

Dispositional determinants of mental tension in future coaches

IHOR HALIAN¹, IHOR POPOVYCH², INNA MYKHAILYUK³, ANDRII HALIAN⁴, ANATOLIY KONONENKO⁵, KOSTYANTYN KRUGLOV⁶, IHOR HOIAN⁷

^{1,4}Lviv Polytechnic National University, Lviv, UKRAINE

²Kherson State University, Kherson, UKRAINE

²Mykola Yarmachenko Institute of Special Pedagogy and Psychology, NAPS of Ukraine, Kyiv, UKRAINE

²National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv, UKRAINE

³Interregional Academy of Personnel Management, Kyiv, UKRAINE

⁵Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Odesa, UKRAINE

⁶Institute of Psychology and Entrepreneurship, Kozyn, Kyiv region, UKRAINE

⁷Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ivano-Frankivsk, UKRAINE

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Abstract:

The aim of the study was to examine the level of mental tension experienced by future coaches–athletes and how it is influenced by emotional exhaustion and professional orientation, with a sample size of 100 participants. **Methods:** The study used validated psycho-diagnostic tools, descriptive statistics, normality tests (Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk), regression analysis, effect size measurement (Cohen's d), and statistical significance coefficients. **Results:** Using the Mann–Whitney test on the Psychological Stress Scale (PSM-25), significant differences in mental tension were found between future coaches of different specializations and genders ($p < .01$; $d = -1.252$). Significant differences were identified in occupational burnout components measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (MBI-ES): Emotional exhaustion ($p < .01$; $d = -0.904$), depersonalization ($p < .01$; $d = -0.454$), and reduced personal accomplishment ($p < .01$; $d = -0.666$). Professional orientation was evaluated using the Bass Orientation Inventory, revealing significant effects in personal orientation ($p < .01$; $d = -0.951$) and task orientation ($p < .01$; $d = 0.774$). Multiple regression analysis was applied to forecast causal relationships between mental tension, emotional exhaustion, and professional orientation in future coaches–athletes of different specializations. Independent variables include the following indicators of the test “MBI-ES”: emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (Dp), reduction in personal achievements (RPA), and “Bass Orientation Inventory”: personal orientation (PO), task orientation (TO), collectivist orientation (CO). Regression analysis results allowed us to create a model that accounts for a fairly large share of predictors in determining the dependent variable ($R^2 = .773$, $p = .001$). The predictor “**emotional exhaustion**” with $\beta = 3.111$, $SE = .230$, $t = 13.544$, and $p = .000$ has the largest share in the model. The share of this predictor in the model is 43.6 %. The predictor “**task orientation**” with $\beta = -3.240$, $SE = .326$, $t = -9.948$, and $p = .000$ shows a negative effect on mental tension. The share of this predictor in the model is 23.3%. The predictor “**depersonalization**” with a negative effect on the variability of the dependent variable ($\beta = -1.252$, $SE = .338$, $t = -3.703$, $p = .000$) has the smallest share in the model. The share of this predictor in the model is 3.24%. **Discussion and conclusions:** It was found that future female coaches–athletes **generally demonstrate higher levels of psychological stress**, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization compared to boys. At the same time, male coaches–athletes are more prone to reflection and less prone to reduction in personal achievements. **Emotional exhaustion** is a key predictor of mental tension in coaches–athletes, which is corroborated by regression analysis results. **Task orientation and depersonalization are the predictors that negatively affect** the variability of the dependent variable. Research into future coaches–athletes’ behavior in extreme situations depending on their personality structure, types of sports, professional experience, and level of sports mastery seems promising.

Keywords: athletes, coach, leadership qualities, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reflection, emotions, regression analysis, predictors, activity.

