

Social pressures and their relationship to the achievement motivation of handball players in Jordan

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to assess the degree of social pressures and their relationship to sports achievement motivation among 51 randomly selected handball players from first-division clubs in Jordan. A descriptive approach was employed, and data were collected via a questionnaire, with analyses conducted using SPSS 26. The results showed that social pressure levels were moderate, with training pressures being the highest ($M = 3.17$; a relative importance of 63.40%), followed by family ($M = 2.92$; a relative importance of 58.40%) and public pressures ($M = 2.32$; a relative importance of 46.40%). No statistically significant differences were found in social pressures and sports achievement motivation among handball players based on experience ($p > 0.05$). While family and public pressures were not significantly correlated with motivation ($p > 0.05$), training and overall pressures were positively correlated with motivation ($p < 0.05$). The study found moderate social pressure among handball players in Jordan, with low public-related pressures and no differences based on experience. Motivation for sports achievement was high, with training-related pressures positively linked to motivation.

KEYWORDS

Handball; Social Pressures; Achievement Motivation; Handball Players

1. INTRODUCTION

The effects of stressful situations are reflected in most aspects of an individual's personality. Some researchers describe our current era as one of anxiety, stress, and psychological crises, with life becoming increasingly complex and negative behaviors more frequent. This has disrupted human relationships and limited individuals' ability to manage stress effectively (Abu Hazem, 2017).

Pressures in the sports field refer to those associated with the intertwined and complex relationships between the player, the coach, the administrators, the fans, the media, and others who interact with players in the sports environment. These pressures may involve criticism, authoritarianism, lack of personal appreciation, lack of motivation, encouragement, or demands to achieve exaggerated ambitions (Al-Otaibi, 2012).

Social pressures, in particular, often cause anxiety and stress, as players experience psychological situations accompanied by heightened emotions and excitement. The need for achievement and excellence motivates them, driving their potential and directing their energy towards the goal of high performance and success (Shteiwi, 2017).

Handball is one of the most popular team sports worldwide, with interest growing significantly in the twentieth century. This is evident in the international tournaments and the sport's progression from one championship to another. Handball relies on a player's overall physical fitness, tactical and skill aspects, and, importantly, the psychological dimension. The psychological aspect is crucial, as players face various pressures, including crowd, media, management, and coach-related pressures, all of which influence their ability to win tournaments and achieve success. Given the importance of handball, particularly in Jordan, and based on the researchers' academic and practical experience in the field, this study is conducted to identify the social pressures experienced by first-class handball players and assess their motivation for sports achievement.

1.1. Study Objectives

- Identify the social pressures faced by handball players in Jordan.
- Examine the differences in the degree of stress experienced by handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable.
- Explore the motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan.
- Analyze the differences in achievement motivation among handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable.

- Investigate the relationship between the degree of social pressure and the level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan.

1.2. Study Questions

1. What is the degree of social pressure faced by handball players in Jordan?
2. Are there significant differences in the degree of social pressures faced by handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable?
3. What is the level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan?
4. Are there significant differences in the level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable?
5. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the degree of social pressure and the level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan?

2. METHODS

2.1. Study Design and Participants

The researchers employed a descriptive approach using the survey method, aligning with the study's nature and objectives. The study population consisted of 160 handball players from first-class clubs in Jordan. A sample of 51 players was randomly selected from first-division clubs, representing 32% of the population. Table 1 shows the distribution of experience levels among sample members.

Table 1. Distribution of experience levels among sample members

The variable	Category	Issue	The ratio
Experience	Less than five years	18	35.2%
	From 5 to 10 years	17	33.3%
	More than ten years	16	31.5%
	Total	51	100%

2.2. Instrument

The researchers used the Ghaith scale (2021) and the Al-Awran scale (2012) to assess social pressures, and the Al-Alawi scale (1998) to measure motivation for achievement and ensure content validity. The scale was reviewed by eight specialized arbitrators with doctoral degrees in sports science, who confirmed the validity of the tool. The researchers used Cronbach's alpha internal

consistency method to verify the instrument's stability (Table 2). The results of the table indicate that Cronbach's alpha values were: 0.765 for family-related stresses, 0.775 for audience-related strains, 0.821 for training-related priorities, and 0.853 for overall pressures. The measure of motivation for sports achievement had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.649. These values indicate a high degree of stability for the fields of study.

