



Social Support, Sexual Harassment, and General Self-Efficacy as Determinants of Self-Rated Performance among Women Volleyball Players in Pakistan

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Abstract

This research examines the role of social support (SS), sexual harassment (SH), and general self-efficacy (GSE) on self-rated performance (SRP) in female volleyball players in Pakistan. The study was based on the Social Exchange Theory and Self-Efficacy theory, and the quantitative survey method was used where 309 female volleyball players of various sports institutions in, Pakistan agreed to the survey. The analyses through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) showed that both the social support and self-efficacy have a substantial positive impact on SRP, with sexual harassment having a substantial negative impact. These results highlight the critical role of psychosocial and contextual determinants in the perceptions of female athletes in terms of performance. In theory, the research will expand the horizons of self-efficacy and social exchange theories to the context of sports performance among women, thus emphasizing the role played by psychological resources and safe environmental situations. In practice, the findings support the proposal of supportive infrastructures, confidence-enhancement programs, and zero-tolerance harassment practices to enhance greater participation and performance of female athletes in competitive sports. Despite the restrictions of the cross-sectional design and use of self-reported data, the study provides meaningful



information to policy makers, sports administrators and researchers working on this issue in the future to enhance the performance and well-being of women in sports.

Keywords: Social Support, Sexual Harassment, Self-Efficacy, Self-Rated Performance, Women Athletes, Sports Psychology, Pakistan

Introduction

The present study examines the complex interplay between social support systems, experiences of sexual harassment, and overall self-efficacy in a sample of female volleyball players in Pakistan and the role they play in combination in determining women's perceived athletic performance. Specifically, it focuses on the moderating and negative influences of different types of social support on athletes' perceptions of self-efficacy and competence (Carfora et al., 2022). Further, the mediating role of general self-efficacy, which represents a psychological factor that reflects a person's belief in success in a specific situation, was examined to examine how the effects of social support and harassment influence objective performance (Tirmzai & Mughal, 2020). By placing these dynamics in the cultural and sporting context of Pakistan, the research aims to offer nuanced understanding of the psychological foundation of female performance in sport (Phukan, 2022). The study is particularly relevant considering the role of relational-efficacy beliefs to psychological, behavioral and performance outcomes within the social sport context (Christensen et al., 2024). The current study adds to the sparse literature by clarifying the specific interaction among these variables in a population facing unique challenges demanding a new form of societal and cultural adaptation, thus expanding the research pool on sport psychology for women (Rasool et al., 2020). The results have implications for the design of specific interventions and support structures to create an empowering environment for female athletes and consequently, improve their athletic and well-being development. Finally, the study is going to help shape policy and practice that will create an equitable and supportive sporting environment for women volleyball players in Pakistan.

The results will clarify the relationship between social identification with a team and efficacy belief towards team performance and the significance of social identification (Rossing et al., 2024). Furthermore, the study aims to clarify the influence of collective belief in team ability to perform under challenging conditions (collective efficacy) on individual motivation and team performance, and therefore to contribute to a better theoretical understanding of team sport psychology (Adilogullari et al., 2025). It will also consider the relationships of efficacy and performance between dyads of athletes, recognizing that athletes' beliefs are embedded with their teammates' beliefs. This project investigates not only self-efficacy but also other-efficacy and collective efficacy, which are important concepts for understanding athletes' beliefs about their own and their teammates' abilities in competitive performance (Habeeb et al., 2019). Importantly, this approach acknowledges that athletes' social identity as part of a team can have significant effects on their self-efficacy, especially in team sports in which performance is a

collective process. Accordingly, team identification can increase athletes' self-efficacy, other efficacy, and relation-evaluated self-efficacy, which positively influences performance (Schmid et al., 2024). The proposed study will also examine the potential of learning-by-observing interventions to complement these varieties of efficacy that translate into tangible performance benefits for the team (Bruton et al., 2019).

Such interventions are especially effective in team sports, where teamwork and shared psychological reactions lead to victory (Bruton et al., 2019). A growing body of work has focused on collective efficacy as a key driver of team performance in different fields - sports, business, and education, among others. Keep in mind that the present study builds upon the previous studies by exploring these intricate connections among the under-studied population of female players from the volleyball team in Pakistan. This focus is necessary, as performance and training in team sports are largely contingent on relational partners and shared and observation-learned beliefs are therefore particularly influential (Christensen et al., 2024). For example, focus on individual and group behaviors has been shown to improve self-efficacy and collective efficacy, implying that certain observational learning interventions may be very effective in sport development (Bruton et al., 2019). Therefore, the use of multilevel observational learning intervention, which is proven to be effective in increasing efficacy belief in practice, can be useful in improving athletes' performance and promoting cohesion. This approach is consistent with results showing that observational learning (both individual and group task content) can significantly boost self-efficacy and collective efficacy, in competitive sports settings. Interventions are generally based on mastery and vicarious learning which increases efficacy beliefs and provides a powerful vehicle for psychological skill development.

