



Influence of mental rehearsal, goal setting and concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State

Ben N Ohuruogu¹, David Ifeanyi Nwigiji¹, Emeka U Mong¹, Ogazi Precious Chioma², Tawo Moses O⁴, Alor Roseline³, Orji Scholastica A¹, Ngozi Onuenyim³, Raphael O Nwodeh², Christian O Aleke^{1*}

¹Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria

²Department of Primary Education, School of Early Childhood Care, Primary, Adult and Non-Formal Education, Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria

³Department of Physical and Health Education, Ebonyi State University College of Education Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

⁴Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Federal College of Education, Obudu, Cross River State, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examined the influence of mental rehearsal, goal setting and concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. Descriptive cross-sectional survey research was adopted for the study. One hundred and forty respondents, comprising (38 Coaches and 102 Soccer players) participated in the study. A self-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study with three null hypotheses which was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the three null-hypotheses. The result of the study revealed that mental rehearsal, goal setting, and concentration influences self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. Moreover, all the three null-hypotheses tested were significant. Based on the implications of the findings, the study recommended among others that the stakeholders in sports development should enhance the provision of environment that would encourage goal setting, mental rehearsal, and concentration during soccer events in the tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Keywords: mental rehearsal, goal setting, concentration, self-confidence, soccer players

Introduction

Psychological skills such as mental rehearsal, goal setting and concentration are well-known factors that enhance athletes' performance in soccer. However, researchers have actively studied these psychological skills in different areas of sports sciences, including sport psychology and psychological skills on self-confidence (Thelwell, Greenlees & Weston, 2010) [8]. Some of the study revealed that psychological skills involved mental practice, which help in the development of athlete's self-confidence for effective sport performance (Rattanakoses, *et al.*, 2009) [24].

Self-confidence has been considered in several studies as one of the key psychological factors for a successful performance in sporting activities (Feltz 2009; Rattanakoses, *et al.*, 2009) [13, 24]. Self-confidence refers to an individual attitude about one's skills and abilities. It means possessing a positive judgment and trust about one capabilities for accomplishment of a setting goal in sports. In other words, self-confidence is when an individual accept and trust him/herself and possess sense of control over life, knows his/her strengths and weakness, and have a positive view of him/herself (Chapman & Mahoney, 2014) [8]. One may have high confidence in driving, but low confidence in directing a golf ball towards a hole (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007) [2]. Bandura (1982) [3] has reported in the social cognitive theory, that the level of an individual's self-confidence in activities can influence his performance. It is also reported by other study that every successful athletes exhibit higher self-confidence than unsuccessful athletes (Treasure *et al.* 1996) [29]. Also, athletes who have higher self-confidence during competitions are more likely to be successful than those who have low self-confidence (Covassin & Pero 2004) [11]. This is evidence thus, confident athletes believe in their ability to perform well and win than those who do not have confidence at the onset of sporting activities (Covassin & Pero 2004) [11]. Performance enhancement in sports environments depends on athletes' self-confidence, motivation, and optimum performance (Gould, 2011) [14]. It is noteworthy that self-confidence is one of the most common mental factors, which results in sports achievements. Numerous interventional studies have been employed psychological skills to improve self-confidence, sport skills performance, and satisfaction in athletes (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007; Chapman & Mahoney, 2014) [2, 8]. It is on this bases that the current study attempts to determine the

psychological skills such as mental rehearsal, goal setting and concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State.

Mental rehearsal comprises several techniques used by athletes to improve performance in sports. Mental rehearsal can be secretly or publicly and without any actual movement, involving the representation of an action or behavior. According to Manz, and Neck (1999) ^[20], mental rehearsal is an imagined mental practice of performing a task as opposed to actual practice. That is, one imagines performing without having to actually do anything. Many studies have reported mental rehearsal to be successful task performance and reducing stress (Cumming, & Williams, 2012) ^[12]. As the cliché goes, "Practice makes perfect." "Practice is helpful, but perfect practice is clearly superior to repeated poor performance during practice" (Manz, & Neck, 1999) ^[20]. This is because mental practice is perfect practice, and confidence-booster. Thus, when one is experiencing success it increases confidence, even if it is imagined (Manz, & Neck, 1999). Research has revealed that when athletes deliberately adopt mental rehearsal with a view to achieving specific cognitive outcomes it will manifest to success. This cognitive outcomes is usually linked to skills performance in sporting activities and other routines (Cumming, & Williams, 2012) ^[12].

