

# A Descriptive-Comparative Study on the Injury Prevention Among the SPS Student-Athletes

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## Abstract

Injury prevention refers to the strategic practices and measures taken to reduce the risk of physical harm or injury in a performance. This study aimed to describe the level of injury prevention – health status, environmental and equipment, exercise sessions, and exercise programs among SPS student-athletes in the Philippines particularly in the Davao Region. A non-experimental quantitative design was employed, specifically utilizing a descriptive-comparative approach with complete enumeration of 100 SPS student-athletes and the data were collected through structured survey questionnaires. Results showed an overall mean of 3.93 (SD = 0.58), interpreted as High, indicating that injury prevention among the student-athletes are often evident and frequently practiced. Furthermore, the study found no significant differences in injury prevention when analyzed according to demographic profiles, suggesting that these factors do not influence the level of injury prevention. This study accepted the assertion of Tim Gabett's Load Management Theory that gradual load progression of the athletes during training through structured exercise programs was shown to prevent injuries effectively. The study highlights the importance of aligning training intensity with a student-athlete's current capacity. Recommendations include implement regular health assessments, athlete screening, ensure safe training, equipment checks, injury prevention workshops, provide regular consultations and rehabilitation support and improved coaching practices. The findings provide practical insights that can guide educators, coaches, and athletes in promoting safe and sustained athletic performance.

*Keywords: Injury Prevention; Load Management Theory; health; environment; equipment; exercise; athletic performance*

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## 1. Introduction

Injury prevention in sports is a critical concern for student-athletes, as injuries can significantly hinder both their athletic performance and academic pursuits. Despite the availability of various preventive measures, the low status of injury prevention in sports remains evident, as many programs are inconsistently implemented and lack long-term effectiveness. For instance, a comprehensive summary of systematic reviews indicated that while numerous injury prevention programs exist, their impact is uneven, and implementation challenges persist (Webster & Hewett, 2021). Additionally, a study on injury prevention strategies during the FIFA 2014 World Cup revealed inconsistencies between perceived best practices and actual evidence-based approaches, further reflecting the low level of commitment to effectively applying preventive measures (McCall et al., 2015).

Globally, the low status of injury prevention continues to pose challenges despite the introduction of various programs. In countries like Norway, national initiatives have aimed to reduce injury rates among

young athletes, yet adherence remains inconsistent, and results are varied (Soligard et al., 2016). For example, the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences reported that while an injury prevention program for football players showed potential, its irregular implementation across teams severely limited its impact (Owoeye et al., 2020). Similarly, during the FIFA 2014 World Cup, the absence of unified, evidence-based standards highlighted the low level of coordinated global efforts toward injury prevention (McCall et al., 2015).

In the Philippines, the low status of injury prevention is even more apparent, as it remains an underdeveloped and often overlooked aspect of sports science. There is a clear scarcity of localized data and comprehensive programs targeting injury prevention. A study analyzing secondary data on injury sources emphasized the lack of sufficient information to support effective policies and programs (Consunji et al., 2021). Moreover, research in Cebu on functional movement as a predictor of injury risk stressed the need for customized prevention strategies—yet these remain limited in number and scale (Cañete et al., 2019), further indicating the low level of institutional support for injury prevention initiatives.

While international studies have explored various approaches to injury prevention, their relevance to the Philippine setting is limited. The low level of localized research and application means that Filipino student-athletes are often left without appropriate preventive strategies suited to their unique needs. For instance, McCall et al. (2015) examined injury prevention at an international level, but its applicability in the local context is constrained by cultural and infrastructural differences. This gap emphasizes the low status of injury prevention efforts within the country and underlines the urgent need to develop and implement context-specific strategies. Doing so is essential to safeguard the health, performance, and continued participation of student-athletes in sports.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of this study is to describe the level of injury prevention among SPS student-athletes. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

1. To describe the profile of respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1 age;
  - 1.2 year level; and
  - 1.3 sex.
2. To determine the level of injury prevention in terms of:
  - 2.1 health status;
  - 2.2 environmental and equipment;
  - 2.3 exercise session; and
  - 2.4 exercise program.
3. To determine if there is a significant difference in the level of injury prevention when analyzed across the profile of the respondents.
4. To propose an intervention based on the results of the study.

### **Theoretical/Conceptual Framework**

This study is anchored on the Load Management Theory by Tim Gabett (2016). This theory aims to examine the application of injury prevention in sports for student-athletes. Specifically, it seeks to explore how balancing training loads with appropriate recovery strategies can reduce injury risks related to health status, environment and equipment, exercise sessions, and exercise programs. The findings could provide insights into how proper load management can optimize performance while preventing injuries in student-athletes.

