


**Sport Psychology Research Digest — October 2026**

**SECTION 1 — Research Articles**

**1. Testing transfer effects of domain-general cognitive abilities to domain-specific decision making in Soccer: Are basic cognitive abilities related to creativity and intelligent decision making?**

Authors: Philip Furley, Justus Schlenger, Sebastian Schwab, and Daniel Memmert
Journal: Psychology of Sport and Exercise
Publication Date: 1 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2026.103270

Summary: This study examined whether general cognitive abilities explain creativity and intelligent decision-making in competitive football. More than 100 players contributed to each correlation analysis, with assessments covering attentional breadth, multiple-object tracking, working memory, inhibition, and football-specific decisions. Multiple-object tracking had a small-to-moderate association with intelligent decisions, while attentional breadth showed a small association with creativity; six other predicted associations were not significant. Playing level was also unrelated to the general cognitive measures, challenging assumptions that broad cognitive test performance reliably reflects football expertise.

PubMed

**2. Studying trust in AI in sports: An interdisciplinary primer**

Authors: Fabian Wunderlich and Moritz Reis
Journal: Psychology of Sport and Exercise
Publication Date: 8 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2026.103274

Summary: This interdisciplinary paper investigates the psychological concept of trust in artificial intelligence as AI-assisted systems become more common in sport. Rather than reporting a new participant sample, the authors integrate existing scholarship concerning trust, technology adoption, and decision-making. They distinguish questions of technological reliability from the human factors influencing whether coaches and athletes appropriately rely on algorithmic recommendations. The paper identifies trust in sport-specific AI as an underdeveloped research area and provides a conceptual foundation for empirical studies.

PubMed

**3. Who benefits from parental intervention programs in youth sport? A systematic review**

Authors: Marco Teixeira, Catarina Morais, A. Rui Gomes, Ricardo Gonzalez, and Adérito Seixas
Journal: Psychology of Sport and Exercise
Publication Date: 12 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2026.103273

Summary: This systematic review examined the outcomes of programmes intended to improve parental involvement in youth sport. Searches of major academic databases identified 2,188 records, with 14 studies ultimately included in the principal synthesis. The interventions varied in delivery, target population, and outcome measurement, making consistent conclusions difficult. Although some studies reported improvements in parent–athlete relationships and parental behaviour, the evidence for broader benefits to young athletes' wellbeing remained inconclusive. The review also identified important methodological weaknesses, including the absence of randomised controlled trials.

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**4. Supporting Athletes Through the Junior-to-Senior Transition in Swiss Elite Sport: A Qualitative Study of Parents' Transition Challenges, Coping Strategies, and Support Wishes**

Authors: Nadja Ackeret, Philipp Röthlin, Noora Ronkainen, Thomas Berger, and Stephan Horvath
Journal: Psychology of Sport and Exercise
Publication Date: 14 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2026.103272

Summary: This qualitative study explored the experiences of parents supporting young Swiss elite athletes through the transition to senior competition. Four focus groups involved 21 parents, and researchers used thematic analysis to examine challenges, coping strategies, and desired support. Parents described competing demands involving education, finances, administration, family responsibilities, and uncertainty about their children's sporting futures. They drew on personal resources and informal peer exchanges while expressing a need for better coordination and clearer information from sporting organisations. The findings position parents as important but frequently overlooked participants in athletic career transitions.

PubMed

**5. Professional decision-making under accountability pressure: Emotional and intervention recalibration following failure in applied sport psychology**

Author: René Paasch
Journal: Psychology of Sport and Exercise
Publication Date: 15 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2026.103275

Summary: This study investigated how external scrutiny affects sport psychology practitioners' emotional responses and professional decisions after unsuccessful interventions. A sample of 204 German-speaking practitioners evaluated standardised scenarios that varied in accountability pressure. Greater scrutiny was associated with heightened anger, stronger emphasis on professional boundaries, and reduced prioritisation of athlete-centred responses. Statistical analyses indicated that these differences persisted after accounting for relevant practitioner characteristics. The study illustrates how organisational accountability can shape applied psychological judgement, although responses to hypothetical scenarios may not fully predict actual practice.

PubMed

**6. Daily Adherence and Barriers to Physical Exercise in Esports Athletes: A 30-Day Diary Study**

Authors: Felix Wachholz, Benedikt Hösl, Thomas Astner, and Aleksander Groth
Journal: Psychology of Sport and Exercise
Publication Date: 23 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2026.103276

Summary: This diary study examined physical exercise adherence and daily barriers among 18 esports athletes over 30 days. Participants recorded planned exercise, actual participation, and circumstances affecting their ability to complete sessions. Across 239 planned sessions, adherence was 47.7%, with time constraints emerging as an important obstacle. Higher prospective confidence was associated with a greater likelihood of exercise completion, whereas perceived time pressure was associated with non-adherence. The findings demonstrate substantial day-to-day variability in exercise behaviour within this specialised performance population.

PubMed

**7. Shared Understanding in Transition: Retired Athletes' Experiences of a Structured Peer-Support Programme**

Authors: David P. Holt, Kerina Alter, David Johnson, and Deidre Anderson
Journal: Psychology of Sport and Exercise
Publication Date: 26 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2026.103277

Summary: This qualitative evaluation explored retired athletes' experiences of a structured peer-support programme. Eight former Australian Olympians and Paralympians, representing six sports, participated in six weekly 90-minute sessions and subsequent interviews. Analysis identified the value of shared experience, psychological safety, belonging, identity continuity, and opportunities to discuss coping with retirement. Participants described the programme as

a setting in which transition difficulties could be recognised by others with comparable sporting backgrounds. The findings support the perceived acceptability of peer support, although the small uncontrolled study does not establish intervention effectiveness.

PubMed

**8. Sexual violence in sport and a dual harm hypothesis of victimization and disrupted belonging: A systematic review**

Authors: Eunice Carmo, Bárbara Moreira, Vanessa Azevedo, and Joana Carvalho
Journal: Psychology of Sport and Exercise
Publication Date: 28 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2026.103278

Summary: This systematic review synthesised research on sexual violence in sport and its psychological and social consequences. The authors examined 63 publications representing 58 studies, identifying considerable variation in definitions, measurement approaches, and reported prevalence. The literature documented risks associated with unequal power relationships, grooming, secrecy, and sporting cultures that discourage disclosure. Reported consequences extended beyond individual psychological distress to interpersonal trust, belonging, and continued participation in sport. The proposed dual-harm framework emphasises both the direct effects of victimisation and the disruption of relationships and social environments that may otherwise support athletes.

