

Research Article

Effects of Psychological Skill Training on Motivation and Anxiety Among Male U-17 Project Football Players

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Abstract

Psychological skills training program is effective in enhancing athletes' performance, positively influencing cognitive and affective states. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of Psychological skill training on motivations and anxiety of psychological variables of male Under 17 football project players. The methodology of the study employed an experimental research design. Thirty (30) male football player participants in the study were selected for the football project. The study subjects were randomly divided into two equal groups, the experimental group (n = 15) and the control group (n = 15). The experimental group had taken Psychological skill training intervention for 8 weeks with 3 sessions per week. Both groups had taken pre-post test and all the subjects participated to standard questionnaires. Motivation was measured using the Sport Motivation Scale (SMS-28) and anxiety was measured using state-trait anxiety inventory test. The data collected from the study subjects was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, version 25) software by descriptive and inferential statistics, at a significant level of 0.05. Results showed Psychological skill training significantly improved the stated variables motivations and anxiety in the experimental group at (p<0.05). Furthermore, no more significant differences were found in both of the variables in the control group (p>0.05). Based on this finding, it can be concluded that Psychological skill training has a positive impact on the improvement of motivations and anxiety of psychological variables. Therefore, Psychological skill training is suggested for adolescent-age football players to improve psychological preparedness for athletic performance.

Keywords

Anxiety, Motivation, Psychological Skill Training

1. Introduction

Applied sports psychology has developed greatly during the last 15 years at all levels of competitive sports. Many athletes and coaches at all levels of competition used the findings of scientific study that emphasized the importance of mental preparation and its positive effects on the personality traits and performance of elite athletes throughout those years [1]. As a result, through Psychological Skills Training, ath-

letes can improve their performance and technical levels, as well as achieve success in a variety of domains [5]. Psychological skills Training alongside physical follows is important in improving athlete preparedness, because psychological skills allow the athlete to not only enjoy the sports experience better, but also perform the sports activity more desirably and achieve sports success [5]. Psychological skill training is a

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vital part of training that helps athletes enhance their performance. Athletes' Psychological skill training includes goal setting, concentration, focus, self-confidence, motivation, relaxation, and others. The above-mentioned skills are the most common and have a direct relationship with the athlete's achievement [7]. And also mental preparation as an essential aspect of performance-improving success. Mental preparation and training are essential aspects of all sports which should be emphasized. Goal preparation, self-talk, imagery, and optimistic thinking, among various mental preparation skills, are all important techniques that athletes and coaches can use to boost performance [15]. In general, psychological skill training has been recognized as a significant factor in increasing football players' performance [10]. Based on the findings of previous studies the current study focused on two separate psychological skills variables: motivation, and anxiety. Psychological Skill training was essential for optimal performance in the football project [6]. Different studies have been conducted on Psychological Skill training in the world. But when it comes to the Ethiopian context there was a lack of research conducted about Psychological Skill intervention. Based on this, the researchers were designing a well-planned Psychological Skill training program for male U-17 football project players, to research the effect of Psychological Skill training on male U-17 football project players' motivation, and anxiety level.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in Addis Ababa, particularly in Akaki kaliti sub city 01 Wereda, Mesale U-17 male football project player. Addis Ababa is the capital city of Ethiopia. It lies at an elevation of 2,355 meters (7,726 ft.) and is a grassland biome, located at 9°1'48"N 38°44'24"E. The city rises to over 3,000 meters (9,800 ft.) in the Entoto Mountains to the north.

2.2. Study Design

The study employed an Experimental research design. There was pre-post test data and manipulation of the cause and effect between Variables. The target population of the study was 30 male U-17 football players and Census sampling method was employed to select sample. Among the selected players, half of them (15) were assigned to the experimental group, while the remaining 15 were assigned to the control group. The researcher used primary sources of data directly from the subjects by measuring their pre-post test results to get adequate information concerning the impact of psycho-

logical skill training on motivation and anxiety level of Trainee.

2.3. Measurement Tools and Procedures

The researcher collected valuable and reliable information from the target group of the study by using various data collection tools. The required data was gathered through standard questionnaires such as 28-sport motivation scale questionnaire and 40 state-trait anxiety questionnaire. The researcher administered the pre-test and post-test standard questionnaires for both the experimental and control groups. The pre-test was conducted for both groups of male U -17 football trainees before giving an eight-week psychological intervention and Post test was conducted for both the experimental and control groups after giving psychological intervention.