Introduction

The issues of mental tension, stress, and the individual’s emotional instability are gaining popularity in sports and are of critical importance. Geopolitical challenges, societal transformations, rapid information flows, and artificial intelligence development are dramatically changing social reality, creating sociogenic influences on subjects of sports activities (Khraban & Silko, 2022; Popovych et al., 2023a; 2023d; Shcherbak et al., 2023). In addition to exhausting physical loads, subjects of sports activities experience permanent mental tension. This impact has recently intensified due to stressful and adverse situations in which people often find themselves. The

mentioned situation is especially relevant in Ukraine, whose citizens are experiencing significant emotional turmoil caused by the war (Savchenko et al., 2024). This has dramatically affected learning, training, and competitive processes (Kremen, 2014; 2023; Kremen & Ilyin, 2020; 2022). A significant burden has fallen on the individual's sphere of values and meanings (Halian, 2022). The above problems have caused emotional instability, a reduction in stress resistance, an increase in anxiety, and, consequently, a decline in sports performance. Each athlete individually responds to different stimuli. However, some regularities reflect the specificity of the individual's behavior in stressful situations depending on gender, age, individual-typological characteristics, etc.

Scientists researching stress usually consider it a predictor in athletes' manifesting different mental states (Lin et al., 2021; Chang et al., 2017; Chang et al., 2018; Hartley & Coffee, 2019; Moen et al., 2019). We have already mentioned that excessively exhausting physical loads and dominant mental states accompany the entire process and the result of learning and training (Popovych et al., 2023b), competitive (Popovych et al., 2022a; 2022b), and restorative activities (Cretu et al., 2021). Constructive mental states and the ability to manage them constitute a latent advantage over competitors (Kurova et al., 2023; Popovych et al., 2022c; 2022d). Scientists have studied the relationship between traumatic stress, emotional intelligence, and posttraumatic growth (Tuck & Patlamazoglou, 2019). We have decided to change the focus of our research, studying dispositional predictors of mental tension. Today, researchers can find various studies characterizing stress determinants. In particular, there are studies describing anxiety responses in competitions and gender differences in stress manifestations (Fletcher & Hanton, 2001; Barnett & Wright, 1994). In this regard, D. Tolin and E. Foa (2006) argue that women (including girls) experience higher levels of psychological stress due to various psychological (Fletcher & Hanton, 2001) and biological (Lupien et al., 2007; Haneishi et al., 2007) factors and higher sensitivity to stressful situations, hence they are more susceptible to depression and anxiety disorders (Gould & Udry, 1994). Other studies show that a high level of stress can be determined by social factors (Kerr & Dacyshyn, 2000; Fry & Newton, 2003; Beck et al., 2000) and low emotion regulation (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2012; Halian, 2023; 2019). Special attention is paid to the analysis of ways to overcome the negative psychological consequences of such situations (Lazarus, 1991; Lazarus, Folkman, 1984; Kessler, 2004 et al., Halian et al., 2024a; Halian, et al., 2024b) and the ability to cope with stress (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012).

Thus, the problem of mental tension is relevant for sports since their activities take place in extreme environments with heightened risk. Despite a sufficient number of studies addressing the issue of stress resistance and emotional stability, there is a lack of research covering the impact of personal factors on the occurrence of stress and its development, particularly in sports coaches who are preparing to start their coaching activities. Therefore, the research into dispositional determinants of future coaches-athletes' mental tension is necessary and timely.

Hypothesis. We assume that the phenomenological content of mental tension is determined by the peculiarities of emotional exhaustion of future coaches and their professional orientation.

The aim of the research is to study the level of mental tension manifested by future coaches, which is expressed in stress signs and determined by the content of occupational burnout and types of motivational orientation.

Material and methods

Methodology. The study is based on scientific ideas and approaches of researchers examining a correlation between athletes' professional skills and anxiety (Fletcher & Hanton, 2001), gender differences in their stress signs (Tolin & Foa, 2006), the impact of psychological (Fletcher & Hanton, 2001), social (Kerr & Dacyshyn, 2000; Fry & Newton, 2003; Beck, et al., 2000), and biological factors (Lupien, et al., 2007; Haneishi K et al., 2007) on sensitivity to stressful situations and anxiety disorders (Gould & Udry, 1994; A. Halian, et al., 2024; Stepura et al., 2024); the ability to regulate emotions (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2012; Halian, 2023; 2019); the ability to cope with stress (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012) and overcome negative psychological consequences of stressful situations (Lazarus, 1991; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Kessler, et al., 2004; Halian et al., 2024a; Halian, et al., 2024b; Vizniuk & Polishchuk, 2020), and other studies revealing the current trends in psychoemotional support (Chebykin et al., 2024; Plokhikh & Bilous, 2025), creation of educational space (Shatri & Thaçi, 2024), excessive loads and specific human activities (Nosov et al., 2021; Tavrovetska et al., 2023; Zinchenko et al., 2023).

