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Article

Psychological well-being and satisfaction with life of young athletic talents in safe educational environment

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Abstract: This research article explores the relationship between psychological well-being and satisfaction with life among young, athletically talented students educated through individualised programs. The primary objective is to assess whether a safe educational environment, emphasising psychological safety and individual support, positively impacts the general satisfaction and academic performance of these students. Using Ryff and Keyes' Psychological Well-Being Scale and Diener's Satisfaction with Life Scale, data were collected from 188 participants—Secondary and university students engaged in rigorous athletic training while completing their studies in the Czech Republic. Key findings reveal a strong correlation between self-acceptance, autonomy, coping with the environment, and enhanced satisfaction with life, indicating that well-being in young athletes is significantly influenced by psychological resilience, emotional support, and control over one's educational journey. Research highlights that individually tailored learning environments, which provide flexibility for training and access to mental health support, contribute to a balanced development between academic and athletic goals. Additionally, the results suggest that a positive correlation within the educational environment, both with peers and instructors, further strengthens the satisfaction with life and reduces the risk of burnout. Implications underscore the need for educational institutions to adopt holistic approaches that support psychological well-being and accommodate the unique needs of athletically talented students. Recommendations include structured mentorship, flexibility in academic scheduling, and access to professional counselling. Future research should investigate the long-term impacts of such environments on academic and athletic success, considering factors such as social inclusion and the effects of digital education.

Keywords: personalised education; satisfaction with life; psychological well-being; sporting talent; safe educational environment

1. Introduction

A safe educational environment represents one of the key factors that influence both the academic success of students and the quality of work of teachers. The definition of a safe educational environment goes beyond mere protection of students' physical integrity and also includes ensuring the emotional and psychological well-being of all participants in the educational process. Therefore, a safe school is an environment that prioritises physical and mental health, provides space for the development of individual abilities, and ensures an inclusive and respectful approach to diversity (Ben-Arieh et al., 2015).

Next, a safe educational environment can be defined as a space that guarantees physical, emotional, and social protection for all students, offers support for their

educational and personal growth, and actively promotes positive interactions between students, teachers, and other members of the school community.

Ben-Arieh et al. (2015) define a safe educational environment as a space based on respect, inclusion, and support for all students, regardless of their individual differences. A key aspect is the prevention of bullying and discrimination, creating conditions for the school to play a positive role in the personal and academic development of students, and ensuring their physical and emotional well-being.

Cefai and Cavioni (2014) emphasise that a safe educational environment is a place where students feel psychologically and emotionally secure. It supports their emotional stability and the development of social skills, which contributes to their sense of belonging within the school community. Such an environment not only prevents negative phenomena such as bullying, but also encourages open communication and mutual support among students.

Roffey (2012) defines a safe educational environment as a place where cooperation, respect, and positive social interaction are essential elements. According to her, it is an environment that provides not only physical protection but also supports psychological safety by allowing students to express their opinions without fear of criticism. Teachers play a crucial role here in modelling positive behaviour and creating an atmosphere of trust and support.

Skrzypiec et al. (2020) define a safe educational environment as a space that supports both the physical and mental health of students. Their study highlights the importance of preventing negative phenomena, such as bullying, while also fostering positive interpersonal relationships between students and teachers. According to the authors, a safe environment actively contributes to creating a climate of trust and cooperation, which directly impacts students' overall well-being and academic performance.

Thapa et al. (2021) describe a safe educational environment as one that encompasses not only physical safety, but also psychological aspects, such as a sense of belonging and trust between students and teachers. They emphasise the importance of inclusivity and respect for diversity, noting that schools that successfully create a safe environment exhibit better academic results, lower levels of conflict, and greater satisfaction with student life.

Van Ryzin and Roseth (2022) explore the influence of a safe school environment on students' emotional well-being, stating that schools actively promoting positive social interactions, equality, and fair treatment significantly contribute to improved student well-being. They argue that a safe educational environment allows students to develop in a climate of trust, which has a long-term positive effect on their psychological resilience and their ability to cope with challenging life situations.

As seen, the evolution of the concept of a safe educational environment has experienced significant changes over time, especially in response to changes in social, cultural, and technological conditions. This concept has undergone several phases, gradually expanding from an initial focus on physical safety to encompass a broader range of aspects, such as psychological safety, social inclusion, well-being support, and protection against digital threats.

In the first phase, especially until the end of the twentieth century, the concept of a safe educational environment was largely focused on the physical safety of pupils

and school staff. This included securing school premises against accidents, fires, violence, and other physical threats, for example, in the context of school shootings that attracted considerable public attention in the 1990s. The approach to school safety at this time focused mainly on protecting the health and physical integrity of everyone in the school (Ttofi and Farrington, 2011).

In the new millennium (2000–2010), the concept of a safe educational environment began to pay increasing attention to the psychological and emotional needs of students. Research, for example, Durlack et al. (2011), Olweus (2001), or Thapa et al. (2021) showed that school success and student satisfaction with life are related not only to physical safety, but also to a feeling of emotional safety and acceptance. At this time, programmes aimed at preventing bullying, developing social and emotional skills, and strengthening inclusiveness in schools began to take shape (Olweus, 2001). Schools gradually began to focus on building a school climate where positive communication between students and teachers is encouraged and where discrimination and marginalisation are minimised.

From 2010 to 2020, the concept of a safe educational environment has developed further with the advent of new approaches focused on inclusivity and the promotion of social and emotional learning (SEL). This phase emphasised the need to integrate students from different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds and provide equal opportunities for success. The concept of safety became more complex and included not only protection against physical and psychological threats, but also building a positive social environment where students feel supported, respected and involved (Durlak et al., 2011). Promoting well-being was increasingly perceived as a key factor in ensuring a positive school environment.

After 2020, with the rapid increase in the use of digital technologies in schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools also began to focus on digital safety and protection against cyberbullying. Due to the transition to online education and increased interaction in the digital space, schools have had to adapt to new challenges, such as ensuring the safety of students in the online environment, protecting their privacy, and preventing cyberbullying (Livingstone et al., 2020). At the same time, the emphasis on the psychological well-being of students has increased, with the pandemic and isolation from the collective educational environment having negative effects on the mental health of young people (WHO, 2021).

It is evident that a key aspect of the current safe educational environment is psychological safety, which allows students to express their thoughts and ideas without fear of ridicule or punishment. This component of safety has a fundamental impact on both the personal and academic development of students, especially in the case of individually educated students, whose schooling experiences may be more personalised and demanding in terms of ensuring support for their well-being (Zins and Elias, 2007).

Research confirming a direct link between the quality of the educational environment and students' satisfaction with life includes, for instance, longitudinal studies focused on students' well-being in schools. Cefai and Cavioni (2014) emphasise in their work that a safe educational environment, which fosters emotional stability and psychological resilience, is crucial for students' positive development.

This study shows that schools providing a safe and supportive environment ensure not only academic success but also greater satisfaction with life among students.

Furthermore, the study by Ben-Arieh et al. (2015) demonstrates that a safe educational environment that promotes open dialogue, inclusivity, and social support contributes to students' overall satisfaction and their sense of belonging to the school community. PISA research (OECD, 2015) also confirms that students who have positive relationships with teachers and feel safe at school exhibit higher levels of well-being and generally better outcomes both academically and emotionally.

According to a report by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2021), which analysed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people's mental health, schools play an active role in supporting student mental health. The report states that, particularly during times of increased stress, such as the pandemic, the absence of a safe and supportive school environment can lead to a decline in life satisfaction, a higher risk of mental health problems, and a deterioration in academic performance.

In addition to the aforementioned studies, several other pieces of research explore the connection between a safe educational environment and student well-being.

In her study "Pupil Wellbeing—Teacher Wellbeing: Two Sides of the Same Coin?" Roffey (2012) explores the interrelationship between student well-being and teachers, confirming that a positive school environment has a significant impact on the emotional well-being of both students and staff. Roffey asserts that schools that foster inclusion, respect, and safety lead to higher levels of student well-being, which in turn has a positive effect on academic outcomes.

Durlak et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of 213 programmes aimed at promoting social and emotional learning (SEL), revealing that students involved in programmes designed to develop social and emotional skills not only demonstrated higher levels of well-being, but also achieved better academic results. The study highlights the importance of a safe and supportive environment for the development of student personal and social skills, which directly influences their satisfaction with life.

Suldo et al. (2016) in their study "Coping Strategies and Perceived School Climate in Relation to Student Life Satisfaction", examine the impact of students' perceptions of the school environment on their satisfaction with life. The findings show that a positively perceived school environment, characterised by safety, teacher support, and inclusivity, has a direct influence on increasing student satisfaction with life and emotional stability.

One of the important aspects of a safe educational environment is the sense of belonging to the school, which is positively correlated with academic performance and personal satisfaction (OECD, 2015). Studies conducted under the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have shown that students who feel accepted and supported by their teachers exhibit higher levels of well-being and satisfaction with life. On the contrary, the absence of support and a sense of alienation can lead to a decrease in motivation and academic performance (OECD, 2015).

The role of teachers in creating a safe and respectful educational environment is irreplaceable. Teachers who experience psychological stress themselves may struggle to manage conflict situations effectively, which can negatively impact the school climate and the quality of teaching (Bočková et al., 2024; Hargreaves and Fullan,

2012). Research shows that supporting teachers' mental health, for instance through specialised counselling and stress management programmes, has a positive effect on the overall quality of the educational process and contributes to creating a positive environment for students (Übius et al., 2014).

1.1. A safe educational environment for individually educated students

A safe educational environment plays a crucial role in the development of individually educated students. According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), the need for belonging and safety is a fundamental psychological requirement. Individual education can be highly effective when conducted in a supportive and secure environment that provides room for personal growth.

A safe educational environment for individually educated students, particularly those who are educated due to athletic talent, requires specific approaches that take into account both their academic needs and the unique demands of their athletic careers. These students often experience different educational conditions and social settings, which can affect their well-being, academic performance, and overall satisfaction with life.

These students often face pressures related to demanding training, competitions, and education schedules. Given that they are outside of the traditional collective school environment, psychological safety is especially important for them. It is essential that these students feel emotionally supported and respected throughout their educational process. Both teachers and coaches should create an environment where students can express their needs and concerns, and where their individual requirements are seen not as obstacles, but as opportunities for development (Jowett and Lavallee, 2007).

