life in the 1930s in Brazil. With the assistance of physical education teachers, sports among female student-athletes have become more popularized each year ever since the 1920s. In addition, sports provide an opportunity for women to stay active and healthy (Elsey
Another study by Moura et al. (2020) found that 49% of Brazilian women are interested in sports compared to 57% of men in Brazil. Gender differences are decreasing and women in sports are growing in Brazil; however, male participation in sports is still more common in today’s Brazilian societies (Moura et al., 2020).

Sports could influence children and teenagers’ interpersonal and academic outcomes. Newman et al. (2018) stated that when kids and teenagers participate in sports, it is expected that they have a positive developmental outcome, such as higher academic performance, interpersonal relationships with others, and life skills development. In addition, about 22 million people between the ages of 6 and 17 years old participate in collective sports in the United States. Finally, it was concluded that youth sports provide a healthy lifestyle to kids and teenagers who have a difficult socioeconomic background (Newman et al., 2018). Being involved in sports can contribute to better performance in their academic and social lives.

Being active can benefit a child’s mental health. Vella (2019) stated in his study that mental health is one of the biggest issues in today’s society. Organized youth sport is one of the most common activities among children and adolescents, and it has been used as a method to support mental health. There are many reasons why mental health programs are beneficial in organized youth sports and the development of future generations. For instance, having weekly meetings with student-athletes may reduce anxiety and provide leadership skills. These assistance programs can be done face-to-face or in an online method. Both methods teach psychological skills that help sculpt the positive mindset of young people in the world (Vella, 2019).

Coupled with certain mental health practices, parents, teachers, and coaches can apply emotional and social methods when developing their students in the classroom or
a sports setting. They should have an encouraging and committed attitude toward the
development of student-athletes with a sense of purpose. In addition, students must have
a great relationship with their peers when executing tasks and reducing emotional
distress. In the process of learning different social and emotional traits, people must
apply their best set of behavioral and character skills for successful results in education
and sports (Seang-Leol, 2021). Parents, teachers, and coaches are crucial in the early
development of children and teenagers as they are growing up, both at home and in the
classroom. This can be a significant factor in whether a child wants to continue playing
in their teenage years or not.

As students decide to start playing sports as adolescents, they may realize that
many positive factors come with practicing sports. Through sports, it is possible to have
the opportunity to travel around the world, meet new people, experience different
cultures, and learn many life lessons. In other words, sports could enable individuals to
have a better future and provide great life opportunities. Furthermore, youth who
participate and are engaged in sports activities are more likely to have better life
outcomes compared to non-participants in the future, such as career development
(Agans & Geldhof, 2012).

People who have played sports have the flexibility to pursue a career in sports
management if their athletic abilities do not reach the professional level. Sports
management is a major industry that a lot of people choose to follow after competitively
participating in a specific sport for many years. Dixon (2022) stated that many of her
colleagues who have had a career in sports management are very satisfied. Some great
comments from sports management practitioners regarding their careers included the
amazing opportunities for self-development, knowledge gained, and relationships built.
Sports management also allows workers to travel to many different places and have new
experiences that many other careers would not have (Dixon, 2022). Sports management
is a career field that has increasing opportunities in today’s societies.

Parents, teachers, and coaches can encourage teenagers to be involved in sports
besides practicing. This can help motivate them to develop their interest in sports at an
early age. With a high sports interest from students at an early age, they can be better
prepared to make good sport-related career choices as they transition from an adolescent
to an adult. Statistics from Behring and Vlasaty (2022) showed that job growth in sports
management will grow faster than average in the upcoming years because of the
expansion of multibillion-dollar profits from the sports industry and the investments
received by growing companies. Jobs such as athletic directors and facilities managers
are some of the most desired jobs within athletics (Behring & Vlasaty, 2022). With a
strong sports management field, academic programs in sports management, and
growing athletic resources, the world’s economy grows through health, market
expansion, and wellness development. Consequently, this increases job opportunities
and generates taxes for the government.

There are some similarities between the fields of sports management and sports
science industries, which are both impactful to the U.S. economy. Sports managers can
contribute toward developing resolutions to help businesses and clients all over the
world achieve their goals and objectives. Sport management leaders are also known as
professionals who are experts in developing innovative solutions that seek healthy
lifestyle improvement and are capable of delivering high-quality services. These types
of services are great for communities because they positively impact people’s health,
which has a strong economic side-effect for different nations (Srivastava et al., 2009).
Furthermore, since the sports industry around the globe is very well-connected, sports
administration managers can share their knowledge with other professionals in the field
by a simple phone call or through the exchange of e-mails. This easy communication could be implemented between parents, teachers, and coaches to make sure student-athletes are on the right track, both academically and athletically.

2.9. Professional Sports Impact

Some people argue that the focus of sports only involves earning money, having big professional stadiums, and paying millions of dollars to professional athletes. However, professional sports are much more than the financial and economic impact associated with it. What people need to realize is that a lot of professional sports organizations support educational institutions which generate even more economic growth and healthy lifestyle impact. This type of impact is very important to communities because it contributes towards the development of the wellness and health industries.

Professional sports help to maximize the productivity of the world’s health and the economy, generating higher economic growth for all stakeholders. Pyun et al. (2023) stated that almost all of the fifty biggest urban areas in the United States have at least one professional sports team in the major professional sports league (football, basketball, baseball, and hockey). Studies showed that professional sports teams located in cities and urban areas can bring many tangible, as well as intangible, social, and economic benefits to the population (Pyun et al., 2023).

The benefits that professional sports can bring to communities are mirrored in cities with low socioeconomic areas as well. Benefits such as athletic skills, social skills, self-esteem development, and gaining life lessons are some examples of the access provided to children and young adults who are not afforded the same opportunities as other privileged communities. For instance, the NBA (National
Basketball Association) implements and conducts NBA basketball camps for youth in third-world countries. The youth involved not only learn from the great coaching staff but they can also be seen by NBA scouts as they are developing their basketball skills. There are a lot of NBA events for the youth in Brazil and fans can find many NBA stores in different malls in the biggest cities of Brazil, such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Porto Alegre. These types of events can incentivize children and teenagers who have a dream to become professional players in the future, which influences them to play sports at a young age in middle and high school.

2.10. Parents Involvement

Parents’ involvement and support are very important in their children’s development, including in sports participation. Dorsch et al. (2021) found that when children are playing sports, they want their parents to focus on their effort rather than the outcome. It is expected that parents have supportive comments and encourage the entire team by showing their emotions. Furthermore, parents have a big impact on their children’s performances and their psychological outcomes in their respective sports. The sports culture socialization of the parents greatly affects how they support their children’s performances in sports (performance-oriented vs. participation-based) (Dorsch et al., 2021).

When kids are growing up, they have the choice to make whether or not they want to participate in sports. A survey done by Messner and Musto (2016) indicated that two-thirds of children in the United States are involved in at least one organized team sport. Most of them play on at least two sports teams during an academic year. It is indicated that the more privileged their family is, the more likely kids will play organized sports. In addition, 95% of parents in the United States believe participating
in sports helps raise their children’s self-esteem. Furthermore, 68% of parents believe that sports can assist their children to get better grades in school. It is also noticeable that participating in sports can help children in many different ways as they get older (Messner & Musto, 2016).

Regarding gender, there is a societal issue that females have a fundamentally lower drive for participating in sports and it can be highly impacted by parental support. In the study conducted by Dorsch et al. (2021), it was found that fathers play a significant role in the involvement of adolescent girls in sports, whereas the presence of mothers is important in community and interschool-related activities. In addition, the authors emphasized that encouragement from parents has a greater impact on sports involvement for females than males (Dorsch et al., 2021).

2.11. Negative Impacts of Sports

Despite the positive impacts of sports, some potential negative impacts may come from practicing sports as well. Merkel (2013) wrote an article that discussed the positive and negative impacts of sports. The author emphasized that when youth play sports, there is a higher possibility of sports-related injuries. There are an estimated 2.6 million emergency room visits each year due to sports-related injuries of athletes between 5 and 24 years old in the world. Many of these injuries are musculoskeletal which can lead to dysfunction, chronic pain, or inappropriate growth. Furthermore, childhood or adolescent injuries can lead to lifelong health issues. The author also stated the negative psychological impact sports can have on young athletes. For instance, there can be an increase in stress levels due to unrealistic goals set by parents or coaches. Finally, Merkel (2013) mentioned that social interaction is another aspect of life that can be negatively impacted by youth athletics. For example, families tend to spend a
Academically speaking, not every student-athlete receives good grades at school. Muñoz-Bullón et al. (2017) gave some negative academic impacts that sports can have on those in higher education. Students who have extracurricular activities, such as sports, may spend a lower amount of time focusing on academic pursuits. For example, these students may be unable to dedicate as much time to studying as students who are not involved in sports (Muñoz-Bullón et al., 2017). Another interesting article that talks about the negative aspects of sports is an article written by Routon and Walker (2015). This study focused on GPA outcomes for athletes vs. non-athletes. Most male and female athletes have a lower GPA than their non-athletic counterparts. Male athletes tend to score lower on standardized tests (GRE, LSAT, MCAT) compared to non-athletes of the same gender. In addition, a low GPA and less studying time are more impactful in those who participate in marquee sports (basketball and football) (Routon & Walker, 2015).

Student-athletes may not be treated equally based on their gender as well as their socioeconomic status, which could harm their well-being. In other words, these student-athletes are excluded from sports participation based on these factors. A very common topic in today’s society is the discussion regarding transgender (whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth) sports participation. Some people do not agree that transgender players should be participating in collective sports activities with other individuals. Harris et al. (2023) stated that transgender student-athletes are the center of many debates about inclusion in sports. There are many efforts to prohibit transgender
athletes from playing sports. This situation goes beyond sports as this is a part of a large and ongoing political subject faced in the United States and the world, which involves the LGBTQI+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex). In the United States specifically, twenty-three states have introduced bills to prohibit transgender student-athletes from participating in sports activities at school (Harris et al., 2023).

Another factor that could increase exclusion amongst student-athletes is socioeconomic status differences. Some children may not feel that they belong to a sports team due to having their socioeconomic status below their peers. According to Persson et al. (2020), many young student-athletes choose to drop their sports activities due to not having a feeling of belonging. The authors mentioned that 7% of the student-athletes (both boys and girls) state that they are socially unhappy in their sports teams due to low relationships with their peers and negative experiences. Some other student-athletes report that they experience a negative social environment by not fitting in with their peers in the club due to a different socioeconomic situation (Persson et al., 2020).

2.12. Difficulties of Becoming a Professional Sports Athlete

Professional sports stars are great illustrations for the youth because they are role models for kids and teenagers who have dreams of becoming successful professionals. NBA, NFL, NHL, and MLB are just some American leagues that many young players would dream of joining one day. In the United States, participating in the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) as a student-athlete is a great path to making a professional career dream come true. However, the vast majority of the student-athletes do not reach the professional level. Dugdale et al. (2021) stated that a successful and specialized soccer academy that recruits kids and teenagers to be professional athletes only had a 10% success rate. Of the 537 players, only 53 players recruited were
able to obtain a professional soccer contract (Dugdale et al., 2021). Therefore, student-athletes need to have a plan B in their chosen professional career industry just in case they are not able to become professional athletes.

Another challenge student-athletes face when trying to make it to the professional level is the lack of information about opportunities. Parents, teachers, and coaches can advise kids and teenagers at an early age about the low number of athletes who make it to the professional level without education. Student-athletes must take academics seriously to be more informed and equipped for the future. A study by Storm et al. (2022) revealed that in Europe, on the other hand, many young players join large soccer clubs (known as “football” clubs in Europe) because of their great training skills and the infrastructure provided.

Storm et al. (2022) also cited cultural transition as another major challenge facing sports professional athletes. People face a strong culture shock when moving from one country to another with many differences in values and worldviews. For instance, an adjustment in playing style, team communication, team bonding, and athlete-coach relationship are some of the difficulties that are seen in players’ everyday lives (Storm et al., 2022). Since many professional contracts are obtained in other countries and the probability of becoming a professional sports player is low, student-athletes must focus on academics as they are growing up to be able to adjust accordingly.

### 2.13. Fundraising

From a fan standpoint, there is a huge amount of emotional attachment to teams and players and fandom is a great way for people to identify themselves with others. In other words, it brings fans together and they feel that they are part of something “bigger
than themselves.” This is also related to college athletics and financial donors in the United States. A lot of college athletics supporters who have significant financial resources are willing to donate to sporting programs to impact the lives of young adults during their college experience.

In the United States, academic success is very important during student-athletes’ college careers. Some high-level donors believe that athletics and academia should work together and that earning a degree from a well-recognized institution is a great way to help students succeed. According to an article written by Kim et al. (2019), donating financial resources to collegiate athletic programs has been a very impactful source of funding for any athletic department in the United States since 1960. Similarly, in academia, the role of athletics in charitable contributions has received a very important amount of consideration from scholars (Kim et al., 2019).

Sports give fundraising opportunities to raise money for their associated academic institutions and athletic departments. Athletics development is a department within athletics that provides job opportunities to fundraisers to improve their institution’s scholarship budgets, which allows coaches to recruit more student-athletes from all over the world. In addition, using appropriate social networks and coordinating special events for donors are crucial fundraising skills that are needed for this type of service in the sports industry. A study showed that some fundraising tactics include making the campaign’s information relevant and personalized based on the recipient’s wants and connections; providing a means of communication in alternative formats, such as through e-mails, websites, cell phones, etc.; and building a long-term relationship with donors by having multiple touch points through mail, e-mail, special day messages, videos, etc. (Push The Rock Sees Exponential Growth Using Relevant Fundraising Tactics, 2012). In 2019, U.S. citizens donated $309.7 billion to athletics
departments, which is equivalent to nearly 2% of the U.S. population’s annual income, to nonprofit organizations (Kim et al., 2021), showing the potential windfalls of a well-run campaign.

Similar to the collegiate level, high school fundraising is another important topic in the United States, but the focus is on equity. Most fundraising is accomplished through booster clubs organized by high schools’ administration. These initiatives help high school athletics to have successful programs for student-athletes and give them the necessary tools so that they can succeed both in academics and athletics. However, boosters usually provide financial support to male athletics sports teams, which leaves female athletes behind.

Despite this, high school booster clubs can be a great source of gender equity, if done correctly. In the United States, there is a federal law that bans high schools from discriminating against any program due to gender, especially in athletics. According to Anderson’s 2016 study, only one-fourth of high schools require their donors to report their donations to their school district office, and only 45% of high schools have an all-sport booster club. This facilitates boosters to donate to male-only athlete programs, which allows them to work around federal law. Solutions for this issue include having additional federal laws that require high schools to report donations received, which will encourage the funding to be distributed evenly among all sports and genders (Anderson, 2016).

Not only do fundraisers interact and engage with current donors, but they also engage with new prospective donors by building strong new relationships in the communities in which the university has a presence. These individuals must take their services to as many organizations and individuals as possible. Another way to increase donation levels is by having a successful college athletics department. A study
conducted by Walker (2015) has shown that private contributions are seen more in institutions where athletics success is higher compared to non-successful programs, specifically in basketball and football. Athletics history, the university’s region, and NCAA division are not the most important factors that donors take into consideration. In addition, these private contributions are crucial because they help academic institutions cultivate more financial resources in the long-term (Walker, 2015).

Athletics development is very important for student-athletes who would not be able to afford a college education. It gives an opportunity to unprivileged individuals to attend college and perform at a collegiate athletics level. However, this dream would not be accomplished without funding. Usually, in most developed countries such as the United States, funds are raised through philanthropic giving. At the collegiate level, fundraising is important, as these resources can provide costly scholarships and valuable equipment to student-athletes at a young age. Even though fundraising is not a common topic in college athletics in Brazil, it is an important topic to be aware of as some student-athletes leave Brazil to go to the United States to play college sports. Vega (2019) stated that Latino student-athletes enrollment in American universities continues to increase yearly because of the availability of funding to support their programs.

2.14. Non-Profit Versus Traditional Aid Athletics Organizations

Non-profit athletic organizations are organized groups with different purposes other than producing revenue for the organization. Also, the profit that is generated in the organization’s income is not distributed to any stakeholder of the institution, such as directors and members. The revenue that is generated through projects and donations is often used to benefit underserved communities through social projects. Examples of non-profit athletic organizations include YMCA, Athletes for Hope, Challenges Athletes Foundation, The Fresh Air Fund, National Football League Foundation,
PeacePlayers International, LA84 Foundation, Little League Baseball, Girls on the Run, Playworks, Skateistan, Grassroot Soccer, South Bronx United, Special Olympics, and many more organizations worldwide.

Non-profit athletic organizations have many more advantages compared to the “traditional” aid organizations when it comes to community development. According to the author Norris-Tirrell (2014), non-profits that serve communities have had a crucial role in advocating for change and redefining social problems. The first benefit is that non-profit organizations have a better psychological and emotional connection with individuals and communities as a whole. In other words, when non-profit athletic organizations have events, they tend to be more personal and offer an environment to create relationships among the participants and organizers. For instance, individuals who work in non-profit organizations tend to be more involved with the people who are being impacted by the cause. The individuals who receive the support not only can benefit from the aid, but also from the connections and relationships that are created through these events. Okada (2021) provided an example of this in his paper in which he discussed the benefits of the Homeless World Cup to homeless populations in five different countries. Interviews with participants revealed benefits such as improvement of both mental and physical health, acquisition of appropriate communication skills, better interpersonal relationships, and overall increase in life skills (Okada, 2021).

Another benefit that non-profit athletic organizations can provide to individuals is opportunities for people to physically learn about being active and staying healthy. In other words, many non-profit athletic organizations have a more active role rather than a passive role. Passive help is generally what “traditional” aid organizations offer to individuals. An example of this help includes resources such as food services. On the other hand, active help is more of an involvement in people’s lives through teaching and
counseling. Non-profit athletic organizations actively participate by showing people how to be active and stay healthy creating a longer-lasting impact. Athletic organizations can assist individuals by providing the same help that aid organizations offer but also have more of a healthy impact.

