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Sara Roberts

Callie Poole

Am Greene-Villa

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# Stress in Athletes Versus Non-Athletes



Sara Roberts, Callie Poole, & Am Greene-Villa

Department of Psychological Science, University of Mary Washington,  
Fredericksburg VA

## Background Information

Too much stress can impact the wellness of a person both physically and mentally (Moeini et al., 2008; Pierceall & Keim, 2007).

It has been debated whether college athletes experience more stress than non-athletes. Wilson and Pritchard (2005) found that college athletes reported more areas of stress in their life than their non-athlete counterparts.

Depending on how a person copes, it will affect their performance and coping effectiveness (Delahaij, 2011).

Consistent with previous studies, college athletes tend to have more positive coping styles than their non-athlete counterparts (Azizi, 2011).

## Hypotheses

Athletes have higher levels of perceived stress than non-athletes.

Athletes have more positive coping styles than non-athletes.

## Methods and Materials

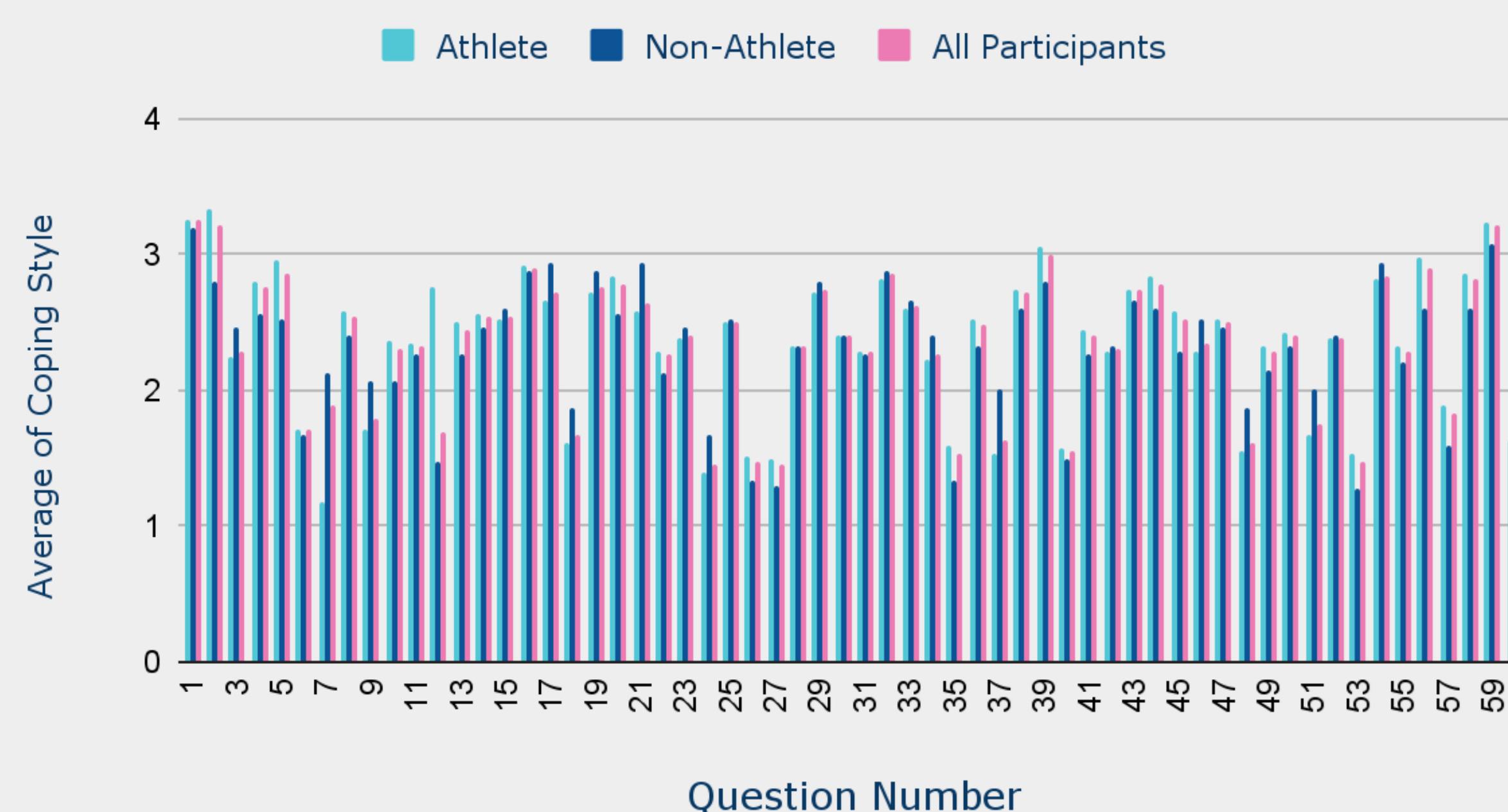
This study is a replication study done by Melanie Martin in 2018.

Participants were recruited from the University of Mary Washington's psychology subject pool and social media. There were 73 participants consisting of 15 non-athletes and 58 athletes.

Participants answered survey questions selected from the COPE Questionnaire, the Perceived Stress Scale, and the International Physical Activity Questionnaire.