Such students often require personalised educational programmes that accommodate their training and sporting commitments. This means that teachers must be able to adjust the schedule and content of the lessons to meet the individual needs of the students without disrupting their educational path. This flexible approach enables students to manage the demands of both education and sport, reducing the stress of constantly balancing these two areas (Bailey et al., 2010).

Individually educated students may face a higher risk of social isolation, as they lack daily contact with peers in a school environment. Schools and educational institutions should support the social inclusion of these students by offering opportunities to meet other students through extracurricular activities, digital communities, or projects that develop collective collaboration. A safe educational environment should foster a balance between individual education and opportunities for social interaction, which is key to these students' psychological well-being (Peláez and Marván, 2020).

Athletes who are individually educated may be more susceptible to mental overload and burnout due to the high demands of both sport and school. Therefore, it is essential that a safe educational environment includes accessible resources for mental health support, such as counselling, psychological support, or access to mentors (Stambulova et al., 2009).

In addition, they may feel as though they are 'outside the mainstream' of school life. Creating a supportive school environment that recognises and appreciates their

efforts is important for strengthening their sense of belonging and school identity (Strycharczyk and Clough, 2015).

Digital technology can play a key role in creating a safe educational environment for these students. Online educational platforms and tools can allow students to stay connected to school and their peers, improving access to education, while also reducing social isolation. These platforms can be used for individual consultations, digital collaborations on projects, and sharing experiences with classmates (Bond, 2020).

Schools should have specific support programmes in place to help individually educated athletes maintain a balance between their sporting and academic goals. These programmes may include tailored schedules, individual learning plans, or access to academic coaches who monitor not only academic progress, but also the well-being of the athletes (MacNamara and Collins, 2011).

A safe educational environment for individually educated students requires a careful balance between academic demands and sporting commitments, psychological support, and inclusion within the wider school community. This approach ensures that students reach their full potential without negative impacts on their mental health and well-being.

Support from family and teachers is a key factor that contributes to a student's emotional and psychological stability (Eccles and Gootman, 2002). Ensuring a sense of safety and a supportive environment not only enhances academic performance, but also helps reduce stress, which could otherwise affect both school and sporting outcomes (Marsh and Kleitman, 2003).

According to a study by Tynjala et al. (2005), a safe and supportive educational environment also contributes to higher levels of motivation and long-term engagement, which is crucial for athletically talented students. Therefore, individual education must create space for the development of not only academic skills but also social connections, which are important for healthy psychological development.

This raises the question of the correlation between the well-being and life satisfaction of individually educated students within a safe educational environment.

1.2. Research on psychological well-being and life satisfaction as factors in a safe educational environment

Gradually, there is an increasing body of empirical evidence highlighting the significant role of socioemotional characteristics in the important correlation between well-being, self-esteem, social integration, positive perception of school social climate and academic achievement (Berger et al., 2010) as factors in a safe educational environment.

Berger et al. (2010) conclude, based on their research findings, that there is a significant correlation between all socioemotional variables and academic success in both primary school girls and boys. Ryff (1989) found that autonomy and coping with the environment, as components of psychological well-being, are strongly associated with satisfaction with life, affective balance, self-esteem, and morality. Although satisfaction with life has a long-lasting, enduring nature, it does not track well-being traits such as autonomy, personal growth, and positive relationships with others.

Research by Rode et al. (2005) revealed a significant correlation between student objective school performance and their overall satisfaction with life. Although their cognitive abilities strongly predicted performance, satisfaction with life was statistically and practically significant in relation to school performance.

Parray and Kumar (2017) examined the impact of assertiveness training on self-esteem, psychological well-being, perceived stress levels, and academic success in adolescents. It was found that assertiveness training significantly improves the level of assertiveness in adolescents, increases their self-esteem, and reduces perceived stress levels. However, there were no significant differences in psychological well-being before and after the intervention. Assertiveness training also significantly improved the academic success of adolescents.

The findings of some studies indicate that higher levels of academic functioning led to higher levels of subjective well-being and lower levels of psychopathology. Similarly, GPA (grade point average) positively predicts changes in satisfaction with life levels (Bücker et al., 2018; Steinmayr et al., 2015; Suldo and Shaffner, 2008).

Psychological well-being is also related to creative thinking, prosocial behaviour, and good physical health. A person's mental capacity and psychological well-being are primarily influenced by their environment and partially by maternal care during childhood. External influences affect a person's well-being, but their behaviour and attitudes have an even greater impact. Interventions aimed at promoting positive behaviour and attitudes play a key role in improving well-being (Huppert, 2009).

However, the results of a meta-analysis exploring the correlation between subjective well-being and academic success report a weak correlation between these two variables. One explanation could be that, since children and young adults spend a significant portion of their lives in school, their overall satisfaction with life and academic satisfaction may overlap, and the distinction between these two types of satisfaction may not be very pronounced. Another explanation could be the failure to find a significant moderator effect due to low statistical power (Bücker, 2018).

A positive reciprocal correlation has been found between academic success and satisfaction with life, where individual differences in experiencing negative or positive affective experiences at school did not moderate the correlation between GPA and subsequent satisfaction with life, or between satisfaction with life and subsequent GPA. This finding suggests that temporary affective experiences at school may not significantly influence interventions aimed at improving both satisfaction with life and academic performance (Ng et al., 2015).

The research by Duncan et al. (2021) also indicates that there is a correlation between lower levels of depression, higher levels of psychological well-being, and better school performance and study behaviour (fewer absences, lower frequency of incomplete homework, etc.).

Psychological well-being at school is also related to a close correlation between the child/student and parents and friends at school, which increases the sense of well-being in the school environment, while conflicts with teachers reduce this sense of well-being. Research has also confirmed that quality interpersonal relationships among adolescents improve their academic performance through increased well-being, while well-being, in turn, promotes better academic performance due to the improved quality of their interpersonal relationships (Kiuru et al., 2020).

The research by Mustafu et al. (2020) further confirmed a significant correlation between psychological well-being and academic success, indicating the impact of psychological well-being on academic achievement. These findings suggest that when the level of psychological well-being increases, academic success also improves.

The study by Douwes et al. (2023) examines the well-being of students in higher education from the students' own perspectives. It underscores the importance of understanding well-being through the views of students, recognising that student perspectives provide essential insights into the factors that influence their mental health, participation, and satisfaction within educational environments. The study suggests that incorporating these perspectives is vital to develop effective policies and support systems to enhance well-being in higher education settings.

The study by Martínez-García et al. (2024) focuses on promoting mental health in higher education, specifically identifying factors that influence well-being in emerging adulthood. The authors propose a theoretical model that includes 14 dimensions of well-being that can be enhanced through educational processes. These dimensions encompass emotional, psychological, and social aspects that are crucial for students' mental health. The purpose of the study is to provide a framework for implementing educational strategies that support well-being and mental health within higher education settings.

Recent studies focussing on well-being within the educational context explore a wide range of factors influencing the psychological and emotional health of both students and educators, generating valuable and often surprising insights. These studies examine, for instance, the impact of digital technologies, such as social networks and online learning platforms, on student well-being and motivation to learn. For example, the study by Zhang et al. (2023) explores how social media use affects the psychological (PWB) and subjective well-being (SWB) of university students. It examines self-esteem and online social support as mediators in this relationship and considers cyberbullying as a moderating factor. Using data from 1004 Chinese college students, the study found that social media positively influences well-being through increased self-esteem and social support. However, the positive impact is weakened when cyberbullying levels are high, highlighting the importance of addressing cyberbullying to protect student well-being.

Another significant area of focus is the effect of classroom social dynamics on students' self-esteem and sense of belonging, which directly influences their academic performance and overall attitude towards education. A study titled "Classroom Interactions Facilitate a Sense of Belonging in University Students" by Peacock and Cowan (2023) examines how classroom social dynamics affect students' self-esteem and sense of belonging, and how these factors influence academic performance and attitudes toward education. The research highlights that positive interactions within the classroom environment enhance students' feelings of being valued and accepted, which in turn boosts their self-esteem and fosters a stronger sense of belonging. These improvements are associated with better academic outcomes and a more positive overall attitude towards learning.

In addition, researchers investigate the role of school environments and support programmes that aim to improve mental health, reducing stress, and foster positive thinking. For example, a study in 2023 by Durlak and Weissberg examines the role of

school environments and support programmes in enhancing mental health, reducing stress, and fostering positive thinking among students. The research highlights that comprehensive school-based interventions, particularly those that incorporate social and emotional learning (SEL), significantly improve student psychological well-being and academic performance. The study emphasises the importance of creating supportive educational settings that promote mental health and resilience.

Some studies also delve into issues of inclusion and diversity, offering new insights into how different groups of students perceive educational settings and how these environments can be made more accessible and supportive. Relevant study related to this issue is "Promoting Inclusive Education for Diverse Societies: A Conceptual Framework" by Cerna et al. (2021). This research provides a framework for understanding how inclusive education can be implemented in diverse classrooms. It discusses strategies for creating supportive learning environments that cater to the varied needs of students, thus promoting their well-being and sense of belonging.

Furthermore, the article by Deroncele-Acosta and Ellis (2024) explores the challenges faced in implementing inclusive education and offers strategies to promote positive educational experiences for all students. The study underscores the role of teacher attitudes, available resources, and self-efficacy in fostering an inclusive environment that supports student well-being.

Together, these factors demonstrate that well-being in education is a complex, multidimensional concept where various psychological, social, and environmental influences intersect. The findings of these studies provide practical recommendations for developing school policies and interventions that support mental health, contributing to a more effective and enjoyable educational experience.

1.3. The correlation between well-being and satisfaction with life of individually educated students as factors of a safe educational environment

In the field of education and research on student well-being and satisfaction with life, increasing attention is being paid to alternative forms of education, such as the aforementioned individualised education for athlete talents. Individual education, or homeschooling, is becoming increasingly popular, especially in relation to changing social conditions, technology, and the emphasis on personalised learning. Researching the well-being and satisfaction with life of individually educated students within a safe educational environment is essential to understand how this form of education affects not only academic outcomes, but also the emotional and social development of children.

Well-being encompasses psychological, physical, and social factors that contribute to a person's general sense of happiness and satisfaction (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). In the context of education, well-being is often considered a key factor supporting student success both academically and personally. Satisfaction with life is commonly measured as a subjective assessment of life quality, which includes school experiences (Huebner et al., 2020).