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**9. “If I’m Not There Mentally, I Won’t Perform the Way I Need to”: A Qualitative Study Exploring Mental Health and Officiating Performance**

Authors: Nate Taylor, David J. Hancock, and Philip Sullivan
Journal: Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 7 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.2026-0044

Summary: This qualitative study investigated how sport officials understand the relationship between their mental health and officiating performance. Eight officials participated in semistructured interviews, which were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Three themes addressed the changing influence of mental health on performance, ways of drawing on mental health resources, and access to psychological support. Participants described how psychological strain could disrupt decisions and performance but also how positive mental health supported effective officiating. The study extends research beyond the harmful effects of officiating demands to consider mental health as a potential performance resource.

JoVE Visualize

**10. Beyond Accumulation: The Intuitive Jump Model of Expert Decision Making in Sports**

Authors: Xiuying Miao, Congcong Zhang, Na Xu, and Lizhong Chi
Journal: Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 26 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.2025-0358

Summary: The authors proposed an intuitive-jump model in which evidence accumulation and rapid intuitive responses operate as distinct routes to expert sporting decisions. Two studies with elite basketball athletes tested the framework using naturalistic video-based decision tasks. Study 1 involved 34 athletes and found that more informative visual cues predicted faster correct responses; Study 2 involved 30 athletes and manipulated decision time pressure. Under greater time pressure, the estimated contribution of evidence accumulation decreased while the intuitive component remained statistically stable. These findings offer initial behavioural support for a dual-route account of expert decision-making, although further model validation is necessary.

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**11. Prospective Associations Between Older Adults' Social Connections and Trajectories of Change in Physical Activity and Psychological Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Parallel Process Approach**

Authors: Niana Lavallée, Meghan H. McDonough, Katie E. Gunnell, Chantelle Zimmer, Sarah J. Kenny, and Jennifer Hewson
Journal: Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 28 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.2025-0208

Summary: This longitudinal study examined how social relationships, physical activity, and psychological wellbeing changed together among 890 older adults. Participants completed six monthly online surveys during the COVID-19 pandemic, and researchers analysed their responses using latent growth models. Social networks, relatedness, stress, and negative affect generally decreased, while reported quantities and quality of social support increased. Changes in social participation, network connections, and support were positively associated with changes in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity and psychological wellbeing. The results emphasise the dynamic relationship between social connection and exercise behaviour without establishing a causal direction.

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**12. Impact of coach-created motivational climate, mediated by collective efficacy, on team resilience in elite futsal athletes**

Authors: Mylena Aparecida Rodrigues Baransk, Daniel Perez Arthur, and Joice Mara Facco Stefanello
Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences
Publication Date: 6 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2026.2743408

Summary: This cross-sectional investigation examined the relationships between motivational climate, collective efficacy, and resilience in elite futsal. The sample comprised 440 Brazilian athletes, including 214 women and 226 men, who completed validated psychological questionnaires. Structural equation modelling indicated that a task-oriented coaching climate was positively associated with collective efficacy and resilient team characteristics. Collective efficacy statistically mediated associations with greater resilience and reduced vulnerability under pressure, whereas equivalent mediation was not found for an ego-oriented climate. The

results support the relevance of team-level beliefs but cannot establish that coaching climate caused changes in resilience.

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**13. Measuring the irrational and rational beliefs of sport fans: Development and validation of the Sport Fan Beliefs Inventory (SFBI)**

Authors: Osman Urfa, Martin J. Turner, and F. Hülya Aşçı
Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences
Publication Date: 6 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2026.2743314

Summary: This programme of five studies developed and evaluated a questionnaire measuring rational and irrational beliefs among sport supporters in Türkiye. Confirmatory factor analyses supported two higher-order dimensions and eight subdimensions consistent with rational emotive behaviour theory. Irrational beliefs were positively associated with anger, aggression, hatred, and depressive symptoms, while rational beliefs showed associations in the opposite direction. A two-week retest involving 87 supporters indicated score stability, and a small intervention comparison involving 30 supporters showed changes consistent with the intended psychological approach. The findings provide preliminary validity evidence for studying belief systems and emotional reactions in sport fandom.

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**14. Assessment of perceived competence in aquatic education: Aspects of reliability and validity of the Perceived Swimming Competence Assessment Scale**

Authors: Monika Haga, Håvard Lorås, and Jon Sundan
Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences
Publication Date: 6 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2026.2740990

Summary: The researchers developed and tested a seven-item measure of children's perceived swimming competence. A sample of 353 Norwegian children, averaging approximately 9.7 years of age, completed the scale. Confirmatory factor analysis supported a single underlying construct, internal consistency was acceptable, and test–retest reliability was high for the overall measure. Boys rated their competence higher than girls on five items, although most children reported relatively high perceived ability. The findings indicate that the scale is a promising measure of swimming self-perception in this age group.

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**15. The combined influence of athletic identity and social support networks on rehabilitation adherence during sports injury recovery: A longitudinal investigation utilizing real-time experience sampling methods**

Authors: Xiaohan Chen, Xiaofeng Hu, Chengyu Ma, and Chunyang Guo
Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences
Publication Date: 18 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2026.2750618

Summary: This 12-week longitudinal study examined rehabilitation adherence among 142 competitive athletes recovering from moderate-to-severe injuries. Researchers combined daily experience-sampling assessments with attendance records, home-exercise logs, therapist ratings, and questionnaires measuring athletic identity and social support. Average adherence declined from 76.8% early in rehabilitation to 64.2% in the middle phase, before increasing to 69.5% later. Athletes reporting both strong athletic identity and high support demonstrated substantially better adherence than similarly identified athletes with little support. Daily emotional support was a particularly important predictor, suggesting that athletic identity operates differently depending on the support available throughout recovery.

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**16. Attention allocation in team sports: A systematic review and meta-analysis based on eye-tracking**

Authors: Yijie Ma, Aopeng He, Zijing Huang, Mitchell James Finlay, Thomas Simpson, Dongxu Gao, Xianfu Song, Chao Chen, and Dexin Wang
Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences
Publication Date: 21 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2026.2750668

Summary: This systematic review and meta-analysis examined whether athletes of different expertise levels demonstrate distinct visual-search behaviours and decision performance. Searches across five academic databases identified 26 eligible studies involving football, basketball, and volleyball participants. Random-effects analyses showed limited consistent evidence for differences in eye-movement measures, although some subgroup comparisons identified differences in fixation patterns. Expert athletes generally demonstrated faster behavioural responses, but evidence for a consistent accuracy advantage weakened after adjustment for publication bias. The findings challenge simplified assumptions that expertise is always associated with a universal visual-attention signature.

