

Original Article

Relationship of narcissism and coping strategies with competitive stress among female elite athletes

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between narcissism and coping strategies with competitive stress in elite athletes. This research was a descriptive-correlation research method (structural equation modeling). In terms of purpose, the present study was an applied type of research and, in terms of time, was a kind of future research. The statistical population of this study was all elite male and female athletes of East Azarbaijan province in two age groups of youth and adults from team who participated in the championship of 2019. According to the Cochran formula 270 athletes were selected as a sample size. To collect demographic information and measure variables, Individual information form, narcissism and coping strategies in sports competition questionnaires were used. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (KS) was used to verify the natural distribution of data, Cronbach's alpha coefficient to calculate the internal consistency of instrument, Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the correlation between variables, Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to study the structural equation modeling and (SEM) models to test the fitting of the base model with the data and to determine the structural relationships between the variables at 95 confidence level, using SPSS22 and Liserl software version 8.53. The results showed that pride had with the greatest impact and the most important role on thought control strategy, imagery, logical analysis, search support, evacuation of unpleasant emotions, distraction of mind and surrender/withdrawal. To be Right had the greatest impact and the most important role on relaxation strategy, efforts to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.

Keywords: Narcissism, Coping Strategies, Competitive Stress;

1. Introduction

Participating in sports has numerous benefits for athletes, including improving skills, fitness, and self-esteem. However, exercise is also a stressful environment for some participants (Weinberg & Gould, 2014). At the highest level of any sport, where competitors have spent countless hours completing their technique and strategy, anything can increase stress. The world of competitive sports often creates a stressful atmosphere. As a result, athletes must control short-term stress during competition and long-term stress outcomes and expectations (Yeh, 2016). Assuming athletes are at the same level, those who are able to cope with stress in critical moments are more likely to succeed. This is why many sports refer to certain moments in a game as "pressure" moments. Stress is often the biggest source of stress in sports. Athletes are constantly in a situation where there is no room for error.

Coping with stress means that the athlete has to deal immediately with hormonal or chemical changes in body that has no control over (Publications, 2021). Therefore, in a sports competition, there are cases in which athletes at all levels and from any sport must not only overcome physical fatigue but also have to cope with stress and unpleasant emotions (Argiris et al., 2018). Therefore, athletes face many stressful situations due to the nature of their activity. During competitions they can feel fear, pain, and lack of confidence, fear of failure and fear of the coach. During exercise, they may experience severe pain or fatigue, uncertainty, or fatigue. Their inability to cope with these stressors is an important factor that leads to failure and reduced performance (Lazarus, 2006).

Therefore, the sports psychology literature unanimously agrees that athletes should use coping strategies to deal with the problem. Coping strategies refer to cognitive and behavioral efforts to prevent, manage and reduce stress that people use in stressful situations (Saadat et al., 2015). According to Folkman and Lazarus (1986), confrontation is a dynamic phenomenon that, on the one hand, shows the state of cognitive and emotional actions of a person in the face of stressful elements or their consequences, and on the other hand, inhibits specific internal needs and external expectations (Folkman & Lazarus, 1986). Endler and Parker (1990) distinguished three general types of problem-solving, emotion-oriented and avoidance coping

strategies (Endler & Parker, 1990). On the other hand, one of the classifications has divided coping strategies into two strategies: task-oriented coping (problem-oriented) and emotion-oriented. In a problem-solving strategy, the individual acts directly against the stressful situation to moderate the stressor and achieve the goal. But in the face of emotion, the individual regulates the emotional states related to or caused by the stressor to moderate the stressor and achieve the goal (Folkman & Lazarus, 1986).

Coping strategies mainly include cognitive and behavioral activities and actions to manage stress. According to Folkman and Lazarus's theory in sports science, coping is defined as the cognitive and behavioral efforts an athlete uses to manage and control the internal and external sport. Athletes have several strategies for coping with stressful situations. The goal of coping strategies is to change the stressful situation, while coping with the emotions eliminates the emotional discomfort associated with the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Krohne (1993) observed that avoidance and coping strategies are most commonly used by athletes. In general, people use coping strategies to prevent stressors (Krohne, 1993). These strategies for coping with the sources of stress we encounter throughout life also affect physical, psychological, and social variables (Hatunoglu, 2020). Athletes' coping skills and strategies are also important determinants of performance that can directly affect athletes' personal and professional lives (Cosma et al., 2020). In general, intense physical, psychological, and emotional demands on athletes during training and competitions require them to develop and use a set of effective coping strategies to meet these needs (Freeman, 2021).

One of the psychological factors that may be involved in the selection and application of coping strategies is the personality traits of athletes. Research evidence shows that extroverted athletes who are emotionally stable and open to new experiences are more likely to use coping strategies. Also, conscientious athletes and athletes with high levels of extraversion, openness, and agreeability benefit more from emotion coping strategies. In addition, athletes with low levels of openness or high levels of neuroticism use more avoidance coping strategies (Allen et al., 2011). On the other hand, evidence in the research literature suggests that narcissism is associated with personality traits



(Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Connor-Smith & Compas, 2004; Connor-Smith & Flachsbar, 2007). Also, although the relationship between narcissism and mental health is widely accepted, little is known about how coping strategies can explain this relationship (Hyun & Ku, 2021). Narcissism is clinically defined as a pervasive pattern of magnification, need for admiration, and lack of empathy (Edition, 2013). According to this definition, research on subclinical samples shows that narcissists consider themselves as special individuals who are superior to others (Gabriel et al., 1994; John & Robins, 1994), have high confidence. (Morf et al., 2011) and are self-centered and arrogant (Morf et al., 2011) based on Raskin & Terry, 1988 conceptualization. In the Narcissistic Personality Inventory, narcissism is characterized by seven characteristics: Exploitation, selfishness and pride are characterized. Narcissism can be conceptualized as a person's ability to maintain a relatively positive self-image through his or her regulatory processes, emotions, and environment.