"And based on previous studies that have successfully used multilevel observational learning interventions to raise efficacy beliefs in sports teams, I believe that the use of these strategies in this culturally novel context can produce substantial contributions to athletic performance." Specifically, the observation of successful individual and team performances can help to increase individual self-efficacy and collective efficacy, thus strengthening confidence in individual and collective ability to achieve common goals (Rossing et al., 2024). This hypothesis is supported by evidence that observational learning intervention-particularly one including clips of one's own team performing in a positive manner-can significantly improve collective efficacy. The interventions provided tangible mastery experiences, which can be an important source of efficacy beliefs, to allow the athletes to imagine successful task and strategic performance, which strengthens confidence and competence (Bruton et al., 2019). Observational learning interventions can be adapted across a variety of sport performance levels, ranging from grassroots to elite, and target a range of basic skills as well as important group processes such as teamwork and communication skills. Therefore, sport psychologists should be encouraged to use multilevel observational learning interventions with sports teams for maximum efficacy and overall performance (Bruton et al., 2019). Furthermore, such

interventions should be formalized and include repeated exposure to heterogeneous "doses" of content in order to identify optimal schedules of interventions for improving team effectiveness and cohesion. This effective use of observation-based training is consistent with literature highlighting the potential of observation-based interventions in enhancing variables that were identified as critical to successful group performance, specifically collective efficacy.

1. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

● Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory as proposed by Bandura offers a conceptual basis of understanding the interaction between individual, environmental, and behavioral factors, especially related to self-efficacy and observational learning in sport. This theory suggests that people learn not only from direct experience but from observation; this observation is at the heart of the effectiveness of interventions based on observational learning in sport. Observational learning is particularly relevant in team sports, where athletes learn new competencies and adjust their existing behaviors from vicarious exposure to other athletes, such as peers and opponents (Hancock & Rymal, 2024). Cognitive mediators (i.e., attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation) influence the efficiency of observed actions in the development of self-efficacy beliefs and subsequent performance outcomes. Thus, the use of multi-level observational learning interventions can be an effective tool for enhancing individual and collective efficacy in sports teams by exploiting these reasoning processes. The framework emphasizes the belief in one's capabilities having a significant impact on motivation, performance and affective well-being and thus on self-efficacy in athletic endeavors (Lochbaum et al., 2023). Moreover, collective efficacy, defined as shared belief among team members in their ability to coordinate and implement necessary action to produce given results, is also affected by observational learning since athletes absorb their teammates' successes and failures.

● Conservation of Resources (COR)

Conservation of Resources Theory (COR), developed by Hobfoll, provides another view of how individuals protect and preserve valued resources (i.e., social support, self-efficacy) in the presence of stressors, such as sexual harassment. The theory suggests that people want, need, maintain, and protect these resources; reduction or threat of reduction in the availability of these resources can lead to psychological stress and impaired functioning. In women volleyball players' environment, sexual harassment may be a great threat to psychological and social resources and may lead to reduced self-efficacy and social support. On the contrary, strong social support networks and high self-efficacy can act as significant individual resources that help the athletes to overcome the negative consequences of such stressors and maintain the performance levels (Kwon et al., 2022). Inclusion of information on resource preservation or depletion under duress is necessary for a holistic understanding of psychological resilience and adaptive coping strategies utilized by athletes faced with an adversity. Thus, Conservation of

Resources Theory sheds light on the favorable influence of proactive resource development (e.g. promoting high team cohesion and individual self-efficacy) in buffering the debilitating consequences of stressors such as harassment (Carfora et al. 2022). Along these lines, this theoretical view also highlights the protective role of a supportive environment and belief in capability against resource depletion.

- **Applicability of Theories to Female Athletes' Performance**

Both Social Cognitive Theory and Conservation of Resources Theory are very relevant for understanding the performance dynamics of female athletes, in terms of their self-efficacy and the stressors that affect them such as sexual harassment and the support they receive from others. Social Cognitive Theory highlights the development of self-efficacy through mastery learning, vicarious learning, and social persuasion, which are important factors for female athletes as they maneuver through a highly competitive context (Bruton et al., 2016). In contrast, the Conservation of Resources Theory explains how female athletes strive to gain, maintain, and defend important personal and social resources such as self-esteem, hope, and social support as a strategy to compensate for the potential resource loss in a rough environment (Demerouti 2025). This is particularly salient in the case of female athletes who may face systemic barriers related to the acquisition or availability of resources (Hogue, 2020; Holmgreen et al., 2017). For example, psychological capital, which includes self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, is a crucial resource that helps athletes to overcome adversity and sustain well-being (Yu et al., 2024). In addition, the interplay between these theories helps to outline the role that social support plays in boosting self-efficacy, ultimately reducing unpleasant effects of stressors like sexual harassment and increasing self-rated performance (Cross et al., 2024; O'Brien et al., 2021). The strategic use of adaptive coping strategies, which are most often positively reinforced by increased levels of psychological capital, can further enhance these positive effects through the maintenance and augmentation of an athlete's available resource pool. Accordingly, this integrated theoretical approach demonstrates the complexity of athletic performance and confirms that the management of individual belief systems and resource management strategies play central roles in the performance of female volleyball players in Pakistan (Bekesiene, 2023). When putting these findings into perspective, the authors suggest that in future studies, not only gender-specific differences in performance should be highlighted, but also the determinants of the performance differences should be considered to gain insight into gender differences in psychological well-being (Hogue, 2020).