Baron et al. (2020) stated that developing programs to promote healthy lifestyles in different communities is a difficult task. The next generation must understand that playing sports plays a vital role in staying healthy given that many kids have the issue of being overweight in their early teenage years. A study by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2019) concluded that it is estimated that 5 million kids in the United States are obese. These obese children have a higher probability of having critical diseases such as stroke, diabetes, and heart disease. Furthermore, children who live with obesity are more likely to remain obese in the future as well (Retrieved from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2019). Therefore, practicing sports helps them to stay in shape, and are less likely to develop critical diseases as they get older.

The third benefit is having great community engagement through events held by non-profit athletic organizations. This is a great way for people to connect with each other. For example, the Special Olympics is a non-profit athletic organization that organizes events for those with special needs. These individuals with special needs do not match the most common standard behavior models and demonstrate some difficulties when dealing with pedagogic and educational projects. This group of special needs people includes individuals who have behavioral disturbances, have been in culturally and socially deprived environments, and/or have mental, physical, and sensory disorders. Hours of treatment are a necessity for kids and teenagers with special needs (Milanović & Milanović, 2014). That is why the mission of the Special Olympics
is crucial for those individuals. These types of events can help to lift communities by providing equal opportunities to the entire society.

One noteworthy advantage of non-profit athletic organizations is that they offer spaces for children, adolescents, and adults to be in a different environment than what they are used to (home, work, school, etc.). For instance, many athletic non-profit organizations rent soccer fields for people to experience sports skills development and personal growth activities. In these spaces, they can also relax and enjoy a place where they are not used to frequenting regularly. Connections between humans and nature are created through the capability to have the environment, mind, and body all working together for one’s overall well-being (Pramova et al., 2022). These interactions between humans and nature are successfully and authentically accomplished by non-profit athletic organizations in events and experiences. Conversely, “traditional” aid organizations cannot provide these types of experiences due to the lack of resources. The aid that “traditional” aid organizations provide is not as personable and outgoing as what athletic non-profit organizations can offer to communities.

One of the most beneficial benefits that non-profit athletic organizations can offer is teaching many lifelong lessons, values, and the benefit of teamwork. A study by Lee et al. (2017) showed that sports held in after-school programs can be an essential tool for developing teenagers’ life skills, such as improving sports skills and mentally preparing for a successful future. These authors further stated that these tasks are accomplished through intentional and strategic plans conducted by schools. When participating in sports activities, kids and teenagers can focus on teamwork as well as learn applicable and relevant life lessons. These lessons are meant to introduce the meaning of good team culture through team bonding experiences. For instance, players who are actively competing need to know the importance of learning how to lose and
how to win games. A lot of lessons learned in sports can be easily applied to everyday scenarios. Many players who lose a match need to understand the importance of working on their weaknesses because there is a short turnaround to the next game. This specific principle can be applied to everyday life. When people are having difficult moments in life, they need to understand that there is no time to “sit around.” They must take action, learn from their mistakes, and move forward.

Looking at the years ahead, a suitable option for the low-income population would be to have some initiatives where non-profit athletic organizations join some “traditional” aid organizations to better serve the people in need. According to Norris-Tirrell (2014), non-profit organizations have historically received funds from “traditional” governmental aid organizations to perform duties and distribute aid that the government does not have adequate resources for (personnel, time, etc.). Since the 1950s, the requirements and the demands from the government for this funding to non-profits have greatly increased blurring the line between the grassroots mission of non-profits and government-driven initiatives (Norris-Tirrell, 2014). Previous studies suggest that sports organizations, including non-profits, can implement social policy goals more effectively amongst participants than government efforts. These goals include social inclusion, increased social cohesion, and the reduction of anti-social behavior (Vandermeerschen et al., 2017).

Even though there is some competition between non-profit athletic organizations and “traditional” aid organizations, there have been some successful stories where two different programs have worked together to best serve the communities in need. To illustrate such collaboration the famous aid organization UNICEF partnered with a local Indonesian organization to improve community engagement and fight against malnutrition of the community in six different subdistricts in the country of Indonesia.
This project included workshops, community events, and a lot of dialogue between stakeholders. The goal of this project was to have discussions regarding the issue of malnutrition with local communities to improve government authorities’ awareness. Finally, parents, teachers, and people in the community as a whole were encouraged to identify children and teenagers in different locations with severe malnutrition issues (Bait et al., 2019).

These are the questions that were used as a guide for this research study.

1. How are school grades, academic studying routine, interest/participation in class, and focus impacted by the involvement in sports of teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years old?

   a. What is the difference between gender or the type of sport played on the impact on academics and attitude?

   The first research question is the core idea and the purpose of the study. This question gives a clear understanding of how sports can influence academics in a positive, negative, or neutral way in the lives of teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years old. Student-athletes can get extremely busy with practices as well as home and away games. Not only do student-athletes’ routines make them extremely busy, but there could also be physical and mental factors to being a student-athlete that might influence either in a positive or negative direction. These components can play a vital and impactful role, both in the short- and long-term. In addition, in this study, readers can understand if student-athletes’ gender or the specific sport that they play could influence their academic performance or attitude, either positively or negatively.
2. How has the attitude and personality of the teenager who is involved in sports changed since they started playing sports?

The second research question asks about the impact of sports on the attitude and personality of student-athletes. The goal of this research question is to understand and analyze every comment that teachers and parents make about student-athletes’ secondary aspects of their lives, outside of academic performance. Sports are a large portion of teenagers’ routines globally, and the high level of involvement and competitiveness that sports cause could require much more than physical participation. Extracurricular activities, such as sports, could influence a teenager’s life in a way that their personality and behavior may change due to stress, competitiveness, pressure, etc.

3. Are there any secondary benefits or negative outcomes that result from involvement in sports as a teenager?

a. What is the effect on classroom time between students who play sports versus students who do not play sports?

The final and third research question asks about the secondary benefits or negative outcomes that result from involvement in sports as a teenager. Parents and teachers need to be aware of the importance of sports and its impact, so they can better assist the development of their children and students. Sports could build a lot of benefits in the lives of the student-athletes during teenage development. For example, working as a team could help them build social skills in comparison to students who do not play any sports. In contrast, teenagers are responsible for performing well at school; however, due to busy sports schedules and lack of time in class, student-athletes may have a different academic performance compared to students who do not play sports.
This question helps identify classroom time differences between student-athletes and non-student-athletes as well as how that impacts student-athletes’ academic performance.
Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Many teenagers worldwide who are between the ages of 12 and 17 years old are attending middle or high school. Therefore, in this research project, there is a special emphasis on the academic aspect of the lives of teenagers. Ultimately, the goal of this study is to investigate, analyze, and discuss if practicing sports affects the academic performance of teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years old. The study focuses on the positive and negative academic outcomes that result from sports involvement. Academics are crucial to the current life situations and futures of these teenagers.

The target academic institution is a public school called Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Ernesto Alves de Oliveira (EAO School). EAO School, a state-funded middle and high school, has a total of 1,248 students and began its activities on March 26, 1956. The minimum grade that students need to get to pass is 6 on a scale from 0 to 10. The school is fully staffed with teachers, state supervision, management, administration, and financial staff. The school’s philosophy is to educate students in an honest, free, participatory, competent, autonomous, and democratic human way. About sixty students of the student body currently play sports at the school, and thirty students play outside of the school in club teams. The majority of the student-athletes play basketball, soccer, indoor soccer, and volleyball (Retrieved from Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Ernesto Alves de Oliveira).

The parents and teachers interviewed in this study were from this public institution. Furthermore, an interesting characteristic of this school is its location. The
school is located in a middle-class neighborhood area in the city of Santa Cruz do Sul, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, in the southern part of Brazil. Having the school located in a middle-class neighborhood area helps the data relevancy, accuracy, and bias, because the school is in the middle of the city’s social hierarchy, and not located in a poor or rich area. This chapter expounds upon the methodology of this study which includes (1) participants, (2), instruments, (3) design and procedures, and (4) analysis.

### 3.2. Purposive Sampling

The nonrandom (nonprobability) sampling technique that was applied in this research study was purposive sampling. EAO School administrative staff directed the researcher to 7 parents and 6 teachers. The exact number of participants was determined by the accessibility, availability of the interviewees, and the requirements listed below.

First, EAO School administrative staff reached out to parents via a text message composed by the researcher (Appendix E). Once the administrative staff received approval from the parents to participate in the study, the researcher received the parents’ contact information via another text message. The researcher reached out directly to participants and scheduled a time for the interviews. A Zoom link was sent to each participant a few minutes before the interview.

Next, the EAO School administrative staff talked to the teachers in person at the school. Once the administrative staff received approval from the teachers to participate in the study, the researcher received the teachers’ contact information via a text message. The researcher reached out directly to participants and scheduled a time for the interviews. A Zoom link was sent to each participant a few minutes before the interview.
Purposive sampling is when researchers identify and select individuals with information related to the study’s research question. Esra Bakkalbasioglu (2020) defined purposive sampling as researchers who want to interview pre-determined and selected individuals based on specific qualities. This type of sampling allows researchers to have an adequate geographic sample while limiting the number of interactions. It also allows researchers to include studies with reliable data that heavily focus on the objectives.

A study conducted by Ames et al. (2019) specifically addressed the idea that utilizing a different sampling method could have greatly changed the outcome of the study they performed. In addition, purposive sampling is a great way to collect a manageable amount of data. In the study mentioned above, the purposive sampling method was used to focus on a specific subset of healthcare-related studies to “perform a thorough analysis” without having to analyze a giant amount of data (Ames et al., 2019).

There are both advantages and disadvantages to using purposive sampling. According to Bakkalbasioglu, one of the advantages of purposive sampling is that it is a great method to increase their interview number in a short period (Bakkalbasioglu, 2020). Another advantage of purposive sampling is the fact that the sampling data can be gathered quickly, and securely, and is less expensive compared to other methods if it is done appropriately (Bakkalbasioglu, 2020). Thirdly, researchers utilizing this type of sampling can make “generalizations” (theoretical, analytic, and logical) about the specific group chosen to be interviewed (Sharma, 2017).

One of the main difficulties of purposive sampling is the fact that gaining access to individuals who serve as interviewees is not always easily accomplished. Not only is it a difficult process to get access to individuals’ contact information, but in many cases,
the researchers must contact these individuals on their own. Researchers are required to contact each interviewee, explain the project, and convince them to participate. It is recommended that researchers try to access the interviewees through letters, emails, faxes, or phone calls. Unsuccessful communication with potential interviewees can disrupt or delay the interview process and may negatively affect the data as well. If a replacement is required of one interviewee with another, there may be a financially high cost or time delay involved. In sum, purposive sampling may be one of the easiest sampling methods, however, the access of sampled individuals is what makes this sampling extremely difficult (Bakkalbasioglu, 2020).

3.3. Participants

Participants of this study consisted of two groups of people related to student-athletes between the ages of 12-17 years old who study at EAO School (see Tables 1 and 2). In other words, the interview questions that guided this study were directed to groups of people who have direct contact with the target group. The groups were the following: (1) parents of the teenagers between the ages of 12-17 years old and (2) teachers of where the teenagers between ages of 12-17 years old study. Details about the participants’ gender, marital status, average age, and race are listed in (Appendix D). For confidentiality, participants have been assigned pseudonyms.
Table 1. Description of Participants (Parents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents (Pseudonyms)</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sports Played By Children</th>
<th>Amount of Time Played</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gabriela</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15, 12</td>
<td>Volleyball and Basketball</td>
<td>10 and 8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabela</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17, 11</td>
<td>(1) Volleyball</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18, 11</td>
<td>(1) Basketball</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adriana</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25, 16</td>
<td>(1) Basketball</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>João and Maria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fernando</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21, 16</td>
<td>(1) Soccer</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Description of Participants (Teachers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers (Pseudonyms)</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Years Teaching (Career)</th>
<th>Years Teaching at EAO School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paulo</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolina</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonardo</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuela</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruna</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eduarda</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.1. Parents of student-athletes of ages between 12-17 years old

The requirements for the parents were that they must have been parents of at least one Brazilian teenager who was between 12-17 years old. In addition, his or her child must have been a student-athlete who attended EAO School. There were no constraints or limitations to the number of children a parent may have attending the school. In other words, the parents could have had more than one child attending the school as long as the children met the requirements for the study. In addition, there were no demographic restrictions for parents in age, race, ethnicity, gender, marital status,
religion, social class, political views, income, education, and employment. However, some demographics were collected to categorize the responses, such as age, race, gender, and marital status.

3.3.2. Teachers of student-athletes of ages between 12-17 years old

The requirements for teachers were that they must have had at least one year of experience in teaching at a middle or high school level. It was encouraged that these teachers had some type of connection and involvement with athletics at the school for the study. There were no constraints on the length of time a particular teacher had been an employee of the school. There were no demographic restrictions for teachers in age, race, ethnicity, gender, marital status, religion, social class, political views, and income. However, some demographics were collected to categorize the responses, such as age, race, gender, and marital status.

3.4. Sample Size

In this research project, the following amount of people were interviewed: 7 parents and 6 teachers. The number of people interviewed was determined by the accessibility of people who met the requirements mentioned above.

3.5. Instrumentation

The methodology of this research project was accomplished through a qualitative method by interactions and interviews with the interviewees. Daymon and Holloway (2011) stated that qualitative research means the understanding of participants’ experiences and people’s lives. The main instrument of the study was the interview guide (Appendix A) provided below. The questionnaire had a set of open-
ended questions for parents and teachers and they aimed to look at the lives of the students to understand if sports affect the everyday lives of the target group (teenagers who were between the ages of 12 and 17 years old). The teenagers that the interviewees were referring to needed to meet the requirements of the study. The requirements were the following: the teenagers must have been Brazilians between the ages of 12-17 years old. They must also have studied at the EAO School and were actively participating in sports.

3.6. Design and Procedures

3.6.1. Design

Haenssgen (2019) presents the three types of interviews that can occur in a qualitative study: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and open or unstructured interviews. For this study, the structured interview process with predetermined questions was used to emphasize specific areas of interest. This form of interview was used because there was already a clear study focus (Haenssgen, 2019).

This study was conducted as a structured video call interview process with specific questions for each participant group. Before asking the questions, the researcher asked the interviewees for an authorization statement signed by each person. In this statement, it was indicated that the purpose of the interview was strictly for research purposes and the answers were confidential. There was a set of six open-ended questions for each particular group that was presented in a question-and-response method by the primary investigator. Each interviewee was asked the questions in the order indicated in the interview guide (Appendix A). Furthermore, the questions were asked in the native language of Brazil, Portuguese. The researcher recorded the
interview with each person, transcribed the answers, and translated from Portuguese to English.

There were no minimum or maximum time and words for each response. In addition, if interviewees did not feel comfortable answering a particular question, they were allowed to exclude that question. Due to IRB guidelines, participants were allowed to skip whatever questions that made them feel uncomfortable. However, due to the small participant size, if more than one question was skipped, there would have been a need to add additional participants to the study. Fortunately, no participants decided to skip a question. Furthermore, the interviewees did not receive any extra questions besides those that are listed in the interview guide (Appendix A). Finally, the researcher identified keywords and phrases relating to the positive and negative aspects of the academic impact of sports on teenagers through coding. Analyzation and discussion took place once the coding was finalized. Similar answers were a factor that the researcher will take into consideration.

3.6.2. Procedures

Daymon and Holloway (2011) believed that for a researcher to answer his or her research questions, he or she must have appropriate procedures for the study from the beginning. It is important that each interviewee, once found, is verified that they meet the requirements of their participant groups. Once the participant groups were verified, all interviews took place over two months. There were a total of 13 interviews in the study. Thirdly, interviews were recorded and transcribed. Next, the transcribed interviews were translated from Portuguese to English as this was a necessary step for language and understanding purposes. Additionally, the researcher coded each interview and identified key phrases and similar sets of answers between the interviewees. Once
this was accomplished, the researcher analyzed all answers received. Finally, discussion and conclusions took place to finalize the project.

3.7. Analysis

In this study, thematic analysis (TA) was used to analyze the data gathered. Thompson and Harper (2011) explained thematic analysis as a method of organizing and examining data through patterns. In other words, it distinguishes what is relevant to the subject studied and what can be excluded (Thompson & Harper, 2011). Additionally, “a thematic analysis allows for social as well as psychological interpretations of data” (Sparkes et al., 2013). Furthermore, Braun and Clarke (2006) described the phases of thematic analysis in six different steps. The steps are the following: (1) learning the data; (2) creating preliminary codes; (3) looking for themes; (4) revising themes; (5) defining and specifying themes; and (6) creating the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In a large amount of data, coding helps to condense the information into a relevant and manageable form making it simpler for the researcher to conduct his or her analysis. Coding also helps to identify common themes, similarities, and opposing views among the data. In addition, when a researcher uses coding, it helps him or her to identify topics, divide up the material, and separate useful information from non-relevant subjects. Furthermore, coding can be completed manually or by using software created for qualitative analysis (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). In this study, coding was accomplished manually. Each transcribed line of each interview was read after translation. Any information found about the research questions was coded appropriately in an Excel sheet into different themes and sub-themes. The researcher then used the codes located in the Excel sheet to analyze the data.
Coding was conducted once the researcher completed the interviews, transcribed, and translated the data. Specific phrases, words, and themes related to the positive and negative aspects of the impact of sports on teenagers were coded. The primary investigator focused on the coded words and phrases from the interviews to analyze and distinguish themes, categories, and premilitary codes. These phrases and words were then assessed for frequency for analysis purposes. The coding scheme (Figure 1) used in this research project was adapted from Hutchinson et al. (2018).