2.4. Methods of Data Analysis

The study used quantitative data analysis techniques to investigate the impact of psychological skill training on motivation and anxiety levels in male U-17 football project players. Descriptive statistics means and standard deviation, paired and independent t-test were used and to obtain the data from closed-ended questionnaires. All data analyses were performed within a computer system using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), version 25. The p-values for statistical significance were considered at $p \leq 0.05$.

3. Results

Analysis of data collected from the samples of study and its results have been discussed. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of Psychological skill training on selected psychological variables of male Under 17 football project players. All trainees continued their Football training; simultaneously half of them were randomly selected and given eight weeks Psychological skill training three times per a week. and tests were given after eight weeks Psychological skill training and Then at the end of eight weeks Psychological skill training (post) similar tests were given for all thirty males football trainees regarding of their groups so as to evaluate whether Psychological skill training affects motivation, and anxiety level of male football trainees or not. Then finding obtained after eight weeks Psychological skill training program are presented below in tables. Table 1 shows Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants, Tables 2 and 3 shows the Descriptive statistics for motivation and anxiety test results respectively. And tables 4 and 5 shows Paired and Independent Samples t-Test for Study.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants.

Group	N	Age (in years)	Height (in meter)	Weight (in kg)
		Mean \pm SD	Mean \pm SD	Mean \pm SD
EG	15	16.53 \pm 0.516	1.6913 \pm 0.06865	55.73 \pm 4.183
CG	15	16.13 \pm 0.834	1.7007 \pm 0.05378	56.27 \pm 3.411

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of motivation variable.

Variables	Group							
	Experimental group				Control group			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.
For the pleasure, I feel in living an exciting experience	2.60	.828	6.07	1.163	1.53	.915	4.53	1.767
For the enjoyment it brings me to learn more about the sport I play.	3.73	.799	6.33	.617	1.67	.816	3.73	2.187
I used to have strong reasons for participating in sports, but these days I'm not sure if I should still do it.	3.80	1.474	6.73	.704	1.80	.862	4.20	2.042
For the enjoyment of learning new methods of training.	2.60	1.056	5.87	1.187	2.33	1.113	3.33	1.718
I don't feel like I can excel in this sport anymore, therefore I stopped doing it.	3.40	.737	6.27	1.033	2.00	.756	2.80	.862
Because it enables me to enjoy the respect of those I know.	3.73	.961	6.00	1.254	2.27	1.163	3.00	1.309
Since it's one of the greatest methods to meet people, in my view.	4.33	1.397	6.73	.594	2.33	1.71	2.67	1.113
Because when I successfully master certain challenging training approaches, I get a great sense of personal pleasure.	3.13	.990	6.53	.640	2.87	2.61	3.00	.756
Because participating in sports is essential for staying in fit.	3.33	1.345	6.73	.458	1.80	.862	2.20	.862
For the honor of competing in sports.	4.27	1.223	6.60	.632	2.27	.884	4.33	1.633
Since it's among the greatest methods I've chosen to develop other aspects of myself.	3.60	1.242	6.27	.704	2.47	1.187	2.73	1.163
For the enjoyment I get from strengthening some of my weaknesses.	3.60	.986	6.73	.458	1.80	.862	2.47	1.187
For the excitement I feel when I am involved in the activities.	3.13	1.457	6.13	1.246	1.80	.862	2.87	1.187
Since I need to play sports to feel good about myself.	3.13	1.125	6.33	.724	2.00	.756	4.60	1.454
For the satisfaction, I experience while I am perfecting my abilities.	2.53	.915	5.73	1.10	2.27	.458	4.27	.458
Because people around me think it is important to be in shape.	3.07	1.534	6.73	.594	2.00	.756	3.67	2.024
Because it is a good way to learn lots of things which could be useful to me in other areas of my life.	3.20	1.373	6.47	.915	2.00	.756	3.80	2.042
In times of strong passion, I feel like playing a sport.	2.60	1.404	6.20	.862	2.00	.000	2.93	1.280
I'm not sure anymore; I don't think sports are where I belong.	3.47	1.187	6.13	1.06	2.80	.862	3.07	1.280

Variables	Group							
	Experimental group				Control group			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.
For the pleasure that I feel while executing certain difficult movements.	3.13	1.642	6.73	.704	2.00	.756	2.47	.516
Because if I didn't take the time to do it, I would feel horrible.	3.87	1.457	6.53	.834	1.47	.516	2.12	.234
To demonstrate to people my skill in my sport.	3.53	1.552	6.27	.704	2.20	.862	4.53	1.767
For the pleasure that I feel while learning training techniques that I have never tried before.	3.33	1.397	6.40	.910	3.53	.326	3.73	2.187
Because it is one of the best ways to maintain good relationships with my friends.	2.60	1.056	5.93	1.16	3.27	2.43	4.20	2.042
Because I like the feeling of being immersed in the activity.	3.33	1.345	6.00	1.195	2.00	.756	3.33	1.718
Because I must do sports regularly.	3.53	1.060	6.00	1.06	2.07	1.03	2.80	.862
For the pleasure of discovering new performance strategies.	3.00	1.069	6.27	.884	1.80	.414	3.00	1.309
I often ask myself, if I cannot seem to achieve the goals that I set for myself.	3.07	1.100	6.33	.976	2.33	.816	2.67	1.113
Totally	3.31	.477	6.32	.296	2.16	.478	3.17	1.031

