



## A Stress Management Program for High School Student-Athletes in a Private School

Eileen B. Navalta<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Karen L.B. Tamayo<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Susana C. Baustista<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> University of Perpetual Help System Laguna-Philippines

### ABSTRACT

Published Online: February 12, 2025

Stress is a significant factor affecting the mental, physical, and social well-being of high school student-athletes, who must navigate the demands of both academics and sports. Without proper support, prolonged stress can hinder their performance and overall well-being.

**Purpose:** This study aimed to address this issue by developing a multi-sensory-based Student-Athlete Stress Management Program tailored to their unique challenges. Using a descriptive-developmental research design,

**Respondents:** the study involved 28 high school student-athletes from a private school in Dagupan City, Pangasinan.

**Method:** Data were collected through a validated, researcher-modified questionnaire to identify primary stressors and evaluate the program's effectiveness.

**Results** indicated that mental stressors were the most prevalent, followed by social and physical stressors. Many participants expressed frustration over the lack of existing stress management initiatives, highlighting the need for structured interventions. To address these concerns, the developed program incorporated relaxation techniques, movement-based activities, and reflective exercises designed to alleviate stress. Student-athletes responded positively, reporting improved emotional well-being, reduced stress levels, and a greater sense of camaraderie within their teams.

**Conclusion:** The findings suggest that such structured programs can provide meaningful benefits, helping student-athletes manage stress more effectively while fostering teamwork and resilience. These results highlight the importance of integrating stress management strategies into school programs to support student-athletes in both their academic and athletic pursuits. Schools that implement targeted interventions may not only improve students' mental and emotional well-being but also enhance their overall performance. Future research could explore ways to further refine and adapt these strategies to different athletic and academic settings, ensuring long-term benefits for student-athletes.

### KEYWORDS:

stress management, high school student-athletes, multi-sensory program, mental stress, wellness program, adolescent health

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Stress is a natural human response that alerts individuals to investigate and address difficulties and threats in their lives. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), stress can be defined as a state of worry or mental tension caused by problems or challenging experiences. While everyone experiences stress to varying degrees, individual well-being largely depends on how stress is managed (WHO, 2023).

*Corresponding Author: Eileen B. Navalta*

*\*Cite this Article: Eileen B. Navalta, Dr. Karen L.B. Tamayo, Dr. Susana C. Baustista (2025). A Stress Management Program for High School Student-Athletes in a Private School. International Journal of Social Science and Education Research Studies, 5(2), 165-170*

Adolescents are highly susceptible to stress due to the many changes and challenges they encounter during this critical period of development. Stressors such as academic pressure, personal issues, and familial responsibilities are common, often negatively impacting physical and mental well-being (Beanlands, 2019; Ching, 2020, cited in Moya, 2022). For student-athletes, stress levels can be exacerbated by the dual demands of academics and extracurricular activities. These additional responsibilities, coupled with the pressure to excel in both domains, increase their susceptibility to burnout (Schaufeli, 1998, cited in Anjum, 2022). International studies have identified a range of challenges faced by student-athletes, including balancing academic and athletic commitments, maintaining social relationships, recovering from injuries, and managing intense training schedules