2.2 Social Support and Athlete Performance

Social support, defined as the range of supportive and consolation interactions that come from an individual's social network, plays a major role in athletic performance by resulting in resilience, reducing stress, and increasing self-efficacy (Adilogullari et al., 2025). This multidimensional construct involves emotional, informational, tangible and appraisal support; each serving in a unique way to an athlete's psychological and physiological readiness to

compete. Specifically, social support creates favorable adaptive responses to stress, which can impact mental and physical health outcomes and performance measures (Hartley et al., 2022). Functional support (i.e., perceived and received support) is of special interest, since empirical evidence has shown that direct receipt of support buffers stress and positively affects athletic performance (Trotter et al., 2021). Furthermore, the perceived quality of expressive ties of emotional intimacy and trust in the network of the athlete has been found to energize competitive performance (Liu et al., 2024).

For example, athletes who receive frequent social support have more positive scores of psychological well-being and perception of interpersonal relationships. Such support can be decisive especially for female athletes as they often have to face more challenges within the systemic and societal system in the sporting landscape, thereby affecting their overall well-being and participation. Furthermore, well-developed social support networks may buffer the detrimental effects of stressors and promote greater affective states which allow for the maintenance of high performance. Nevertheless, the efficacy of a given support intervention hinges upon the alignment between the support offered and the athletes specific needs as mismatches may erode the beneficial impact of the support offered (Park & Kim, 2014). This highlights the need for personalized support systems that consider individual characteristics and the demands of the environment. The form and source of social support change throughout the career of an athlete: parental support plays a dominant role in the early years of the development of the athlete, while partners, coaches, and peers become more influential as the athlete matures (Hong & Hong, 2023). In addition, social networks go beyond direct assistance to influence the appraisal of stressful situations, understanding, and adaptive coping strategies among athletes (Ferreira et al., 2024), and in this way, play an important role in reducing psychological distress. In sport psychology, perceived social support appears to help athletes to cope with stress during training and competition, and can thus contribute to the process of adaptation and well-being. Conversely, lack of perceived support is linked to higher levels of depression levels and anxiety, thus it is important to ensure that these networks are activated in order to promote mental health (Davies et al., 2023). In high-stakes situations, for example in the context of an important competition, injuries or changes in the career path, the absence of this support can increase stress and jeopardize performance and psychological stability.

Perceived social support has been shown to be associated with an increase in self-coping ability and less perceived severity of problems, which adds to the ability of individuals to cope with the adverse effects of stress (Liu et al., 2023). This observation is consistent with the stress buffering hypothesis, which suggests that strong support systems buffer against psychological strain and maintain mental health, particularly for adolescent athletes (Delfin et al., 2023). Previous research has documented evidence that different forms of support are important in assisting to sustain or even improve mental health, reducing feelings of stress, anxiety and helplessness in competitive situations (Delfin et al., 2023). In particular, perceived support has

often been shown to have a more significant impact on mental well-being than support from other sources like family members, friends or even pets, both during times of stress and non-stressful times (Acoba, 2024). This finding is especially relevant with intercollegiate student-athletes as the support of significant others is crucial to maintaining mental health in the face of the demands of competition (Hagiwara et al., 2021). The psychological benefits of a strong support system are also supported by studies showing that people with better social support have fewer negative psychological effects of pressure. In particular, the theory of perceived social support reduction has been proposed to reduce hopelessness and psychological pressure, which will improve the mental health of college athletes (Liu et al., 2023).

2.3 Sexual Harassment and Its Effect on Performance

Sexual harassment in sport is a serious breach of the physical and psychological security of athletes and seriously compromises their well-being and performance abilities. This widespread problem - in the form of sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical sexual harassment - makes it difficult for an athlete to concentrate, be motivated and stay psychologically healthy when they live in a hostile environment. Such encounters can create intense emotional pain such as anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder which directly hinder training effectiveness as well as the ability to compete at the highest level (Galily et al., 2024). The existing power dynamics of sports can often leave athletes in a position of vulnerability and make it difficult for them to report, further contributing to a culture of silence that can further harm performance and mental health. Mental and psychological damage, including humiliation, rejection and sexual harassment, are not uncommon in an elite sporting environment and are often normalized in a culture of silence (Walton et al., 2023). This normalization has an adverse effect on the individuals; team cohesion and overall organizational performance, thus indirectly affecting performance results. Moreover, these negative experiences may undermine the development of self-efficacy and self-worth which are necessary for the development of the psychological resilience needed to sustain athletic excellence. Therefore, athletes exposed to sexual harassment are more likely to feel high stress levels, lower psychological well-being and have generalized insecurity which in turn directly impairs optimal performance (Davies et al., 2023; Ojio et al., 2024).