To ensure that the results of the study were trustworthy, it was important to focus on the validity and reliability of the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed that the four criteria for trustworthiness included credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. First, the researcher must take into consideration the credibility of the data gathered, which is how aligned the results of a study are with reality.

Methods to support credibility include prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Kuzmanić (2009) discussed two viewpoints about validity, which are positivist versus constructivist. The positivist viewpoint is when a researcher looks for the truth and finds that the data represents reality. On the other hand, the constructivist viewpoint takes into account how social worldview affects the reality of a person. These two viewpoints emphasize the difficulty in determining perception versus reality (Kuzmanić, 2009). Qualitative research has the opportunity to give the readers the ability to understand one’s perspective as a true reality. In other words, it can only provide the perspective of each person, which is their reality. By adding more interviews and data, the hope is to gather more perspectives that can represent a general reality.
Qualitative research commonly does not seek to establish replicable results. Second, qualitative research can distinguish patterns and explanations that can be applied from one context to another through transferability. Transferability requires a complete description of the circumstances in which data was collected for a future researcher to be able to apply this context (Stahl & King, 2020). Third, dependability is the ability to trust the results of a study. This can be established through a research method that is reasonable, trackable, and transparent at every step of the process (Nowell et al., 2017). Some methods to ensure dependability include overlap methods and dependability audits (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, confirmability is the concept of “getting as close to objective reality as qualitative research can get” (Stahl & King, 2020). This requires the researcher to ensure that the data is representative only of the research population and not of the researcher (Shenton, 2004).

In this project, these specific interview questions were asked to understand the “intentions and perspectives” of those involved in the lives of the teenagers (Agee, 2009). Furthermore, Agee (2009) stated that in a qualitative study, the questions should focus on how the people who are involved in the study group experience events and view the situation as a whole. Keeping this in mind, the questions listed at the end of the literature review were intended to determine if sports had an impact on the lives of teenagers from the viewpoint of parents and teachers. In sum, the questions focused on the area of academic performance for teenagers.
Figure 1  
Data Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preliminary Codes</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Dedication/Discipline</td>
<td>Maturity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Personality Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Competitiveness</td>
<td>Pride and Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calmness</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>School-Sports Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness</td>
<td>Quick Learning Ability</td>
<td>Improvement in Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Grades</td>
<td>Aiming for Better Grades</td>
<td>Commitment to Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Engagement</td>
<td>General Academic Benefits</td>
<td>Change of Behavior (class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects Related to Sports</td>
<td>Ability to Finish Assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distraction Help</td>
<td>Sense of Belonging</td>
<td>Benefit for the Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation with Coaches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In School Sports</td>
<td>Club Sports</td>
<td>Involvement in Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in Soccer</td>
<td>Involvement in Volleyball</td>
<td>Male SA’s vs. Female SA’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Studying Routine</td>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>Interest in Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nervousness</td>
<td>Calmness</td>
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<td>No Difference Between SA’s vs. Non SA’s Participation</td>
<td>Attention in Class</td>
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<td>Parents Assistance</td>
<td>Parents Threat</td>
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<td>Variability in Grades</td>
<td>Variability in Interest</td>
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<td>Poor performance (grades)</td>
<td>Less Classroom Time</td>
<td>Lack of Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of Focus/Attention</td>
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<td>Tiredness</td>
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<td>Parents Frustration</td>
<td>Professors Frustration</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
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Note. The coding scheme is adapted from Hutchinson et al. (2018, p. 268)
Chapter 4

Results and Analysis

** Direct quotes from research interviews conducted with parents and teachers are referred to as (Name, P) for parent comments and (Name, T) for teacher comments who have been assigned pseudonyms. **

Below are the answers to the research questions:

1. How are school grades, academic studying routine, interest/participation in class, and focus impacted by involvement in sports of teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years old?

4.1. School Grades

There was a split between a benefit to grades and a decrease in grades. The code frequency revealed an emphasis on both good grades and poor performance in the classroom. All teachers (100%) stated that student-athletes had poorer performance grades compared to their non-student-athletes’ counterparts. Teachers noticed that grades were worse for student-athletes due to multiple reasons including time out of the classroom, low interest in class, poor studying routine, and a greater interest in just sports rather than classwork.

“The three who play basketball have lower performance and interest in the classroom [compared to non-student-athletes].” (Paulo, T).

“My feedback [school grades] is not very good for players.” (Carolina, T).

“Students who play competitive sports have lower grades in the classroom than others. Student-athletes always have lower grades compared to others.” (Manuela, T).
“Their [student-athletes] grades get worse because they have to travel and so it is more difficult. They pay more attention to the sport, and not to classes.”
(Bruna, T).

“Students who play sports have slightly lower grades compared to those who do not play sports.” (Eduarda, T).

In addition, a parent complemented the teachers’ argument by stating that her child believes that if he plays sports, he does not need to study at all: “He has a vision that if he is very good at the sport, he does not need to study. I disagree very much. So, unfortunately, it did not have much of an impact on this case.” (Isabela, P). On the other hand, there was a split between parents noting whether their children did better or worse, with a slight preference towards good grades.

All parents (100%) noted that increasing competition and responsibility through sports, encouraged their children to work harder which resulted in better grades. Furthermore, there were a few parents who stated that their children had been aiming for better grades since becoming involved in sports: “She is aiming for better grades.” (Gabriela, P). A small number of parents and teachers added that playing sports did not affect the student-athletes’ grades: “His [student-athlete] teachers told me that his grades would get worse eventually, but I have not seen his grades get worse yet.” (Fernando, P). Finally, several teachers found that there were some exceptions, and bad grades were not correlated to involvement in sports.

4.2. Academic Studying Routine

The vast majority of the parents (71%) stated that sports have not impacted their children’s academic routine: “The academic routine of studies and the amount he [student-athlete] studies remain the same.” (João and Maria, P). Some student-athletes
studied more than others, and sports had no impact whatsoever on their academic studying routine. On the other hand, a few parents (29%) stated that they have noticed that ever since the student-athletes started playing sports, they started to study more. No direct comments were correlating practicing sports and poor studying habits by teachers and parents.

4.3. Interest/Participation in Class

The majority of the teachers (83%) and some parents stated that student-athletes had a lack of interest in classes ever since they started playing sports: “He [student-athlete] does not care much [about academics].” (Isabela, P). Some student-athletes did not have an interest in academics because of the time spent out of class due to sports activities. Others detached interest because they did not pay attention in class or simply did not care about the classes’ content, only caring about sports. Some parents stated that their children playing sports has not affected the interest that they have had in class: “My son never really liked studying but he knows he needs to study. Yes, he [student-athlete] studies, but the sport has had no impact whatsoever. He likes to play, and we [parents] always ask for studying to be part of it.” (Adriana, P). Some comments included that their interests have always remained the same. Some other comments stated that the child has never liked studying; however, they understand the importance of studying. Therefore, being involved in sports actually could encourage the student-athlete to study.

4.4. Focus

A few teachers (33%) mentioned that some student-athletes suffered from a lack of focus. They had a hard time focusing during lecture time and while doing their assignments:
“He [student-athlete] does not do the activity in class. He just sits there. He only exists and is in person. But he does not do anything.” (Carolina, T).

“It would be important [to study and get good grades], but I do not see that concern on their side [from the student-athletes]. I see them very focused on just practicing the sport. They are not taking this academic part seriously.” (Manuela, T).

“If it is not in their [student-athletes] interest related to sport, they have no interest at all.” (Bruna, T).

According to these teachers, there was a correlation between more sports activities and less time spent on academics. However, on the other hand, nearly all parents (71%) stated that the more their children played sports, the more focused they were in every aspect of their lives. In addition to numerous characteristics that student-athletes gain, they also improved significantly in areas such as responsibility and teamwork efforts. These parents believed that having their children involved in sports helped them in the short-term, but also in the long-term aspects of life. On the contrary, only one parent stated that his child’s focus had not changed due to sports activities: “He [student-athlete] has always had the same focus. His focus is to get the minimum grade necessary to pass. He will not try more or less. That is a characteristic of his. From my point of view, his focus did not change anything. There was no less focus or more focus because of the sport itself.” (Fernando, P).

a. What is the difference between gender or the type of sport played on the impact on academics and attitude?

Only one teacher mentioned the difference between male student-athletes versus female student-athletes in their academic performance and attitude. According to this
teacher, female student-athletes paid more attention in class and cared more about their grades: “For girls who play sports, I notice that they are more concerned about grades than boys.” (Bruna, T). The male student-athletes did not pay attention. Male student-athletes played soccer and basketball, and the female student-athletes played volleyball. In addition, half of the teachers had some comments about the student-athletes who were involved in basketball versus soccer.

For basketball, it was noted that student-athletes were always looking at their cell phones during class and that their focus was completely on sports and not on classes. One teacher noted that some basketball players had a hard time concentrating when they were in classes together: “In my classes, there is a group of three boys who play basketball together. They are very distracted. It is a very difficult job to make them concentrate on the lecture.” (Bruna, T).

On the other hand, soccer student-athletes were better students overall in grades and class participation. Teachers mentioned that their soccer student-athletes concentrated in class, wanted to obtain good grades, and had a bigger sense of responsibility and discipline compared to basketball student-athletes: “He is from Porto Alegre, and he came to Santa Cruz just to play soccer. He was very interested [in classes]. He did all the activities.” (Carolina, T). A parent of a soccer student-athlete stated that the conversations that his child had with the soccer coach helped him to concentrate more and stay committed in classes: “Before he [student-athlete] played sports competitively, he was uncommitted to his studies. Then, with the discipline he learned from soccer training and conversations with the coach, this ended up influencing him in high school as well.” (João and Maria, P). This same parent stated that his child started playing daily four years ago, and it has been a noticeable positive
change in his life: “It has been about four years since he [student-athlete] started training soccer daily. Since then, his responsibility has increased. And the grades improved too.” (João and Maria, P). Although these particular attributes were not mentioned by every teacher and parent, the difference between gender and type of sport played was noticeable.

2. How has the attitude and personality of the teenager who is involved in sports changed since they started playing sports?

According to most parents (85%) and a few teachers (16%), playing sports impacted the student-athlete’s personality for the better and helped with positive life skills, despite the lowered academic performance. Most parents stated that their children gained significant attributes to their personality that helped the students in their daily lives. The skills that student-athletes gained after playing sports included responsibility, organization, commitment, focus, dedication, maturity, teamwork, confidence, motivation, competitiveness, self-esteem, calmness, concentration, life balance ability, preparedness, and quick learning ability. The three main life qualities that were mentioned most often by parents were confidence (mentioned 11 times), dedication (mentioned 10 times), and responsibility (mentioned 9 times). In addition, one parent specified that he noticed that classroom engagement was an additional attribute gained by her child: “Even asking the teacher any questions, she was embarrassed before. With sport, she can deal better with these issues [shyness].” (Gabriela, P).

Some teachers also mentioned that they noticed that some student-athletes improved in these aspects as well, despite their lowered academic performance. One teacher added that she noticed the behavior of student-athletes changed for the better once they started playing sports, especially regarding their sense of competitiveness:
“Sport helps them [student-athletes] to be very competitive. They [student-athletes] do not like losing question-and-answer trivia games about the lecture in the classroom. They [student-athletes] are more competitive than those who do not play sports. It is very much within them to win.” (Bruna, T). Teamwork and responsibility were other attributes mentioned by some of the teachers as well. Overall, parents and teachers agreed that there were improvements once the student-athletes started to play sports which could potentially benefit their future. On the other hand, some parents noted that there were no changes in confidence or calmness in their children since starting sports; this includes no difference in how their children reacted before tests and games.

3. Are there any secondary benefits or negative outcomes that result from involvement in sports as a teenager?

According to parents and teachers, there were both secondary benefits and negative outcomes that resulted from involvement in sports for teenagers. A secondary benefit mentioned by a teacher was that sports gave a sense of belonging to the student-athletes at EAO School: “There is this sense of belonging and a proximity between sports and the school [for student-athletes who play for the school]. They feel like part of the school and have a feeling of belonging.” (Paulo, T). These students had a feeling that they were an active part of their school. Secondly, one parent mentioned that sports assisted in helping keep her child off of her cell phone: “It is a way we can get her off her cell phone.” (Gabriela, P). By participating in sports, student-athletes had less time to get distracted by negative influences and were able to focus more on sports.

One negative outcome not mentioned previously in other questions was that sports caused student-athletes to be more tired, which made it more difficult for students to participate or pay attention in class: “Those who play sports are always tired. Few
come to class, and when they do, they are always tired. They lower their heads down to sleep and we [teachers] stay on ‘top of them’ to get up and stay awake.” (Carolina, T).

The other negative outcome mentioned was that once student-athletes started playing sports, their attitude would change for the worse. Some student-athletes spoke negatively about participating in class or maintaining good grades according to their teachers. In addition, teachers noted that this bad attitude was related to a high ego gained through sports or being a member of a sports team. According to one parent, her child even stated that he did not need to study because he played sports: “This morning he [student-athlete] and I had a discussion and dialogue. He [student-athlete] said that all the players had average grades in school. No player gets good grades. So, I told him to be different. He is smart, but he is not using his intelligence. I told him to be the first one. Change that vision and stereotype you have. He says players make a lot of money playing sports, but the grades have never been good. I tell him to be smart, be a good player, and make money doing it too.” (Isabela, P).

a. What is the effect on classroom time between students who play sports versus students who do not play sports?

Every teacher (100%) stated that student-athletes had less classroom time than students who do not play any sports. Teachers also specified that student-athletes could not keep up with the schoolwork and had a hard time concentrating in class due to absences:

“Sports use up the student’s time so much that they end up running out of time to study.” (Carolina, T).
“Sometimes they [student-athletes] arrive in the classroom, but they missed two weeks of class, so they miss a lot of material because the class needs to continue. For them, this classroom monitoring is hampered due to these class absences.” (Manuela, T).

“Some students’ [student-athletes] performance dropped a little because they missed classes.” (Eduarda, T).

Furthermore, one parent also stated that their children had a difficult time keeping up with the schoolwork due to the lack of classroom time, which was also reflected in poor grades and academic performance: “His [student-athlete] academic routine changed, yes. Before he had more free time. Now he does not have so much free time. He started studying and looking at notebooks only on Sundays. Just before the week starts again.” (Isabela, P). Intense workout routines and busy traveling schedules were the main reasons why student-athletes were absent from classes. Teachers noted that as the semester progressed, student-athletes had more difficulty catching up on assignments due to the accumulation of missed lectures. However, a few teachers stated that non-student-athletes were willing to assist student-athletes who missed a lot of classes:

“There is an accumulation of lost lectures to write in notebooks and work to do, but friends collaborate a lot. Sometimes the girls [non-student-athletes] even make a summary of the lecture and hand it to them (male student-athletes).” (Bruna, T). Sadly, most student-athletes did not care about class content, did not obtain missed notes or materials, and told the teachers that they did not have time to complete the missed class activities or assignments due to sports.
4.5. **Academic Concerns**

The data in this study showed three ways academics were impacted by sports: positively, negatively, or not at all. The codes revealed mostly that involvement in sports either provided positive or negative effects or in some cases, both for students. The main negative effects found were academic concerns: less classroom time compared to non-student-athletes (mentioned 18 times), poor grade performance in the classroom (mentioned 14 times), lack of interest in classes (mentioned 14 times), and difficulty keeping up with schoolwork (mentioned 12 times) (see Figure 2). Many of these effects were connected. A lack of classroom time ultimately could have led to decreased grades for many of the students mentioned in this study. Decreased grades could have resulted from missing assignments, missing class notes, less time studying, and falling behind on classwork, all of which could have been due to less time in the classroom. Once the students noticed that they were behind on classwork, then they may have had a decreased interest in future class assignments as well.

Student-athletes had to miss a lot of class time due to sports activities. Findings showed that classes were not a priority for student-athletes. At times, game schedules kept them away from classes; however, sometimes it was a matter of choice for student-athletes. In addition, all teachers mentioned that there was a lower grade performance from student-athletes and difficulty in keeping up with schoolwork due to less time in class since they started playing sports:

“We [teachers] have already had cases of some students who play soccer and basketball who went to competitions and were away for weeks.” (Paulo, T).
“Student-athletes have less classroom time than non-student-athletes. They lose work and content.” (Carolina, T).

“Because some students who play sports have to travel. And these trips cause them to miss a few days of school. This can compromise learning.” (Lenardo, T).

“They [student-athletes] have less time in the classroom and end up missing more classes. They end up wasting a lot of class time, so even the follow-up is bad.” (Manuela, T).

“Their grades get worse because they have to travel and so it is more difficult. They pay more attention to the sport, and not to classes.” (Bruna, T).

“Students who play sports have less time in the classroom, yes. They have to travel to competitions and train. It is affected by the lack of lecture that they do not follow in class.” (Eduarda, T).

School administrators in Brazil need to find a solution to keep both the students and the school aligned with each other despite busy athletic schedules. Santos and Sagas (2023) found that it is extremely hard for student-athletes to balance academics and athletics. In addition, when academic and athletic goals are not aligned with each other, there is a noticeable reduction in academics and quality of life. Authors added that student-athletes with a high athletic self-identity are associated with low academic engagement (Santos & Sagas, 2023).

Student-athletes’ lack of interest in class was noticeable in many ways by the teachers. For example, students did not do the activities in class, did not listen to their
teachers, did not ask for missed lecture content, did not spend much time studying, etc. The lack of interest showed in their class participation as well. Teachers stated that students who played sports were less participative in class than those who did not play any sports. Additionally, teachers saw student-athletes act in unethical ways, such as cheating on exams and class projects, as well as plagiarizing their assignments: “They ask to copy their classmates’ homework to show the exercise as if they did it.” (Carolina, T). This bad attitude from student-athletes influenced teachers to form a negative opinion of student-athletes’ sports involvement.