Psychological well-being refers to a state that includes positive emotions, personal growth, autonomy, and the ability to handle life's challenges. For students

with athletic talent who are educated individually, the flexibility of their education and the ability to focus on their sports careers can have a significant impact on their development (Duda and Balaguer, 2007). Ryan and Deci (2000) mentioned that autonomy, competence, and a sense of belonging are key elements of human motivation and contribute to well-being. Individual education offers the possibility to tailor the educational process to the specific needs of the student, which supports autonomy and enhances subjective well-being (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Further research shows that athletically talented students who have the opportunity for flexible education demonstrate higher levels of psychological well-being than their peers in the traditional school system (Wylleman and Lavallee, 2004). These students often feel less stressed and more focused on their goals, improving their psychological well-being and overall satisfaction with life (Duvall et al., 2021).

However, it can also have disadvantages, such as limited social interaction or reduced access to professional educational support (Guterman and Neuman, 2020).

In the context of individual education, safety can be understood not only physically (e.g., the home environment), but also psychologically, which includes a sense of autonomy and control over one's learning (Blackwell et al., 2022; Suldo et al., 2019).

Research conducted by Fraser-Thomas and Côté (2009) suggests that students who combine individual education with intensive sport show higher levels of life satisfaction, as they have more control over their time and can focus on what fulfils them.

However, the need to balance academic and sporting life can be challenging and may lead to a risk of burnout if adequate boundaries between education and sports careers are not established (Gould et al., 1996).

1.4. Literature gap

Although there are many studies exploring well-being and satisfaction with life in traditional school environments, such as Hefferon et al. (2020), Lomas et al. (2020), and Tapia-Fonllem et al. (2020), research specifically focused on individually educated students in a safe educational environment is relatively limited. The most significant theoretical gap lies in:

- Lack of longitudinal studies: Most of the available research on the well-being of individually educated students consists of cross-sectional studies, which examine their state at a single point in time. There is a lack of research tracking the well-being and satisfaction with life of these students over a longer period (Meissner and Atkinson, 2021).
- Limited consideration of different educational settings: There is a scarcity of comparative studies that evaluate the well-being of students in various individual education contexts (e.g., structured homeschooling vs. unschooling) (Winstanley, 2021).
- Interaction between social isolation and well-being: One of the challenges of individual education may be limited social interaction. Although this factor is often discussed, there is a lack of in-depth studies examining how the absence of

regular peer interaction impacts satisfaction with life and long-term well-being (Guterman and Neuman, 2020).

- The role of parents as educators: Although the role of parents in individual education is crucial, there is little research focused on how parental involvement and the quality of home teaching affect students' well-being (Murphy, 2022).
- Psychosocial impacts of the pandemic on individual education: The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increased interest in homeschooling, but its long-term psychosocial effects on the well-being and satisfaction with life of these students have not yet been sufficiently explored (Blok, 2023).

Therefore, in our study, we examine the relationship between psychological well-being and satisfaction with life in athletically talented students educated individually. Psychological well-being is a multidimensional concept, defined as a subjective state in which an individual perceives positive aspects of their personality, their relationships with others, and their life journey (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). Our study is based on this Ryff and Keyes' (1995) understanding of psychological well-being, which is measured using the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS). This scale distinguishes six dimensions: self-acceptance, autonomy, coping with the environment, personal growth, meaning of life, and positive relationships with others. Additionally, we draw on the concept of satisfaction with life as defined by Diener et al. (1985), measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS).

Our research focusses on how these aspects influence the psychological state of athletically talented students during their individual education and whether they experience the kind of safe educational environment required today.

2. Materials and methods

The purpose of our research was to explore the correlation between psychological well-being (including positive relationships with others, self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, coping with the environment, and meaning of life) and satisfaction with life in young athletic talents who are individually educated.

This research was based on the premise P that a higher correlation between these two variables could indicate a safer and more supportive educational environment for these athletes. In this way, we could assess whether individual education indeed contributes to an improvement in their psychological state and overall satisfaction with life.

A secondary analysis based on Guney (2009) and Mehmood and Shaukat (2014) was used to formulate hypothesis H1: There is a significant correlation between psychological well-being and satisfaction with life in young athletic talents who are individually educated.

2.1. Research sample

A total of 195 respondents participated in the research, divided into two groups. The first group consisted of 93 individually educated secondary school students. These students were selected based on their athletic talent, which requires an individualised educational plan. All respondents were in their second or third year of secondary

school, and 5 third-year students were excluded from the study due to errors in the questionnaires.

The final sample comprised 88 respondents aged 16 to 18 years (M = 16.8; SD = 0.67), including 55 boys (62%) and 33 girls (38%).

Data collection was objective and was conducted in September 2024. Participants were elite junior athletes representing the Czech Republic in internationally renowned competitions such as Wimbledon and were members of VSC VIKTORIA, a sports centre under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic.

Detailed information on these respondents, such as their socioeconomic status, the size of their place of residence, or parental education, is not available. These factors were not the focus of our research, nor are they tracked by the VSK VIKTORIA, which selected the respondents for this study. These details were not included in the questionnaire. The common characteristic of all respondents is their active involvement in a high-level junior sports career, which is the main reason for their inclusion in this centre.

The athlete's email addresses were obtained through personal contact with VSK VIKTORIA, which further encouraged the selected respondents to participate in the research. After initial contact by email and securing their agreement to participate, an online meeting was held to explain all procedures and questionnaires in detail. The questionnaires were subsequently sent and collected electronically.

The second group consisted of 102 individually educated university students from various universities in the Czech Republic, also members of the VSC VIKTORIA. After excluding two incomplete questionnaires, the final sample consisted of 100 respondents aged 20 to 22 years (M = 21.8; SD = 0.77), including 65 boys (65%) and 35 girls (35%). These athletes participated in international competitions, reaching levels such as the World Championships in cross-country skiing. Data collection followed a similar process to that used for secondary school students, with email communication followed by electronic questionnaires.

In total, 188 respondents participated in the research, with a mean age of M = 19.3 years, comprising 120 boys (66.67%) and 68 girls (33.33%).

Although the research sample of 188 respondents may appear insufficiently representative to generalise the results to a broader population of young athletic talents, it is essential to recognise that the number of young athletic talents in the Czech Republic who achieve the levels of performance and success required for this study is limited. Therefore, the findings of our research can indeed be generalised to Czech athletic talents. Within this context, the research sample is sufficiently representative, as it represents 92.3% of Czech athletic talents currently studying at secondary or higher education institutions. However, the sample is limited to Czech athletes, which may restrict the applicability of the findings to an international context.

Furthermore, the research does not account for factors such as socioeconomic status, parental education, or the size of the place of residence, all of which may significantly influence psychological well-being and life satisfaction.

We are also fully aware that our study is cross-sectional, which means it captures the state of the respondents at a single point in time without considering long-term changes or trends. Additionally, the lack of a control group of traditionally educated

students limits the ability to compare the effects of individualised education on well-being and life satisfaction.

These factors mean that the results cannot be deemed entirely representative of the broader population of young students, which is a critical consideration when interpreting and applying the conclusions of this study.

2.2. Data collection methods

2.2.1. Operationalisation of terms

Indicators of psychological well-being were measured using the Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989), which focusses on six main dimensions: positive relationships with others, self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, coping with the environment, and meaning of life. Each of these dimensions was operationalised as a summation index based on the individual items of the questionnaire.

This tool was selected due to its validity and widespread use in similar studies examining individual well-being across various populations (Ryff and Keyes, 1995).

Psychological well-being was measured using the shortened version of the Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). This version consists of 18 items divided into six dimensions. Respondents responded on a Likert scale, where 1 indicated "strongly disagree" and 7 indicated "strongly agree". The scores on the scale ranged from 18 to 126 points, with higher scores indicating a higher level of psychological well-being.

In Ryff's (1989) original study with 20 elements, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the indicator of self-acceptance was $\alpha = 0.93$; for positive relationships with others $\alpha = 0.91$; for autonomy $\alpha = .86$; for coping with the environment $\alpha = 0.90$; for meaning of life $\alpha = 0.90$; and for personal growth $\alpha = 0.87$.

The test-retest reliability in the original study (Ryff, 1989) for self-acceptance was $r = 0.85$; for positive relationships with others $r = 0.83$; for autonomy $r = 0.88$; for coping with the environment $r = 0.81$; for meaning of life $r = 0.82$; and for personal growth $r = 0.81$.

Indicators of satisfaction with life were measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985). Respondents rated their agreement with five statements on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1 indicated "strongly disagree" and 7 indicated "strongly agree". The total score on this scale ranged from 5 to 35 points, with higher scores reflecting greater satisfaction with life.

The validity and reliability of this scale have been consistently confirmed in various research contexts (Diener et al., 1985).

In the original study by Diener et al. (1985), the reliability of the test-retest was $r = 0.82$ and the internal consistency, measured by Cronbach's alpha, was $\alpha = 0.87$.

In our investigation, both indicators were analysed to explore their correlation and impact on the overall psychological state of young athletes.

2.2.2. Hypotheses

In the framework of our research, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: We hypothesise that there is a positive correlation between the summation index of positive relationships with others and the summation index of satisfaction with life.

- H2: We hypothesise that there is a positive correlation between the summation index of self-acceptance and the summation index of satisfaction with life.
- H3: We hypothesise that there is a positive correlation between the summation index of autonomy and the summation index of satisfaction with life.
- H4: We hypothesise that there is a positive correlation between the summation index of personal growth and the summation index of satisfaction with life.
- H5: We hypothesise that there is a positive correlation between the summation index of coping with environment and the summation index of satisfaction with life.
- H6: We hypothesise that there is a positive correlation between the summation index of meaning of life and the summation index of satisfaction with life.

2.3. Research plan

This research employed a quantitative, non-experimental and verification design, as empirical hypotheses were formulated and data were collected using standardised questionnaires. Furthermore, the research was correlational, focussing on the relationship between psychological well-being and satisfaction with life as factors of a safe educational environment for young athletes. This approach allowed us to identify statistical correlations between variables, though not causal mechanisms.

2.4. Procedure

The data collected were analysed using SPSS statistical software and JMP Pro 14.3.

