Original article

Parental involvement and gender differences in the psychological profile of freshmen collegiate athletes

J. Gualberto Cremades a,*, Catherine J. Donlon b, Artur Poczwardowski c

a Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Barry University, Miami Shores, FL 33161, USA
b Cognoscenti Health Institute, Orlando, FL 32822, USA
c Graduate School of Professional Psychology, University of Denver, Denver, CO 80208, USA

Received 13 December 2011; revised 5 February 2012; accepted 5 March 2012

Abstract

Background: The parent-to-child influences can be adaptive and contribute to the optimal psychological well-being and positive perception of the athlete. Contrary to the healthy parental involvement, a family can also have negative effects on an athlete development. The purpose of this study was to determine gender, father involvement, and mother involvement differences in the psychological profiles of collegiate freshmen athletes as measured by perfectionism, physical self-concept, and psychological well-being.

Methods: Eighty-two male and 73 female collegiate freshmen responded to self-reported measures of family involvement, perfectionism, physical self-concept, and psychological well-being. Three separate $2 \times 2 \times 2$ (gender $\times$ mother involvement $\times$ father involvement) factorial multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVAs) were carried out on the respective subscales from the reported measures.

Results: There were significant differences for gender as well as father involvement in perfectionism ($p < 0.01$). Freshmen females had lower concern over mistakes, and greater levels of organization as well as planfulness than males. Furthermore, freshmen athletes with high involved fathers showed greater levels of high standards for others as well as organization.

Conclusion: Father involvement and mother involvement impact extends through the freshmen year in college as shown in the athletes' perfectionism, physical self-concept, and psychological well-being. Future research should develop better measures and utilize a family systems perspective.

Keywords: Development; Father involvement; Mother involvement; Perfectionism; Physical self-concept; Psychological well-being

1. Introduction

In the media, successful athletes often credit their families for encouragement, valuing achievement, and love and support. Alternatively, some athletes speak about family pressures or disappointments. Sport psychology researchers have long recognized that the family and particularly the parents are key influences on young athletes’ performance and psychological development. Hellstedt^9 stated: “…family influences are always present, visibly or invisibly, in the athlete’s mind and performance.” The literature has documented three types of parental involvement during the children’s upbringing in his/her sports experiences.

First, under-involved, considered unhealthy, refers to a relative lack of emotional, financial, or functional investment on the parents’ behalf. Studies have shown such indications of this under-involvement would be the lack of attendance at games, meets or events, minimal financial investments in

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: gcremades@gmail.barry.edu (J.G. Cremades)
Peer review under responsibility of Shanghai University of Sport

2095-2546 Copyright © 2012, Shanghai University of Sport. Production and hosting by Elsevier B.V. Open access under CC BY-NC-ND license.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jshs.2012.05.001
Parental involvement and psychological profile

equipment, few volunteer functions (i.e., car pooling or other assistance with transportation), minimal interests in team meetings, or conferences with the coach in relation to the quality of their son’s or daughter’s participation or skill development, and little assistance, if any, in helping the athlete set realistic outcome and performance goals.

Second, the moderate-involved family, considered healthy, has been characterized in past research as having firm parental direction, but with enough flexibility so the young athlete is allowed significant involvement in the decision-making.7,8,13,16 Parents are supportive, but ultimate decisions regarding participation and levels of achievement are made by the athletes themselves. There is an open line of communication system because members are dealt with as being separate individuals. Parents are recognized as providing encouragement to their young athletes without inducing undue pressure to win or overemphasizing the importance of the children’s sport participation.8,16

Last, in the over-involved parental continuum, considered unhealthy, parents have an excessive amount of involvement in their children’s athletic success. Based on Coakley’s findings,5 nearly all of the family activities are enmeshed with the sport environment. These families tend to be child-centered during the upbringing of a young athlete.

The parent-to-child influences can be adaptive; thus, contribute to the optimal psychological well-being and positive perception of physical self. The athletes whose parents provide support without pressure, value effort and competition over winning, and encourage process rather than outcome, are more likely to enjoy participating in sports.1,3,11–13 Contrary to the healthy parental involvement, a family can also have negative effects on an athlete development. For example, Cox et al.17 indicated that the concerns over mistakes, parental criticism, parental expectations, are generally associated with maladaptive functioning (negative perfectionism). Clearly, parental involvement can take the form of demands that impose an atmosphere of rigid rules and unrealistic expectations. Parents who pressure their children to win and communicate, either overtly or covertly, that the outcome is more important than the process, appear to promote their children in high levels of negative sport-related behaviors.13 In addition, Anshel and Mansouri18 found that parental expectations of competitive athletes significantly increased the athletes’ negative perfectionism through negative feedback.