The basic needs of narcissists are accreditation, approval, and acknowledgment along with overt and covert motivation in search of external experiences of self-promotion from the social environment. Most theorists have suggested that narcissism is a healthy and morbid state that reflects the organization of adaptive and maladaptive personality, psychological needs, and regulatory mechanisms that result from individual differences in self-promotion and accreditation needs (Mohammadi, 2017). According to Foster et al. (2011), narcissism is a personality structure that has symptoms such as the influence of personal desires, accountability to others, and cognitive processing bias (Mohammadi, 2017). The narcissists have a very irrational and very positive attitude towards themselves and always consider themselves worthy of everything. They pay no attention to others and show less interest in dependency, communication and social values, and socially supportive behaviors (Morf et al., 2011). However, narcissism is associated with both positive and negative consequences, some of which include reduced depression, extraversion, initial pleasure, and better overall functioning (Wallace & Baumeister, 2002).

In line with research, Hyun and Ko (2021) showed that great narcissism predicts greater satisfaction with life and less perceived stress, while vulnerable narcissism shows the opposite pattern, and all of these relationships are actively confronted. They are

mediated (Hyun & Ku, 2021). Overall, the results highlight the vital role of preventive coping strategies in predicting mental health among narcissists. Brailovskaia et al (2020) in their study showed that vulnerable narcissism and large narcissism had a significant relationship with anxiety (Brailovskaia et al., 2020). The results of Fang et al (2021) showed that admirable narcissism is negatively related to depression, while competitive narcissism is positively related to depression. Admirable narcissism is also likely to be positive, while competitive narcissism may be negative with mental health (Fang et al., 2021). Okada (2010) in his research has pointed out the relationship between narcissism and aggression (Okada, 2010). Houlcroft et al (2012) in their study showed that vulnerable narcissism was strongly associated with anger and hostility, while superior narcissism was strongly associated with verbal and physical aggression (Houlcroft et al., 2012). Akehurst & Thatche (2010) in their study on narcissism, social anxiety and self-confidence in sports *showed* that narcissism protects people from experiencing high levels of social anxiety (Akehurst & Thatcher, 2010). The results of Salehian and Lotfollahi (2018) show that the difficult dimensions of emotion regulation include (non-acceptance of emotional responses, difficulties in participating in goal-oriented behaviors, impulse control problems, lack of emotional awareness, limitations in achieving emotional regulation strategies, and lack of clarity (Salehian, 2018). There is a significant relationship between emotion and narcissism and stress among students. The study of narcissism in athletes shows that narcissism in athletes in some sports such as football and bodybuilding is higher than non-athletes and athletes in other sports and with increasing levels of competition also increases the levels of narcissism (Elman & McKelvie, 2003; Hatami et al., 2013; Salehian, 2018).

In addition, research evidence suggests that narcissism is associated with aggression, unrestrained morality, and antisocial behaviors in athletes, which emphasizes the need for careful study of this structure and its role in athletes' athletic behaviors at various levels of competition (Jones et al., 2017). Given the key role of emotion control and coping strategies in athletic performance and success (Lazarus, 2000; Nicholls & Polman, 2007) and the potential role of narcissism in applying coping strategies, the present study seeks to answer the question: Are the dimensions of narcissism and



strategies for coping with competitive stress in elite athletes related or not?

2. Materials and Methods

Due to the nature of the analyzed data, the present study is quantitative research and has been conducted cross-sectionally. In terms of data collection method, the present study is descriptive-correlational research (structural equation modeling) and in terms of purpose is applied research and in terms of time is prospective research.

2.1. Statistical Society

The statistical population of the present study is all the elite female athletes of East Azerbaijan province in both age groups of youth and adults from the basketball, futsal, volleyball and handball team disciplines who participated in the championship of the province from July 2020 to October 2020. According to provincial competition statistics, 130 athletes in the youth age category and 140 athletes in the adult age category (in a total of 270 people) participated.

2.2. Statistical sample

According to the Krejcie & Morgan sample size table, the sample size was determined to be 97 for the youth age group and 103 for the adult age group (200 in total) and was divided into 4 subgroups using a simple stratified random sampling method.

2.3. Research tools

Personal information form: A researcher-made form consisting of eight items was used to determine the demographic characteristics consisting of age, sport, sports history, competitive history, competitive age group, championship records and winning and losing status in current competitions.

Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-40): This instrument was developed by Raskin & Terry 1988 based on the original 54-item version and is the first and most common self-assessment tool for measuring narcissistic traits in nonclinical groups. The list consists of seven subscales of authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, pride, and the answers include a pair of phrases that the respondent must choose from. For retest reliability, 0.72, reliability by composing method is 0.75 and internal consistency is 0.65. Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained in this study ranged from 0.71 to 0.79 for narcissistic dimensions and 0.78 for the whole list. Based on this evidence, the assessments based on the narcissistic personality list in the study had good validity and reliability.

List of coping strategies in sports competition (ISCCS): This tool was created by Gaudreau &

Blondin (2002) based on the original French version of 95 phrases and consists of 39 phrases on 10 subscales, which are classified into two categories of coping strategies (Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002). The first category is task-oriented coping with strategies of thought control, mental imagery, relaxation, effort, logical analysis, and seeking support. Has been. The response of the tools of this tool is graded on a five-point Likert continuum from (never 1) to (5 too much). Internal consistency of the Persian version of the list of coping strategies in sports competition using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the whole tool is 0.78 and for nine subscales in the range of 0.74 (unpleasant emotion evacuation strategy) to 0.83 (support search strategy) has been reported (Hasani et al., 2015).

