

Comparison of Situational Coping Strategies, Psychological Well-Being and Life Satisfaction in Athletic and Normal Students

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Masoumeh Ahmadi¹
 Mehrdad Hasanzadeh^{2*}
 Shiva Yousefzadeh Ghara Aghaji³
 Leila Kaabi Amir⁴

¹MA of Clinical Psychology, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran
²MA of Psychology and Education of Exceptional Children, Payame Noor University, Ardabil, Iran
³MA of Motion Behavior, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran
⁴MA Student of Educational Research, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran

*Correspondence:
 Mehrdad Hasanzadeh, MA of Psychology and Education of Exceptional Children, Payame Noor University, Ardabil, Iran

Email: hasanzadehmehrdad2@gmail.com
 Orcid : 0000-0001-8943-1568

Abstract

Purpose: Physical activity includes a wide range of health benefits that can protect people from diseases and provide and strengthen their mental and physical health. Therefore, in the present study, situational coping strategies, psychological well-being and life satisfaction in athletic and normal students will be compared.

Methods: The leading research method was descriptive causal-comparative. The statistical population of this study was all undergraduate students of Mohaghegh Ardabili University. From this population, by sampling multi-stage clusters (university, faculty, department and finally the classroom, respectively), 200 people were selected. (100 athletes and 100 normal people) and the Situational Coping Strategies Questionnaire (SCSBQ-28), the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale (RSPWB-18) and the One-Question Life Satisfaction Scale (LSS-1) were administered to them. The method of analysis was multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

Results: The results showed that athletes use uncompromising strategies significantly less than normal people (MD= -1.478, P= 0.023). Also, psychological well-being (MD= 7.667, P< 0.001) and life satisfaction (MD= 0.956, P= 0.007) of athletes are significantly higher and with a very desirable level than normal people.

Conclusion: Cultural and sports managers can encourage individuals and organizations to perform and budget to increase these activities by considering the psychological benefits of sports activities. Psychotherapists and counselors should also consider sports activities as behavioral techniques to promote well-being and satisfaction.

Keywords: Situational coping strategies, psychological well-being, life satisfaction, sports activity

Introduction

In recent decades, sport as a socio-cultural

phenomenon has been growing, so that studies on the technical components, game tactics and physical fitness of athletes are

increasing (Voser, Hernandez, Okubo & Junior, 2017). Physical activity provides a wide range of health benefits that can protect people from disease and enhance their mental and physical health (World Health Organization, 2010). In other words, regular physical activity can prevent a range of chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, type2 diabetes, and some cancers, and manage improved musculoskeletal health, weight control, development of motor skills in children, and mental health problems. World Health, 2010; Durstine, Gordon, Wang & Luo, 2013). On the other hand, physical inactivity is one of the most important risk factors in global premature mortality, which is responsible for 9% of premature deaths worldwide (Lee, Shiroma, Lobelo, Puska, Blair & Katzmarzyk, 2012). In this regard, athletic performance during training and competition is not only influenced by physical determinants such as physical fitness level and skills, but also through psychological abilities (Berger and Tobar, 2011; McCormick, Meijen & Marcora, 2015). In fact, athletic performance is the result of a combination of professional abilities (including technique and tactics), physical (including strength and speed) and psychological abilities of players (including goal setting, self-confidence, anxiety and stress management) (Thelwell, Greenless & Weston, 2017).

On the other hand, because of the pressures to perform well on sports teams, athletes are at risk for mental health (e.g., anxiety and depression) in a competitive sports environment (Rice, Parker, Rosenbaum, Bailey, Mawren & et al, 2018). Nevertheless, although psychological factors play a very important role in athletes' performance and are very effective in some decisive moments, they have been neglected (Voser et al, 2017). Thus, the growing path of sports management studies has begun to address issues related to the relationship

between sports services and their welfare implications (Engelberg, Moston, & Skinner, 2015). In other words, when players are equipped with the necessary professional and psychological abilities for sports, it can be expected to have good and safe sports performance and suffer less sports injuries (Thelwell et al., 2017). In sports psychology, the component of mental health, which is very close to psychological well-being, plays a very important role as a core and central component. Research on mental health in elite athletes has grown rapidly in recent years (Rice et al, 2016). Several studies have shown a significant level of mental health distress among the professional athlete population that has been a cause for concern (Foskett & Longstaff, 2018; Schaal et al, 2011). Factors that increase athletes' susceptibility to mental health syndrome include exercise-related stressors such as physical injury (for example: concussion, musculoskeletal or limb injury), poor performance, maladaptive perfectionism, and competition for choice (Reardon, Hainline, Aron, Baron, Baum & et al, 2019), as well as general stressors in non-sporting contexts such as recent adverse life events (Rice, Gwyther, Santestebanecha, Baron, Gorczynski et al, 2019).

