

**ATHLETE IDENTITY AND SATISFACTION OF STUDENT-ATHLETES IN
SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE
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UNIVERSITY**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original thesis work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or any other award.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to God for his grace, love, and peace, which have enabled me to get this far. I also dedicate this thesis to my family, particularly my daughter Ashley, my wife Herody, as well as my father and mother, for their unwavering love and support throughout this research.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AI	Athletic Identity
AIMS	Athletic Identity Measurement Scale
AIQ	Athletic Identity Questionnaire
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AS	Athlete Satisfaction
EAUSF	Eastern Africa University Sports Federation
IVT	Identity-Verification Theory
JKUAT	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
KNFL	Kenya National Federation leagues
KU	Kenyatta University
KUSA	Kenya University Sports Association
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Athlete satisfaction:	A positive, affective state resulting from a complex evaluation of the structures, processes, and outcomes associated with the athletic experience.
Athlete:	A person who is trained or skilled in exercises, sports, or games requiring physical strength, agility, or stamina.
Athletic identity:	It refers to the degree to which an individual identifies with the athlete's role and looks to others for acknowledgment of that role.
Exclusivity:	The high value of athletic functioning in relation to other daily activities
External components:	Proposed athletic identity model that includes social identity and exclusivity and influenced by society and groups like family and friends.
Identity facets:	The different aspects of oneself that make one who they are
Internal components:	The proposed athletic identity model that consists of self-identity, positive affectivity, and negative affectivity and influenced by individual perceptions and evaluation of the athlete's role.
Intramural sports:	Recreational sports that are organized and played within a particular institution, usually an educational institution, for the purpose of fun and exercise
Negative affectivity:	The degree to which an individual feels uncomfortable or distressed in response to unfavourable outcomes of sport engagement.
Personality:	It refers to a combination of a referee's behavioural attributes that bring out their distinct character.
Positive affectivity:	the degree to which an individual feels good or encouraged in response to desired outcomes of athletic engagement.

Positive affectivity:	The extent to which an athlete feels satisfied or inspired in response to desired outcomes of athletic engagement.
Role conflict:	The discord that arises when the demands of two or more of athlete roles for example being a student and athlete are incompatible, which can lead to stress, anxiety, and decreased performance in one or all of the roles.
Self-identity:	The individual's level of self-awareness about their role as an athlete.
Social identity:	The degree to which an individual's role as an athlete is understood and valued by society.
Subscale level identity:	Refers to a specific area of interest or focus within a larger scale that measures different aspects of identity.
Subscale level satisfaction:	Refers to a specific area of interest within a larger scale, such as athlete satisfaction, focusing on personal, and team, competitive, social, or general aspects.

ABSTRACT

Athletic Identity and Satisfaction are important aspects that form part of how a student-athlete perceives himself or herself and how they are viewed by society. Satisfied student-athletes perform better in sports and can feel more integrated into their teams. It remains unclear how athlete identity and satisfaction are influenced by student-athletes demographic characteristics of level of competition, year of study, age, and gender due to sparse literature, particularly in Kenya. The purpose of this study was to examine the status of selected Kenya University student-athletes identity and satisfaction. The specific objectives were to determine the status of athlete identity and satisfaction in relation to gender, age, year of study, and level of competition among selected Kenya University student-athletes, to examine the relationship between athlete identity and athletic satisfaction among selected Kenya University student-athletes, and to determine whether level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study have a significant influence on athlete identity and satisfaction among selected Kenya University student-athletes. Using an analytical cross-sectional design, the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale-Plus (AIMS-Plus), and the Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ), a total of 309 (52.4% males and 47.6% females) Kenya University student-athletes participated in the study. Results showed that female student-athletes had a slightly stronger athlete identity (4.00 ± 0.478) compared to males (3.93 ± 0.503), but Pearson correlation showed no statistically significant relationship between athlete identity and gender ($r(308) = -0.064, p = .264$). Female student-athletes had stronger athlete satisfaction (4.24 ± 0.443) than males (4.09 ± 0.576), and Pearson correlation revealed a statistically significant relationship based on gender of student-athletes ($r(308) = -0.135, p = .017$). Pearson correlation indicated a negative and statistically significant relationship between student-athlete self-identity and gender ($r(308) = -0.171, p = .003$). A linear multiple regression revealed that selected demographic characteristics such as level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study collectively explained a small proportion of change (3.5%) in student athlete identity (R^2 adjusted = .035, $F(4, 263) = 3.391, p = .010$) and (3.2%) in athlete satisfaction (R^2 adjusted = .032, $F(4, 263) = 3.210, p = .013$). It was concluded that the athlete identity of selected Kenya University student athletes is strong and similar between males and females. It was also concluded that Kenya University student-athletes have high levels of athlete satisfaction, which vary by gender. Furthermore, Kenya University student-athletes have a low perception of themselves as athletes (self-identity), which significantly varies by gender, where male student-athletes show a relatively weaker self-identity than their female counterparts. It was also noted that respondent demographic characteristics such as level of competition, year of study, age, and gender have a weak influence (3.2%) on athlete satisfaction among Kenya University student-athletes, where only level of competition and gender predicted athlete satisfaction. It was recommended that Kenya universities sports departments and sports practitioners, in collaboration with coaches, should design programs (such as student-athlete mentorship) to help student-athletes navigate rigorous training and competition schedules that affect their identity. Further studies are needed to investigate athlete identity and satisfaction beyond demographic characteristics, such as examining variables like coach leadership, education goals, and injuries, to present robust and comprehensive information and contribute to the sparse literature on the subject.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Athlete identity (AI) is a construct that has been used to describe the extent to which an individual identifies with their athletic role. It refers to the degree to which an individual identifies with and relates to their role as an athlete (Parker et al., 2022). Studies suggest that solid and healthy AI perpetuates other facets of identity in an individual, leading to increased self-confidence, discipline, a strong emotional connection to sport, and positive social interactions (Edison et al., 2021; Griffith & Johnson, 2002). In other words, AI is a psychological construct that influences an athlete's sense of self-worth, which is developed from athlete self-reference as well as others perceptions of the individual in relation to their athletic role. AI is affected by several factors such as training, regular diet, competition (Turkeli, 2020), career transition, age, gender, academic, and social levels (Quinaud et al., 2020). However, as Quinaud et al. (2020) stated, traditional research has focused on single-level considerations for simple test interpretation, assuming associated limitations to this approach. Additionally, there are a few studies on athlete identity, especially in Africa, and Kenya investigated University student athlete identity all the way to its subscale levels.

The AI of University student athletes is essential because it can define their commitment to their athlete role and the overall performance of University sports. However, it is important to recognize that AI is a dynamic and developing construct that can be affected by personal factors such as age, gender (Stambulova, 2016), academic level, type of sport, and level of competition (Quinaud et al., 2020). For

example, athlete identity has been shown to decrease with age, but gender has been established to have no determining role in athlete identity (Martin & Fogarty, 2014).

Young athletes AI (10–15 years) has been reported to increase with age but then plateau (Edison et al., 2021). Given that University student athletes have varying ages and lifestyle transitions compared to young athletes, assessing their AI can provide crucial insight that can inform their coaches on the best ways to support them in their sport pursuits. Evidence also suggests AI correlates positively with the level of competition because it is associated with athlete achievements (Edison et al., 2021).

The level of competition is perceived as success or lack thereof, which can influence an athlete's AI. However, mismatches between athlete level of competition and AI have been reported, but this was associated with the risk of disordered eating (Palermo & Rancourt, 2019). Varying results showed that AI is less determined by current sport competition levels (McGinley et al., 2022). The reviewed literature on level of competition and AI implies careful generalization of their findings because different methodologies and measures involved led to varying outcomes. For example, McGinley et al. (2022) examined the influence of level of competition on AI with injured and pre-injured youth athletes, while Palermo and Rancourt (2019) investigated the effect of level of competition on athlete AI with eating disorder as a moderating factor.

Another vital construct in the performance of student athletes is athlete satisfaction (AS). AS refers to the level of contentment student-athletes have with their sporting ability and the sport (Davis et al., 2019). Empirical evidence alludes to the presence of a relationship between AS and student athlete sport performance. The coach-athlete relationship is a key determinant in AS (Contreira et al., 2023). The quality of the

relationship between student athlete and coach can create an environment that favors or disfavors AS, subsequently impacting their sporting performance. Davis et al. (2019) argued that communication strategies between student-athletes and coaches are imperative because they can help enhance the relationship, leading to improved AS. The study, however, points out that the coach-athlete relationship is cyclical, implying that the relationship may be affected when the quality of communication fluctuates, hence impacting AS.

Athletes' perception of balance in role and engagement in the team (team task contribution) enhances AS (Eys et al., 2007). Assigning student-athlete leadership roles (formal or informal) is one way to influence the team members to feel integrated in the sport, which increases their AS. Although most literature has focused on formal leadership in sport, such as coaches and managers, empirical evidence emphasizes the importance of athlete leadership due to its ability to increase team engagement, which is essential to enhancing AS. Furthermore, athletes feel satisfied if their sense of competence, autonomy, and relatedness is gratified (Banack et al., 2011). Similarly, the notion of teamwork among athletes is a deeply ingrained value that strongly contributes to their satisfaction (Mwanga et al., 2017).

Empirical and anecdotal evidence shows the importance of social demographic characteristics (gender, age, year of study, level of competition) on student AS. For example, the age of players' influences satisfaction in sports and physical activity in both younger and older players alike, showing an inclination toward different satisfaction components (Kuhn & Revolutions, 2017). A student athlete's academic year of study may have a bearing on their satisfaction because athlete satisfaction is a

product of performance progress, goal achievement, and group integration (Foster & Huml, 2019).

Academic progress and athlete goals may conflict, affecting AS, especially among student athletes in their final academic year. Furthermore, participating in competitions at levels perceived as prestigious fosters student-athlete satisfaction. A high level of competition influences AS because it is viewed as an integral achievement by student athletes (Rhind et al., 2011; Unruh et al., 2005). Although the reviewed literature shows adequate research on social demographic characteristics of AS, the identified studies reveal that they are often investigated separately, and few have attempted to establish how these attributes can concurrently influence AS, particularly among University student athletes.

In addition, few studies have looked into the impact of AI and AS simultaneously, yet the two constructs have been established to be significant determinants of student athlete sport performance. In light of these findings and limited local studies on the subject, the present study investigated athlete identity and satisfaction among student athletes at selected universities in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Kenya University sports present student-athletes with an opportunity to excel and make up a significant proportion of professional athletes in national teams, like other countries. However, as Chumba (2019) established in Kenya, University student athletes are underrepresented due to structural and social constraints. Ndirangu et al. (2022) concluded that the low participation of student athletes in sports is due to the physical structure and perceived constraints associated with an unfavorable sporting

environment in most Kenyan universities. The study recommended enhancing University student athletes perceptions of sport to increase their participation.

Besides the aforementioned constraints, an initial review showed little attention to the literature on AI and AS from Kenya, even though their impacts on student-athlete sport performance have been previously reported in studies to be important constructs in student-athletes (Edison et al., 2021); Foster and Huml (2019); and Martin and Fogarty (2014). Moreover, the available studies, both on AI and AS, show variations in their methodological approaches, such as focusing on different measures, resulting in significant variation in outcomes leading to contextual gaps.

As Kenya is one of the hosts of prestigious University competitions, and as Kenyatta University stated while hosting the 10th All Africa University Games in the University according to Kenyatta University's website, <https://www.ku.ac.ke>, it is important to support Kenyan University student athletes with all the resources (physical and social) to ensure they perform at their best and hoist the Kenyan flag high like their counterparts in national teams. Although AI and AS are viewed as complex constructs that are influenced by several factors, including social demographic characteristics, understanding them from the local perspective enables coaches, team managers, and University sport departments to understand the best way to offer essential support to student athletes and enhance their sport performance. This study therefore sought to look into athlete identity and satisfaction among student athletes at selected universities in Kenya.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between athlete identity, satisfaction, and demographics (gender, year of study, and level of competition) among selected Kenyan University student-athletes.

1.4 Research Objectives

The broad objective of the study was to establish athlete identity and athlete satisfaction of student athletes from selected University students in Kenya.

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the status of athlete identity in relation to gender, age, year of study, and level of competition among selected Kenyan University student-athletes.
2. To assess the status of athlete satisfaction in relation to gender, age, year of study, and level of competition among selected Kenyan University student-athletes.
3. To examine the relationship between athlete identity and athletic satisfaction among selected Kenyan University student-athletes.
4. To determine whether level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study have a significant influence on athlete identity among selected Kenyan University student-athletes.
5. To determine whether level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study have a significant influence on athlete satisfaction among selected Kenyan University student-athletes.

1.5 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- a) What is the level of athletic identity among Kenyan University student-athletes?

- b) How does athletic identity vary among Kenyan University student-athletes by gender, year of study, and level of competition?
- c) Is there a relationship between athletic identity and athlete satisfaction among Kenyan University student-athletes?
- d) Do level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study have a significant influence on athletic identity among Kenyan University student-athletes?
- e) Do level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study have a significant influence on athlete satisfaction among Kenyan University student-athletes?

1.6 Study Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for testing:

Ho₁ Athlete identity is not significantly influenced by level of competition, year of study, age category, or gender among selected Kenya University student-athletes.

Ho₂ Athlete satisfaction is not significantly influenced by level of competition, year of study, age category, or gender among selected Kenya University student-athletes.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Coaches, athletic directors, and trainers in the institutions of higher learning in Kenya may not be aware of the important benefits of athlete identity and satisfaction among their athletes. The findings of the study may help them improve student-athletes' overall well-being by giving insights into the elements that influence athlete satisfaction, allowing them to build a more pleasant and supportive atmosphere for the student-

athletes. Understanding these aspects allows for the development of programs that can promote their well-being and performance.

Furthermore, such a survey can aid in identifying the precise aspects that contribute to athlete satisfaction and create tailored treatments and activities to meet the specific requirements of student-athletes. The study can help improve athlete satisfaction by fostering a helpful and happy environment, which in turn can have a positive impact on their overall well-being and athletic performance.

The study's benefits go beyond the confines of a single University. The findings can help coaches, athletic directors, and trainers build effective programs by providing useful insights to the greater sporting community. Understanding the factors that lead to athlete satisfaction allows sports professionals to create efforts that provide a good and supportive environment for athletes at all levels of competition. This can lead to a more fun and satisfying experience for all athletes, regardless of skill level or competition intensity.

Furthermore, the study can be used as a guide for sports policy management. Recognizing the significance of athlete contentment and well-being allows sports organizations to establish policies and laws that promote athletes' holistic development. This can include things like having enough resources, support systems, and opportunities for growth and development. Sports policy may ensure that athletes have a positive and gratifying experience throughout their athletic journey by boosting athlete identity and satisfaction.

1.8 Delimitations

The study focused solely on how student-athletes' identity and satisfaction may be influenced by factors such as the sport they play, gender, year of study, and level of competition among the specified population, leaving out other factors like athletes personal goals, coaching styles, and social support.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The study sought to find out the athletic identity and athletic satisfaction of University student-athletes from selected Kenyan universities. The study was limited by the use of athletes' self-reported questionnaires. The researcher, however, mitigated this by requesting that the respondents be as sincere as possible and assuring them of confidentiality.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

The study was carried out with the assumption that students in Kenyan universities participate in competitive sports and that participation in competitive sports contributes to athletic identity and enhances athletic satisfaction.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on social identity theory, self-determination theory, and identity-verification theory. These theories suggest that athlete identity, satisfaction, and demographics (gender, academic year of study, and level of competition) are all interrelated. Specifically, the theories suggest that athlete identity is positively related to satisfaction and that satisfaction is positively related to demographics such as gender, academic year of study, and level of competition.

This study will investigate these relationships by surveying a sample of Kenyan University student-athletes. The survey will explore the status of athlete identity, satisfaction, and demographics.

1.11.1 Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory (SIT) is a social psychological theory that proposes that individuals have multiple social identities and that these identities are important to their self-concept Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje (2002). SIT posits that individuals are motivated to maintain positive social identities and that they will engage in behaviors that they believe will help them achieve this goal.

In the context of athlete identity, SIT suggests that athletes are motivated to maintain a positive athlete identity Cartigny et al. (2022). This is because athlete identity is a social identity, and as such, it is important to athletes' self-concept. Athletes may engage in behaviors that they believe will help them maintain a positive athlete identity, such as training hard, competing in competitions, and supporting their team.

Research has shown that SIT is a valid and reliable theory of social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). SIT has also been shown to be a useful framework for understanding a variety of behaviors, including academic achievement (Aronson & Steele, 2005), physical activity (Pelletier et al., 2001), and sport performance (Burns et al., 2012). Athlete identity is a social identity that is defined by one's involvement in sport. Athletes with a strong athlete identity are more likely to identify with their sport, to value their athletic experiences, and to be involved in their sport (Brewer, 1991). , Cartigny et al. (2022)

Roberts & Treasure (2013) established that athlete identity is positively related to satisfaction with athletic performance; they found that athletes with a strong athlete identity were more likely to be satisfied with their athletic performance. SIT on athlete identity and satisfaction suggests that athletes are motivated to maintain a positive athlete identity and that athletes with a strong athlete identity are more likely to be satisfied with their athletic performance (Burns, N., Sparkes, A. C., & Lavalley, D., 2012).