In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for narcissistic dimensions ranged from 0.74 to 0.83 and for the whole instrument were 0.81. Based on this evidence, the assessments based on the list of coping strategies in sports competition in the present study had good validity and reliability.

2.4. General method of execution

The required information in the present study was collected by field method. In order to carry out the research, first the necessary correspondence and coordination was made to introduce the researcher to the General Directorate of Sports and Youth of East Azerbaijan Province and subsequently to the provincial sports delegations in the fields of basketball, futsal, volleyball and handball. In all sports delegations, first, information was received about the time of holding provincial competitions in the women's section in the two age categories of youth and adults. The time of completing the questionnaires was considered after the end of the competitions. Sampling tried to make the participants a combination of successful and unsuccessful athletes and teams in the competitions. Athletes and teams who volunteered to participate in the study were invited to be present at the designated time. At first, explanations about the objectives of the research and the necessity of its implementation, the method of completing the questionnaires, the confidentiality of the collected information and the optionality of participating in the research were provided and the questionnaire packages were provided to them. In total, all questionnaires were returned.

2.5. Data analysis method

Individual information and research variables were classified and described using mean, standard deviation, frequency and frequency percentage,



shape and table. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-S) was used to examine the status of data distribution and due to the abnormal distribution of data, non-parametric statistical tests were used to analyze the data. Structural equation method was used to test the research hypotheses. The whole process of data analysis was performed in SPSS and PLS software.

3. Results

According to Table 1, the test results show that the distributions are abnormal due to the lower level of significance than 0.05, and therefore non-parametric statistics should be used to examine the research data. Therefore, Smart PLS-based variance software was used.

Table 1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test

Variables	Z	Sig.	Variables	Z	Sig.
Narcissism	1.418	0.001	Coping strategies	1.521	0.001
Authority	1.512	0.001	Thought control	1.498	0.001
Show off	1.407	0.001	imagination	1.532	0.001
Supremacy	1.421	0.001	calming	1.471	0.001
to be right	1.510	0.001	Spend effort	1.510	0.001
Exploitation	1.417	0.001	Logical analysis	1.429	0.001
Good health	1.475	0.001	Search for support	1.551	0.001
Pride	1.539	0.001	Discharge of unpleasant emotions	1.443	0.001
			Distract the mind	1.518	0.001
			Surrender / retreat	1.446	0.001

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and thought control strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T value which is higher than 1.96, it was found that this relationship is significant. In the meantime, pride

with a relationship of -0.390 is the most important dimension of narcissism on the mind control strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.

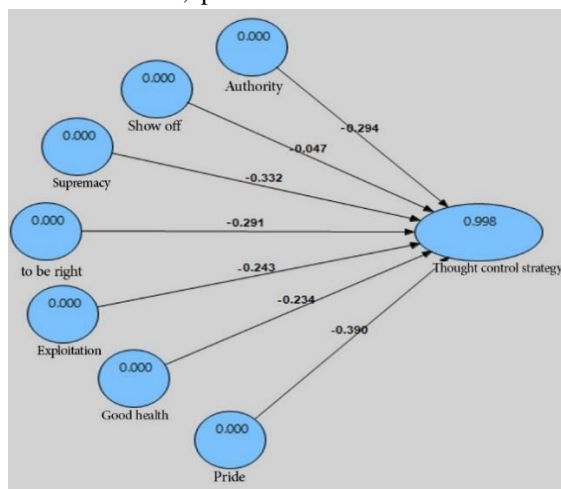


Figure 1. Structural fit of the relationship between narcissistic dimensions and thought control strategy to deal with competitive stress



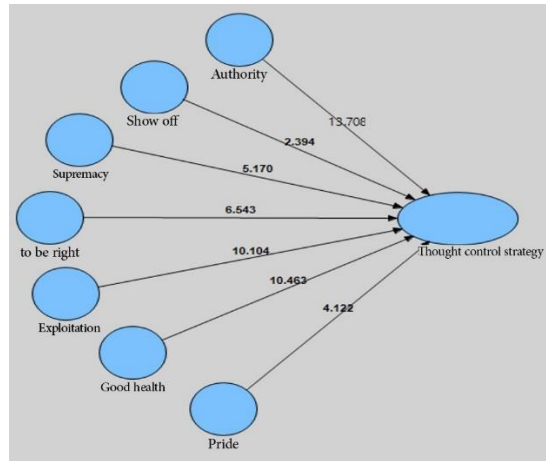


Figure 2. The relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and thought control strategy to deal with competitive stress

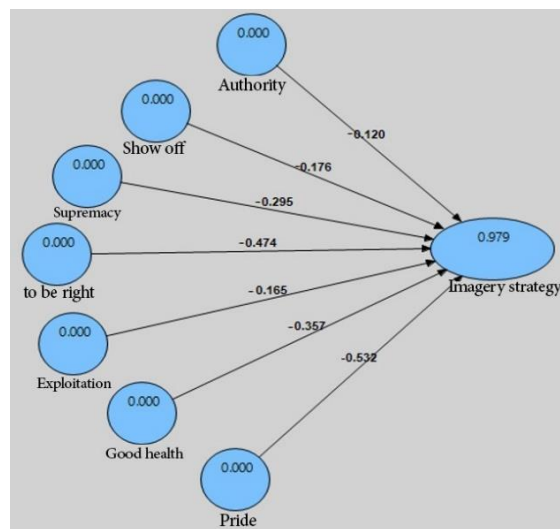


Figure 3. Structural fit of the relationship between narcissistic dimensions and thought control strategy to deal with competitive stress