## Eileen B. Navalta et al, A Stress Management Program for High School Student-Athletes in a Private School

(Rongen, 2018; Scantlebury, 2020; Thompson, 2022b). The lack of adequate support from teachers, coaches, and institutions further compounds these difficulties, heightening the risk of burnout. Despite the growing body of research on stress management strategies, there is limited focus on programs specifically tailored to high school student-athletes. Existing studies often concentrate on college athletes or broader populations, leaving a gap in understanding the unique stressors faced by younger student-athletes (Ines, 2021). Furthermore, interventions targeting stress relief among this demographic are scarce and often neglect holistic approaches that address both academic and athletic stressors (Juhsz, 2024). Recent findings emphasize the need for school-based wellness programs that prioritize the mental health and well-being of high school student-athletes (Herman, 2021; Samantha, 2023). To address this gap, this study aims to develop a Student-Athlete Wellness Program tailored to high school student-athletes. This program will incorporate multi-sensory activities—a promising yet underutilized approach for stress management in this population. Multi-sensory therapy, while traditionally used for individuals with sensory processing disorders or mental health challenges, holds potential for alleviating stress among student-athletes. By integrating this approach into a structured wellness initiative, the program seeks to provide a supportive framework that acknowledges the unique needs of student-athletes and fosters their academic success and life balance. This study will explore the current stress management programs available in schools, assess the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of student-athletes with these programs, and identify the primary stressors they face. Based on these findings, the researcher intends to design a Student-Athlete Wellness Program incorporating multi-sensory activities. Finally, the program's effectiveness and student-athletes' satisfaction with its implementation will be evaluated to determine its impact on stress alleviation.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

### 2.1 Data Collection

This study adopted a survey method, all the needed information for data was obtained with self-made questionnaires to understand the different sources of stress experienced by the respondents. Furthermore, the study utilizes the use of data and information gathered from secondary sources such as the internet.

### 2.2 Sample Size

The study population is 80 respondents in a private school in Dagupan City, Pangasinan. Raosoft Calculator was used with a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence interval was utilized to help the researcher obtain the desired sample size of 67. However, only 28 students were allowed by the principal due to conflicts in schedules for academics and practice in their sport.

### 2.3 Sampling Technique

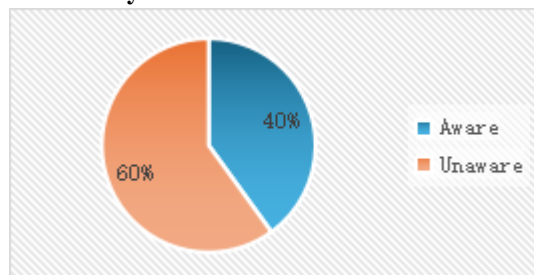
Simple Random Sampling was used in administering the questionnaires, which further helps the researcher understand the sources of stress of the respondents in aiding for the development of the stress management program.

### 2.4 Method Data Analysis

Data collected was analyzed using weighted mean and percentage method.

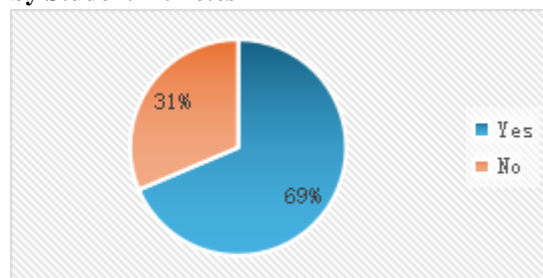
## III. RESULTS

**Table 3.1 Current Stress Management Programs Implemented by the Institution**



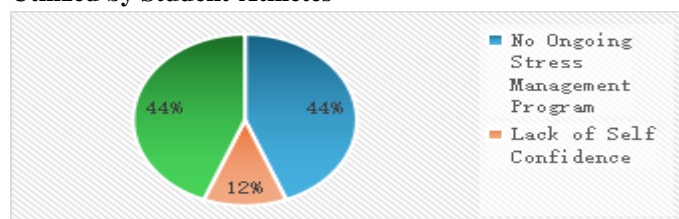
**Table 3.1:** Presents the frequency of distribution that is currently being implemented by the institution. It comprises 40% of the respondents answering that there is no ongoing stress management program. 60% comprises of answers that they either not see the benefit of having one. Some students also shares that they feel that even if there is one, they couldn't get themselves to attend due to wariness of one's confidence.

**Table 3.2 Satisfaction with the Current Program Utilized by Student-Athletes**



**Table 3.2:** Presents that 69% of students are satisfied with their current regime of program in which has not been specified by the respondents. On the other hand, the figure shows a total of 31% dissatisfied students regarding their current management stress program.