The above table 2 shows the pre-post test mean and standard deviation values for the motivation components in the experimental and control groups. The motivation factors for EG and CG had the following pre-post-means and standard deviations: EG, $M=3.31$, 6.32 , $SD= 0.477$, 0.296 ; CG, $M=2.16$, 3.17 , $SD=0.478$, 1.031). Due to the Psychological

skill training, the mean values of EG increase from 3.31 to 6.32 on the pre-post test. Therefore, it may be inferred that the experimental group's motivation measures responded favorably to Psychological skill training. However, there is no visible difference in the control group on the pre-test to post-test results.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of anxiety.

Anxiety questionnaire	Experimental group				Control group			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.
I feel calm	2.80	.941	1.40	.507	1.53	.915	2.00	.75
I feel secure	1.73	.799	1.47	.516	1.53	.516	2.47	1.1
I am tense	2.40	.737	1.47	.516	2.07	1.033	2.53	1.5
I feel strained	2.53	.516	2.33	1.113	1.80	.862	2.53	1.5
I feel at ease	2.13	.743	1.33	.488	2.27	.458	2.47	.91
I feel upset	2.47	.640	1.47	.834	2.00	.756	2.20	.86
I am presently worrying over possible misfortunes	2.67	.617	1.40	.507	2.07	1.033	2.00	1.3

Anxiety questionnaire	Experimental group				Control group			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std.dev.
I feel satisfied	2.20	.775	1.47	.516	1.80	.862	1.93	.70
I feel frightened	2.20	.561	1.47	.516	2.07	1.033	2.27	1.163
I feel comfortable	2.27	.704	1.47	.516	1.27	.458	2.27	.45
I fee self –confident	2.27	.961	1.60	.632	1.27	.458	2.53	.51
I feel nervous	2.40	.632	1.40	.507	1.53	.516	2.53	.51
I am jittery	1.60	.737	1.60	.632	1.27	.458	2.27	.45
I feel indecisive	2.40	.737	1.73	.799	1.53	.915	2.53	.91
I am relaxes	2.67	.724	1.40	.507	1.53	.516	2.53	.51
I feel content	2.60	.632	1.47	.516	1.80	.414	2.80	.41
I am worried	2.40	.737	1.67	.617	1.27	.458	2.53	.51
I feel confused	2.53	.834	1.60	.632	1.80	.862	3.07	1.0
I feel steady	2.73	.594	1.60	.632	1.27	.458	2.27	.45
I feel pleasant	2.13	.516	3.40	.828	1.27	.458	2.53	.51
I feel pleasant	2.47	.640	1.60	.632	1.80	.862	3.07	.70
I feel nervous and restless	2.67	.488	1.60	.507	1.27	.458	2.53	.91
I feel satisfied with myself	2.73	.458	1.60	.507	1.27	.458	2.27	.45
I wish I could be as happy as others seem to be	2.60	.507	2.00	2.803	1.53	.516	2.73	.45
I feel like a failure	2.40	.737	1.47	.516	1.27	.458	2.27	.45
I feel rested	2.47	.516	1.47	.516	1.00	.000	2.20	.41
I am “calm, cool and collected ”	2.60	.507	1.60	.507	1.00	.000	2.20	.41
I feel that difficulties are piling up so that I cannot overcome them	2.40	.632	1.60	.632	1.53	.516	2.53	.51
I worry too much over something that doesn't matter	2.27	.594	1.20	.414	1.80	.414	3.07	.70
I am happy	2.53	.834	1.00	.000	1.80	.414	2.80	.41
I am disturbing the thought	2.60	.737	1.80	.862	1.80	.414	2.80	.41
I lack self-confidence	2.33	.617	1.33	.488	1.53	.516	2.53	.51
I feel secure	2.33	.617	1.40	.507	1.53	.516	2.53	.51
I make decisions easily	2.47	.516	1.67	.724	1.27	.458	2.27	.45
I feel inadequate	2.67	.488	1.33	.617	1.27	.458	2.53	.51
I am content	2.53	.516	1.40	.507	1.27	.458	2.53	.51
Some unimportant thought runs through my mind and bothers me	2.47	.516	2.13	1.125	1.53	.516	2.80	.41
I take disappointments so keenly that I can't put them out of my mind	2.53	.516	1.80	.775	1.53	.516	2.53	.51
I am a steady person	2.07	.594	1.40	.507	1.53	.516	2.53	.516
I get in a state of tension or turmoil as I think	1.80	.775	1.47	.516	1.27	.458	2.27	.45

