

Interpersonal Coaching Behaviors and Athlete Fear of Failure: Mediating Role of Socially Prescribed Perfectionism in Adolescent Figure Skaters

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INTRODUCTION

The error is not aversive in itself; what generates distress is the interpretation of its consequences. Athletes may associate mistakes with shame, loss of social approval, or a decrease in their personal value. In perfectionistic individuals, fear of failure tends to be more frequent and more intense (Taylor et al., 2023), as they not only pursue extremely high performance standards but also strive to present themselves as flawless, which creates a “zero margin for error” mindset (Curran et al., 2018; Hewitt & Flett, 2022).

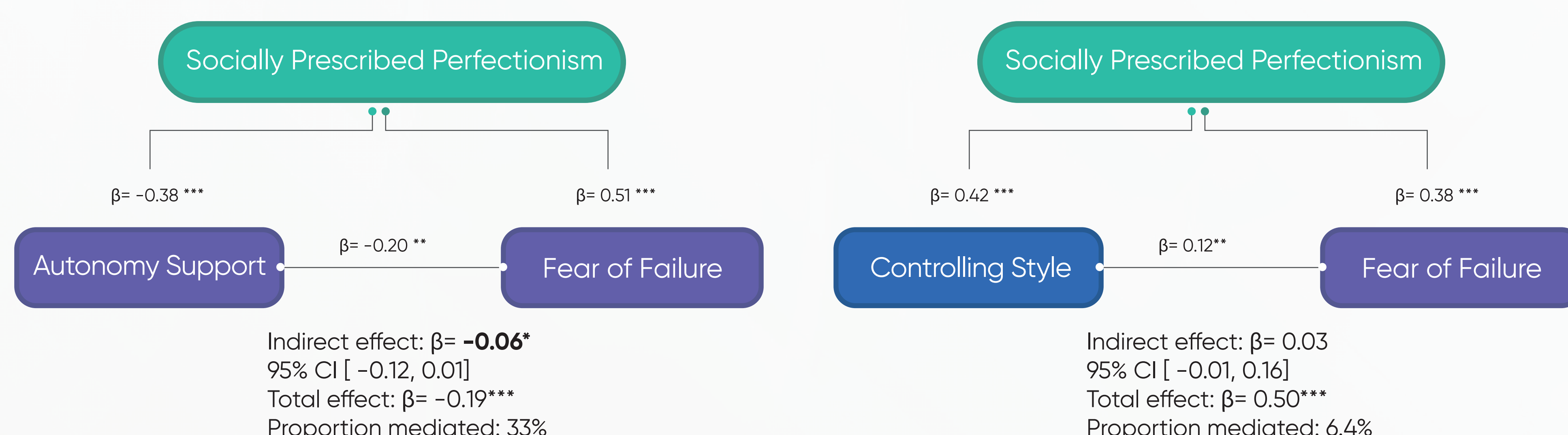
In sport contexts, coaches significantly influence athletes through their interpersonal styles, shaping not only athletes' sporting experiences and self-perceptions but also the ways in which they pursue and regulate their achievement goals (Lemelin et al., 2025).

METHODOLOGY

A total of 232 female figure skaters ($M = 17.44$; $SD = 2.98$) from South America participated and completed the Sport Climate Questionnaire (SCQ, Ryan & Deci, n.d.; Raimundi et al., 2022), the Controlling Coach Behaviors Scale (CCBS, Bartholomew et al., 2010; Castillo et al., 2014), The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (Hewitt et al., 2008), and the Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (PFAI, Conroy, 2001).



RESULTS MEDIATION MODELS



CONCLUSIONS



• **Autonomy supportive coaching appears to protect athletes from fear of failure by reducing the belief that they must be perfect to meet others' expectations.**

- When athletes perceive their coaches as more empathic, and being more growth-oriented are less likely to be perceived as threats to their self-worth.

• **Controlling coaching styles may increase fear of failure through more direct pathways, without necessarily involving the internalization of perfectionistic beliefs.**

- In these contexts, immediate pressure, constant monitoring, and perceived negative consequences or evaluative threat can elicit fear of failure.