

Doctoral Thesis in 2015

**Studies on Structure and Function of Psychological Resilience
among University Athletes**

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Abstract

Psychological maladjustment resulting in burnout and dropping out has become a critical issue in Japanese university club activities. In this context, a factor considered important in sport psychology is psychological resilience, or “the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances” (Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990). The purpose of the present set of nine studies was to examine the structure and function of psychological resilience among university athletes.

Study 1 aimed to develop a psychological resilience scale for university athletes and to examine the relationship among psychological resilience, sociodemographic factors, and stress response. These results indicated that the scale can be a valuable tool in the multidimensional evaluation of university athletes’ psychological resilience.

Study 2 aimed to develop a model of psychological resilience among university athletes. This results showed that daily and competitive activities’ stressors were associated with stress response and self-esteem via psychological resilience efficacy and psychological resilience.

Study 3 aimed to investigate a dual processing model of psychological resilience among university athletes. The findings of this study supported our hypothesis that university athletes’ psychological resilience promotes athletic growth and reduces burnout.

Study 4 aimed to investigate the relationship between psychological resilience, self-esteem, and adjustment to athletic club activity among university athletes. This finding indicate that resilience in university athletes serves to augment self-esteem and adjustment to athletic club activity.

Study 5 aimed to examine the relationship between psychological resilience and burnout among university athletes. These results indicated that psychological resilience was significantly negatively correlated with the level of burnout; however, the possibility of increased burnout depending on the presence of certain variables was suggested.

Study 6 aimed to examine the relationship between personality factors, the innate/acquired psychological resilience in daily activities, and athletic psychological resilience among university athletes. The findings supported our hypothesis that the personality of university athletes may vary between their daily lives and their competition experience, specifically in terms of one's level of psychological resilience.

Study 7 aimed to examine the relationship between psychological resilience, psychological performance self-efficacy, and competitive performance among university athletes of higher and lower performance levels. This finding indicated that the psychological resilience of university athletes serves to augment competitive performance.

Study 8 aimed to develop the Subjective Graph Drawing Method of Resilience (SGDM-R) and examined its validity. These results suggested that the SGDM-R could be a good measure of the resilience process. The validity of the SGDM-R and its applicability to Japanese athletes were confirmed.

Study 9 aimed to investigate the function of psychological resilience among university athletes by means of a longitudinal study. These results suggested that the directionality of a significant path differed between variables over time and the relationship between psychological resilience and burnout. These results suggested that the relationship between psychological resilience and burnout or other factors should be further examined through longitudinal studies.

The results of these nine studies indicate the structure and function of the psychological resilience among university athletes. Athletic psychological resilience has two forms of positive effects, on mental health and competitive performance, as shown by cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. Not only is athletic resilience an important factor in competition performance improvement, but it also reduces the impact of stress and promotes adaptation and mental and physical health. Furthermore, this study's results have established a basic theory according to which psychological resilience promotes personal and athletic growth and prevents burnout and dropping out.