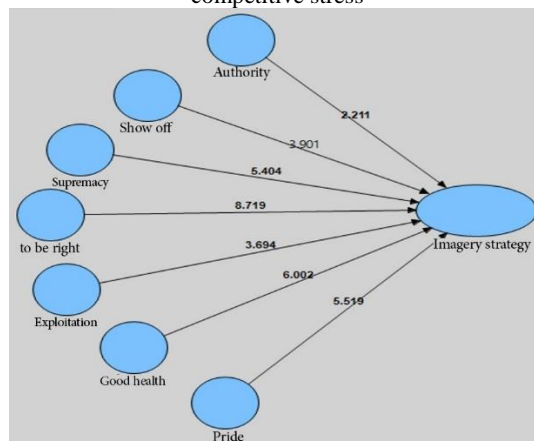


Figure 4. The relationship between narcissistic dimensions and imagery strategy to deal with competitive stress
 The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and imagery strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T value which is higher than 1.96, it was found that this relationship is significant. In the meantime, pride with a relationship of -0.532 is the most important dimension of narcissism on the imagery strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.



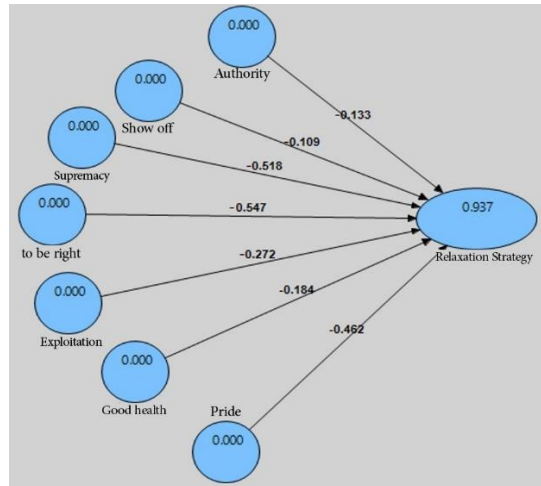


Figure 5. Structural fit of the relationship between narcissistic dimensions and relaxation strategy to deal with competitive stress.

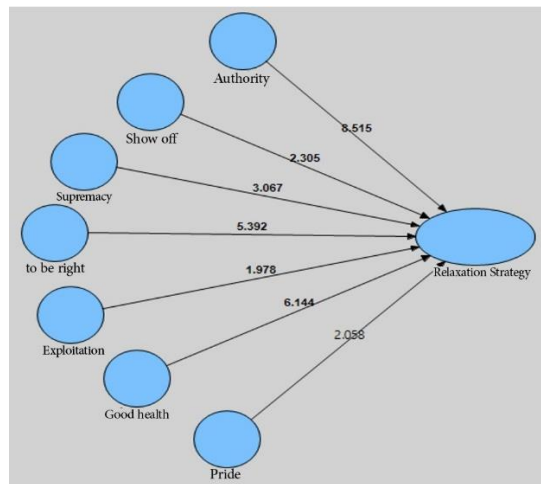


Figure 6. Relationship between narcissistic dimensions and relaxation strategy to deal with competitive stress.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and relaxation strategy to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T value which is higher than 1.96, it was found that this relationship is significant. In the meantime, being

right with the relationship of -0.547 is the most important dimension of narcissism on the relaxation strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.

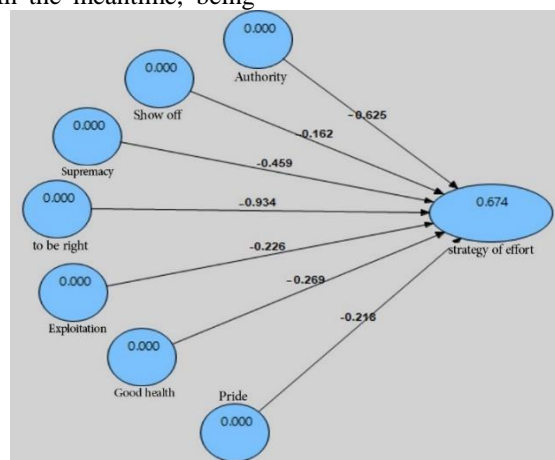


Figure 7. Structural fit of the relationship between narcissistic dimensions and strategy of trying to cope with competitive stress



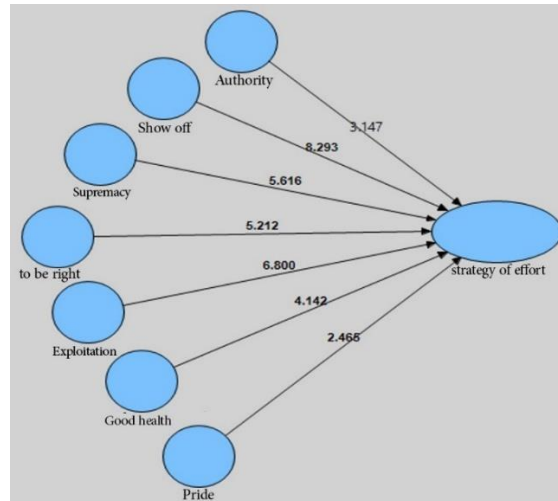


Figure 8. Relationship between narcissistic dimensions and strategy of effort to cope with competitive stress. The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and the strategy of simply trying to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T value which is higher than 1.96, it was found

that this relationship is significant. In the meantime, being right with the relationship of -0.934 is the most important dimension of narcissism on the strategy of just trying to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes.