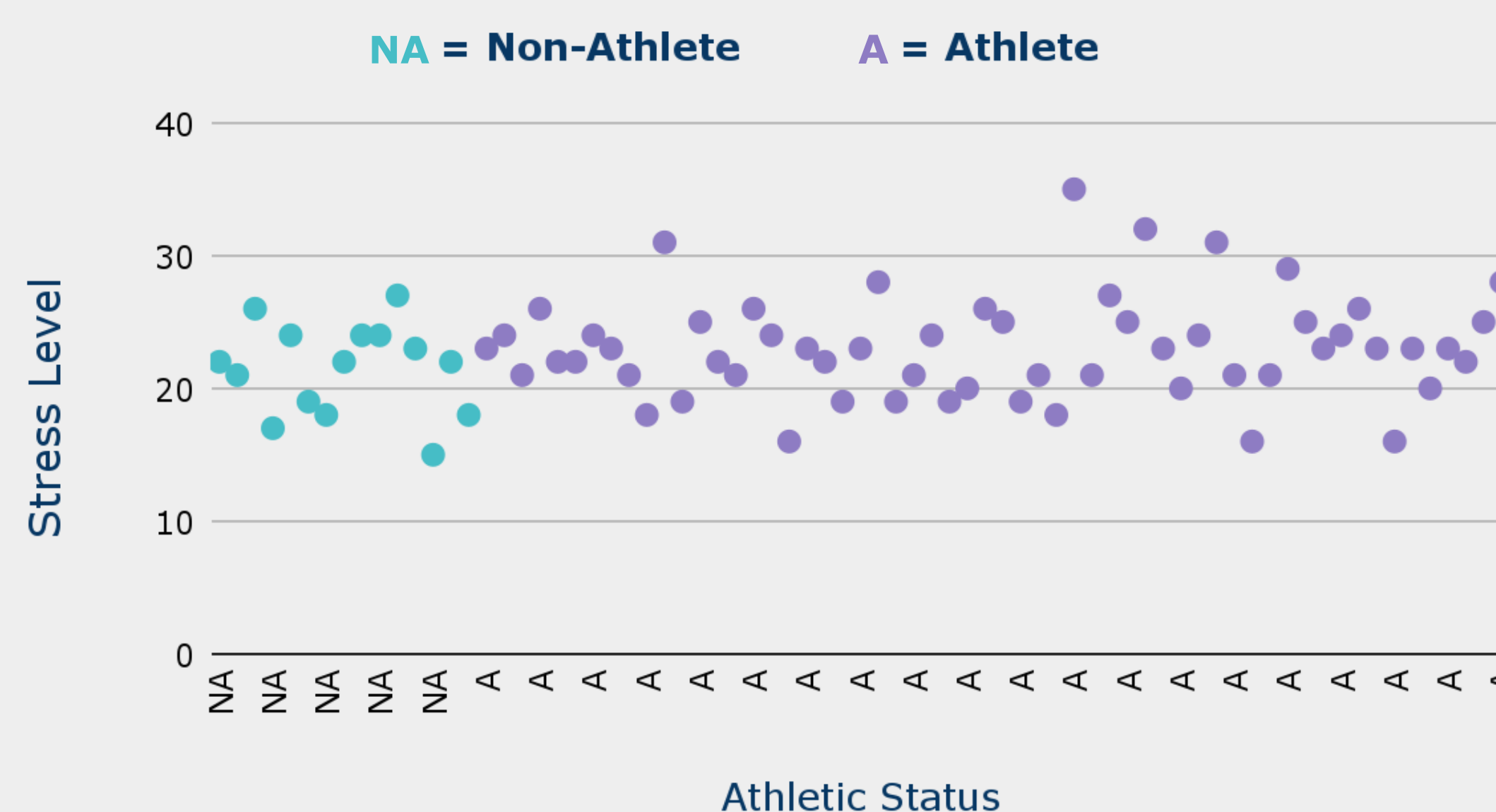
## Results

### Coping Styles of Athletes vs. Non-Athletes



This graph shows the averages of each coping style asked in the specific numbered question for each respective group.

### Stress Level for Athletes vs. Non-Athletes



This graph shows the stress level score for each respective group.

## Discussion

Athletes did not have higher levels of perceived stress than non-athletes.

Athletes did have more positive coping styles than non-athletes.

Both groups had high levels of perceived stress.

Athletes answered above average for denial and substance abuse in regards to coping styles.

Non-athletes answered above average for focus on and venting of emotions and behavioral disengagement in regards to coping styles.

## Future Research

An insightful study could be one that establishes a baseline level of stress for athletes and non-athletes. Then, make participants take the survey a second time at a later date to determine more specific differences in stress levels.

A study for athletes specifically, could look at the differences in stress levels during different times in their athletic year (pre-season, competition season, tournament time, and offseason etc.)

## References

Martin, M. (2018). Comparing stress levels and coping styles in college athletes and non-athletes. Honors Theses.

Moeini, B., Shafii, F., Hidarnia, A., Babaii, G. R., Birashk, B., & Allahverdipour, H. (2008). Perceived stress, self-efficacy and its relations to psychological well-being status in Iranian male high school students. *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 36(2), 257-266.

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Wilson, G. W. & Pritchard, M. P. (2005). Comparing Sources of stress in college student athletes and non-athletes. *Athletic Insight*. 7(1) 1-8.