1.11.2 Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a psychological theory of motivation that focuses on the innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. SDT posits that when these needs are met, individuals are more likely to be intrinsically motivated, engaged, and satisfied with their experiences.

In the context of athlete identity, SDT suggests that athletes who experience high levels of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are more likely to have a strong athlete identity. This is because these athletes are more likely to feel like they are in control of their own athletic experiences; they are more likely to believe that they are capable of succeeding in their sport; and they are more likely to feel connected to their team and community.

Research has shown that SDT is a valid and reliable theory of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). SDT has also been shown to be a useful framework for understanding a variety of behaviors, including academic achievement (Pelletier et al., 2001), physical activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and sport performance (Keegan et al., 2018).

Athletes with a strong athlete identity are more likely to identify with their sport, to value their athletic experiences, and to be involved in their sport (Brewer, 1991). Research has shown that athlete identity is positively related to satisfaction with athletic performance (Roberts & Treasure, 2013).

SDT suggests that athletes are motivated to engage in sport when they experience high levels of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Secondly, athletes with a strong athlete identity are more likely to be satisfied with their athletic performance.

1.11.3 Identity-Verification Theory

Identity-verification theory is a social psychological theory that asserts people want to be known and understood by others according to their firmly held beliefs and feelings about themselves and become motivated to maintain them through self-verification. Carter, M. J. (2013)

When people fail to gain self-verifying reactions through the display of an identity cue or through choosing self-verifying social environments, they may still acquire such evaluations by systematically evoking confirming reactions. Self-verification theory predicts that when people interact with others, there is a general tendency for them to make others see them as they see themselves. Swann, W. B. Jr. (2012)

Student-athlete identity is a social identity that is defined by one's involvement in sport. Student-athletes with a strong student-athlete identity are more likely to seek out and enjoy athletic and academic experiences, and they are also more likely to be satisfied with their academic and athletic performance. This is because they have a strong need to be seen as student-athletes, and they are more likely to receive positive feedback from others when they engage in athletic and academic activities Cartigny et al. (2022)

Research has shown that student-athlete identity is positively related to satisfaction with athletic and academic performance (Flynn, Wilson, & Nix, 2016). For example, one study found that student-athletes with a strong student-athlete identity were more likely to be satisfied with their athletic and academic performance, even after controlling for factors such as skill level and academic achievement (Biddle, Markland, & Sparkes, 2017).

Identity-verification theory has a number of implications for research on student-athlete identity and satisfaction. First, it suggests that student-athletes are motivated to seek out and maintain social interactions that confirm their student-athlete identity (Carter, M. J. 2013). This implies that student-athletes are more likely to be satisfied with their athletic and academic performance when they are surrounded by supportive and encouraging coaches, teammates, game tutors, and family members.

Secondly, identity-verification theory suggests that student-athletes may be more likely to engage in self-defeating behaviors when they are not able to maintain their student-athlete identity. For example, student-athletes who are injured or who are not performing well academically or athletically may be more likely to give up on their athletic or academic goals, Rubin and Pearson (2021)

1.12 Conceptual Framework

The study utilized a modified AI and AS development model concept for student-athletes adapted from Cieslak (2004). The model shows that AS is dependent on the importance ascribed to the AS factors. The independent variable AI was illustrated by external and internal components. External components comprise social identity and exclusivity, both representing the social identity factor of the student-athlete, which

characterizes "the extent to which the individual views himself/herself as occupying the role of the athlete" within society, while the exclusivity factor indicates "the extent to which the athlete's self-worth is determined solely by performance in the athlete role.

Internal components of sports participation include negative and positive affectivity, which is "the extent to which the student-athlete experiences undesirable or beneficial effects in response to sports outcomes." The result of these components is athlete satisfaction, which is illustrated by the athlete's team achievement, individual achievements, team process, and individual efforts and processes.

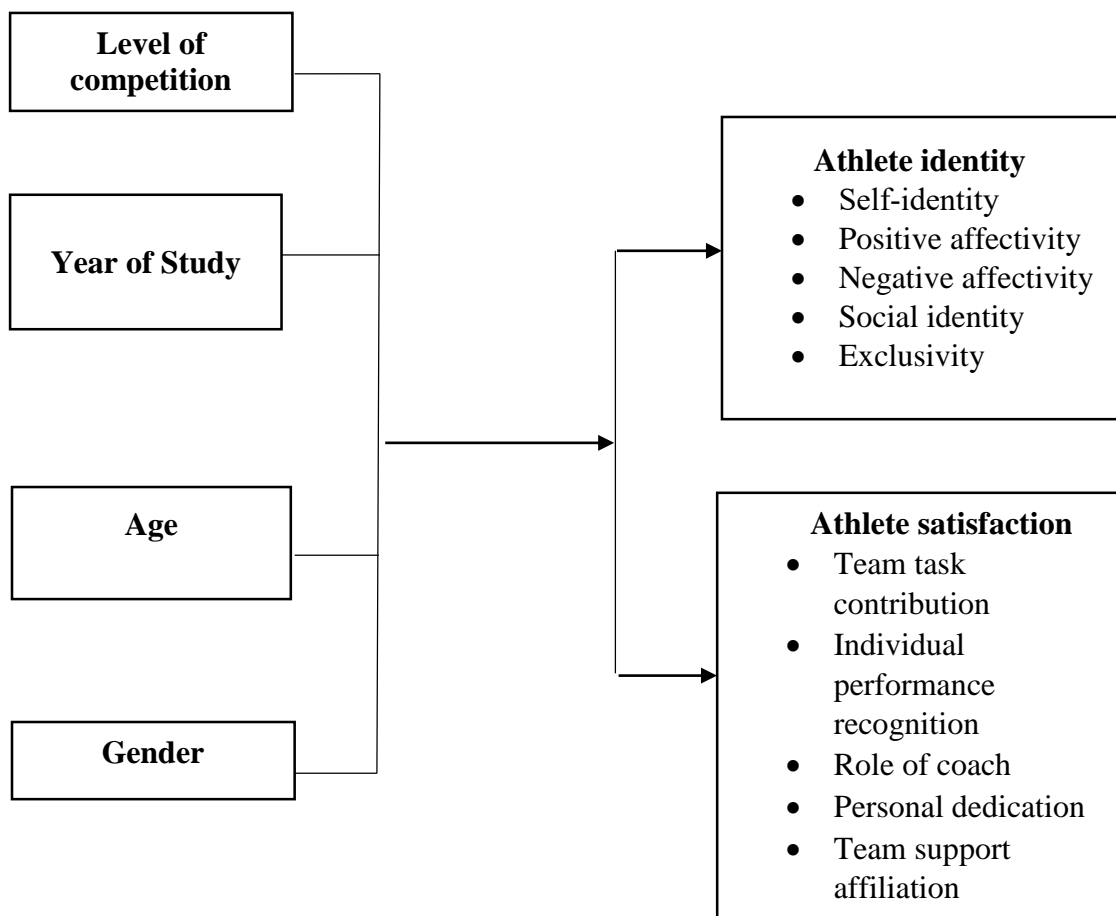


Figure 1.1: The Athlete identity and athlete satisfaction development model concept for student-athletes developed by researcher 2023

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Athletic Identity

Athlete identity is an individual aspect of self-concept that includes one's subjective assessment of who they are and how they fit into their social world with others. Athlete identities are the attributes and characteristics, social relationships, positions, and social group memberships that define one as an athlete (Elmore & Smith, 2018). Ren (2017) suggests that an athlete's perceived level of identity is an important measure for determining their sustainability in sports. Gionnone et al. (2017) note that athlete identity is how an athlete identifies with their role and seeks acknowledgement and understanding from themselves and others for that role. Therefore, athlete identity is built through the experiences, motivations, successes, and struggles involved in their respective sport roles.

2.1.1 Athlete Identity External and Internal Components

Martin et al. (2014) identified and classified AI sub-components into two groups, naming them external and internal components. They went on to classify social identity and exclusivity as external components. The degree to which an individual's self-worth is formed through involvement in an athletic position while identifying weakly with other roles such as student or buddy is referred to as exclusiveness.

Hilliard et al. (2017) explored the relationship between athlete identity and beliefs about rehabilitation among 80 college student athletes with injuries and how they adhered to rehabilitation. The researchers established that exclusivity informed college student athletes' behaviours and was associated with the participants' high levels of adherence to rehabilitation. Exclusivity is pivotal because it can suggest how student athletes

perceive their athletic role, consequently influencing their performance and commitment to that role. Hilliard et al. (2017), however, warned that overemphasizing exclusivity could lead to college student athletes devoting their focus to their athletic role.

Martin et al. (2014) defined social identity as the extent to which an individual sees himself or herself as occupying the role of an athlete, whereas exclusivity is defined as the extent to which an individual's self-worth is established through participation in an athletic role while identifying weakly with other roles such as student or friend. Rees et al. (2015) recommended the need to incorporate an individual sense of self, which can be a powerful determinant in student athletes' behaviours and performance in sport. The researchers also suggested that social identity forms the groundwork for the development of sport groups, behaviours, and support and stress appraisal, which are essential in student athletes' pursuit of their athletic and academic careers. Given the importance of social identity, it was imperative for this study to investigate the social identity component of Kenyan University student athletes to guide coaches, University career counsellors, and sports departments. Rintaugu et al. (2020), in an investigation of the motives of 242 male University student soccer players, identified social identity as one of the major reasons for male students' participation in soccer.

The ability of student-athletes to display their skills in sport is a crucial social component that keeps many University students committed in their athletic roles. The study concluded that sport trainers should consider social roles when planning their trainings and competitions. The present study is also intended to establish the effect of the social component on student athlete identity.

The internal sub-components of AI comprise negative affectivity, self-identity, and positive affectivity. An athlete can experience negative affectivity if he or she goes through negative emotions as a result of unwanted sports outcomes, while self-identity can be achieved when a student perceives himself or herself as an athlete. Positive affectivity refers to athletes' positive emotions and expressions, including cheerfulness, pride, enthusiasm, energy, and joy, as a consequence of how they interact with others and with their surroundings (Warner, 2021).

A study involving 506 Brazilian student-athletes established that contextual factors such as University type and sport competition level influenced athlete identity. The study further found that affectivity, specifically negative affectivity, had no significant influence on Brazilian college-student athletes. Student athletes can be emotionally affected (positive or negative affectivity) by individual and team performance, and it is necessary to determine the extent of the impact to enable coaches and trainers to take the necessary actions.

College sports can provide students with essential life skills and psychological benefits that can aid in their growth (Knudsen et al., 2020). Participation in University sports has also proven to help student-athletes develop leadership skills, teamwork skills, time management skills, improved academic performance, accountability, and responsibility.

However, there are also drawbacks; for example, college sports have been identified as the most time-consuming extracurricular activity (Aries, 2009). Athletes are challenged to balance several duties during one of the most developmental seasons of their lives due to the time commitment required to prepare and compete at the Kenya University national games.

2.1.2 Developing Student Athlete Identity

Athlete identity is developed through the acquisition of skills, confidence, and social interactions experienced during sport. Carless and Douglas (2013), when investigating the process and consequences of athlete identity development through narrative methodology among young elite athletes, established that athlete identity is developed through a combination of multiple factors that influence athletes personal, social, and professional lives. The study noted that elite sport culture is important in developing or resisting student athlete identity, which could start at an early age. Small (2013) also explored how role identity influences the development of male collegiate athletes' identities, and the findings concurred with Carless and Douglas (2013) that student athletes introduced to the sport at an early age exhibited strong athlete identities.

It is important to note that athlete identity is dynamic and may evolve over time based on the student athlete's experience, changing environment, or personal growth (Stambulova, 2016). For example, Small (2013) found that many senior student athletes demonstrated moderate athlete identity. Such findings show that athlete identity is not static because, as student athletes mature, they may need to balance other aspects of life such as relationships, education, or careers. An earlier survey involving 330 athletes found a connection between dynamic components of their personalities and athlete identity (Tušak et al., 2005).

In a recent systematic review involving ten studies examining the athlete identity of youth athletes, two out of ten studies found athlete identity increased during adolescence compared to later in their training (Edison et al., 2021). The review further identified that transitioning to a higher level of play during adolescence corresponded to a stronger sense of athlete identity (Edison et al., 2021). The above reviewed studies

assert that athlete identity is dynamic and that its development is complex due to various factors that affect it. In addition, the reviewed studies show a mixed approach and measurement of different aspects such as athlete identity and mental health, injured athletes, and others, leading to a contextual gap.

2.1.3 Benefits of Athlete Identity to Coaches and Sport Organizations

Athlete identity plays an essential role in shaping student athletes experiences, behaviors, and performance, which can have significant implications for coaches and University sports. Poux and Fry (2015), when examining the relationship between college athletes' motivation climate and athlete identity, established that the climate variables caring, task, and ego were positively associated with college athletes reporting high athlete identity. Based on their findings, the study argued that college athletes could benefit from having coaches who create and support a caring and task-involving team climate, which is important to ensure athletes perform at their optimum throughout (Poux & Fry, 2015).

Another study involving Black female college athletes identified that by fostering a sense of belonging, coaches, athletic departments, and administrators were able to enhance a sense of connectedness in athletics and the greater University environment for participants who are historically marginalized (Carter, 2018). These reviews demonstrate that athlete identity can have strong implications for University coaches, administrators, and sport departments seeking to develop a supportive and successful sport environment.

Athlete identity can contribute to the resilience and mental toughness of athletes (Jowett & Frost, 2007). As such, athletes who identify strongly with their sport role are better

prepared to handle and overcome setbacks, injuries, and failures and always perceive themselves as competent and successful. This makes them reliable and highly competitive, which gives coaches a meaningful opportunity to always bring out the best outcomes during competitions. However, despite the associated benefits of athlete identity to coaches and sport organizations, the concept is not fully interrogated, especially in Africa and to a greater extent in Kenya.

2.1.4 Athlete Identity and Individual Characteristics (Gender, Year of study, Age and Level of Competition)

The athlete identity of University student athletes can be influenced by various individual characteristics, among them gender, age, year of study, and the level of competition they engage in.

2.1.4.1 Gender and Athlete Identity

Gender may play a role in influencing athlete identity due to societal norms and expectations that often vary for male and female athletes. Traditionally, women have received negative stereotypes and gender biases, which could impact their self-perception as athletes (Beron & Piquero, 2016; Quinaud et al., 2020). As a result, women may be more encouraged to pursue non-sporting identities (Fuches et al., 2016; Sturm et al., 2011). According to Fuches et al.'s (2016) study, male athletes have been more valued and receive greater support, which tends to lead to strong identification with their athlete roles.

Studies on athlete identity and gender have given mixed results. Although Şekeroğlu (2017) established a significant difference between athletic identity and gender and that gender plays an important role in determining athletic identity, some studies indicate

no gender differences in student-athlete athletic identity (Beron & Piquero, 2016; Quinaud et al., 2020). Contrarily, López et al. (2015) found that female student-athletes reported higher levels of athletic identity on same-sex campuses when compared to co-educational campuses.

The different findings infer that although gender is an important feature when considering student athlete identity, it can interact with other individual characteristics such as level of competition and age, thereby affecting how individuals perceive themselves in the context of sport. Nonetheless, establishing the impacts of gender on student athlete identity guides the development of ideal strategies that are necessary to support their sport performance and career.

2.1.4.2 Academic Year of Study and Athlete Identity

The identity of University student athletes may change as they progress through their academic years. MacNab (2015) identified that student athletes' academic and sport goals created a conflicting impact on student athletes, subsequently affecting athlete identity. A first-year might still be adjusting to University life and the demands of being a student athlete, while seniors who have already adjusted to the lifestyle may depict a strong athlete identity. Some studies have shown no considerable relationship between academic year of study and athlete identity. For example, a study on the Determinants of Student-Athlete Grade Point average, "The Roles of Identity, Context, and Academic Interests," established that there was no significant difference in athletic identity between student-athletes in different academic years (Beron, 2020). Montcal (2019), upon examining Athletic Identity and Identity Foreclosure among Male Collegiate Student-Athletes, established that there was no significant difference in athletic identity between male student-athletes in different academic years.

A study by Landry (2018) on student-athlete academic level and athlete identity found a slight positive correlation between academic year of study and athlete identity in student-athletes across all academic years. In a longitudinal study involving Division III football players, Masten et al. (2018) established that academic identity increased while athletic identity decreased over the course of college years, but there was no significant difference in athletic identity between freshmen and seniors.

These studies suggest that the academic year of study does not appear to have a significant impact on athletic identity. The diverse findings on the influence of academic year of study on student athletes' identity underscore the need to concurrently examine how various individual characteristics influence athlete identity to provide more accurate findings on the subject.

2.1.4.3 Age and Athlete Identity

The age of University student athletes can influence athlete identity in several ways. Younger athletes may be more enthusiastic and open to new experiences, whereas older athletes might have more experience and a deeper sense of commitment to their sport. Some studies have found a relationship between athlete identity and age. For example, Machado et al. (2022) found that athlete identity was strongly correlated with younger student-athletes than seniors.