The pervasiveness of sexual harassment in sports may lead to long-term psychological impacts including maladaptive coping mechanisms and trouble forming interpersonal relationships which further jeopardize mental health and career sustainability (McLoughlin et al., 2020). Many symptoms have been found, such as physical symptoms (e.g., headache, lethargy, sleep problems and gastrointestinal problems) and psychological symptoms (e.g., decreased self-esteem and increased emotional volatility) (Haynes, 2022; Solvberg et al., 2023). These health consequences then lead to decreased job satisfaction, lower productivity and withdrawal from sports (Karami et al., 2019). Furthermore, victims of sexual harassment often report psychosomatic symptoms, such as muscular pain, general deterioration of physical and

psychological health, and feelings of anxiety, anger, stress, and a lack of self-confidence (Maran et al., 2022). This phenomenon is particularly harmful for women and non-binary persons, who experience lower perceptions of safety, have reduced well-being and experience lower performance in academic or professional settings (Athanasiaides et al. 2023). In the context of sporting, these deleterious challenges can show up as ineffective training, poor performance in competition, and potential sport abandonment and ultimately a failure to achieve career goals and development (Colangelo et al., 2023). Additionally, childhood experiences of harassment and abuse can have lifelong consequences for physical health, psychological well-being, and social relationships with these adverse consequences being compounded by a lack of intervention and the age at which victims first experience abuse (Adriaens et al., 2024).

2.4 General Self Efficacy and Athletic Performance

General self-effort, which is defined as an individual's belief in his or her ability to successfully perform the behaviors required to produce desired outcomes, is an important psychological construct that influences athletic performance in a range of domains. This strong belief system helps athletes overcome challenges, set high standards for themselves and recover from defeats, which directly improves their competitive ability. It acts as a building block of motivation and goal attainment and helps athletes meet difficult situations with confidence and positive expectations of success. Beyond the direct competition-related domain, higher self-efficacy is associated with better psychological health, and lower tendencies toward maladaptive coping strategies in adversity (Willson et al., 2023). Empirical evidence consistently shows that athletes with high self-efficacy levels have higher persistence levels, performance levels and lower anxiety and burnout levels (Ayranci & Aydin, 2025). This association is attributed to the influence of self-efficacy on motivation, emotional responses and cognitive patterns that facilitate the interpretation of stressful situations as challenges rather than threats (Cross et al., 2024). Moreover, high self-own sense of efficacy fosters adaptive self-regulation, which allows athletes to adjust effort and tactics depending on the fluid competitive demands and in the best possible way to maximize performance under pressure (Antonio, 2023). Furthermore, the construct is directly associated with self-confidence, which is an important mediator of mental well-being, socialization, resilience, and the overall potential for success, especially for athletes (Jekauc et al., 2023). Within the sport performance context, self-efficacy is a powerful predictor of performance and has an intermediary role in the effects of emotional states on performance (Solmaz et al., 2025). General self-efficacy is positively related to engagement and positive affect whereby people with high general self-efficacy are likely to undertake challenging tasks and have aspirational goals and this increases positive affect in the engagement in activities (Fosli & Lorentzen, 2025). This belief goes beyond the specific skills to include a general belief in one's ability to cope with a variety of difficulties and to achieve valued objectives. Above all, self-efficacy is not only an index of immediate performance, but it also plays a role

in assessing potential and has relevance for training commitment and sensitivity to performance feedback. Those with high self-confidence have high behavioral expectations when faced with difficulties (Yu et al., 2024). The internal belief helps an athlete to mobilize resources, maintain motivation, and commit to sport in the face of significant stressors. Self-Belief acts as a self-protective mechanism that buffers the negative effects of adverse experiences and daily stressors on mental health and is one of the most important resilience mechanisms that supports adaptive functioning (Schueler, et al., 2021). Furthermore, general self-efficacy has a profound effect on problem solving, decision making, and persistence and allows athletes to manage stress and anxiety effectively, leading to improved goal achievement and performance (Santi et al., 2023). It is a psychological resource that allows an individual to face difficulties and stay mentally healthy even in negative situations. Defined as a belief in one's own self-efficacy and ability to initiate and organize work to reach goals, self-efficacy has been shown to play an important role in goal pursuit, persistence in the face of adversity, and utilization of resilience (Gueroni et al., 2023). These beliefs are key predictors of stress, anxiety, depression, self-actualization, and academic achievement. Importantly, general self-efficacy, which refers to a stable, broadly applicable belief in trust in one's ability to handle a wide range of challenges in many kinds of situations, differs from situation-specific self-efficacy.