In short, many of the positive outcomes of parenting have been hypothesized to happen in families with moderate involvement whereas the negative behavioral outcomes have been attributed to under-involved and over-involved families or unhealthy family involvement.7–10,16,19 Holt et al.20 suggested that parents’ knowledge and experience influence their involvement in youth sports. In supporting this suggestion, in Fine’s21 sociological analysis of Little League baseball, it was observed that parents who were over involved tended to criticize rather than cheer, and were prone to arguing with the umpires and addressing children forcefully after defeat in a game. Additionally, children’s perception of their performance can be influenced by their parents’ gender stereotyped perceptions, especially when parents’ beliefs of performance are higher for boys than girls. Thus, parents’ perceived beliefs could explain the gender differences seen in a child’s own self-perceptions of their physical performance, especially in sports.22 Moreover, parents’ perceived beliefs have the potential of playing a vital role in their children’s self-concept and well-being.

1.1. Perfectionism

Perfectionism was first generally classified as the effect of overly critical evaluations and high personal standards in the setting of one’s personal goals.23 Hamachek24 added further by stating it “refers to the manner of behaving but also to a manner of thinking about the behavior”. Hamachek also made a distinction between two types of perfectionism: normal (adaptive) and neurotic (maladaptive) perfectionism. Adaptive perfectionists are individuals who set high personal performance standards but are able to maintain their ability to view themselves as being successful even when their standards are not fully achieved.24 Thus, they are able to understand both the personal and the environmental constraints when pursuing their performance goals. In contrast, maladaptive perfectionists repeatedly strive for achievement of their unrealistic high standards, never gaining a sense of satisfaction from their accomplishments, and are preoccupied with and are overly critical of their mistakes.25

Parker26 examined adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism in 820 academically talented sixth graders and found that “non-perfectionists” (healthy) children received low levels of parental criticism and were conscientious, goal and achievement oriented and socially at ease. Alternatively, children labeled as being “unhealthy perfectionists” reported higher levels of parental criticism and expectations, and described as anxious, disagreeable, defensive and socially detached. Parker26 also found significantly higher levels of self-esteem in healthy perfectionist children than in the unhealthy perfectionism group. Clearly, athletes’ perfectionism can be affected by parental criticism and expectations.

Dunn and colleagues27 study on male and female inter-collegiate athletes showed males to have significantly higher perfectionist tendencies than females. Gender differences in sport perfectionism, based on evidence from literature, may be related to the higher value and importance males tend to place in sports compared to their female counterparts. In Ryska’s28 study of 235 high school student athletes, results showed males tended to base their self-work (self-concept) more exclusively upon success and performance in the sport realm than females. Similarly, Eccles and Harold,29 and Eccles et al.30 two studies with elementary school children found boys to rate themselves having higher abilities in sports than girls. Also, male college students indicated a higher desire to win than females.31 Together, these findings may suggest that male student athletes may have developed higher perfectionist orientations in the sport realm than females because their attainment for higher performance standards in a highly valued
discipline should philosophically lead to the greatest increase in self-worth as a critical element of one’s self-concept.  

1.2. Physical self-perception

Self-concept is the perception that people have about themselves relative to physical self. It is closely tied to the notion that an individual’s feeling of self-worth and self-esteem is related to how that individual perceives oneself within his or her body. Positive physical self-concept contributes to the development of global self-esteem and it is often conceived as a mediating variable which facilitates the attainment of other desired outcomes (i.e., physical skills, health-related physical fitness, physical activity, and exercise adherence) in non-elite settings, as well as improved performance in elite settings (sports). Moreover, sport and exercise researchers focus on physical self-concept and particular components of physical self-concept, instead of, or in addition to, measures of self-esteem, which is defined as a person’s positive or negative self-evaluations and perceptions.

