



EMOTIONAL SUPPRESSION AMONG COACHES AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO EGO INFLATION AMONG ADVANCED PLAYERS IN SOME VOLLEYBALL CLUBS IN THE NORTHERN REGION

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Abstract

The significance of the current research lies in studying the impact and relationship of coaches' emotional suppression on the variable of ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

The research problem emerged as the researcher sought to answer the following question:

- What is the relationship between the variables of coaches' emotional suppression, as perceived by players, and ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region?

Objectives of the Study: To identify the correlational relationship between emotional suppression and ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

Hypothesis: The researcher hypothesized that:

- There is a significant correlational relationship between emotional suppression and ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

Methodology: The researcher adopted the descriptive correlational method, as it aligns with the nature of the study.

Research Population and Sample: The research population comprised **120 advanced volleyball players** from the northern region. The sample size consisted of **90 players**, representing 75% of the total population. Measurement forms were distributed to players of northern region clubs.

To ensure reliability, the researcher relied on a stability sample of **15 players** from the Nineveh Sports Volleyball Club, drawn from the research population but excluded from the main sample.

Instruments: The researcher used two scales:

- **Emotional Suppression**
- **Ego Inflation**

Both scales were validated for scientific accuracy before their application.

Findings: The researcher concluded that:

- Coaches' emotional suppression has a direct and positive effect on ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

Recommendations: The researcher recommended the following:

1. Provide psychological support for players and coaches through psychological workshops and lectures to guide them effectively.
2. Integrate psychological components into training units and offer psychological support to players to achieve optimal results in competitions.

Keywords: Suppression, Emotional, Ego Inflation, Volleyball

1. Introduction to the Research

1.1 Introduction and Importance of the Research



Sports psychology is one of the branches of psychology that explores psychological topics associated with sports activities and the psychological and personal traits of athletes. It helps athletes make the best use of their talents, abilities, and sports traits. Sports psychology specializes in studying the impact of psychological factors on athletes' performance. Some sports psychologists strive to assist athletes in improving their sports performance, while others use sports activities to enhance and develop individuals' lives generally and over the long term (Neff et al., 2007, p. 139).

Emotional suppression is one of the psychological variables that becomes necessary in situations requiring self-control. Emotions are the inner voice of desires and inclinations within each person. Suppressing this voice does not eliminate it but transforms it into energy interacting with vital processes. There are two options for expressing this energy: the unconscious option, which intensifies emotional arousal and presents it later at multiple times, or the cognitive option, which hides the emotion deeply. In the latter case, the desire retains its emotional intensity, and the information linked to the emotional event. Over time, this intensity may transform into psychosomatic symptoms or nervous tension (McLaren, 2010, p. 3).

The importance of emotional suppression lies in situations where individuals express their negative emotions intensely, necessitating the regulation of emotional intensity to avoid undesirable consequences. Suppression moderates emotional intensity, helping individuals maintain their social relationships. Moderate suppression also conceals certain personal feelings whose expression might harm the individual (Bonanno et al., 2003, p. 2).

Athletes differ in this concept, with some exhibiting a high level of ego inflation and others displaying low levels, especially in response to loss, injury, or failure to achieve goals, as well as external factors such as familial, social, and economic issues. Some athletes expressed concerns about increasing ego inflation, which could lead to complacency about their sports performance and hinder future progress with their team (Amy et al., 2019, p. 178).

Interest in the concept of the ego or self is not new but has evolved theoretically alongside philosophical and psychological schools of thought. The meanings of self have shifted over centuries, sometimes being equated with the soul or mind, as seen among ancient Greek philosophers (Zuhair & Al-Jubouri, 2018, p. 357).

Intentional ego inflation is believed to stem from a deep sense of inadequacy, with narcissistic behaviors serving as unconscious defense mechanisms against such feelings. Family upbringing and parenting styles also play a role in this phenomenon (Al-Khalidi & Al-Dafa'i, 2017, p. 468).