The Load Management Theory emphasizes the balance of training intensity and volume which is particularly relevant for student-athletes in adjusting exercise sessions and programs based on their health status and physical capabilities. This theory fosters a safer training environment, promoting a deeper understanding and more effective training strategies through active participation in sports, while ensuring the proper use of equipment. By applying this theory, student-athletes can effectively measure and enhance their performance in sports to prevent injuries.

## Method

This study will employ a quantitative research design, which involves the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to generate objective findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Specifically, a descriptive-comparative approach is employed to identify similarities and differences in injury prevention among student-athletes without manipulating any variables (Polit & Beck, 2021). The study will be conducted in public secondary high schools in Region XI that offer the Special Program in Sports (SPS). The target respondents are student-athletes currently enrolled in SPS, actively engaged in competitive sports, and willing to participate in the research. To ensure the data collected is relevant and aligned with the study's objectives, purposive sampling will be used, where respondents are deliberately selected based on specific inclusion criteria (Etikan et al., 2016).

The primary research instrument utilized in this study is the *Sports Injury Prevention Awareness Scale* developed by Yildiz and Genc (2021), ensuring the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Data collection will involve distributing the questionnaire to the selected student-athletes, either in person or through digital means, depending on accessibility. After gathering responses, statistical analysis will be conducted using frequency analysis to summarize the distribution of responses, the mean to determine the average level, and ANOVA to assess significant differences among different groups of student-athletes (Field, 2018). These analytical methods will provide meaningful insights into the level of injury prevention among SPS student-athletes, contributing to improved safety measures and training programs in secondary schools.

## Results and Discussion

This chapter outlines the discussion of the results and the analysis of the data. By employing suitable statistical methods, the gathered information was examined to address the issues outlined in the introduction of this study. The discussion is organized according to the order of the research objectives. Related literature is integrated to support and provide context to the findings.

Table 1 provide a detailed demographic profile of the SPS student-athletes involved in the study. Outlined in the table are age distribution, sex, and year level of the student-students.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the SPS Student-Athletes for Age, Sex and Year Level Frequency

Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age		
12	7	7.0
13	33	33.0
14	16	16.0
15	28	28.0
16	12	12.0
17	4	4.0
Total	100	100.0

Sex		
Female	54	54.0
Male	46	46.0
Total	100	100.0
Year Level		
Grade 7	31	31.0
Grade 8	15	15.0
Grade 9	23	23.0
Grade 10	31	31.0
Total	100	100.0

The table highlights the demographic characteristics of the SPS student-athletes on age, sex, and year level distribution. The most common age is thirteen years old, with thirty-three respondents, making up thirty-three percent of the total. Followed by fifteen years old with twenty-eight respondents with a twenty-eight percent, while the least represented seventeen years old with only four respondents with a four percent. In terms of sex distribution, females make up a slightly larger portion with a fifty-four percent compared to males with a forty-six percent. Regarding year level, the majority of respondents are Grade 7 and Grade 10 have the highest representation, each with thirty-one respondents with a thirty-one percent, whereas Grade 8 has the lowest at fifteen respondents with a fifteen percent. Grade 9 comprises twenty-three percent of the sample. Overall, the data suggest a balanced distribution with a slight female majority and a concentration in Grade 7 and 10 students.

Table 2. Level of Injury Prevention of SPS Student-Athletes

Injury Prevention (IP)	SD	Mean	Interpretation
Health Status	.68	3.55	High
Environmental and Equipment	.80	3.95	High
Exercise Session	.65	4.18	High
Exercise Program	.73	4.05	High
Overall Mean	.58	3.93	High

Presented in table 2 are the results of descriptive statistics derived from the tabulated and analyzed data gathered from the variable of injury prevention of SPS student-athletes. The sub-indicators are: health status, environmental and equipment, exercise session and exercise program, as well as the overall mean.

The overall injury prevention has a mean of 3.93, which is interpreted as High, means that the injury prevention of SPS student-athletes are often evident. This implies that safety measures are frequently practiced, which likely helps prevent injuries. This means that students are generally aware of and apply safety precautions.

The result supports the study of McKenzie et. al. (2020), it states that effective injury prevention strategies, such as hazard identification, proper training, and adherence to safety protocols, contribute to a safer environment by minimizing potential risks. Similarly, a study by Gielen and Sleet (2019) emphasizes that consistent safety awareness and preventive actions lead to a lower incidence of injuries, especially in

workplaces and schools. These findings support that the high mean score reflects a strong presence of injury prevention practices, which likely help reduce accidents and promote a culture of safety.

