

Title: Facilitating Dual Careers by Improving Resistance to Chronic Stress: Effects of an Intervention Programme for Elite Student Athletes.

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Aims: The current study therefore developed a stress-resistance training for elite athletes (SRT-EA). SRT-EA is an educational-psychological group intervention programme to improve personal resistance to chronic stress. Additionally, the study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of SRT-EA and ultimately, improve student athletes' resistance to chronic stress.

Method: Participants were between 13 and 20 years of age and represented various Olympic summer sports. Individuals were in class grades 10 and upward at four German elite sport schools. The evaluation carried out was quasi-experimental design, with three time points of measurement (baseline, immediately after, and three months after) and two non-randomised controlled groups: an intervention group (n=128) and an untreated control group (n=117). The study focused on short-term (directly after) and mid-term effects of the intervention. A single, 90-minute session was provided once per week over a 10-week period. Coping strategies, stress reactions/sources of stress, and personal strengths/weakness are all examples of topics discussed in the SRT-EA. To test the effectiveness of SRT-EA, evaluation criteria were used showing different levels of the success of the intervention. These included: (1) reactions (i.e., did the participant like the

programme?), (2) learning (what did the participants learn during the programme?), (3) transfer (will the participants be able to transfer the contents of the programme to their daily lives?), and (4) results (does the intervention lead to positive changes regarding stressful experiences and behaviour?). If the intervention was successful, the above questions were answered positively.

Results and Practical Implications: Outcome variables (e.g., general self-efficacy and chronic stress level) were assessed with questionnaires. Significant short- and mid-term intervention effects were explored. The intervention increased stress-related knowledge, general self-efficacy, and stress sensitivity. Chronic stress level, stress symptoms, and stress reactivity were reduced. Measurements at the end of the intervention and three months later showed mostly positive subjective experiences. The results reinforce the hope that educational-psychological stress-management interventions can support dual careers. SRT-EA is a suitable tool for broad and sustainable facilitation of individual resistance to chronic stress. SRT-EA should be embedded in larger, more complex programmes for the facilitation of dual careers and health promotion in elite sports. Sustainable effects on stress-resistance need to be supported by programmes that (1) create an organisational-structural coupling of academics and sports and (2), include parents, teachers, and coaches of elite athletes.

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<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17461391.2017.1407363>