

ABSTRACT

SOURCES OF STRESS FOR NCAA DIVISION-ONE FEMALE ATHLETES

The purpose of this study was to investigate the athletes' stressors from their first involvement in their sport to the end of the 2002 postseason. Some common stressors that have been identified among female team sport athletes are negative aspects of competition and training, personal struggles, coaches, and distractions. Research has been limited to current stressors. Therefore, when these stressors may have occurred over time is unknown. Results of the present study indicated that the sources of stress identified by Division I female athletes included negative aspects of competition and training, personal struggles regarding their sport, team dynamic issues, and non-sport related issues. For example, some of the stressors were found to occur during the time of high school/club transitions, the recruitment process, and during the Division I athletic experience. Information on the stress that athletes face throughout their sporting career may be beneficial for several reasons. First, it will contribute to filling a gap in the literature. Secondly, it will create awareness for coaches, sport psychologists. It may also assist in the modification of effective applied stress management programs for female athletes.

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