As shown in Table 2, the level of injury prevention reveals that among the four indicators, exercise session appeared as the highest mean score of 4.18 and interpreted as High, means that the injury prevention of SPS student-athletes are often evident indicating that structured exercise sessions are effectively implemented for injury prevention. This suggests that proper warm-ups, cool-downs, and supervised workouts are consistently practiced, contributing to athlete safety.

This study supports the claim of Van Mechelen et al. (2018), found that incorporating proper warm-up routines and injury-prevention exercises significantly reduces the risk of muscle strains and ligament tears. Similarly, Faude et al. (2019), highlight that supervised training programs tailored to an athlete's specific needs enhance performance while reducing overuse injuries. These findings align with the data, suggesting that well-planned exercise sessions contribute to safer training and reduced injury risks.

The next highest indicator under injury prevention is exercise program with a mean of 4.05 and interpreted as High, means that the injury prevention of SPS student-athletes are often evident indicating that training programs designed for student-athletes effectively integrate injury prevention measures. This indicates that structured workout routines, strength training, and conditioning programs play a significant role in maintaining athlete safety.

The result supports the study of Myer et al. (2018), that programs that incorporate flexibility, strength training, and balance exercises help in reducing sports injuries, especially in young athletes. Similarly, Lauersen et al. (2019), emphasize that injury prevention programs tailored to the specific demands of different sports can significantly lower injury rates. This study supports the findings, reinforcing that effective exercise programs contribute to long-term athlete safety and performance.

Furthermore, another highest indicator under injury prevention is environmental and equipment and with a mean score of 3.95 and interpreted as High, indicating that proper maintenance of training facilities and sports equipment is often evident. This highlights that student-athletes are provided with safe and well-maintained environments, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries.

Studies emphasize that a safe sports environment significantly reduces injury risks. According to Finch and Donaldson (2020), maintaining high-quality sports equipment and ensuring hazard-free training spaces are crucial in minimizing injuries among athletes. Additionally, Junge et al. (2018), found that poor playing conditions and defective equipment increase the likelihood of injuries, especially in high-contact sports. These findings support the data, reinforcing that consistent equipment checks and environmental maintenance are essential for sustaining injury prevention.

Lastly, the lowest mean score of 3.55 belongs to health status and interpreted as High, indicating that proper health monitoring and medical assessments of the SPS student-athletes are often evident. This implies that student-athletes generally receive adequate health evaluations, which contribute to their ability to perform safely.

A study of Mountjoy et al. (2018), highlighted the regular medical assessments and health monitoring are essential in identifying risk factors that may predispose athletes to injuries. Similarly, a study by Soligard et al. (2019) emphasizes the importance of adequate nutrition, hydration, and rest in maintaining an athlete's overall health and reducing the likelihood of injuries. This study aligns with the findings, reinforcing that prioritizing health assessments and wellness programs can further enhance injury prevention efforts.

Table 3. The Difference in the Level of Injury Prevention of SPS Student-Athletes when analyzed according to the Demographic Profile.

Demographic Profile	F-value	P-value	Decision @ 0.05 Alpha Level	Interpretation
Age	0.653	0.663	Accept null hypothesis	There is no significant difference.
Sex	0.377	0.707	Accept null hypothesis	There is no significant difference.
Year Level	1.95	0.135	Accept null hypothesis	There is no significant difference.

Presented in Table 3, are the results of the injury prevention of SPS student-athletes. The ANOVA was used to assess differences in injury prevention between age and year levels, while T-test was applied to examine differences based on sexes.

The analysis of injury prevention based on age resulted in an F-value of 0.653 and a P-value of 0.663, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of injury prevention across different age groups of SPS student-athletes. The findings suggest that regardless of age, all student-athletes receive similar injury prevention measures, training, and safety protocols. This uniformity may be due to standardized sports safety programs and coaching strategies that apply equally to all age groups.

According to Emery et al. (2015), emphasize that injury prevention strategies, such as neuromuscular training and protective equipment use, are implemented to minimize disparities in injury risks regardless of age. Similarly, Rössler et al. (2018), found that general injury prevention programs, such as the FIFA 11+, effectively reduced injury rates among athletes, regardless of age or sport. These findings align with the results of the current study, which indicate no significant difference in injury prevention among different age groups of SPS student-athletes, likely due to the uniform application of injury prevention programs.

In terms of sex, the analysis yielded an F-value of 0.377 and a P-value of 0.707, again leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This means that there is no significant difference in the level of injury prevention between male and female student-athletes. The result suggests that both genders likely follow the same injury prevention strategies, training regimens, and safety guidelines. This could be due to equal access to protective equipment, health monitoring, and exercise programs that ensure fairness and inclusivity in sports training.