Table 2. Results of field study stability using the Cronbach-Alpha method

The number	Pressures	Number of paragraphs	Cronbach's alpha value
1	Family-related social	10	0.765
2	Social issues related to the public	10	0.775
3	Social issues related to training	10	0.821
4	Total stress	30	0.853
5	The measure of motivation for sports achievement	20	0.649

2.3. Statistical Analysis

Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS 26 and included the following methods: arithmetic averages, standard deviation, percentages, Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for comparing means, and the Pearson correlation coefficient.

3. RESULTS

Results related to the first question, “What is the degree of social pressure facing handball players in Jordan?” were obtained by calculating the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of social pressures experienced by handball players in Jordan. The findings are summarized in Table 3, which presents the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of social pressures among handball players in Jordan, arranged in descending order.

Table 3. Social pressures among handball players in Jordan: averages and standard deviations

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	The level	Rank
3	Social issues related to training	3.17	0.93	63.40	Average	1
1	Family-related social issues	2.92	0.79	58.40	Average	2
2	Social issues related to the public	2.32	0.79	46.40	Low -	3
	Total stress	2.81	0.62	56.20	Average	

Table 3 shows that the level of social pressure among handball players in Jordan was average, with an arithmetic mean of 2.81 and a relative importance of 56.20. The pressures ranged from low to medium, with arithmetic averages between 3.17 and 2.32. The highest level of social pressure was related to training, with an arithmetic mean of 3.17 and a relative importance of 63.40. The lowest level of social pressure was related to the audience, with an arithmetic mean of 2.32 and a relative importance of 46.40. The social pressures among handball players in Jordan are analyzed according to their specific aspects in the following. Table 4 presents the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of family-related social pressures.

Table 4. Family-related social pressures: arithmetic averages and standard deviations

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	The level	Rank
1	Family differences contribute to a low level of performance	4.27	1.02	85.40	Too high	1
2	In the event of the death of a family member reduces his achievement	3.92	1.23	78.40	Elevated	2
9	The presence of a family member to watch the competitions affects his achievement	3.20	1.59	64.00	Average	3
7	In the case of the illness of a family member, his achievement decreases	2.98	1.22	59.60	Average	4
3	Any confusion among family members reduces his achievement	2.88	1.39	57.60	Average	5
8	The tendency of his family not to differentiate between winning and defeating during competitions limits his achievement	2.78	1.62	55.60	Average	6
5	The lack of encouragement from family members to compete limits his achievement	2.67	1.51	53.40	Average	7
10	His preoccupation with competition increases his family problems	2.39	1.59	47.80	Low -	8
4	The lack of interest of family members in competitions reduces his achievement	2.35	1.37	47.00	Low -	9

6	Family member's travel abroad affects his achievement	1.75	1.23	35.00	Very low	10
Social pressures related to the family		2.92	0.79	58.40	Average	

Table 4 indicates that the level of family-related social pressures was average, with an arithmetic mean of 2.92 and a relative importance of 58.40. The stress levels ranged from very low to very high, with arithmetic averages between 4.28 and 1.75. The highest-ranking item was "family differences contribute to a low level of performance," with an arithmetic mean of 4.27 and a relative importance of 85.40. The lowest-ranking item was "the travel of a family member abroad affects my achievement," with an arithmetic mean of 1.75 and a relative importance of 35.00. Table 5 presents the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of social pressures related to the public.

Table 5. Social pressures related to the public: arithmetic averages and standard deviations

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	The level	Rank
7	The hurtful comment that touches him from the audience affects his achievement	2.78	1.39	55.60	Average	1
5	The public boycott of the team limits his achievement	2.69	1.41	53.80	Average	2
9	Watching some important people compete affects his achievement	2.67	1.60	53.40	Average	3
3	The lack of cheering and encouragement for the team reduces his achievements during competitions	2.41	1.37	48.20	Low -	4
6	The attempt of fanatics from the public to physically assault the players generates fear during the competitions	2.37	1.56	47.40	Low -	5
1	The presence of the public during the competitions limits his achievement	2.33	1.57	46.60	Low -	6
10	The media bias of the competitive team audience reduces his motivation to achieve	2.20	1.34	44.00	Low -	7
2	The release of hostile	2.06	1.20	41.20	Low -	8

	cheers from the audience limits his achievement					
8	The lack of sports awareness among the public confuses him during competitions	1.92	1.15	38.40	Low -	9
4	Cheering for the opposing team limits his achievement	1.80	1.06	36.00	Very low	10
	Social pressures related to the public	2.32	0.79	46.40	Low -	

Table 5 indicates that the level of social pressures related to the public was average, with an arithmetic mean of 2.32 and a relative importance of 46.40. The stress levels ranged from very low to very high, with arithmetic averages between 1.80 and 2.78. The highest-ranking item was "the hurtful comment from the public affects my achievement," with an arithmetic mean of 2.78 and a relative importance of 55.60. The lowest-ranking item was "cheering and encouraging the opposing team limits my achievement," with an arithmetic mean of 1.80 and a relative importance of 36.00. Table 6 presents the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of social pressures related to training.