Related to this, one of the indicators of mental health is life satisfaction (Schimmack, Diener & Oishi, 2010). Life satisfaction is a cognitive process for assessing one's quality of life with respect to some salient aspects, and a positive assessment of one's condition and quality of life meets certain standards and expectations (Diener et al, 1985, Prasoorn & Chaturvedi, 2016). In fact, life satisfaction is an arbitration process in which people evaluate their quality of life based on their unique criteria or perceived satisfaction; Therefore, it is the perception and mentality of individuals (not the realities of their lives) that has the greatest impact on their lives

(Piko & Hamvai, 2010; Karimi, Najafi and Mohammadifar, 2016; Hassani, Asghari, Kazemzadeh Bitali & Abdoli Soltani Ahmadi, 2016). Life satisfaction arises from examining a person's long-term life (Ivanova, 2014; Keyes, Shmotkin & Ryff, 2002), which reinforces better functioning and coping with problems and obstacles (Jachimowicz, Kostka & Stisfaka, 2009). According to Wilson (2016), life satisfaction is significantly related to sports identity. In this regard, studies have shown that student-athletes are more satisfied with life than normal students (Gholizadeh, Ojaghi, Hekmati & Pirzadeh, 2009) but other studies show that professional athletes due to high training and high pressure. Experiencing life satisfaction is less likely to be experienced (Felton & Jowett, 2014). However, some athletes show higher life satisfaction so that they enjoy life more than other athletes (Chen, Wu, & Chang, 2015). In general, college athletes place more importance on health and have higher life satisfaction than normal people (Arı, Ulun, Yunus, Yarayan, Dursun, Tuğba, Bozkurt & Üstün, 2020). Life satisfaction indicates mental well-being, in other words, quality of life (Coffey, Warren & Gottfried, 2015). Life satisfaction has been described as a psychological state that is generally associated with psychological well-being (Malinauskas, 2010). Life satisfaction is one of the important indicators of well-being (Prason & Chatorudi, 2016) and in other words, it is a cognitive component of psychological well-being (Diener, 2009; Gravanovora, 2013).

In this regard, understanding the ways to increase the psychological well-being of sports participants, consumers and employees has become an important issue in the contemporary sports industry (Doyle, Philo, Locke, Funk & McDonald, 2016; Kim, Kim, Newman, Ferri & Perrewe, 2019). Well-being refers to a person's

cognitive and emotional assessment of his or her current life or life from a long-term perspective (Diener & Scollon, 2014). Lack of mental well-being is not a mental illness, but something that everyone experiences, albeit to varying degrees. Psychological well-being is also a good way of life and a combination of good feeling and effective performance (Tennur Yerlisu, 2015). The results of Ghasempour and Judat (2013) show that student-athletes are in a better position than non-athlete students in terms of psychological well-being, positive relationships with others and purpose in life. Studies also show that regular physical activity and exercise at different ages play an important role in reducing mental health problems and disorders and increasing mental health and psychological well-being (Opdenacker, Boen, Bourdeaudhuij & Auweele, 2008; Edwards & Steyn, 2008; Edwards, Ngcobo, Edwards & Palavar, 2005; Krawczynski & Olszewski, 2000). According to Maltby and Day. (2001), one of the benefits of physical exercise is the improvement of one's psychological well-being. In other words, it is thought that physical exercise, especially depression and stress, is reduced. Encouraging students to do physical and sports activities at a young age and puberty can help increase their mental health and psychological well-being (Abedanzadeh, Pourkargari & Parsaei, 2015). Sports participation, especially during physical activity, has many health and well-being benefits (Biddle, Gorely & Mutrie, 2015). However, prominent athletes are as likely as normal individuals to experience anxiety (Rice, Purcell, De Silva et al, 2016) and depression (Gulliver, Griffiths & Christensen, 2012; Hammond, Gialloredo & Kubas, 2013).