This suggests that younger student-athletes may place more importance on their sporting role than older student-athletes who are experienced and comfortable with the role. Fogarty et al.'s (2021) study involving University student athletes established that athlete identity declined with age. Given that age can affect an athlete's physical capabilities and recovery abilities, which can impact how they perceive themselves as

athletes, the findings appear consistent, but it is still crucial to establish how the various individual characteristics impact athlete identity when examined together.

2.1.4.4 Level of Competition and Athlete Identity

The level of competition in which college athletes participate can significantly influence their identity. Athletes competing at the highest collegiate level might see themselves as elite athletes, and their sport becomes a central part of their identity (Ahmadabadi et al., 2014). Conversely, athletes competing at lower levels might see their sport as a recreational pursuit or a means of staying active while focusing more on academics or other interests.

Quinaud et al. (2020), when investigating the influence of level of competition among 506 Brazilian student athletes (219 males and 287 females), established that sport competition level is a contextual factor that mostly influences student athletes' identities. Edison et al. (2021), during their systematic review, observed that playing in higher levels of competition during adolescence corresponded to a high sense of athlete identity. Participating at elite levels positively contributes to athletes' emotional connection to sport, which in turn has beneficial effects on performance and adherence to sport (Edison et al., 2021).

Sport's competitive level contributes to athlete identity variation among University athletes, where those competing at the highest level show high values in athlete identity (Quinaud et al., 2020). The dimension of the athlete's level of competition influences how athletes perceive and respond to their identity, making it a vital component in shaping their identity. Therefore, transitioning to a higher level of competition infers a strong positive perception that corresponds to a high level of athlete identity. It is also

important to recognize that athletic identity is a complex and multifaceted construct that can vary greatly from person to person. Additionally, individual characteristics can interact and influence each other. For example, a female athlete in her senior year competing at a high level might have a different athlete identity compared to a male freshman athlete at a lower competitive level. Additionally, external factors such as team dynamics, coaching style, and overall team success can also impact athlete identity emphasizing the need for investigating athlete identity from various angles, such as the influence of student athletes' characteristics on athlete identity as well as the relationship between athlete identity and athlete satisfaction.

2.1.5 Student-athlete's Competitive levels in Kenya

The levels of competition for student-athletes in Kenya vary depending on the individual's skill level and the sport they are involved in. However, there are a number of opportunities for students to compete at various levels, from intramural games to national and international competitions, as illustrated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Kenya University Student-Athletes Sports Competition levels

Level	Description
Intramural games	Organized within individual universities for their students.
University sports leagues	Organized by Kenya Universities Sports Association (KUSA)
National championships	Organized by Kenya National Sports Federations
International competitions	Organized by Eastern Africa University Sports Federation (EAUSF)

2.1.5.1 Kenya Universities Sports Association (KUSA)

KUSA is the national governing body for University sports in Kenya. It was founded in 1968 and currently has over 60 member universities. KUSA's mission is to promote and develop University sports in Kenya and to provide opportunities for students to participate in a variety of sporting activities, according to the Kenya University Sports Association website (www.kusa.or.ke).

KUSA oversees a wide range of sports disciplines, including athletics, football (soccer), basketball, rugby, volleyball, handball, hockey, netball, tennis, table tennis, chess, swimming, badminton, and many more. The association organizes tournaments, leagues, and championships in these sports throughout the academic year.

It also organizes various sporting events and competitions at both regional and national levels. These include annual championships, such as the KUSA National Games, where teams from different universities compete against each other. The association also organizes qualifiers for national and international University sports events.

2.1.5.2 Eastern Africa University Sports Federation (EAUSF)

According to the Eastern Africa University Sports Federation website (www.eausf.org), the EAUSF is a regional organization that promotes and develops University sports in Eastern Africa. It was founded in 2003 and currently has over 100 member universities from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan. EAUSF is mandated to promote sports among University students in Eastern Africa and to provide opportunities for students to participate in a variety of sporting activities.

The mandate of Eastern Africa University Sports involves promoting and developing University sports within the region. This includes creating opportunities for student-athletes to participate in various sporting disciplines and organizing competitions and championships, including the EAUS Games, which are held every two years.

2.1.5.3 Kenya National Federation Leagues (KNFL)

In addition to KUSA and EAUS, there are a number of national sports federations in Kenya that oversee and organize leagues for different sports disciplines. These include the Football Kenya Federation (FKF), the Kenya Basketball Federation (KBF), the Kenya Rugby Union (KRU), the Kenya Hockey Union (KHU), Athletics Kenya, the Softball Federation of Kenya, the Kenya Table Tennis Association, Badminton Kenya, and Chess Kenya, among others.

These federations organize leagues for both men's and women's sports at various levels, from the amateur to the professional. They provide opportunities for athletes to compete at a variety of levels and to develop their skills and talents.

2.1.5.4 Kenya, University Sports Intramurals Games

In addition to the national and regional sporting events organized by KUSA, KNFL, and EAUS, many universities in Kenya also organize intramural games for their students. As noted in a report by the Kenya Ministry of Education (2023), intramural sports are an important part of the student experience at Kenyan universities.

These games are open to all students, regardless of their skill level or previous sports experience. The emphasis is on participation and inclusivity, providing an opportunity for students to engage in sports and recreational activities in a fun and supportive environment as well as preparing them to join higher-level competitions.

2.2 Athlete Satisfaction

Chelladurai and Riemer (1997) defined athlete satisfaction as a positive affective state coming from a sophisticated appraisal of a team's or a player's experiences. In other words, it is the level of contentment, fulfillment, and happiness experienced by athletes in their sporting pursuits and overall athletic experiences. Athlete satisfaction is an essential aspect of sports because satisfied athletes are more likely to perform well, stay motivated, and be committed to their role, which has a positive impact on the team as well as individual performance (Burns et al., 2012). Burns et al. (2012) argue that athlete satisfaction is a complex psychological construct that results from athlete evaluation of processes, structures, and outcomes that student athletes associate with athletic experience.

2.2.1 Athlete Satisfaction Dimensions

Student athlete satisfaction is an important aspect in sport psychology and for practitioners because it can be used as a measure of individual and team performance through pathways such as compatibility in coach-athlete relationships and satisfaction with individual or team performance (Sullivan & Gee, 2007). Therefore, a classification and investigation of the various facets of athlete satisfaction presents a good approach to measuring the impact of athlete satisfaction on performance. The facets or dimensions are classified by the following criteria: whether it is team task contribution support, individual performance recognition, the role of the coach, personal dedication, or team support affiliation (Chelladurai & Riemer, 1997).

Although there is little empirical research on the five dimensions of athlete satisfaction, anecdotal evidence shows that team task contribution support enhances cooperation among team members towards achieving common goals by fostering collaboration, communication, and a willingness to help each individual student athlete succeed (Claudia, 2013). Team task contribution support encompasses the athlete performance of individual student-athletes and the overall performance of the sports team by positively impacting motivation and cohesion, mental well-being, skill development, performance accountability, and resilience (Claudia, 2013).

Tungpalan (2020) studied the sport motivation of state University athletes and established that most of them were highly motivated due to incentives and the awards and recognition they received. Therefore, recognizing individual performance (e.g., sports awards, sports scholarships) is essential as it not only boosts the morale and motivation of the individuals being recognized but also sets an example for others to strive for excellence and contribute positively to their communities.

In relation to the role of the coach, Banwell and Kerr (2016) alluded to the fact that coaches are not only responsible for instructing athletes in the technical aspects of their sport but also play a significant role in their overall development as individuals, among other things, by developing skills, tactical understanding, motivation and mentoring, goal setting, psychological support, evaluation and feedback, and performance analysis.

Johnson et al. (2011) added that a coach's behaviors can impact student athletes' feelings of stress, burnout, and mental health. Fikadu (2023) indicated that coaches play key roles in the career development of student athletes because the relationship between coaches and student athletes is prone to factors such as culture, communication, gender, and coaching experience. The reviewed literature demonstrates a sound argument showing that the role of a coach goes beyond just technical guidance. It encompasses various aspects that contribute to the holistic development of student athletes, ultimately leading to improved performance and personal growth.

Team support and affiliation play a vital role in influencing the performance of student-athletes. The solidarity, encouragement, skill development, and emotional support derived from being part of a team contribute to improved performance and overall athletic success (Cho et al., 2020). Cho et al. found a direct and significant relationship between perceived team support and affiliation and subjective well-being with 313 University student athletes from Singapore. The study recommended coaches and student leaders design strategies that enhance the subjective well-being of student athletes, which is important in promoting perceived team support and subsequently enhancing performance.

2.2.2 Athlete Satisfaction Contribution Factors

Athlete satisfaction can be affected by several key factors, among them performance and success, coaching and support, team environment, recognition and rewards, as well as facility and resource availability (Chelladurai & Riemer, 1997). A survey by Weiss and Amorose (2008) found that student athletes are more likely to be motivated and interested in their sport if they are satisfied with their athletic experiences. They established that student experience in sports and team environments can result in more effort, perseverance, and a deeper commitment to training and competition, ultimately leading to better performance. Gustafsson and Isoard-Gauthier (2018) alluded to the fact that a good team environment and coach support improve student athletes' self-esteem, confidence, and mental wellness. It is also important to acknowledge that the outcomes of athlete satisfaction can also be affected by team integration, individual dedication, and game strategies (selection strategy, competition tactics), which can vary from team to team and college to college due to different approaches applied by coaches; hence, a local study for local evidence is necessary.

University student athlete satisfaction may be influenced by a continuum of factors, and establishing the ones that student athlete satisfaction shows a positive inclination towards can help coaches and trainers adjust their strategies and capitalize on the benefits of high student athlete satisfaction (Mugala & Wamukoya, 2018). It is also crucial to recognize that University student athletes experience role conflict due to the need to balance academic and sport goals. As Colbert (2019) identified, role conflict and team social contributions are significant mediators of college student athletes' satisfaction. Therefore, it is imperative to interpret student athlete satisfaction findings

with caution given that these can affect University student athletes' commitment and subsequent performance in sport differently.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that athlete satisfaction can vary significantly from one individual to another, and factors influencing it might evolve over time. Coaches, sports organizations, and teams play a crucial role in understanding and addressing the needs of student athletes to ensure overall satisfaction and well-being.

2.2.3 Athlete Satisfaction and Individual Characteristics (Gender, Year of study, Age and Level of Competition)

Athlete satisfaction can be influenced by various factors, including individual characteristics such as age, gender, year of study, and level of competition. Researchers have conducted studies and surveys to gather data directly from student athletes to better understand the relationship between these individual characteristics and athlete satisfaction and inform strategies to enhance athletes' overall experience and well-being.

2.2.3.1 Gender and Athlete Satisfaction

Gender can affect athlete satisfaction due to differences in societal expectations, support, and opportunities. López-Gajardo et al.'s (2021) longitudinal study of 439 professional athletes showed that gender differences predict athlete satisfaction due to perceptions of fairness and equality in the treatment of male and female athletes. López-Gajardo et al. (2021) reported that female athletes placed more importance on relational and motivational aspects from the coach than their male counterparts. Coach behaviour is therefore an important aspect of athlete attitudes and can influence their satisfaction differently across genders.

Traditional societal and cultural norms can expose female student athletes to challenges related to gender bias, limited media coverage, and unequal funding compared to male athletes, subsequently negatively affecting their satisfaction. Dorsch et al. (2009) affirmed this when they established that male and female athletes had different satisfaction factors. Their survey concluded that males' satisfaction was predominantly driven by coaching practices, while females were more influenced by team dynamics and organizational support.

In another study by Harwood et al. (2000), female collegiate athletes showed lower levels of perceived competence and satisfaction than male athletes. Female athletes also reported seeking greater social support than male athletes. Smucker et al. (2010) found that female collegiate athletes expressed higher levels of satisfaction with their coaches than male athletes in a study on gender disparities in collegiate athletes' satisfaction with coaches. Female athletes valued coach assistance and communication more than male athletes valued coach expertise and performance outcomes.

In these studies, female athletes emphasize the importance of team cohesion and social support, which determine their satisfaction. Furthermore, the source of athlete satisfaction varies between male and female athletes, meaning the subject can be better understood by examining information from athletes in local settings (Kenya University student athletes) to enhance the quality of evidence and generalizability of the findings to the local context.

Overall, the above studies note that gender difference plays a crucial role in athlete satisfaction, and their findings can provide valuable insights for coaches and sport managers. By understanding the factors that influence athlete satisfaction, coaches and sport managers can tailor their coaching and management strategies accordingly and

create an environment that fosters the well-being and contentment of athletes, regardless of their gender.

Additionally, understanding the factors that contribute to athlete satisfaction can help coaches and sport managers create an inclusive and equitable environment and address potential disparities in satisfaction levels. This knowledge can help improve the overall athletic experience and well-being of athletes at Kenyan universities.

2.2.3.2 Academic Year of Study and Athlete Satisfaction

An academic year of study can lead to different levels of satisfaction between various academic years for student athletes. According to Pulido et al.'s (2020) study, satisfaction levels may vary throughout this time, with some athletes reporting lower levels of satisfaction due to the difficulties of adapting to increased academic and physical demands.

The changes in student-athlete satisfaction across academic years could also be associated with experiences, expectations, and perspectives as they progress through their college life. Killebrew (2020) in a survey with college athletes, established that athletes' skill development and experience within their sport affected their contentment as they went through their academic years. Athletes who perceived skill growth and achieved personal goals demonstrated improvement in their performance and increased satisfaction. The study argued that adjustment and transition may affect the satisfaction of junior student athletes due to the possible challenges of adjusting to college life, unlike seniors, who are more likely to have adapted to the environment.

Singh and Surujlal (2006) hypothesized that the University environment influences the overall experience of student athletes, including athlete satisfaction. A survey of 257

student athletes at four different Division II institutions established that an individual's environment has a significant influence on student athletes' satisfaction (Beattie & Turner, 2020). The study indicated that factors such as social support and academic demands play a crucial role in determining athletes' satisfaction. Beattie and Turner (2020) noted that seniors had a more extensive social network and connections within their teams and the broader college community, which attributed to enhanced overall satisfaction, unlike freshmen, who appeared to be still building these connections, hence their sense of not being fully integrated into the college culture. Hazzaa et al. (2018), with 226 Division I student athletes, also established that freshmen athletes had low athlete satisfaction compared to senior athletes.

The study attributed the findings to the expansive experiences of senior athletes and their relations with the school sports fraternity, which foster stronger team cohesion than freshmen athletes. Evidently, review studies show student athletes' satisfaction is influenced by their academic year but also imply that this happens through different pathways, including available support (academic and sport), facilities, and social support, which may vary from one University to the next, highlighting the need for localized studies to substantiate these assertions.

2.2.3.3 Age and Athlete Satisfaction

Age can play a significant role in athlete satisfaction. Younger athletes may be more enthusiastic and adaptable, but they might also face challenges related to balancing sports with education or other commitments (Fogarty et al., 2021). A study by Machado et al. (2022) found young athletes in their first and second years had high athlete satisfaction. Contrarily, Hut et al. (2021) established that the athlete satisfaction of older female college athletes was higher compared to the younger first- and second-year

student athletes. Older athletes may have more experience and resilience but could also experience physical limitations (Hut et al., 2021). The satisfaction of younger athletes might be affected by their ability to balance sports and education, while older athletes may be influenced by their performance and the potential for injuries to affect their satisfaction.

Caution should be taken when interpreting athlete satisfaction findings because different measures applied lead to different outcomes. For example, Hut et al. (2021) report high athlete satisfaction among older female athletes based on team practice, sport anxiety, and emotion dysregulation. In addition to the limited and recent literature on this concept, a discrete investigation of University student athlete satisfaction based on specific attributes (e.g., performance, coach, and social support) is essential to enhance the quality of evidence and add to the sparse literature.

2.2.3.4 Level of Competition and Athlete Satisfaction

The level of competition can significantly impact athlete satisfaction in that athletes competing at higher levels, such as professionals or elite athletes, may experience higher pressure, intense scrutiny, and greater expectations. Rhind et al. (2011) found that competition level played a critical role among student athletes who participated in individual sports in the United Kingdom. In another survey involving 325 student athletes from the national collegiate athletic association, I and II (NCAAD) from 4 regions in the US observed a significant difference in athlete satisfaction between student athletes in low-profile and high-profile sports (Swindell et al., 2019). The study suggested that the perceived importance and popularity associated with high-profile competitions are triggers for high athlete satisfaction.

According to Eys et al. (2010), athletes who competed at a higher level were happier with their sports experience. This was most likely due to a combination of variables, including increasing challenge and competitiveness, the opportunity to compete against superior athletes, and the sense of satisfaction that comes with higher-level success. Jones (2012) alluded to the fact that the level of competition, the coach-athlete connection, and the player's own ambitions have an impact on athlete satisfaction.

While reaching high levels of competition can bring a sense of accomplishment, it may also lead to increased stress and pressure, potentially affecting satisfaction levels. Athletes at lower levels might experience satisfaction from the joy of participation and camaraderie. In reality, athletes' perceived degree of competence influenced their satisfaction more than their level of competition (Maday, 2014). Athletes who thought they were more competent were more satisfied with their sporting experience.

From these findings, the level of competition is a significant factor in athlete satisfaction. However, other factors, such as the coach-athlete relationship, the athlete's personal goals, the athlete's perceived level of competence, the athlete's perceived level of support, and the athlete's perceived level of fairness in the sport environment, all play a role in athlete satisfaction, and investigating them is pivotal in enhancing the quality of literature on the subject.