A study conducted by Yukhymenko-Lescroart (2023) revealed that the rate of academic dishonesty by student-athletes is higher than non-student-athletes. In addition, findings stated that first-generation student-athletes need to receive stronger support in their academic journeys compared to second and third-generation student-athletes. First-generation student-athletes also lack self-confidence in their abilities to be academically successful by themselves (Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2023).

A connection that can be made is the poor academic performance that student-athletes had in class and the easy access to information that cell phones, the internet, and social media can offer. According to interviews with teachers and parents, student-athletes spent a lot of time using their cell phones. One parent even stated that their child said that if there was no Internet in the world, it would not be worth living: “It has not changed [kids who play sports’ interest level in class]. It did not get any better. The interest is the same. According to them [student-athletes], if there is no internet, it is not worth living.” (Pedro, P). This became a distraction in their lives taking away the time that they could have been studying and interested in academics. A South American study conducted by Mejia et al. (2019) stated that 44% of students have an Internet
addiction and 23% have a video game addiction. In addition, 49% of students spend at least two hours or more playing video games each day.

Tiredness was another negative aspect of the study. According to teachers, some students did not even come to class due to being extremely tired, which could have been due to sports participation. For those student-athletes who showed up to class, it was noticeable that some were tired during class, and sometimes, they just put their head down during the lecture. It was noticed in the study that student-athletes not being able to get enough rest at night could have been a disadvantage for them. Research by Turner II et al. (2021) concluded that student-athletes who believe that they have sleep problems are more likely to perform academically worse than students who do not play any sports. In addition, for each day of the week that student-athletes have an inadequate amount of sleep at night, there is an 11% likelihood that their grade will lower (Turner II et al., 2021). The findings from the study indicated that parents need to educate their children about the importance of having a good night of rest each day.

Another negative influence of absence of sleep at night experienced by student-athletes was the lack of focus and attention. The lack of focus and attention could contribute to poor mental health. This could indicate that student-athletes mainly put their effort into sports and not much in academics. Usually, the attention was not on their academic work and career, rather they were only focused on becoming a professional athlete. This made parents and teachers frustrated:

“It is a shame because the two could be reconciled well, right? The person [student-athlete] could be more active, more agile, and benefit from studying as well. But it is not like that.” (Carolina, T).
“Unfortunately, he [student-athlete] focuses on training sports, and not on studying. He goes to class, does the basics, but nothing more.” (Isabela, P).

“We [parents] tell him: ‘If you study a little more, you will do better.’ We tell him [student-athlete] to bring this sporting mentality to his studies, but he says he does not need it. He says that if a student gets a 7 or 10, it does not make any difference. You will be the same, you will pass the same way. This is something we always fight with him about.” (Fernando, P).

Sood and Puri (2023) corroborated in their article that playing and practicing sports do not stop student-athletes from facing mental health difficulties. The authors added that many student-athletes have a challenge to maintain a high performance in between athletics and academics which results in poor mental health. In addition, the pressure that they receive from coaches, teachers, and parents to be able to balance practice, games, and academic performance does not help their mental health (Sood & Puri, 2023).

There were additional negative comments teachers made when talking about the poor academic performance presented by student-athletes. The student-athletes demonstrated a bad attitude and a high ego when they started playing sports: “They have a very high ego [student-athletes]. Because they are teenagers and feel proud to represent the school, they think the school will be ok with them having low grades and still being able to pass their subjects. They think they are important to school, so school will make grades easier for them.” (Bruna, T). Some students told the teachers that they did not need to pay attention in class because they had already learned the lecture from another source outside the school, such as private English lessons offered by their parents. Other students emphasized to their parents and teachers that if they performed
well in athletics, there was no need for them to study. Parents tried to tell their children the importance of studying; however, student-athletes chose not to listen. Ryska (2002) concluded that a high ego can make it difficult for someone to leverage and maximize their assessment abilities, especially in an athletic setting (Ryska, 2022).

An interesting finding demonstrated that parents and teachers experienced a high level of frustration for many different reasons. Teachers were frustrated that student-athletes did not emphasize on studying as much as they did on sports. Student-athletes were cheating on exams, had a lack of respect towards faculty and staff, and used their cell phones to get answers, play games, or simply text friends. Teachers stated that there were a few exceptions of student-athletes who were focused on their studying routine:

“I also had students who were focused and were able to play sports and develop well in the classroom. In my view, they are exceptions.” (Leonardo, T). However, it was rare and frustrated them due to the partial commitment. Parents also felt the same way about student-athletes’ lack of responsibility regarding academics. According to parents, their children’s interest in class was low, and they did not study much at home, which could have contributed to their poor academic performance. In response, parents were able to use sports as a way to make their children study more. Parents told their children that if their grades were not good enough, they would not be able to play sports.

“We [parents] used sports to keep him [student-athlete] with good grades. We tell him that if he does poorly in his studies, grades, and school, he will leave the sport. We use sport as a tool to get what he likes out of him if he does poorly. We just use sports so he can do well in class. For example, last year he lived away from home for a year. We told him that if his grades in school were bad, he would go back home.” (Fernando, P).
“For her to be able to train and for us to be able to make all this investment in basketball, she also needs to perform well at school.” (Gabriela, P).

Comparing American high school athletics to Brazilian high school athletics, it is apparent that in the U.S., student-athletes must earn good grades to play sports. In contrast, in Brazil, high schools do not require good academic performance, and student-athletes can still participate in athletics activities despite their low grades. That is a major disadvantage in Brazil’s high school system because most Brazilian student-athletes will not pursue a professional sports career. This is a problem because Musztkat (2017) stated that schools in Brazil have a strong sociocultural inequality among themselves, and it is estimated that 15-20% of Brazilian children and teenagers have difficulties in learning.

Therefore, academic performance is important because they need it for their higher education or future careers. Student-athletes need to know how important academics are for them in the long-term, so parents, teachers, school administrators, and coaches should emphasize this importance to them as they get older, especially between the ages of 12-17 years old. It makes sense that these Brazilian student-athletes do not perform well in the classroom as this is not required by authorities. A change should be made.
4.6. Life Skills

Despite the many negative outcomes, there were many positive effects as well, which were related to their life skills, academics, and general life benefits. First, as mentioned in the Data Coding above, the life skills gained from the student-athletes, according to teachers and parents were responsibility, organization, commitment, focus, dedication/discipline, maturity, teamwork, confidence, motivation, competitiveness, pride, and self-esteem, calmness, concentration, life balance ability, preparedness, and quick learning ability (see Figure 3).

One of the positive aspects of being a student-athlete was becoming more responsible as a result of the sense of belonging they have towards their team. In other words, their sense of loyalty was very strong. According to the authors Hernández and Nelson (2021), the sense of belonging refers to “a feeling of connectedness” amongst others. Scholars Santos and Sagas (2023) concluded that a sense of belonging for student-athletes is associated with the time commitment that they put toward their team. The authors added that this sense of belongingness can be explained as the
“psychological dimension for student integration” (Santos & Sagas, 2023). Nearly all parents who were interviewed noted that their children became more responsible in their everyday life activities after they started playing sports and became part of a team. The responsibility was sometimes reflected in the student-athletes’ studying routine.

“She [student-athlete] has more responsibility.” (Gabriela, P).

“Responsibility increased [when kids who are student-athletes started playing sports].” (Pedro, P).

“It helped him [student-athlete] to have more discipline, more responsibility. More responsibility with studies.” (Julia, P).


“Responsibility with the material and organization of class times improved. Before we [parents] had to organize it for him [student-athlete]. Then when he started playing sports, he took on this responsibility alone.” (João and Maria, P).

According to scholars in the sports management industry, the increase in responsibility has to do with peer coaching. Çoştu and Bilgiç (2023) defined peer coaching as a unified teaching and learning experience that gives shared benefits to all individuals involved. It allows participants to share their basic knowledge using an easy-to-understand language. In other words, peer coaching allows engagement among classmates and teammates by sharing ideas and collaborating on each other’s development. This is a great way to learn from peers and achieve career goals (Çoştu &
Bilgiç, 2023). Merian and Snyder (2015) found that students and coaches notice many positive results from the peer coaching experience. These outcomes include self-confidence, relationships with peers and teachers, and communication skills. Besides the positive team dynamics that student-athletes gain from each other, it was found that peer coaching increases the student-athlete’s level of confidence. In sum, peer coaching contributes to the experience of the student-athlete in a very positive way, beyond their athletic experiences, such as their confidence (Merian & Snyder, 2015).

Merian and Snyder (2015) added that peer coaching assists the student-athlete’s confidence in their coaching skills, ability to interact with others, and their overall sports knowledge. Another positive aspect impacted by peer coaching that student-athletes gained after they started playing sports is confidence. For example, one parent mentioned that his child had a lot of confidence, especially while playing sports. The parent elaborated that he noticed that playing sports could have contributed to his child being calmer the day before tests: “He [student-athlete] does not have that fear. We noticed that his colleagues were very nervous before the test. And he was very calm. He did not mind taking another test.” (Fernando, P). On the other hand, he felt his child’s classmates, who did not play sports, were always very nervous to take the tests in comparison. By using peer coaching, not only was student-athletes’ confidence evident but their sense of belonging was noticeable among each other. In other words, these student-athletes felt connected to their teammates and coaches.

The current research study also showed that a sense of dedication and discipline is another fact that was improved in the lives of the student-athletes from EAO School. Some parents stated that sports taught discipline to the student-athletes. Before the student-athletes started playing sports, they did not have any discipline. However, after
many hours of training and games, there was a noticeable difference in this aspect of the athletes’ lives, which sports could have contributed to:

“She [student-athlete] is dedicating herself 80%-90% more than she was before.” (Gabriela, P).

“It helped him [student-athlete] to have more discipline, more responsibility.” (Julia, P).

Schnoebelen-Kramer (2009) showed an example of a student-athlete who had to work extremely hard to fight diabetes. In her article, it was mentioned that the student-athlete had to change his lifestyle to fight the disease. His daily physical exercises and receiving support from family members, coaches, and teammates helped him cope. He had to test his blood sugar limits daily and make sure that his body was ok. The author mentioned that he never quit, and he took a lot of responsibility for himself by always setting his goals high. The dedication and discipline that he could have learned through sports made a huge impact on his life (Schnoebelen-Kramer, 2009).

Having conversations with coaches was a positive aspect of playing sports to enhance the lives of the student-athletes. Having a strong relationship with coaches, it is possible that it contributed to students doing well in school. Park et al. (2017) stated that mentoring is an important factor for career advancement, psychological support, and overall success for both males and females. This study suggests that student-athletes take full advantage of the relationship that they have with their coaches, especially as they transition from high school to college (Park et al., 2017).

Parents noted that their children’s mindset and mental health improved while playing sports. Interviews showed that once student-athletes started playing sports, they
became more mature, which could have influenced their ability to be organized, focused, and calm:

“He [student-athlete] comes home and goes straight to sleep. He says: ‘Tomorrow I have a test, so I am going to sleep, so I will be well rested for the test.’” (Isabela, P).

“He [student-athlete] is calmer since he started playing sports.” (Isabela, P).

“The youngest [child of two who play sports] has become calmer since he started playing sports.” (Pedro, P).

These characteristics were not necessarily only related to academics but were implemented in their everyday life. A research study directed by Harris and Maher (2023) showed the importance of mental health education for student-athletes. Student-athletes need to receive support from their parents, teachers, coaches, teammates, and trainers to constantly invest and address their needs to build a certain quality of life for them. Conversely, student-athletes are less likely to seek mental health support on their own; therefore, providing mental health tools to student-athletes is a crucial factor in this matter (Harris & Maher, 2023). Mental health initiatives could help instigate student-athletes to exercise personality qualities such as calmness, focus, and organization.

The ability to work as a team and a high level of commitment could be a sign of loyalty, faithfulness, and dedication that can be learned through the practice of sports. Being around teammates and working together to accomplish a goal were some of the indicators that assisted student-athletes in becoming great committed team members. A teacher mentioned that the commitment developed in the sport setting by student-athletes was also implemented in the classroom and positively impacted their grades:
“Students who take part in school games and are part of the school team do well in sports and generally have a great commitment in the classroom.” (Paulo, T). López-Gajardo et al. (2023) showed that a high awareness of athletic teamwork effort and execution can be an indicator of resilience and better performance under pressure. The results show the importance as well as the correlation between teamwork, execution, and team resilience (López-Gajardo et al., 2023). Student-athletes at EAO School showed great dedication to teamwork and commitment efforts by helping each other and holding each other accountable. It helped student-athletes with responsibility, focus, and teamwork: “He [student-athlete] has a sense of team now. Always asking for help or helping others. He is always willing to help” (Adriana, P). It is possible that sports influenced student-athletes to develop such characteristics in their lives. A study conducted by Fahim Devin et al. (2015) concluded that in a team sports setting, working with each other as a group and relying on teammates are great qualities to have.

Fahim Devin et al. (2015) stated that competitiveness is a motivational act used by people in sports and education. Parents and teachers stated that these characteristics were fully impacted by sports because a change was also noticed in the classroom once student-athletes started playing for the first time. A teacher even stated that the student-athletes did not like losing the question-and-answer trivia games about lectures given in class: “They [student-athletes] do not like losing question-and-answer trivia games about the lecture in the classroom.” (Bruna, T). Student-athletes were more competitive than those who did not play any sports. In regards to high competitiveness, a particular topic that student-athletes need to be aware of is that elevated competition may affect student-athletes negatively. Petrou (2023) mentioned in a research study that the mental health of student-athletes could face a developmental difficulty when they are very
competitive in athletics. Pediatrics, parents, teachers, and coaches must be involved in
the mental development of student-athletes, especially at a young age (Petrou, 2023).

Interestingly, student-athletes at EAO School only played team sports. Fahim Devin et al. (2015) confirmed that student-athletes who play in team sports learn to be confident and adaptable people. When student-athletes play as a team, they learn that an individual player is not the most important aspect of a team. The final score of a game is the most important result because it impacts the entire team. In addition, team sports can give the opportunity to student-athletes to be motivated and think of others, instead of being self-centered (Fahim Devin et al., 2015). The competitive motivation of winning as a group and being less selfish is a must in team sports that can affect student-athletes’ entire lives.

Some parents noticed that their children changed their personalities by playing sports and developing higher self-esteem. For instance, one particular parent mentioned that her child was always shy in uncomfortable situations. Not only was she shy in the classroom or while presenting projects to classmates, but also in her everyday life:

“Sport helped her lose her shyness. She was very shy before. This issue of presenting projects and exposing herself, she is managing to loosen up more now.” (Gabriela, P). At first, this student-athlete [daughter] did not let her parents watch her play at basketball games because she would be very nervous if her parents were watching her. However, as time went by and she played sports for a longer period, she gained confidence and had greater self-esteem: “At first when she started playing, even in training, she did not want us to watch her because she was embarrassed. So as time went by, she lost that shame.” (Gabriela, P). Nikander et al. (2022) concluded in a research project that self-esteem means one’s positive attitude towards his or herself,
involving self-evaluation and self-worth. High self-esteem can be positively associated with gaining skills by playing sports and having more opportunities to stand up for one’s self.

This can also be correlated to a successful career as one’s high self-esteem can play a crucial role in developing one’s career at a young age. Nikander et al. (2022) added that key individuals in the lives of student-athletes need to have a full understanding of integrating sports and education to support student-athletes (Nikander et al., 2022). At EAO School and other Brazilian schools, these key individuals consist of parents, teachers, and coaches. They play a big part in assisting student-athletes’ life paths, especially between the ages of 12-17 years old. They support student-athletes by having conversations with them about career and life choices. This mentoring can be done both formally and informally.

There were some additional life skills mentioned in this research study by teachers and parents (as shown in the top box of Figure 1). However, each life skill was only mentioned once by a parent or a teacher. Therefore, despite not being the most important and noticeable traits mentioned by the interviewees, they are still important to take into consideration. These life skills were concentration, ability to juggle multiple responsibilities (school-sports balance) preparedness, quick learning ability, and overall life improvement. Concentration, preparedness, and quick learning abilities are qualities that student-athletes can implement in sports, in the classroom, and in life in general. Sports can assist student-athletes in developing such skills; however, they need to work on these skills on their own as they get older.

The ability to juggle multiple responsibilities is a trait that student-athletes will improve as their lives get busier, but practicing with school-sports balance is a good
“And he [student-athlete] had to balance sport with studies, plus his day-to-day activities. Now he lives alone. So, he had to learn how to live on his own.” (Julia, P).

These attributes could all contribute to an overall improvement in life, which, if student-athletes retain them, show the power of sports in education. Gayles (2009) stated that student-athletes are a unique student population because they spend over twenty hours per week in practice or playing, are normally tired, and miss several classes while in season. These same students are also expected to perform well in class and earn good grades. Therefore, students need to spend a large amount of psychological and physical energy to work with multiple people (e.g., faculty, classmates, group organizations, etc.). These interactions can be exhausting but are great methods to learn and have a positive personal development in school (Gayles, 2009). Being highly involved in athletics and school activities are great ways for student-athletes to have a community within their school, learn from others, challenge themselves, and ultimately, become better people. The challenging situations in which sports put the student-athletes can be difficult, yet it could be a great way to take the student out of their comfort zone and improve in life.

**Figure 3**

Life Skills
4.7. Academic Benefits

Academically speaking, most parents stated that their children’s grades were impacted positively by sports (see Figure 4). However, parents did not go into depth, simply stating that their grades were better or that they were aiming for better grades; in comparison, teachers’ negative statements about student-athletes’ grades were much more specific. Parents were more talkative about their children’s life skills rather than academic performance. A study conducted by Myrskylä and Margolis (2014) stated that parental well-being and happiness involve being excited about their children’s success and joy. This might mean parents want to believe that their children’s school grades are better due to sports.