2.5 Social Support, Sexual Harassment and Self-Efficacy

This section explores the complex interrelations between these three constructs, and how social support may buffer the negative impact of sexual harassment on self-effectiveness and subsequently on athletic performance. Conversely, a lack of social support may increase the adverse psychological consequences of harassment and result in significant declines in self-efficacy and athletic performance. Furthermore, social identification in team settings can play a crucial part in boosting self-efficacy in athletes playing team sports, and foster collective efficacy beliefs and a positive social climate in which team members feel valued and competent (Schmid et al., 2024). Collective efficacy then reinforces individual self-efficacy, in the form of a shared sense of goal accomplishment and mutual assistance (Li et al., 2022). In the context of stress caused by the expectation of sexual harassment, such a social environment could act as a buffer by increasing perceived competence and belonging among the individual (Guo et al., 2024; Peng et al., 2025). This, in turn, supports the argument for collective efficacy, which originates from positive team climate and shared beliefs in team capabilities, having a direct positive influence on both individual self-efficacy and resilience (Adilogullari et al., 2025).

Consequently, the importance of a strong social support system, formal or informal, cannot be overstated as an important component in the development and maintenance of high levels of self-efficacy among athletes. Empirical evidence shows that social persuasion has a significant impact on self-efficacy; thereby, verbal encouragement and constructive feedback from coaches, team members and family members play a role in building an athlete's faith in their own abilities and potential for future success (Priyadharsan & Saravanabawan, 2020).

Furthermore, perceived social support has been linked to an increase in general self-efficacy, which means that people who feel the acceptance of their social networks are more likely to have a fortified self-belief in their own competence (Li et al., 2022).

Supportive coaching behaviors take on particular relevance for athletes, as the empirical literature suggests that these behaviors have a positive contribution to the strengthening of team resilience and collective efficacy, which mitigates athletes' self-perceptions of competence and moderates their vulnerability when under pressure. Coaching behaviors that are perceived as supportive work with team resilience to enhance collective efficacy, so that team efficacy enhances the individual's self-efficacy and reduces athletes' perceived susceptibility (Adilogullari et al., 2025). In high intensity sporting environments where athletes face significant scrutiny and performance demands, the dynamic interaction of social support from multiple sources, including coaches, is crucial in psychological well-being and in sustaining superior levels of performance. Additionally, good crisis coaching, which involves affirmative feedback and emotional support, helps athletes feel more stable and part of a team and therefore less anxious and pressured to perform well. Such supportive coaching behaviors are not only an indispensable tool in creating a positive psychological milieu, but they can also equip athletes to better deal with stressors so as to achieve optimal performance.

2.6 Self-Rated Performance in Sports Context

Self-rating performance is one of the critical measures of sports psychology since it summarizes an athlete's own assessment of their capabilities and execution in their field of choice. This subjective appraisal also often correlates highly with objective performance evaluations and provides information about an athlete's self-awareness, confidence and affective states during competition. It includes athletes' perceptions of their skills, their performance in tactics and their overall contribution, which can have a significant influence on motivation and resulting performance outcomes. In team sports, individual performance is contextualized in a collective endeavor and the perception of team confidence and collective efficacy are paramount for overall performance (Christensen et al., 2024). The relationship of collective efficacy and team outcome confidence across sequential stages of a game highlights the preeminence of this relationship for perceived team performance. This premise identifies the importance of collective beliefs in a team's capabilities that not only influence collective success, but also influences the perception of one's contribution and performance overall in that framework.

Moreover, the influence of coaching effectiveness and facilitation provided by coaches on athletes self-perceived performance is profound and mediates the relationship between anxiety and performance. Interpersonal assistance of coaches is irreplaceable, as their supportive role and constructive feeding is a significant factor that impacts an athlete's ability to control anxiety and strengthens self-pride (Adilogullari et al., 2025). The feedback process (either from coaches in a positive form or from one's own internal reflection process) further enhances the athletes' autonomy self and resilience, and in turn reduces defensive mechanisms when faced with

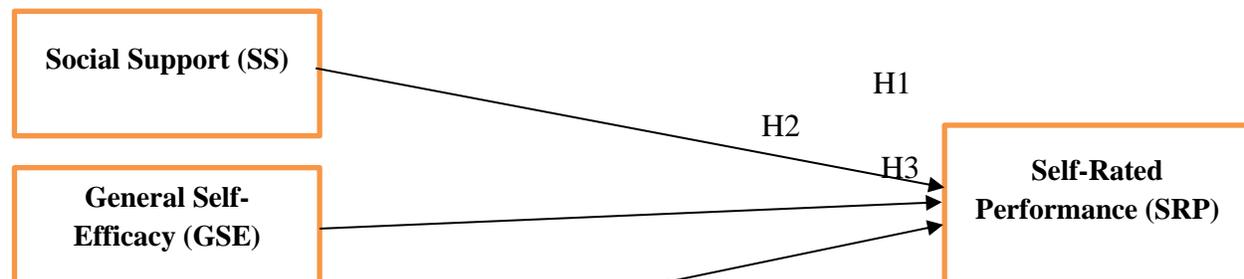
threats to performance (Wang, 2021). The mediating effect of sport confidence between competitive state anxiety and perceived performance further increases the importance of psychological variables in athletic performance. Specifically, sport confidence, which refers to individual's conviction of his or her ability to succeed in sports, has a direct influence on perceived performance and can buffer out the negative consequences of competitive anxiety (Chun et al., 2022). Consequently, developing strong sport confidence is important for athletes to successfully manage the pressures of competition in order to maximize their self-assessed performance outcomes. In sports like basketball, which require precision, power, and endurance, athletes are often subjected to injury and rigorous physical contact; thus, psychological strength and confidence is an important requirement to maintain a high level of performance. Accordingly, the psychological preparedness and ability of an athlete to keep his or her head during pressure is intricately interlinked with the athlete's self-perception of performance under such demanding environments.