**Table 3.3 Dissatisfaction with the Current Program Utilized by Student-Athletes**



**Table 3.3:** Shows 44% of the respondents have shown their dissatisfaction with the lack of ongoing stress management program, the other 44% of the respondents thought to spend their time at their own leisure rather than participate with stress management programs, and 12% of the respondents have shown to have a lack of confidence in participating such intervention programs.

**Table 3.4 Physical Sources of Stress as Perceived by Student-Athletes**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. don't feel confident on physical appearance	1.97	Disagree	4
2. feel sleepy during academic classes	2.44	Disagree	1
3. feel easily prone to injuries	2.18	Disagree	3
4. feel tired upon waking up before an exam	2.41	Disagree	2
5. I feel unmotivated whenever the training approaches	1.74	Strongly Disagree	5
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.15</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	

**Table 3.4:** Depicts the physical sources of stress and the ranking of answers, the 1st contributor are the sleepiness during academic classes, followed by the 2nd contributor, tiredness upon waking up, and lastly, the probability of injury was 3rd in the list.

**Table 3.5 Social Sources of Stress as Perceived by Student-Athletes**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I have disagreements between me and my parents	1.91	Disagree	5
2. I feel increased pressure from my parents to excel in academics and sport	2.18	Disagree	3
3. I experienced arguments between teachers,	2.12	Disagree	4

coaches and peers			
4. My achievements and/or improvements are not recognized by my peers	2.38	Disagree	2
5. My teammates are better than me so I feel pressured to improve	2.71	Agree	1
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.26</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	

**Table 3.5:** Shows the sources of social stressors, the 1st contributor focusing on the pressure experienced base on their own perception of themselves, the 2nd contributor, recognition of achievements, and lastly, the 3rd ranked contributor which is increased parental pressure.

**Table 3.6 Mental Sources of Stress as Perceived by Student-Athletes**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I feel like I'm not having any improvement at all	2.26	Disagree	3
2. I feel like I'm the weakest or least member in my team	2.62	Agree	1
3. I feel my inability to balance both performances in academics and sports	2.18	Disagree	4
4. I experience anxiety and depression whenever I perform poorly	2.58	Agree	2
5. I feel no joy in my position as a student and an athlete	1.74	Strongly Disagree	5
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.28</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	

**Table 3.6:** Shows the mental sources of stress, on to the 1st stressor was the self-evaluation, on to the 2nd stressor, the experience of anxiety and depression and lastly, the 3rd contributor, Self perceived improvement.

**Table 3.7 Summary of Sources of Stress**

Stressors	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Mental	2.28	Disagree	1
Social	2.26	Disagree	2
Physical	2.15	Disagree	3

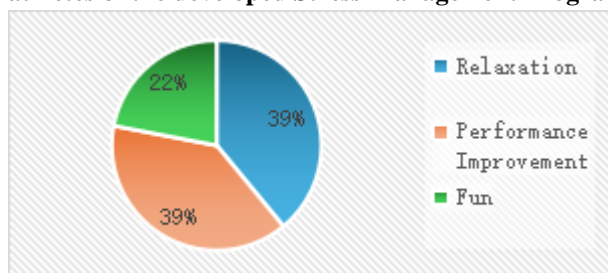
**Table 3.7:** Shows Mental stressors being ranked 1, followed by social stressor ranking 2nd, Lastly, for the Physical factor that ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Table 3.8 Level of Satisfaction of Stress Management Program**

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. The program and activities bring fun and enjoyment.	3.21	Agree	1
2. The program's instruction is simple, clear and easy to follow	3.09	Agree	3
3. The program and activities bring relaxation.	2.90	Agree	5
4. The activities help to relieve my stress	3.15	Agree	2
5. I am satisfied with the program and activities presented.	3	Agree	4
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.07</b>	<b>Agree</b>	

**Table 3.8:** It can be said based on the presented results; the student-athletes were satisfied of the intervention program that had been implemented. It was a success based on the perspective of the student-athlete, having felt that they had experienced relief from their everyday pattern.