Other positive statements about academics that parents mentioned about their children were their better classroom engagement and a more consistent studying routine, both at home and in class. A parent stated that the more her child participated in sports, the better academically she was. In other words, this parent believed that sports and academics worked hand-in-hand. She went on and stated that sports preparation was similar to exam preparation. Her child needed to spend many months practicing to be ready for an important game, similar to the many months studying for an important exam: “In sports, he [student-athlete] trains months, weeks and days to get to the day of the game and he is ready to perform well in the game. In the test, the same thing happens. He studies to arrive the next day and take the test, and that he will do the right thing.” (Julia, P). Another parent stated that her child only focuses on sports while playing and forgets about any outside distractions that may be in the way. Similarly, this parent stated that, in academics, her child only focuses on class content while in the classroom: “She [student-athlete] enters the court [basketball court] and forgets everyone there. This is being reflected in the classroom too.” (Gabriela, P).
Chen and Liu (2023) researched the well-being of student-athletes in both academic and athletic settings. While the students did find it hard to manage both academics and sports, the study found that student’s mental and physical well-being improved when they participated in athletics activities regularly (Chen & Liu, 2023). Improved well-being could contribute to good grades, which may support the parents’ statements regarding their children’s better classroom engagement and consistent studying routine when simultaneously playing sports and going to school.

The discipline student-athletes were able to gain from sports, they could also apply the same mindset in studying if they chose to do so. Findings indicated that some parents and teachers believed that there were some general academic benefits for student-athletes who chose to put some effort into it. According to their feedback, if the student-athlete’s study schedules and sports routines were organized, they could be successful in both settings. A parent stated that the more her child studied, the more purposeful and intentional he felt in a sports setting: “He [student-athlete] himself notes that the more he studies, the more he can make better decisions on the court. It was in a very positive way.” (Julia, P). Sports and studying could be correlated to each other. A study conducted by Hamid et al. (2023) showed that there is a positive correlation between students from middle school, high school, and universities who play sports and their school grades. The study found that consistent physical activities help students’ productivity, concentration, and overall success in the classroom (Hamid et al., 2023).

Finally, parents mentioned that they believed that their children were more committed to learning since they started playing sports. One parent mentioned that her child was able to use the skills gained in sports and applied them in academics as well. In addition, this same parent stated that her child was more capable of distinguishing if
the exam was hard or not ever since she started playing sports. If it is a hard exam, she
puts more effort into it because she wants to learn, study, and perform well: “If he
[student-athlete] knows he has an exam, and even more so if it is a slightly more
difficult test, he studies a lot.” (Julia, P). A study conducted by Kristiansen (2017) has
shown that family and coach support is extremely important when a student-athlete has
success in the classroom and is committed to learning. The author mentioned that it is
hard to perform well in both academics and athletics. However, with the support from
family, student-athletes can succeed in both areas. The study showed that many parents
contact schools directly regarding tests and assignment schedules, which holds the
student-athletes accountable and allows them to fully focus on studying.

Figure 4
Academic Benefits
Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1. Limitations

One initial limitation of the study was that sports may not be the only factor that affects teenagers between 12 and 17 years old academically. There are many other factors, other than athletics, such as family dynamics, personal issues, health-related needs, other extracurricular activities, etc. that may affect student-athletes’ academic performance positively or negatively. No external factors (i.e., home-life related) were recorded in this study, and therefore, comparisons cannot be made.

In this research study, the data (responses) came fully from the perspective of parents and teachers who have daily interactions with the student-athletes. In other words, this is a perspective that was derived apart from the student-athletes’ perspectives. Therefore, the teacher and/or parent may have had a different viewpoint of how the teenager feels, interacts, and performs when compared to the student’s reality. In addition, the researcher understands that parents and/or teachers may have given more favorable answers due to the relationship that they have with their children or students. Therefore, some answers may have not been fully reliable and trustworthy.

The third limitation was that this research relied on the parents and teachers remembering academic performance before and after the student-athletes started playing sports. Parents and/or teachers may have forgotten, mistaken, or were unaware of how the student-athletes were before when they began playing sports. It was not specifically asked of the parents or teachers if they could remember before teenagers started sports-
related activities. The researcher understands that this was a highly subjective part of the investigation.

Another limitation was the fact that teachers could not have legally and ethically provided student-athletes’ grades. For teachers to provide a grade, they needed to ask for permission from the school as well as the parents. Therefore, for this research study, teachers only gave a general idea of student-athletes’ grades and were not able to provide specific grades. A similar idea applied to the parents. Parents gave a generalized overview of their children’s grades and academic success.

The fifth limitation was that the interviews of the research project were conducted in Portuguese, then transcribed, and translated into English. Ultimately there was an underlying cultural context in different languages (i.e., idioms and metaphors) that were difficult to translate. However, the researcher aimed to translate as close to the original meaning as possible, not leaving the concepts of each phrase out.

Next, a limitation of this research project was the small population that participated in the interviews. There was a total of thirteen interviews, including seven parents and six teachers. This provided a limited perspective of the answers to the research questions. The researcher relied on the availability of the parents and teachers through the administration personnel from the EAO School. Furthermore, the researcher was in a different country and time zone than the participants and was limited to using Zoom. This technology platform was not available to all potential participants, which excluded some interviews. In addition, there were only fifty student-athletes who were actively playing for EAO School at the time of the study, which limited the potential participant pool.
The final limitation noted in the research was that the target group was able-bodied youth only. In other words, the complications of physical, emotional, and mental disability of any kind in sports were beyond the scope of this project. Even though students with special needs and/or disabilities can participate in recreational sports and stay healthy while also being full-time students and learning different self-determination skills, it was impossible to focus on this target group at EAO School. Administrative staff at EAO School notified the researcher that there were not any students with special needs or disabilities who currently play sports at school that the researcher could study.

A previous research project by Papp et al. (2021) affirmed that parents, teachers, and coaches need to constantly assist kids and teenagers with special needs and/or disabilities. This is a necessary step for successful sports participation development for these students. However, some sports-related barriers may be faced by parents, teachers, or coaches. For instance, adults who assist young student-athletes may not know about all the athletic opportunities available in their communities for these kids and adolescents. Sport-related goals should be implemented in these kids’ and teenagers’ lives when guiding them to a successful academic and athletic career. In addition, teachers at school should facilitate communication between coaches and parents for adolescents with special needs and/or disabilities to have the best results from being student-athletes. Finally, parents, coaches, and teachers are important stakeholders in any student’s success at this stage of their lives (Papp et al., 2021).

5.2. Discussion

Despite sports involvement, some parents noted that there was no change in their children’s lives. To expand, parents mentioned that aspects such as academics and personality traits were not influenced by sports once they started playing. According to
parents, academic areas in which they did not see a change included studying routine, grades, and interest in classes.

“The study routine and organization have not changed. It was always the same.” (Pedro, P).

“They [grades] were not impacted at all. Everything remains the same.” (Adriana, P).

“The interest [in classes] remains the same.” (João and Maria, P).

Furthermore, personality areas that were not impacted by sports were nervousness, calmness, confidence, and focus, according to a few parents and teachers. A possible reason why no change was seen by parents was because the study was based on their outside perspective due to not being able to study the actual target audience (student-athletes). Consequently, the results were not gathered from the actual individuals who are playing sports and studying at EAO School.

A few teachers added that they did not see any difference between student-athletes and non-student-athletes regarding attention in class. According to one teacher, students were generally very distracted with cell phone use. This teacher warned students that if they did not put their cell phones away, she would have collected the devices during class: “There is no difference [regarding attention in class] between those who play sports and those who do not play sports. I must tell them that if they do not pay attention, I will have to take their cell phones away.” (Bruna, T). Students were not interested in learning or writing down the lecture due to cell phone distractions. Jalil and Sabir (2019) found that the usage of cell phones by students in the classroom caused distractions that impacted learning negatively. However, most students believe
that it is their right to use cell phones in class; 83% of students believe that cell phones should not be banned from class, and 28.5% of students state that the reason why they use cell phones in class is due to being bored (Jalil & Sabir, 2019).

The analysis revealed that many negative academic aspects could have resulted from involvement in sports. However, this did not necessarily mean that sports involvement is detrimental to teenagers. As the results also showed, many positives can result from teenagers’ involvement in sports, such as responsibility, commitment, focus, dedication, etc. While the study could have made make generalizations, ultimately each teenager was an individual case with his or her capabilities and limitations. On the other hand, when students were participating in sports, this did not mean that they were more or less likely to perform well academically when compared to their non-student-athlete peers. In addition, the goal of the study was to show readers the positive and negative academic outcomes that come from teenagers practicing sports. Ultimately, the study could not predict the future outcomes (poor career, lack of higher education, etc.) of any teenager who studied at EAO School.

Interestingly, some teachers noted that there were differences between the student-athletes who played for the EAO School and student-athletes who played for a club team (not affiliated with the school). According to these teachers, student-athletes who played for the school were more diligent when it came to class content and ended up recovering lost content and tasks that were left behind due to sports activities:

“Students who take part in school games and are part of the school team do well in sports and generally have a great commitment in the classroom.” (Paulo, T).
“They [school student-athletes] play sports at school, but in academic life, they are projecting other things [academically]. So, their performance in the classroom is better because they are just playing for fun, and their focus is not on sports. So those who play for the school perform better in the classroom and their grades.” (Manuela, T).

These school student-athletes were more motivated, committed to class, and wanted to earn good grades, and some did not have the intention to become professional athletes in the future.

Some teachers highlighted that students who played for club sports teams (not affiliated with the school) ended up not caring about the class lecture materials when they came back from a sports trip, and therefore, never had the class notes that were missed. These club team student-athletes did not care about their grades, and it was hard for them to conciliate sports and academics. Teachers also stated that there was a bigger sense of belonging to the school amongst the student-athletes who played for the school compared to the students who did not play for the school. In other words, school athletes genuinely felt part of the EAO School because they were contributing towards the school in some way:

“And those who play outside of school do not have the same feeling [feeling of belonging]. For them, sport is not linked to school.” (Paulo, T).

“And those (which is the vast majority) who are just into sports, they cannot take sports and studies together. They [club sports teams’ student-athletes] are not worried about studying.” (Manuela, T).
These findings suggest that playing for the school made student-athletes feel more connected to the organization and their teammates compared to the student-athletes who strictly played for club teams, not affiliated with the school.

Furthermore, parents and teachers tended to have different perceptions of student-athletes. All teachers stated that there were more negatives than positives that resulted from playing sports. Half of the teachers stated that there were some benefits that sports can provide to academics too. These teachers mentioned the importance of being organized due to the busy schedules and the ability to pay attention in class. However, students have shown a lack of their ability to do so. On the other hand, the majority of the parents stated that some academic benefits come from their children playing sports. Yet parents’ main focus was not the academics, instead, parents mainly emphasized the positive traits that sports can provide to teenagers. Parents stated that their children are more likely to be attentive, retain information, handle responsibilities, and be efficient: “Maybe they [student-athletes] became more focused and organized so as not to leave anything behind.” (Pedro, P). These life skills were not only applicable in their academics but also in their everyday lives. Furthermore, a few teachers and parents had a similar opinion about student-athletes’ interest in subjects related to sports. According to them, student-athletes had more interest in such subjects because they matched their interests. Finally, both parents and teachers experienced the same frustration regarding the bad attitude that student-athletes had when it came to academics. The only difference was that teachers showed frustration in a class setting, and parents at home.

Parents’ involvement was a big influence in the lives of the student-athletes. Some parents assisted their children to hopefully help provide a successful high school
career, both athletically and academically. First, one parent emphasized motivating her child. This parent was always on “top of her” by asking for greater effort in academics and athletics: “And this is what we talk to her about preparing for games and championships. How she is training and how she is doing.” (Gabriela, P).

Secondly, a few parents used threats as a tool to make sure their children performed well at school. For instance, parents stated that for their children to attend practices, they needed to earn good grades. In other words, these parents used sports to make sure their children did well at school. The moment that the student-athletes did poorly in academics, they were told to leave their sports.

Thirdly, some parents put a lot of pressure on their children to make sure they did a good job at school. Most parents constantly told their children the importance of earning good grades and recommended they put some extra effort in sports as well: “We [parents] always tell him: ‘To be an athlete, you need to get a degree and study.’ It is not just playing basketball. In the future, he wants to go to college and study. He is focusing a lot on that too. Now it will be his last year. So, we have to wait and see what his future will be.” (Julia, P). According to the parents, if their children put as much effort into academics as they put into sports, then the student-athletes would earn much better grades: “We [parents] tell him: ‘If you study a little more, you will do better.’ We tell him to bring this sporting mentality to his studies.” (Fernando, P).

Finally, one parent stated that her daughter felt even more pressure to receive better grades than most student-athletes because the parent was a teacher at EAO School: “Even because I am a teacher too, she [student-athlete] ends up feeling pressured.” (Gabriela, P). One teacher mentioned the importance of the family’s role in the success of the student-athletes: “It is hard for a student to be academically
successful unless the family helps and collaborates [to the student-athlete], but that is only 20% of cases [to motivate the student to study at home].” (Eduarda, T). However, most families were not fully involved in their children’s academic life, according to this teacher.

In conclusion, two teachers mentioned that they were uncertain if the grades and confidence of student-athletes were changed strictly due to sports activities. Others stated that there were variations between student-athletes who did well in school and student-athletes who did poorly, noting it was a case-by-case scenario: “Some [student-athletes] end up getting along well and others do not [academic success].” (Carolina, T). According to these teachers, there was a noticeable difference between student-athletes who were interested in class and those who were not at all. A follow-up interview with these participants for a future study is recommended for more reliable information.

5.2.1. Potential Impacts of Sports Participation

There are several potential positive and negative impacts of participating in sports. Positive impacts include enhancing great academic performance, promoting a healthy lifestyle, and teaching valuable life lessons and values to student-athletes. These can both have short- and long-term benefits for student-athletes. On the other hand, there are some negative impacts associated with sports participation, such as poor academic performance, injuries, and mental concerns. These are some disadvantages that student-athletes may face when playing sports. Parents and teachers can play a significant role in contributing to student-athletes’ lives and potentially creating a positive experience for them in sports during high school. The following sections discuss the positive impacts followed by the negative ones.
5.2.1.1. Great Academic Performance

Parents believe that student-athletes’ sports participation contributes to them gaining better skills, which could be applied in academics, such as earning good grades. Muñoz-Bullón et al. (2017) stated that playing sports could not only give health benefits but it could also lead student-athletes to have a higher sense of achievement and goals performance, which include higher academic standards and better grades in some cases. In other words, sports activities could improve academic outcomes. Consequently, schools could encourage students to participate in sports because it has many benefits including high academic achievement. With high academic performance, student-athletes are in a better position to have positive professional careers and future success (Muñoz-Bullón et al., 2017). In sum, sports could play a pivotal role in the early success of a student-athlete.

Another study by Burns (2020) showed that sports participation and healthy habits are associated with better academic performance. Positive health habits can improve cognitive functioning, better behavior during class, and high grades. On the other hand, other healthy habits that students could acquire from sports participation outside the classroom include not smoking or drinking alcohol, getting quality sleep at night, and having a regular diet, such as eating vegetables and fruits. These habits assist student-athletes with expanding mental functioning as well as contributing to their decision-making skills and long-term memory (Burns, 2020). Overall, these attributes can be associated with student-athletes earning good grades at school which can impact their lives in the long-term.

There are additional benefits when student-athletes play sports. One of them is their ability to have problem-solving skills, which is linked to their academic success.
Basak et al. (2014) stated that having problems and being able to solve them is a complex issue because it requires cognitive and affective behaviors to overcome such difficulties. Physical activities can assist students in having positive developmental attributes, which include better self-esteem, self-confidence, social development, goal-oriented, problem-solving skills, and better academic performance. These attributes are reflected in many other points of their lives. In particular, this may contribute positively to academic achievement at a young age (Basak et al., 2014).

5.2.1.2. Healthy Lifestyle

Sports provide great opportunities for people to maintain good health and to decrease the obesity rate and overall diseases. This is an important knowledge that parents must have to motivate their children to take part in sports activities. A study by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2019) found that about 5 million American children are obese, and it suggested that this number will most likely increase. Childhood obesity is one of the biggest issues to the world’s health, economy, and future. Children who are obese have higher chances of diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Having a high number of children with such diseases has an important impact on the increase of healthcare costs worldwide. Consequently, children who are obese are more likely to remain obese as adults, and the probability of having children who are also obese in future generations is high (Retrieved from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2019).

The estimated annual medical cost of obesity in the United States is $190.2 billion, or approximately 21% of total annual medical spending. The high costs of obesity are influencing societies to spend less money on job growth in different cities in the United States (Retrieved from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). In the
10 cities with the highest obesity rates in the United States, the total costs associated with obesity is about $50 million per 100,000 residents. If these 10 cities cut their obesity rates down to the national average, the combined savings to these communities would be $500 million in healthcare costs each year (Retrieved from Healthy Communities Healthy Future). Additionally, regular exercise reduces the risk of respiratory diseases, which has been a huge factor in COVID-19 deaths. It has also been recommended that people exercise regularly because it reduces the severity of acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), which affects between 3% and 17% of all those affected by COVID-19 (UVA Health Newsroom, 2020).

