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Examination of Neuroticism and Acute vs. Chronic Stress in College Athletes

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

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Abstract

Student-athletes' acute and chronic stress affects their well-being and confidence before competition (Malone, 2022). College athletes face various challenges, including managing school, athletics, and personal life, under internal and external pressure. However, it is unclear how specific demographics (e.g., academic year, gender, individual/team sport) play a part in the perception of acute/chronic stress and neuroticism. Participants (N = 69) completed three different scales of chronic and acute stress (PSS, STAI, respectively) and personality traits (BIG5). It was hypothesized that higher neuroticism scores would positively correlate with higher acute and chronic stress scores, and that females/younger student-athletes would perceive both more acute and long-term stress, and have higher neurotic scores. It was also hypothesized that people participating in individual sports would express higher stress levels. There was a significant positive correlation with all three scales, $r(67) = 0.40-0.67$, $p < .001$. There was a significant gender difference, showing that women experience greater chronic stress, $t(66) = -2.45$, $p < 0.05$, acute stress, $t(66) = -3.18$, $p < 0.01$, and higher levels of neuroticism, $t(66) = -3.50$, $p < 0.001$. Freshmen experienced significantly more neuroticism than upperclassmen, $F(2, 63) = 5.43$, $p < 0.05$, $R^2 = 0.17$. When controlling for gender and year, student-athletes participating in individual (versus team) sports have higher levels of acute stress, $F(12,55) = 1.82$, $p < 0.05$. $R^2 = 0.28$. To conclude, freshman, female,

individual sport athletes experienced greater chronic/acute stress and have neurotic personality types.

Keywords: stress, student-athletes, neuroticism

References

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