**Table 3.9 Level of Satisfaction of high-school student-athletes of the developed Stress Management Program**



**Table 3.9:** Depicts the feedback was positive and was thrilled to have to experience it yet again. Most of the students have said to have experienced relaxation, the feel of having to relieve and alleviate their stress from sports and academics alike.

**IV. DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study highlight significant insights into the stress management needs of high school student-athletes, providing a foundation for the development of targeted wellness programs. First, it was revealed that the school did not have a formal stress management program for its high school student-athletes, indicating a gap in institutional support. This absence likely contributed to students' reliance on personal coping strategies, underscoring the need for structured interventions to address their unique stressors. Student-athletes expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of available programs, which they felt limited their ability to manage stress effectively. This dissatisfaction was compounded by the perception that the absence of such initiatives diminished the school's support for their mental and emotional well-being. The findings also identified key sources of stress, categorized into physical, social, and mental domains. Mental stressors emerged as the most significant, followed closely by social and physical stressors. These results emphasize the importance of addressing psychological and interpersonal challenges alongside physical demands in developing comprehensive stress management strategies.

The stress management program developed in response to these findings incorporated activities tailored to address the specific stressors identified. Physical and social engagement activities, such as team sports and reflective practices, were included to mitigate physical and social stressors. Additionally, mindfulness-based exercises and breathing techniques were introduced to address mental stressors. Respondents reported positive experiences with the program, noting increased enjoyment and stress relief. However, resource limitations posed challenges, requiring adjustments to ensure the program's effectiveness within existing constraints.

Student-athletes expressed enthusiasm for the developed program and demonstrated a strong willingness to participate in future iterations. They highlighted the program's value and advocated for its integration into the school curriculum to promote overall well-being and academic performance. These findings emphasize the critical need for schools to institutionalize such programs, ensuring sustainability through adequate resource allocation and regular evaluation.

The results suggest several implications for schools and stakeholders. Integrating stress management programs into the curriculum can address the multifaceted stressors experienced by student-athletes, particularly by combining physical, social, and mental components. Ensuring sufficient resources, such as materials and trained personnel, will be



essential for program sustainability. Regular assessments of stress levels and program effectiveness should also be conducted to support continuous improvement. Collaboration among administrators, teachers, coaches, and mental health professionals will be vital to provide holistic support for student-athletes.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

The results of this study shed light on significant deficiencies in the availability and implementation of stress management programs for high school student-athletes. One of the primary issues identified was the complete absence of any ongoing stress management initiatives within the institution, which led to noticeable dissatisfaction among the student-athletes. The lack of such programs, combined with limited participation opportunities, left many students struggling to manage their stress effectively. Additionally, many respondents reported self-related stress, contributing further to their difficulties. Among the various stressors identified, mental stress was found to be the most prominent, followed by social and physical stressors. In response to these challenges, a new stress management program was developed. This multi-sensory approach was specifically designed to address the major stressors identified in the study. The program was well-received by the participants, with student-athletes reporting high levels of satisfaction. They noted its effectiveness not only in alleviating stress but also in providing a sense of immediate and long-lasting enjoyment, improving their overall mental health and well-being.

Given the positive reception and outcomes from this study, it is strongly recommended that academic institutions take steps to implement similar multi-sensory stress management programs for their student-athletes. The program demonstrated notable benefits, and it could be further improved by incorporating a wider variety of activities tailored to the unique needs of athletes in different sports disciplines. In addition to this, it is advised that coaches, educators, and administrators integrate stress management strategies into their teaching and coaching methods, as doing so could help foster both academic and athletic success while simultaneously alleviating stress. By embedding these strategies into the routine of student-athletes, schools can better support their mental health and performance. Furthermore, occupational therapists could utilize the findings from this study to refine and adapt existing stress management interventions to better suit the distinct needs of student-athletes. Lastly, future research should explore a broader range of interventions to determine their effectiveness in various settings. Expanding the scope of research to include different schools or regions and assessing the program during high-stress periods such as competitions, could provide further insight into its adaptability and effectiveness across a variety of contexts.