Table 6. Social pressures related to training: arithmetic averages and standard deviations

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	The level	Rank
3	The coach's attention to the leading players at the expense of other players reduces his achievement	3.96	1.40	79.20	Elevated	1
1	The weakness of the personal trainer during training reduces his achievement	3.88	1.53	77.60	Elevated	2
6	Poor integration in training after a long time affects his achievement	3.71	1.49	74.20	Elevated	3
10	The coach's bullying of some players makes training dull for him	3.69	1.44	73.80	Elevated	4
2	Receiving conflicting instructions from the trainer during training limits his achievement	3.67	1.34	73.40	Elevated	5
8	The lack of proper training time made him uncomfortable during the performance	3.29	1.70	65.80	Average	6
4	The love of the appearance of some players during training	2.55	1.47	51.00	Low -	7

	makes them uncomfortable during the performance					
9	The inappropriate duration of the training makes him not interested in training	2.54	1.53	50.00	Low -	8
5	The sudden change in the date of training affects his achievement	2.37	1.57	47.40	Low -	9
7	It is difficult for him to consult a coach when he has problems in training for fear of being criticized	2.08	1.44	41.60	Low -	10
	Social pressures related to the public	3.17	0.93	63.40	Average	

Table 6 shows that the level of social pressures related to training was average, with an arithmetic mean of 3.17 and a relative importance of 63.40. The pressure levels ranged from very low to very high, with arithmetic averages between 2.08 and 3.96. The highest-ranking item was "the coach's interest in leading players at the expense of others reduces my achievement," with an arithmetic mean of 3.96 and a relative importance of 79.20. The lowest-ranking item was "it is difficult for me to consult a coach when I have problems in training for fear of criticism," with an arithmetic mean of 2.08 and a relative importance of 41.60.

Results related to the second question, "are there any significant differences in the degree of social pressures facing handball players in Jordan due to the variable of experience?" were obtained by calculating the arithmetic averages, standard deviations, and social pressures based on the experience variable. Table 7 presents arithmetic averages and standard deviations of social pressures among handball players by experience level.

Table 7. Arithmetic averages and standard deviations of social pressures among handball players by experience level

Pressures	Experience	Issue	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Social pressures related to the family	Less than five years	19	2.91	0.83
	From 5 to 10 years	18	2.87	0.87
	More than ten years	16	2.98	0.69
Social pressures related to the public	Less than five years	19	2.59	0.76
	From 5 to 10 years	18	2.22	0.82
	More than ten years	16	2.16	0.76
Social pressures related to training	Less than five years	19	3.16	0.85
	From 5 to 10 years	18	3.25	0.94
	More than ten years	16	3.11	1.03
Total stress	Less than five years	19	2.89	0.64
	From 5 to 10 years	18	2.78	0.64
	More than ten years	16	2.75	0.60

Table 7 indicates that there are noticeable differences in the averages of social pressures among handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable. To determine whether these differences are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 8, which examines the differences in social pressures among handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable. The results show that there are no statistically significant differences in social pressures among handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable ($p>0.05$).

Table 8. ANOVA results for social pressures by experience level

Pressures	Source of variability	Total squares	Degrees of freedom	Average squares	<i>p</i> value
Social pressures related to the family	Among the groups	0.11	2	0.06	0.09
	Within the groups	30.87	48	0.64	
	Total	30.98	50		
Social pressures related to the public	Among the groups	1.82	2	0.91	1.48
	Within the groups	29.47	48	0.61	
	Total	31.29	50		
Social pressures related to training	Among the groups	0.16	2	0.08	0.09
	Within the groups	42.64	48	0.89	
	Total	42.80	50		
Total stress	Among the groups	0.17	2	0.09	0.22
	Within the groups	18.98	48	0.40	
	Total	19.16	50		

Regarding the results related to the third question, "What is the level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan?", Table 9 presents the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of the measure of sports achievement motivation among handball players, arranged in descending order. The table shows that the level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players was high, with an arithmetic average of 3.63 and a relative importance of 72.60%. Motivation scores ranged from very low to very high, with averages between 1.78 and 4.82. The highest-ranking item was "I admire players who train extra hours to improve," with an average of 4.82 and a relative importance of 96.40%. The lowest-ranking item was "Excellence in sports is one of my main goals," with an average of 1.78 and a relative importance of 35.60% (Table 9).