2.3 Relationship between Athlete Identity and Athlete Satisfaction

The link between athlete identity and athlete satisfaction is complex and can vary depending on various factors, including, among others, individual factors, the nature of the sport, and the athlete's specific experiences. In other words, the relationship between athlete identity and athlete satisfaction is multidimensional and influenced by a range

of psychological, social, and situational factors. A systematic review of ten studies examining athlete identity in youth athletes found that athlete identity positively correlated with and increased athlete satisfaction (Edison et al., 2021). Although the review did not target student athletes, the finding infers that athletes who have a strong sense of identity and feel deeply connected to their role as athletes are more likely to experience higher levels of satisfaction. When being an athlete is a crucial part of their self-concept, they often find more fulfillment, purpose, and joy in their sports participation.

Burns et al. (2012) examined the relationship between athlete identity and satisfaction at the facets level and found that social identity and negative affectivity were positively related to athlete satisfaction, while exclusivity was negatively related to satisfaction. Burns et al.'s (2012) findings only demonstrate the complexity of the relationship between athlete identity and satisfaction, implying the relationship is multidimensional. In the context of University student-athletes, the area is hardly investigated, but given the unique nature of student athletes, the relationship between athlete identity and satisfaction can be impacted by multiple factors due to the various things the student athlete has to balance: academics, sports, and social life.

As Foster and Huml (2017) posit, excessive pressure to conform to the athlete's identity, either from internal or external sources, can lead to dissatisfaction among student athletes. For example, if an athlete feels overwhelmed by the expectations associated with their identity, it may lead to negative emotions and a decrease in satisfaction. As a result, there is a need to study and carefully interpret the potentially complex relationship between student-athlete identity and satisfaction.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

From the reviewed literature, it is apparent that it lacks a comprehensive exploration of the role of gender, age, level of competition, and type of sport in shaping athlete identity and satisfaction. These variables are crucial for understanding the unique experiences and needs of student-athletes in different contexts. By examining these variables, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to athlete satisfaction and develop strategies to promote well-being and success among student-athletes.

The review of empirical evidence briefly acknowledges gender differences in sports identity development, with male student-athletes reported to have stronger athletic identities than females. However, it fails to explore the underlying reasons for this disparity or the potential impact it may have on athlete satisfaction, as well as the contextual factors that influence gender differences in athletic identity. Furthermore, there were varying methodologies and measures from one study to another, leading to different outcomes and difficulties in appraising the quality of the evidence.

Although the reviewed literature shows adequate research on social demographic characteristics of AS, the identified studies reveal that they were often investigated separately, and few have attempted to establish how these attributes can concurrently influence AS, particularly among University student athletes.

Additionally, the identified review touches upon the influence of the level of competition on athlete identity, with higher-level athletes displaying stronger athlete identities. However, it does not delve into the specific mechanisms through which the level of competition impacts athlete satisfaction. This leaves contextual gaps in how the

challenges, opportunities, and expectations associated with different levels of competition affect student-athletes' identity and satisfaction as well as overall athlete performance.

Moreover, the literature review clearly notes that most of the research has been done in western countries, therefore highlighting the need for further investigation in this area among Kenyan University student-athletes so as to explore the potential disparities in athlete identity and satisfaction and get a comprehensive and generalized comparison of results. For this reason, this study delved into investigating the relationship between athlete identity, satisfaction, and demographics (gender, year of study, and level of competition) among selected Kenyan University student-athletes.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study was conducted using a cross-sectional analytical survey design. This is a non-experimental, quantitative research methodology that allowed the study to collect data from a group of student-athletes at a certain point in time while allowing multiple variables at the time of the data collection (Schmidt & Brown, 2019). With completeness at critical data points, the study design provided good control over the measuring procedure. It also improved the precision of the sampling procedure and gave clear data for the study's descriptive analysis (Peytcheva and Groves (2009).

3.2 Variables of the Study

The study's independent variables were participants' demographics of gender measured at the nominal level, level of competition measured at the ordinal level, and type of sport measured at the nominal level. The dependent variables were Athlete Identity (AI) and satisfaction (AS), both measured at scale level.

3.3 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in 10 counties in the Republic of Kenya. They include Embu, Meru, Kiambu, Nairobi, Kilifi, Mombasa, Siaya, Kisii, Nakuru, and Uasin-Gishu counties. These counties are home to significant major universities that have a long history of sports participation in the Kenya Universities Sports Association Games, have a large student population, and could form a large pool of potential participants for the study.

3.4 Target Population

The study targeted 1219 male and 1035 female University student-athletes competing in various sports in their University leagues or games: Kenya Universities Sports Association Games (KUSA, 2021), Kenya National Federation Leagues (KNFL), and the Eastern Africa University Sports Federation (FEAUS), as detailed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Population Table adapted from KUSA (2021) Kenya University Sports Association National, National Playoffs.

S/N	Sport	Male teams	Female teams	Number of players per team	Total number of student-athletes (Male)	Total number of student-athletes (Female)
1	Athletics	8	8	10	80	80
2	Badminton	6	6	8	64	64
3	Basketball	8	8	12	96	96
4	Football	9	6	18	162	108
5	Handball	6	5	12	72	60
6	Hockey	7	6	18	126	108
7	Netball	8	6	12	96	72
8	Table tennis	5	6	8	40	48
9	Tennis	6	6	8	48	48
11	Volleyball	8	6	12	96	72
12	Skating	4	4	12	48	48
13	Rugby	8	4	15	120	60
14	Lawn Tennis	6	6	8	48	48
15	Softball	5	5	15	75	75
16	Chess	6	6	8	48	48
Total (Male/Female)					1219	1035
Total number of student-athletes					2254	

3.5.1 Exclusion Criteria

The students who were excluded from the study survey were those who were not enrolled full-time at a University in Kenya, who were not currently participating in a varsity sport, and who were not willing to complete a survey about their student-athlete identity and athlete satisfaction.

3.5.2 Inclusion Criteria

To be included in the study, student-athletes must be enrolled full-time at a University in Kenya, currently participating in a varsity sport, and willing to complete a survey about their student-athlete identity and satisfaction. Also included in the criteria are aspects such as gender, sport, and academic year. These additional inclusion criteria would allow the researchers to explore how student-athlete identity and athlete satisfaction may vary across different groups of students.

3.6 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

A stratified random sampling method was used to select the study sample of student-athletes. This ensured that each subgroup of interest was representative of the categories of sports, allowing for the acquisition of a sample from the sports that best represented the study's entire population.

The Yamane (1967) formula was used to calculate the sample size, $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$, where

"n" is the sample size. "N" is the total population and "e" is the margin of error

calculated at 5%. $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$, $n = \frac{2254}{1+2254(0.05^2)}$, $n = 340$

% of male student-athletes in the sample - $\frac{1219}{2254} \times 100 = 53.7\%$ or 184

% of female student-athletes in the sample - $\frac{1035}{2254} \times 100 = 46.3\%$ or 156

Table 3.2: Strata/sub-groups of the study Sample

S/n	Sport	% (Male)	% (Female)	Sample size (Male)	Sample size (Female)
1	Athletics	6.1	5.1	11	8
2	Badminton	4.3	5.7	9	9
3	Basketball	8.3	7.9	15	12
4	Football	13.2	10.6	24	16
5	Handball	5.1	5.3	10	10
6	Hockey	11.1	10.6	19	16
7	Netball	5.2	10.4	11	18
8	Table tennis	5.1	5.5	9	9
9	Tennis	4.7	4.3	9	7
10	Volleyball	9.4	9.3	18	15
12	Skating	3.7	4.3	7	4
13	Rugby	8.7	5.3	16	8
14	Lawn Tennis	4.7	4.3	9	7
15	Softball	5.2	7.1	8	10
16	Chess	5.2	4.3	9	7
Total		100%	100%	184	156

3.7 Research Instrumentation

3.7.1 Recruitment and Training of Research Assistants

Three research assistants were recruited from among postgraduate students at Kenyatta University's departments of Recreation and Sports Management. Prior to the study's implementation, their duties and responsibilities were outlined in a two-day training session (Appendix D), which included but was not limited to: attending and actively participating in research team meetings; assisting with participant recruitment; obtaining informed consent and keeping accurate records for the project; safekeeping of the completed questionnaire; and data confidentiality.

3.7.2 Research Instrument

The study used a questionnaire to collect quantitative data from student athletes' respondents (Appendix C). The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A collected social demographic information about respondents, for example, gender, age, type of sport, year of study, and level of competition. Section B collected information assessing the athlete identity of respondents using the Athlete Identity Measurement Scale-Plus (AIMS-Plus). The scale comprised self-reported inventory statements that measured the importance that individuals place on the role of an athlete. The AIMS-Plus had 24 questions measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 =I strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral/agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). Respondents scored by selecting the level of agreement on the scale that most represented their views. The scores on each item were then summed up and converted back to the average, which ranged from 1 to 5). A score of 2.5 and above indicated average to strong AI, while scores below 2.5 represented weak AI.

The dimensions of the AIMS-Plus were also assessed. The three internal components consisted of the following:

- a) Self-identity: This subscale measures the extent to which an athlete's identity is defined by their sport. It includes items such as "I think of myself as an athlete," "My sport is very important to me," and "I spend a lot of time thinking about my sport."
- b) Positive affectivity: This subscale measures the extent to which an athlete experiences positive emotions related to their sport. It includes items such as "I enjoy participating in my sport," "I feel happy when I'm playing my sport," and "I feel proud of my accomplishments in my sport."

- c) Negative affectivity: This subscale measures the extent to which an athlete experiences negative emotions related to their sport. It includes items such as "I feel down when I'm not playing my sport," "I worry about my performance," and "I feel like I'm not good enough."

The items that measured self-identity were 1, 2, 7, 11, and 13. Positive affectivity 12, 14, 18, and 21, and negative affectivity 9, 10, 17, and 22.

The external components subscale consisted of the following:

- a) Social identity: This subscale measures the extent to which an athlete's social identity is defined by their sport. It includes items such as "My sport is a big part of who I am," "I identify with other athletes," and "I feel like I belong to a community of athletes."
- b) Exclusivity: This subscale measures the extent to which an athlete's life revolves around their sport. It includes items such as "I spend a lot of time thinking about my sport," "I make a lot of sacrifices to play my sport," and "My sport is more important to me than other things in my life."

The items that measured social identity were 4, 16, 19, 20, and 23 and exclusivity 3, 5, 6, 8, 15, and 24.

These subscales were essential because they provided insight into how athletes see themselves and their sport. They can also be used to assess the efficacy of interventions aimed at improving athletes' mental health and their performance in sports. AIMS-Plus had been successfully used and validated, for example, by Brewer and Cornelius (2001) and Cieslak et al. (2004).

Section C of the questionnaire assessed University student athlete respondents AS using the Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ). ASQ had 25 items measuring AS and was measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1-extremely dissatisfied, 2-moderately dissatisfied, 3-neutral, 4-moderately satisfied, 5-satisfied). The ASQ was originally developed by Harold and Chelladurai in 1998 as a 56-item instrument. However, for this particular use, it has been modified and condensed to 25 items. A common multidimensional scale that evaluates satisfaction across different aspects of athletic participation such as coach leadership, team climate, and competition level. The instrument has been found to be sound for assessing the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve athlete satisfaction (Dunn & Causgrove, 2011; Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004; Riemer & Chelladurai, 1998; Smith & Cushion, 2006).

Respondents scored by selecting the level of satisfaction on the ASQ that most represented their views. The scores on each item were then added to a total and then converted back to the average, which ranged from 1 to 5). A score of 2.5 and above indicated moderate to high AS, while scores below 2.5 represented low AS. The subcomponents of the ASQ (team task contributions, individual performance recognition, role of coach, personal dedication, and team support affiliation) were also examined. The scoring followed similar procedures as previously described with the scale.

3.8 Pre-testing of the Questionnaires

A pre-test was performed on the study survey questionnaire to determine its appropriateness, stability, and clarity. It was carried out on the Kenyatta University men's soccer team (18 players) and the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology women's hockey team (18 players). The two teams constituted an

equivalent of 10.05% of the sample for male student-athletes and 12.24% of the sample for female student-athletes. Ambiguous, confusing, and repetitive questions identified during the pre-test were removed or modified from the research instrument to enhance the study's reliability.

3.9 Validity and of Research Instruments

Carole and Almut (2008) define validity as the degree to which an instrument measures what it claims to measure. It is the ability of the study instrument to precisely assess what it was intended to measure (Heale & Twycross, 2015). In the current study, external validity was upheld by ensuring the sample was as representative as possible using stratified random sampling for the results to generalize the Kenya University student-athletes' perspectives towards their athlete identities and satisfaction. Face and content validity were achieved by ensuring the questionnaire captured all the study variables and evaluated all the study objectives.

3.9.1 Reliability of Research Instrument

Reliability refers to the extent to which results are consistent over time while accurately representing the study population (Zohrabi, 2013). Moreover, if the findings could be replicated using the same methodology and research instrument, to establish consistency, the study used a test-retest approach with a time interval of two weeks to ascertain the stability of measures and the internal consistency of the research instrument (Carole & Almut, 2008).

This entailed administering the questionnaire instrument to 18 soccer players from KU and 18 women's hockey players from JKUAT two weeks before the actual survey to allow for reliability testing. Participants took approximately 10 minutes to answer all the questions and provide their views regarding the appropriateness of the study

questions. The statements identified as vague, irrelevant, or repetitive were restructured to make them appropriate for the participants. This was to ensure the accuracy of the research instrument. For internal consistency, the coefficient alpha technique was used. The test-retest reliability recorded a high correlation of 0.874, indicating sufficient stability of the research instrument and a strong correlation between the participants' scores on the research instrument when they took the test twice. This means that the participants' scores were consistent over time, suggesting that the instrument is reliable.

Evidence from previous studies that have used the AIMS-Plus scale has reported the tool to be reliable, with Cronbach's alpha above .70. Lally (2007) administered it to 160 collegiate athletes, and the internal consistency of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha; a value of 0.851 and 0.874 was reported, indicating good reliability. In a study of 1514 male Japanese students, the Cronbach's alpha for the AIMS-Plus was 0.88 (Hagiwara & Isogai, 2013), indicating excellent reliability.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

Before data collection, approval was sought from the Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee (Appendix G) and the National Council of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) (Appendix H). The sports and games offices at the targeted universities were informed, and consent to participate in the study was obtained from them and the student-athletes. Research assistants helped the researcher administer the survey questionnaires to the targeted sample of athletes who had consented to participate.

The participants were recruited through presentations and information sessions held during team meetings prior to training at the universities' training arenas and at KUSA

competition sports arenas. The presentations emphasized the importance and potential benefits of the research, addressing any concerns or questions from the athletes.

Once an individual agreed to participate in the study, the investigator made an appointment for the questionnaire to be delivered. To ease data collection, the participants were classified according to counties and then to their universities. The researcher or research assistant explained the scope and importance of the study, assured confidentiality of the information given, and requested that the individual respond as honestly as possible and return the questionnaire to the researcher or research assistant once completed.

3.11 Data Analysis and Presentation

The primary data from the field was cleaned (removing duplicate answers and incomplete data sets, proper formatting) and coded into SPSS statistical software version 25 to enable analysis. The initial analysis was descriptive, that is, frequency, percentages, mean, and standard deviations.

Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to determine the status of athlete identity and athlete satisfaction in relation to gender, age, year of study, and level of competition of the responding University student athletes (objectives 1 and 2). In addition, Pearson correlation was used to examine the relationship between athlete identity and satisfaction of University student athletes, objective 3.

A linear multiple regression was used to determine whether level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study had a significant influence on athlete identity among selected Kenyan University student-athletes (objective 4). The regression model for objective 4 was as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1+ \beta_2X_2+ \beta_3X_3+ \beta_4X_4+\varepsilon$$

Where:

Y: Athlete identity

β_0 : constant variable

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$: Regression coefficients

X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4 : age, gender, year of study, level of competition

ε : Error term

Linear multiple regression was also used to determine whether level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study had a significant influence on athlete satisfaction among selected Kenyan University student-athletes (objective 5).The regression model for objective 5 was as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1+ \beta_2X_2+ \beta_3X_3+ \beta_4X_4+\varepsilon$$

Where:

Y: Athlete satisfaction

β_0 : constant variable

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$: Regression coefficients

X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4 : age, gender, year of study, level of competition

ε : Error term

To ensure multiple regression was tenable for these analyses, assumptions of normality using Shapiro-Wilk, multicollinearity (examining correlations), and homoscedasticity by observing scatterplots were examined. All levels of significance for this study were determined at $p < .05$. The results were presented in tables.

3.12 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

To conduct the study, the researcher applied for research permits, which included study approval and research authorization both from Kenyatta University's graduate school, as well as Ethical approval from Kenyatta University's Ethical Review Committee and eventually a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) and permission from the Deans of Students/Directorates of Sports and Games of the selected universities. The researcher explained to the respondents the purpose and significance of the study. The respondents were also given an informed consent form (Appendix A), which they signed and returned once they accepted to participate in the study. Respondents were also given demographic questionnaires (Appendix C), the Athletic Identity Questionnaire (Appendix D), and the Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (Appendix E), and to facilitate the identification of the student athletes for the study, the assistance of sports officers from the selected universities was sought (Appendix B).