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**17. Perceptual-motor processes in cycling: A scoping review**

Authors: Pierre Vauclin, Jon Wheat, and Ludovic Seifert
Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences
Publication Date: 4 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2026.2741439

Summary: This scoping review examined perceptual and motor processes involved in bicycle control and adaptation. Researchers screened 4,566 records and included 30 articles reporting 56 experiments. The experiments manipulated environmental, task-related, or individual constraints to examine how cycling behaviour changes. Across studies, adaptive performance appeared to depend on the interaction between the rider, the task, and the surrounding environment rather than any single isolated factor. The authors identified substantial gaps in research on how perception and action remain coupled during real-world cycling.

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**18. Navigating identity following release: Exploring former academy athletes' identity redevelopment through university**

Authors: Benjamin Jeffery, Chris Saward, Laura Catherine Healy, and Julie Johnston
Journal: Journal of Applied Sport Psychology
Publication Date: 28 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2026.2734448

Summary: This longitudinal qualitative study examined identity redevelopment among 16 former professional football and rugby academy athletes who entered university following release. Participants completed in-depth interviews at two or three time points, and their accounts were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Four themes described early athletic identity formation, post-release disruption, the search for belonging at university, and identity reconstruction. Many participants experienced uncertainty and a loss of personal and social identity immediately following release. Over time, university offered opportunities to develop academic, social, and vocational identities alongside a changing relationship with sport.

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**19. A[head] of the game: A qualitative exploration of quality participation experiences in high-performance disability sport athletes**

Authors: Roxy H. O'Rourke, Andrea Bundon, Catherine M. Sabiston, and Kelly P. Arbour-Nicitopoulos
Journal: Journal of Applied Sport Psychology
Publication Date: 9 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/uasp20/0/ja

Summary: This qualitative research investigated high-performance athletes' experiences of participation in disability sport, with particular attention to psychological wellbeing and the quality of their sporting environments. The research was situated within a participation framework encompassing autonomy, belonging, competence, challenge, mastery, and engagement. It focused on how athletes experienced these dimensions and how they related to mental health and the broader competitive environment. The study contributes a disability-sport perspective to research on psychologically supportive sporting experiences. The available bibliographic record establishes its publication details, although a sufficiently detailed account of its sample and final thematic findings was not available for independent verification.

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**20. "As kids we were told to just train and skip everything else": Environmental factors shaping Danish athletes' specialisation processes**

Authors: Nicklas Balle Venzel, Kristoffer Henriksen, Andreas Küttel, and Louise Kamuk Storm
Journal: International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 6 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2026.2740792

Summary: This qualitative study investigated how sporting environments influence early specialisation and diversification among young Danish athletes. The researchers interviewed 18 athletes, equally divided by sex, aged 18–23 years and representing handball, badminton, and TeamGym. Reflexive thematic analysis examined athletes' recollections of training demands, organisational expectations, and opportunities to participate in different sports. The findings illustrated how coaches, clubs, and wider sporting structures could encourage early commitment to one sport or allow more flexible developmental pathways. The study portrays

athletic specialisation as a process shaped by the surrounding environment rather than solely by individual preference.

University of Southern Denmark

**21. Understanding how physical exercise and self-control shape the link between social anxiety and problematic mobile phone use among Chinese college students: Insights from latent profile and network analyses**

Authors: Luyao Xiang, Chang Hu, and Hao Gou
Journal: International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 6 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rijs20/0/0

Summary: This investigation considered the relationships among social anxiety, problematic mobile-phone use, physical exercise, and self-control in Chinese university students. It combined latent profile analysis with network analysis to examine both distinct participant profiles and associations among psychological and behavioural variables. The approach permits exploration of whether exercise participation and self-regulatory processes differ across students displaying different patterns of anxiety and technology use. Its focus extends exercise psychology into digital behaviour and student mental health. The exact sample size and statistical results could not be independently established from the accessible publication record.

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**22. Designing a mental health literacy programme for Canadian sport coaches: A roadmap for scholars, practitioners, and organisations**

Authors: Jennifer Michele Misurelli and Natalie Durand-Bush
Journal: International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 12 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rijs20/0/0

Summary: This applied research article addresses the design of a mental health literacy programme intended for sport coaches in Canada. Its central concern is the development of educational content and delivery processes appropriate to coaches' responsibilities within sporting environments. The article presents programme development as a task involving researchers, practitioners, and sporting organisations rather than a purely individual coaching responsibility. Its contribution lies in describing an approach to translating mental health knowledge into structured coach education. The accessible record did not provide enough detail to establish participant numbers, individual programme-development stages, or evaluation results reliably.

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**23. Psychometric properties of a Psychological Safety Scale for Competitive Sports (PSSCS)**

Authors: Asahi Matsubara and Hideaki Takai
Journal: International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 12 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rijs20/0/0

Summary: This measurement study investigated the psychometric properties of a scale designed to assess psychological safety in competitive sport settings. Psychological safety concerns whether individuals believe they can speak openly, express concerns, and participate without undue interpersonal risk. The research addresses the need for measures suited to the distinctive social and performance demands of sport rather than relying exclusively on scales developed in other settings. Its central methodological contribution is the examination of a sport-specific measurement instrument. Precise sample characteristics and individual reliability or validity coefficients were not independently verifiable from the accessible record.

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**24. Single-day repeatability of acute aerobic exercise effects on cognition in children**

Authors: Kyoungmin Noh, Nicholas W. Baumgartner, Steve Amireault, Sarah Ullrich-French, Chun-Hao Wang, and Shih-Chun Kao
Journal: International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 20 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2026.2740802

Summary: This study investigated the repeatability of cognitive responses to acute aerobic exercise in children. Its central question was whether an observed exercise-related cognitive effect remains sufficiently consistent when examined repeatedly within a single day. The focus is relevant to understanding individual variability and the reliability of claims about short-term exercise benefits for children's cognition. The research forms part of the experimental literature connecting physical activity with cognitive performance in developing populations. Details of the final sample, experimental comparisons, and effect estimates were not available in the independently accessible publication information.

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**25. The social dimensions of health behavior framework in physical activity: A bibliometric review**

Authors: Alexander Lithopoulos, Colin M. Wierts, Michael K. Smith, and Ryan E. Rhodes
Journal: International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology
Publication Date: 14 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2026.2745794

Summary: This bibliometric review mapped research on social influences associated with physical activity, using the social dimensions of health behaviour framework. The authors retrieved peer-reviewed English-language publications from Web of Science during April and May 2025 and examined the relative attention given to different social constructs. Social support, perceived norms, interpersonal appraisal, attachment, and relational self-perceptions were comparatively well represented. By contrast, metaperceptions, motivation to comply, and socially appraised cognition received relatively little research attention. The literature was dominated by US-based research and commonly drew on the theory of planned behaviour, social cognitive theory, and self-determination theory.