For the univariate analysis, measures such as mode, median, quartiles, range, skewness coefficient, and standard deviation were calculated. Pearson's correlation coefficient and Spearman's correlation coefficient were used to analyse the correlations between variables. The correlation was interpreted based on the values of the correlation coefficients, with a relationship of $r = 0–0.3$ considered weak, $r = 0.3–0.5$ considered moderate, and $r = 0.5–1$ considered strong.

Visualisations, such as box plots and histograms, were also created to provide a better understanding of the data distribution.

The internal consistency of the questionnaires was verified using the Cronbach alpha coefficient, which should reach a minimum value of 0.7 to confirm reliability.

3. Results

3.1. Psychological well-being

The table below (**Table 1**) presents the frequency of participants' responses, in percentages, to specific items in the psychological well-being questionnaire. On the Psychological Well-being Scale, 43.2% of participants indicated that they are somewhat in agreement with liking most of their personality traits and abilities, while only 1.1% of the participants strongly disagreed with this statement. The most notable indicator in the subscale of positive relationships with others was the item expressing frustration with maintaining close relationships, where 43.2% of the participants strongly agreed.

Table 1. Frequency of participants' responses in the psychological well-being questionnaire.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Slightly disagree	Don't know	Slightly agree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
PWB1: I like most of my personality traits and abilities.	1.1	6.8	12.5	5.7	15.9	43.2	14.8	100
PWB2: When I reflect on my life so far, I am pleased with how it has developed.	4.5	8	6.8	11.4	20.5	33	15.8	100
PWB3: Some people go through life without a sense of purpose, but I am not one of them.	2.3	3.4	6.8	14.8	14.8	25	32.9	100
PWB4: The demands of everyday life leave me feeling discouraged.	11.4	14.8	26.1	5.7	10.2	23.9	7.9	100
PWB5: In many ways, I am disappointed in what I have achieved in my life so far.	6.8	6.8	15.9	9.1	8	30.7	22.7	100
PWB6: Maintaining close relationships is difficult and frustrating for me.	5.7	5.7	4.5	9.1	9.1	22.7	43.2	100
PWB7: I live only for the present and do not think much about the future.	5.7	11.4	13.6	9.1	18.2	15.9	26.1	100
PWB8: I have control over the situations in which I find myself.	3.4	8	10.2	9.1	22.7	37.5	9.1	100
PWB9: I manage my daily responsibilities well.	4.5	11.4	13.6	8	30.7	23.9	7.9	100
PWB10: Sometimes I feel like I have done everything I was supposed to do in life.	4.5	6.8	9.1	15.9	14.8	22.7	26.2	100
PWB11: I view life as a continuous process of learning, change, and growth.	3.4	0	2.3	4.5	14.8	29.5	45.5	100
PWB12: I believe it is important to have new experiences that make me reflect on myself and the world around me.	2.3	1.1	0	5.7	6.8	22.7	61.4	100
PWB13: People would describe me as a kind person, always willing to spend time with others.	4.5	5.7	9.1	26.1	21.6	26.1	6.9	100
PWB14: I have long since given up trying to make major improvements and changes in my life.	5.7	2.3	8	9.1	13.6	23.9	37.4	100
PWB15: People with strong opinions usually manage to influence me.	8	8	13.6	15.9	15.9	17	21.6	100
PWB16: I have not had many positive and trusting relationships so far.	9.1	10.2	15.9	11.4	11.4	20.5	21.5	100
PWB17: I trust my own opinions, even when they are different from those of most people.	5.7	3.4	2.3	2.3	21.6	26.1	38.6	100
PWB18: I evaluate myself based on what I consider important, not on the values that others think are important.	5.7	8	5.7	5.7	10.2	34.1	30.6	100

Source: Own.

In the self-acceptance subscale, the most prominent indicator was the item in which 43.2% of the participants stated that they agree somewhat with the liking of

most of their personality traits. However, 30.7% of the participants also stated that they agree somewhat with being disappointed in several aspects of what they have achieved in their lives so far.

A key indicator in the autonomy subscale was the item expressing confidence in one's opinions, even when they differ from others', with 38.6% of participants strongly agreeing with this item.

In the personal growth subscale, 61.4% of the participants strongly agreed with the item that highlighted the importance of having new experiences that make one reflect on themselves and the world around them.

Another notable indicator on the coping with environment subscale was the item in which 37.5% of the participants somewhat agreed that they have control over the situations in which they find themselves.

The subscale of meaning of life included an item that expresses that one does not live life aimlessly, with 32.9% of the participants strongly agreeing with this statement. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the internal consistency of the Psychological Well-being Scale Questionnaire was $\alpha = 0.78$, indicating that the scale can be considered reliable.

In the positive relationship with others subscale, there were no outliers or extreme values, as illustrated in **Figure 1**. Similarly, the autonomy subscale did not contain any outliers or extreme values, as shown in **Figure 2**. However, **Figure 3** shows that the autonomy subscale included an outlier, where a participant scored lower than the rest of the research sample. In the personal growth subscale, there was also an outlier, where a participant scored lower than the rest of the sample, as displayed in **Figure 4**. The coping with environment subscale did not contain any outliers or extreme values, as seen in **Figure 5**. On the meaning of life subscale, an outlier was identified, with a participant scoring lower than the rest of the research sample, as demonstrated in **Figure 6**.

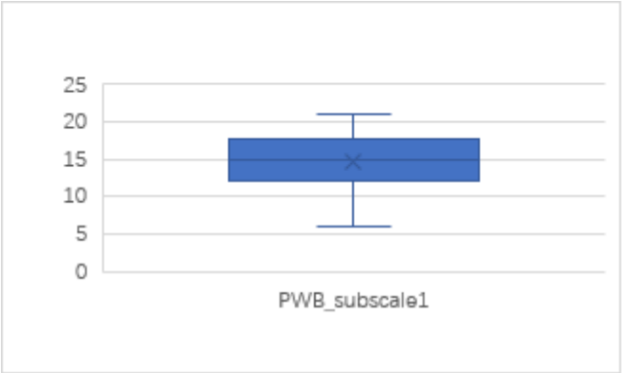

Figure 1. Box plot of positive relationships with others.

Source: Own.

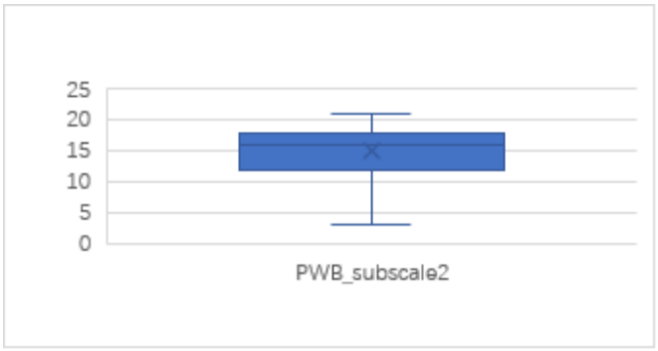

Figure 2. Box plot of autonomy subscale.

Source: Own.

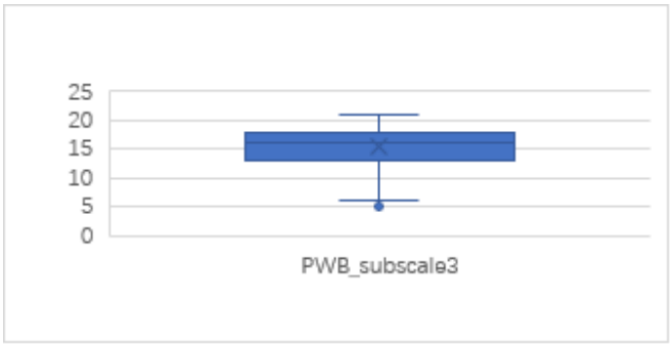

Figure 3. Box plot of autonomy subscale.

Source: Own.

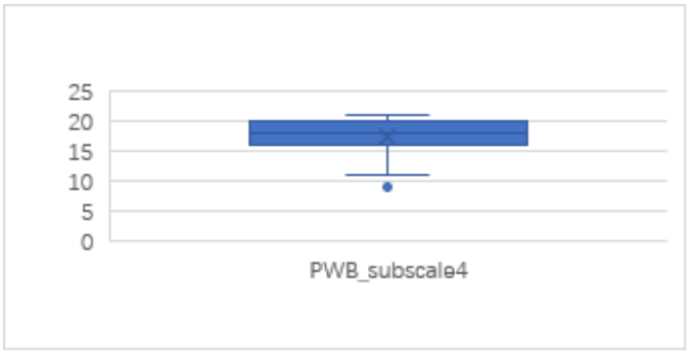

Figure 4. Box plot of personal growth subscale.

Source: Own.

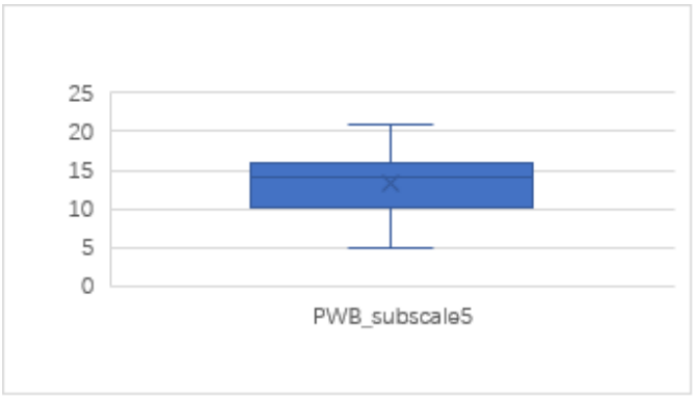

Figure 5. Box plot of coping with environment subscale.

Source: Own.

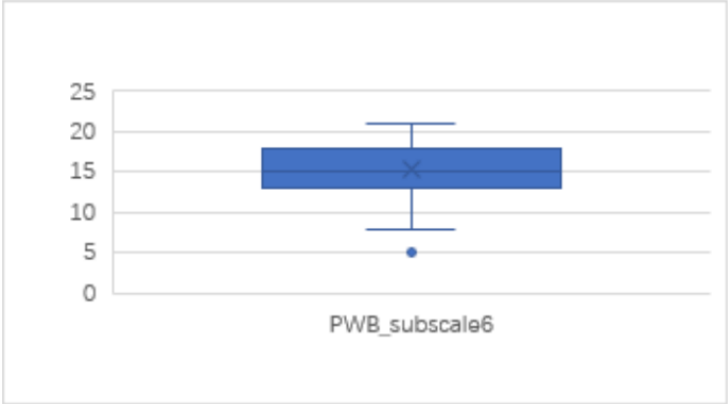

Figure 6. Box plot of meaning of life scale.

