

Associations between Sport Performance Anxiety and Parental Pressure among NCAA Division III Athletes

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ABSTRACT

Earlier studies have examined causes of anxiety among college student athletes, but the relationships among parental pressure and anxiety among college student athletes is less understood. **PURPOSE:** To measure the associations among types of parental pressure and sport performance anxiety among NCAA Division III collegiate athletes. **METHODS:** Voluntary student athletes (Female=35, Male= 21) from NCAA Division III sports teams (Softball= 7, Baseball= 8, Volleyball= 8, Basketball= 8, Track & Field= 3, Tennis= 5, Soccer= 9, Multiple sports= 8) answered a modified version of the Sports Anxiety Scale-2 and PISQ (Parental Involvement in Sport Questionnaire). Questions measured sport performance anxiety, general parental pressure, parental post-game conversations and parental pressure to play a certain sport. Chi-Square analyses were used to measure the associations among self-reported sport performance anxiety and parental pressure variables. **RESULTS:** Statistically significant associations were found between sport performance anxiety and gender ($\chi^2 = 5.531, p = .019$), sport performance anxiety and parental pressure ($\chi^2 = 10.562, p = .001$), and sport performance anxiety and parental pressure to play a certain sport ($\chi^2 = 7.340, p = .007$). **CONCLUSION:** Findings suggest that gender, parental pressure and parental pressure to play a certain sport was associated with sport performance anxiety among the student athletes. Results can be used to inform coaches and parents of these relationships and help to prevent additional anxiety related to sport performance, particularly among the unique and understudied population of NCAA Division III collegiate athletes. NCAA Division III student athletes are not awarded financial scholarship and often juggle employment and sport, in addition to academics. Preventing, addressing and reducing sport performance anxiety among NCAA Division III student athletes could also have profound implications for their general mental health.