Goal setting is an aspect of mental health training of the athletes. With the use of goal setting, athletes will have description of what he/she must achieve. Mattie and Munroe-Chandler, (2012) ^[21] observed that goal setting is the process of establishing a level performance proficiency which should be reached within a prescribed time period. In other words, goal setting is a way to set performance level in a period of time. Goal setting is not "separated from the achievement sport, it can help athletes to focus attention on the targeted goal. It means, instead of doing the training without target, training with target will increase the concentration, effort, motivation, and athlete spirit to train. When the relationship between imagery and self-confidence is examined, it has been reported in many studies that the factors play an important role in the performances of athletes in sports" (Mattie & Munroe-Chandler, 2012; Mamassis & Doganis, 2014) ^[21, 19]. It is observed that the use of imagery during sporting activities will contribute positively to the physical and mental performance of football players and increase the self-confidence levels. Although there were many studies reporting that imagery and self-confidence contribute to the mental and physical development of the athletes in many sports activities, (Short and Short, 2015; Munroe-Chandler *et al.*, 2015; Adegbesan, 2010) ^[25, 19, 1]. However, little or no studies has been carried out in the present study location, thus the need for this investigation in the current study population.

Concentration is one of the psychological skills that is concerned with the ability of an individual to focus attention on the task at hand (Vernacchia, 2013) ^[30]. This means that to be successful in competitive situations athletes must be able to learn how to focus attention on the sport activity and control his/her thoughts. According to Couture, (2021) ^[10], performance in sports requires that individual do not react to potential distractions. These distractions can be external or internal during sporting activities. "External distractions can be visual or auditory, and may include other competitors, spectators, and media. Internal distractions may include negative self-talk, fatigue, and emotional arousal". In sports, the best performance therefore can occur when athletes voluntarily concentrate on the cues in their environment to pursue an action that is within their ability and are at the same time able to avoid potential distractions (Smith, 2013) ^[26].

To develop athletes with the potential to be professional soccer players, increasing emphasis has been placed on skill development and boosting self confidence in young players, in order to achieve excellence. In other words, to ensure soccer players reach their maximum potential in sports, researchers have continued to look for the safest and most successful methods to help athletes compete at the highest level. Therefore, it is on this background that the present study attempted to determine psychological skills such as mental rehearsal, goal setting and concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players in Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State. Evidence of low self-esteem among the soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State have been established (Ohuruogu, *et al.* 2022) ^[4]. Thus, investigating the influence of mental rehearsal, goal setting and concentration on self-confidence of athletes will improve self-confidence of soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. The objective of this study is to determine the influence of mental rehearsal, goal setting and concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players in Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State. Specifically, the study will ascertain the influence of: (1) mental rehearsal on self-confidence of male soccer players of Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State, (2) goal setting on self-confidence of male soccer players of Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State, (3) concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players of Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State.

Methods

Research design

An institutional-based cross-sectional survey was conducted to assess the influence of mental rehearsal, goal setting and concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. The tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State include: Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike Ikwo, Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana, Afikpo, Ebonyi State College of Education Ikwo and College of Agriculture, Ishiagu. All the institutions have physical and health departments and facilities that promote soccer for the student's populace.