2.7 Research Model & Hypothesis

H1: Social Support (SS) has a positive and significant effect on Self-Rated Performance (SRP).

H2: General Self-Efficacy (GSE) has a positive and significant effect on Self-Rated Performance (SRP).

H3: Sexual Harassment (SH) has a negative and significant effect on Self-Rated Performance (SRP).



Methodology used in this study was a quantitative, cross-sectional survey study to explore the relationships existing between social support, sexual harassment, general self-efficacy, and self-rated performance among a group of female volleyball players in Pakistan. The reason why a quantitative paradigm was selected is that a quantitative paradigm allows the systematic testing of hypotheses through statistical analysis that can increase the objectivity of the empirical results and may be generalized. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) installed on Smart PLS 4.0, a powerful analysis software, was used to estimate the conceptual model. The intended population was female volleyball players who play provincial, university, and national teams in the whole of Pakistan. The distinction in female athletes was explained by the increased relevance of gender-specific factors, including sexual harassment and social support, in the effects of their performance. There was a purposive

sampling strategy in order to include those participants who had the appropriate experience and exposure on the team-based sporting environments. A sample size of 309 respondents who were the representatives of different clubs and universities located in Lahore, PAK was taken. The overall sample size (n = 309) is more than the minimum that is required according to the paper by Hair et al. (2021) when using PLS-SEM, thus ensuring sufficient statistical power. All variables were measured using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale with 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items were adapted from established and validated sources as follows:

Table 1: Constructs Items

| Constructs | Source | No. of Items | Item (example) |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Social Support (SS) | Freeman et al., (2011) | 6 | “I can count on my teammates and coach when I need support.” |
| Sexual Harassment (SH) | Konik & Cortina (2008) | 3 | “I have experienced unwanted sexual attention during training or competition.” |
| General Self-Efficacy (GSE) | Schwarzer & Jerusalem (2010) | 3 | “I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.” |
| Self-Rated Performance (SRP) | Cook et al., (2000) | 4 | “I perform my duties as a player efficiently and effectively.” |

3. Data Analysis

The demographic profile of the 309 people that participated was analyzed to explain the sample background. The sample was a group of female Pakistani volleyball players, all of which were students of universities, provincial, and national teams. The demographic data that was documented included age, education level, years of experience playing and level of competition. The demographic profile of the respondents will be outlined in a tabular format.

Table 2: Demographics of the Data

| Variable | Category | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|----------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Age | 18–22 years | 128 | 41.4 |
| | 23–27 years | 106 | 34.3 |
| | 28–32 years | 48 | 15.5 |
| | Above 32 years | 27 | 8.7 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|-----|------|
| Education Level | Intermediate | 39 | 12.6 |
| | Undergraduate | 137 | 44.3 |
| | Postgraduate | 91 | 29.4 |
| | Others (Diploma/Coaching Certification) | 42 | 13.7 |
| Experience | Less than 2 years | 57 | 18.4 |
| | 2–5 years | 173 | 56.0 |
| | Above 5 years | 79 | 25.6 |
| Competition Level | University/College Team | 210 | 68.0 |
| | Provincial/Regional Team | 63 | 20.4 |
| | National Team | 36 | 11.6 |

The results indicate that the participants were mostly young female players aged between 18 and 27 years of age and this highlights the growing activity of the youth in volleyball in Pakistan. The majority of athletes had undergraduate degrees and 2-5 years of playing experience, which meant that they were involved in academic activity and at the same time dedicated to sport. In addition, a significant percentage (68 per cent) showed university level teams, which supports the fact that volleyball is still popular among higher learning institutions. The distribution balance between the levels of experience and competition types provides a strong sample of female athletes, thus, allowing the study of the effects of the social support, sexual harassment, and self-efficacy on the rates of self-perceived performance.

4.1 Construct Reliability

Table 3 shows internal consistency reliability and convergent validity data of all the constructs used in the current research including Social Support (SS), Sexual Harassment (SH), General Self-Efficacy (GSE), and Self-rated Performance (SRP). Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were the three key measures studied to determine the reliability and validity of the measurement model.