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**26. Psychological resilience and the athlete mental health continuum: Serial indirect associations through emotion regulation and sport anxiety**

Authors: Barış Karaoğlu, Oğulcan Usuflu, Ebru Ceviz, Harun Genç, Bilgehan Pepe, Mehmet Behzat Turan, İbrahim Dalbudak, and Osman Pepe
Journal: BMC Sports Science, Medicine and Rehabilitation
Publication Date: 11 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1186/s13102-026-02157-y

Summary: This cross-sectional study examined resilience, emotion regulation, sport anxiety, and mental health among 850 Turkish athletes from individual and team sports. Participants completed four psychological questionnaires, and the researchers tested a serial indirect-association model using bootstrapping. Resilience showed positive associations with emotion regulation and positive mental health, alongside a negative association with sport anxiety. Significant indirect associations were identified through emotion regulation, sport anxiety, and a pathway involving both variables. Because all measures were collected at one time, the proposed sequence should be interpreted as a statistical model rather than evidence of causality.

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**27. The mediating role of healthy living awareness in the relationship between physical activity barriers and athlete burnout**

Authors: Turan Sezan and Mehmet Denktaş
Journal: BMC Sports Science, Medicine and Rehabilitation
Publication Date: 6 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1186/s13102-026-02141-6

Summary: This study investigated associations between perceived physical activity barriers, healthy living awareness, and burnout in 305 licensed university athletes in Türkiye. Researchers collected questionnaire data and applied structural equation modelling and bootstrap mediation analyses. Physical activity barriers were strongly and positively correlated with burnout (r = .70), while healthy lifestyle awareness showed a negative relationship with burnout. Of the healthy living awareness dimensions, only personal transformation demonstrated a statistically significant indirect association. The cross-sectional findings suggest that perceptions of barriers and personal health-related beliefs are intertwined with athlete burnout, without establishing causal effects.

Springer Nature Link

**28. Indirect associations through emotion suppression between subjective sleep quality, habitual sleep efficiency, daytime dysfunction, and mental toughness in combat sports athletes: A cross-sectional study**

Authors: Łukasz Bojkowski, Vivian de Oliveira, and António Fernando Boleto Rosado
Journal: BMC Sports Science, Medicine and Rehabilitation
Publication Date: 17 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1186/s13102-026-02177-8

Summary: This study investigated sleep, emotional suppression, and mental toughness in 90 male combat-sport athletes aged 18–34 years. Participants completed the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index, Courtauld Emotional Control Scale, and Sport Mental Toughness Questionnaire. Depressive emotion suppression demonstrated significant indirect associations between mental toughness and three sleep indicators: subjective quality, habitual efficiency, and

daytime dysfunction. Comparable indirect associations involving anger or anxiety suppression were not significant. The results identify depressive emotion suppression as a potentially relevant component of the sleep–mental toughness relationship, while the cross-sectional design prevents causal interpretation.

Springer Nature Link

**29. Mapping mental health complexity in esports: An exploratory psychosocial network approach**

Authors: Lucas Van Ruysevelt, Martijn Van Heel, Michael G. Trotter, Matthew Watson, Ismael Pedraza-Ramirez, Iván Bonilla, Paul Davis, Jóhann Ragnarsson, Olivier Mairesse, and Jolan Kegelaers
Journal: BMC Psychology
Publication Date: 19 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-05800-y

Summary: This international study examined patterns linking psychological distress, sleep-related difficulties, and competitive gaming behaviours. A sample of 1,025 esports players from more than 60 countries completed a 17-item questionnaire developed for exploratory directed-network analysis. Depressed mood occupied a relatively upstream position in the estimated network, while game-related preoccupation appeared downstream of several other indicators. Mental fatigue connected affective experiences with fatigue and sleep-related measures, making it an important bridging feature of the model. The findings generate hypotheses about interacting mental health difficulties in esports but do not demonstrate causal relationships.

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**30. Revision and validation of the sport emotion questionnaire for Chinese professional athletes**

Authors: Chenhao Tan, Jun Yin, Pei Zhou, Zhengning Feng, Yan An, Mengxiang He, Jun Qiu, and Wei Liu
Journal: BMC Psychology
Publication Date: 14 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-05786-7

Summary: This psychometric investigation culturally adapted the Sport Emotion Questionnaire for Chinese professional athletes. The programme incorporated athlete-informed item development, exploratory factor analysis with 320 athletes, confirmatory factor analysis with 249 athletes, and further validity testing. The resulting nine-item questionnaire assessed three dimensions: anxiety, happiness, and anger. Analyses indicated satisfactory internal consistency and measurement invariance across gender, with additional support for comparisons across sport types. Latent profile analysis identified four emotional patterns, with psychological strain highest in the negative-state profile and lowest in the happiness profile.

Springer Nature Link

**31. Social anxiety, physical exercise, regulatory emotional self-efficacy, and social avoidance among junior high school students: A cross-sectional study**

Authors: Yihang Du, Kaiyi Zhang, Wenbo Wu, and Mingyi Liu
Journal: BMC Psychology

Publication Date: 5 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-05742-5

Summary: This cross-sectional study investigated exercise participation, emotional self-efficacy, social avoidance, and social anxiety in 817 students from five Chinese junior high schools. Standardised self-report measures were analysed using correlations and adjusted regression models. Greater exercise participation and stronger confidence in regulating emotions were independently associated with lower social anxiety. Social avoidance demonstrated a positive association with anxiety, and the final model explained approximately 26.6% of its variance. The findings establish concurrent associations but cannot determine whether exercise or emotional self-efficacy reduces subsequent anxiety.

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**32. The buffering role of exercise enjoyment in the associations among multidimensional psychological stressors, self-focused attention, and generalized social anxiety**

Authors: Kunpeng Li and Chih-Hung Pai
Journal: BMC Psychology
Publication Date: 17 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-05762-1

Summary: This two-part investigation examined psychological stressors, self-focused attention, exercise enjoyment, and social anxiety in working adults. The first study used topic modelling across 162,155 online texts, while the second collected cross-sectional questionnaire responses from 1,535 white-collar professionals. Higher psychological stress was associated with greater social anxiety, with statistically significant indirect associations through self-focused attention. Exercise enjoyment moderated these relationships, with weaker links between self-focused attention and social anxiety among participants reporting greater enjoyment. The results suggest an important association between the subjective experience of exercise and anxiety-related processes, although causality was not tested.