On the other hand, according to psychological theories, coping strategies play an important role in managing stressful situations, reducing stress and ultimately in

mental health and psychological and physical well-being of individuals, and effectively and optimally deal with problems that are one of the signs of well-being (Eini, Hashemi & Ebadi Kasbakhi, 2020). Coping is defined as the process of implementing a response to a stressor, where stress is seen as the experience of dealing with related problems in efforts to achieve the goal (Lazarus, 1966). Coping efforts can change moment by moment at any stage of a stressful event (Lazarus & Folkman, 1985). Situational coping strategy is something that a person has done (or is doing) at a particular coping stage or in a particular period, when people face difficulties and problems, to develop a variety of cognitive and behavioral strategies to deal with it. (Brown, Phillips, Ebony Vinson & Robertson, 2011). Coping strategy modulates the relationship between stress and its consequences (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). In Besharat (2005b) research, the use of avoidance coping style compared to coping style has a higher correlation with athletic success in athletes. Also, between elite athletes and regular athletes, in the overall score of cognitive emotion regulation - whose components are very close to situational coping strategies - and positive refocusing strategies, refocusing on planning, positive reassessment, adopting views, catastrophizing and blaming others. There is a significant difference. This difference is due to the higher score of total cognitive emotion regulation and the scores of positive refocus strategies, refocusing on planning, positive reassessment, taking a view, and lower scores of catastrophic strategies and blaming others in elite athletes than in normal athletes. This means that professional athletes have a higher cognitive regulation (Maghsoudi, Ajilchi & Zareian, 2016). The research of Sadidi and Yamini (1397) showed that there is a significant positive relationship between

problem-oriented strategies and psychological well-being and in contrast, there is a negative and significant relationship between emotional-oriented strategies and emotional malaise with psychological well-being. Although no study was found in the group of athletes, studies have shown that women who use appropriate coping skills are better able to cope with life's needs and challenges, reduce the destructive effects of stress on their body and mind, and are less prone to aberrations and abnormal behaviors. They become social (Babakhani and Badiee, 2018). There is also a relationship between coping strategies with stress and quality of life (Helvic et al, 2016; Cohen et al., 2011; Gholamzadeh et al, 1397). In the case of athletes, the presence of stressors such as bad refereeing during the match, the presence of bad environmental conditions, the reaction of spectators during the match, the tendency to win at the cost of deviating from sports ethics, the experience of injury, observing rival cheating, the possibility of cheating to win, Reprimanding the player by the coach, criticizing the coach during the match (De Fabio & Saklofske, 2014), makes the necessity of effective coping skills to maintain the athlete's mental health and achieve athletic success inevitable because these skills are the inability to cope with stressors in sports environments. Affects and prevents the influence of disturbing factors (Lazarus, 1984). Therefore, in the present study, situational coping strategies, psychological well-being and life satisfaction in athletic and normal students will be compared.

Materials and Methods

The leading research method will be descriptive causal-comparative. The statistical population of this study is all undergraduate students of Mohaghegh Ardabili University. From this population,

by sampling multi-stage clusters (university, faculty, department and finally class, respectively), 200 samples were selected. (100 athletes and 100 normal people) and a questionnaire of situational coping strategies, Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale and One-Question Life Satisfaction Scale will be administered on them. It is important to note that in experimental and comparative studies, each group should include at least 30 subjects (Delavar, 2013), which due to the high sample size value and less variance error in the above sample, as well as the probability of data Missing and abundance of student community This sample size was considered. In the following, the psychometric properties of the instruments will be explained.

Situation Coping Strategies Brief Questionnaire (SCSBQ-28): The Short Situation Coping Strategy Questionnaire was designed by Monzani, Steca, Greco, D'Addario, Cappelletti and Pancani (2015) and asks participants to consider the relevant stressors in the recent past. Bring it and show how to deal with it. This questionnaire has 28 questions. Also questions based on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = I did not do this at all; 2 = I did this a little; 3 = I did this to some extent; 4 = I did this a lot) Are given. This tool, as theorized by Carver (1997), includes 14 dimensions, which are: self-distraction (active attention), active coping, denial, substance use, use of social support, use of instrumental support, behavioral retardation (Avoidance), projecting, positive re-framing (positive reconstruction), planning, joke, acceptance, spirituality, self-blame. Given the number of standardized factors, all are good indicators for the relevant factors. In addition, due to omega reliability, acceptable internal consistency was reported for all 14 dimensions. Evaluation of fitness indicators, and the validity and reliability of the original version was reported to be desirable

(Monzani et al., 2015). Also Sharifi Fard, Nabizadeh, Ali-Babaei, Borojerdi and Javdan (Unpublished) research in Iran also confirmed the fit indices of the model and also reliability with Cronbach's alpha method for the 14 dimensions and the whole questionnaire was good (0.76).