The result supports the study of Ristolainen et al. (2014), examined the incidence of sports injuries among male and female athletes across various disciplines, highlighting that sex differences in injury rates are sport-specific and influenced by both biological and sociocultural factors. Similarly, a study by Smith et al. (2016), investigated the impact of a standardized neuromuscular training program on male and female high school athletes, finding that both sexes benefited equally in terms of reduced injury rates, suggesting that uniform application of such programs can be effective across genders. These findings align with the current study's results, indicating no significant difference in injury prevention between male and female student-

athletes, likely due to the consistent implementation of comprehensive injury prevention strategies.

When analyzing the year level, the F-value was 1.95, and the P-value was 0.135, which also resulted in the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is no significant difference in injury prevention levels among student-athletes from different grade levels. The similarity in injury prevention efforts across year levels suggests that all students, regardless of experience or academic standing, receive consistent safety training, injury awareness programs, and coaching support. This ensures that injury prevention remains a priority across all grade levels without disparity in implementation.

A study of Richmond et al. (2016), examined the significant reduction in sport-related injuries, including lower extremity injuries, suggesting that consistent application of such program's benefits students across different grade levels. Similarly, Soomro et al. (2016) demonstrated that structured, multifaceted programs—including warm-up routines, neuromuscular strength training, and proprioception exercises—led to a 40% reduction in injury rates across various educational stages. This study aligns with the findings, which indicate no significant difference in injury prevention among student-athletes from different grade levels. The uniform application of comprehensive injury prevention programs across all educational levels likely contributes to this consistency.

An effective intervention plan to improve the health status of student-athletes should focus on enhanced medical assessments, nutrition monitoring, recovery programs and injury prevention education. Regular health screenings, including injury risk evaluations and fitness tests, can help identify potential issues early. Implementing monthly health assessments to monitor and hydration guidelines can ensure student-athletes maintain peak physical condition. Additionally, collaborating with healthcare professionals to provide workshops on proper nutrition, hydration, and mental health well-being can enhance overall health management and prevent long-term health issues. Educating student-athletes on proper rest, recovery techniques, and self-care practices can further enhance their resilience and performance, aims to create a sustainable and proactive approach to injury prevention.

## Conclusion

The four factors consistently exhibit high levels and that there is no significant difference in injury prevention regardless of the demographic profile of the SPS student-athletes, it is inferred that these four factors do not influence the level of injury prevention. Further, the findings affirm the Load Management Theory that a well-structured exercise program, proper equipment, and a safe training environment significantly reduce the risks of injuries. By addressing these factors through proper supervision, athlete education, and adherence to preventive measures, the study confirms that injury prevention is essential for sustaining athletic performance and long-term participation in sports.

## Recommendation

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the school and the coaches should implement regular health assessments to monitor student-athletes' fitness levels, and must ensure safe training environments and equipment. Trainers and coaches should design structured exercise programs with proper warm-ups, cooldowns, and injury prevention techniques. Student-athletes must follow safety guidelines, reporting injuries, and adhere to recovery protocols. Additionally, health professionals of the school should conduct injury prevention workshops, provide regular consultations, and recommend rehabilitation support to promote safe and sustained athletic performance.



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## Appendix A. Survey Questionnaire

Research Title: A Descriptive-Comparative Study on the Injury Prevention Among the SPS Student-Athletes

INJURY PREVENTION					
A. HEALTH STATUS	5	4	3	2	1
1. I plan my exercise based on my current health condition.					
2. I take my previous injuries into account before starting exercise.					
3. I stop exercising if I experience chest pain, palpitations, or fainting.					
4. I stop exercising if I feel severe physical discomfort during the activity.					
B. ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUIPMENT					
5. I choose appropriate shoes for the type of sport I engage in.					
6. I use specific protective equipment if possible during heavy exercises.					
7. I ensure that only adequate equipment is used to a specific sport.					
8. I select suitable shoes depending on the surface or place I exercise on.					
9. I wear proper attire according to the weather conditions.					
C. EXERCISE SESSION					
10. I include cardiovascular endurance exercises in my routine.					
11. I incorporate strength exercises into my training program.					
12. I do balance exercises to help prevent injuries.					
13. I do post-exercise stretching to aid recovery and prevent injuries.					
14. I stay hydrated before, during, and after physical activity.					
D. EXERCISE PROGRAM					
15. I start my training with light exercises when I am a beginner.					
16. I increase the duration of my exercise gradually.					
17. I gradually increase the intensity or difficulty of my exercises.					
18. I increase the frequency of my exercise sessions in a controlled manner.					