Participants. The research sample consisted of 100 Ukrainian future coaches of different sports specializations. The random sample was heterogenous (37 males and 63 females) aged 16–23 ($M = 19.05$; $SE = .105$; $SD = 1.219$).

Procedures and instruments. The methodology "The Psychological Stress Scale" (PSM-25) (Lemyr-Tessier-Fillion) was applied to determine the level of mental tension. "PSM-25" is designed to measure the phenomenological structure of stress and is based on the idea that stress is not monotypic and has many different aspects, particularly emotional, cognitive, and physiological. The level of mental tension is a diagnostic construct of the methodology. The interpretation of its results implies that the higher the empirical indicator is, the higher the level of psychological stress (mental tension) the individual has (Tessier et al., 1990).

Future coaches' emotional exhaustion was diagnosed using the questionnaire "Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey" (MBI-ES) (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Maslach, 1998). It is based on a multifactor theory of burnout, which considers burnout a psychological syndrome represented by three symptoms: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1978). The questionnaire contains 22 statements and is a version of the original MBI for examining teachers, administrators, other employees, and volunteers working in any educational environment. This form was initially known as MBI-Form Ed. The diagnostic constructs include the following MBI-ES scales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

"Bass Orientation Inventory" (Bass, 1977) was used to diagnose the personal orientation of future coaches. The diagnostic constructs include the individual's orientation: personal (focused on achieving one's well-being, the desire for leadership and status), task (the desire for knowledge, engagement in the process of activity, mastering new skills and abilities), and collectivist (focused on the need for communication, the desire to maintain positive relationships with colleagues).

Variables. The scale scores of the "Psychological Stress Scale" (PSM-25) became the dependent variable in regression analysis. The independent variables include the scales of "Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey" (MBI-ES): emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (Dp), and reduction in personal achievements (RPA) and the scales of "Bass Orientation Inventory": personal orientation, task orientation, and collectivist orientation.

Statistical analysis. The research was conducted using a confirmative strategy and forecasting a relationship between independent and dependent variables. The results were statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The variance was analyzed with a focus on $p \leq .050$. The effect size was calculated using Cohen's d . The statistical program IBM SPSS, version 27, was applied.

Results

The empirical stage of the research was aimed at testing the hypothesis that the phenomenological structure of stress is determined by some components of future coaches' occupational burnout and motivational orientation.

Tabl. 1 shows descriptive statistics based on the results of studying the level of mental tension, occupational burnout, and personal orientation of future coaches. The indicators of a normal distribution by the Shapiro-Wilk test (Sh-W) and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-Sb) testify to the absence of a normal distribution by all variables. Hence, we used non-parametrical data processing methods in further calculations.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the diagnosed variables (for the entire sample, $n = 100$)

Variables	X	SE _x	SD	Me	Normal Distribution			
					A	E	K-S ^b (p)	Sh-W (p)
“The Psychological Stress Scale” (PSM-25) (Tessier et al., 1990)								
Integral scale of psychological stress	102.23	2.770	27.703	108	.044	-.815	.005	.000
“Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey” (MBI-ES) (Maslach, 1998)								
Emotional exhaustion	27.46	.893	8.931	25	.435	-.998	.000	.000
Depersonalization	14.82	.601	6.007	15	-.018	-.042	.047	.013
Reduction in personal achievements	30.71	.962	9.622	30	-.271	-.594	.012	.001
“Bass Orientation Inventory” (Bass, 1977)								
Personal orientation	31.70	.346	3.457	32	.018	-.930	.000	.000
Collectivist orientation	27.36	.292	2.918	28	-.449	.190	.000	.000
Task orientation	30.94	.420	4.197	30	.196	-1.004	.000	.002

Note: p – statistical significance; X – arithmetic mean; SD – standard deviation; SE_x – standard error of the mean; A – asymmetry (skewness); E – excess (kurtosis); K-S (Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test) – Kolmogorov-Smirnov's criterion; Sh-W (Shapiro-Wilk Test) – Shapiro-Wilk's criterion; * – the lower limit of significance for the Kolmogorov Smirnov test. The lower limit of significance for the Sapiro-Wilk test is $p > .05$; b – Lilliefors' significance correction.