Ryff Psychological Well-Being Questionnaire (RSPWB-18): This questionnaire was designed by Ryff in 1989 and revised in 2002. This 18-item questionnaire is a kind of self-assessment tool that is answered in a 6-point continuum from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This questionnaire measures 6 dimensions of autonomy: predicting psychological well-being, positive communication with others, mastering the environment, personal growth, purposefulness in life and self-acceptance. Ryff (1989) reported the internal consistency coefficient of the subscales of this questionnaire between 0.86 and 0.93 and the retest reliability coefficient of 0.81 to 0.86. Evidence for the convergent validity of the Psychological Well-Being Questionnaire suggests that the six factors of psychological well-being are positively related to life satisfaction, self-esteem, and creativity, and negatively related to depression, luck, and the source of external control. Ryff (1989) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient between 0.83 and 0.91. In Iran, the reliability coefficient by the retest method of this questionnaire was 0.82 and its subscales were between 0.70 - 0.78, which is statistically significant (Bayani, Kouchaki & Bayani, 2008). In this study, the reliability coefficient of the tool using Cronbach's alpha method was calculated to be 0.8 and the subscales between 0.69 and 0.79.

Single-item Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS-1): This scale was designed and Validated by Sharifi Fard, Ahmad Panah, Ali-Babaei, Zolgharnein, Nabi Zadeh and Taheri

(Unpublished), with a question that: "How do you evaluate your life these days?" In the 11-point Likert, it measures life satisfaction in a way that shows zero (overall worst condition) to 10 (overall best condition). Pearson correlation coefficient obtained from the double implementation of the scale is 0.74, which indicates the good reliability. Also, convergent validity with Well-being was 0.61 and divergent validity with anxiety and depression were -0.36 and -0.53, respectively, which is psychologically good.

Results

In the first stage and after the performance, out of 200 samples, 96 were student-athletes and 104 were normal students. Then, in the second stage, 90 people were entered into

the analysis by removing incomplete and outdated data from each group. The analysis was performed at both descriptive and inferential levels. At the descriptive level, it was found that the subjects in terms of age group between 19 to 24, in terms of gender (male and female) and marital status (single and married) in each group in approximately 55% and 45%, in terms of Degrees are bachelor's (68%) and master's (32%), respectively, and in terms of economic status are average (66%) and good (34%), respectively, because the groups were very close to each other. Descriptive in general. In the inferential section, first in Table 1, the mean and standard deviation of the variables or other expressions of the components will be discussed.

Table 1- Mean and standard deviation

Component	Group	Average	The standard deviation
Compromised strategies	Athletes	69.49	8.140
	Normal	18.49	178.8
Uncompromising strategies	Athletes	87.18	301.4
	Normal	34.20	4.348
Well-being Psychological	Athletes	96.75	014.10
	Normal	29.68	382.8
Life satisfaction	Athletes	51.6	137.2
	Normal	56.5	553.2

Table 2. Test for homogeneity of variance my box

Source	M Box	F	Degree of freedom ¹	Degree of freedom ²	Sig
group	22.952	240.2	10	151477.291	0.013

Table 2 shows the assumption of covariance homogeneity, which based on Tabachnick

and Fidel (2001) has a significance level of 0.01, and there is no problem in this regard.

Table 3. Levin test for homogeneity of variance

Components	F	Degree of freedom ¹	Degree of freedom ²	Sig
Strategies compromise reached	2.177	1	178	142.0
Strategies compromise undetected	0.880	1	178	349.0
Well-being Psychological	3.629	1	178	0.058
Satisfaction of life	2.098	1	178	0.149

Table 3 shows the assumption of no problem in this regard and all components are in good condition. Table 3 shows the assumption of homogeneity of variances that with respect to the significance level greater than 0.05 for adapted strategies (0.14), uncompromising strategies (0.34), psychological well-being (0.05), and life satisfaction (0.14), there is

Table 4. Results of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA)

Source	Test	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
group	Pilay effect	0.180	9.604	4	175	0.001	0.180
	Wilks Lambda	0.820	9.604	4	175	0.001	0.180
	The effect of hoteling	0.220	9.604	4	175	0.001	0.180
	Great - the root of the	0.220	9.604	4	175	0.001	0.180

Table 4 shows the multivariate analysis of variance tests based on which there is a significant difference between the groups (athlete and normal) in terms of components ($P < 0.0001$).