In the context of sport, Zinsser et al. found that athletes who believe they should be perfect (unhealthy perfectionism) tend to blame themselves for every defeat and every setback; consequently their self-worth will likely suffer. Similarly, in the competitive sport environment, Kerr and Gos found in elite adolescent gymnasts that low levels of self-esteem is related with lacking a sense of personal control over one’s life. According to Berry and Howe, low self-esteem female university varsity athletes experienced competitive anxiety and were more prone to adopt negative behaviors (i.e., symptoms of eating disorders) than their male counterparts who had higher self-esteem. These findings concur with past research suggesting that individuals experiencing unhealthy perfectionism and low levels of self-esteem (self-concept) have higher levels of parental expectations and need for parental approval.

1.3. Psychological well-being

According to Ryff and Singer, psychological well-being is a multidimensional concept, which includes autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. More specifically, psychological well-being resides within the experience of the individual. It is person’s evaluative reaction to his or her life — either in terms of life satisfaction (cognitive evaluations) or affect (ongoing emotional reaction).

To date, studies on family involvement and well-being have been conducted in the academic settings, such as Rigby’s study on adolescents’ well-being. She found that perceived support by teachers, best friends, students in class, and mothers and fathers, contributed significantly to the adolescents’ well-being. Flouri and Buchanan tested whether adolescents’ perceptions of social support by their mothers’ and fathers’ involvement protected against unhappiness and well-being. Results indicated that mothers’ and fathers’ moderate involvements are positively related to the psychological well-being of their adolescents, as well as their provision which makes an important contribution to their adolescent’s well-being. Although with no references to family involvement, Valois et al. concluded that participation in sports teams, especially for white females, may enhance physiological and psychological well-being, and contribute to life satisfaction. Clearly, research on athlete psychological well-being as a function of family involvement in sports is warranted, including investigations of how parental involvement influences the psychological development of young athletes up to the time of starting college.

Past research indicated the role of a particular parent to be more emphasized in different situations, for example, depending on the children’s gender. More specifically, fathers are typically the ones who are more involved in their young athletes sport environment, whereas mothers tend to take the role of being the caretaker. Greendorfer and Lewko demonstrated that fathers were an important predictor of sport selections for both boys and girls, although boys received a little more fathers’ attention than did girls. Concerned with the long-term effects of upbringing, we hypothesized that the relationship between the perceptions of the family involvement and athlete psychological functioning might extend beyond the years spent at home and might still be observed during the developmental stage of increased independence such as entering college. Consequently, we investigated several theoretically and practically vital psychological qualities (i.e., perfectionism, physical self-concept, and psychological well-being) of both male and female collegiate athletes as related to their reports of parental involvement.

In sum, our choice of psychological variables as dependent on parental involvement, was guided by the importance placed on perfectionism, physical self-concept, and psychological well-being as essential concepts in human development and both training process and performance levels (perfectionism, self-concept, and psychological well-being). Further, sport psychology researchers have rarely examined athletes’ perfectionism, self-concept, and psychological well-being in relation to the perceived level of parental involvement. Past studies on these topics have been conducted primarily on adolescents and favored academic or physical education and fitness settings. Data obtained in the sport domain, particularly from collegiate athletes is lacking.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine gender differences, father involvement differences, and mother involvement differences in the psychological profiles of collegiate freshmen athletes as measured by perfectionism, physical self-concept, and psychological well-being. The following hypotheses were stated regarding the three dependent measures (i.e., perfectionism, self-concept, and psychological well-being): (a) females would show greater levels of perfectionism, and lower levels of physical self-concept as well as psychological well-being; (b) freshmen athletes who had greater levels of father involvement would reveal greater levels of perfectionism, and lower levels of physical self-
concept as well as psychological well-being; (c) freshmen athletes who had greater levels of mother involvement would reveal greater levels of perfectionism and lower levels of physical self-concept, as well as psychological well-being.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

The sample consisted of 155 (82 male, 73 female) freshmen Division I and Division II collegiate varsity athletes with age ranging between 18 (n = 81) and 19 years (n = 74). The represented sports were: wrestling (n = 34), gymnastics (n = 34), diving (n = 14), golf (n = 7), tennis (n = 21), swimming (n = 35), bowling (n = 4), and track & field (n = 6). Seventy-seven respondents had at least 10 years and 52 had between 6 and 10 years of experience in athletics. Approximately 77% (n = 120) were white, 5% (n = 7) were Hispanic, 5% (n = 7) were African American, one participant was Latino, and 13% (n = 20) classified themselves as “other.” All participants were living away from home for the first time.

