

# The impact of empowering climate workshops and special benefits of additional sport psychological coaching sessions for coaches



Deutsche  
Sporthochschule Köln  
German Sport University Cologne

Janna Kerkow<sup>1,2</sup>, Helena Schmitz<sup>1</sup>, Teresa Greither<sup>3</sup>, Marc Allroggen<sup>3</sup>, Jeannine Ohlert<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Psychology, German Sport University Cologne, Germany

<sup>2</sup>The German Research Center for Elite Sport Cologne – momentum, German Sport University Cologne, Germany

<sup>3</sup>Clinic for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at University Hospital Ulm, Germany



## Theoretical Background

According to empirical studies, a strong empowering coaching climate seems to be a protective factor against interpersonal violence (IV) in sport (Ohlert et al., 2022; Greither & Ohlert, 2023). Thus, **coach education should focus on prevention by strengthening an empowering and minimize a disempowering climate** (Greither & Ohlert, 2023). The aim of the present study was to evaluate coaches' perceptions regarding the impact of workshops and additional sport psychological coaching sessions (empowering climate intervention) in which they participated.

## Methods

- N= 7 voluntary coaches ( $f = 3$ ;  $m = 4$ ; age range = 20 – 49 ys;  $M = 30.57$  ys;  $SD = 11.10$  ys)
- Sports= handball (1), gymnastics (1), table tennis(1) , judo(3) & dancing (1)
- Years of experience= 2,5 – 35 ys ( $M = 11,35$  ys;  $SD = 11.46$  ys)
- Licenses= C-Licence (4), B-Licence (1), none (2)



- 2 workshop interventions (90 min.) conducted by sports psychologists  
→ Introduction & reflection on strategies for creating an empowering climate using the TARGET model
- 4 personal coaching sessions ( $M = 32$  min., 10 secs.;  $SD = 7$  mins., 11 secs.) conducted by sports psychologists  
→ Reinforcing strategies learnt in workshops and reflecting on past coaching behavior



- Recording of the interviews using webex
- Transcription of the interviews using f4x
- Categorization of the transcripts using MAXQDA by Kuckartz
- 20 categories were developed inductively
- 8 relevant categories were chosen and examined in greater depth
- Transcripts were assigned accordingly and exported to Excel



- Interview topics: Empowerment Climate understanding: Personal definition and relevance
- Coaching: Experiences, **perception, emotional responses, practical effects, evaluation & value**
- Workshops & Coaching as a combination: **Perception, content, impact of workshops, Usefulness of combining vs. separate formats**
- Overall Evaluation & Outlook: Positives/ negatives, suggestions for improvement, project strengths, final remarks & questions



"The coaching sessions were the most beneficial because they were customized and helped us to create an empowering climate throughout the club."

## Results

- All coaches: Reported **increased awareness of interpersonal violence in sport** following the workshops; Identified **individual feedback during coaching sessions** as **key benefit**.
- 5 of 7: Highlighted **combination of workshops and coaching sessions** as **highly effective**; Perceived involvement of **neutral sport psychologist, external to the clubs**, positively.

"I've become more confident because I now have some strategies to deal with difficult situations."

"So I think it only works 100% if you have this in combination with the coaching sessions, so that you can perhaps really apply the things actively."

## Discussion

- Results show a **strong impact of the workshops** and their **combination with coaching sessions**. Coaching alone yields notable **benefits for the practice** and should be **considered** in future **sport psychology training** for coaches.
- Limitations: **Not all categories** were analyzed in depth, potentially omitting relevant insights. The findings may be influenced by **limited sample size**, and **inherent subjectivity** in qualitative research.

## Literature

Ohlert, J., Schmitz, H., Schäfer-Pels, A., & Allroggen, M. (2022). An empowering climate as a protective factor against sexual violence in sport? *Social Sciences*, 11(8), 330. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11080330>

Greither, T. & Ohlert, J. (2023). Empowerment stärkendes sowie schwächendes Klima und Erfahrungen psychischer Gewalt im Gerätturnen. *German Journal Of Exercise And Sport Research*, 54(4), 576–586. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12662-023-00886-7>