The researcher assured respondents about the confidentiality of the information they provided by explaining how their personal information would be protected. This included safeguarding participants' privacy, keeping their information and responses secure and confidential, and allowing them to remain anonymous. Explanations or any clarifications on any query were done before the filling out the questionnaires.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the findings of the study in accordance with the study objectives. It presents information regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents and findings regarding the status of athletic identity and athlete satisfaction in relation to gender, year of study, and level of competition among selected Kenyan University student-athletes. The chapter also encompasses findings about the relationship between athletic identity and athletic satisfaction among selected Kenyan University student-athletes and whether the level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study have a significant influence on athletic satisfaction among selected Kenyan University student-athletes.

4.2 Demographic of Respondents

Table 4.1 shows respondent distribution based on gender.

Table 4.1: Respondent Distribution Based on Gender

Participants	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Males	162	52.4
Females	147	47.6
Total	309	100

A total of 309 student athletes responded to the study from the targeted sample size of 340, giving the study a response rate of 91%. Out of the total respondents, 52.4% (162) were male and 47.6% (147) were female student athletes.

4.2.1 Distribution of Respondents based on Academic Year of study

Table 4.2 shows the frequency of student athletes respondents based on the academic year of study.

Table 4.2: Responded Students and Athletes Based on Academic Year of study

	First year		Second year		Third year		Fourth year		Fifth year Sixth year	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Female	40	12.9	35	11.4	40	12.9	30	9.7	2	0.6
Male	49	15.9	52	16.8	29	9.4	32	10.4	0	0
Total	89	28.8	87	28.2	69	22.3	62	20.1	2	0.6

Results show that first-year students were the majority respondents at 28.8% (89), but most male respondents were in the second year of study at 16.8% (52). In relation to female respondents, most respondents were first- and second-year students, 12.9% (40) each.

4.2.2 Distribution of Respondents Based on Age

Table 4.3 represents the frequency distribution of responded student athletes by their age.

Table 4.3: Responded Student-Athletes Based on Age

	16-18		19-20		21-22		23-24		Above 25	
	Years		Years		Years		Years		Years	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Female	5	1.6	56	18.1	60	19.4	23	7.4	3	1.0
Male	7	2.3	77	24.9	58	18.8	20	6.5	0	0
Total	12	3.9	133	43.0	118	38.2	43	13.9	3	1.0

Results in Table 4.3 indicate student athletes in the age category 19–20 years were the majority of respondents (43.0%, 133), while most female respondents were between 21–22 years old (19.4%, 60). In relation to male respondents, the highest proportion were between 19 and 20 years old, at 24.9% (77).

4.2.3 Distribution of Respondents Based on Level of Competition

Table 4.4 shows distribution of student athlete respondents based on their level of competition.

Table 4.4: Responded Student-Athletes Based on Level of Competition

	Kenya							
	National							
	East Africa		Federation		KUSA		Intermural	
	University		League				Games	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Female	11	4.1	18	6.7	76	28.4	19	7.1
Male	10	3.7	35	13.1	94	35.1	5	1.9
Total	21	7.8	53	19.8	170	63.5	24	9.0

Table 4.4 reveals that over half of the student athletes who responded competed at the KUSA level of competition: females, 28.4% (76), and males, 35.1% (94). A few student athletes 7.8% (21) competed at the East Africa University Level.

Table 4.5 shows the distribution of the student athletes' responds based on the sport they competed at University level.

Table 4.5: Responded Student-Athletes Based on their Sport Participated in the University

Sport	Males		Females		Total Count	%
	n	%	n	%		
Football	25	15.4	28	19.0	53	17.2
Hockey	17	10.5	18	12.2	35	11.3
Basketball	16	9.9	18	12.2	34	11.0
Handball	12	7.4	21	14.4	33	10.7
Volleyball	13	8.0	13	8.8	26	8.4
Lawn Tennis	15	9.3	10	6.8	25	8.1
Badminton	13	8.0	10	6.8	23	7.4
Rugby	9	5.6	11	7.5	20	6.5
Softball	16	9.9	2	1.4	18	5.8
Table tennis	10	6.1	8	5.4	18	5.8
Athletics	3	1.9	5	3.4	8	2.6
Chess	6	3.7	1	0.7	7	2.3
Netball	5	3.1	1	0.7	6	1.9
Skating	2	1.2	1	0.7	3	1.0
Total	162	100	147	100	309	100

From the data in Table 4.5, student athletes mostly participated in football: males 15.4% (25) and females 19.0% (28). The second were student athletes who participated in

hockey: males at 10.5% (17) and females at 12.2% (18). Only a few respondent student athletes competed in skating: males (1.2% (2) and females (0.7% (1).

4.3 Status of Athlete Identity among Selected Kenyan University Student

Athletes

Objective 1 of the study was to determine the status of athlete identity in relation to gender, year of study, and level of competition among selected Kenyan University student-athletes. To assess this, student-athlete respondents were presented with the athlete identity measurement scale-plus (AIMS) questionnaire. The AIMS had 24 items designed to assess student-athlete participant identity. Each item was measured on a five-point Likert scale where 1 represents strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neutral, 4 agree, and 5 strongly agree. Respondents scored between 1 and 5 on each item, and cumulative scores were converted back to average (minimum 1 to maximum 5). The minimum score on AIMS, 1 implied a low athlete identity, while a maximum score of 5 implied a high athlete identity.

4.3.1 Status of Athlete Identity among Selected Kenyan University Student

Athletes in Relation to Gender

Table 4.6 shows the total scores and sub dimensions results of the AIMS according to student athletes' gender.

Table 4.6: Status of Student-Athlete Identity in Relation to Gender

	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
AIMS	female	4.00	0.478
	male	3.93	0.503
Self-identity	female	4.26	0.507
	male	4.04	0.707
Positive affectivity	female	4.37	0.518
	male	4.37	0.607
Negative affectivity	female	4.15	0.671
	male	4.14	0.711
Social identity	female	3.55	0.720
	male	3.55	0.698
Exclusivity	female	3.91	0.625
	male	3.81	0.668

The results in Table 4.6 indicate that the athlete identity status of the responded student athletes was strong and almost the same between female and male athletes, females (4.00 ± 0.478) and males (3.93 ± 0.503). Based on the AIMS subscale, Table 4.6 indicates that student athletes had strong positive affectivity, females (4.37 ± 0.518) and males (4.37 ± 0.671), but were slightly low on the social identity component, females (3.55 ± 0.720) and males (3.55 ± 0.698).

4.3.2 Status of Athlete Identity among Selected Kenyan University Student-Athletes in Relation to Age

Table 4.7 presents results of Kenya University student athlete identity in relation to their age.

Table 4.7: Status of Student-Athlete Identity in Relation to Age

Components	16-18 Years (n = 12)		19-20 Years (n = 133)		21-22 Years (n = 118)		23-24Years (n = 43)		Above 25 Years (n = 3)	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
AIMS	3.77	0.455	3.91	0.480	4.01	0.520	4.01	0.435	4.53	0.173
Self-identity	3.93	0.657	4.07	0.637	4.20	0.661	4.21	0.460	4.8	0.000
Positive affectivity	4.23	0.719	4.35	0.598	4.43	0.549	4.28	0.444	4.92	0.144
Negative affectivity	4.21	0.611	4.13	0.708	4.19	0.704	4.02	0.617	4.5	0.866
Social identity	3.35	0.476	3.49	0.726	3.59	0.743	3.67	0.606	3.73	0.115
Exclusivity	3.47	0.677	3.78	0.648	3.90	0.649	4.04	0.543	4.89	0.096

In regard to the status of student-athlete identity in relation to age, the results in Table 4.7 reveal that student-athlete identity strengthens by age, with younger student-athletes (16–18 years) demonstrating a relatively weak athlete identity (3.77 ± 0.455) compared to older ones (23–24 years) (4.01 ± 0.435). Results also demonstrate that social identity is the weakest among the five subscales of athlete identity in all five age categories.

4.3.3: Status of Athlete Identity among Selected Kenyan University Student Athletes in Relation to Year of study

Table 4.8 shows descriptive results of the status of responded student athlete identity in relation to their academic year of study.

Table 4.8: Status of Student-Athlete Identity in Relation to Year of study

Components	Year 1 (n = 89)		Year 2 (n = 87)		Year 3 (n = 69)		Year 4 (n = 62)		Year 5 & 6 (n = 2)	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
AIMS	3.98	0.494	3.89	0.474	4.00	0.525	3.97	0.474	4.44	-
Self-identity	4.03	0.668	4.19	0.548	4.16	0.755	4.22	0.500	4.63	-
Positive affectivity	4.38	0.579	4.35	0.656	4.41	0.514	4.35	0.469	4.63	-
Negative affectivity	4.17	0.670	4.14	0.672	4.18	0.591	4.08	0.854	4.38	-
Social identity	3.68	0.661	3.405	0.728	3.57	0.801	3.51	0.604	4.10	-
Exclusivity	3.86	0.687	3.72	0.610	3.95	0.669	3.94	0.592	4.59	-

From Table 4.8 results, student athletes show high and almost the same athlete identity across the six categories of the academic year, but student athletes in the second year demonstrate the lowest athlete identity in the group (3.89 ± 0.474). Among all the categories of student years of study, social identity was indicated as the lowest of the five subscales of athlete identity, for example, in the first years (3.68 ± 0.661)

4.3.4 Status of Athlete Identity among Selected Kenyan University Student

Athletes in Relation to Year of study Level of Competition

Table 4.9 shows results of the status of responded student athlete identity in relation to their level of competition.

Table 4.9: Status of Student-Athlete Identity in Relation to Level of Competition

Components	East Africa University Games (n = 21)		Kenya National Federation (n = 53)		KUSA (n = 170)		Intramural Games (n = 24)	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
AIMS	3.96	0.472	4.16	0.546	3.91	0.488	3.78	0.503
Self-identity	4.11	0.535	4.40	0.642	4.08	0.646	3.98	0.629
Positive affectivity	4.23	0.734	4.55	0.561	4.35	0.569	4.25	0.612
Negative affectivity	4.25	0.647	4.26	0.681	4.09	0.715	4.02	0.714
Social Identity	3.53	0.637	3.77	0.748	3.51	0.736	3.31	0.703
Exclusivity	3.93	0.636	4.07	0.689	3.80	0.636	3.63	0.683

The findings in Table 4.9 suggest that student athletes competing in intramural competition have the lowest athlete identity among the four categories (3.78 ± 0.503),

while those competing at the Kenya National Federation show the highest athlete identity (4.16 ± 0.546). It also indicates social identity is the weakest subcomponent of athlete identity across all four levels of competition, for example, the East African University Games (3.53 ± 0.637).

These findings imply that in general, the athlete identity of Kenyan universities student athletes is similar across genders, and therefore coaches and sport departments can use the same approach to maintain or strengthen it to benefit the sport performance of the student athletes and inform the sport University department to better manage student athletes. However, there is a need for enhanced team and individual building in Kenya University sports to increase student athletes' sense of self (social identity) in the team or the sport they participate in.

4.4 Status of Athlete Satisfaction among Selected Kenyan University Student

Athletes

The second objective of the study was to assess the status of athlete satisfaction in relation to gender, year of study, and level of competition among selected Kenyan University student athletes. To examine this, respondents answered a 25-item athlete satisfaction questionnaire (ASQ). Respondents scored between 1 and 5 on each item, and total scores were converted back to average (minimum 1 to maximum 5). The minimum score on the ASQ, 1 implied low athlete satisfaction, while the maximum score of 5 implied high student athlete satisfaction.

4.4.1 Status of athlete satisfaction among selected Kenyan University Student athletes in Relation to Gender

Table 4.10 show the total scores and subscale results of the ASQ based on student based on the gender of student athletes.

Table 4.10: Status of Student-Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Gender

	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
ASQ	female	4.24	0.443
	male	4.09	0.576
Team task contribution support	female	4.20	0.557
	male	4.04	0.776
Individual performance recognition	female	4.17	0.528
	male	4.02	0.644
Role of coach	female	4.10	0.648
	male	3.97	0.909
Personal dedication	female	4.01	0.532
	male	4.30	0.609
Team support affiliation	female	4.32	0.560
	male	4.17	0.743

The findings in Table 4.10 suggest that the athlete satisfaction status of the responding student athletes is high, with females demonstrating slightly higher athlete satisfaction (4.24 ± 0.443) than males (4.09 ± 0.576). According to Table 4.10, female student athletes demonstrated high scores on team support affiliation (4.32 ± 0.560) but low scores on personal dedication (4.01 ± 0.532) sub-dimensions of athlete satisfaction. Male student athletes show high on the personal dedication (4.30 ± 0.609) subscale but low on the role of coach (3.97 ± 0.909) subscale of athlete satisfaction.

4.4.2 Status of athlete satisfaction among selected Kenyan University student athletes in relation to Age

Table 4.11 shows the result of Kenyan universities student-athlete satisfaction in relation to their age.

Table 4.11: Status of Student-Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Age

Components	16-18 Years (n = 12)		19-20 Years (n = 133)		21-22 Years (n = 118)		23-24Years (n = 43)		Above 25 Years (n = 3)	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
ASQ	4.11	0.649	4.17	0.528	4.12	0.553	4.18	0.382	4.49	0.521
Team task contribution support	3.99	0.691	4.10	0.658	4.12	0.784	4.18	0.463	4.56	0.192
Individual performance recognition	4.11	0.606	4.08	0.614	4.08	0.640	4.160	0.410	4.14	0.247
Role of coach	3.90	0.912	4.08	0.749	3.94	0.915	4.13	0.547	4.13	0.115
Personal dedication	4.40	0.644	4.36	0.614	4.36	5.78	4.27	0.431	4.75	0.000
Team support affiliation	4.14	0.555	4.22	0.698	4.29	0.665	4.15	0.555	4.89	0.192

From Table 4.11, athlete satisfaction appears to be similar and to increase by age of student athlete, for example, student athletes in the age groups 16–18 years (4.11 ± 0.649) and 23–24 Years (4.18 ± 0.382). It also suggests that the role of coach was associated with the lowest student-athlete satisfaction across all the age categories.

4.4.3 Status of Athlete Satisfaction among Selected Kenyan University Student Athletes in Relation to Year of study

Table 4.12 presents descriptives of the status of student athlete satisfaction based on their academic year of study.

Table 4.12: Status of Student-Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Year of study

Components	Year 1 (n = 89)		Year 2 (n = 87)		Year 3 (n = 69)		Year 4 (n = 62)		Year 6 (n = 1)	
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
ASQ	4.23	0.521	4.10	0.557	4.18	0.539	4.14	0.449	4.37	-
Team task contribution support	4.16	0.658	4.01	0.719	4.10	0.776	4.20	0.551	4.59	-
Individual performance recognition	4.14	0.543	4.09	0.653	4.09	0.671	4.04	0.499	4.07	-
Role of coach	4.16	0.686	3.95	0.824	4.03	0.813	3.95	0.881	4.50	-
Personal dedication	4.33	0.610	4.36	0.570	4.32	0.608	4.38	0.499	4.76	-
Team support affiliation	4.33	0.643	4.10	0.699	4.39	0.583	4.13	0.702	4.33	-

The results in Table 4.12 suggest that student athletes have strong and almost the same athlete satisfaction despite their year of study, but first-year students have the highest athlete satisfaction (4.23 ± 0.521). Second-year athletes show slightly lower athlete satisfaction in the group (4.10 ± 0.557). The results suggest student athletes in their first year feel low on individual performance recognition (4.14 ± 0.543), while second (3.95 ± 0.824), third (4.03 ± 0.813), and fourth (3.95 ± 0.881) year student athletes show low satisfaction with the role of coach.

4.4.4 Status of Athlete Satisfaction among Selected Kenyan University Student Athletes in Relation to Level of Competition

Table 4.13 illustrates results of student athletes' satisfaction based on the level of competition they participate in.

Table 4.13: Status of Student-Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Level of Competition

Components	East Africa Kenya University National Games Federation (n = 21) (n = 53)		KUSA (n = 170)		Intramural sports (n = 24)			
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.		
ASQ	4.20	0.467	4.36	0.529	4.10	0.530	4.08	0.531
Team task contribution support	4.19	0.487	4.31	0.82	4.05	0.669	3.95	0.691
Individual performance recognition	4.10	0.434	4.37	0.521	4.01	0.608	4.02	0.596
Role of coach	4.01	0.736	4.11	1.05	4.01	0.748	3.93	0.626
Personal dedication	4.43	0.448	4.48	0.645	4.30	0.583	4.31	0.644
Team support affiliation	4.29	0.644	4.53	0.635	4.14	0.699	4.18	0.564

Results in Table 4.13 show that student athletes competing in intramural competitions had the lowest satisfaction level (4.08 ± 0.531). It also suggests that student athletes at all competition levels had low satisfaction with the role of the coach, for example, at the East African Games (4.01 ± 0.736) and intramural sports (3.93 ± 0.626).