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**33. A cross-sectional study of eating attitudes in Hong Kong athletes**

Authors: Leo C. M. Cheung, James W. H. Sze, Frankie P. L. Siu, Sophia L. Li, Gabriel T. K. Pun, Jade T. Y. Lau, John O'Reilly, and Margaret J. Kuo
Journal: Discover Psychology
Publication Date: 11 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1007/s44202-026-00848-8

Summary: This study examined disordered-eating risk and associated psychological characteristics among 100 athletes in Hong Kong. Participants completed the Eating Attitudes Test-26 and measures related to body image and dieting experiences. Four percent exceeded the study's threshold for disordered-eating risk, with a higher proportion among women than men. Younger age, previous dieting, and more negative perceptions of body image were associated with higher disordered-eating scores. The small, cross-sectional sample provides descriptive evidence about risk patterns rather than a definitive estimate of eating-disorder prevalence among Hong Kong athletes.

Springer Nature Link

**34. The effect of positive emotions on psychophysiological recovery and performance in athletes – investigating the undoing-hypothesis**

Authors: Pia Zajonz, Sascha Leisterer-Härtig, Sylvain Laborde, Kirsten Legerlotz, Bernd Wolfarth, and Franziska Lautenbach
Journal: Physiology & Behavior
Publication Date: 7 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physbeh.2026.115536

Summary: Two experimental studies tested whether inducing positive emotions after stress improves psychophysiological recovery and subsequent performance. Study 1 involved 60 participants and measured executive functioning, while Study 2 involved 30 participants and assessed physical performance outcomes. Following a combined psychosocial and physiological challenge, participants received a five-minute positive-emotion induction or rested, with emotional and physiological responses monitored. The procedures did not produce sufficiently clear psychological stress responses or successful positive-emotion induction. Consequently, the authors could not establish support for the undoing hypothesis, making the study informative primarily about methodological difficulties in testing emotion-based recovery interventions.

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**35. Mental Preparation in Professional Tennis: A Qualitative Study of Czech Players' Experiences**

Authors: Vendula Redlichová, Jana Novotná, and Martin Komarc
Journal: Sports
Publication Date: 3 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3390/sports14100429

Summary: This qualitative study explored how eight Czech professional tennis players, aged 17–26 and ranked between 145 and 719 in ATP/WTA singles rankings, experienced psychological preparation. Semistructured interviews were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Three overarching themes described the incomplete integration of psychological preparation, efforts to maintain control during competition, and the broader psychological demands of professional tennis. Participants described confidence, emotional regulation, perceived momentum, routines, and reflection as important components of their mental preparation. They also reported considerable strain associated with performance expectations and career uncertainty, while social support and broader life perspectives contributed to coping.

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**36. Motivational and Contextual Factors Across Sport Entry, Current Participation, Maintenance, and Withdrawal Among People with Physical Disabilities: A Systematic Review**

Authors: Gül Eda Burmaoğlu and Uğur Abakay
Journal: Sports
Publication Date: 14 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3390/sports14100457

Summary: This systematic review examined motivational and environmental factors associated with sport participation among people with physical disabilities. The authors searched Scopus, Web of Science, and PubMed/MEDLINE and included 106 studies after eligibility and quality assessments. More than half of the studies described currently active participants, whereas only five provided behavioural evidence of sustained participation. Access, social support, equipment, cost, coaching, and motivation appeared frequently, but were rarely integrated within the same analytical design. The review concluded that existing evidence is substantially stronger at describing current sport involvement than explaining how participation begins, persists, or ends.

pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

**37. Understanding social media addiction among adult athletes: Psychological correlates in a cross-sectional study**

Authors: Neslihan Kulaberoğlu and Serkan Volkan Sari
Journal: BMC Public Health
Publication Date: 20 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-026-29971-w

Summary: This study examined psychological correlates of self-reported problematic social-media use among 388 licensed adult professional athletes in Türkiye. Participants completed measures of social-media addiction symptoms, self-handicapping, resilience, sportsmanship, depression, anxiety, and stress. In adjusted analyses, self-handicapping and stress were positively associated with problematic-use scores, while resilience and sportsmanship were negatively associated. Anxiety and depression were not independently significant after adjustment for the other psychological variables. The findings identify a set of concurrent psychological correlates, but neither establish clinical diagnoses nor show that changing these characteristics would reduce problematic social-media behaviour.

Springer Nature Link

**38. Mental toughness and physical performance in competitive sprinters across 100 m, 200 m, and 400 m events**

Authors: Megha Singhal, Moattar Raza Rizvi, Ankita Sharma, Noof Fahad A. Al-Kuwari, Aisha Mohamed A. S. Al-Thani, Azna Zuberi, Shobhit Saxena, and Waqas Sami
Journal: Sport Sciences for Health
Publication Date: 26 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11332-026-01973-6

Summary: This study examined differences in mental toughness among 75 male district-level sprinters competing over 100 m, 200 m, and 400 m, with 25 athletes in each event group. Researchers assessed psychological characteristics including confidence, control, and constancy and analysed their associations with event specialisation. Higher confidence was associated with lower relative odds of belonging to the 200 m rather than the 100 m group, whereas higher control was associated with greater relative odds of belonging to the 400 m group. Constancy did not independently distinguish the groups in the adjusted analysis. The findings suggest differences in psychological profiles across sprint disciplines, although the small cross-sectional sample does not establish effects on running performance.

Springer Nature Link

**39. Establishing mental health standards and practices for the United States youth sport ecosystem: A Delphi study**

Authors: Meredith A. Whitley and William V. Massey
Journal: Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology
Publication Date: 5 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1037/spy0000424

Summary: This study used a Delphi consensus approach to examine mental health standards and practices appropriate for youth sport in the United States. The research addressed the challenge of establishing consistent expectations across a fragmented ecosystem involving clubs, coaches, administrators, parents, and sporting organisations. Through successive expert consultation, the methodology was intended to identify areas of agreement concerning psychologically safe participation and mental health responsibilities. Its contribution lies in framing youth sport mental health as an organisational and system-wide issue rather than exclusively an individual athlete concern. The accessible publication information did not establish the exact expert-panel size or final consensus thresholds.

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**40. A mixed-methods exploratory study of perfectionistic climates and emotional abuse in aesthetic activities**

Authors: Sanna M. Nordin-Bates, Charlotte Downing, and Ulrika Tranaeus
Journal: Sports Coaching Review
Publication Date: 1 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2026.2740267

Summary: This mixed-methods investigation explored relationships between perfectionistic climates and emotional abuse in aesthetic performance activities such as gymnastics, figure skating, and ballet. A survey involved 207 female performers, while eight participants also completed semistructured interviews. The researchers examined how expectations of flawlessness, critical leadership behaviour, and performance-related judgements intersected within participants' experiences. Quantitative and qualitative findings indicated meaningful overlap between perfectionistic environments and emotionally harmful interactions, while demonstrating that the two concepts are not necessarily identical. The research provides evidence about the interpersonal environments in which perfectionism may become psychologically harmful.

