

INTRODUCTION

- Burnout in sport is described as emotional and physical exhaustion that can develop from chronic stress (Dubuc-Charbonneau & Durand-Bush, 2015)
- Burnout can negatively impact an athlete's performance, diminish physical and psychological wellbeing, increase risk of depression, increase one's fear of failure, and can sometimes lead to an athlete choosing to terminate their sport (Dubuc-Charbonneau & Durand-Bush, 2015; Madigan, 2021).
- There is limited research examining burnout interventions in athletes. The few existing studies that have tested interventions to reduce athlete burnout (i.e., Dubuc-Charbonneau & Durand-Bush, 2015; Langan et al., 2015) were effective in reducing or preventing burnout, however, both spanned nearly or all the sport season, which may not be feasible for many coaches or practitioners to implement.
- Both burnout interventions were also led by experienced practitioners, which may not be cost-effective for many coaches. Therefore, more practical options are needed.
- Stress mindset is an individual's perception of stress (Crum et al., 2013). People with a stress-is-enhancing mindset are more likely to experience positive outcomes from stress, such as increased performance or productivity, better health or wellbeing, and increases in learning and growth (Crum et al., 2017).
- Research has shown it is possible to manipulate perception of stress, stress mindset, appraisal of obstacles, or the experience of stress through intervention (Crum et al., 2013; Jamieson et al., 2012, 2016, 2018a, 2018b).
- Recent research has shown that there is relationship between stress mindset and burnout (Shipherd et al., 2021). Specifically, college student-athletes with a stronger stress-is-debilitating mindset reported experiencing more burnout symptoms than student-athletes with more of a stress-is-enhancing mindset.
- Thus, a stress mindset intervention may reduce burnout symptoms.
- Furthermore, given stress mindset interventions are brief, easy, and do not require a specialist to implement, this may be a more feasible option to reduce symptoms of burnout in college student-athletes.

PURPOSE

- The purpose of the present study was to examine if a stress mindset intervention could help in alleviating burnout symptoms in college student-athletes.

METHODS

Participants:

- A total of 13 ($n = 8$ male; $n = 3$ female) NCAA DII collegiate student-athletes, participated in this study. See Table 1 for more participant characteristics.

Instruments:

- Demographic and sport participation information
- Stress Mindset Measure (SMM; Crum et al., 2013)
 - 8-item instrument which measures an individual's stress mindset
 - 5-point Likert-type scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree)
 - Sample item: "Experiencing stress enhances my performance and productivity"
- Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ; Raedeke & Smith, 2001; Raedeke & Smith, 2009)
 - 15-item measure of athlete burnout
 - 3 subscales: Reduced sense of accomplishment, emotional/physical exhaustion, and sport devaluation
 - 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always)
 - Sample item: "I feel physically worn out from sport."

METHODS, cont.

Table 1: Participant characteristics

Variable		<i>n</i>	Variable		<i>n</i>
Ethnicity	Black	2	Yr in School	Freshman	1
	Caucasian	5		Sophomore	3
	Hispanic	5		Junior	3
	Bi/multiracial	1		Senior	5
Other	1	1			
College Major	Art	1	Sport	Basketball	4
	Biology	3		Football	2
	Business	1		Tennis	2
	Communications	1		Track & Field	2
	Kinesiology	4		Volleyball	3
	Mechanical Engineering	1			
Psychology	1				
Wildlife Science	1				

Procedure:

- Recruitment via convenience and snowball sampling
- Hyperlink provided access to the study in Qualtrics, an online survey tool
- Following consent, participants completed demographic, sport participation information, SMM, and ABQ
- Participants then watched three brief stress-is-enhancing mindset videos and completed a brief manipulation check.
- Two weeks after completing the initial survey, participants were emailed a link to the second online survey
- In this second survey, participants completed the SMM and ABQ a second time

Data Analysis:

- Data screened and descriptive data calculated for all variables in SPSS v. 26
- Five paired samples *t*-tests were then performed to test for changes in stress mindset and burnout symptoms following the stress mindset intervention, using an alpha level of .05 for indication of statistical significance.

RESULTS

Table 2: SMM and ABQ means and standard deviations

Variable	Mean	SD
SMM pre	2.91	0.63
SMM post	2.91	0.58
ABQ total pre	2.23	0.72
ABQ total post	2.30	0.64
ABQ reduced sense of accomplishment pre	2.26	0.54
ABQ reduced sense of accomplishment post	2.34	0.40
ABQ exhaustion pre	2.52	0.97
ABQ exhaustion post	2.52	0.90
ABQ devaluation pre	1.92	0.86
ABQ devaluation post	2.03	0.86

No significant difference was found between before and after the stress mindset intervention (pre and post) in stress mindset or burnout, as assessed by the ABQ total and three ABQ subscales. See Table 2 for means and standard deviations.

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CONCLUSIONS

- The stress mindset intervention was not successful in alleviating burnout symptoms in this sample of college student-athletes.
- One potential reason no statistically significant difference was found could be due to participants failing to watch the required videos in the study, and therefore not receiving the intervention.
- It is also possible the stress mindset intervention does not reduce burnout symptoms in college student-athletes if not they are not actively engaged in the intervention, which research has found is important for interventions to be successful (Regehr et al., 2013).
- Finally, the timing of the data collection may have impacted burnout scores to begin with. Given the data collection occurred during the summertime, all college student-athletes who participated in this study were out of their sport season. This could have impact burnout symptoms experienced, given athletes report higher rates of burnout towards the beginning of their competitive sport season (Dubuc-Charbonneau & Durand-Bush, 2015).
- Therefore, future research should replicate this while college student-athletes are in their competitive sport season.

Limitations:

- Sample size
- Some participants did not actually receive the intervention
- Online data collection

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