We assumed that the studied characteristics have statistically significant differences in future coaches by the grouping variable "gender". The non-parametrical Mann-Whitney U-test was used because there is no normal distribution.

It was found that the values of such variables as "emotional exhaustion", "depersonalization", "reduction in personal achievements", "personal orientation", and "collectivist orientation" have statistically significant differences between males' and females' samples ($p < .05$) (Tabl. 2).

Table 2. Indicators of the comparative analysis of variances^a by the grouping value “gender”^b

SP	Scale of psychological stress	Emotional exhaustion	Depersonalization	Reduction in personal achievements	Personal orientation (P)	Collectivist orientation (C)	Task orientation (T)
Mann – Whitney U-test	447.000	591.500	738.000	675.000	579.000	1079.000	693.500
W Wilcoxon	1150.000	1294.500	1441.000	2691.000	1282.000	1782.000	2709.500
Z	-5.132	-4.107	-3.061	-3.507	-4.216	-.627	-3.383
Asymptotic significance (two-sided)	.000	.000	.002	.000	.000	.530	.001

Note: ^a – the grouping value – gender; ^b – Mann – Whitney U-test; SP – statistical parameter.

The variable “task orientation” has no significant differences between the groups ($p > .05$). Given the results of descriptive statistics for males’ and females’ samples, this characteristic is not prioritized over others for males and females. The differences in content and the effect size (*Coens d*) can be seen in the results presented in Tabl. 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for males’ and females’ samples ($n = 100$: males = 37; females = 63)

Scales	Gender	N	X	SE _M	SD	Me	Cohen’s d
Psychological stress scale	males	37	83.49	4.106	24.973	74	-1.252
	females	63	113.24	2.902	23.034	111	
Emotional exhaustion	males	37	22.78	.986	5.996	23	-.904
	females	63	30.21	1.167	9.262	28	
Depersonalization	males	37	13.14	.605	3.683	13	-.454
	females	63	15.81	.864	6.860	17	
Professional efficiency	males	37	34.57	1.476	8.977	35	.666
	females	63	28.44	1.175	9.325	29	
Personal orientation (P)	males	37	29.81	.514	3.126	30	-.951
	females	63	32.81	.399	3.167	33	
Collectivist orientation (C)	males	37	27.32	.585	3.559	26	-.019
	females	63	27.38	.315	2.498	28	
Task orientation (T)	males	37	32.86	.701	4.263	34	.774
	females	63	29.81	.472	3.750	29	

Notes: N – number of subjects; X – arithmetic mean; SE_x – standard error of the mean; SD – standard deviation; Me – median, Cohen’s d – effect size (measured in units of standard deviation).

Multiple regression analysis was used to forecast a probable causal relationship between mental tension, emotional exhaustion, and professional orientation of future coaches of different sports specializations. The independent variables include the indicators of the following scales “Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (MBI-ES)”: emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (Dp), reduction in personal achievements (RPA), and the scale “Bass Orientation Inventory”: personal orientation, task orientation, collectivist orientation (Tabl. 4–6).

Table 4. Generalized data for the regression analysis model

Model	R	R ²	Correction R ²	SE	Statistics of changes				
					R ²	F	df (1)	df (2)	p (for F)
1	.718 ^a	.515	.510	19.387	.515	104.160	1	98	.001
2	.861 ^b	.741	.736	14.244	.226	84.547	1	97	.001
3	.879 ^c	.773	.766	13.393	.032	13.714	1	96	.001

Notes: 1, 2, 3, – models of multiple regression (Model: 1 (a) – predictors: emotional exhaustion; 2 (b) – predictors: emotional exhaustion; task orientation; 3 (c) – predictors: emotional exhaustion; task orientation; depersonalization; R – correlation coefficient of the predictor with the model; R² – coefficient of determination; SE – standard error; F – Fisher’s test; p – statistical significance; df (1, 2) – degrees of freedom. Dependent variable: PSM-25 psychological stress scale.