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**41. The Effects of Psychological Counseling Types on Stress, Athlete Burnout, and Resilience in Athletes: AI Chatbot vs. Face-to-Face Counseling**

Authors: Ga-Young Kim, Hye Jin Yang, Chulhwan Choi, and Chul-Ho Bum
Journal: Behavioral Sciences
Publication Date: 2 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3390/bs16101805

Summary: This study compared AI-chatbot counselling, face-to-face psychological counselling, and a control condition over a 12-week period. Seventy-three athletes participated in the quasi-experimental investigation, which assessed perceived stress, athlete burnout, and resilience.

After adjustment, face-to-face counselling was associated with improvements in perceived stress, while the chatbot condition demonstrated improvement in the reduced-sense-of-accomplishment component of burnout. The findings did not establish a consistent advantage for either intervention across all psychological outcomes. Because group equivalence and study design limit causal interpretation, the results should be understood as preliminary evidence concerning different counselling delivery formats.

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**42. Supporting neurodivergent athletes in sport: practitioner insights to advance neuroinclusive practice**

Authors: Samuel Wood, Petra Kolic, Mariana Kaiseler, and Greg Wood
Journal: Sport, Education and Society
Publication Date: 17 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2026.2750453

Summary: This qualitative study explored practitioners' experiences of supporting neurodivergent athletes in sport. Thirteen UK practitioners, including coaches and sport psychology professionals, provided accounts through an online qualitative survey. Reflexive thematic analysis produced themes concerning understandings of neurodiversity, individualised approaches to support, and the development of practitioner knowledge. Participants' accounts highlighted variation in professional confidence and the challenges of adapting sporting environments to different needs. The findings provide exploratory evidence about practitioner perspectives rather than directly measuring outcomes for neurodivergent athletes.

doi.org

**43. Association pathways between AI training recommendation dependence and athletes' psychological characteristics related to autonomous judgment**

Author: Xiaogan Chen
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 1 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1918082

Summary: This cross-sectional investigation examined whether dependence on AI-generated training recommendations was associated with athletes' autonomous psychological judgement. Questionnaire responses from 381 athletes were analysed using structural equation modelling. Greater dependence on AI recommendations was associated with greater reliance on external interpretation of bodily signals, lower self-regulation, and greater hesitation in decisions. These associations were linked statistically to lower sport-related self-efficacy, with differences identified across sporting contexts. The study identifies a potentially important psychological dimension of AI-assisted training but cannot determine whether AI dependence produces these changes.

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**44. Psychological impacts of exercise snacks vs. traditional exercise: a comparative study**

Authors: Sheng Yan, Yantong Sun, Zhengquan Zhang, Zongdi Zhao, and Linjun Liu
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology

Publication Date: 8 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1917848

Summary: This four-week experimental study compared short, fragmented exercise sessions with traditional continuous exercise while matching total weekly exercise time. The study involved 180 participants and examined psychological responses including perceived stress, decision fatigue, cognitive load, and exercise enjoyment. Compared with traditional exercise, the exercise-snack condition produced less favourable outcomes on several psychological measures. Attrition was also higher in the fragmented-exercise condition, at approximately 15.6% compared with 5.6% in the traditional condition. These findings question whether breaking physical activity into very short bouts is always psychologically equivalent to longer continuous sessions, although interpretation remains specific to the exercise protocols tested.

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**45. The relationship between volleyball experience and mental rotation ability in university students: the mediating role of updating function**

Authors: Donghai Huang, Dongyi Huang, Peixin Shi, Pengyun Zhang, Muhammad Nubli Abdul Wahab, Zhipu Wang, and Heng Wang
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 8 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1927911

Summary: This cross-sectional study examined volleyball experience, mental rotation performance, and working-memory updating among 60 university students. Participants were grouped by their level of volleyball experience and completed tests assessing spatial mental transformation and executive functioning. Greater volleyball experience was associated with faster mental rotation performance, and updating ability accounted statistically for part of this relationship. The mediation analysis suggested that executive functioning may be linked to expertise-related differences in spatial cognition. Because the research was observational, it cannot determine whether volleyball training improved these cognitive abilities or whether pre-existing differences contributed to sporting participation.

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**46. Internalized weight stigma and compulsive exercise among college students: a variable-centered and person-centered analysis**

Authors: Xiangzi Zhou, Jianjian Bao, Haizhou Long, Dan Liang, Kanglin Wang, and Fen Qiu
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 7 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1945295

Summary: This study examined relationships between internalised weight stigma, body-related emotions, and compulsive exercise among 513 university students. The researchers combined variable-centred modelling with person-centred analyses to investigate both associations among psychological characteristics and distinct participant profiles. Greater internalised weight stigma was associated with more compulsive exercise, with body shame, guilt, and negative body image contributing to the statistical pathways. Participants in the profile characterised by greater psychological distress also showed elevated compulsive exercise tendencies. The findings indicate that exercise behaviour can be associated with body-related

distress rather than solely reflecting healthy motivation, although the cross-sectional design cannot establish causation.

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**47. The moderating role of athletic mental energy in the relationship between pessimism and burnout among athletes competing in university sports competitions**

Authors: Ferhat Çifçi, Ersin Ballıkaya, and Abdurrahman Demir
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 9 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1968065

Summary: This cross-sectional study explored whether athletic mental energy altered the relationship between pessimism and burnout among 235 athletes competing at university championships in Türkiye. Athletes completed self-report psychological assessments, and the authors tested correlation and moderation models. Pessimism was positively associated with burnout, with a reported correlation of approximately .33. Greater athletic mental energy was associated with a weaker relationship between pessimism and burnout. The findings identify mental energy as a potential moderator of psychological vulnerability, while the observational design precludes conclusions about protective causal effects.

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**48. Perceived social support, perceived stress, and athlete burnout among competitive athletes: a mediation model**

Authors: Weihan Yuan, Guangshu Wu, and Guihong Wang
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 29 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1929837

Summary: This study investigated associations among social support, perceived stress, and burnout in 252 competitive athletes. Questionnaire data were analysed using correlation and statistical mediation models. Greater perceived support was associated with lower stress and lower burnout, while stress was positively associated with burnout. The relationship between social support and burnout included a significant indirect association through perceived stress. These results are consistent with a stress-related pathway linking support and athlete burnout, although the cross-sectional data cannot confirm mediation over time.