Population of the study

The population of the study was one hundred and forty in number, made up of thirty-eight (38) coaches and one hundred and two (102) athletes (soccer players) in the five tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State (that is Ebonyi State University Abakaliki, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike Ikwo, Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic Unwana, Ebonyi State College of Education Ikwo and College of Agriculture Ishiagu). Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki has 12 coaches and 22 players; Alex Ekwueme Federal university, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, has 10 coaches and 22 players; Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana, Afikpo, has 8 coaches and 22 players; Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo has 3 coaches and 18 players and College of Agriculture, Ishiagu has 5 coaches and 18 players (Source: Sport's Unit of the Institutions, 2021)

Sample and sampling technique

The entire population of the study was used as the sample due to manageable size. Therefore, there was no need for sampling.

Instrument for data collection

Psychological Skills on Self Confidence of Male Soccer Players Questionnaire (PSSCMSPQ), was the instrument used to elicit information for the study. The questionnaire contains two parts. Part 1 deals with bio-data of the respondents. Part 2 was used to elicit information from the respondents based on the research questions. It contains 40 items divided into sections A, B, C D. section (A) sought information on the influence of mental rehearsal on self-confidence of male soccer players of tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State; section (B) was structured to elicit information on the influence of goal setting on self-confidence of male soccer players of tertiary institutions, section (C) sought information on the influence of concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players of tertiary institutions. The instrument was a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4; Agree (A) = 3; Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The options are weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 for the positive items and the reverse for the negative items.

Method of data collection

The researcher with the help of three research assistants (who were briefed and instructed on how to fill the questionnaire) administered 102 questionnaires to the respondents. This was on the spot to ensure that the copies of questionnaire are promptly returned to the researcher so as to ensure 100% return rate. By this method, no questionnaire was lost.

Method of data analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation. For the acceptance and rejection of mean results for the interpretation of the research questions, any mean value of 2.50 and above was accepted as an effect while a mean value of below 2.50 was not accepted as an effect. The hypotheses were tested using the t-test for H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} , at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule used for the study was to reject the hypothesis if the t-calculated value exceeded the table value, if otherwise, do not reject.

Results

Table 1: Mean Results on the Influence of Goal Setting on Self-confidence of Male Soccer players in Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State

S/N	Items	\bar{x}	S.D
1	It motivates the players	2.87	1.17
2	It improves spirit to train	3.20	0.94
3	It guarantee emotional security	2.61	1.29
4	It support them to achieve the set target alone	2.94	1.26
5	It reduces the rate of frustration of failure among the athlete	2.85	1.10
6	It encourages athletes to achieve highest achievements	2.64	1.20
7	It helps athlete to focus the attention on the targeted goal	2.58	0.99
8	It is a way to set performance level in a period of time	3.00	1.29
9	Athlete will feel obliged and bound in achieving the target	2.89	1.31
10	It make athlete train seriously	2.89	1.32

Decision Key: Any mean value of 2.50 and above was accepted as High Effect while a mean value of below 2.50 was rejected as Low Effect.

Based on the results in Table 1, all the item has mean values above 2.50 which indicated that goal setting influences self-confidence of male soccer players in Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State.

Table 2: Mean Results on Influence of Mental Rehearsal on Self-Confidence of Male Soccer players in Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State

S/N	Items	\bar{x}	S.D
1	It helps to self-regulate their thoughts	2.81	1.12
2	It helps to self-regulate their feeling	2.70	1.10
3	It helps to self-regulate their behavior	3.10	1.23
4	It motivates the athlete	3.15	1.16
5	It guarantee self-confidence of the athlete	2.87	1.32
6	It promotes setting objectives of the athlete	2.92	1.05
7	It improves preparation of the athlete	2.94	1.10
8	It relaxes emotional states of the athlete	2.89	1.32

The results in Table 2, showed that psychological skill such as mental rehearsal influences self-confidence of male soccer players in Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State.

Table 3: Mean Results on Effect of Concentration on Self-confidence of Male Soccer Players in Tertiary Institutions in Ebonyi State

S/No	Items	\bar{x}	S.D
37	It promotes performance	2.75	0.95
38	It helps to identify tactics	2.58	1.22
39	It motivates participation	3.01	1.28
40	It facilitates dedication	2.52	0.97

The results in Table 3 reveal that all the items are accepted having mean above 2.50. Thus, concentration as a psychological skill influences self-confidence of male soccer players.