A good way to have more healthy children and teenagers around the world is by providing physical activity programs. Passmore and Jones (2019) stated that regular physical activity has many health benefits for the youth, which include their mindset, cardio-metabolic health, bone strength, body fat, and appropriate body weight. Therefore, it is recommended that every child and teenager should practice intense physical activity for at least 60 minutes per day. Parents and school teachers are essential healthy lifestyle educators for children. In other words, parents are the starting point for teaching their children about having healthy daily habits until the kids start attending school. Once they start school, the responsibility of teaching a healthy lifestyle is divided between parents and the school, which both have crucial roles in their ways. Healthy programs that engage kids, parents, and the school system are recommended, and they are significant components in the process of the learning experience and better mental health (Passmore & Jones, 2019).
5.2.1.3. Life Lessons

Sports participation not only fuels the body but also fuels the mind. The practice of sports influences and forces people to learn more sports techniques and lessons. There are a lot of events and organizations that promote the learning experience that sports provide to individuals. Participating in different lectures, seminars, and conventions is a great way for coaches and parents to educate themselves and help the young generation reach the next level in their academic and athletic paths. An article written by Yoo Seang-Leol (2021) states that coaches and teachers can apply emotional and social skills when developing their students in the classroom or a sports setting. All stakeholders must have an encouraging and committed attitude with great social, emotional, behavioral, and character skills for successful results (Yoo Seang-Leol, 2021). Academic success and well-structured guidance by parents, teachers, and coaches can play an important role in assisting student-athletes with these traits.

Promoting public educational events to kids/parents to let them know the importance of staying healthy and investing in education is another great way to help the young generation in their personal lives. Smith et al. (2019) wrote an interesting article that states that in the upcoming years, the aim is for public health to be more involved with youth sports which could result in having more scholarships for teenagers. This idea enhances health, wellness, and personal development (Smith et al., 2019). Middle and high schools all over the world should promote the idea to teenagers of participating in sports at a young age. Practicing sports at an early age and developing great athletic skills can help student-athletes earn scholarships in college once they graduate from high school.
Organizing public educational events, and providing relevant information to kids and their parents, helps the nation to enhance its future workforce. Consequently, it builds a network of qualified staff to lead health and sports organizations to better develop and support the field of sports as well as the kids, teenagers, and young adults involved. According to an article written by Dorsch et al. (2021), parents have a big impact on their children’s performances and their psychological outcomes in their respective sports. In sum, sports parenting is an expected and common topic in youth sports (Dorsch et al., 2021). Middle and high schools could work closely with parents to guide them on how to successfully do this with their children.

It is not only the parents' responsibility to guide student-athletes, but the school should also be constantly and actively engaged with their students. School involvement and the activities offered to students are crucial for kids’ and adolescents’ life skills development in the short-term as well as the long-term. A research project by Lee et al. (2017) studied the importance of having youth sport-based afterschool programs that can assist in their student’s overall life skills development. In this study, it was concluded that adolescents who participate in afterschool programs improve their skills in many ways, such as connecting and having the ability to play amongst their peers. From an athletic standpoint, it enhances the youth’s ability to play sports, stay healthy, and develop their sports skills (Lee et al., 2017).

5.2.1.4. Life Values

Bringing more life values to individuals is another way that sports can impact people positively, which includes improving their behaviors and attitudes. When teenagers practice sports, a lot of benefits are added to not only their lives but also all stakeholders involved. First of all, it helps teenagers in their personal growth. A young
student-athlete may learn how to overcome obstacles when participating in competitive sports as a team. For example, if student-athletes lose a basketball game over a weekend tournament, then they need to know that there could be more games coming up that same weekend, and it is necessary to “turn the page” and look into the next game. That is exactly how life is. People need to be able to overcome daily obstacles.

There are many life values associated with the practice of sports. A recent study emphasized that youth sports help youth learn determination, selflessness, and the value of hard work. Sports aid in the improvement of both social development and motor skills. Sports also help kids and teenagers with decision-making skills, critical thinking, and self-discipline (Glick et al., 2022). Also, Stewart Vella (2019) wrote an article that talked about the relationship between mental health and organized youth sports. The author stated that there are already many sports health programs implemented in the world that give psychological support to young adults, teenagers, and kids. These programs aim to help shape the mindset of the future generations to come and can be done face-to-face or online (Vella, 2019).

Looking at the years ahead, parents, teachers, and coaches should constantly assist children and teenagers in succeeding in the long-term, rather than just in the short-term. Forneris et al. (2012) wrote an article that highlights values that are gained through the practice of sports. Kids’ and teenagers’ sports are activities that should increase life skills and personal values, especially when youth experience a good involvement in organized collective sports. It enhances their growth and capability to succeed in the future (Forneris et al., 2012). Administrators, coaches, teachers, and parents must take into consideration sports programs that value psychological development and positive experiences for kids and teenagers. Interestingly, sports administrators, coaches, and parents who participated in sports when growing up report
that sports helped them grow, mature, and advance in their lives. Therefore, they are
good examples of how sports can be impactful to newer generations. In other words,
sports can teach a set of values and skills that, at times, cannot be taught in the
classroom (Forneris et al., 2012). These experienced individuals are great examples of
successful stories and can be used as an incentive for the younger generation.

5.2.1.5. Poor Academic Performance

Academics and athletics play two important, yet very different roles in the lives
of student-athletes. When student-athletes have a strong athletics involvement
oftentimes they do not put much emphasis on their studying. Athletics is a priority in
student-athletes’ routines, and they tend to forget the importance of academic success
both in the short- and long-term. Yukhymenko-Lescroart (2022) showed that a high
athletics identity is associated with low academic performance. The author showed that
student-athletes do not have motivation to study, which affects their academic
performance and achievement. Student-athletes also have difficulties succeeding and
balancing the responsibilities that athletics and academics constantly request from them
simultaneously (Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2022). Firstly, since student-athletes in high
school are under the age of 18 years, they need assistance and support from their parents
to make rational decisions that will positively impact their future. Secondly, teachers
and coaches also play important roles when they are at school as well.

Due to the multiple hours working out and competitive athletic games, student-
athletes may have less time to sleep at night compared to non-student-athletes.
Consequently, student-athletes’ grades could be negatively impacted. A research project
by Astridge et al. (2021) studied swimmers who were student-athletes and their lack of
sleeping time. The study findings showed that these student-athletes who have sports
and academic commitments are not able to successfully get an adequate amount of sleep. There is no high-quality deep sleep in their schedule and their sleep pattern is irregular due to academic and sports schedules. Academic stress of assignments and exams, on top of athletics, contributes to having difficulties sleeping. Coaches need to work closely with each student-athlete to ensure that students are emphasizing their well-being, which includes great sleeping habits (Astridge et al., 2021). This particularly should be emphasized during the swimming season because student-athletes have greater athletics responsibilities during that time of the year, and not performing well may negatively impact their athletics abilities, and make their academic performance even worse.

Another study about sleep deprivation conducted by Turner II et al. (2021) stated that not having enough sleep time is associated with student-athletes not earning an A-letter grade. An 8% increase probability of a B-letter grade average for each day of inadequate sleep. In addition, insufficient sleep is also linked to a 21% increased possibility of C, D, and F-letter grades for each day described as insufficient sleep. In addition, student-athletes who reported that sleep reduction interferes with academic performance had a 111% increased likelihood of obtaining lower grades compared to the student-athletes who reported that sleeping hours and the amount of rest at night are not an issue in their routine (Turner II et al., 2021). Student-athletes who have a difficult time performing well in academics when having competitive sports on their schedules should be identified by parents, teachers, and coaches. By doing so, special attention and supervision of these student-athletes may be crucial to their academic success.
5.2.1.6. Injuries

Sports involves physical activity which can lead to injuries that can negatively impact one’s athletics career. When injuries happen, not only would their athletic traits be impacted, but also their personal life, such as their physical health and well-being. Usually, injuries cannot be prevented, and they can have long-lasting effects when occurred. However, there are some muscle training and stretching exercises that could assist in lowering the probability of being injured. Gilgunn (2010) showed that high competitiveness in athletics leads to an exhausted body which can consequently lead to physical injuries in athletes’ bodies. Leonardelli et al. (2023) affirmed that (a) injuries happen in sports competitions; (b) medical care and treatment; and (c) time was needed to rest and not practice any sports. A study conducted by Tatlibal (2023) which investigated a group of gymnasts’ injuries during one year found that the risk of being injured in gymnastics is extremely high. According to the study, 79.4% of the entire population group of gymnasts were injured, and only 20.6% were not. To put it succinctly, on average, four out of five gymnasts were injured during this one year. It was also revealed that both male and female gymnasts have most of their injuries in the toes, knee, waist back, shoulder, wrist, groin, and hip. The average time out of training due to injuries was 28 days, and 47% of these injuries occurred during training (Tatlibal, 2023).

Furthermore, an injury could occur as simple as a twisted ankle that may cause athletes to be out for a couple of days to as complex as an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) tear or strain which forces athletes to rest for many months. Regardless of the severity of the injury, such events are very common and can be devastating for someone’s career, with the possibility of ending it. Even in first-world countries, it is possible to see many athletes’ injuries each year. A good example of a first-world
country that is facing many injuries is Canada. Leonardelli et al. (2023) affirmed that sports injuries are very common for those who participate in it. In 2009-2010, there were an estimated 4.27 million Canadians aged 12 years old and older who suffered at least one injury. These injuries limited their everyday activities. There was also an estimated 35% of those people who were involved specifically in sports and physical activity (Leonardelli et al., 2023).

A study by Nakao et al. (2023) showed that there are differences between adults’ and children’s injuries from physical activities. Adults have a more developed body when compared to kids, and that influences the injury severity when playing sports. Nakao et al. (2023) worked on a nationwide Japanese study that studied the entire population of Japan and their severe sports-related injuries in children and adults. The differences are due to different muscular development and the school environment that kids experience daily. For example, in children, injuries in the head/neck and abdomen are more frequent compared to adults. Head injuries are more common in children due to the small head, body, and cranial bones. Abdominal injuries are more common in children due to their abdominal muscles being less established and due to their flexible rib cages. On the other hand, chest and spinal injuries were the most common severe sports-related trauma in adults. These injuries happened mostly during the winter, and since adults play more sports than children in the winter, authors believed that this was the reason why such injuries happened (Nakao et al., 2023). Knowing the differences between children’s and adults’ injuries is crucial for injury prevention.

People from different communities believe that schools should not be the only responsible stakeholders when student-athletes get injured, such as concussion-related injuries. For example, at the collegiate level, a higher establishment that is responsible for college athletics in the United States is the National Collegiate Athletic Association
(NCAA). This body ensures that student-athletes who how injuries receive full medical and emotional support at all times. However, Abe (2020) contended that the NCAA as an organization is not reliable for any student-athlete's concussion-related injuries and effects, despite being responsible for managing and governing over 500,000 student-athletes and 1,117 colleges and universities within three different divisions around the United States. In other words, the NCAA does not believe that the organization owes a duty of care. The author further added that the NCAA should be responsible for serious student-athletes’ injuries, such as concussions. Many steps, such as assisting student-athletes and giving enough support to schools, should have been taken seriously in the past which would have made identifying and curing injuries more efficient for student-athletes and their schools. These are the most basic steps and responsibilities that a huge organization such as the NCAA should have conducted for many years in the United States (Abe, 2020).

5.2.1.7. Mental Concerns

Mental sensitivity can be displayed emotionally or physically by showing signs of emotional imbalance and extreme tiredness. When student-athletes play sports, it is not uncommon for them to experience mental sensitivity. The pressure to win games and to perform well in the classroom can become overwhelming to them. Teachers and parents may witness student-athletes becoming burned out by observing their behavior and noting the initial warning signs of fatigue. Many programs in the United States and Brazil have mental health services specifically to support student-athletes. However, awareness of these services is lacking within the community. According to a study by Stokowsk et al. (2022), student-athletes are unaware of the mental health services offered by the schools. Additionally, it has been reported that student-athletes have a strong level of anxiety and stress which could lead to depression. The authors also
added that more than a quarter of student-athletes have signs of depression, 50% of them feel overwhelmed with their daily responsibilities, and 45% of them report that they have never received any mental health education. Despite the difficulties faced by the student-athletes, they choose not to seek assistance for mental health disorders (Stokowsk et al., 2022).

Student-athletes often face pressures and stress daily that non-student-athletes do not have to confront. Due to high stress, student-athletes are considered a high-risk population for mental health concerns. Therefore, parents, teachers, and coaches have an important responsibility to ensure that student-athletes are taking all necessary steps to make their well-being a priority. Sport psychologists are also determinants for great student-athletes’ mental health. Gross et al. (2018) concluded that sports psychology professionals have an exceptional opportunity to help student-athletes improve in psychological well-being, and consequently, great athletic performance. It is also important that school administrators give successful tools to parents, teachers, and coaches on how to constantly check student-athletes’ mental welfare (Gross et al., 2018).

Some student-athletes receive an opportunity to play sports in other cities or countries through athletic scholarships. When they receive such opportunities, they need to leave their homes and families behind to pursue a dream. These foreign student-athletes may face a difficult time when moving from one country to another. For instance, a new language, a new type of food, a new community, and a different environment could all result in a lack of comfort. This may negatively impact their mental health. A study conducted by Gilgunn (2010) showed that when student-athletes move from their hometown to a new city, they may experience culture shock. For example, they may see extreme poverty and racial segregation which could be
uncommon in their hometowns (Gilgunn, 2010). Therefore, student-athletes’ close interactions with parents, teachers, and coaches can ensure they are easily adjusted to the culture in their new city after leaving their hometown.

5.2.2. Attracting New Students

This research study was conducted through a partnership with the EAO School. This organization is a public school located in an average economic area in the city of Santa Cruz do Sul, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, southern part of Brazil. Since EAO School is a public school, funds are received by the state and federal governments. Therefore, it is necessary to find unique ways to not only raise more money for extracurricular activities for students but also to increase the number of students.

EAO School needs to constantly attract upcoming hard-working students to show the government that the school is making an impact on the young lives around its community. In addition, the school can use sports as a tool to successfully attract new determined students and engage their current students as well. Although there is always a possibility of negative academic impacts from sports participation for students, the benefits can often be seen to outweigh any negative consequences. The school can focus on showing students and families the benefits that sports may bring to student-athletes. Promotions and advertising are also great routes that the administrative staff at EAO School can maximize in the community of Santa Cruz do Sul. The following section discusses initiatives that EAO School already engages in to attract new students and some recommended initiatives that EAO School could start doing to increase its student body in the future.

Attracting new consumers through promotions and advertising is an essential step for any organization’s success. In the world we live in today, we have seen
companies and organizations investing a lot of time, money, and effort to have successful promotions and advertising campaigns. Social media, frequent internet use, and easier access to information have made the world in which we live a more interconnected place. Promotions and advertising are effective ways to catch one’s attention through visual methods. Both advertising and promotions catch people’s attention, and people identify themselves with images and sounds that they feel connected to and related to.

With increasing competition in every industry worldwide, managers of organizations must spend a significant amount of time creating new, interesting, and innovative promotions and advertising campaigns. Not only should these campaigns make a significant impact, but they also should offer great services to customers because building trust is essential to any organization’s success. The three main aspects of customer loyalty are trust, satisfaction, and great service (Latif et al., 2021). By creating innovative promotions and advertising campaigns, as well as multiple events and activities, organizations can build loyalty among consumers who will then become repeat customers. In the EAO School specifically, repeat customers are returning students as well as children and teenagers joining the school from the same family or neighborhood for the first time. For instance, a brother or a sister with a sibling who already attends the school may attend EAO School in the future. Similarly, someone from the same neighborhood as a current student may join the school because of the great feedback received through word-of-mouth.

Schools are key factors in economic development in many different areas of the world (Pfeiffer & Dunlap, 1988). The organization uses promotions to introduce new consumers and build loyalty in many different ways. First, EAO School invests a
significant amount of effort in promoting the school on its social media platforms – Instagram and Facebook. Some school staff members are responsible for maintaining social media accounts. There is a large number of people who follow both of their accounts on these platforms, which allows them to keep track of the latest news about the school. Future events, current projects, and students’ accomplishments are common themes that are seen on the social media accounts of the school.

Another great way that EAO School confidently uses promotion to introduce new consumers and build loyalty is by being heavily involved in the community in different events and social causes. These events include Fashion Week, cooking classes, finance writing competitions, games and recreation, competitive sports, dancing classes, partnerships with local English academies, school trips, community service, etc. One of the biggest events that the school has each year is called Jogos de Integração Ernestão (Big Ernesto Integration Games), which is conducted for seven days. The school divides itself into three different teams and competes in many sporting events with each other. In addition, the management staff of the school focuses on the interaction between the students in cultural, pedagogical, and social aspects. Parents are also able to participate in the Integration Games, which bring families closer together. At the end of the competition, winners are announced, and prizes are delivered. Studies have concluded that social and health activities should be offered to anybody, including underrepresented groups and cultural minorities (Fraser et al., 2019).

The directors and the principal of the school are believers that the more the school is involved in society, the more trust and relationships are built. The stakeholders who work and are involved in the organization put a significant effort into getting to know one another and building long-lasting relationships that go beyond the workplace. This type of environment and culture helps the team perform better at work and have
successful careers. Because of the wonderful environment that the school creates, word of mouth is a powerful tool that encourages high student enrollment and increases potential employee applications. Latif et al. (2021) stated that customer loyalty consists of having positive word-of-mouth recommendations to others. It all comes back to performing an impactful job to increase recognition, introduce new consumers, and build loyalty.

Thirdly, since EAO School is a public school without cost to the students, administrators do not strive for the highest number of students possible but rather for the most hardworking, committed, and consistent students. Having high academic engagement from students is a determinant factor of students’ success. The three most important academic engagement characteristics that students display for achievements include: “disciplinary conformity, effort during class, and out-of-school homework” (Bianchi & Munroe, 2008). EAO School has some recruiters who go to other public schools around the city to find out if any students want to relocate to a school with a better location and programs. EAO School is located in the middle of the city of Santa Cruz do Sul with easy access to public transportation. Not only is it a great location offered to students, but most importantly, EAO School offers the best high school public education in the city. Therefore, recruiters talk to other schools to see if they have any students who may be interested in enrolling at EAO School. One of the main goals of the school is to send graduates to colleges and universities around the state of Rio Grande do Sul and the country of Brazil. A high acceptance rate to colleges and universities encourages enrollment. Having intelligent and committed public students is a great way to accomplish this goal which benefits society as a whole in the future.