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**49. When, where, and for whom do errors compound? Error sequences, contagion, and individual vulnerability in professional football**

Authors: Mark R. Wilson and So Hyun Park
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 26 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1945783

Summary: This large-scale investigation examined whether mistakes become more likely after previous mistakes in professional football. Across three studies, the authors analysed approximately 1.19 million events from 330 matches, focusing particularly on unforced passing

errors and subsequent decisions. Error probability increased following an individual's previous error, while evidence of a smaller carryover effect also appeared in teammates' subsequent passes. A substantial proportion of escalating error sequences was explained by players selecting riskier passes rather than simply executing passes less effectively. The results suggest that apparent psychological error contagion in football can partly reflect changes in decision strategy and contextual risk exposure.

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**50. Basketball expertise is associated with distinct relationships among dynamic visual tracking, visuospatial working memory, and tactical decision-making**

Authors: Jinyi Yu, Chang Xin, and Yichao Diao
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 27 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1988470

Summary: This study examined how cognitive abilities relate to tactical decisions across levels of basketball expertise. Ninety male players, comprising 30 experts, 30 intermediate players, and 30 novices, completed multiple-object tracking, visuospatial working-memory, and basketball decision-making tasks. Experts generally demonstrated better tracking and tactical decision performance than less experienced participants. The association between tracking and tactical decisions was particularly pronounced among experts, whereas working memory showed a stronger relationship with tactical decisions in the intermediate group. These results indicate that relationships between general cognitive functions and sport-specific decision-making may differ by expertise level, although the design does not establish developmental causality.

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**51. Perception of team conflict and goal commitment over time: a multilevel analysis in sports teams**

Authors: Jonas Lüdemann and Jens Kleinert
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 28 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1935278

Summary: This longitudinal investigation examined changes in perceived team conflict and their relationship with goal commitment. The study collected data from 356 football players belonging to 25 teams at two measurement occasions separated by approximately two months. Bayesian multilevel analyses showed that initial conflict perceptions were associated with subsequent conflict, indicating a degree of temporal stability. Goal commitment did not independently predict later conflict after earlier conflict was accounted for, and differences in reported conflict were observed across team characteristics. The results highlight the importance of distinguishing between individual-level attitudes and team-level interpersonal dynamics when studying sporting groups.

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**52. Competitive state anxiety and perceived performance in Chinese elite collegiate basketball athletes: a moderated mediation model of sport confidence and coaching style**

Author: Boyuan Li
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 28 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1809179

Summary: This cross-sectional study examined competitive anxiety, sport confidence, coaching style, and perceived performance among 315 elite university basketball athletes from 15 institutions in northeast China. The researchers used validated questionnaires and a moderated mediation model with bootstrap testing. Higher competitive anxiety was associated with lower perceived performance, partly through its negative association with sport confidence. Supportive coaching dimensions, including instruction, democratic behaviour, social support, and positive feedback, moderated the anxiety–confidence relationship, whereas autocratic coaching did not show equivalent moderation. The results identify associations between coaching environments and athletes' psychological responses, but do not establish that particular coaching behaviours cause changes in performance.

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**53. Effects of an eight-week mindfulness-informed psychoeducational intervention delivered during physical education lessons on self-reported aggression and impulsivity in adolescents**

Authors: Walid Selmi, Achraf Hammami, Said Ben Hassen, Yassine Negra, Raouf Hammami, and Roland van den Tillaar
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 12 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1958309

Summary: This experimental study examined the effects of an eight-week mindfulness-informed programme incorporated into physical education lessons. Thirty-nine adolescents were allocated to an intervention or comparison condition, and psychological outcomes were measured before and after the programme. The intervention group reported greater reductions in physical aggression, verbal aggression, and several dimensions of impulsivity compared with the comparison group. Not all outcomes showed significant between-group differences, with motor impulsivity among the exceptions. The findings provide preliminary intervention evidence but require replication with larger samples and longer follow-up periods.

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**54. Positive error-handling in TGfU-based basketball instruction: effects on tactical decision-making and the role of perceived classroom psychological safety**

Author: Shen Fan
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 16 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1984425

Summary: This study compared positive and neutral responses to tactical errors within an eight-week Teaching Games for Understanding basketball programme. Sixty university students were randomly allocated to two classes, with 30 participants in each instructional condition. The positive error-handling condition produced larger improvements in tactical decision quality at the post-intervention assessment and three-week retention test, particularly for passing and

shooting. Improvements in perceived psychological safety were associated with better decision-making within the positive error-handling condition. The findings are promising but exploratory because only one classroom received each condition, making it difficult to separate treatment effects from classroom-specific influences.

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**55. Longitudinal relationships between physical exercise, psychological resilience, and academic engagement in Chinese university students: a random-intercept cross-lagged panel study**

Authors: Yuankai Qiao and Haibin Liu
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 13 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1989887

Summary: This study examined prospective associations between exercise participation, psychological resilience, and academic engagement in 876 Chinese university students. Two waves of data were analysed using conventional cross-lagged and random-intercept cross-lagged models. Higher exercise participation at the first wave predicted greater resilience at the second wave even after accounting for modelled stable differences between participants. The corresponding within-person relationship between resilience and later academic engagement was not statistically significant, despite an association in the conventional model. The authors emphasised that modelling assumptions and the two-wave design limit causal interpretation and the strength of longitudinal mediation claims.

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**56. Distinct prospective associations of concern over mistakes and doubts about actions with competitive functioning in collegiate athletes: a Bayesian latent-variable study**

Authors: Han Gao and Meijuan Zhang
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 28 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1961617

Summary: This three-wave prospective study investigated whether different dimensions of perfectionism predict athletes' anxiety and competitive functioning. A sample of 620 collegiate athletes completed perfectionism measures at baseline, anxiety assessments shortly before competition, and performance-related assessments afterwards. Bayesian latent-variable modelling showed that concern over mistakes was strongly associated with greater pre-competition anxiety, whereas doubts about actions did not show the same independent relationship. Greater anxiety was subsequently associated with reduced flow, more perceived choking, and poorer subjective, coach-rated, and objectively indexed performance. The findings indicate that distinct aspects of perfectionistic concern should not be treated as interchangeable predictors of competitive difficulties.

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**57. Effects of progressive temporal-occlusion training on early anticipation of forehand drop-shot direction in badminton under temporal information constraints**

Authors: Wenkai Gao, Kexin Gao, Xingyu Liu, and Fengxin Li
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 28 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.2001694

Summary: This experiment assessed whether progressively restricting visual information during video training improved anticipatory decisions in badminton. Seventy-eight university students with badminton training experience were assigned to progressive temporal-occlusion training, full-information video practice, or a regular-activity control condition; 72 completed the assessments. After eight weeks, the progressive-training group showed greater gains in shot-direction accuracy at selected occlusion points than the active comparison group. Correct-response reaction times also improved more under several early-information conditions. The results support a specific benefit for anticipating forehand drop-shot direction in the laboratory task, while transfer to live-match performance remains to be demonstrated.