Anxiety questionnaire	Experimental group				Control group			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.
over my recent concerns and interests								
Totally	2.425	.2072	1.627	.1689	1.543	.2885	2.482	.27

The above [table 3](#) shows the pre-post test mean and standard deviation values for the anxiety variables in the experimental and control groups. The anxiety-related factors for EG and CG had the following pre-post means and standard deviations: EG, were (M=2.425, 1.627, SD= 0.2072, 0.1689, CG, M=1.543, 2.482, SD=0.2885, 0.2705), respectively. Due to

the Psychological skill training, the mean values of EG increase from 2.425 to 1.627 on the pre-posttest. Therefore, it may be inferred that the experimental group's Psychological skill training for anxiety factors had a favorable outcome. But, there is no discernible difference in the control group pre posttest results.

Table 4. Paired t-test for motivation and anxiety variables.

Variables	Group	Tests	Paired differences		95% Difference Confidence Interval		T	Sig.(2-tailed)
			Mean	Std. deviation	Lower	Uppers		
Motivation	EG	Post-pre-test	2.685	.4897	2.4097	2.9522	21.200	.000
	CG	Post-pre-test	.27429	.661	-.09180	.64037	1.607	.130
Anxiety	EG	Post-pre-test	-.805	.207	-.91943	-.69057	-15.088	.000
	CG	Post-pre-test	-.114	.366	-.31803	.08835	-1.212	.246

The mean and standard deviation values of the motivation variables, EG (MD =2.685, SD =0.4897, CG, MD =0.27429, SD =0.661), are also shown in [Table 4](#). Given that the P-value is less than 0.05, the motivation variable on EG shows significant changes due to Psychological skill training. But, as the p-value is higher than 0.05 ($P>0.05$), no discernible change was seen in the CG motivation variable. And also The above [Table 4](#) demonstrates that the EG posttest result exhibits a statistically significant difference from the CG of anxiety levels (MD = -0.805, SD = 0.207, MD = -0.114, SD = 0.366). The results of the posttest indicate that the EG posttest value is lower than the CG posttest value, as indicated by [Table 3](#)

However, the outcome is favorable. In other words, a low score suggests a player with little anxiety. Conversely, a higher score on the CG posttest values denotes a higher level of anxiety in the player. Since the p-value of EG is less than 0.05, this indicates that an 8-week psychological skill training intervention has been taken and is crucial for the reduction of anxiety and confident rather than nervous. But there isn't a noticeable distinction. Paired sample t-test findings generally showed that 8 weeks of psychological skill intervention has a favorable influence on male football players' motivation and anxiety characteristics. In order to support the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis based on all factors.

Table 5. Independent Samples T-test for Study Variables.

Equal variances assumed							
Variables	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	T	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95%confidence interval for mean	
						Lower	Upper
Motivation	19.526	0.000	13.054	0.000	3.15952	2.66374	3.65530
Anxiety	2.507	0.125	4.025	0.000	.59667	0.29302	0.90031

Levine's Test is used to check the assumption of equal variance between the two groups (EG and CG) after intervention. It is tested by using F-test. The results of Levine's Test for Equality of Variances from table 5 showed that: There is significance difference ($P=0.000$) between EG and CG for Motivation variable. So that, of psychological skill interventions has shown a statistical significance difference between EG and CG on Motivation, since p value between two groups is less than 0.05 and also There is significance difference ($P=0.000$) for Anxiety between EG and CG. So psychological skill interventions has shown a statistical significance difference between EG and CG on Anxiety of participants, since p value between two groups is less than 0.05. Therefore, the assumption of equal variance between groups is satisfied, because the p-value of Levine's assumption of equal variance for those two variables is less than 0.05. This implies, EG is better than CG on Motivation and Anxiety Variables of psychological skill interventions.

4. Discussions

This study aims to investigate the impact of psychological skill training on a subset of psychological factors related to male U-17 football project players in Addis Ababa city. The results of this study reveal that athletes who get psychological skill training to increase their motivation level significantly.