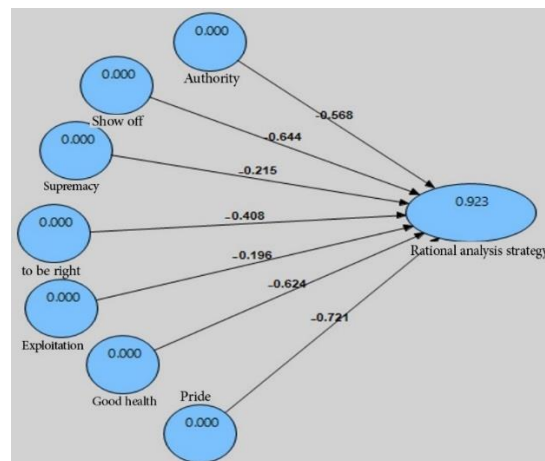


Figure 9. Structural fit of the relationship between narcissistic dimensions and rational analysis strategy to deal with competitive stress.

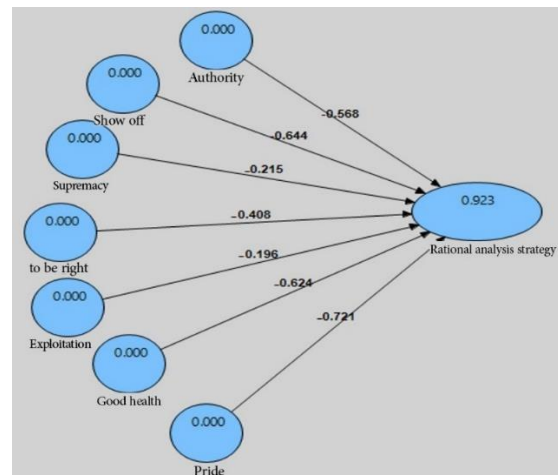


Figure 10. Relationship between narcissistic dimensions and rational analysis strategy to deal with competitive stress.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of

narcissism and logical analysis strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T



value which is higher than 1.96, it was found that this relationship is significant. In the meantime, pride with a relationship of -0.721 is the most important

dimension of narcissism on the strategy of logical analysis to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.

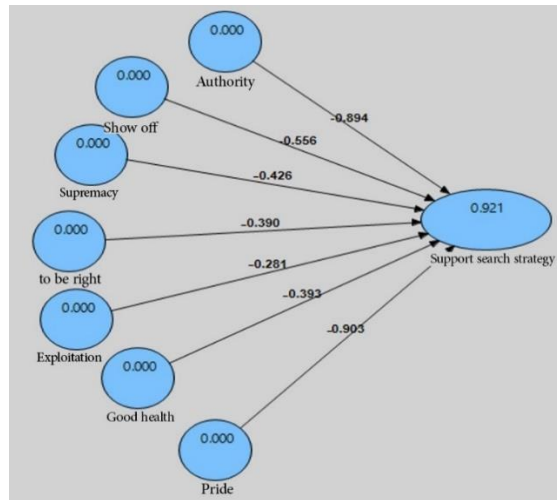


Figure 11. Structural fit of the relationship between narcissistic dimensions and support seeking strategy to deal with competitive stress

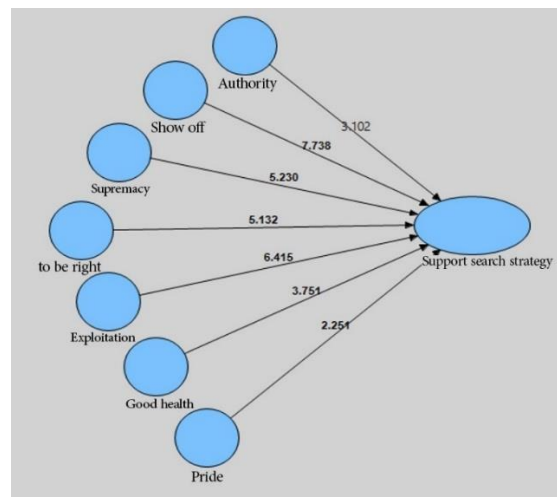


Figure 12. Relationship between narcissistic dimensions and support seeking strategy to deal with competitive stress.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and the strategy of seeking support to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T value which is higher than 1.96, it

was found that this relationship is significant. In the meantime, pride with a relationship of -0.903 is the most important dimension of narcissism on the strategy of seeking support to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes.



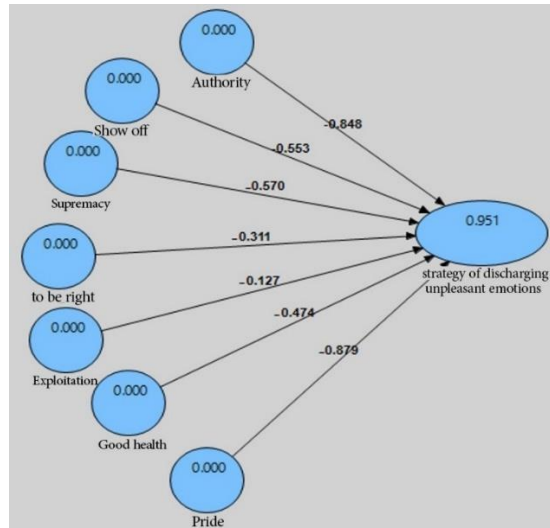


Figure 13. Structural fit of the relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and the strategy of discharging unpleasant emotions to deal with competitive stress

