



Comparison of defense mechanisms and self-compassion in the team and individual athlete

Poster Presentation

1Vadoud Hamididrazi * ; 2Behrouz Abdoli; 3Ebrahim Moteshareie

¹Master of Sport Psychology, Faculty of Sport Sciences and Health, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran
(vadood.hamidi@gmail.com)

²Professor, Department of Cognitive and Behavioral Science and Technology in Sport, Faculty of Sport Sciences and Health, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

³Assistant Professor, Department of Cognitive and Behavioral Science and Technology in Sport, Faculty of Sport Sciences and Health, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

Introduction: Although several studies have positively evaluated the role of defense mechanisms and self-compassion in ensuring the psychological well-being of individuals. However, no studies have been conducted on athletes' attitudes toward accepting or resisting self-compassion and whether different areas of the sport can facilitate or hinder self-compassion. Accordingly, this study aims to compare defense mechanisms and self-compassion in student-athletes in the team and individual disciplines.

Methods: The present study is a comparative study of 210 student-athletes. After compiling the questionnaire online and sending the relevant link to the target population, 210 questionnaires, 100 and 110 questionnaires for the team and individual athletes, respectively, were analyzed using one-way (ANOVA) statistical method at a significant level of $p < 0.05$ was analyzed.

Results: The results showed no significant difference in the level of self-compassion of the team and individual athletes, individual contact, and non-contact athletes; only in the subscale of common humanity was there a significant difference, so that team athletes had less sense of common humanity. In adopting a defensive style, there was no significant difference between a team and individual athletes, individual contact and non-contact, and athletes used defensive styles in a combined manner.

Conclusion: This study showed that lack of empathy and incoherence could neutralize the development of self-compassion in team athletes. Therefore, sports psychologists should educate team coaches and athletes about how their emotions are contagious and the impact of their behaviors on teammates. In general, it seems that participating in sports competitions can improve athletes' moods and consequently increase their level of self-compassion. Therefore, Compassionate interventions by sports psychologists can pave the way for the development of new coping styles, improved mindfulness, and rapid post-failure psychological recovery for vulnerable athletes.

Keywords

Self-compassion; defense mechanisms; team; individual; student athletes

Reference:

- Walton, C. C., Baranoff, J., Gilbert, P., & Kirby, J. (2020). Self-compassion, social rank, and psychological distress in athletes of varying competitive levels. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 50(December 2019), 101733. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2020.101733>
- Campo, M., Martinent, G., Pellet, J., Boulanger, J., Louvet, B., & Nicolas, M. (2018). Emotion–performance relationships in team sport: The role of personal and social identities. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 13(5), 629–635. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1747954118785256>
- Crozier, A. J., Mosewich, A. D., & Ferguson, L. J. (2018). The company we keep: Exploring the relationship between perceived teammate self-compassion and athlete self-compassion. *Psychology of Sport & Exercise*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2018.10.005>
- Mousavi, A., Mousavi, M. V., & Yaghubi, H. (2017). Defense Mechanisms in Psychological Health and Sport Success of Athletes. 24(5), 379–388.