The results in Tabl. 4 show that each subsequent model is an improved version of the previous one. All the models have high and statistically significant correlation values. However, Model 3 is the best by R² and corrected R². When the variables are added to the model, the value of R² increases, which indicates the model improvement. The **F-statistics** decreases in Model 2 and Model 3, which may testify to a narrower specification. However, they remain statistically significant. The differences between the models are statistically significant (Tabl. 5).

Table 5. Indicators of differences in the empirical distribution

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	P
1	Regression	39147.494	1	39147.494	104.160	.000 ^b
	Remainder	36832.216	98	375.839		
	Total	75979.710	99			
2	Regression	56300.403	2	28150.202	138.753	.000 ^c
	Remainder	19679.307	97	202.879		
	Total	75979.710	99			
3	Regression	58760.272	3	19586.757	109.198	.000 ^d
	Remainder	17219.438	96	179.369		
	Total	75979.710	99			

Notes: a – dependent variable: PSM-25 psychological stress scale; 1, 2, 3, – models of multiple regression (see note in Table 4); df (1, 2) – degrees of freedom; F – Fisher’s test; p – statistical significance.

The regression analysis established the share of predictors in determining mental tension in future coaches. The most complete model is Model 3, which contains three predictors: emotional exhaustion, task orientation, and depersonalization (Tabl. 6). The model statistically significantly ($p < .010$) accounts for a relatively large share of predictors in determining the dependent variable ($R^2 = .773$ (60 %), $p < .010$) (see Tabl. 4).

Table 6. Beta coefficients of independent variables in the regression analysis model

Coefficients ^a									
Model	Not standardized		Standardized β	T	p	VIF	Correlations		
	β	SE					Zero-order	Partial	Component
1 Constant	41.090	6.297		6.526	.000				
Emotional exhaustion	2.227	.218	.718	10.206	.000	1.000	.718	.718	.718
Constant	132.666	10.981		12.081	.000				
2 Emotional exhaustion	2.476	.163	.798	15.230	.000	1.029	.718	.840	.787
Task orientation	-3.181	.346	-.482	-9.195	.000	1.029	-.349	-.682	-.475
Constant	135.608	10.356		13.095	.000				
3 Emotional exhaustion	3.111	.230	1.003	13.544	.000	2.322	.718	.810	.658
Task orientation	-3.240	.326	-.491	-9.948	.000	1.031	-.349	-.712	-.483
Depersonalization	-1.252	.338	-.272	-3.703	.000	2.277	.433	-.354	-.180

Notes: a – dependent variable: PSM-25 psychological stress scale; constant – intercept; 1, 2, 3, – multiple regression models (see note in Tabl. 3); β – beta coefficient; SE – standard error; p – statistical significance; t – Student’s criterion; VIF – collinearity index.

Discussions

Using multiple regression analysis, we predicted the causal relationship between mental tension, emotional exhaustion, and professional orientation of future coaches of different sports specializations. We assumed that mental tension, emotional exhaustion, and professional orientation manifest differently in male athletes-coaches (boys) and female athletes-coaches (girls). According to the methodology “PSM-25”, **girls** ($X = 113.24 \pm 2.902$; $SD = 24.973$) **compared to boys** ($X = 83.49 \pm 4.106$; $SD = 23.034$) **demonstrate a higher level** of psychological stress with the effect size ($d = -1.252$). This difference was identified using Mann-Whitney U-test: $U = 447.000$; $p = .000$). This aligns with other studies on stress in sports, which underscore that women and girls have a higher level of psychological stress (Tolin & Foa, 2006) due to different psychological (Fletcher & Hanton, 2001), social (Kerr & Dacyshyn, 2000), and biological factors (Lupien, et al., 2007; Haneishi K et al., 2007) and higher susceptibility to stressful situations. Consequently, they are more susceptible to depression and anxiety disorders (Gould & Udry, 1994).