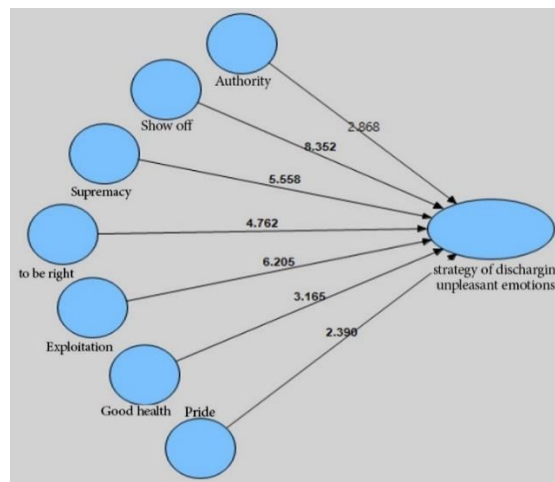


Figure 14. The relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and the strategy of discharging unpleasant emotions to cope with competitive stress.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and the strategy of discharging unpleasant emotions to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T value which is higher than 1.96, it was found that this relationship

is significant. In the meantime, pride with the effect of -0.879 is the most important dimension of narcissism on the strategy of discharging unpleasant emotions to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.



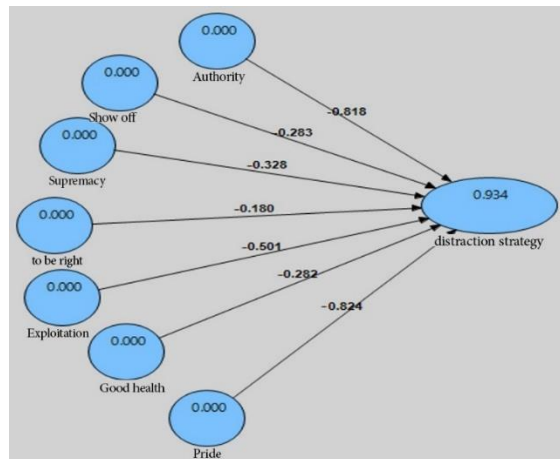


Figure 15. Structural fit of the relationship between narcissistic dimensions and mind distraction strategy to deal with competitive stress

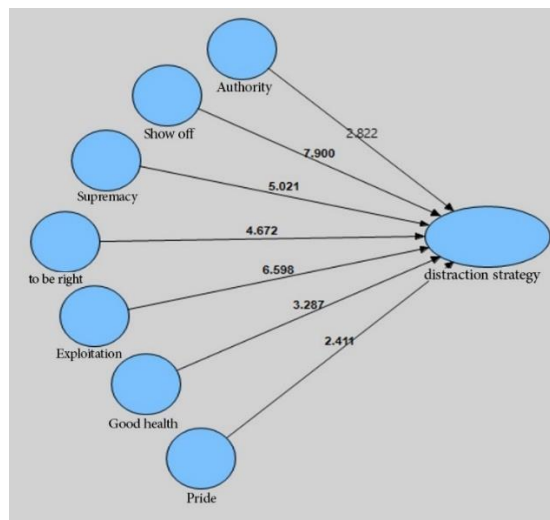


Figure 16. The relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and the strategy of distracting the mind to cope with competitive stress

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and the strategy of distracting the mind to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T value which is higher than 1.96, it was found that this relationship is significant. In the meantime, pride with a relationship of -0.824 is the most important dimension of narcissism on the strategy of distracting the mind to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.



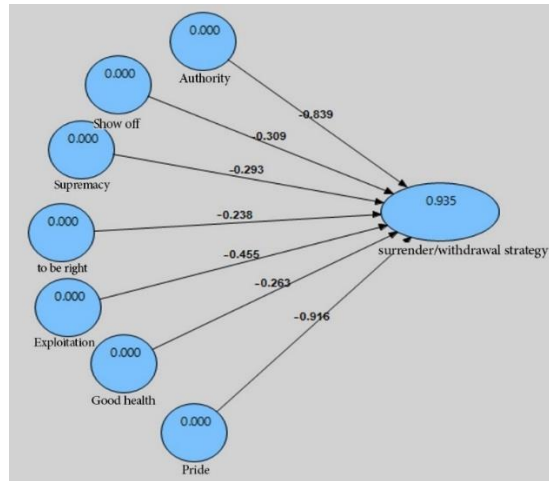


Figure 17. Structural fit of the relationship between narcissistic dimensions and surrender / withdrawal strategy to cope with competitive stress

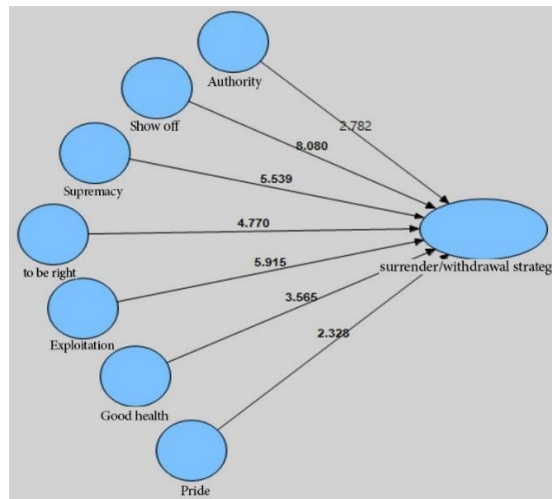


Figure 18. Relationship between narcissistic dimensions and surrender / withdrawal strategy to cope with competitive stress

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and surrender / withdrawal strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Considering the T value which is higher than 1.96, it was found that this relationship is significant. In the meantime, pride with a relationship of -0.824 is the most important dimension of narcissism on the strategy of surrender / retreat to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes.