Table 9. Motivation for sports achievement among handball players

The number	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Relative importance	The level	Rank
2	He is like a player who trains extra hours to improve his level	4.82	0.52	96.40	Too high	1
20	His goal is to be exceptional in his sport	4.75	0.59	95.00	Too high	2
12	Winning the competition gives him satisfaction	4.67	0.71	93.40	Too high	3
18	He is trying his best to be the best player	4.61	0.75	92.20	Too high	4
16	He has a very high desire to be successful in his sport	4.59	0.90	91.80	Too high	5
19	He can be calm in the moments right before the competition	4.27	1.02	85.40	Too high	6
6	Enjoy taking on any task that some other players find difficult	4.22	1.10	84.40	Too high	7
10	He is ready to train all year without interruption to succeed in his sport	4.22	1.15	84.40	Too high	8
1	He finds it challenging to try to sleep after his defeat in a competition	3.94	1.48	78.80	Elevated	9
14	He prefers to take a break from training in the period after the completion of the official competition.	3.92	1.28	78.40	Elevated	10
9	Sometimes, when he is defeated in a competition, it bothers him for several days.	3.73	1.40	74.60	Elevated	11
7	He is afraid of defeat in the competition	3.51	1.50	70.20	Elevated	12
3	When he made a mistake in his performance during the competition, he needed some time to forget about this mistake.	3.29	1.43	65.80	Average	13
11	He had no difficulty sleeping the night he participated in a competition.	3.14	1.40	62.80	Average	14
8	Luck leads to winning with a greater degree of effort.	3.02	1.48	60.40	Average	15
17	Before participating in the competition, He does not get busy thinking about what might happen in the contest or its results	3.00	1.51	60.00	Average	16
13	Feel nervous before a sports competition.	2.61	1.23	52.20	Average	17

15	When he makes a mistake in performance, it exhausts him throughout the competition.	2.43	1.22	48.60	Low -	18
5	He often feels scared right before he participates in the competition	2.06	1.30	41.20	Low -	19
4	Excellence in sports is one of his primary goals	1.78	1.32	35.60	Very low	20
	Motivation of sports achievement among handball players	3.63	0.39	72.60	72.60	

Regarding the fourth question, “Are there any statistically significant differences in the level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable?” the arithmetic averages and standard deviations of motivation for sports achievement were calculated according to experience levels. The results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Differences in the level of motivation for sports achievement by experience level

Experience	Issue	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Less than five years	19	3.57	0.35
From 5 to 10 years	18	3.59	0.44
More than ten years	16	3.73	0.38

Table 10 indicates that there are noticeable differences in the average motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable. To determine if these differences are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied. The results are presented in Table 11. There are no statistically significant differences in sports achievement motivation among handball players in Jordan based on experience ($p > 0.05$).

Table 11. ANOVA results for motivation by experience level

Source of variability	Total squares	Degrees of freedom	Average squares	<i>p</i> value
Among the groups	0.25	2	0.12	0.80
Within the groups	7.35	48	0.15	
Total	7.59	50		

Results related to the fifth question “Is there a statistically significant relationship between social pressures and motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan?” were analyzed using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Relationship between social pressures and motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan

The number	Relationships	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i> value
1	Family-related social forces and basis for athletic achievement	0.098	0.494
2	Social pressures related to the audience and the motivation for sports achievement	0.212	0.136
3	Social pressures related to training and motivation for sports achievement	0.320	0.022*
4	Total stress and motivation for sports achievement	0.291	0.038*

Table 12 shows that social pressures related to family and the audience have non-significant correlations with sports achievement motivation ($r = 0.098$, $p = 0.494$; $r = 0.212$, $p = 0.136$, respectively). In contrast, social pressures related to training and overall pressures have significant positive correlations with motivation ($r = 0.320$, $p = 0.022$; $r = 0.291$, $p = 0.038$), indicating that higher pressures are associated with increased motivation for sports achievement.

4. DISCUSSION

The results of our study indicate that the overall level of social pressure among handball players in Jordan is moderate. The study's findings reveal that social pressures related to training were the highest, with an average score of 3.17 and a relative importance of 63.40%, followed by family-related pressures (average 2.92, relative importance 58.40%) and pressures from the public (average 2.32, relative importance 46.40%). These findings suggest that handball players in Jordan face significant, ongoing stress, which is exacerbated by the fact that many play handball as a hobby under adverse conditions. This combination of pressures negatively impacts their psychological well-being and, in turn, their performance in competitions. The players often compare their situation to athletes in more popular sports, such as football, which heightens their stress due to the differences in professional opportunities and recognition, thereby contributing to the persistent social pressures they experience.