2.2. Instrumentation

2.2.1. Family involvement

The Family Involvement (FI) questionnaire was used to measure the respondents’ perception of parents’ involvement. FI’s construct validity was demonstrated by Stein et al. in that predicted relationships in the data were confirmed. The participants responded to four FI questions by rating their mothers’ (2 questions) and fathers’ (2 questions) on four separate 7-point Likert scales. First, involvement level was examined by the following questions: “How involved is your mother with your sport participation?” and “How involved is your father with your sport participation?” with the endpoints ranging from 1 (not at all involved) to 7 (very involved). Secondly, involvement degree was assessed by: “Do you think your mother is involved –3 (involved way too little) to 3 (way too involved)” and “Do you think your father is involved –3 (involved way too little) to 3 (way too involved)” with the scale midpoint labeled involvement just right. Mother and father involvement were conceptualized separately into high involvement and low involvement with the 50th percentile as the cutoff for both (same for mother involvement and father involvement which was 5.33).

2.2.2. Perfectionism

The Perfectionism Inventory (PI) is a 59-item self-report questionnaire and was developed by combining the most salient factors from the Hewitt and Flett Multidimensional Perfectionism Inventory and the Frost et al.'s Multidimensional Perfectionism Inventory. PI’s internal consistency values ranged from 0.83 to 0.91 and test-retest reliability coefficients ranging from 0.71 to 0.91 for a 3–6-week interval. The inventory consists of eight subscales comprising two higher order factors: (a) conscientious perfectionism (i.e., organization, planfulness, striving for excellence, and high standards for others) and (b) self-evaluative perfectionism (i.e., concern over mistakes, need for approval, rumination, perceived parental pressure). Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

2.2.3. Physical self-perceptions

The Physical Self-Perception Profile (PSPP) is a 30-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess self-perceptions in the physical domain. The subscales were reported to be sensitive to a wide range of individual differences, not influenced by ceiling or bottoming effects, and not significantly related to social desirability scores. The internal consistency of the scales ranged from 0.83 to 0.92 for men and women. Test–retest coefficients ranged from 0.74 to 0.92 over a 16-day period and from 0.81 to 0.88 over a 23-day period. The inventory consists of five 6-item subscales (perceived sport competence, body attractiveness, physical conditioning, physical strength, and general physical self-worth). In the PSPP, two alternative statements are presented for each item and respondents choose which one best represent themselves, using “sort of true” to “really true”. Each of the questions is then scored from 1 (low self-perception) to 4 (high self-perception).

2.2.4. Psychological well-being

The Ryff Psychological Well-Being (PWB) scale is a 54-item self-report questionnaire and assesses six distinct aspects of well-being. Internal consistency from the scales ranged from 0.86 to 0.93, and test–retest reliability over a 6-week period ranged from 0.81 to 0.88. PWB consists of six factor constructs (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance), each operationalized with a 14-item scale divided between positively and negatively phrased items. Items for the scales are mixed and are measured on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

2.3. Procedures

An appropriate institutional approval and the agreement from athletic directors and the head coaches were obtained. Each athlete received a packet with the questionnaires from their respective coaches to whom all materials were mailed with standard administration instructions. Informed consents were obtained and the data were collected anonymously, and later mailed by the coaches back to the leading researcher. Each participant who completely responded to all questionnaires was included in the study.

2.4. Data analysis

Three separate $2 \times 2 \times 2$ (gender × mother involvement × father involvement) factorial multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) were carried out on the respective subscales from three inventories: PI, PSPP, and PWB. The independent variables were gender, father...
involvement, and mother involvement. A Bonferroni correction to control for Type I error inflation was implemented and α level was set at p < 0.01 for all analyses. SPSS 14.0 software (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA) was used to carry out all statistical analyses.

3. Results

There were no outliers and data were normally distributed. The subscales for each one of the inventories were analyzed for internal consistency. Cronbach α coefficients were above 0.70 and therefore acceptable for all subscales. Mean values were calculated for the subscales in each one of the self-report measures being used in this study (i.e., PI, PSPP, and PWB).