These findings imply that personal dedication is critical to the satisfaction of female student athletes; therefore, University coaches and game tutors may need to foster open discussion with them to reinforce their perception and role as athletes to ensure they remain dedicated to their role and enhance satisfaction. The role of the coach is important to athlete satisfaction among Kenyan University student athletes; hence, improving the coach's abilities to understand them, for example, in terms of training and capabilities, could increase satisfaction.

4.5 Relationship between Athlete Identity and Athlete Satisfaction among Selected Kenyan University Student Athletes

The third objective was to examine the relationship between athlete identity and athlete satisfaction among selected Kenyan University student-athletes. This was assessed by first examining the correlation between athlete identity and selected demographics (gender, age, academic year of study, level of competition) of student athletes. A correlation between athlete satisfaction and selected demographics of student athletes was also performed. Lastly, a correlation between athlete identity and athlete satisfaction of the responding student athletes was done using Pearson Correlation.

4.5.1 Relationship between Athlete Identity and Selected Demographics of Gender, Age, Academic Year of study, and Level of Competition

Pearson Correlation was used to assess the association between athlete identity and selected demographics of Kenyan University student athletes.

Table 4.14 shows the results of the relationship between athlete identity and gender among student athletes.

Table 4.14: Correlation between Athlete Identity Subcomponents with Gender of Student-Athletes

Component	df	r	p
AIMS PLUS	308	- 0.064	.264
Self-identity	308	-0.171	.003*
Positive affectivity	308	-0.001	.991
Negative affectivity	308	-0.003	.955
Social identity	308	-0.002	.974
Exclusivity	308	-0.078	.172

p < .05

The data in Table 4.14 suggests an overall weak and negative relationship between athlete identity and gender among Kenyan University student athletes. It shows a very weak negative relationship between athlete identity and gender, but the relationship is not significant ($r(308) = -0.064, p = .264$). However, the relationship between self-identity and gender is weak but significant ($r(308) = -0.171, p = .003$).

Table 4.15 shows the results of the relationship between athlete identity and the age of student athletes.

Table 4.15: Correlation between Athlete Identity’s Subcomponents with Age of Student-Athletes

Component	df	r	p
AIMS PLUS	308	0.142	.012*
Self-identity	308	0.138	.015*
Positive affectivity	308	0.040	.481
Negative affectivity	308	-0.013	.816
Social identity	308	0.108	.058
Exclusivity	308	0.211	.001**

p < .05

Results in Table 4.15 suggest that athlete identity has a weak positive but significant relationship with the age of student athletes, which was statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($r(308) = 0.142, p = .012$). Additionally, negative affectivity has a negative relationship with the age of student athletes but is not significant ($r(308) = -0.013, p = .816$). Table 4.15 also shows that at the 0.05 level, exclusivity has a positive and significant relationship with the age of student athletes ($r(308) = 0.211, p = .001$).

Table 4.16 shows the results of the relationship between athlete identity and the academic year of study for student athletes.

Table 4.16: Correlation between Athlete Identity Subcomponents and the Academic Year of study of Student-Athletes

Component	df	r	p
AIMS PLUS	308	0.034	.555
Self-identity	308	0.110	.054*
Positive affectivity	308	0.009	.875
Negative affectivity	308	-0.026	.653
Social identity	308	-0.045	.428
Exclusivity	308	0.094	.100

$p < .05$

Based on the results in Table 4.16, there is no significant relationship between athlete identity and the year of study of the responding Kenyan University student athletes. However, negative affectivity and social identity demonstrated a weak negative relationship with the student athlete's year of study, but the relationship was not significant at the 0.05 level of significance ($r(308) = -0.026, p = .653$) and ($r(308) = -0.045, p = .428$), respectively.

Table 4.17 shows the results of the relationship between athlete identity and the level of competition of student athletes.

Table 4. 17: Correlation between athlete identity subcomponents with level of competition of student-athletes

Component	df	r	p
AIMS PLUS	266	-0.158	.010*
Self-identity	266	-0.133	.030*
Positive affectivity	266	-0.055	.374
Negative affectivity	266	-0.106	.083
Social identity	266	-0.118	.054
Exclusivity	266	-0.161	.008*

$p < .05$

The data from Table 4.17 suggests a negative but significant relationship between athlete identity and level of competition among the responding Kenyan University student athletes ($r(266) = -0.158, p = .010$). Self-identity had a negative and significant relationship with the student athlete's level of competition ($r(266) = -0.133, p = .030$). The relationship between student athletes' exclusivity and level of competition is also statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($r(266) = -0.161, p = .008$).

4.5.2 Relationship between Athlete Satisfaction and Selected Demographics of Gender, Age, Academic Year of study, and Level of Competition

Pearson Correlation was used to assess the association between athlete satisfaction and selected demographics of Kenyan University student athletes.

Table 4.18: Correlation between Athlete Satisfaction Subcomponents and Gender of Student-Athletes

Component	Df	r	p
AS	308	-0.135	.017
Team task contribution support	308	0.847	.000**
Individual performance recognition	308	0.780	.000**
Role of coach	308	0.764	.000**
Personal dedication	308	0.761	.000**
Team support affiliation	308	0.775	.000**

$p < .05$

The data in Table 4.18 suggests a weak, negative, but significant relationship between athlete satisfaction and the gender of student athletes. Table 4.18 also shows a positive relationship between each of the subcomponents of athlete satisfaction and the gender of student athletes ($p < .001$).

Table 4.19 shows the relationship between athlete satisfaction and the age of the responding student athletes from selected Kenyan universities.

Table 4.19: Correlation between Athlete Satisfaction Subcomponents and Age of Student-Athletes

Component	df	r	p
AS	308	0.029	.600
Team task contribution support	308	0.063	.270
Individual performance recognition	308	0.032	.576
Role of coach	308	0.004	.942
Personal dedication	308	-0.022	.704
Team support affiliation	308	0.034	.556

$p < .05$

The findings in Table 4.19 show no significant relationship between athlete satisfaction and the age of student athletes ($r(308) = 0.029, p = .613$). Personal dedication has a weak but not significant relationship with the age of student athletes ($r(308) = -0.022, p = .704$).

Table 4.20 shows the relationship between athlete satisfaction and the academic year of the student athletes who responded from selected Kenyan universities

Table 4.20: Correlation between Athlete Satisfaction Subcomponents with Academic Year of Student-Athletes

Component	df	r	p
AS	308	-0.030	.600
Team task contribution support	308	0.038	.507
Individual performance recognition	308	-0.055	.334
Role of coach	308	-0.065	.251
Personal dedication	308	0.021	.707
Team support affiliation	308	-0.047	.408

p < .05

Table 4.20 indicates that there is a weak negative relationship between athlete satisfaction and the academic year of the student athlete, but this relationship is not significant ($r(308) = -0.030, p = .600$). The table further demonstrates that athlete satisfaction subcomponents team task contribution and personal dedication have a weak positive relationship with the academic year of student athletes, but the relationship is not significant ($r(308) = 0.038, p = .507$) and ($r(308) = 0.021, p = .707$), respectively.

Table 4.21 represents the relationship between athlete satisfaction and the level of competition among the student athletes from selected Kenyan universities.

Table 4.21: Correlation between Athlete Satisfaction Subcomponents with Level of Competition of Student-Athletes

Component	df	r	p
AS	266	-0.138	.023*
Team task contribution support	266	-0.133	.029*
Individual performance recognition	266	-0.150	.014*
Role of coach	266	-0.040	.518
Personal dedication	266	-0.096	.117
Team support affiliation	266	-0.143	.019*

p < .05

Table 4.21 reveals a negative and significant relationship between athlete satisfaction and the level of competition ($r(266) = -0.138, p = .023$). It indicates that only the role of coach and personal dedication have no significant relationship with the student athlete's level of competition ($r(266) = -0.040, p = .518$) and ($r(266) = -0.096, p = .117$), respectively.

4.5.3 Relationship between Athlete Identity External and Internal and Athlete Satisfaction

The relationship between athlete identity's external components (social identity, exclusivity), internal components (self-identity, negative and positive affectivity), and athlete satisfaction was assessed using the Pearson correlation analysis method.

Table 4.22 displays a summary of Pearson correlation results between athlete identities, external and internal factors, and athlete satisfaction among Kenyan University student athletes.

Table 4.22: Correlation between External and Internal Self-Identity Factors with Athlete Satisfaction

Component	df	r	p
Internal Athlete Identity	308	0.474	.000**
External Athlete Identity	308	0.463	.000**

p < .05

The above results demonstrate a moderate and significant relationship between internal athlete identity and athlete satisfaction ($r(307) = 0.474, p < .001$). Table 4.22 also indicates that the relationship between external athlete and athlete satisfaction was moderate and significant among Kenyan University student athletes ($r(307) = 0.463, p < .001$).

4.6 Influence of Level of Competition, Year of Study, Age Category, and Gender on Athlete Identification of Kenyan University Student Athletes

Objective four of the study was to determine whether level of competition, primary sport, gender, and year of study have a significant influence on athletic identity among selected Kenyan University student-athletes. The corresponding hypothesis was that athlete identity is not significantly influenced by level of competition, year of study, age category, or gender among selected Kenya University student-athletes. This was assessed using multiple linear regression.

Tables 4.23–4.27 show results of the multiple regression analysis with regard to the relationship between athlete identity and level of competition, year of study, age category, and gender of Kenyan University student athletes.

Table 4.23: Model Summary of Predictors’ Gender, Academic Year of study, Highest Level of Competition, and Age

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	0.221 ^a	0.049	0.035	0.50054

Table 4. 24: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	<i>p</i>
1	Regression	3.398	4	0.850	3.391	0.010
	Residual	65.891	263	0.251		
	Total	69.290	267			

a. Dependent Variable: Athletic Identity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, academic year of study, highest level of competition in one’s sport, Age

Table 4.25: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		95.0% Confidence Interval for B		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	<i>p</i>	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	4.272	0.230		18.579	0.000	3.819	4.725
	Highest level of competition in my sport	-.117	0.046	-.168	-2.561	0.011	-.207	-.027
	Academic year of study	-.077	.038	-.172	-2.019	.045	-.152	-.002
	Age	.113	.055	.174	2.042	.042	.004	.222
	Gender	-.075	.062	-.074	-1.212	.226	-.198	.047

a. Dependent Variable: Athletic Identity

Using the enter method, it was found that only a small proportion, 3.5% (R^2 adjusted =.035) of the variance of athlete identity, can be explained by the four predictors: highest level of competition, academic year of study, age, and gender (Table 4.23). The results indicated that collectively, level of competition, academic year of study, age, and gender significantly influenced athlete identity ($R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .035$, $F(4, 263) = 3.391$, $p = .010$) (Table 4.24). As a result, the hypothesis stating that athlete identity is not significantly influenced by level of competition, year of study, age category, and gender among selected Kenya University student-athletes was rejected.

Table 4.25 shows that level of competition significantly predicted athlete identity ($p = .011$), where one unit increase in level of competition is associated with a 0.168 decrease in athlete identity ($\beta = -0.168$, $t(266) = -2.561$, $p = .011$). Similarly, academic year of study and age significantly predicted athlete identity ($\beta = -0.172$, $t(266) = -2.019$, $p = .045$) and ($\beta = 0.174$, $t(266) = 2.042$, $p = .042$), respectively. However, gender does not significantly predict athlete identity ($p = .226$), and one-unit increase in age contributes to a 0.074 decrease in athlete identity ($\beta = -0.074$, $t(266) = -1.212$, $p = .226$).

These results from the linear multiple regression analysis suggest that level of competition, academic year of study, age, and gender of Kenyan University student athletes contribute to a small proportion, 3.5%, of variables that influence athlete identity, implying the presence of other mediating factors.

4.7 Influence of Level of Competition, Year of study, Age Category, and Gender on Athlete Satisfaction of Kenyan University Student Athletes

Objective five of the study examined whether level of competition, age category, gender, and year of study have a significant influence on athletic satisfaction among

selected Kenyan University student-athletes. The corresponding hypothesis was that athlete satisfaction is not significantly influenced by level of competition, year of study, age category, or gender among selected Kenya University student-athletes. A linear multiple regression was performed, and the results are shown in Tables 4.26–4.28.

Table 4.26: Coefficients of the relationship between Athlete Satisfaction and demographic factors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	4.820	.241			20.014	0.000	4.346	5.294
Highest level of competition in my sport	-.131	.048	-.179		-2.727	0.007	-.225	-.036
Academic year of study	-.041	.040	-.088		-1.035	0.302	-.120	.037
Age	.018	.058	.027		.316	0.752	-.096	.133
Gender	-.166	.065	-.155		-2.545	0.012	-.294	-.037

a. Dependent Variable: Athlete satisfaction

Table 4.27: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	<i>p</i>
1	Regression	3.529	4	.882	3.210	0.013
	Residual	72.284	263	.275		
	Total	75.814	267			

a. Dependent Variable: Athlete Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, academic year of study, highest level of competition, age

Table 4.28: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		95.0% Confidence Interval for B		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	<i>p</i>	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	4.820	.241		20.014	0.000	4.346	5.294
	Highest level of competition in my sport	-.131	.048	-.179	-2.727	0.007	-.225	-.036
	Academic year of study	-.041	.040	-.088	-1.035	0.302	-.120	.037
	Age	.018	.058	.027	.316	0.752	-.096	.133
	Gender	-.166	.065	-.155	-2.545	0.012	-.294	-.037

b. Dependent Variable: Athlete satisfaction

Results from multiple regression indicated that only a small proportion, 3.2% (R^2 adjusted = .032) of the variance of athlete satisfaction, can be explained by the four predictors: level of competition, academic year of study, age, and gender (Table 4.26).

The results suggested that collectively, level of competition, academic year of study,

age, and gender significantly predicted athlete satisfaction of Kenyan University student athletes ($R^2_{adjusted} = .032$, $F(4, 263) = 3.210$, $p = .013$) (Table 4.27). Based on these results, the hypothesis stating that athlete satisfaction is not significantly influenced by level of competition, year of study, age category, or gender among selected Kenya University student-athletes was rejected.

Data from Table 4.28 suggests that level of competition significantly predicted athlete satisfaction ($p = .007$), where one unit increase in level of competition is associated with a 0.179 decrease in athlete satisfaction ($\beta = -0.179$, $t(266) = -2.727$, $p = .007$). However, age does not significantly predict athlete satisfaction ($p = .752$), and one unit increase in age contributes to a 0.027 increase in athlete satisfaction ($\beta = 0.027$, $t(266) = 0.316$, $p = .752$).

These findings suggest that demographic factors such as level of competition, year of study, age category, and gender of Kenyan University student athletes affect their athlete satisfaction to a small extent (3.2%), and there is a high possibility that other factors are responsible for influencing their athlete satisfaction.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents discussions of the study findings based on the study objectives in line with Kenyan University student athletes' athlete identity and athlete satisfaction and highlights the status and correlation between them. It further discusses how social demographic factors such as gender, age, academic year of study, and level of competition moderate University student athletes' identity and satisfaction.

5.2 Demographic Characteristics of the study Respondents

The number of male student-athletes in the study was slightly higher than the number of female student-athletes among the 309 study participants. This is a reflection of the male dominance in sports in Kenyan universities. Additionally, first- and second-year student-athletes constituted the largest number of study participants, which was attributed to their flexible academic schedule compared to University students in advanced academic years. Most participants' competitive sports were football, followed by hockey, basketball, handball, volleyball, lawn tennis, badminton, rugby, table tennis, softball, chess, and netball, while skating was noted to be the least played among the sports being played in the Kenyan universities.

5.3 Status of Athlete Identity in Relation to Gender, Age, Year of study, and Level of Competition among selected Kenyan University Student-Athletes

5.3.1 Status of Athlete Identity in Relation to Gender

The findings showed that both male and female student-athletes had strong athlete identities, with female student-athletes having slightly stronger identities than their

male counterparts. These findings resonate with López et al.'s (2015) study, which found female student athletes had a higher athlete identity. However, the findings contradict Şekeroğlu (2017) findings, which reported that being male was associated with high athlete identity. As noted during the literature review, studies examining athlete identity and its association with gender present mixed findings because of the different variables measured as well as the methodology applied. Nonetheless, the findings of this study suggest that, as López et al. (2015) concluded, it is still an important component that University coaches and sport managers should consider when interacting with University student-athletes.

When student-athlete satisfaction status was examined at the facets level, the findings showed a similar trend where both male and female athletes had high positive affectivity but low social identity. Although there is limited literature for comparing the findings, Knudsen et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of positive affectivity in college sports because it reflects the positive emotions and attitudes that student-athletes experience in relation to their athletic identity.

De Mendonca et al. (2019) reported that positive affectivity influenced Brazilian student-athletes' cheerfulness, pride, enthusiasm, energy, and joy. Therefore, the findings suggest that participating Kenyan University student-athletes have a strong sense of pride, satisfaction, enjoyment, passion, and fulfillment associated with being a student-athlete. However, with respect to the low social identity of participating Kenyan

University student-athletes, the findings allude to the fact that they have yet to see or feel themselves as part of a larger group, such as their team or athlete program.

Martin et al. (2014) argued that social identity is dependent on how an individual sees himself or herself as occupying the role of an athlete. Based on these findings, incorporating strategies that enhance team membership and interaction with other athletes and coaches is essential to promoting a sense of social identity among student-athletes.