Social pressures related to the family: Social pressures stemming from family dynamics ranked second, with an average score of 2.92, as shown in Table 4. The statement "family differences contribute to a decrease in my performance level" ranked highest. This can be attributed to the negative impact family conflicts have on a player's mental health and performance. Furthermore, family pressure to abandon a sports career, especially if the player is a student or early in their

professional life, due to a lack of financial independence in sports, exacerbates this issue. Such pressures highlight the need for permanent solutions to the problems within the sports environment. Conversely, the statement "the travel of a family member abroad affects my achievement" ranked last, with an average score of 1.75.

Social pressures related to the public: Social pressures from the audience ranked third, with a low average of 2.32. The statement "hurtful comments from the audience affect my performance" ranked highest, with an average of 2.78. This reflects the detrimental effect of negative comments on a player's mental and physical health, often leading to depression and frustration. On the other hand, the statement "Cheering and cheering for the opposing team limits his achievement" ranked lowest, with an average of 1.80, which may be because players tend to focus on supportive comments from their own fans.

Social pressures related to training: Training-related social pressures ranked first, with an average of 3.17, as shown in Table 6. The statement "the coach's attention to the main players at the expense of others reduces my performance" ranked highest, with an average of 3.96. This suggests that neglecting reserve players in favor of main players has a negative impact on the neglected players' performance and commitment to training.

The results presented in Table 8 indicated no statistically significant differences in the degree of social pressures experienced by handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable ($p > 0.05$). The researchers attribute this to the relatively similar ages of the players, with an average age range of 21 to 31 years. This close age group likely experiences comparable conditions related to the nature of the game, including its pressures, demands, and burdens. Additionally, players in Jordan appear to have a shared awareness of their environment and the challenges they face, regardless of their level of experience. This suggests that both inexperienced and experienced players approach these pressures with a realistic and pragmatic mindset. The level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players was high, with the statement "I like the player who trains for extra hours to improve his level" ranking first. The researchers attribute this to the fact that players view handball as a hobby alongside their main job, and those who dedicate extra time to training are admired by their peers for their commitment to improving their performance. On the other hand, the statement "excellence in sports is considered one of my main goals" ranked last, with an average score of 1.78. This is likely due to the promotional and social nature of sports practice in this context, where it is not seen as a primary means of income.

No significant differences were found in the level of motivation for sports achievement among handball players in Jordan based on the experience variable ($p > 0.05$). The researchers suggest that this is because even inexperienced players are highly motivated to achieve their goals and overcome obstacles in the sports community, driven by the efforts of influential sports figures who work to find solutions and enhance performance. These findings differ from Al-Silmy (2008), who found statistically significant differences in achievement motivation, with more experienced players showing higher motivation compared to those with 1-5 years of experience. Furthermore, social pressures related to family and the audience have non-significant correlations with sports achievement motivation ($r = 0.098$, $p = 0.494$; $r = 0.212$, $p = 0.136$, respectively). In contrast, social pressures related to training and overall pressures have significant positive correlations with motivation ($r = 0.320$, $p = 0.022$; $r = 0.291$, $p = 0.038$), indicating that higher pressures are associated with increased motivation for sports achievement. The researchers attribute this to the fact that the motivation associated with sports activity is influenced by training-related pressures, as noted by Allawi (2004). This contrasts with the findings of Al-Otaibi (2008), who reported a statistically significant inverse relationship between success motivation and stress.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In light of the results of this study, the researchers conclude that the degree of social pressure among handball players in Jordan was generally moderate, with social pressures related to the public being particularly low. There were no differences in the degree of social pressures among the players due to the experience variable. The level of motivation for sports achievement among the players was high, and there were no significant differences in motivation based on experience. Additionally, there was no statistically significant relationship between overall social pressures and motivation for sports achievement, though a direct positive relationship was found between training-related social pressures and motivation for achievement.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the study's findings, the researchers recommend the following: (1) develop appropriate training programs and activate the role of social and sports guidance specialists to help alleviate social pressures on athletes; (2) provide solutions to reduce players' attachment to their daily jobs to lessen the physical burden, allowing them to focus on sports as a profession rather than a hobby; (3) ensure all resources are available to further develop the handball game in Jordan; and (4)

conduct further studies to explore social pressures and motivation for sports achievement across various sports.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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