The importance of this research lies in studying the influence and relationship between emotional suppression in coaches and ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

1.2 Research Problem

The emotional aspect significantly affects cognitive dimensions in human life, particularly in the coach's thought process. The researcher observed genuine challenges faced by coaches, expressed directly or indirectly through signs of fear and anxiety in their emotions, leading them to suppress these feelings. This impacts their thinking, creativity, and attitudes negatively.

The research problem arises from the adverse effects of emotional suppression on performance due to stressful events and the inability to manage or overcome them positively. The researcher aimed to assess how coaches use emotional suppression, which might vary depending on match circumstances, players' abilities, and behaviors, ultimately influencing team results.

Athletes, particularly volleyball players, face numerous challenging and stressful situations in their daily and training lives, including undesirable experiences and events that pose anxiety, risks, and threats across various aspects of their lives. These experiences impact most aspects of an athlete's personality. The lack of studies on the psychological and mental health aspects of athletes necessitates further research. This is



especially true given the absence of Arab or local studies or measurement tools to assess ego inflation among athletes in general and volleyball players in particular.

Thus, the researcher formulated the research question:

- What is the relationship between coaches' emotional suppression (as perceived by players) and ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region?

1.3 Research Objectives

The current research aims to:

1. Identify the level of emotional suppression among coaches, as perceived by advanced volleyball players in the northern region.
2. Determine the level of ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region.
3. Examine the correlation between emotional suppression and ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

The researcher hypothesizes the following:

1. A significant correlation exists between emotional suppression and ego inflation among advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

1.5 Research Scope

1.5.1 **Human Scope:** Advanced volleyball players in the northern region (Kirkuk, Erbil, Duhok, Sulaymaniyah, Nineveh).

1.5.2 **Temporal Scope:** From September 10, 2024, to November 30, 2024.

1.5.3 **Spatial Scope:** Sports club halls in the northern region included in the research.

1.6 Definition of Terms

1.6.1 Emotional Suppression

Defined by Nezelek and Kuppens (2008, p. 4) as strategies individuals use to reduce and erase emotional expression behavior, encompassing both negative and positive expressions (Bryan, 2014, p. 22).

1.6.2 Ego Inflation

Defined by Sigmund Freud as a symptom of narcissistic personality disorder, where the individual excessively admires themselves to the point of arrogance, preventing gratitude towards others and inhibiting empathy or admiration for them. This leads to self-centeredness and preoccupation with self-aggrandizement (Al-Haggar, 2018).

2. Research Procedures

2.1 Research Methodology

The researcher adopted the descriptive correlational approach, suitable for the nature of this research.

2.2 Research Population and Sample

The research population consisted of 120 advanced volleyball players from the northern region. The sample size was 90 players, representing 75% of the total population. A subset of 15 players from Nineveh Volleyball Club was selected for reliability testing, separate from the main sample.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

The researcher utilized the following scales to achieve the research objectives:

2.3.1 Emotional Suppression Scale

The researcher employed the emotional suppression scale developed by Zakir Muhammad Saleem



(2023). It consists of 35 items, including 28 positive and 7 negative items, distributed across six dimensions as shown in Table 1:

- Self-Control (5 items)
- Defensive Suppression (8 items)
- Impulse Control (7 items)
- Intense Suppression of Emotional Expression (5 items)
- Emotional Intensity (5 items)
- Emotional Persistence (5 items)

Responses were based on a five-point Likert scale: "Always Applies," "Often Applies," "Sometimes Applies," "Rarely Applies," and "Never Applies," scored from 5 to 1 for positive items and reversed for negative items. The maximum possible score is 175, and the minimum is 35, with a hypothetical mean of 105. Appendix 10 presents the final version of the scale.

