

Title: Sport Burnout Inventory – Dual Career Form for Student-Athletes: Assessing Validity and Reliability in a Finnish Sample of Adolescent Athletes

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Year: 2017

Keywords: Depressive symptoms, dual career, self-esteem, sport burnout inventory, sport task values

Sports: Mixture of team and individual sports (judo, track and field, football, ice hockey)

Journal: Journal of Sport and Health Science

Main Theme: Burnout

Secondary Theme: Mental Health

Aims: The aim of the study was to introduce a sport burnout measure for adolescent athletes currently undertaking a dual career, and to investigate the reliability and validity of the measure.

Method: The instrument is called the Sport Burnout Inventory–Dual Career Form (SpBI-DC). The participants were 391 female and male student-athletes (with a mean age of 16) from 6 different upper secondary sport schools in Finland, and 260 mothers. Data from mothers were used as research has shown that obtaining information of depressive symptoms from adolescents’ mothers may be particularly useful in predicting future depression.

Consequently, mother-rated depressive symptoms were used as a predictor of sport burnout. Questionnaires on sport burnout, sport task values, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem were administered to the young Finnish student-athletes.

Results: First, the results of the study suggest that the new sport burnout dual career measure has good internal consistency (suggesting the items on the scale are measuring similar areas) and is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing sport burnout in young student-athletes. The results of the study suggest that for student-athletes, burnout can be

characterised by three separate dimensions; exhaustion, cynicism toward the meaning of sport, and feelings of inadequacy as an athlete. The study also found that young athletes who reported higher levels of depressive symptoms also experienced higher levels of sport-related exhaustion (which could be explained by chronic fatigue as one of the symptoms of depression), suggesting that mental health in young student-athletes should be monitored to avoid dropping out of their sport. Finally, the study found that self-esteem is likely to decline when young student-athletes experience a deterioration in their sports results or feel inadequate and exhausted in their sport, suggesting that self-esteem interventions may be key during these periods.

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