5.3.2 Status of athlete identity in relation to age

The findings suggested that athlete identity strengthened with age, with younger student-athletes having a lower athlete identity than their older counterparts. These findings contradicted the studies by Fogarty et al. (2021) and Machado et al. (2022), which found that athlete identity declined with age in student-athletes. These studies argued that this was because age affects athletes' physical capabilities and recovery, hence affecting their identity. However, the difference in the findings in this study is associated with the dynamic nature of student-athlete identity.

As Stambulova (2016) hypothesized, athlete identity evolves over time and is multifaceted, meaning it is affected by numerous factors, including the experience of student-athletes, the changing environment, and personal growth. Additionally, similar to the findings of Carless and Douglas (2013) and Small (2013), student-athletes who are introduced to sports early in life tend to have a stronger athlete identity. This finding suggests that the association of athlete identity with age is complex and should be interpreted with caution. As was established earlier with gender, both young and older student-athletes had high positive affectivity, demonstrating their enthusiasm as

student-athletes. However, they also had relatively low social identity, indicating a lack of strong team cohesiveness or weak athlete programs to enhance cohesiveness among Kenyan University student-athletes.

5.3.3 Status of Athlete Identity in Relation to Year of study

In regards to the status of athlete identity in relation to year of study, the findings showed that athlete identity was almost the same across the Kenya University student years of study, but there were mixed results for second and fourth year student-athletes, who had slightly lower athlete identity. Similar findings were reported by Beron (2020) and Montcal (2019). These varied findings may be because first-year student-athletes are still adjusting to the academic and athletic demands of University life, which can lower their athlete identity. At the same time, senior student-athletes may be affected by the sense of transitioning from student to life after school and the desire to focus more on academics. For example, Masten et al. (2018) found that academic identity increased while athlete identity decreased over the course of college years, although there was no significant difference in athlete identity between freshmen and seniors.

At the subscale levels of athlete identity, positive affectivity was high while social identity was low. This trend was consistent across academic years for student-athletes, depicting a similar pattern as observed previously with the age and gender of the Kenya University student-athletes.

5.3.4 Status of Athlete Identity in Relation to Level of Competition

With regard to athlete identity and level of competition, the findings suggested that athlete identity increased with the level of competition, where intramural competitions had the lowest athlete identity compared to respondents who competed at the Kenya

National Federation leagues. The findings align with those of other studies (Ahmadabadi et al., 2014; Edison et al., 2021; Quinaud et al., 2020). The findings infer that participating in high-level competitions is perceived as prestigious, hence leading to a high level of athlete identity.

When Kenya University student-athlete identity was examined at the subscale level, the findings demonstrated high positive affectivity and low social identity, similar across all levels of competition, as previously observed in the findings of this study. These findings demonstrate the need for Kenyan University coaches and sports departments to rethink how to utilize and maintain the high positive attitude and interest (positive affectivity) for student-athletes and support them as part of the team of sports programs (social identity) in all levels of sports competitions.

5.4 Status of Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Gender, Age, Year of study, and Level of Competition among selected Kenyan University Student-Athletes

5.4.1 Status of Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Gender

In regard to athlete satisfaction and gender, female student-athletes demonstrated slightly higher athlete satisfaction than their male counterparts. The findings were in contradiction with early studies by Dorsch et al. (2009) and Harwood et al. (2000). The difference in findings was linked to different measures examined; for example, Dorsch et al. (2009) measured student-athlete satisfaction by examining the source of satisfaction, while Harwood et al. (2000) studied college student-athlete satisfaction in relation to competence, leading to different findings. However, the findings of the present study were congruent with those of Smucker et al. (2010), who found that female collegiate athletes expressed higher levels of satisfaction, especially with their

coach. The findings of this study show that Kenyan female student-athletes are motivated and interested in their sport, and they may be more committed to their role as athletes than male student-athletes.

Considering athlete satisfaction of the respondent student-athletes at the facets level, the findings demonstrated that female student-athletes enjoy good team support affiliation but experience low personal dedication, unlike male student-athletes, who have great personal dedication but are low on the role of coach. These findings suggest that Kenya female University student-athlete satisfaction is more due to good team support, which enhances solidarity, encouragement, and skill development. Gustafsson and Isoard-Gauthier (2018) suggest that a good team environment and team support improve student athletes' self-esteem, confidence, and mental wellness, which are critical in enhancing their sense of solidarity.

The low personal dedication of Kenya female University student-athletes suggests insufficient determination and drive in their team or athlete roles. Conversely, the findings suggest Kenya University male student-athletes satisfaction is impacted more by the role of the coach, but they are highly enthusiastic, as demonstrated by their high personal dedication. Banwell and Kerr (2016) advised that coaches provide beyond tactical and skill development to athletes, augmenting other aspects such as psychological support, evaluation and feedback, and performance analysis. Johnson et al. (2011) inferred that coaches should pay attention to their relationships with athletes, as their behaviors can affect athletes' feelings of stress, burnout, and mental health. The findings of this study suggest that Kenyan University male student-athletes can benefit from coaches' comprehensive approach to sport and paying attention to their relationship with the student-athletes.

5.4.2 Status of Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Age

The findings on athlete satisfaction in relation to age showed a similar pattern in Kenya University student-athlete satisfaction, with satisfaction increasing as the age of the student advanced. These findings were similar with Hut et al., (2021) but disagreed with Machado et al., (2022) whose study findings found that young athletes in first and second year of study have high athlete satisfaction than their older cohorts. The different findings were ascribed to the complexity of athlete satisfaction dimension which is susceptible to different and intersecting factors. Hut et al., (2021) reported that older student-athletes have high athlete satisfaction, possibly due to their gained experience in the sport. However, caution should be taken when interpreting these findings, as a relatively young athlete could have also been introduced into sport early and may therefore also have high satisfaction due to their experience.

The findings revealed that at subscale level, the role of coach was associated with low athlete satisfaction across all the age categories. As established previously when examining the role of gender on athlete satisfaction, Kenya student-athletes appears to be affected more by aspects of coaches. Banwell and Kerr (2016) and Johnson et al., (2011) highlight the importance of coaches to overall development of athletes and it is imperative for University coaches to take a step and acknowledge their pivotal role in nurturing University student-athletes to bring out the best in them.

5.4.3 Status of Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Year of study

Regarding athlete satisfaction in relation to the student-athlete's year of study, Kenya University student-athletes demonstrated high and almost similar levels of athlete satisfaction regardless of the year of study. However, mixed results were identified,

with first-year students reporting high athlete satisfaction and second-year students reporting the lowest athlete satisfaction in the group. Empirical evidence suggests that while athlete satisfaction may change based on the academic year of study, it is more dynamic and may change with time because of the athlete's skill development and experience (Killebrew, 2020; Pulido et al., 2020). As a result, student-athletes in universities may demonstrate different levels of satisfaction incongruent with their academic year due to varying perceived skills, experiences, and personal goals.

However, some studies have reported different findings. For example, Beattie and Turner (2020) found that senior student-athletes in the United States had high athlete satisfaction, which they associated with established social support and experience. Hazzaa et al. (2018) also found that freshmen had low athlete satisfaction, but they attributed this to the difference in sport culture between Kenya and Western countries (early entry in sport).

The findings suggested that first and second year Kenya University student-athletes are more affected by low individual performance recognition, while third and fourth-year student-athletes are more affected by the role of the coach. Although there was limited literature for comparison, the findings imply that first and second-year athlete satisfaction can be improved by giving them incentives such as sports awards to enhance their performance recognition. Tungpalan (2020) emphasizes the need to motivate student-athletes through rewards and sports scholarships to boost their morale and, subsequently, satisfaction. Alternatively, Kenya University third and fourth year student-athletes can benefit from enhanced coach relationships to support their sport development needs and robust engagement with coaches, such as involvement in decisions such as game strategies, selection, and performance analysis.

5.4.4 Status of Athlete Satisfaction in Relation to Level of Competition

In regards to the status of athlete satisfaction in relation to level of competition, the findings suggested that Kenya University student-athlete satisfaction increased with perceived increase in competitive level, where respondents competing at intramural sports competitions demonstrated low satisfaction while student-athletes competing at perceived high levels of competition, such as Kenya Federation leagues, had high athlete satisfaction. Consistent findings were reported by Swindell et al. (2019), Eys et al. (2010), and Jones (2012) studies, which found that student-athletes competing in low-profile sports demonstrated low satisfaction compared to their counterparts who competed in high-profile sports. Maday (2014) argued that participating in high-level competitions is perceived as a great achievement and competence, leading to student-athletes' happiness and subsequently high satisfaction. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that Kenya University student-athletes who compete in high-level competitions feel more competent and have a higher sense of sports achievement, leading to higher athlete satisfaction than those who compete in perceived low-level competitions.

At the facets level of athlete satisfaction, the findings indicated that Kenya University student-athletes had low satisfaction with the role of the coach, regardless of their competition level. As established throughout this discussion, Kenya University student-athletes competing at any level are impacted by the role of the coach, which can span from the relationship with the coach, coach strategy and tactics, to coach behaviors. Given these findings, a conscious effort is needed to promote the coach-athlete relationship and enhance student-athlete involvement in decisions such as game strategies, selection, and other related roles.

5.5 Relationship between Athlete Identity and Satisfaction among Selected Kenyan University Student-Athletes

5.5.1 Relationship between Athlete Identity and Selected Demographics of Gender, Age, Academic Year of study, and Level of Competition

The findings demonstrated that gender had no significant relationship with athlete identity ($p = 0.264$). The findings align with Beron and Piquero's (2016) and Quinaud et al.'s (2020) studies but contradict Şekeroğlu (2017) findings, which established a significant difference between athlete identity and gender. As noted earlier during the discussion on gender and athlete identity in this study, the difference in findings is believed to be due to different variables measured as well as different methodologies applied between the two studies. However, at the facet level of athlete identity, the study established a negative and a significant relationship between self-identity and gender ($p = .003$) with male student athletes reporting relatively low on this component (3.93 ± 0.503) (Table 4.6).

The findings suggest that Kenya University student-athletes' perceptions of themselves as athletes considerably vary by gender, with male student-athletes possessing a relatively weak self-identity. Carless and Douglas (2013) established that self-identity can be impacted by the dual role conflict of student-athletes because of the desire to balance academics with rigorous training and competition schedules as well as social life. Based on the findings of this study, evidence points out that Kenya University male student-athletes are more affected by dual-role conflict, and it is imperative for University coaches and sport departments to assist them in navigating through these challenges.

Age and athlete identity had a positive and significant relationship ($p = .012$), where older student athletes demonstrated high athlete identity. The findings disagreed with Fogarty et al.'s (2021) and Machado et al.'s (2022) studies, which found age to be strongly correlated with athlete identity, where young athletes showed high athlete identity. The differences in findings were attributed to the fluidity of age (variations in age-related changes, e.g., experience, skills) and its implications on athlete identity. At the subscale level, exclusivity had a positive and significant relationship with age ($p = 0.001$).

The findings imply that young Kenya University student-athletes are less committed to their athlete role (exclusivity). Hilliard et al. (2017) emphasized the importance of exclusivity in college student-athletes because it informs their behaviors that are linked to a high level of adherence to their role as athletes and sport. In the context of Kenyan University student-athletes, the findings suggest that young athletes are less committed to sport compared to older ones, which may affect their adherence and continuity as student-athletes throughout their University lives.

The study findings established that the academic year of study had no significant relationship with athlete identity, even at the facet levels ($p > .05$). As earlier discussed, the findings conclude that Kenya University student athletes' self-identity is the same across academic years.

A negative and significant relationship between level of competition and athlete identity was established ($p = .010$) among the responded Kenya University student-athletes, with athletes competing at high-level competitions reporting high athlete identity. Consistent findings were reported by Ahmadabadi et al. (2014) and Quinaud et al. (2020). At the subscale level, a negative and significant relationship was identified between

subcomponents of self-identity ($p = 0.030$), exclusivity ($p = .008$), and level of competition.

In relation to self-identity, the findings suggest that Kenya University student-athletes competing in low-level competitions are affected by dual-role conflict more than student-athletes competing at high levels. The data from this study also alludes to the fact that student-athletes competing in low-level competitions are less committed to their athlete role (exclusivity) compared to athletes competing in high level competitions.

5.5.2 Relationship between Athlete Satisfaction and Selected Demographics of Gender, Age, Academic Year of study, and Level of Competition

The present study revealed a negative but significant relationship between gender and athlete satisfaction ($p = .017$), where female student-athletes had higher satisfaction than their male counterparts. These findings were consistent with López-Gajardo et al.'s (2021) findings but opposed those of Dorsch et al.'s (2009) and Harwood et al.'s (2000) studies. The different findings were linked to different measures applied between the studies, as earlier discussed in this study. The findings also showed a weak positive and significant relationship between gender and all facets of athlete satisfaction ($p < .005$), with male student-athletes demonstrating low scores in all five facets (Table 4.10) (team task contribution support, individual performance recognition, role of coach, personal dedication, team support affiliation).

These findings suggest that Kenya University student-athletes' satisfaction is affected by multiple factors such as team cohesiveness, cooperation between team members for common goals (team task contribution support), and recognition and rewards

(individual performance recognition), but males are affected more than female student-athletes.

Age had no significant relationship with athlete satisfaction ($p = 0.600$), even at the facet levels ($p > .05$). The findings mirrored Hut et al.'s (2021) study but disagreed with Machado et al.'s (2022) findings. The difference in findings between these studies can be accounted for by the varied sport culture between Kenya and western countries (student-athletes introduced to sports at a tender age). As Weiss and Amorose (2008) reported, although student-athlete satisfaction is impacted by different factors, among them team environment and coaches, experience in the sport is crucial because it enhances their confidence because of the skills gained in the sport over time. As a result, careful interpretation of the findings on age and student-athlete satisfaction needs to be maintained. Nonetheless, the findings of the present study echo that athlete satisfaction among Kenya University student-athletes is similar across age groups.

The findings of this study described that the academic year of study of the responded Kenya University student-athlete was the same across academic years ($p = .600$). Although many studies (Beattie & Turner, 2020; Hazzaa et al., 2018; Singh & Surujlal, 2006) agree that the academic level of student-athletes affects athlete satisfaction, they offer that individual environmental factors (social role, support, and network) determine to a large extent athlete satisfaction, leading to mixed satisfaction scores unrelated to the academic year of student-athletes.

A negative and significant relationship was found between athlete satisfaction and level of competition among Kenya University student-athletes ($p = 0.023$). This relationship decreased with lower levels of competition (Table 4.13). Similar findings were reported by Jones (2012) and Swindell et al. (2019).

At the facet levels of athlete satisfaction, the findings revealed that team task contribution support and individual performance had negative but significant relationships with the level of competition. This means that student-athletes competing at lower levels of competition, such as KUSA and intramural sports, were more affected by team support, collaboration, and cohesion (team task contribution support) and incentives, awards, and recognition (individual performance recognition) than those competing at higher levels.

5.6 Influence of Level of Competition, Year of study, Age and Gender on Athlete Identity of Kenyan University Student Athletes

The findings indicated that demographic characteristics (level of competition, year of study, age, and gender) could only explain 3.5% of the observed variance in athlete identity among the Kenya University student-athletes who responded. Results also demonstrated that level of competition ($p = .011$), age ($p = .042$), and year of study ($p = .045$) predicted athlete identity of Kenya University student-athletes. Although there were limited empirical studies for comparison, these findings suggest that there are other factors besides demographic characteristics that influence the identity of Kenyan University student-athletes. Studies examining athlete identity have shown that athlete identity is dynamic and can be influenced by multiple factors such as skills, confidence, experience in sports (Carless & Douglas, 2013), education, and career prospects. James (2020; Quinaud et al., 2020; Tusak et al., 2005). These findings suggest that although demographic factors can lead to differences in the identity formation of Kenya University student-athletes, the development of athlete identity is multifaceted and complex, and multiple elements play a vital role in its formation.

5.7 Influence of Level of Competition, Year of study, Age and Gender on Athlete Satisfaction of Kenyan University Student Athletes

The demographic characteristics of level of competition, year of study, age, and gender of Kenya University student-athletes explained only 3.2% of the change in athlete satisfaction. The findings also revealed that only level of competition ($p = .007$) and gender ($p = .012$) predicted athlete satisfaction among Kenya University student-athletes. Although there is inadequate literature on athlete satisfaction based on demographic characteristics, available studies in the context have shown other factors such as goal achievement, a good team environment, and mental wellness are influential variables in student-athlete satisfaction (Foster & Huml, 2019; Isoard-Gauthier, 2018; Quinaud et al., 2020). It is also worth noting that these findings should be interpreted with caution due to the lack of adequate literature in this area, specifically on Kenya University student-athlete satisfaction.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary of the Major Findings

The study's objective was to examine the status of athlete identity and satisfaction among student-athletes from selected Kenyan universities. The relationship between athlete identity and athlete satisfaction in relation to competition level, gender, age, and year of study was also examined. The study further assessed the influence of demographic characteristics such as competition level, gender, year of study, and age on student-athlete identity and satisfaction. The following are the main study findings:

6.1.1 Status of Athlete Identity of Kenya University Student-Athletes

The study established that male and female student-athletes had strong athlete identity although for females it was slightly higher than male counterparts. The findings further asserted that both male and female student-athletes reported low social identity suggesting Kenya University student-athletes do not feel themselves as part of the team or athlete program there are in. Developing student-athlete community in University sport programs is crucial to promoting student-athletes' interactions with coaches and other athletes which has been linked to enhanced a sense of social identity.