Source: Own.

The data distribution for the Psychological Well-Being Scale in the subscales of positive relationships with others, self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, coping with environment and meaning of life is shown in **Figures 7**–**12**.

In the positive relationships with others subscale, the data distribution was non-Gaussian, left-skewed, and platykurtic, as illustrated in **Figure 7**. The data distribution on the self-acceptance subscale was also non-Gaussian, right-skewed, and platykurtic. Similarly, the autonomy subscale did not have a normal data distribution.

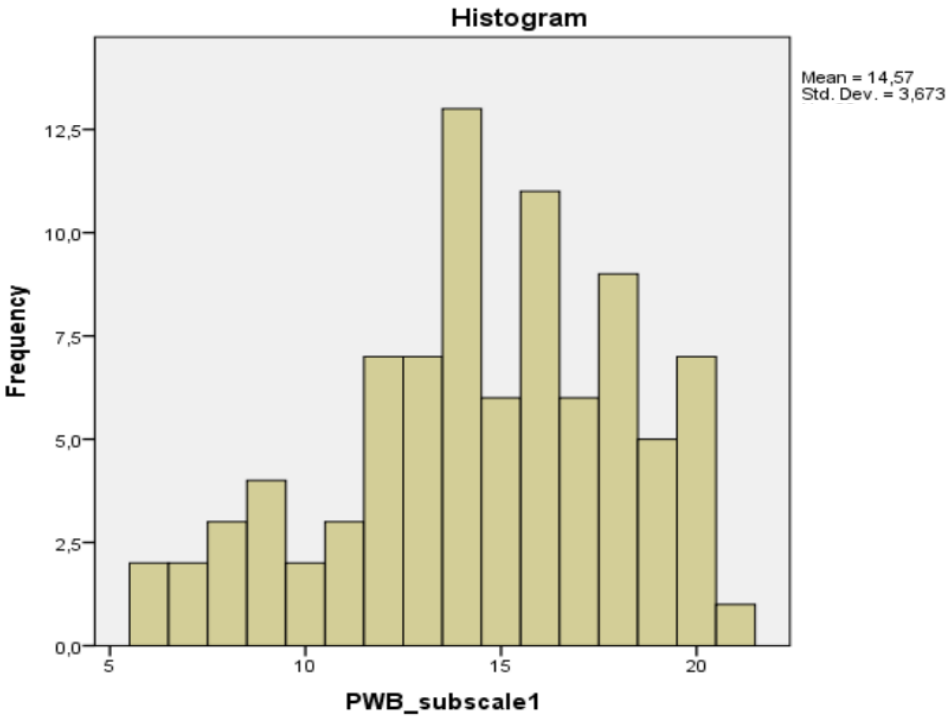

Figure 7. Histogram of positive relationships with others subscale.

Source: Own.

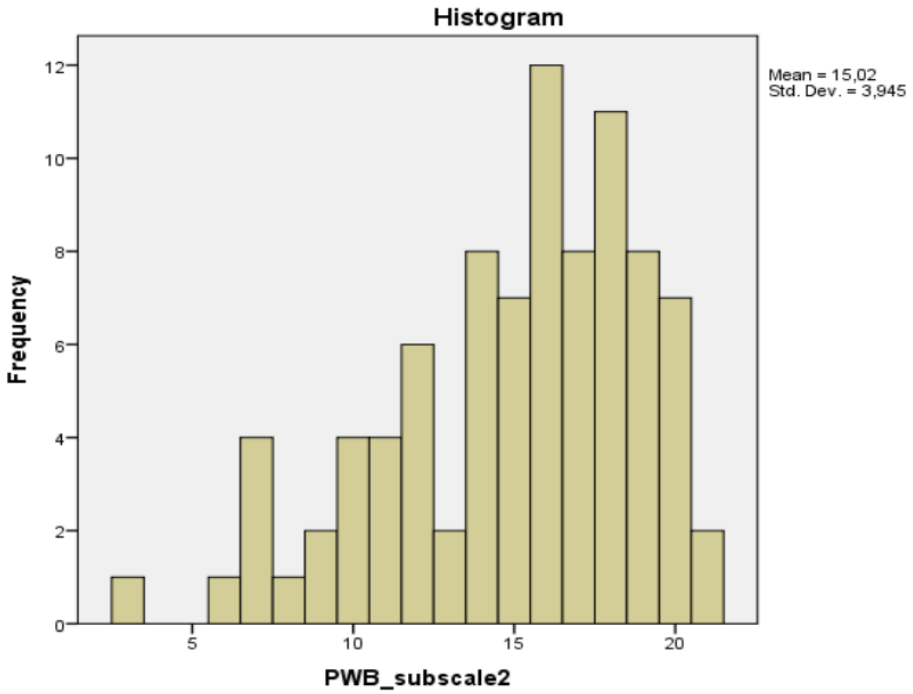

Figure 8. Histogram of the self-acceptance subscale.

Source: Own.

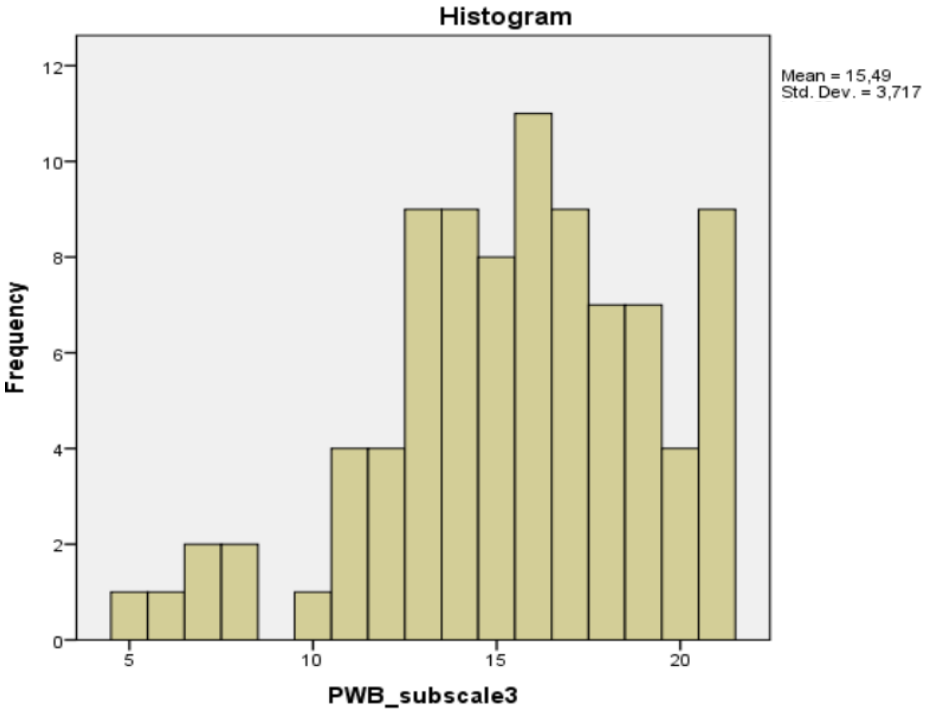

Figure 9. Histogram of the autonomy subscale.

Source: Own.

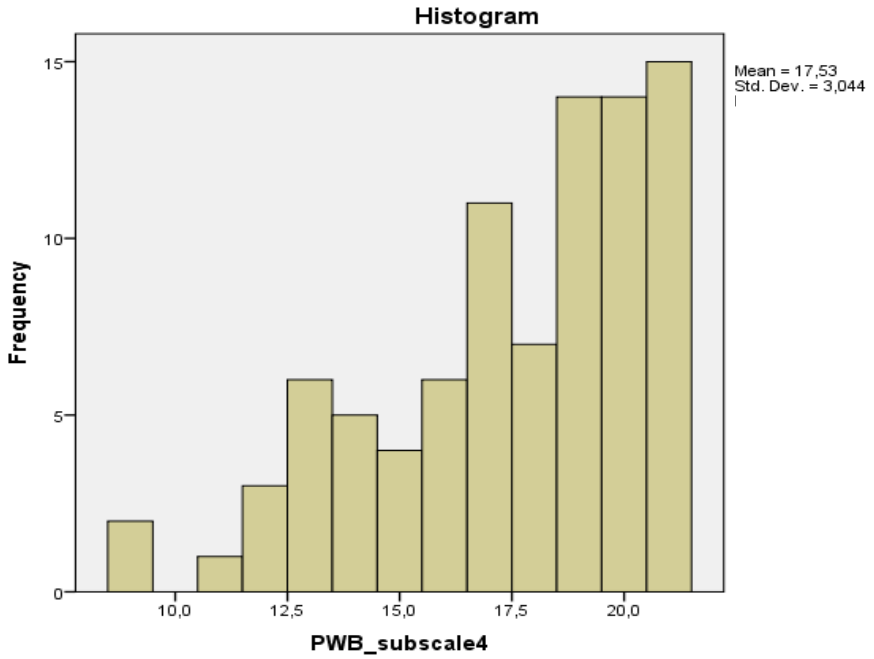

Figure 10. Histogram of the personal growth subscale.

Source: Own.