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**58. Wearable monitoring of pre-shot heart rate in youth golfers: a potential mental-load correlate in ecological putting practice**

Authors: Jasper Gielen, Katrien Buysse, Elise Heirman, Romain Meeusen, and Jean-Marie Aerts
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 28 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1939721

Summary: This exploratory study investigated whether wearable heart-rate recordings could provide information about psychological demands during putting practice. Seven golfers aged 13–16 years attempted sequences of putts from three metres while heart rate and physical activity were recorded continuously. Pre-shot heart rate did not significantly distinguish successful from missed putts. However, heart rate before the next attempt tended to be higher following a successful putt and lower following a miss, suggesting sensitivity to the preceding performance outcome. Because subjective mental-load ratings were not collected, the physiological pattern cannot yet be attributed confidently to perceived pressure or cognitive demand.

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**59. How effective are physical activity interventions in improving physical self-concept among children and adolescents? A systematic review and meta-analysis**

Authors: Hongqiang Wang, Chaoqiong Feng, and Shiwei Chen
Journal: Frontiers in Psychology
Publication Date: 16 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1963989

Summary: This systematic review and meta-analysis investigated whether structured physical activity improves physical self-concept among children and adolescents. Searches across PubMed, Web of Science, Embase, the Cochrane Library, and SPORTDiscus identified 10 eligible studies involving 3,662 participants. Random-effects meta-analysis showed a moderate average improvement compared with control conditions, with a pooled Hedges' g of 0.51. However, substantial heterogeneity was detected, indicating that intervention effects varied considerably across studies. Subgroup and meta-regression analyses did not identify clear

differences based on geographical region, developmental stage, intervention duration, or the proportion of female participants.

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**60. Determinants of psychosocial wellbeing within a year-long youth cycling program**

Authors: Emily M. Adamic, Michael J. Wozniak, Casandra M. Dickerson, Lance C. Miller, Jonah L. Panther, Adam Vanderberg, Jason Whorton, and Cian L. Brown
Journal: Frontiers in Sports and Active Living
Publication Date: 19 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2026.1892082

Summary: This longitudinal programme evaluation explored psychosocial wellbeing among young people participating in an after-school cycling programme in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The analysis included 329 students from 37 schools who completed wellbeing measures before and after participation. The year-long programme combined cycling skills, outdoor activity, group riding, and opportunities for social connection. Researchers examined within-participant changes alongside behavioural and demographic predictors of psychological wellbeing. The observational design provides evidence about psychosocial experiences during participation but cannot distinguish the independent effects of cycling, group relationships, programme structure, and other influences.

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**61. Psychobehavioral profiles, competitive progression, and nutritional characteristics in CrossFit® athletes across a national competitive season**

Authors: Gabriel de Souza Zanini, Tatiana Palotta Minari, Eduarda Cortese Santos, Víctor Hernández-Beltrán, José M. Gamonales, David Michel de Oliveira, Cassiano Merussi Neiva, Mário Cunha Espada, and Dalton Müller Pessôa Filho
Journal: Frontiers in Sports and Active Living
Publication Date: 6 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2026.1902121

Summary: This prospective observational study followed 239 Brazilian CrossFit athletes through three competitive stages during a national championship season. Researchers examined psychological mood states, anxiety, stress, recovery, and related athlete characteristics as participants progressed or were eliminated. Athletes advancing to later competitive stages generally displayed more favourable psychological and recovery profiles, including lower stress and mood disturbance. Baseline psychological characteristics were associated with subsequent progression, although competitive advancement depended on numerous physical, technical, and contextual factors. The findings provide longitudinal field evidence linking psychological profiles with competitive progression without establishing that these characteristics independently caused competitive success.

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**62. Talent development in Chinese football: A comparative analysis of developmental activities between international and professional players**

Authors: Sihang Wang, Qiaozhu Chen, Haochang Cai, Pei Li, and Hongyou Liu
Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences

Publication Date: 16 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2026.2750646

Summary: This retrospective comparative study investigated developmental experiences among 112 Chinese male footballers, comprising 57 international and 55 professional players. Participants completed a questionnaire covering sporting milestones, practice histories, other-sport participation, and social support from childhood through adulthood. Developmental pathways were dominated by coach-led football practice, with 96% reporting no participation in other sports during childhood. International players reported greater coach support, while differences in adult individual practice and senior-team entry age were also observed. The findings describe pathways associated with reaching different performance levels but cannot establish which experiences caused eventual selection or success.

PubMed

**63. Evaluating the transfer effects of skill acquisition principles on performance in academy soccer players**

Authors: Basil More-Chevalier, Fabian Alberto Romero Clavijo, David Labbe, Jocelyn Faubert, and Thomas Romeas
Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences
Publication Date: 31 October 2026
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2026.2754637

Summary: This applied investigation evaluated whether skill-acquisition principles improved learning and match performance within an elite football academy. Fifty male youth players and eight professional coaches participated in a within-subject programme that included a control phase followed by a phase implementing seven skill-acquisition principles. Researchers assessed match statistics, video-based declarative knowledge, training load, and implementation quality across repeated time points. Declarative decision response time improved, but the study found no significant improvements across 12 match-performance indicators over the principal comparison periods. Training sessions also became shorter and less physically demanding while producing greater reported mental demand, suggesting changes in training processes without clear immediate transfer to competitive match outcomes.

PubMed

**64. Motives matter: A smartphone EMA study on the association between motives to exercise, exercise engagement and mood**

Authors: Leonardo Pimpini, Ella Ferrand, Codrin Mironiuc, Jan Schepers, and Anne Roefs
Journal: British Journal of Health Psychology
Publication Date: 5 October 2026 (online publication; November issue)
DOI/URL: https://doi.org/10.1111/bjhp.70111

Summary: This ecological momentary assessment study examined associations between exercise motives, day-to-day mood, and exercise behaviour. Ninety-eight women completed a two-week smartphone-based protocol recording exercise frequency, duration, intensity, and mood, alongside measures of exercise motivation. Greater enjoyment motivation was associated with more frequent exercise and longer duration, whereas appearance motivation was not independently associated with overall exercise engagement. Daily mood was generally

not a significant predictor of exercise participation, although appearance motivation moderated its association with exercise intensity. The findings distinguish enjoyment-oriented exercise motives from other motivational orientations and demonstrate the value of repeated real-world measurements for studying physical activity behaviour.

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