Studies on the impact of social support and stress on female athletes find that female athletes may exhibit a higher level of stress compared to male athletes due to a high level of expectations and lower social support (Kerr & Dacyshyn, 2000). Research also shows that female athletes face more stressors, such as social stereotypes and the necessity to combine sports and social roles, which increases a psychological burden (Beck et al., 2000). Another study clarifies that women and girls usually tend to be more prone to depression and anxiety disorders, which can be related to a higher level of stress due to social factors and ways of regulating emotions (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2012). Scientists also argue that women and girls are more prone to stress due to the complexes related to their appearances (Duisenbayeva et al., 2024; Swami et al., 2018; Zebrowitz & Montepare, 2008). Researchers also consider the impact of stress on cognitive functions, where gender is one of

the grouping factors. Studies show that women and girls can be more susceptible to stressful situations due to hormonal fluctuations (Lupien et al., 2007; Tolin & Foa, 2006).

Our research identified differences at a level of one standard deviation ($d = -.904$) between boys and girls in the variable “emotional exhaustion” ($U = 591.500$; $Z = -4.107$; $p = .000$). **The mean values for this variable are higher in girls ($X = 30.21 \pm 1.167$; $SD = 9.262$) than in boys ($X = 22.78 \pm .986$; $SD = 5.996$). We associate the occurrence of emotional exhaustion in athletes with stress and overload, especially in juniors. This is underscored in the studies by H. Gustafsson, G. Kenttä, and P. Hassmén (2011); H. Glandorf, D. Madigan, O. Kavanagh, and S.H. Mallinson-Howard (2023). Coaches’ role and families’ support in preventing athletes’ emotional exhaustion are considered highly important (Gaudreau et al., 2016). Scientists study the impact of workplace resourcefulness on the development of emotional exhaustion through the models of “demand-control” and “job resources” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) and through the Job Demands-Resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Researchers highlight the importance of balancing job requirements and available resources to prevent occupational burnout. These and other studies create a foundation for further research into practical strategies for stress management in competitive situations and various activities.**

Statistically significant differences in depersonalization ($U = 738.000$; $Z = -3.061$; $p = .002$; $d = -.454$) were identified in **girls ($X = 15.81 \pm .864$; $SD = 6.860$) and boys ($X = 13.14 \pm .605$; $SD = 3.683$)**. Future female coaches’ depreciating personality traits of their counterparts, indifference, and aggressiveness toward others help them generate “sports anger” more effectively. At the same time, male coaches ($X = 34.57 \pm 1.476$; $SD = 8.977$) **experience a reduction in personal achievements ($U = 675.000$; $Z = -3.507$; $p = .00$; $d = -.666$) more intensively than female coaches ($X = 28.44 \pm 1.175$; $SD = 9.325$)**. This manifests in a decreased sense of professional competence, dissatisfaction with themselves, the depreciation of their activity, and a negative self-perception in the professional field. Notably, the differences in depersonalization and the reduction in personal achievements between male and female coaches may be caused by different factors. They primarily include individual-typological characteristics, biochemical processes in the body, and other features belonging to biological factors. Another factor is social, which is formed by sociocultural requirements, the balance between occupation and family responsibilities (Leiter & Maslach, 2005; Cohen et al., 2019), social expectations (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Popovych et al., 2023c; 2023e), and different social and professional stereotypes (Purvanova & Muros (2010). The professional factor (the lack of significant personal achievements in sports activities and stressfulness of socioeconomic professions (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993), support in the workplace) is important in sports activities (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Thus, gender roles and social expectations can affect the level of depersonalization and burnout in professional and sports environments.