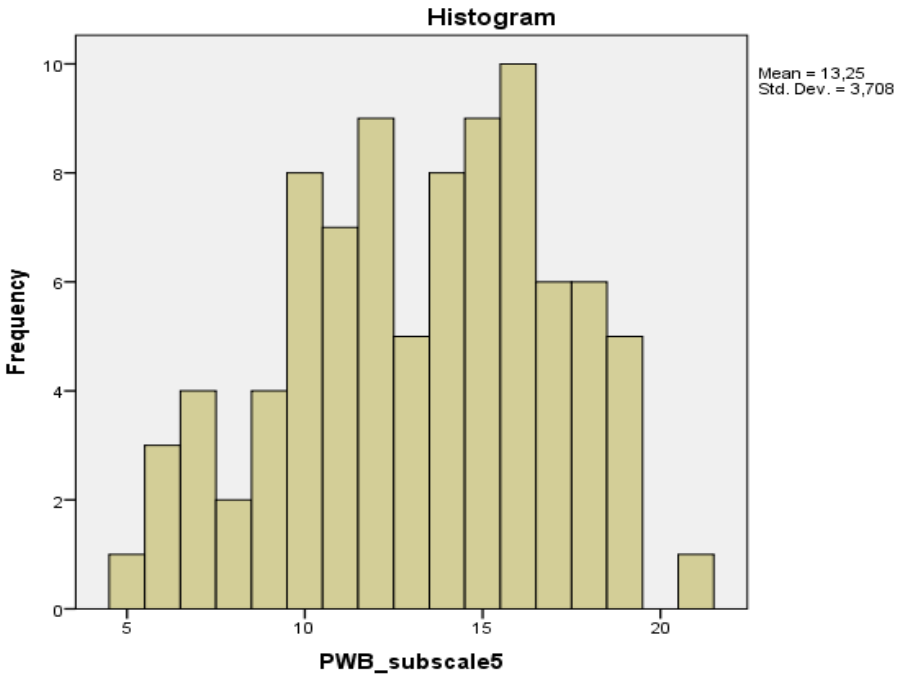

Figure 11. Histogram of Coping with environment subscale.

Source: Own.

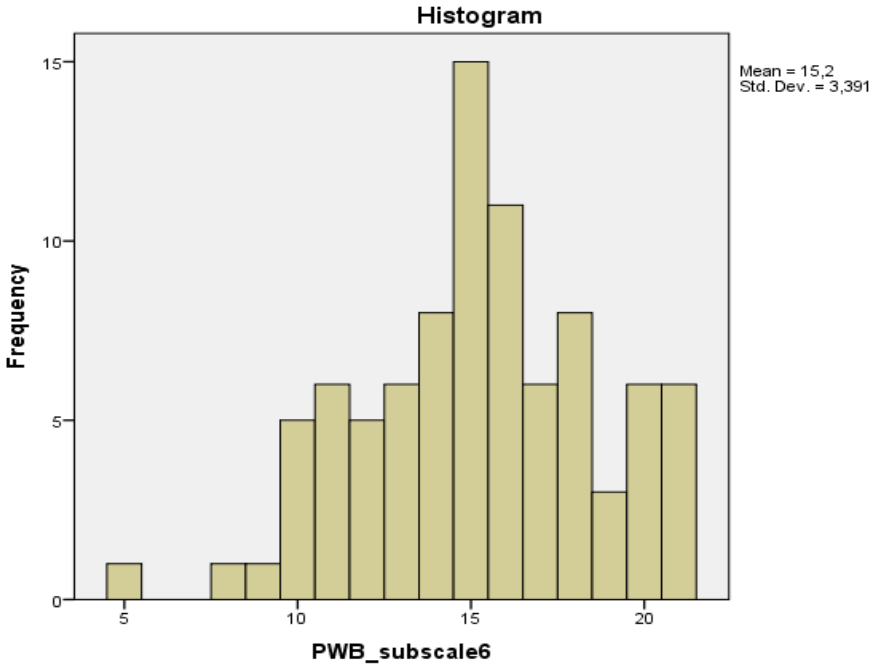

Figure 12. Histogram of the life purpose subscale.

Source: Own.

The statistical description of the individual dimensions of the Psychological Well-being Scale Questionnaire is presented in **Table 2**. The theoretical minimum that participants could achieve in each subscale of the questionnaire is 3, and the theoretical maximum in each subscale is 21.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the subscales of the psychological well-being scale questionnaire.

		positive relations	self-acceptance	autonomy	personal growth	coping with environment	meaning of life
E		14.6	15.0	15.5	17.5	13.3	15.2
Median		15	16	16	18	14	15
Modus		14	16	16	21	16	15
Standard deviation		3.67	3.94	3.72	3.04	3.71	3.39
Variance		13.49	15.56	13.82	9.26	13.75	11.50
Kurtosis		-0.42	0.11	0.23	-0.02	-0.70	-0.09
Skewness		-0.44	-0.79	-0.60	-0.84	-0.23	-0.26
Minimum		6	3	5	9	5	5
Maximum		21	21	21	21	21	21
Variability		15	18	16	12	16	16
Percentiles	25	12	12	13	16	10.75	13
	50	15	16	16	18	14	15
	75	17.25	18	18	20	16	18
IQR		5.25	6	5	4	5.25	5

Source: Own.

The empirical minimum achieved by participants on the positive relationships with others subscale is 6, with an empirical maximum of 21. For the self-acceptance subscale, the empirical minimum is 3 and the empirical maximum is 21. On the

autonomy subscale, the empirical minimum is 5, and the empirical maximum is 21. The empirical minimum in the personal growth subscale is 9, with an empirical maximum of 21. In the coping with environment subscale, the empirical minimum is 5, with an empirical maximum of 21. The meaning of life subscale has an empirical minimum of 5 and an empirical maximum of 21 as well.

The correlation between the positive relationships with the other subscale and self-acceptance is positive, moderate, and statistically significant ($rs = 0.45$; $p < 0.01$). There is a positive, weak, and statistically significant correlation between positive relationships with others and autonomy ($rs = 0.24$; $p < 0.05$). The correlation between personal growth and positive relationships with others is positive, moderate and statistically significant ($rs = 0.37$; $p < 0.01$), while the correlation between environment and positive correlation with others is positive, moderate, and statistically significant ($rs = 0.44$; $p < 0.01$). The correlation between positive relationships with others and the meaning of life is positive, but negligible and not statistically significant ($rs = 0.07$).

There is a positive, weak and statistically significant correlation between self-acceptance and autonomy ($rs = 0.28$; $p < 0.01$), and a positive, strong and statistically significant correlation between self-acceptance and personal growth ($rs = 0.50$; $p < 0.01$). Similarly, there is a positive, strong, and statistically significant correlation between self-acceptance and the ability to cope with the environment ($rs = 0.54$; $p < 0.01$). The correlation between self-acceptance and meaning of life is positive, weak, and statistically significant ($rs = 0.23$; $p < 0.05$).

The correlation between autonomy and personal growth is positive but weak ($rs = 0.20$), and there is a weak correlation between autonomy and coping with the environment ($rs = 0.12$). Furthermore, there is a weak correlation between autonomy and meaning of life ($rs = 0.20$).

There is a positive, moderate and statistically significant correlation between personal growth and coping with the environment ($rs = 0.43$; $p < 0.01$), and a positive, weak and statistically significant correlation between personal growth and meaning of life ($rs = 0.27$; $p < 0.05$).

The correlation between coping with the environment and the meaning of life is positive, weak and statistically significant ($r = 0.30$; $p < 0.01$).

3.2. Satisfaction with life

Table 3 presents the frequencies of the participants' responses in the Satisfaction with life Scale questionnaire.

The most prominent indicator in the Satisfaction with life Scale is the item expressing satisfaction with one's life, with 44.3% of participants agreeing with this statement. The second most prominent indicator is the item that states that the participant's life conditions are excellent, with 37.5% of participants agreeing. 21.6% of the participants expressed strong disagreement with the statement that the participant would not change anything in his life if they could live it again. Furthermore, 19.3% of the participants disagreed that their life almost completely matches their ideal.

Table 3. Frequencies of responses on the satisfaction with life scale.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Can't decide	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
SWLS1: My life is almost completely in line with my ideal.	6.8	19.3	19.3	10.2	27.3	15.9	1.2	100
SWLS2: The conditions of my life are excellent.	0	3.4	8	11.4	21.6	37.5	18.1	100
SWLS3: I am satisfied with my life.	2.3	4.5	9.1	14.8	14.8	44.3	10.2	100
SWLS4: I have received almost everything I wanted from life.	5.7	5.7	15.9	18.2	30.7	21.6	2.2	100
SWLS5: If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	21.6	13.6	15.9	13.6	17	9.1	9.2	100

Source: Own.

The Cronbach alpha value, which represents the internal consistency of the Satisfaction with life Scale Questionnaire, was $\alpha = 0.75$, indicating that the Satisfaction with life Scale has been shown to be reliable.

As shown in **Figure 13**, there is an outlier in the Satisfaction with life scale for participant no.35, who had a lower score than the rest of the participants in the research sample.

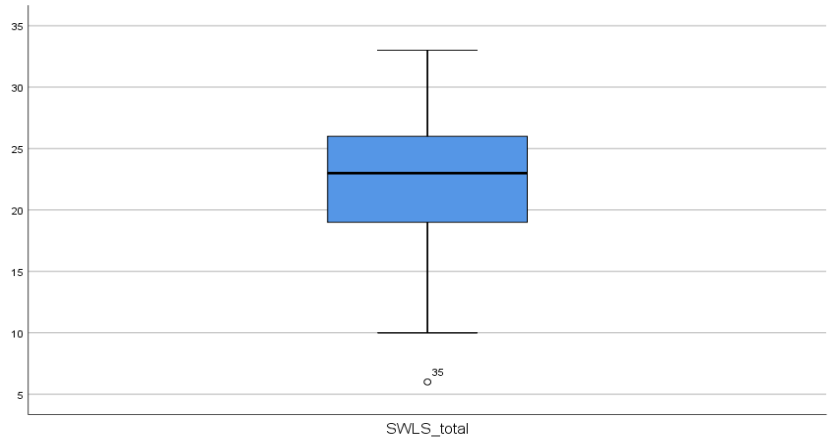

Figure 13. Box plot of Satisfaction with life.

Source: Own.

The data in the Satisfaction with life Scale Questionnaire were normally distributed, exhibiting a Gaussian distribution, as can be seen in **Figure 14**. The normal distribution of the data was also confirmed by the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, where $W = 0.98$; $p = 0.12$.

The statistical description of the Satisfaction with life Scale Questionnaire is presented in **Table 4**. The theoretical minimum that the participants could achieve in the questionnaire is 5, and the theoretical maximum is 35. On the Satisfaction with life Scale, participants achieved an empirical minimum of 6, with an empirical maximum of 33. The average score in this questionnaire was $M = 22.20$ ($SD = 5.59$).