6.1.2 Status of Athlete Satisfaction of Kenya University Student-Athletes

Findings revealed that female student-athletes had a slightly higher level of athlete satisfaction than male student-athletes. However, female student-athletes showed low satisfaction with personal dedication, suggesting that Kenyan female student-athletes lack enthusiasm or strong interest in their team or athlete role. Conversely, male student-athletes showed low satisfaction with the role of coach, implying that Kenya

University male student-athletes are more affected by coach behaviors such as game strategy, relationship, and team selection, among others.

Athlete satisfaction of first and second-year student athletes was low on individual performance recognition, suggesting that Kenya University student athletes in their first and second years may be affected by rewards and other recognitions such as positive feedback and verbal praise from coaches and teammates.

6.1.3 Relationship between Athlete Identity and Satisfaction among Kenya University Student-Athletes

The findings showed that athlete identity is similar between male and female student-athletes in Kenyan universities. However, how student-athletes perceive themselves as athletes (self-identity) significantly varied, with male student-athletes possessing a relatively weak self-identity.

Age had a positive and significant relationship with athlete identity among Kenya University student-athletes, such that athlete identity increased with age. The findings further indicated that young student-athletes in Kenya universities were less committed to their athlete role (exclusivity) compared to older student-athletes.

The findings revealed a significant relationship between the level of competition and athlete identity. It was also established that athletes competing at low-level competitions (Intramurals and KUSA) had low self-identity, suggesting that they had a weaker perception of themselves as athletes compared to those competing in high-level competitions (Kenya Federation leagues).

The findings of this study established a significant relationship between gender and athlete satisfaction, with female student-athletes reporting higher satisfaction scores than male student-athletes. A significant relationship was also established between the level of competition and athlete satisfaction among Kenya University student-athletes. Additionally, team task contribution and individual performance recognition showed a significant relationship with student-athlete level of competition, such that those competing in low-level competitions demonstrated low scores on the two constructs.

6.1.4 Influence of Level of Competition, Year of study, Age category and Gender on Athlete Identify of Kenyan University Student Athletes

It was established that collectively level of competition, year of study, age, and gender could only explain a small proportion 3.5% of observed variance in athlete identity suggesting presence of other factors predicting athlete identity of Kenya University student-athletes. The finding further indicated that only level of competition, age, and year of study predicted athlete identity of Kenya University student-athletes.

6.1.5 Influence of Level of Competition, Year of study, Age and Gender on Athlete Satisfaction of Kenyan University Student Athletes

Level of competition, year of study, age, and gender mutually influenced Kenya University student-athlete satisfaction but could only explain a 3.2% change in athlete satisfaction. The findings show the effect of demographic factors on athlete satisfaction is mutually responsible for the associated change in student athlete satisfaction. However, only level of competition and gender predicted athlete satisfaction among Kenya University student-athletes.

6.2 Conclusion

From the study findings, the study concluded that:

- i. The athlete identity of selected Kenya University student-athletes is strong and the same between males and females. However, Kenya University student-athletes had a lower perception of themselves as athletes (self-identity), which significantly varied by gender, where male student-athletes showed a relatively weaker self-identity than their female counterparts.
- ii. Kenya University student-athletes have high athlete satisfaction, which significantly varies by gender, with female student-athletes showing slightly higher satisfaction than male student-athletes.
- iii. There is a positive and significant relationship between athlete identity and age among Kenya University student-athletes. In addition, younger student-athletes in Kenyan universities are less committed to their athlete role (exclusivity) compared to older student-athletes.
- iv. Level of competition and athlete satisfaction are negatively related and significantly related among Kenya University student-athletes, where student-athletes competing in low-level competitions have low athlete satisfaction. Similarly, student-athletes competing in low-level competitions are more affected by team task contribution and individual performance recognition.
- v. Respondent characteristics such as level of competition, year of study, age, and gender have a weak influence (3.5%) on the athlete identity of Kenya University student-athletes, where only level of competition, age, and year of study predicted athlete identity.

- vi. Respondent characteristics such as level of competition, year of study, age, and gender have a weak influence (3.2%) on athlete satisfaction among Kenya University student-athletes, where only level of competition and gender predicted athlete satisfaction.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Recommendations for Policy

- i. Kenya University sport departments and sport practitioners, in collaboration with coaches, should design programs (such as student-athlete mentorship) to help student-athletes navigate rigorous training and competition schedules that affect their identity.
- ii. Kenya University sport departments and sport practitioners, in consultation with coaches and student-athletes, should design policies that demand new entrants into University sports sign a letter of intent to commit to sport (exclusivity) and academic goals.

6.3.2 Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Kenya University coaches, sport practitioners, and sports departments should emphasize team support and cohesion. They should create a positive and supportive team environment where athletes feel valued and respected. They should provide opportunities for athletes to work together, celebrate team successes, and encourage athletes to support each other.

- ii. Kenya University coaches, sport practitioners, and sports departments should reward athletes for both individual and team achievements. This will help to motivate athletes and promote a sense of accomplishment. Use a variety of rewards, such as public recognition, tangible prizes, and opportunities for leadership.
- iii. Kenya University coaches should pay attention to their athletes training behaviors, as these can have a significant impact on their identity and satisfaction. Coaches should provide positive feedback, be supportive, and show respect for all athletes. They should also tailor their training methods to the individual needs of each athlete.
- iv. Kenya University sport practitioners should create a positive and supportive environment where athletes feel safe and valued. This includes providing opportunities for athletes to succeed, being fair and consistent, and managing conflict effectively.
- v. Coaches should be aware of the different needs of athletes of different ages and genders. They should tailor their coaching style to meet the needs of each athlete.
- vi. Coaches should seek out professional development opportunities to improve their coaching skills. This includes attending workshops, reading books, and taking online courses.
- vii. Coaches should set clear goals and expectations for each athlete, and they should regularly review progress to ensure that athletes are on track. Athletes need to know what they are working towards and what is expected of them.

- viii. Coaches should create a challenging environment where athletes are pushed to reach their full potential, but they should be careful not to over-challenge athletes, as this can lead to burnout.
- ix. Coaches should create a fun and positive environment where athletes can enjoy themselves, learn new skills, and make sports enjoyable for student-athletes.

6.3.3 Recommendations for Future Studies

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study the following recommendations are made:

- i. There is limited research on athlete identity and satisfaction among Kenya University students, specifically in Kenya. More studies on the topic will bridge the information gap and present a true image of athlete identity and satisfaction status in Kenya.
- ii. Future studies should investigate athlete identity and satisfaction beyond demographic characteristics by examining variables like coach leadership, education goals, and injuries to present robust and comprehensive information on the subject.
- iii. There is a need to investigate athlete identity and satisfaction based on specific institutions to address the possible gaps (physical and human resources) that may result from the differences across Kenya University's private and public sport programs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FOR STUDY

PARTICIPANTS/STUDENT-ATHLETES

My name is **Ishmael Kiprono Kurui**, a Master of Science student at Kenyatta University researching in the area of athletic identity and athlete satisfaction. The topic of my research is “Athletic Identity and Athlete Satisfaction of University Student-Athletes in Selected Universities in Kenya”

Procedure

As active student-athletes, you are requested to fill out the questionnaires attached herewith. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you have the right to refuse participation if you so desire, as well as ask questions about the study at any time during the administration of the questionnaire.

Discomforts and Risks

If you feel uncomfortable or under any form of risk to respond to any part of this questionnaire, you may refuse to answer the questions if you so choose.

Benefits of taking part in the study

Your participation in this study will help us to learn and understand more about student-athlete identity and the athlete satisfaction of athletes in the Kenyan Universities. This will aid sports practitioners to be intentional about what support services they put in place, what services may need to be altered, and this will ultimately help the student-athletes to accomplish their goal of educating the whole student.

Confidentiality

The researcher would like to assure you that the information you provide will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The questionnaires will be kept safely in a locked cabinet at Kenyatta University. Everything will be kept private and only shared with the study team. The questionnaire will not include your name. Everything will be kept strictly confidential.

Contact Information

If you have questions about the study you may call the supervisor Dr. Francis Mundia, PhD on 0722761379 or Dr. Agnes W. Kamau PhD on 0710970717 or myself/Investigator on 0722326819

However, if you have questions about your rights as a study participant: You may contact Kenyatta University Ethical Review Committee Secretariat on chairman.kuerc@ku.ac.ke,

Participant's Statement

The above information regarding my participation in the study is clear to me. The study has been explained to me and I have been given a chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. My participation in this study is entirely voluntary. I understand that my records will be kept private and that I can leave the study at any time.

Name of Participant _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Investigators statement

I, the undersigned, have explained to the volunteer in a language s/he understands the procedures to be followed in the study, as well as the risks and benefits involved.

Name of Interviewer: Ishmael Kiprono Kurui

Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX B: INTRODUCTION LETTER

The Dean of Students/Director of Sports and Games

Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN YOUR INSTITUTION

My name is Ishmael Kiprono Kurui. I am pursuing a Master of Science Degree in Recreation and Sports Management at Kenyatta University. The research is titled Athletic Identity and Athlete Satisfaction of University Student-Athletes in Selected Universities in Kenya.

I have identified your institution as one of the major institutions for my research due to its relevance in the area of study. The information that will be obtained from your student-athletes will be used solely for this study and will not be diverted to any other purpose.

Your positive consideration in allowing me to carry out this research in your institution will be highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Ishmael Kiprono Kurui

APPENDIX C: RESPONDENT'S DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A:

In the blank space provided, **please tick** (✓) the appropriate box indicating the most appropriate response that applies to you.

Background information

1. Please indicate your gender.

1	Female	
2	Male	

2. Please indicate your academic year of study.

1	1 st year	
2	2 nd year	
3	3 rd year	
4	4 th year	
5	5 th year	
6	6 th year	

2. Please indicate your age

1	16-18 years	
2	19-20 years	
3	21-22 years	
4	23-24 years	
5	25 years and above	

3. What sport do you compete in at the University level (Kindly write)

Indicate the sport you play in the University?	
--	--

4. What is your highest level of competition in your sport? (Tick)

1	Eastern Africa University Sports Federation (EAUSF)	
2	Kenya National Federation League (KNFL)	
3	Kenya University Sports Association (KUSA)	
4	Intramurals (Inter-school/inter-college) competitions	

SECTION B: ATHLETIC IDENTITY MEASUREMENT SCALE-PLUS

Student-athletic identity refers to the magnitude of importance, strength, and exclusivity associated with the role maintained by an athlete and impacted by the environment.

Based on your involvement and participation in sports, please rate each of the following assertions on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 2 3 4 5 by **ticking (√)** your appropriate rating.

1 = Strongly disagree

2= Disagree

3= Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)

4= Agree

5= Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I consider myself to be an athlete.					
2	I have many goals related to sport					
3	I make sacrifices to participate in sports					
4	Most of my friends are athletes					
5	Sports is the most important element of my life.					
6	I think about sports more openly than I do about anything else.					
7	I need to participate in sport to feel good about myself					
8	I continuously think about how I can become a better athlete					
9	I feel bad about myself when I play poorly in practice or competition.					
10	I only enjoy sports when I'm winning					
11	I participate in sport because I want to make a career in sport.					

12	My participation in sports is a very positive part of my life.					
13	Being an athlete is a very important part of who I am.					
14	I feel good about myself when I play well in practice or competition.					
15	I typically organize my day so I can participate in sports					
16	Other people see me mainly as an athlete					
17	If I were injured and unable to participate in sports, I would be depressed.					
18	When I am participating in sports, I am happy.					
19	My family expects me to participate in sports.					
20	It is important that other people know about my sport involvement					
21	I get a sense of satisfaction when participating in sports.					
22	Without Sport, I would not be a complete person					
23	I participate in sports for recognition/fame.					
24	My sports involvement has influenced my day-to-day decision-making					

SECTION C: ATHLETE SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE (ASQ)

Each item below describes an expectation about your satisfaction as an athlete while taking part in sports in your University team(s). **Please tick** [√] as answer for each question. Use the ratings below for each.

1. Extremely dissatisfied
2. Moderately dissatisfied
3. Neutral
4. Moderately satisfied
5. Satisfied

		1	2	3	4	5
1	The degree to which I reached my performance goals.					
2	How happy or satisfied are you with your team's overall performance?					
3	The degree to which my sports abilities were used.					
4	Coach's choice of strategies during games.					
5	The recognition I received from my coach.					
6	The degree to which my teammates cooperated with me during training and competition.					
7	My teammates' sportsmanlike behaviour.					
8	How do you rate your team members'/players' commitment to working together to achieve team goals					
9	The improvement in my performance.					
10	The degree to which our team is accomplishing its season goals.					
11	This season's development and improvement in my skill level.					
12	The team's win/loss record this season					
13	The extent to which my abilities are put to use in the team.					

14	The extent to which my role in the team corresponds to my ideal role					
15	How my coach combines the available talent.					
16	Extent to which all team members are ethical.					
17	My team mates' sense of fair play.					
18	Degree to which teammates share the same goal.					
19	Team members' commitment and dedication to working together to achieve team goals.					
20	The extent to which I give or do my all for the team.					
21	My enthusiasm during competitions.					
22	My commitment to the team.					
23	Extent to which my role matched my potential.					
24	How the coach made adjustments during competitions.					
25	My coach's sportsmanship.					

APPENDIX D: RESEARCH ASSISTANTS' TRAINING PROGRAM

JUNE 2022

Day 1	Description	Remarks
3:00pm- 5:00pm	Introduction and purpose of the study Introduce study location and number of universities to be sampled. Familiarization with the items in the questionnaire	
Day 2 3:00pm- 5:00pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Familiarization with the items in the questionnaire 2. Communication and presentation:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Recommend ways of collecting the data. ii. Effectively communicate to the research participants iii. Questionnaire administration iv. Collection of the filled in questionnaire v. Coding of the filled in questionnaire 3. Ethics and compliance: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Adherence to ethical principles and guidelines related to research, ii. Data privacy and informed consent 	

APPENDIX E: RESEARCH APPROVAL, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 020-8704150

Internal Memo

FROM: Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 7th April, 2022

TO: Mr. Ishmael Kiprono Kurui
C/o Department of Recreation & Sports
Management

REF: H108/OL/MSA/24265/14

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

=====

This is to inform you that Graduate School Board, at its meeting on **31st March, 2022**, approved your Research Proposal for the M.Sc. Degree entitled, **“Athletic Identity and Athlete Satisfaction of Student-Athletes in Selected Universities in Kenya.”**

You may now proceed with your Data collection, subject to clearance with the Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking and Progress Report Forms per semester. The Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Thank you.


DR. HARRIET ISABOKE
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL



CC. Chairman, Recreation and Sports Management Department

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Francis Mundia
C/o Department of Physical Education, Exercise & Sports
Science
Kenyatta University
2. Dr. Agnes W. Kamau
C/o Department of Recreation & Sports Management
Kenyatta University

APPENDIX F: RESEACH AUTHORIZATION, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100

NAIROBI, KENYA

Tel. 020-8704150

Our Ref: H108/OL/MSA/24265/2014

DATE: 7th April, 2022

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MR. ISHMAEL KIPRONO KURUI –
REG. NO. H108/OL/MSA/24265/14**

I write to introduce Mr. Ishmael Kiprono Kurui who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. He is registered for M.Sc. degree programme in the **Department of Recreation and Sports Management**.

Mr. Kurui intends to conduct research for a M.Sc. thesis Proposal entitled, "Athletic Identity and Athlete Satisfaction of Student-Athletes in Selected Universities in Kenya."

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,


PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI
DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL



H1/psw

APPENDIX G: ETHICAL CLEARANCE, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS AND SAFETY

Fax: 8711242/8711575
Email: chairman.kuerc@ku.ac.ke
Nairobi, 00100

P. O. Box 43844,

Tel: 8710901/12

Website: www.ku.ac.ke
Our Ref: KU/ERC/APPROVAL/VOL.1

Date: 30th /05/2022

Ishmael Kiprono Kirui
P.O Box 43844, 00100
Nairobi.

Dear Mr. Kirui,


APPLICATION NUMBER: PKU/2511 /11638- ATHLETIC IDENTITY AND ATHLETE SATISFACTION OF STUDENTS –ATHLETES IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA


This is to inform you that **KENYATTA UNIVERSITY ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **PKU/2511 /11638**. The approval period is **30th /05/2022 to 30th /05/2023**

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by **KENYATTA UNIVERSITY ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE**
- iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **KENYATTA UNIVERSITY ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **KENYATTA UNIVERSITY ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.


**APPENDIX H: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM NATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: **695581** Date of Issue: **06/June/2022**


RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Mr.. Ishmael KIPRONO Kurui of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research in Embu, Kiambu, Kilifi, Kisii, Meru, Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru, Siaya, Uasin-Gishu on the topic: Athletic Identity and Athlete Satisfaction of Student-Athletes in Selected Universities in Kenya for the period ending : 06/June/2023.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/22/18075**

695581
Applicant Identification Number


Director General
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION**

Verification QR Code



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Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.**