There were significant gender differences in freshmen athletes for perfectionism; Pillai’s Trace = 0.24, F(8, 140) = 5.72, p < 0.01, η² = 0.24. Follow-up univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) showed lower scores for females than males in relation to concern over mistakes, F(1, 140) = 9.69, p < 0.01; higher scores for females than males on organization, F(1, 140) = 6.11, p < 0.01; and higher scores for females than males on planfulness, F(1, 140) = 16.12, p < 0.001 (Table 1).

There were significant father involvement differences in freshmen athletes for perfectionism; Pillai’s Trace = 0.23, F(8, 140) = 5.26, p < 0.01, η² = 0.23. Follow-up univariate ANOVAs revealed that athletes with high involved fathers obtained higher scores than athletes with low involved fathers on the following subscales: high standards for others, F(1, 140) = 6.32, p < 0.01; and organization, F(1, 140) = 18.72, p < 0.001 (Table 2).

There were no differences for mother involvement among freshmen athletes in any of the psychological measures (i.e., PI, PSPP, and PWB). Further, there were no differences in gender, father involvement, and mother involvement among freshmen athletes as measured by physical self-perception and psychological well-being.

4. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine gender differences, father involvement differences, and mother involvement differences in the psychological profiles of collegiate freshmen athletes as measured by perfectionism, physical self-concept, and psychological well-being. Taken together, our results lead us to the following conclusions. First, freshmen females had lower concern over mistakes, and greater levels of organization as well as planfulness than males. Second, freshmen athletes with high involved fathers showed greater levels of high standards for others as well as organization. Third, mother involvement was not a factor that influenced perfectionism, self-perception, and/or psychological well-being in freshmen athletes. Last, gender, father involvement, and mother involvement were not factors that influenced either physical self-perception or psychological well-being.

4.1. Hypotheses testing

First, the results of the present study partially support the hypothesis that females would show greater levels of perfectionism and lower levels of physical self-concept, as well as psychological well-being. Our results suggest gender differences in perfectionism. Specifically, male athletes reported higher scores in regards to concern over mistakes as a self-evaluative perfectionism (or maladaptive as one tends to experience distress or anxiety over making a mistake), whereas female athletes scored higher on organization and planfulness (both are conscientious or adaptive aspects of perfectionism). Similar to our findings, Hill et al. found that females had a tendency to exhibit more perfectionist qualities than males. An important addition from our findings is that male athletes reported self-evaluative (maladaptive) perfectionism as contrasted with females’ conscientious perfectionism (adaptive).

Second, the results of this study partially support the hypothesis that freshmen athletes who had greater levels of father involvement would reveal greater levels of perfectionism and lower levels of physical self-concept, as well as psychological well-being. Our results suggest that freshmen athletes with high involved fathers had greater levels of high standards for others as well as organization, which are both examples of conscientious perfectionism. Positive influences of high involved fathers are known (e.g., Bloom) and this potential has been confirmed again in our sample. Our finding adds specificity regarding particular aspects of athlete psychological profile (i.e., conscientious perfectionism) that
may be influenced by fathers who are typically the ones more involved in children’s sport-related activities than other family members.\(^{47–49}\)

Third, the results of our study do not support the hypothesis that freshmen athletes who had greater levels of mother involvement would reveal greater levels of perfectionism, and lower levels of physical self-concept as well as psychological well-being. Contrary to our findings (although not in a sport setting), Flouris and Buchanan\(^{14}\) found that both mothers’ and fathers’ involvement were positively related to the psychological well-being of their adolescent children. The latter findings are confirmed by Rigby\(^{41}\) who found that perceived support by teachers, best friends, students in class, and parents, contributed significantly to the adolescents’ well-being. In general, the notion of positive parental support in sports is well documented\(^{57,58}\) and specific examples of support such as informational, tangible, and companionship may potentially be present in intensely involved families.

Last, gender, father involvement, and mother involvement were not factors that influence either physical self-perception or psychological well-being. Aligned with the need to expand our understanding of the mechanisms implicated in highly involved parenting, the results of the present study do not support the hypothesis that there would be differences in self-perception, psychological well-being, or both. It has been argued that high parental involvement does not have to be necessarily negative if desired by the children and focuses on constructive elements of a parent’s role.\(^ {14}\) Thus, even with high involved parenting, there may not be such a negative impact on self-perception and/or psychological well-being. If future research can operationalize positive aspects of highly involved families, one might speculate that the support that parents offer as part of being highly involved might serve as a major buffer to the documented negative outcomes of over parenting in sports.