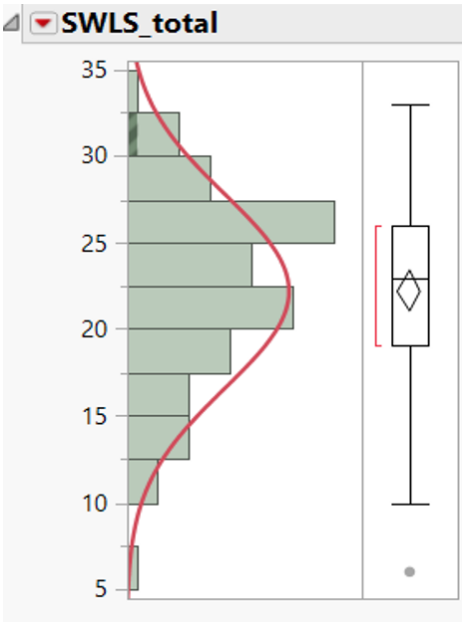

Figure 14. Histogram of Satisfaction with life Scores.

Source: Own.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of satisfaction with life.

E		22.2
Median		23
Modus		26
Standard deviation		5.59
Variance		31.22
Kurtosis		−0.20
Skewness		−0.43
Minimum		6
Maximum		33
Variability		27
Percentiles	25	19
	50	23
	75	26
IQR		7

Source: Own.

3.3. Psychological well-being and satisfaction with life

Before conducting correlation analyses, we first used the Shapiro-Wilk normality test to determine whether the data were normally distributed, allowing us to decide which correlation coefficient to apply, whether Spearman's (rs) or Pearson's (r) correlation coefficient.

In **Table 5**, we present the p values, following the rule that if $p < 0.05$, the data do not have a normal distribution, and we will use the Spearman correlation coefficient. If $p > 0.05$, the Pearson's correlation coefficient will be applied. Similarly, for correlations where one variable has a normal distribution and the other does not, we used Spearman's correlation coefficient.

The *p*-values were greater than 0.05 for the environment subscale, and the life purpose subscale in the Psychological Well-being Scale questionnaire, as well as for satisfaction with life, indicating that these variables follow a normal distribution.

Table 5. Results of the Shapiro-wilk normality test.

	Statistic	df	Sig.
PWB_subscale1	0.963	188	0.014
PWB_subscale2	0.939	188	0.000
PWB_subscale3	0.955	188	0.004
PWB_subscale4	0.904	188	0.000
PWB_subscale5	0.974	188	0.074
PWB_subscale6	0.973	188	0.067
SWLS_total	0.977	188	0.120

Source: Own.

Table 6. Correlation matrix of psychological well-being subscales and satisfaction with life.

		PWB1	PWB2	PWB3	PWB4	PWB5	PWB6	SWLS
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.755	0.420	0.308	0.734	0.986	0.278	0.403
	N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188
	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.448**	0.242*	0.369**	0.442**	0.072	0.359**
PWB1	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.023	0.000	0.000	0.508	0.001
	N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188
	Correlation Coefficient	0.448**	1.000	0.278**	0.501**	0.543**	0.231*	0.664**
PWB2	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.009	0.000	0.000	0.031	0.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188
	Correlation Coefficient	0.242*	0.278**	1.000	0.207	0.120	0.197	0.306**
PWB3	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.023	0.009		0.053	0.266	0.066	0.004
	N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188
	Correlation Coefficient	0.369**	0.501**	0.207	1.000	0.430**	0.268*	0.260*
PWB4	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.053		0.000	0.012	0.014
	N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188
	Correlation Coefficient	0.442**	0.543**	0.120	0.430**	1.000	0.300**	0.445**
PWB5	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.266	0.000		0.004	0.000
	N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188
	Correlation Coefficient	0.072	0.231*	0.197	0.268*	0.300**	1.000	0.049
PWB6	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.508	0.031	0.066	0.012	0.005		0.652
	N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188
	Correlation Coefficient	0.359**	0.664**	0.306**	0.260*	0.437**	0.065	1.000
SWLS	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.004	0.014	0.000	0.546	
	N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188

Source: Own. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$.

There is a positive, moderately strong, and statistically significant correlation between positive relationships with others and satisfaction with life ($rs = 0.36$; $p <$

0.01). Between self-acceptance and satisfaction with life, we found a positive, strong, and statistically significant relationship ($rs = 0.66$; $p < 0.01$). Autonomy was positively correlated with satisfaction with life, with a moderately strong and statistically significant relationship ($rs = 0.30$; $p < 0.01$). We found a positive, weak, but statistically significant relationship between personal growth and satisfaction with life ($rs = 0.26$; $p < 0.05$), while the relationship between coping with environment and satisfaction with life was positive, moderately strong, and statistically significant ($r = 0.45$; $p < 0.01$). The relationship between the meaning of life and the satisfaction with life was positive but negligible ($r = 0.05$) (see **Table 6**).

4. Discussion

We hypothesised that there is a relationship between psychological well-being, specifically its individual dimensions (positive relationships with others, self-acceptance, autonomy, personal growth, coping with environment and meaning of life), and satisfaction with life. This hypothesis was confirmed in our research, with the strongest positive and significant relationship identified between self-acceptance and satisfaction with life.

Based on the results, it can be stated that individually educated students who value most of their personality traits exhibit greater satisfaction with life. Additionally, students who perceive control over the situations they find themselves in are more likely to feel that their way of life aligns with their ideals. Students who feel successful in managing daily responsibilities also show higher levels of satisfaction with life.

Our findings align with the research by Mehmood and Shaukat (2014), who also found that self-acceptance, as a key component of psychological well-being, is strongly associated with satisfaction with life. Students with higher levels of self-acceptance and lower levels of depression achieved greater satisfaction with life. The authors also argue that high self-acceptance is a significant predictor of satisfaction with life in young people, with this relationship being particularly strong in girls, the main focus of their research.

In addition to the research by Mehmood and Shaukat's (2014), our study builds on other important studies that focus on the relationship between psychological well-being and satisfaction with life in students within a safe educational environment., which confirms the results of Ryff's (1989) study.

Another significant study by Diener et al. (2003) shows that subjective well-being, how people feel in their daily lives, including their emotional responses and overall life evaluations, has a strong correlation with satisfaction with life. This research emphasises the importance of positive emotions and their impact on overall student satisfaction in an environment that promotes safety and personal growth.

Similarly, the study by Gilman and Huebner (2006) focusses on the school environment and its impact on adolescents' subjective well-being and satisfaction with life. Their research confirms that positive relationships with peers and teachers, as well as support for autonomous decision making in a safe school environment, are key factors that increase student satisfaction with life.

A study by De-Juanas et al. (2020) confirms the importance of autonomy and other dimensions of psychological well-being, such as meaning of life and coping with

environment, which have a strong correlation with satisfaction with life in young people. This research, carried out in a sample of adolescents from Madrid and Bogotá, emphasises that autonomy and the ability to manage one's environment are key factors in increasing satisfaction with life. This corresponds to our findings, where control over situations and autonomy contribute to student satisfaction in a safe educational environment. These results also align with research by Procházka and Bočková (2024), which found a moderate and statistically significant relationship between psychological well-being and satisfaction with life in early career project managers.

Furthermore, Lorber et al. (2023) found that loneliness and restricted social contacts during the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on well-being and satisfaction with life. This research further showed that support for psychological well-being, such as through digital technologies and family contact, can help improve overall satisfaction with life. This again corresponds to our results, which show that supporting positive relationships and managing daily challenges in a safe environment increases student satisfaction.

Another study, such as that of Garca-Carrion et al. (2021), explores the importance of collective social environments in relation to well-being and notes that environments that promote positive interactions and dialogue among students have a significant impact on their satisfaction and overall psychological well-being. A safe environment that creates space for sharing ideas and feelings contributes to personal growth and increases overall satisfaction with life.

Further research by Quraishi and Walker (2021) demonstrated that emotional and social support in a safe educational environment significantly improves adolescent well-being. The study emphasised that when students have the opportunity to develop their abilities and are supported by teachers and peers, their level of satisfaction with life increases. This research confirms that a safe educational environment that provides emotional security and support is essential for personal growth and managing daily challenges.

A more recent study by Singh et al. (2022) found that a supportive educational environment focused on strengthening positive relationships increases students' subjective well-being, particularly by ensuring they feel supported by teachers and peers. The results of this study also showed that when students are encouraged to develop autonomy and positive interactions, they feel more connected to their environment and exhibit higher levels of satisfaction with life.

Our research confirms that psychological factors such as self-acceptance, autonomy, and positive relationships are crucial to achieving greater satisfaction with life in individually educated students, especially in a safe educational environment. This context enables the development of personal growth, the ability to manage challenges, and the building of meaningful relationships, which are key to overall well-being.

Existing research further supports and expands these findings, adding new aspects such as the impact of social isolation or collective environments on psychological well-being. These findings are consistent with current education trends that emphasise the importance of psychological well-being for academic and personal growth in young people. For these assertions, we draw on findings from recent studies that provide a broader context and validate our conclusions about the importance of a

safe educational environment, emotional support, autonomy, and digital tools for the satisfaction and well-being of young talents.

The study by Duncan et al. (2021) examines the influence of early childhood experiences on health and well-being later in life. It highlights that positive experiences in the early stages of life foster long-term health and psychological well-being. Our findings emphasise the importance of support from the early stages of education, aligning with this study's assertion that a secure environment has a profound impact on psychological well-being.

The research by Lorber and Smith (2023) investigates the impact of stress and coping strategies on life satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study underscores the role of emotional support, confirming our conclusion that emotional and psychological support within a safe environment is crucial to managing stress among students with athletic talents.

Martínez-García and López-Montesinos (2024) identify dimensions of well-being in higher education and propose a model to improve mental health among young adults. This model complements our proposal for support programmes in individualised education for athletic talents, particularly in the domain of psychological well-being and mental health.

Furthermore, Quraishi and Walker (2021) explore how emotional support in an inclusive educational environment improves adolescents' well-being. Their study highlights the importance of positive interactions with teachers and peers, which is in line with our conclusions on the importance of a secure environment for individually educated students.

Zhang and Sun (2023) analyse the impact of digital interactions on life satisfaction and well-being among university students. Their study focusses on self-confidence and social support in online environments, complementing our findings on the importance of digital tools and access to online support in individualised education.

De-Juanas et al. (2020) argue that cooperative learning enhances life satisfaction through social interactions and support. These findings support our thesis that social interactions within a secure educational environment strengthen the psychological well-being.