Personal professional orientation manifests differently in boys and girls ($U = 579.000$; $Z = -4.216$; $p = .000$). In particular, girls ($X = 32.81 \pm .399$; $SD = 3.167$) demonstrate higher scores on the scale “self-orientations” than boys ($X = 29.81 \pm .514$; $SD = 3.126$) **with the effect size $d = -.951$. “Task orientation” manifests differently in boys and girls ($U = 693.000$; $Z = -3.383$; $p = .001$). Boys show higher scores ($X = 32.86 \pm .701$; $SD = 4.263$) than girls ($X = 29.81 \pm .472$; $SD = 3.750$) $d = -.666$** . At the same time, the research participants do not differ in the variable “collectivist orientation” ($U = 1079.000$; $Z = -.627$; $p = .530$). **Personal orientation is consistent with their motivation. Therefore, it can account for the occurrence of emotional exhaustion. The study by M. Weiss and N. Chaumeton (1992) analyzes the place of motivation in the context of the athlete’s career development and emotional exhaustion. This study shows the impact of different motivation types on the development of emotional exhaustion. The social context is also essential in the formation of the athlete’s orientation. A. Eagly and W. Wood (2012) posit that in traditional social structures, males usually focus on achievements (tasks) while females focus on interaction and emotional communication (communication). These differences may vary depending on the social context.**

Regression analysis results generated a model which accounts for a fairly large share of predictors in determining the dependent variable ($R^2 = .773$, $p = .001$). **The intercept** indicates the model’s statistical significance ($\beta = 135.608$, $SE = 10.356$, $t = 13.095$, $p = .000$) (see Tabl. 6). The predictor “**emotional exhaustion**” with $\beta = 3.111$, $SE = .230$, $t = 13.544$, $p = 0.000$ has the largest share in the model. The standardized $\beta = 1.003$ corroborates the strong effect of emotional exhaustion on future coaches’ mental tension. This confirms the significance of the theory by C. Maslach and S.E. Jackson (1981) about the relationship between emotional exhaustion and stress (Crum et al., 2017). The share of this predictor in accounting for the variability of the dependent value is expressed through the correlation between the components ($r = .658$), namely through the coefficient of multiple determination (R^2). For this predictor, it accounts for 43.6 % of the variance (with $r = .658$ and the coefficient of multiple determination $R^2 = .43.29$).

The predictor “**task orientation**” with $\beta = -3.240$, $SE = .326$, $t = -9.948$, $p = .000$ shows a negative effect on mental tension. **The standardized $\beta = -0.491$ indicates its relatively significant share in the model, which is confirmed by the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .233$), namely 23.3 %.** The predictor “**depersonalization**”, **which also has a negative effect on the variability of the dependent variable ($\beta = -1.252$, $SE = .338$, $t = -3.703$, $p = .000$), is the least represented predictor in the model. The standardized $\beta = -.272$ indicates an even smaller but still significant effect of depersonalization on the dependent variable. The share of this predictor in the model is 3.24 % ($R^2 = .032$).**

The determination of mental tension by depersonalization is quite interesting. According to C. Maslach's theory, **depersonalization** implicates the individual's alienation or emotional distancing from others with whom they interact. In our research, a negative effect of depersonalization on future coaches' mental tension can be explained in the following way: the higher the depersonalization, the lower the mental tension, and vice versa. In sports activities (especially in individual sports), depersonalization helps athletes distract from unnecessary things, concentrate, and focus on the activity. Therefore, the higher depersonalization the athlete has, the lower the level of their anxiety is, and vice versa. A defense mechanism is triggered when the individual starts to accept others not as personalities but as abstract or impersonal objects. This may reduce empathy and increase indifference to others. The inability to depersonalize oneself and accept the opponent as an object increases anxiety and mental tension (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014).

Conclusions

The study shows that future female coaches-athletes **generally demonstrate higher levels of psychological stress**, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization than male coaches-athletes. At the same time, boys are more prone to reflection and less prone to a reduction in personal achievements. **Emotional exhaustion** is a key predictor of future coaches' mental tension, which is confirmed by regression analysis results. **Task orientation and depersonalization are predictors that have a negative effect on the variability of the dependent variable.**

It seems encouraging to study the behavior of future coaches-athletes in extreme situations depending on their personality structure, types of sports activity, professional experience, and level of sports mastery.

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