Hypothesis 1

Table 4: T-test Results on Effect of Goal setting on self-confidence of male soccer Players based on categories.

S/No	Variable	No	\bar{x}	S.D	Df	T-val	P-val
1	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.87 2.45	0.38 1.11	138	8.56*	0.00
2	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.76 2.91	0.82 0.95	138	7.01*	0.00
3	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.60 2.09	0.56 1.13	138	10.27*	0.00
4	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.78 2.54	0.48 1.27	138	7.02*	0.00
5	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.34 2.42	0.38 0.99	138	9.71*	0.00
6	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.92 2.34	0.60 2.13	138	11.29*	0.00
7	Coaches Athletes	38 102	2.31 2.68	1.16 0.91	138	1.98	0.05
8	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.39 2.63	0.48 1.34	138	6.25*	0.00
9	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.48 2.48	0.72 1.31	138	7.09*	0.00
10	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.80 2.48	0.62 1.33	138	7.01*	0.00

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

The results in Table 4 indicated that t-value of 8.56, 7.01, 10.27, 7.02, 9.71, 11.29, 6.25, 7.09 and 7.01 respectively were greater 2.50 with the probability value of; 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00 and 0.00 were less than 0.05, hence, H_0 is rejected. This mean that there is a significant difference in mean rating of the coaches and athletes on the effect of goal setting on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of coaches and athletes on the effect of mental rehearsal on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State.

Table 5: T-test Results on Effect of mental Rehearsal on self-confidence based on Category

S/No	Variable	No	\bar{x}	S.D	Df	t-val	p-val
1	Coaches Athletes	38 102	2.81 2.81	1.08 1.15	138	0.01	0.99
2	Coaches Athletes	38 102	22.8 9.21	0.99 1.08	138	3.37*	0.00
3	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.83 2.76	0.38 1.29	138	5.88*	0.00
4	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.79 2.83	0.52 1.22	138	5.85*	0.00
5	Coaches Athletes	38 102	4. 00 2.45	0.00 1.33	138	7.15*	0.00
6	Coaches Athletes	38 102	2.55 3.05	1.00 1.04	138	2.58*	0.01
7	Coaches Athletes	38 102	2.47 3.10	0.97 1.10	138	3.11*	0.02
8	Coaches Athletes	38 102	4.00 2.48	0.00 1.33	138	7.01*	0.00

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

The results in Table 5, indicated that the t- values of 3.37, 5.88, 5.85, 7.15, 2.58, 3.11 and 7.01 were greater than the p-value and the probability value of 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.00, 0.01, 0.02 and 0.00 were less than 0.05 percent level of significance. Therefore; H_0 is rejected. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of coaches and athletes on the effect of mental rehearsal on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. Thus, there is psychological determinants on coaches and athletes of mental rehearsal on self-confidence of female soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State.

Hypothesis 3

Table 6: T-test Results on Effect of Concentration on Self-confidence based on Category

S/No	Variable	No	\bar{x}	S. D	Df	t-val	p-val
1	Coaches Athletes	38 102	2.81 2.72	0.89 0.97	138	0.50	0.62
2	Coaches Athletes	38 102	2.00 2.80	1.04 1.21	138	3.60*	0.00
3	Coaches Athletes	38 102	3.82 2.64	0.60 1.33	138	6.25*	0.00
4	Coaches Athletes	38 102	2.50 2.52	0.95 0.98	138	0.16	0.87

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

The results in Table 6, indicates that the t-value of 3.60 and 6.25 were greater than 2.50 while its probability of 0.00 and 0.00 were also less 0.05 percent level of significance, hence; H_0 is rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of coaches and athletes on the effect of concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players of tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State.