Finally, Singh and Sharma (2022) examine the influence of autonomy on well-being in educational settings. Our findings on autonomy as a critical dimension of psychological well-being for students with athletic talents are directly confirmed by this study.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion of our article highlights the crucial importance of the correlation between psychological well-being and satisfaction with life in individually educated students, particularly in athletically talented individuals. Research shows that well-being, which encompasses positive relationships, personal growth, autonomy, and coping with the environment, significantly influences the overall happiness of life of these students. For athletes who participate in intensive training and competitions, psychological well-being is essential not only for their athletic success but also for academic achievement.

A safe educational environment plays an irreplaceable role in supporting the well-being of these students. An environment that ensures physical and psychological safety allows athletically talented students to better balance the demands of education and their sporting careers. This protection against stress and burnout enables them to achieve better academic results and long-term satisfaction. Educational institutions that provide flexible study plans and individual support contribute significantly to the overall mental well-being of students.

For students in secondary schools and universities, it is crucial that the educational environment provides not only academic flexibility but also emotional support, ensuring that students can successfully manage both school and sporting demands. This research also emphasises the need for comprehensive support from school psychologists, coaches, and educators, which is essential to maintain the psychological well-being of athletically gifted students.

5.1. Limitations

This study has several limitations that warrant consideration.

One primary limitation is the reliance on self-reported data, which is vulnerable to biases related to social desirability, recall accuracy, and personal perception. Participants may present themselves in a more favourable light or may struggle to accurately recall certain experiences or emotions, potentially skewing the findings. Such biases in self-reporting can limit the objectivity and reliability of the data collected. To address these issues, future research could benefit from incorporating observational methods or multi-informant reports. For example, observational methods could provide more objective data on behaviours and interactions within athletic and educational environments, while multi-informant reports, drawing on the perspectives of coaches, teachers, or peers, could offer a more comprehensive understanding of participants' well-being. This triangulated approach would help validate self-reported measures and mitigate the limitations inherent in relying solely on participants' accounts.

Another significant limitation of this study is the use of the Satisfaction with Life Scale, a tool that consists of only five items and may not encompass the full breadth of life domains in which young athletes might experience satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Research by Diener et al. (2003) emphasises that life satisfaction is a complex construct that extends across various domains, including family life, friendships, academic achievements, and, notably, for young athletes, success in sports. The limited scope of the scale could restrict our understanding of participant satisfaction in these broader areas, which may be particularly relevant for young athletes balancing multiple aspects of life. Future studies could address this gap by incorporating broader and more nuanced psychometric tools that assess happiness with life across multiple domains, as recommended in studies like García-Carrion et al. (2021). Specialised questionnaires targeting areas such as athletic success, social support, or family well-being could produce a more detailed and accurate measure of life satisfaction in this population.

An additional limitation of this study is the absence of an analysis of age and sex differences in relation to psychological well-being. While this omission aligns with

the primary objectives of the investigation, understanding how well-being varies between demographic factors such as age and gender could provide valuable information. Developmental and gender-based differences often shape people's experiences and needs, particularly in demanding contexts that combine education and athletic performance. Future research could explore these variables, helping to tailor interventions to meet the distinct developmental and psychological needs of different age groups and genders.

Addressing these limitations in future studies would contribute to a stronger understanding of psychological well-being and life satisfaction among young athletic talents and improve the precision of interventions aimed at supporting them.

5.2. Theoretical and practical implications

Given that this was an academic study, its primary contribution is to enrich knowledge in this area.

From a methodological perspective, a significant contribution is the validation of the psychometric tools used in the study, particularly the Psychological Well-Being Scale and the Satisfaction with life Scale.

Practical implications cannot be definitively established, as this was an academic rather than a practical study. However, the results of our research could serve as a basis for developing appropriate preventive programmes and interventions for schools. In these programmes, school psychologists, educators, and school administrators could focus on improving the mental well-being and satisfaction of students, thus reducing the risk of socially pathological phenomena that are often present in the school environment. Educators and other school personnel should be adequately trained in the prevention of bullying, cyberbullying, and other forms of violence or discrimination.

In relation to the individual education of sports talents, it is important to emphasise personal development and the balance between sports and academic activities. An individualised approach to the education of such students should include flexibility in organising lessons, so that students have sufficient time not only for training but also for recovery and successfully completing school duties. The support provided by the teaching staff, school psychologists, and coaches should focus on developing mental resilience, stress management, and motivation to achieve both sporting and academic goals.

Until the COVID-19 pandemic, individualised education, although legally approved in Czechia and Slovakia, was not widely practised. The pandemic revealed the capacity of teachers to transition much of their instruction to online or hybrid models, which are particularly well suited for education of sports talents. Platforms like Moodle allow for prestructured academic content, enabling students to learn at their own pace and adapt their studies around rigorous training and competition schedules.

In the following, we present a proposal for an individualised educational programme:

(1) Digital learning platforms:

- Moodle or equivalent systems should serve as the backbone, providing a structured and accessible curriculum for the entire school year.
- The learning materials and assignments are organised into modules, allowing students to progress flexibly and independently.

(2) Flipped classroom approach:
- Educators focus on mentoring and resolving complex issues during periodic synchronous sessions, with foundational knowledge delivered through pre-recorded lectures and reading materials.

(3) Flexible deadlines and assessments:
- Establish clear deadlines for key outputs and exams, balancing the demands of sports schedules.
- Regularly scheduled one-on-one check-ins for assessments and feedback to ensure students meet academic standards.

(4) Student-centric design:
- Personalization of course timelines and content to fit the athlete's training and recovery cycles.
- Incorporation of real-world learning opportunities, such as project-based tasks related to sports sciences or management, fosters dual development.

(5) Social and emotional support:
- Dedicated counsellors and mentors trained in sports psychology to support students' mental well-being.
- Opportunities for peer interaction through virtual study groups or occasional in-person collaborative projects.

(6) Inclusion of physical and mental wellness in curriculum:
- Education on stress management, mental health awareness, and work-life balance.
- Encouragement of practices such as mindfulness or sports psychology workshops.

Based on the findings of our study, here are concrete recommendations for coaches and policymakers as well:

For coaches:

(1) Encourage academic and athletic balance:
- Support athletes in prioritising academic goals alongside their training schedules.
- Collaborate with educators to monitor the student's holistic progress.

(2) Mental health resources:
- Advocate for access to psychological counseling services tailored to student athletes.
- Regularly check athletes' mental well-being and provide interventions if signs of burnout appear.

(3) Leadership in emotional development:
- Promote a positive team culture that values personal growth and life satisfaction beyond sports performance.

For policy makers:

(1) Invest in holistic education systems:

- Fund initiatives for psychological support programmes in schools, such as employing school psychologists or offering group therapy sessions.
- Develop inclusive policies that recognise the dual career pathways of student athletes.

(2) Standardise individualised education policies:
- Mandat flexible academic frameworks for schools that cater to athletes.
- Ensure accessibility to digital tools and on-line education platforms for individually educated students.

(3) Enhance collaboration between stakeholders:
- Promote partnerships between schools, sports organisations, and families to create a unified support system for students.

(4) Monitor long-term well-being:
- Commission longitudinal studies to track the effectiveness of safe educational environments in both academic and athletic success.
- Use findings to continuously improve policies and support systems.

Adopting these principles and recommendations will ensure that the psychological safety and academic success of student athletes are prioritized. This dual focus on academic rigour and athletic demands fosters well-rounded development, preparing students for long-term success in both domains.

5.3. Future research

In our study, we explored the correlation between psychological well-being and satisfaction with life.

In light of limitations, future research would benefit from adopting a longitudinal design to observe changes in well-being over time, allowing the identification of trends and causal relationships. Additionally, the use of mixed-method approaches could capture both quantitative data and rich qualitative insights, providing a more comprehensive view of well-being. Finally, including measures that assess satisfaction with life in more detailed dimensions, such as family support, peer relationships, and academic success, could provide a fuller picture of life satisfaction among young athletes and improve the applicability of the findings to support systems in educational and athletic settings.

In future research, it would be beneficial to focus on the relationships between these variables in the context of the child's attachment and the parental upbringing styles to which they have been or are currently exposed.

In addition, it would be useful to compare well-being in relation to academic success and to compare these variables between students in schools with school psychologists and those without. This approach could produce interesting results, highlighting the role of the school psychologist in supporting students.

Another possible direction for future research could be to compare well-being and academic success between boys and girls. Taking into account the research by Amholt et al. (2020), which showed that the relationship between psychological well-being and academic success changes with child maturation, it would be useful to conduct longitudinal research focused on the development of well-being and academic success throughout a student's educational journey, from primary school through

secondary school to university. This research could clarify whether and how the relationship between psychological well-being and academic success changes over time.

Other research areas could include a specific approach to the individual education of athletically talented students, where the correlation between psychological well-being, academic success, and the high demands associated with athletic performance could be examined more deeply. Athletic students face challenges related not only to their education but also to the pressures of achieving excellent results in training and competitions. Research could focus on how psychological well-being, satisfaction with life, and academic success of athletes are interconnected and how these factors affect their overall performance and long-term development.

One of the key areas of exploration could be how individually tailored educational programmes that take into account the time demands of training and competitions can support not only athletes' academic results but also their psychological health. Emphasis could be placed on how educational institutions can create flexible learning plans or provide specialised support, such as through school psychologists or coaches, to ensure balanced development of both academic and athletic abilities.

It would also be interesting to explore how specific elements of the educational environment, such as a safe and supportive school climate, can affect the psychological well-being of athletic talents. Research could analyse to what extent a positive school environment, including emotional and social support, safety, and sufficient resources for talent development, contributes to better academic and athletic outcomes. Particular attention could be paid to how schools and coaches can prevent stress and burnout in young athletes, who are often subjected to high expectations both in school and sports.

Another research direction could be to examine the differences in psychological well-being and academic success between athletically gifted students educated in main schools and those educated in institutions focused on sports talents (e.g., sports high schools). This could clarify whether an integrated or specialised approach is more suitable and how the specific educational environment affects long-term success for athletes, both academically and in their sports careers.

Lastly, it would be interesting to investigate how collaboration between school psychologists, coaches, and teachers can help create comprehensive support systems that allow athletes to manage academic responsibilities, psychological pressure, and demanding sports training without negatively affecting their mental health or academic achievements.

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