Table (1): Positive and Negative Items of the Final Emotional Suppression Scale

No.	Domains	Positive Items	Negative Items	Total
1	Self-Control	1-4-24	2-5	5
2	Defensive Suppression	6-7-8-9-10-11-12	13	8
3	Impulse Control	14-15-16-17-18-19-20	0	7
4	Intense Suppression of Emotional Expression	21-23	22-25-3	5
5	Emotional Intensity	26-28-29-30	27	5
6	Emotional Continuity	31-32-33-34-35	0	5

(Salim, 2023: 75-76)

2-3-2 Ego Inflation Scale

The researcher utilized the Ego Inflation Scale for advanced volleyball players in the northern region, prepared by **Aws Sohaib Hamza Al-Taie (2024)**. The final version of the scale consisted of **31 items**, distributed across **three dimensions**:

- **Narcissism:** 10 items
- **Authoritarianism:** 11 items
- **Inclusiveness:** 10 items

The scale items are answered using a **five-point Likert scale**, with options arranged in descending order as follows:

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The weights are assigned according to the content of the item: **(5-4-3-2-1)**. The total maximum score for the scale is **155 points**, while the total minimum score is **31 points**, and the hypothetical mean is **91 points**.

The items of the current scale are formulated in two directions (**positive and negative**) with a positive concept and five alternatives. The weights ranged between **5-1** for positive items, based on the sequence of responses, and **1-5** for negative items, as shown in Table (8).



The **positive items** are as follows: (1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 29, 30).
The **negative items** are as follows: (4, 5, 7, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30).

Table (2) presents the weights of the items in both positive and negative directions.

Item Weight	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive Direction	5	4	3	2	1
Negative Direction	1	2	3	4	5

(Al-Tai, 2024: 80-81).

2-4 Scientific Validity of the Used Scales

2-4-1 Validity of the Scales (Face Validity)

"Face validity of items is essential because it indicates how well an item represents the trait it was designed to measure. A well-formulated item that is related to the trait under investigation contributes to enhancing its discriminative power and validity coefficient" (Al-Kubaisi, 2001, p. 171). The face validity of the two scales was verified by presenting them to a group of experts and evaluators specializing in physical education, educational sciences, and psychology after making some adjustments to the phrasing of the items to suit the research sample¹. The evaluation panel consisted of 9 experts, and the researcher relied on an agreement rate of 75% or higher among the experts to accept or reject an item. Bloom et al. (1983, p. 126) indicated that "the opinions of experts can be relied upon if the agreement rate is 75% or higher in such validity."

2-4-2 Reliability of the Scales

Reliability is a fundamental condition for the objectivity of a research tool (Al-Rousan, 1999, p. 33). It refers to the degree of stability in the results when estimating a behavior or trait (Al-Nabhan, 2004, p. 229). To find the reliability coefficient of the scales, the researcher used the split-half method and the simple correlation coefficient before correction, as well as the Spearman-Brown coefficient after correction. The scales were distributed to a reliability sample of 15 volleyball players from Ninawa Club, and the reliability coefficients for the two scales (Emotional Suppression and Narcissism) were 0.82 and 0.80, respectively. To obtain an unbiased estimate of the overall reliability of the scales, the Spearman-Brown formula was used. The total reliability coefficients for the two scales were 0.90 and 0.89, respectively, which are high reliability values indicating the stability of the scales.

2-5 Final Application of the Scales

The researcher applied the scales after verifying their scientific measures on the main experimental sample of 90 players, from 30/9/2024 to 30/10/2024, in the clubs included in the study in the northern region of Iraq.

2-6 Statistical Methods

¹ The Experts Are:

1. Prof. Dr. Akla Suleiman Ali - University of Mosul / College of Basic Education
2. Prof. Dr. Nazim Shakir Al-Wattar - University of Mosul / College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences
3. Prof. Dr. Nagham Mahmoud Saleh - University of Mosul / College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences
4. Prof. Dr. Issam Mohammed Abdul-Ridha - University of Mosul / College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences
5. Prof. Dr. Rafee Idris Abdul-Ghafour - University of Mosul / College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences
6. Prof. Dr. Thamer Mahmoud Thanoon - University of Mosul / College of Basic Education
7. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Moayed Hussein - University of Mosul / College of Basic Education
8. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Hisham Ahmed - University of Mosul / College of Basic Education
9. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bassam Ali Mohammed - University of Mosul / College of Basic Education



The researcher used the SPSS statistical package to extract the results of the current study, relying on the following formulas:

- Percentage.
- Arithmetic mean.
- Standard deviation.
- Simple correlation coefficient (Pearson).
- Spearman-Brown formula.
- Hypothetical mean.

