# Article information:

The cost of mental illness: The public’s derogation of athletes with psychological distress.  
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fsah0000213>

# Article summary:

1. The public tends to derogate athletes with mental health concerns, leading to decreased likelihood of being signed and offered less financial compensation compared to healthy counterparts.

2. This stigma may discourage athletes from seeking treatment and lead to increased symptom concealment.

3. While there may be some potential for diminishing public stigma toward sport psychological treatment, more work is needed to decrease stigma toward other forms of psychological treatment for athletes.

# Article rating:

Appears moderately imbalanced: The article provides some useful information, but is missing several important points or pieces of evidence that would be required to present the discussed topics in a balanced and reliable way. You are encouraged to seek a more balanced perspective on the presented issues by exploring the provided research topics and looking at different information sources.

# Article analysis:

The article "The cost of mental illness: The public’s derogation of athletes with psychological distress" by Merz et al. (2020) explores the impact of public stigma on athletes with mental health concerns. While the study provides valuable insights into the negative effects of stigma, it also has some potential biases and limitations that need to be considered.

One potential bias in the study is the use of a hypothetical scenario to assess public attitudes towards athletes with mental health concerns. The authors asked participants to rate their likelihood of signing a player and their initial monetary contract offers based on a brief description of a hypothetical athlete's mental health status. This approach may not accurately reflect real-world decision-making processes, as actual team managers and owners may have more information about an athlete's condition and treatment history.

Another limitation is that the study only focused on one specific type of mental health concern - sport psychology issues - rather than considering a broader range of conditions such as depression or anxiety. This narrow focus may limit the generalizability of the findings to other types of mental illness.

The authors also make some unsupported claims in their discussion section, suggesting that stigma towards athletes with mental health concerns fosters decreased treatment seeking behaviors and increased symptom concealment. While this may be true in some cases, there is no direct evidence presented in the study to support these claims.

Additionally, while the study highlights the negative effects of stigma on athletes with mental health concerns, it does not explore potential counterarguments or alternative perspectives. For example, some people may argue that teams have legitimate concerns about an athlete's ability to perform at their best if they are struggling with psychological issues.

Overall, while this study provides important insights into public attitudes towards athletes with mental health concerns, it is important to consider its potential biases and limitations when interpreting its findings. Future research should aim to address these limitations and provide a more comprehensive understanding of how stigma affects individuals with different types of mental illness.

# Topics for further research:

* Impact of stigma on mental health treatment seeking behaviors
* Athlete mental health support programs
* Team management of athletes with mental health concerns
* Prevalence of mental illness in athletes
* Intersectionality of mental health stigma and sports culture
* Effectiveness of anti-stigma campaigns in sports

# Report location:

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