4. Discussion

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with thought control strategies to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness,

exploitation, selfishness, pride and reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; Pride is most associated with the most important role in the mind control strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. The results are consistent with the findings of Jones (2017) (Jones et al., 2017), Bernacka et al. (2016) (Bernacka et al., 2016), Salehian and Lotfolahi (2018) (Salehian, 2018), Pasand et al. (2015) (Pasand et al., 2016), Yavari (2014) (Yavari, 2014), Besharat (2009) (Besharat et al., 2021), Hyun and Ko (2021) (Hyun & Ku, 2021), Brillowski et al. (2020) (Brailovskaia et al., 2020).

In this regard, Salehian and Lotfolahi (2018) showed that narcissism of elite athletes in the components of selfishness, exploitation, pride, self-observation, power and authority, precedence, ostentation is higher than other athletes and affects their athletic performance (Salehian, 2018). is. Narcissistic athletes use each of these components to do their job successfully. In explaining the results, it



should be mentioned that narcissism causes athletes to have high expectations of them and to expect the most desirable level possible in the competition fields. This has led to narcissism due to some unwanted pressure on people's minds and stress cause intellectual conflicts among athletes. This causes narcissism to reduce the mind control strategy to deal with the competitive stress of elite athletes, and in a way this strategy is overshadowed by some psychological problems of narcissism.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with the illustration strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, pride and reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; Pride with the most relevance has the most important role in the imagery strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. The results of the present study are in line with the results of Jones (2017), Bernaka et al. (2016), Salehian and Lotf Elahi (2018), Pasand et al. (2015), Yavari (2014), Besharat (2009) for Brylowski et al. (2020). Misaligned research was not found. In interpreting the results, it should be noted that narcissism causes problems for athletes in the mental and psychological fields. On the other hand, narcissists strongly feel that they deserve certain privileges, which causes them to have major problems in the field of illustration. This is due to the negative role of narcissism on the mental and psychological issues of athletes. Thus, narcissism due to some psychological problems caused to reduce the amount of imagery strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with a relaxation strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, pride and reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; being honest with the most communication plays the most important role in the relaxation strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. The results of the present study are in line with the results of Jones (2017), Bernaka et al. (2016), Salehian and Lotf Elahi (2018), Pasand et al. (2015), Yavari (2014), Besharat (2009). Misaligned research not found. In explaining the results, it should be mentioned that narcissism is one of the injuries that causes mental and intellectual disorders in athletes. People who are self-absorbed think they

are special people, they exaggerate their abilities, they need a lot of attention and approval, joy, surprise, kindness, and they expect to be treated in a special way. It is difficult to bear criticism of them. These narcissistic traits cause athletes to be in poor mental state, which in turn reduces the amount of relaxation strategies to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.

The results of the present study showed that the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with the strategy of trying to cope with competitive stress have a negative effect on elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, pride and reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; being honest with the most communication plays the most important role in the strategy of simply trying to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes. The results of the present study are consistent with the results of Jones (2017), Bernaka et al. (2016), Salehian and Lotf Elahi (2018), Pasand et al. (2015), Yavari (2014), Besharat (2009). Misaligned research not found. In interpreting this result, it should be noted that narcissism causes people to be satisfied with their current situation. This satisfaction with the situation of people causes them to make less effort. Thus, narcissism as a problem causes people to reduce their efforts to achieve success, which in turn reduces the strategy of simply trying to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with a logical analysis strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, pride and reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; Pride plays the most important role in the rational analysis strategy for coping with competitive stress in elite athletes. The results of the present study are consistent with the results of Jones (2017), Bernaka et al. (2016), Salehian and Lotf Elahi (2018), Pasand et al. (2015), Yavari (2014), Besharat (2009). In interpreting this result, it should be noted that narcissism causes people to abandon their logical thinking and try to use emotional thinking. In other words, the problems created by narcissism cause them to have a low ability to think logically. This issue has a negative effect on the strategy of rational analysis to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes and causes narcissism and its occurrence among athletes to reduce the strategy of logical analysis to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.



The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with the support seeking strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, pride and reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; Pride plays the most important role in the strategy of seeking support to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes. The results of the present study are consistent with the results of Jones (2017), Bernaka et al. (2016), Salehian and Lotfollahi (2018), Pasand et al. (2015), Yavari (2014), Besharat (2009). In interpreting these results, it should be noted that narcissists will have a low level of social communication. On the other hand, while reducing the amount of social communication, these people have a low level of empathy with others. This has led to narcissism among elite athletes and a reduction in the number of supports seeking strategies to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. This can be due to the narcissistic functions of limiting communication in individuals, which keeps them away from social communication.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with the strategy of discharging unpleasant emotions to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, pride and reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; Pride is most associated with the most important role in the strategy of discharging unpleasant emotions to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. The results of the present study are consistent with the results of Jones (2017), Bernaka et al. (2016), Salehian and Lotf Elahi (2018), Pasand et al. (2015), Yavari (2014), Besharat (2009). In interpreting these results, it should be noted that narcissism causes people to have a false sense of self-importance. They increase their reflection on themselves; they consider themselves important people. This causes them to be unable to manage and vent some of their emotions. Thus, narcissism among athletes causes the strategy of discharging unpleasant emotions to cope with competitive stress in elite athletes to be significantly reduced due to narcissistic functions.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with the strategy of distracting

the mind to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, and pride, reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; Pride with the most relevance plays the most important role in the strategy of distracting the mind to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. The results of the present study are consistent with the results of Jones (2017), Bernaka et al. (2016), Salehian and Lotfollahi (2018), Pasand et al. (2015), Yavari (2014), Besharat (2009). In interpreting these results, it should be noted that narcissism causes people to be overshadowed mentally and intellectually. People are obsessed with thinking and thinking that they will achieve ideal success and power, and in the meantime, they do not understand some limitations and gaps. This causes narcissism to negatively affect the minds and thoughts of athletes and reduces the level of mental ability of people in acute times. Thus, narcissism leads to a marked reduction in the strategy of distracting the mind to deal with competitive stress.

