

# Influence of Athlete Burnout on Depression among Japanese University Athletes

メタデータ	言語: English 出版者: 公開日: 2016-03-16 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): 作成者: 上村, 明 メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	<a href="https://jair.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/2003242">https://jair.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/2003242</a>

授与機関名 順天堂大学

学位記番号 甲第 34 号

## Influence of Athlete Burnout on Depression among Japanese University Athletes

(日本の大学生競技者におけるアスリート・バーンアウトが抑うつ性に及ぼす影響)

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### Abstract

Several studies have demonstrated psychopathologically that burnout symptoms experienced by athletes are closely related to depression. However, no epidemiological study has revealed the relationship between depression and athlete burnout, using psychological assessments. Athlete burnout is a psychological syndrome characterized by emotional/physical exhaustion, devaluation, and reduced sense of accomplishment (Raedeke, 1997). The Athlete Burnout Questionnaire is an instrument that has been shown to have reliability and validity for evaluating athletes' burnout levels in some countries, but not yet in Japan. Therefore the purposes of this study were to examine the reliability and validity of the Japanese version of the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (Study 1), and further examine the relationship between athlete burnout and depression (Study 2), using a burnout measure that meets international standards. In Study 1, participants were 516 Japanese university athletes ( $M = 19.9$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ) from 13 kinds of sports. No item was found to exhibit a floor/ceiling effect. The results also showed high internal consistency and a three-factor structure similar to the original ABQ. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis showed that the ABQ-J had good model fit. Overall test-retest reliability coefficients were satisfactory. In Study 2, participants were 373 Japanese university athletes ( $M = 20.01$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ) from 21 kinds of sports. A positive correlation was found between athlete burnout and depression. Furthermore, individuals with athlete burnout had 3–4 times the risk of serious depressive symptoms. We concluded that the ABQ-J has a three-factor structure like the original ABQ, and it is a useful measure of burnout among Japanese university athletes. Moreover, this study provides cross-sectional evidence of a positive relationship between athlete burnout and depressive symptoms.