Next, the organization creates events for the students, students’ family members, and their guests to promote the organization to potential students and simultaneously
build loyalty with the current ones. These events are social, interactive, and very informative to all attendees. These events can be done in a variety of ways, such as bringing guest speakers to talk to students, having a sporting event for kids, teenagers, and/or parents, health promotion events, etc. According to the authors Pinto and Silva (2020), health promotion can be successfully discussed in school settings. Many schools have spent a significant amount of time developing preventive activities for the health of students, teachers, and staff. In addition, research shows that discussions about the principles of health have contributed tremendously in schools (Pinto & Silva, 2020).

In events that the school holds, school administrators can create stronger relationships with the current students and their family members as well as cultivate new relationships with prospective students. A lot of current students have younger siblings who, in the future, will be looking for a school as well. Therefore, building early relationships with these prospective students is a great way to ensure their attendance in the future. On the other hand, these prospective students benefit from meeting teachers and other staff from the EAO School because this will make the transition to join easier. Studies have shown that high levels of satisfaction come from receiving high-quality services. Satisfaction from receiving high-quality services is associated with trust from customers that these services will continue in the future (Latif et al., 2021).

Fifth, EAO School helps the students by assisting them on what to do after high school. Many students get extremely stressed with deciding on secondary education. Decisions on what to do after high school graduation are determined by socioeconomic status, previous achievements, gender, ethnicity, and family structure (Lee et al., 2013). The organization offers a variety of assistance programs to aid the students in what to do once graduation arrives. Teachers and school administrators spend numerous hours
speaking with the students and showing them the different successful routes students could follow. This type of initiative is a great way to promote the school and build loyalty because it shows that the organization cares about the success of the student body. In addition, it shows the prospective students that this organization can be a future tool for success, which makes these upcoming students choose EAO School as their future high school destination.

Lastly, EAO School has a project in place called *Eu Fiz e Continuo Fazendo Parte Dessa Escola*, which means I Used to Belong and Still Belong to This School. In this project, the school focuses on keeping in touch with some former students. A lot of alumni who have established careers return to the school and offer their services for free. For instance, the school’s library and cafeteria have been recently renovated through the service of a former student who is an architect, without cost to the school. Another former student came back to the school and served as a mentor to the younger generation. This alumnus voluntarily had conversations with the current students about life, plans after graduation, and common topics that arise when kids and teenagers are in school. By creating formal student-alumni mentoring initiatives, schools can offer their students an exceptional experience of having a professional mentor who works in their field of interest. Students can successfully transition into the next step of their lives with the assistance of a mentor (Skrzypek et al., 2019). These two alumni, including many other former students, do not charge the school for their kind services as they want to “give back” to the school.

There are a few recommendations on what EAO School managers could do to attract new and returning consumers in the future. First, the school staff can follow up with the graduates 5 to 10 years after they graduate from high school to find out how they are doing personally and in their careers. Once the school receives responses, they
can evaluate how to assist the upcoming and current students by continuing what has successfully worked with other students in the past. Also, if some of the responses are negative, they can modify the plans to minimize the negative impact on the current and prospective students. An easy and effective way to accomplish this is to organize alumni reunions where former students can talk to other alumni. Not only would it be a great way for people to reconnect with one another, but they may also be willing to support the school in the future. This support could be done financially, through service hours, or in any different way. A study concluded that a school’s participation in alumni and fundraising initiatives helps create a strong foundation for the alumni to actively support the institution where they studied (Drezner, 2011).

The second suggestion for EAO School to attract new and returning consumers in the future is for the management staff of the school to organize and establish a Student Ambassador team. The Student Ambassador staff could have a president, vice president, recruiters, social staff, etc. A recent research study showed that student ambassadors are capable of engaging other students which makes for a better school environment with a sense of belonging and stronger connection to others. It can also encourage conversations regarding overall students’ well-being and mental health (Reis et al., 2022). This group of student leaders could serve the school in different events, be “the voice” of the student body, and serve as representative school leaders in the community. For example, the student ambassadors could go to different elementary schools in the city of Santa Cruz do Sul and talk to the kids. Conversations may include different subjects such as the benefits of EAO School, sports offered at the school, life mentoring, or simply having conversations and playing games to build stronger relationships. These ambassador students would be great examples of what the future
would look like for the young students at the elementary schools if they choose to attend EAO School.

Third, advertisements on the radio, newspapers, and television would be a great option to promote the name of the school. The five main factors of advertisements in an educational setting are the “primacy of product, uniqueness, identification, timeliness, and price” (Pfeiffer & Dunlap, 1988). Since EAO School is a public school and the overall budget is limited, it would need government assistance and support from the city of Santa Cruz do Sul to accomplish it. This organization is a well-known school and having its brand’s name in these different media platforms would help to boost the name of the school in the community. In addition, the city of Santa Cruz do Sul is a growing and developing city with an increasing number of residents each year. Therefore, promoting the name of the school and having a great education option for these new resident families is a great way to welcome people to the city. The advertisements that these individuals see in newspapers, watch on television, or hear on the radio could assist in the success of the school.

Next, having a “parents’ club” is another recommendation on how to attract new and returning consumers in the future. In this club, mothers and fathers with children of similar ages can meet and enjoy fun activities and conversations regarding topics that they all similarly face and struggle with. Parents can advise one another on how they are successfully able to raise their children. Besides the numerous recommendations that they would be able to give to one another, they would also be able to build stronger relationships with other families in the community. There is a sense of belonging involved when parents who live in the same cultural environment meet together to share their similar difficulties. Sehl et al. (2022) stated that people socially connect when they see some similarities in preferences, beliefs, and choices.
Finally, having more sporting activities during non-class times for the kids and teenagers is another recommendation that the EAO School could use to attract new and returning consumers in the future. Studies concluded that the purpose of schools is to provide great education with cognitive development materials as well as a variety of different and unique experiences outside of the classroom (Pfeiffer & Dunlap, 1988). For example, many students who only study in the morning could attend a sports activity in the afternoon instead of sitting at home. The school should try to hire coaches to teach sports lessons to interested kids and teenagers when they are not in school, such as soccer, basketball, and volleyball classes. Funding and investments from the state would be necessary to implement such programs due to the lack of resources that public schools have in Brazil. The availability of sporting programs during parents’ working hours has the potential to attract more students to the school. Not only can these activities make the school environment more welcoming to students, but they can also allow kids and teenagers to stay healthy and socially interact with one another.

### 5.2.3. Follow-up Studies

Interestingly, all sports that student-athletes play at EAO School are team sports. An interesting follow-up study would be to research teenagers who play individual sports, such as tennis, rifle, gymnastics, swimming, etc. However, these sports are not offered at EAO School. The opportunity to play individual sports would need to be granted by a different organization. Another idea would be to research a private school, instead of a public school, to see if there are any differences in the answers from parents and/or teachers. One step further, this research can also be done in a different geographic location in Brazil, or even in the United States. It would be interesting to compare the differences in student-athletes’ academic success in Brazil compared to
student-athletes in the US. Ideally, the sample size for a future study would need to be larger, which would also add to a validity standpoint.

Another future research direction would be to interview the target group (teenagers who are between the ages of 12 and 17 years old), and not just people who are involved in their lives, such as parents and teachers. For this particular research, it was not possible to conduct the study with the actual teenagers because they were under 18 years old, and the partner school was in another country, Brazil. Since the partner organization was not located in the same country as the United States, both the American and Brazilian governments (regionally and nationally) had to be involved to avoid legal issues. However, interviewing the actual target group may have ensured that the results of the study were more trustworthy, from a validity and reliability data perspective. Furthermore, a fruitful idea would be to conduct a longitudinal study that measures the student-athletes’ grades throughout all four years of high school.

This study can be a starting point for a larger research project related to how sports can impact people’s lives in Brazil in general. Future researchers can focus not only on the youth but also on adults at any age. Furthermore, a good future research project could be to interview the same parents and teachers in the upcoming years to find and analyze the real impact that sports have had on these students into adulthood. Also, it may be of interest to see if their observations and opinions about youth sports have changed over the years, which would be significant information for the next generation of youth.

5.3. Conclusion

In this study, it was analyzed if teenagers between the ages of 12-17 years old had a positive or negative academic outcome from practicing sports from the
perspective of parents and teachers who had daily interactions with the student-athletes. Based on the findings, most student-athletes had a negative academic impact once they started playing sports. According to teachers and parents, the main negative characteristics that impacted the academic life of teenagers were less classroom time compared to non-student-athletes (mentioned 18 times), poor grade performance in the classroom (mentioned 14 times), lack of interest in classes (mentioned 14 times), and difficulty keeping up with schoolwork (mentioned 12 times).

Despite the bad impacts that sports can generate on the student-athletes, there were some positive life skills that they were able to gain from sports. The main positive attributes were confidence (mentioned 11 times), dedication/discipline (mentioned 10 times), responsibility (mentioned 9 times), and focus (mentioned 8 times). Each student can gain a lot of positive characteristics when doing an extracurricular activity. Ultimately, it is up to the student-athletes if they choose to apply these characteristics to their academics.

The study also found that a few parents and teachers believed that sports did not influence the student-athletes’ lives. Some characteristics such as nervousness, calmness, confidence, and focus were attributes that some student-athletes had before playing sports. In other words, the fact that their children or students started playing sports did not impact their behavior and actions. Furthermore, a few teachers mentioned that student-athletes’ grades, studying routine, and interest in classes had always remained the same ever since sports became a part of their lives.

In general, during the interviews, most parents and teachers showed a sense of concern that the student-athletes were heavily involved in sports rather than being heavily involved in school. Although most parents and teachers mentioned that they
knew this could make the students’ academic performance decrease, none of the parents and teachers were fully against the practice of sports. They all showed a sense of respect that their children or students were pursuing an athletic career that they enjoyed.

It is concluded in this research study that playing sports is not necessarily good or bad for teenagers between 12-17 years old. Many factors could influence the life of a teenager, in a positive, negative, or neutral way, not just sports. Interestingly, if it is perceived negatively, it is fully related to their academics. If it is positive, it is primarily correlated to life skills gained and related to their academics. First, their academics could be highly impacted negatively due to the lack of interest and the less classroom time compared to non-athletes. Some student-athletes do not emphasize the importance of academics and mainly focus on their athletic performance once sports become a priority in their lives. On the other hand, there are many positive features gained through sports that student-athletes can use in their lives. Not only do these positive attributes, caused by sports, could be used in life in general, but some students choose to apply them to their academic performance. Finally, in some cases, sports do not have an impact, according to the findings.

The study can conclude that sports are more of a fun and healthy extracurricular activity for student-athletes. EAO School supports and incentivizes students who participate in other activities, such as sports. Some student-athletes could try to pursue a professional career after graduating high school; however, this is not the case for every student. Therefore, it is up to the students to determine what they want to take and learn from sports. Frankly, student-athletes can be responsible for using sports as a positive aspect in their lives or can use it as a tool of distraction for many other important aspects. It is extremely important to have strong support from individuals who are
present in the student-athletes’ lives such as their parents and teachers. Having emotional and practical guidance from key individuals involved in their lives can be a crucial aspect of whether a student will fully benefit from all the secondary benefits that sports can offer. Assistance and support are essential for teenagers’ development.

This research study hopes to raise awareness about the academic impact of sports on teenagers for all students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and local community administrators. A primary goal is to help student-athletes be the best version of themselves in the classroom and as athletes. Another goal is to provide further opportunities for discussion on how to better prepare student-athletes during high school; as well as assisting with their transition from high school to college, for a successful career later on in life.
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Appendix A

Interview Guide

Questions for parents

I. Have your child’s school grades been impacted once he or she started playing sports? If so, how?
II. How has your child’s focus on studying changed since he or she started playing sports?
III. How has your child’s academic studying routine changed since he or she started playing sports?
IV. How has your child’s confidence changed when preparing for a test since he or she started playing sports?
V. How does your child react emotionally the night before an exam since he or she started playing sports?
VI. Has your child’s interest in classes changed since he or she started playing sports? If so, how?

Questions for teachers

I. Please discuss how the grades of students who play sports differ from students who do not play sports.
II. Have you noticed how the grades of student-athletes have changed since he or she started playing sports?
III. How does the interest/participation in class differ between student-athletes and non-athletic students?
IV. How do you feel the attention of students involved in sports compares to non-athletic students?
V. What are the academic benefits of having your students involved in sports?
VI. Do student-athletes have less classroom time due to practice and game schedules? If so, how do you feel that this affects the students?
Appendix B

Consent for Research Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>The Academic Impact of Sports on Teenagers – A Special Focus on a Brazilian Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher(s)</td>
<td>Felipe Rocha, The University of Memphis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers Contact Information</td>
<td>901-233-7663, <a href="mailto:frocha@memphis.edu">frocha@memphis.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The box below highlights key information for you to consider when deciding if you want to participate. More detailed information is provided below the box. Please ask the researcher any questions about the study before you make your decision. If you volunteer, you will be one of about 14 people to do so.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Information for You to Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voluntary Consent:</strong> You are being asked to volunteer for a research study. It is up to you whether you choose to participate or not. There will be no penalty or loss of benefit to which you are otherwise entitled if you choose not to participate or discontinue participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> The purpose of this research is to study, analyze, and discuss the positive and negative academic outcomes that result from teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years old from practicing sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration:</strong> It is expected that your participation will last 30-40 minutes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Procedures and Activities:</strong> You will be asked to answer interview questions verbally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk:</strong> We do not anticipate any risks for you participating in this study, other than those encountered in day-to-day life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benefits:</strong> Some of the benefits that may be expected include aiding the advancement of knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternatives:</strong> Participation is voluntary, and the only alternative is to not participate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Who is conducting this research?**

Felipe Rocha of the University of Memphis, Department of College of Professional & Liberal Studies is in charge of the study. His faculty advisor is Dr. Colin Chapell. There may be other research team members assisting during the study.

There is no member of the research team that has a significant financial interest or a conflict of interest related to the research.

**Why is this research being done?**

The purpose is to study, analyze, and discuss the positive and negative academic outcomes that result from teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years old from practicing sports.
You are being invited to participate because you are capable of answering specific interview questions for the researcher to understand the “intentions and perspectives” of those involved in the lives of teenagers.

**How long will I be in this research?**

The research will be conducted over Zoom at the Escola Estadual Ernesto Alves de Oliveira School. It should take about 30-40 minutes of your time to fill out the consent form and participate in the interview. The interview will occur in a single session.

**What happens if I agree to participate in this Research?**

If you agree you will be asked to provide some demographic information, including age, race, gender, and marital status. In addition, you will be asked to fill out the consent form and you will answer 6 questions about the academic impact of sports on the lives of teenagers in your life. This will happen over Zoom at the Escola Estadual Ernesto Alves de Oliveira School. I will record the Zoom meeting so I can transcribe and translate the answers later. Participants are allowed to skip any question and stop at any time if they feel uncomfortable. Two groups of people are participating in the study: parents to student-athletes of ages 12-17 years old and teachers of student-athletes of ages between 12-17 years old.

**What happens to the information collected for this research?**

Information collected for this research will be used only for dissertation paper purposes. There is no plan for this research study to be published at this point. All names or identifying factors will be excluded from this paper. In addition, the information collected for this research will not be shared with any outside sources.

**How will my privacy and data confidentiality be protected?**

We promise to protect your privacy and the security of your personal information as best we can. However, you need to know about some limits to this promise. Measures we will take include:

- The research will be conducted in a private room at Ernesto Alves de Oliveira School over Zoom. Only the researcher and the participant will be in the Zoom meeting. There will be at least a fifteen-minute window between each interview, so the participants will not know who the other participants are.
- The researcher will keep the data on his personal computer, which is password-protected and is only accessible by the researcher. This data will be saved for 3 years and no other person will be granted access to this data. Furthermore, the signed consent forms will be kept in a safe which only the researcher has access to. Finally, the signed consent forms will be destroyed by a paper shredder at the end of the three years.
- Any contact information collected will be kept on a computer that will only be accessible to the researcher.
Individuals and organizations that monitor this research may be permitted access to inspect the research records. This monitoring may include access to your private information. These individuals and organizations include:

- Institutional Review Board
- Dr. Colin Chapell (researcher’s academic advisor)
- Dr. Cody Havard (researcher’s committee chair)

**What are the risks if I participate in this research?**

We do not anticipate any risks for interviewees participating in this study, other than those encountered in day-to-day life.

**What are the benefits of participating in this research?**

Participating has no known direct benefits to you. Some of the indirect benefits that may be expected include aiding the advancement of knowledge.

**What if I want to stop participating in this research?**

It is up to you to decide whether you want to volunteer for this study. It is also ok to decide to end your participation at any time. There is no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled if you decide to withdraw your participation. Your decision about participating will not affect your relationship with the researcher or the University of Memphis. If you need to withdraw from the research before your interview, please contact the Ernesto Alves de Oliveira School administration staff. If you feel uncomfortable during the study, please let the researcher know, so the interview can be terminated immediately.

**Will it cost me money to take part in this research?**

Taking part in this research may lead to additional costs to you, such as transportation to the school.

**Will I receive any compensation or reward for participating in this research?**

- You will not be compensated for taking part in this research.

**Who can answer my question about this research?**

Before you decide to volunteer for this study, please ask any questions that might come to mind. Later, if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints about the study, you can contact the investigator, Felipe Rocha at frocha@memphis.edu or the researcher’s faculty advisor, Dr. Colin Chapell at cbchpell@memphis.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the Institutional Review Board staff at the University of Memphis at 901-678-2705 or email irb@memphis.edu. We will give you a signed copy of this consent to take with you.

**STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

I have had the opportunity to consider the information in this document. I have asked any questions needed for me to decide about my participation. I understand that I can ask additional questions through the study.
By signing below, I volunteer to participate in this research. I understand that I am not waiving any legal rights. I have been given a copy of this consent document. I understand that if my ability to consent for myself changes, my legal representative or I may be asked to consent again before my continued participation.

As described above, you will be audio and video recorded while performing the activities described above. Audio and video recordings will be used for translation and transcribing purposes. Initial the space below if you consent to the use of audio and video recording as described above.

____ I agree to the use of audio and video recording.

Name of Adult Participant ____________________________________________________________________
________________________
Signature of Adult Participant ____________________________________________________________________
__ Date ____________________________________________________________________

Researcher Signature (To be completed at the time of Informed Consent)

I have explained the research to the participant and answered all of his/her questions. I believe that he/she understands the information described in this consent and freely consents to participate.

Name of Research Team Member ____________________________________________________________________
________________________
Signature of Research Team Member ____________________________________________________________________
__ Date ____________________________________________________________________
Appendix C

Parent Interview Example (Portuguese and English)

**Pergunta 1:** Notas do teu(tua) filho(a) foram impactadas desde que ele/ela começou a jogar esportes? Se sim, como foi impactada?

**Question 1:** Have your child’s school grades been impacted once he or she started playing sports? If so, how?

**Resposta 1:** Mudou para melhor. Teve mais foco nos estudos. Mais responsabilidade.

**Answer 1:** Changed for the better. She focused more on her studies. More responsibility.

**Pergunta 2:** Como o foco do teu(tua) filho(a) mudou desde que ela começou a praticar esportes? Como esse foco mudou?

**Question 2:** How has your child’s focus on studying changed since he or she started playing sports?

**Resposta 2:** Questão de organização. Se prepara mais para as avaliações. Eu cobro dela. Pra ela poder treinar e a gente poder fazer todo esse investimento no basquete, ela também precisa ter um bom rendimento na escola. Os dois precisam andar associados. Esse comprometimento e a questão que é cobrada no basquete, ela trouxe isso para dentro da escola também.

**Answer 2:** It affected her organization. She prepares more for the tests. I am on top of her. For her to be able to train and for us to be able to make all this investment in basketball, she also needs to perform well at school. The two need to be associated. This commitment and dedication that is demanded in basketball, she brought this to the school as well.

**Pergunta 3:** Como a rotina acadêmica de estudos do teu(tua) filho(a) mudou desde que ela começou a praticar esportes? Como por exemplo de aula.

**Question 3:** How has your child’s academic studying routine changed since he or she started playing sports?

**Resposta 3:** Não mudou muito. Ela se focou mais. Se dedica mais. Ela se cobra mais. Ela começou a se cobrar mais para tentar melhorar na escola. Ela está buscando melhores notas. Está se dedicando 80%-90% mais do que era antes. Também tem a questão do amadurecimento. Agora já está crescendo mais, e então começa a se cobrar. E na turma dela tem mais três meninas que fazem parte desse grupo que jogam juntas. Então isso também ajudou bastante ela.

**Answer 3:** It has not changed much. She focused more. Dedicate herself more. She has higher standards for herself. She started pushing herself harder to try to improve at school. She is aiming for better grades. She is dedicating herself 80%-90% more than she was before. There is also a sense of maturity. Now she is growing more and then started to have more standards for herself. In her class, three other girls are part of this group and they all play together. So that also helped her a lot.
Pergunta 4: A confiança do(a) teu(tua) filha mudou desde que ele/ela começou a praticar esportes?

Question 4: How has your child’s confidence changed when preparing for a test since he or she started playing sports?

Resposta 4: Sim. Ela tinha crise de ansiedade e ficava muito nervosa. E essa questão que a gente trabalha com ela: a preparação para os jogos e campeonatos. Como ela está treinando e como ela está fazendo. Ela está se esforçando. Eu falo pra ela: “Se tu não tivesse fazendo nada, tu até poderia ficar nervosa porque tu não estás buscando melhorar.” Mas como tu treina e como tu faz a tua parte, e até em relação à escola, tu vai ir bem. Tu está estudando mais e se dedicando mais. Então isso faz com que ela se sinta mais confiante. Foi nítida a diferença.

Answer 4: Yes. She had an anxiety attack and was very nervous. And this is what we talk to her about preparing for games and championships. How she is training and how she is doing. She is trying hard. I tell her: “If you had not been doing anything, you could be getting nervous because you were not trying to improve.” But since you train and since you do your part, and even at school, you will do well. You are studying more and you are dedicating yourself more. So this makes her feel more confident. The difference was clear.

Pergunta 5: Como o(a) seu/sua filho(a) reage emocionalmente na noite antes de uma prova ou teste desde que ele/ela começou a praticar esportes?

Question 5: How does your child react emotionally the night before an exam since he or she started playing sports?


Answer 5: She gets a little nervous. Not as much as she was before she started playing. There is still a little bit left. Even because I am a teacher too, she ends up having this pressure, right? And she goes to the school where I work. So she ends up getting a little tense. And even in mathematics, which is my subject. So she pushes herself a lot because she thinks she has to do well. After all, her mother is a math teacher. It is much better than it was before. When she had a test, before starting to play basketball, 3-4 days before she was already nervous, she had a stomach ache and could not sleep. She could not sleep the night before the test. So since she started playing it has changed a lot.

Pergunta 6: O interesse nas aulas do(a) seu/sua filho(a) mudou desde que ele/ela começou a praticar esportes? Se sim, como?

Question 6: Has your child’s interest in classes changed since he or she started playing sports? If so, how?

Answer 6: It changed because she is more dedicated to everything. Sport helped her lose her shyness. She was very shy. This issue of presenting projects and exposing herself, she is managing to loosen up more. Before, she was very withdrawn and ashamed. This basketball opportunity helped her. At first, when she started playing, even in training she did not want us to watch her because she was embarrassed. So as time went by, she lost that shame. Now she enters the court and forgets everyone there. This is being reflected in the classroom too. Even asking the teacher any questions, she was embarrassed before. With sports, she can deal better with these issues.


Extra Feedback: Sometimes we stop doing something because of our daughter’s sport. Yesterday I had classes until 6:15 pm and then I had to teach again at 7:15 pm. So I ran out of school, picked her up from training, dropped her off at home, and went back to teach at school. Also today. I take her to training at 3:30 pm. She trains until 6:15 pm. Then she has another training session later in the afternoon. Tomorrow there is training again. But it is a way we can get her off her cell phone. It is a sport she enjoys, as well as being good for her health. I do not mind all this rushing around because at least it is doing her good. And that means we can improve other things. We demand it. It is not
that we want her to be a professional athlete. But you never know. She can change mentally. But sport can open up many opportunities for her. Through sport, you can have many opportunities in the future. This is what we try to convey to her. In general, it has changed a lot. When there were no people at her friend’s training, the teacher invited her to participate because she was 13 years old and very tall. The teacher saw that she had potential. It started as a joke until she later joined the Santa Cruz women’s team. A cool project. We try very hard because it is affecting her life. Not only for health reasons, but throughout her life, many things have changed with sport. She is behind the others. Because there are girls who have been training for 3 or 4 years. So now during this semester, we will push it more. I took her to a nutritionist. Start eating healthy. I am going to pay a coach to give her some specific training so she can improve some things. Let’s invest so she does not lose her love for sport.

Teacher Interview Example (Portuguese and English)

Pergunta 1: Por favor fale como as notas dos estudantes que jogam são diferentes em comparação aos estudantes que não jogam esportes.

Question 1: Please discuss how the grades of students who play sports differ from students who do not play sports.


Answer 1: So, from what I was able to glean from grades from students who play sports regularly or are part of teams, it varies a lot. It depends a lot on the student. Some are doing very well. Others are average. And others do badly. It is even. There are not many bad and few good, or vice versa. It is well distributed between them. Some do well. Some are average. And others are bad. In general.

Pergunta 2: Você notou que as notas dos que jogam mudaram desde que eles começaram a jogar esportes?

Question 2: Have you noticed how the grades of student-athletes have changed since he or she started playing sports?

Resposta 2: Como eu vario muito de turma. Cada ano que começa, a gente tem troca de turma. Às vezes eu pego a turma já andando. Não conhecia os alunos. E muitos deles já praticam. Então não consigo fazer um comparativo de um antes e depois de praticar esportes. Alguns que eu sei de particular, desenvolveram senso de responsabilidade um pouco mais. Mas não houve uma melhora na nota. Mas um senso de responsabilidade e comprometimento.

Answer 2: I move a lot between classes. Every year that starts, we change classes. Sometimes I start teaching a class in the middle of the semester. I did not know the students in the past. And many of them were already playing sports. So, I cannot make a comparison before and after playing sports. Some that I know in particular have
developed a little more sense of responsibility. But there was no improvement in the grade. But a sense of responsibility and commitment.

**Pergunta 3:** Qual é a diferença no interesse e participação em aula entre os estudantes que praticam esportes e estudantes que não praticam esportes?

**Question 3:** How does the interest/participation in class differ between student-athletes and non-athletic students?

**Resposta 3:** Varia muito. Caso a caso. Os alunos que fazem parte dos jogos escolares e que fazem parte do time da escola, vão bem no esporte e tem um grande comprometimento em sala de aula geralmente. Tem alguns que jogam no time de fora. Dois jogam no time de vôlei e três que jogam no Corinthians, no time de basquete. Esses são mais variados. Os dois que jogam vôlei tem um interesse maior. E os três que jogam no basquete tem um rendimento e interesse menor em sala de aula. Eles são mais dispersos no conteúdo de aula.

**Answer 3:** It varies a lot. Case by case. Students who take part in school games and are part of the school team do well in sports and generally have a great commitment in the classroom. Some play for club teams (outside of school). Two play on the volleyball team and three play for Corinthians, on the basketball team. These are more varied. The two who play volleyball have a greater interest. And the three who play basketball have lower performance and interest in the classroom. They are less interested in the class content.

**Pergunta 4:** Como é o senso de atenção na sala de aula dos estudantes envolvidos em esportes comparado com os estudantes que não praticam esportes?

**Question 4:** How do you feel the attention of students involved in sports compares to non-athletic students?

**Resposta 4:** Os estudantes que praticam esportes para o colégio têm um comprometimento maior com o estudo em sala de aula. O comprometimento reflete na nota. São estudantes que acabam indo bem. Tem um bom desempenho em nota. Conseguem ter uma melhora no desempenho escolar.

**Answer 4:** Students who play sports for the high school (not for the club teams) have a greater commitment to studying in the classroom. Commitment is reflected in the grade. These students are the ones who end up doing well. They receive good grades. They can have a better academic performance.

**Pergunta 5:** Quais são os benefícios acadêmicos para os estudantes envolvidos em esportes?

**Question 5:** What are the academic benefits of having your students involved in sports?

**Resposta 5:** Não consigo te dizer se percebo diferença por conta do esporte. Como história, eu acabo entrando pouco em sala de aula, eu tenho uma percepção mais limitada do desenvolvimento deles. Mas eu creio que beneficia sim. Ajuda sim.

**Answer 5:** I cannot tell you if I notice a difference due to the sport. Since I am a history teacher, I end up not being with the students as often, so I have a more limited perception of their development. But I believe it does benefit. Yes, it helps.

**Pergunta 6:** Os estudantes que praticam esportes têm menos tempo em sala de aula por causa do calendário dos treinos e jogos? Se sim, isso afeta o rendimento dos estudantes?
**Question 6:** Do student-athletes have less classroom time due to practice and game schedules? If so, how do you feel that this affects the students?

**Resposta 6:** Alguns casos sim. Os que fazem parte dos jogos escolares, eles têm que perder alguns dias de aula. Mas eles conseguem fazer a recuperação. Eles não se prejudicam muito. Eles ficam no máximo uns 3 dias fora. Se afeta no desempenho, eu não vejo afetando no prejuízo. São estudantes que sempre vem muito motivados. E acabam recuperando os conteúdos perdidos e as tarefas que ficaram para trás. Já tivemos casos de alguns alunos que jogam futebol e basquete que foram para competições e ficaram semanas fora. E depois voltaram para as aulas. E não tem muito comprometimento e são mais relapsos a sala de aula. Então eles acabam não indo atrás quando voltam. É relativo. Os alunos que estão envolvidos com esportes da escola, saem com um benefício bem maior. Tem essa relação e proximidade. Fazer parte e ter um sentimento de pertencimento. Estão jogando pela escola. E os que jogam fora da escola não é tanto. Para eles, o esporte não está vinculado com a escola. Enquanto os que jogam pela escola, eles têm um vínculo maior pela escola.

**Answer 6:** In some cases yes. Those who take part in school games (not for clubs) have to miss a few days of school. But they managed to recover. This does not hurt them much. They stay away for a maximum of 3 days. If it affects performance, I do not see it in their grades. These are students who are always very motivated (students who play for the school). And they end up recovering lost content and tasks that were left behind. On the other hand, we have already had cases of some students who play soccer and basketball (club sports) who went to competitions and were away for weeks. And then they went back to class. After this, they do not have much commitment and are more relaxed in the classroom. So, they end up not going back to the material when they come back. It is relative. Those who are involved in school sports, leave with a much greater benefit. There is this sense of belonging and proximity between sports and the school. They feel like part of the school and have a feeling of belonging. They are playing for the school. And those who play outside of school do not have the same feeling. For them, sport is not linked to school. While those who play for the school, they have a greater bond with the school.
## Appendix D

### Demographics

#### Teachers

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<th>Gender</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Stable Union</td>
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| Average Age | 41,17 years old |

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| Average Years of Teaching | 7 years |

| Average Years at Ernesto Alves | 2,83 years |

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<tbody>
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#### Both Parents and Teachers

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| Average Age | 43,07 years old |

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<tr>
<td>Two kids</td>
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| Average Age of Children | 15,45 years old |

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#### Parents

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</thead>
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<tr>
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| Average Age | 44,50 years old |

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0,00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One child</td>
<td>28,57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two kids</td>
<td>71,43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Average Age of Children | 15,45 years old |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports Played By Children</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>50,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>25,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>25,00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

Text Message to Parents

In Portuguese:

Meu nome é Felipe Rocha, e sou de Santa Cruz do Sul. Estou fazendo uma parceria com a Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Ernesto Alves de Oliveira para completar o meu projeto de pesquisa de doutorado da Universidade de Memphis, localizada nos Estados Unidos. O nome do meu projeto é O Impacto Acadêmico que o Esporte Traz nos Jovens – Um Foco Especial em um Grupo de Brasileiros. Para o meu projeto de pesquisa, é necessário entrevistar pais e professores que têm pré-requisitos específicos para o propósito do estudo. O propósito da pesquisa é estudar, analisar, e discutir os pontos acadêmicos positivos e negativos que resultam em jovens entre as idades de 12 e 17 anos a partir da prática do esporte. Nesse projeto de pesquisa, a única instituição acadêmica é a Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Ernesto Alves de Oliveira. Tendo isso em mente, o senhor(a) se encaixa com os pré-requisitos do estudo. Se o senhor(a) gostaria de participar, por favor avise a administração da escola e a mim, junto aos horários que estiver disponível. As entrevistas vão ser online via Zoom e vão demorar 30-40 minutos ou menos. O meu número de telefone do WhatsApp é (51) 99766-7898, e coloco-me ao seu dispor para esclarecer qualquer dúvida. Desde já agradeço a tua ajuda e colaboração.

In English:

My name is Felipe Rocha, a native of Santa Cruz do Sul. I am partnering with Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Ernesto Alves de Oliveira (Ernesto Alves de Oliveira School) to conduct my research project to complete my Doctorate of Liberal Studies degree at The University of Memphis. The name of the project is The Academic Impact of Sports on Teenagers – A Special Focus on a Brazilian Population. For my research project, it is necessary to interview a set number of parents and teachers who have specific requirements for the study. The purpose of my research is to study, analyze, and discuss the positive and negative academic outcomes that result from teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 years old from practicing sports. In this research project, the target academic institution will be Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Ernesto Alves de Oliveira (Ernesto Alves de Oliveira School). With that being said, you meet the requirements of the study. If you would like to participate, please let the school administration know along with the times that you are available. Interviews will be online and will take 30-40 minutes or less.
Appendix F

Official Collaboration Letter

Estado do Rio Grande do Sul
Secretaria da Estado do Rio Grande do Sul
Secretaria da Educação - 6º Coordenadoria Regional de Educação
E.E.E.M. ERNESTO ALVES DE OLIVEIRA
Travessa Sergipe, 145 - CEP 96.810-220 - Santa Cruz do Sul – RS.
Fone (051) 3711-3845 – ernestoaliveira06cre@educacao.rs.gov.br

June 12, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

This is an official letter from Escola Estadual de Ensino Médio Ernesto Alves de Oliveira (Ernesto Alves de Oliveira School) stating that we are glad to collaborate in Felipe Rocha’s study called The Academic Impact of Sports on Teenagers - A Special Focus on a Brazilian Population. This document officially allows The University of Memphis doctoral student, Felipe Rocha, to interact and interview the parents of our students as well as teachers of our school.

Felipe approached us back in 2022 and has been very diligent and communicative about his plans. We are aware that he is going to interview parents and teachers in the second half of this year, 2023. The school will help Felipe to find the appropriate parents and teachers to participate in his study according to the population’s requirements. We are also going to provide a private room for parents and teachers to communicate with Felipe on an online platform.

The Ernesto Alves de Oliveira School’s directors are willing to collaborate with Felipe’s study throughout all stages of the process. We look forward to seeing the finished product and the results of the study. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Business and Administration Office at +55 51 99898-6888 or at +55 51 3711-3845.

Sincerely,

Janaina Andréa Halmenschlager Venzon

Principal

Janaina A. H. Venzon

Diretora

6º CRE-ID2415623/01