This outcome has demonstrated consistency with related studies conducted throughout a range of time periods. And other research supported to these finding of study. Male and female football players between the ages of 15 and 23 may find that using a psychological skill training effectively raises their motivation levels [4]. A research conducted in 2012 by [13]. Corroborated the results of this investigation. They proposed that psychological skill intervention can help male junior a hockey goaltenders perform better by promoting relaxation and motivation [11]. The present study's findings align with the findings of About the impact of mental skill training techniques on motivation levels. Over the course of twelve weeks, they worked with 45 male amateur Trainee whose ages varied from 18 to 21. The study's conclusions

showed that participants reported feeling more motivated after the intervention [14]. Similarly, study from 2021 was to demonstrate how psychological skill training affected the way 24 football players in Ardabil Shahrdaari perceived their level of sports achievement [8].). Because of those and other unknown reasons, the results of this study showed a statically significant improvement on motivation level.

According to the current study, throughout the intervention period, athletes in the experimental group dramatically reduced their perceptions of their anxiety level. The degree of confidence in the control group remained constant. Follow-up test findings demonstrated a substantial decrease in the experimental group's feelings of anxiety from the pre-posttest. The results of several investigations appear to have significantly reduced anxiety, according to several studies. [12]. completed a project that included teaching male high school football players psychosocial skills through an implementation program. After the psychological skill training, athletes saw a reduction in anxiety. [3] studied the connection, between psychological abilities (relaxation and visualization) and anxiety. According to the findings, the athletes retained their anxiety reaction prior to the competition and might use visualization or relaxation techniques for facilitative interpretations of anxiety-related symptoms. Likewise [2] the research conducted to show the positive effects of cognitive psychological techniques on the anxiety levels of athletes have shown similar findings. The findings of the research may have implications for strategies that instruct athletes in cultivating a calm mental state by altering their understanding of worry. Studies on psychological skill training have shown that athletes' anxiety levels may be lowered by practicing relaxation, visualization, and cognitive restructuring. The therapies, according to the authors, decreased anxiety levels. The study's findings about how raising athletes' self-esteem levels impacted their anxiety levels.

This study's contradiction also showed that, following three follow-up exams, there was no decrease in the experience of anxiousness According to [2] informed that for athletes to modify certain characteristics and psychological abilities, psychological skill training programs should run for at least

three months. [12]. defined those athletes in 13 – 17 age years old are in specializing years and this term anxiety levels are high level. The effectiveness of relaxation techniques in reducing anxiety in youngsters depends on having adequate time to explain the technique, guide the athletes through it methodically, and provide continuous feedback. According to [12] their study showed that regular cognitive practices did not reduce athletes' anxiety levels. In a similar vein, [9]. Ran a psychological skill training Program over the whole season to assist a select group of athletes in developing their psychological abilities [9]. Throughout the whole year, there were no disparities between the teams. They succeeded, like the current study results, in bringing anxiety reduction among the intervention squad from preseason to postseason, even if this outcome suggests that the anxiety program was useless. In support of this, study examined the effects of a season-long psychological skill training program guided by cognitive-behavioral techniques on anxiety. The study's overall findings showed that players' anxiety levels remained constant throughout the season. The lack of a useful technique to mitigate interpretations of fear may be the cause of such outcomes [16]. Athletes' anxiety levels did not significantly reduce, according to [14]. After offering athletes under the age of eighteen a mental skills training, the study found no discernible differences in anxiety levels across the groups. Additionally [16] said that they will look into and assess how psychological skill training methods like progressive muscle relaxation affect anxiety. The results of the study showed that there was no discernible variation in the anxiety levels of male collegiate football players. The affect-reducing assessments of relaxation techniques might not be suitable, especially in light of the short duration of an intervention program. The finding of these study revealed that 8 weeks psychological skill training program showed improvement on anxiety levels of male U-17 football trainees. Those and other many findings supported the result of this study.

5. Conclusion

Based on the result of the study the following conclusions were enumerated: In the present study, the experimental group differed significantly from the control group. The intervention of eight weeks psychological skill training program has a significant effect on motivation, and anxiety level of football players. So, the researcher concludes that psychological skill training program has a significant effect on motivation, and decreased anxiety levels. Therefore, psychological skill training program is suggested to project football players in adolescent age groups and for team and individual sports to improve their mental status.

Abbreviation

CG Control Group

EG	Experimental Group
M	Mean
MST	Mental Skill Training
MTP	Mental Training Program
N	Number of Participants
PST	Psychological Skill Training
SD	Standard Deviation
SMS	Sport Motivation Scale
SMTQ	Sports Mental Toughness Questioners
SP	Sport Psychology
SPCs	Sport Psychology Consultation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
STAI	State-Trait Anxiety Inventory

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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