The results of the present study showed that there is a negative relationship between the dimensions of narcissism including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride with surrender / withdrawal strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. Thus, increasing the dimensions of narcissism, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness, and pride, reduce this strategy. The results of this hypothesis showed that among these dimensions; Pride plays the most important role in the surrender / withdrawal strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes. The present study is in line with the results of Jones (2017), Bernaka et al. (2016), Salehian and Lotfalahi (2018), Pasand et al. (2015), Yavari (2014), Besharat (2009). It should be noted that people with narcissistic personality disorder often have arrogant, arrogant, and arrogant attitudes toward others. This characteristic of narcissists causes them not to give up and retreat in some matters. This leads to narcissism, which significantly reduces the rate of surrender / withdrawal strategy to deal with competitive stress in elite athletes.

Explaining the results can also be based on the research of Edelstein et al (2010) which showed that people who had higher scores of narcissisms, expressed higher cortisol response and more negative emotion when exposed to stressors (Edelstein et al., 2010). Thus, the characteristics of narcissism in the long run can lead to serious health problems and increase stress. Also, narcissistic people are arrogant and have a very positive attitude towards themselves, are very sensitive to criticism and blame, and like to be the center of attention and to be approved by others. When these traits are



violated by others, stress is aroused in these people and it is natural that people's coping strategies change negatively. Now these changes may occur in sporting events and competitions and among elite athletes. Researchers have found that people in vulnerable narcissism experience high levels of interpersonal stress (Dickinson & Pincus, 2003). Unlike high-functioning narcissists, morbid narcissists suffer from stress and anxiety, and their anxiety levels are higher in the vulnerable type. The level of anxiety stress they experience is so high that it leads to dysfunction in their social and professional lives (Alicke & Sedikides, 2011). One of the limitations of the present study is the lack of related research in terms of research variables. Also, the statistical population of the study was limited to elite athletes, so generalization of results should be done with caution. Finally, it is suggested that the present study be conducted in other target groups and the results be compared. It is also recommended to sports psychologists to provide some behavioral training to reduce narcissistic behaviors such as emphasizing appropriate responses to threats, criticism and negative feedback to reduce some of the problems of extrapolational behavior among target athletes and related problems. Prevent their stress.

5. Conclusions

The present study found that some dimensions of narcissism, including righteousness and pride, play a more effective role than other dimensions of narcissism. Also, narcissism and its dimensions, including authority, ostentation, superiority, righteousness, exploitation, selfishness and pride, cause elite athletes to have a lower level of coping strategies with competitive stress. In other words, narcissism reduces the rate of coping strategies with competitive stress among them.

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ارتباط خودشیفتگی و راهبردهای مقابله با استرس رقابتی در ورزشکاران زن نخبه

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چکیده: هدف از پژوهش حاضر بررسی ارتباط خودشیفتگی و راهبردهای مقابله با استرس رقابتی در ورزشکاران زن نخبه بود. پژوهش حاضر از نظر هدف جزء پژوهش های کاربردی و بر مبنای روش پژوهش از نوع پژوهش های توصیفی - همبستگی بود. جامعه آماری پژوهش حاضر کلیه ورزشکاران نخبه زن استان آذربایجان شرقی در دو رده سنی جوانان و بزرگسالان از رشته های تیمی بودند که در سال ۱۳۹۸ در مسابقات قهرمانی استان شرکت داشتند. جامعه آماری این پژوهش ۲۷۰ نفر بود که براساس جدول کرجسی مورگان ۲۰۰ نفر بعنوان نمونه انتخاب شدند. برای گردآوری اطلاعات از پرسشنامه های اطلاعات فردی محقق ساخته، سیاهه شخصیت خودشیفته راسکین و تری (۱۹۸۸)، سیاهه راهبردهای مقابله گادریو و بلوندین (۲۰۰۲) در رقابت ورزشی استفاده شد. آزمون کلموگروف اسمیرنوف (K-S) برای بررسی طبیعی بودن توزیع داده ها، برای تعیین همبستگی های بین متغیرها از روش معادلات ساختاری در سطح اطمینان ۹۵ درصد و با استفاده از SPSS نسخه ۲۲ و نرم افزار لیزرل نسخه ۸/۵۳ انجام شد. نتایج نشان داد که غرور با بیشترین ارتباط، مهمترین نقش بر راهبرد کنترل افکار، تصویرسازی، تحلیل منطقی، جستجوی حمایت، تخلیه هیجانات ناخوشایند، منحرف کردن ذهن و تسلیم شدن/عقب نشینی برای مقابله با استرس رقابتی در ورزشکاران نخبه را دارا می باشد. محق بودن با بیشترین ارتباط، مهمترین نقش بر راهبرد آرام سازی و صرف تلاش برای مقابله با استرس رقابتی در ورزشکاران نخبه را دارا می باشد.

واژه های کلیدی: خودشیفتگی، راهبردهای مقابله، استرس رقابتی؛

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این نماد به معنای مجوز استفاده از اثر با دو شرط است یکی استناد به نویسنده و دیگری استفاده برای مقاصد غیر تجاری.