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An Analysis of Motivational Approaches in Sport with Specific Reference to Training and Competition: A South-African Perspective

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this investigation was to determine how athletes are generally motivated as well as during practice and competitions. Two types of motivation can be identified: failure avoidance and the pursuit of success. Athletes (hockey, athletics and rugby) took part in the investigation. The results of the investigation revealed that: Failure avoidance is significantly more prominent than the pursuit of success when it comes to sport in general and during training sessions. As far as competition is concerned, the pursuit of success as a motivational approach was significantly higher than the avoidance of failure. The avoidance of failure as a motivational approach was significantly higher for males compared to female athletes. Grade 10 athletes displayed significantly less failure avoidance than Grade 12 athletes. Athletes who participated in team sport showed a significantly higher level of failure avoidance as a motivational approach compared to individual athletes.