Table 3: Construct Reliability

| Constructs | Cronbach's alpha | Composite reliability (rho_a) | Average variance extracted (AVE) |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| General Self-Efficacy (GSE) | 0.865 | 0.908 | 0.783 |
| Self-Rated Performance (SRP) | 0.816 | 0.850 | 0.647 |
| Sexual Harassment | 0.733 | 0.803 | 0.656 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| (SH) | | | |
| Social Support (SS) | 0.862 | 0.903 | 0.639 |

The results have shown that each of the constructs meets the suggested criteria of internal consistency and convergent validity. To ensure reliability and validity, Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability values should be more than 0.70 and AVE values should be more than 0.50 in accordance to Hair et al. (2021). GSE had high reliability with Cronbach Alpha of 0.865 and AVE at 0.783; thus, suggesting that the items used to measure it are rather robust to depict construct. SRP also showed high internal consistency (0.816) and tolerable convergent validity (AVE 0.647). SH also demonstrated a Cronbach Alpha of 0.733, which was a little less than the other constructs but within the acceptable range and therefore, indicated moderate but reliable internal consistency. The reliability and validity of SS were high, and the alpha was 0.862, and the associated AVE was 0.639, demonstrating the fact that the given indicators are measuring the construct in a consistent way. Altogether the findings support the fact that each of the measurement scales is statistically reliable and valid thus making the integrity of the further analysis of the structural model.

4.2 Discriminant Validity

The discrimination of validity was used to measure how separate each of the constructs is in the model. Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell Larcker criterion where the square root of the AVE variance of each construct (on the diagonal) must be greater than the correlations of the construct to the other constructs (off-diagonal).

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

| Constructs | General Self-Efficacy (GSE) | Self-Rated Performance (SRP) | Sexual Harassment (SH) | Social Support (SS) |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| General Self-Efficacy (GSE) | 0.885 | | | |
| Self-Rated Performance (SRP) | 0.362 | 0.804 | | |
| Sexual Harassment (SH) | 0.755 | 0.387 | 0.810 | |
| Social Support (SS) | 0.396 | 0.364 | 0.570 | 0.800 |

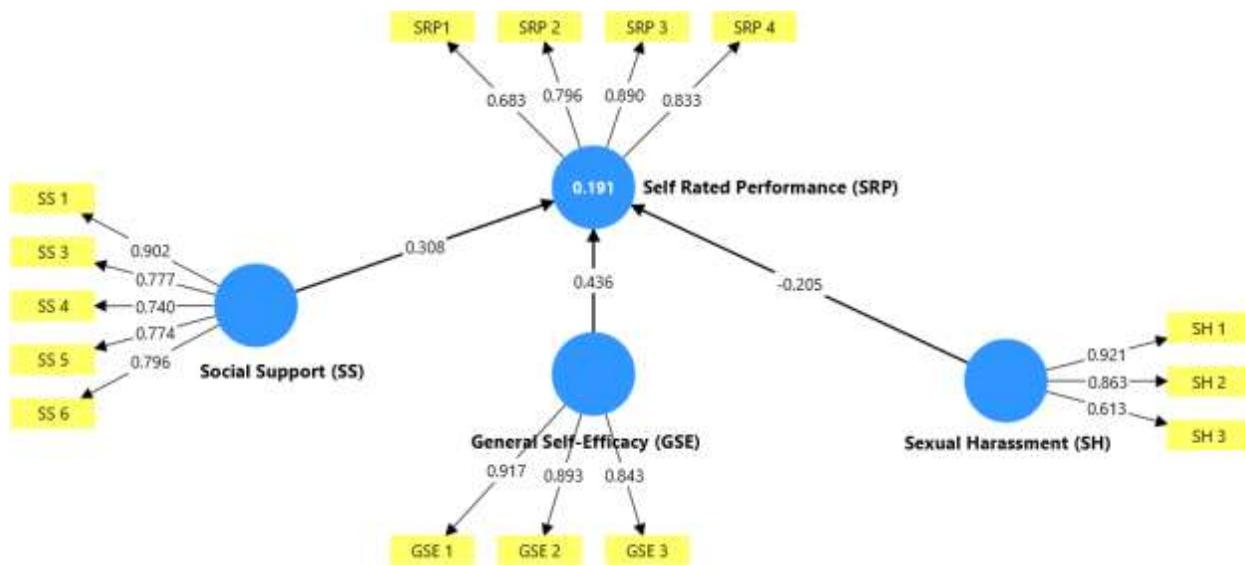
Table 4 provides a summary of the results. The square roots of the AVE of each construct are the diagonal in Table 4, and the off-diagonal indicate the correlation analyses between constructs. These results indicate good discriminant validity, where all the diagonal values are higher than the inter-construct correlations. When compared with SH, the square root of GSE



has a positive correlation of 0.755, and its correlation with the other variables is also positive, which implies that the concepts are clearly different. The correlation between SRP (0.804) and the rest of the constructs are significantly lower, which supports the idea that self-rated performance is a distinct outcome construct. SH (0.810) also meets the requirement, which sets it apart to GSE and SS though there is a moderate level of correlation. The separate factor of SS (0.800) is independent of all other factors, but the moderate coefficient of correlation with SH (0.570) suggests an inverse but relevant relationship under the conditions of social support as a buffer of the effect of harassment. As a result, the model satisfies the Fornell Larker criterion by stating that all the constructs should possess sufficient discriminant validity and reflect unique theoretical concepts within the framework studied.

