

***The effect of self-care on depression and quality of life of athletes in retirement***

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**Abstract**

Self-care includes addressing basic human needs and maintaining activities related to health and life preservation and is of great importance in the lives of all people, especially retired athletes. Therefore, the present study, which was conducted to determine the effect of self-care on depression and quality of life of athletes in retirement in East Azerbaijan province, was a quasi-experimental study with pretest-posttest and control group. The statistical population was all retired athletes who had completed their professional sports before 2020, from which 50 people were selected by simple random sampling (25 for the experimental group and 25 for the control group). Tools used; The Beck Depression Inventory and the World Health Organization (WHO) Quality of Life Questionnaire and the Self-Care Protocol were administered to participants before and after self-care training, and data were provided through descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (analysis of covariance) Were analyzed. Findings showed that self-care training increases quality of life and reduces depression in retired athletes ( $P < 0.05$ ). Therefore, by timely detection of signs and symptoms of depression and the quality of life of

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individuals, by increasing self-care behaviors and doing so, it can reduce the psychological and physical effects of depression and improve the quality of life.

**Keywords:** self-care, depression, quality of life, retired athletes.

### **Introduction**

With the development of knowledge in the field of sports and research, many athletes have realized the importance of self-care in quality of life and reducing depression. However, athletes face difficulties in achieving such self-care behaviors, and since psycho-emotional self-care has not been studied to reduce depression and improve the quality of life of retired athletes, this study aims to investigate the effect of self-care behaviors and considers psycho-emotional and the role of these factors in increasing quality of life and reducing depression. In this study, due to the high prevalence of depression in retired athletes and the physical, emotional and social problems imposed due to a sudden change in the lifestyle of athletes during retirement and also because the level of self-care, especially psychological and emotional self-care can be influenced by the culture and atmosphere in which we live, the effect of self-care on depression and improving the quality of life of retired athletes has been studied.

### **Research Methods**

The present study was a quasi-experimental study with pretest-posttest and control group. The statistical population was made of all retired athletes who had completed their professional sports before 2020. Among them, 50 people were selected by simple random sampling (25 for the experimental group and 25 for the control group). The used instruments were the Beck Depression Inventory, the World Health Organization (WHO) Quality of Life Questionnaire, and the Self-Care



Protocol, which were administered to participants before and after self-care training and data were analyzed through descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (analysis of covariance).

### **Research Findings**

The results show that the experimental and control groups are different in depression and this difference is significant between the two groups in the post-test phase. As a result, self-care training has been effective in reducing the rate of depression in retired athletes and has reduced depression in the experimental group.

### **Conclusion**

The results show that the experimental and control groups are different in depression and this difference is significant between the two groups in the post-test phase. As a result, self-care training has been effective in reducing the rate of depression in retired athletes and has reduced depression in the experimental group. Therefore, by early detection of signs and symptoms of depression and the quality of life of individuals, it is possible to reduce the psychological and physical effects of depression and improve the quality of life by increasing and following self-care behaviors.

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