**VI. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** who contributed to the work but do not qualify for authorship

The completion of this research would not have been possible without the support and guidance of some generous people. For this, the researcher would like to express her sincerest gratitude and appreciation to

Karen L.B. Tamayo OTR MD, EdD, my adviser, for her unending support, patience, pushing me to give my best, correcting, guiding in helping me complete my research work.

Antonio D. Yango, PhD, Marilou C. Urbina, DBM, Dr. Noel R. San Antonio DPT, MSCPD., PTRP, my research panelists, for their patience in helping me with this research and for their valuable recommendations;

Susana C. Bautista, EdD, Dean of the graduate school, for your unending support in this research process and for going the extra mile just to help me reach the finish line;

Research Respondents, for your time and willingness to partake in the surveys of which this study wouldn't be possible without;

Christopher Navalta, Luke Elijah Navalta, Caryl Elisha Navalta, Carys Esther Navalta, Caryn Ezra Navalta, and Casey Elyz Navalta, my family, for your unceasing support, love and motivation throughout this journey and for being my source of strength;

Delite Rasgo and Nelia Bitong, my family, for praying for me during my academic journey and the process of my research, always motivating and cheering me to finish the course.

To my batch mates, for your encouragement and support all throughout my years learning and growing in the Doctor of Occupational Therapy program in UPHSL; and

Finally, to my God for His unmerited favor, love and grace, and for the provision of good health and sound mind during the entire research study.

## **VII. DISCLOSURE**

The author declares no conflicts of interest related to the research presented in this paper."

## **REFERENCES**

1. Amble, T. (2023, September). Effectiveness of Yoga Training as an Adjunct Intervention Alongside Multisensory Teaching in Enhancing Self-esteem and Behavioural Parameters of Children with Learning Disorders. ProQuest. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/89a913f0c2cef9f51a527beff7e5944e/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=2032134>
2. American Psychological Association. 2023. Inclusive language guide. <https://www.apa.org/about/apa/equity-diversity-inclusion/language-guidelines> Google Scholar

3. Arici, N.2022.The Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Thriving Programs on High School Students' Perceived Stress, Mindfulness, Thriving and Self-Efficacy Levels.  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359027895> (Accessed on May 26, 2024)
4. Aristizabal S.2021. Biophilic office design: Exploring the impact of a multisensory approach on human well-being.  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0272494421001353>.(Accessed on May 25,2024)
5. Attia, M, 2022. Cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral stress-related symptoms and coping strategies among university students during the third wave of COVID-19 pandemic.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9523087/>(Accessed on May 26, 2024)
6. Babar (2004). Students, stress and coping strategies: A case of Pakistani: Education for health. LWW.  
[https://journals.lww.com/edhe/abstract/2004/17030/students,\\_stress\\_and\\_coping\\_strategies\\_\\_a\\_case\\_of.10.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/edhe/abstract/2004/17030/students,_stress_and_coping_strategies__a_case_of.10.aspx)
7. Barbeau, A. (2024, June). The effects of musical practice on the well-being, mental health and social support of student, amateur, and professional musicians in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic.
8. Bastemeyer. (2021, July). Mental health in sports students – a cohort study on study-related stress, general well-being, and general risk for depression. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*.  
<https://efsupit.ro/images/stories/iulie2021/Art%20249.pdf>
9. Beasley, L. (2023, April). A descriptive look at the mental health ... - sage journals. Sage Journals.  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/01937235231171369>
10. Bheemaiah P, 2022. A Theoretical Framework of Stress Management- Contemporary Approaches, Models and Theories  
<https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/94NMF>(Accessed on May 24,2024)