4.3 Structural Model Assessment

Figure 2 below illustrates the proposed relationships between the constructs of the Social Support (SS), Sexual Harassment (SH), General Self-efficacy (GSE), and Self-rated Performance (SRP) among female volleyball players in Pakistan. The model explains a small but significant variance of SRP ($R^2 = 0.191$) indicating a small but significant influence of the antecedent variables. The results show that SS has a positive and statistically significant effect on SRP (0.308), which implies that athletes, who are provided with strong emotional, informational, and instrumental support by coaches, teammates, and families, report a more positive effect on the perceived level of performance. This fact is aligned to the social-exchange theory which holds the view that encouraging social milieus enhance confidence and motivation hence improving performance. Similarly, GSE has a positive and significant impact on SRP (0.436), which means that sportspeople with high self-belief and perceived competence are more likely to evaluate their performance in a positive way. This finding supports the self-efficacy theory offered by Bandura emphasizing that personal confidence is critical in maintaining persistence and accomplishing task goals. On the other hand, SH has a negative relationship with SRP (-0.205), which implies that the exposure to harassment harms the psychological health and performance ratings of the athletes. This negative correlation supports the past studies that have shown that harassment undermines motivation, focus, and general mental well-being, which lowers the performance perceptions. Although favorable social networks and strong self-efficacy are permissive to high performance, sexual harassment experiences significantly affect high performance. Despite the fact that R-square is 0.191 may indicate the presence of other contributory variables, the given constructs may be considered as a strong theoretical construct and empirically-validated construct to explain self-assessed performance in female athletes.



4. Discussion

The current study was intended to test how social support (SS), sexual harassment (SH) and general self-efficacy (GSE) affected Self-Rated Performance (SRP) among female volleyball players in Pakistan. The findings demonstrate that social support and self-efficacy show great positive impacts on perceived performance, and conversely, sexual harassment has a negative impact. The positive correlation between social support and performance measured is found to support the hypothesis that emotional and instrumental support of coaches, teammates and family contributes to confidence and motivation and hence better performance results. Similarly, the robust correlation of general self-efficacy with performance is consistent with the self-efficacy theory by Bandura (1997) which assumes that self-belief enhances persistence, achievement of goals and perceived accomplishment in competitive sport settings. On the other hand, the relationship between sexual harassment and self-rated performance is negative as it supports the previous literature that correlates the psychological distress and anxiety caused by harassment with a lack of concentration, lower satisfaction, and a sense of the lack of accomplishment among athletes. Overall, the model provides psychological and social wellbeing as an essential factor in athletic performance of female competitors, which is often overlooked in sports studies in developing regions, including Pakistan.

5. Conclusion

This paper comes to the conclusion that social support, and general self-efficacy have a strong influence on self-rated performance, but sexual harassment has an adverse effect. The results prove that the positive social climate and development of psychological confidence are critical in the wellbeing and performance of female athletes. The organizational and policy interventions are essential in addressing harassment as a result of ensuring a safe and empowering culture in sports. The empirical validation of these relationships allows the study

to expand the existing knowledge about the psychosocial determinants of performance when it comes to female sports in Pakistan.

6.1 Theoretical Contribution

The research contributes to the Social Exchange Theory and Self-Efficacy Theory since it shows that the supportive environments in interaction with self-belief contribute to the perception of performance among athletes. It confirms that social support is a psychological source that helps in positive performance appraisal which is a concept of the Social Exchange Theory, which states that mutual trust and support between the two groups leads to commitment and positive results. Moreover, the results support the assumption of the Self-Efficacy Theory that personal confidence can be transformed into the better behavioral and cognitive performance even in the problematic situations. The study includes the negative external variables of sexual harassment in the model and therefore provides some contributions to the limited body of empirical studies on the association between workplace harassment and performance perceptions in sports psychology.

6.2 Practical Contribution

The research has a number of practical implications on sports managers, coaches and policy-makers. First, it is possible to build an inclusive and supportive environment via mentoring, team-building, and communication and strongly increase the confidence and perceived performance of female athletes. Secondly, the mental preparedness and concentration of the players can be enhanced by organized training programs aimed at enhancing self-efficacy, e.g. goal-setting workshops and psychological resilience training. Third, organizations should implement zero-tolerance to sexual harassment, which is complemented with effective reporting systems and awareness campaigns to provide psychological security. All these measures together can improve the performance, satisfaction, and retention of athletes in the competitive sports.

6.3 Future Research Direction & Limitations

Although this study has merits, it has flaws. There is no opportunity to infer causation between the variables under study due to the cross-sectional nature of the study, whereas the use of self-reported data would result in social desirability bias. Also, the participants were confined to female volleyball players in Pakistan and this might not be generalizable to other sports or geographical areas. The future research must use longitudinal or mixed-method designs to follow-up on the changes in self-efficacy and support with time, and increase the sample size to non-female athletes or participants with diverse sports and cultural backgrounds in order to gain comparable information. Additionally, the mediating or moderating variables could be viewed as an opportunity to further understand psychological processes through which harassment, support, and performance outcomes are interrelated.

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