Table 5. Test between-group differences in component - of maladaptive strategies, well-being and life satisfaction

Table 5 shows the differences between groups in components based on the components of uncompromising strategies (0.023), psychological well-being (0.001), and life satisfaction (0.007). / 0), there is a significant difference between the groups but there is no significant difference in the component of adapted strategies (0.662). The triple error coefficient (Eta²) also shows that 2% of the variance of uncompromising strategies, 14% of the variance of psychological well-being, and 4% of the variance of life satisfaction due to group membership.

Table 5. Bonferroni multiple comparison

Variables	group A	group B	The average difference - Display (A – B)	standard error	Sig	Assurance distance Low - the lowest	95% The highest limit
Strategies compromise undetected	Athlete	Normal	*478.1	0.645	0230.0	750.2	-02.06
Well-being Psychological	Athlete	Normal	*667.7	0.379	001.0	946.4	387.10
Satisfaction of life	Athlete	Normal	*956.0	0.351	007.0	0.263	648.1

Table 6 shows the difference and direction of superiority of groups in components, based on which in the component of uncompromising strategies (MD = -1.478, P = 0.023) athletes are significantly less than normal individuals. They use uncompromising strategies. Also, regarding the components of psychological well-being (MD = 7.667, P <0.001) and life satisfaction (MD = 0.956, P = 0.007), athletes' well-being and satisfaction were significant. And with a much more desirable level than ordinary people.

Discussion

The results of the present study showed that athletic and normal students differ in the components of situational coping strategies (uncompromising strategies), psychological well-being and life satisfaction, with the explanation that the application of uncompromising strategies in athletic students is less than normal. Although no direct studies were found in this field, but indirect studies are in line with the results of the leading research (Besharat, 2005; Maghsoudi et al., 2016). Also, the psychological well-being of student-athletes is at a desirable level better than normal, which is in line with other studies (Updenicker, Bowen, Bourdieu and Oville,

2008; Edwards and Stein, 2008; Abedanzadeh, 2015; Biddle et al, 2015). On the other hand, the life satisfaction of athletic students is also significantly higher than non-athlete (normal) and many studies are in line with it (Gholizadeh, Ajaghi, Hekmati and Pirzadeh, 2009; Chen, Wu and Chang, 2015; Eri, Yulon, Yarayan, Dorson, Bozkurt et al., 2020), although in the case of professional athletes, life satisfaction is lower due to physical and psychological pressures (Felton and Jute, 2014).

Uncompromising situational strategies issued in the face of issues and problems include denial, substance use, behavioral retreat (avoidance), and self-blame. Given the enhanced characteristics of sports, such as courage and stubbornness, and since they are more prepared for active confrontation to deal with issues and problems, it is natural for them to benefit less from passive or withdrawn confrontation because the characteristic of some of them are more active in the direction of exposure. Athletes, for example, increase their resilience in the face of sporting failures, and the continual experience of failure and victory, and their sensitivity to failure decreases (regular desensitization), which leads to They can accept failure and face it more easily.

Therefore, in difficult and failed situations, they take a more logical and systematic approach. These conditions are also reflected in the component of psychological well-being. Welfare has its own components of acceptance, environmental dominance, positive relationships, purposefulness, personal growth and independence, and as mentioned in athletes due to the characteristics and conditions strengthened in this area - which mentioned - more can be seen. Explaining that exercise and physical well-being can be a positive factor for mental well-being, also some components such as interaction with others, purposefulness, and personal growth can occur in the context of sports activities, which ultimately increases psychological well-being. Finally, independently and as explanations of strategies and well-being, increasing life satisfaction in athletes can be justified. Also, increasing well-being and reducing uncompromising strategies mediate to increase life satisfaction. On the other hand, since the small and large successes achieved in activities as well as diseases have a negative and inverse relationship, and physical and mental vitality has a positive and direct relationship with exercise can be another reason. It is about increasing well-being and life satisfaction.

Conclusion

One of the limitations of the leading research was its implementation on the age range of youth (early adulthood) and students. Athletes were also amateurs. Therefore, it is suggested that the components and methods of this research be performed on other age groups (for example, adolescents and the elderly) and compared with professional athletes. Also, in practical suggestions, cultural and sports managers can encourage individuals and organizations to perform and budget to increase these activities by considering the psychological

benefits of sports activities. Psychotherapists and counselors should also consider sports activities as behavioral techniques to promote well-being and satisfaction.

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