3. Presentation of Results and Discussion

After the researcher distributed the scales to the main research sample of 90 players from the northern region volleyball clubs and collected the players' responses, the researcher extracted their scores on the scales. To achieve the research objectives, the statistical features of the scales were calculated, as shown in Table (3).

Table (3) shows the statistical measures for the two scales.

No.	Variable	Sample Size	S.D.	Mean \pm S.D.	Hypothetical Mean
1	Emotional Suppression	90	119.35	6.22	105
2	Ego inflation	90	92.14	5.71	93

Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations, and hypothetical means for the Emotional Suppression scale from the coaches' perspective and the Narcissism scale for advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

To achieve the research goal of identifying the correlation between the two scales and verifying the hypothesis, the researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient between the variables, as shown in **Table 4**.

Table 4 shows the Pearson correlation coefficient and its significance value between the Emotional Suppression scale and the Narcissism scale.

Variable	Sample Size	r	sig
Emotional Repression	90	0.722	0.005
Narcissistic Inflation	90		

*The difference is significant at the 0.05 level of significance.

It is evident from Table (4) that there is a significant correlation between the emotional suppression scale of coaches from the players' perspective and the narcissism scale for advanced volleyball players in the northern region, as the calculated r value is (0.722) with a significance level of (0.004), which is less than the significance level of (0.05).

The researcher attributes the appearance of this result to the fact that volleyball coaches try to use emotional suppression methods in front of their players during training sessions or matches so as not to negatively affect the players' psychology, from their perspective. They hide their true feelings, experiencing temporary psychological satisfaction when suppressing their anger and displeasure with the negative performance of some players. This result agrees with the study of (Taalib, 2013) and (Latif, 2016), but it differs from the study of (Qweder, 2014), which confirmed that when individuals use a suppressive strategy, their sense of psychological comfort increases, and they express fewer negative emotions, such as anxiety, psychological distress, and low self-esteem.



This result aligns with Gross's viewpoint that an individual in a social group seeks to adopt a suppressive strategy to achieve social acceptance and not lose membership in the group, which poses a threat to their self-respect and love (131, 2014, John Gross).

Additionally, the researcher attributes the appearance of this result to the volleyball players in the northern region being aware of the negative effects of this trait on their performance and personalities, which should align with the human goals of volleyball. The coach has a clear impact on this, as they are training players who will likely become team leaders in the future, making them more responsible and cultivating healthy personal traits. This result can also be explained by the upbringing style in our society and customs, which encourage children to be humble, avoid arrogance, respect others, and love the good for others. This result indicates that volleyball players in the northern region enjoy psychological health and come from families that have fulfilled their emotional and psychological needs, thus preventing or limiting the development of narcissism. This result contradicts the findings of (Muhammad & Hamed, 2021), which indicated that the calculated mean for narcissism was statistically significant, meaning that narcissism was present among the study sample, and also contradicts the results of the study by Gouda (2012), which found that university students had moderate narcissism. (Al-Khalidi & Al-Shuqran, 2023, 93).

4- Conclusions and Recommendations

4-1 Conclusions The researcher concluded the following:

4-1-1 Emotional suppression by coaches has a direct effect on the narcissism of advanced volleyball players in the northern region.

4-2 Recommendations The researcher recommends the following:

4-2-1 Paying psychological attention to players and coaches through psychological workshops and lectures that guide them psychologically.

4-2-2 Integrating the psychological aspect in training sessions by coaches and providing psychological support to players to achieve the best results in competitions.

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