Taken together, the issues of parental involvement are indeed multifaceted and the concept of complex families,\(^ {59}\) which provide both resources (e.g., support) and high expectations (e.g., positive modeling) should be a driving concept for future research projects.

4.2. Strengths, limitations, and practical implications

First, an important limitation involved the psychometric properties of the FI questionnaire.\(^ {19}\) Although its construct validity was supported through demonstration of predicted relationships,\(^ {19}\) further research should determine the reliability and validity of such questionnaire. Even though much attention has been given to the usage of the term family involvement in sport psychology literature\(^ {7,10,14}\) without valid definitions and sound psychometric instrumentations, researchers will continue to encounter theoretical and methodological problems. Our findings further support the need for breaking down the family involvement into respective involvement (high or low) of each parent separately as the data indicated residual effects of the parental influence on their children’s perfectionism during the first year in college.

A second limitation was related to participants’ natural biases in self-report measures (a common issue in sport psychology research). Our respondents may have based some of their responses on current outside factors or situations (i.e., fight with a parent or friend, worrying about a big game or competition coming up, win–loss record). Similarly, the participants’ adjustments to college life (feelings of loneliness or detachment, relief from parental pressures and monitoring, etc.) as well as their new evolving perspectives on the past experiences of being a child may also have affected their responses. Thus, researchers need to make efforts to standardize age sampling and time-in-the-season sampling as well as use coach influence and win–loss record as control variables.

A third limitation in this study was the sample used to collect data. The number of participants per sport was small in some cases such as golf, bowling, and track and field. Furthermore, the racial distribution of the sample was limited since 77% of the participants involved in this study were white. A more diverse sport population as well as racial distribution is needed to generalize our findings to other sports and ethnicities.

A more salient theoretical framework to study family involvement in sports is needed to provide a more holistic understanding such as postulated within the family system approach.\(^ {9,14,60,61}\) Since the members of a family function within a system and share a variety of complex interactions, it is impossible to understand an individual’s situation without exploring their general family process as well as specific family member—family member interactions.\(^ {62,63}\) For example, parents who invested time, money, and emotional energy into their children’s athletic development might experience tension, feelings of being left out once their children move on to college.\(^ {9}\) As a result, a young athlete might become or made more aware of the financial and emotional costs of the family and starts to be even more compelled to succeed. Therefore, examining the various dynamics of athletic families (e.g., communication, behavior modeling, distribution and execution of various roles, value interpreting) is recommended.\(^ {9,14,61–64}\) Qualitative research designs as well as mixed methods designs\(^ {65}\) seem to suit the emerging research problems, especially in relation to the increasing complexity of sport psychology research on family involvement.

The results of our study as well as past research\(^ {9,10,60}\) indicated that family, or as suggested by our findings, the differential parental involvement in their children’s sport is associated with the athletes’ psychological development. Thus, a positive, process-focused, mastery family atmosphere for an athlete should be created (as related to sport participation) and workshops for parents need to continue to be offered to enhance the families’ “how to” knowledge on creating optimal family environments. Similarly, based on future research determining the factors affecting athletes’ psychological profiles, applied sport psychologists can work with families for optimal development of young athletes. For example, coaches and practitioners who are aware of specific
perfectionist attributes can teach an athlete the adaptive components of being a perfectionist in sports as well as manage the maladaptive aspects of perfectionism.

5. Conclusion

Our study demonstrated crucial theoretical differences between gender, father involvement, and mother involvement in freshmen collegiate athletes’ psychological profiles (as measured by perfectionism, physical self-concept, and psychological well-being). Evidently, the athlete perceptions of the parental involvement deserve careful attention from future researchers. Family plays a vital role in athletes’ lives and sport participation that extends through the freshmen year in college. Utilizing a family system model, varying methodological paradigms and diversifying variables and populations seem fruitful directions in designing future research. Also, valid and reliable measurements of family involvement, parental involvement, or both, are needed. Finally, potential practical implications involve enhancing workshop contents for parents and coaches as well as guide sport psychology practitioners in their work with athletic families.

References