Discussion

Influence of goal setting on self-confidence of male soccer players

The result shows the influence of psychological skill such as goal setting on the self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. This result is anticipated because goal setting helps to improve someone's performance and enhance the skill and achievements as much as possible. Goal setting makes it necessary to pay attention to training aspects (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) ^[33], such as physical training, technical training, tactical training and mental training. The four aspects above are very important in training the athlete with. Therefore, goal setting is a part of mental aspect that is important to train the athlete. With goal setting, athletes will have description of what they must achieve. The goal setting helps the process of establishing a level performance proficiency which should be reached within a prescribed time period. In other words, goal setting is way to set performance level in a period of time. Goal setting is important to the athlete as goal setting can help athlete to focus attention on the targeted goal in order to increase the concentration, effort, motivation, and athlete spirit to train as suggested by Widmeyer & Williams (2009) ^[31]. Mentally, the athlete will feel obliged and bound in achieving the target. Goal setting creates motivation and confidence for maximum achievement through self-confidence because motivation can improve athlete's effort to achievements by training. Self-confidence endorses someone to achieve highest achievement because it is the core value to have highest achievements (Smith, Cumming & Smoll, 2016). To get in the highest podium, an athlete must be fully confident because this kind of mental behavior will help them so much in the adaptation process while facing some excessive tension. Once there is confidence through goal setting, emotional security is endorsed and frustration or failure is avoided. Without full confidence, athlete will not achieve highest achievements since there is a relation between achievement's motive and confidence (Tenenbaum, 2014) ^[27]. It means that setting goals and teaching the athlete how to set the goals of training are essential. The t-test result of hypothesis shows that there is a significant difference in mean rating of the coaches and athletes on the effect of goal setting on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. This result means that there is a differential between the responses of the coaches and the athletes on the effect of goal setting on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State.

Influence of mental rehearsal on self-confidence of male soccer players

The result shows the influence of psychological skill such as mental rehearsal on the self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. The result is expected and consequently not a surprise because mental rehearsal has quality attributes that prepares the athlete such as self-regulation of thoughts, feelings and behavior; motivating athletes, guaranteeing self-confidence of athletes, promoting the setting of objectives, improving preparation of athletes and relaxing emotional state of the athletes. With all these nice attributes, the athlete is prepared to excel in his activity because self-confidence has been achieved. These are the reason Chelladurai (2014) ^[9] has described mental rehearsal as implicit practice, imagery, and covert rehearsal because mental rehearsal has been studied to improve psychomotor and sport performance. While in many instances, performance can be enhanced with a combination of mental and physical rehearsal, physical practice was shown to be more effective than mental practice alone. The result of the t-test analysis of hypothesis revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of coaches and athletes on the effect of mental rehearsal on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. This means that the null hypothesis was rejected. In other words, mental rehearsal is important and could bring about the heightening of self-confidence in male soccer players differently in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State.

Influence of concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players

The results reveal the influence of psychological skills of concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players. The above result is significant because sport competition provides an environment that is prone to elicit real or imagined self-presentational concerns. It is important to note that every time the athletes compete, they run the risk of poor performances and presenting undesirable images about their ability and competence to powerful others, such as judges, coaches, teammates and spectators. Hence, they develop self-presentational concerns that are salient in sport competition and may underpin a variety of issues in sport, including motivation, performance, sport choice, amount of effort, competitive anxiety and self-handicapping. The athletes pervasiveness of social evaluation in sport has long been recognized, so self-presentational concerns helps to overcome some of the major sources of perceived threat and stress in sport (James and Collins (2012) ^[16].

The result is in line with several studies, some of which have demonstrated that the majority (67%) of the stress-related sources is self-presentational in nature (James and Collins, 2007) ^[15], and tends to be more task than social related. The result also relates to cognitive components of competitive anxiety such as, appearing untalented and lacking mental composure (McGowan, Prapavessis and Wesch, 2008) ^[22] and poor performances in front of important others (Bray, Bengtsson and Fallby, 2010) ^[5]. Increasing the relevance of self-presentational factors of competition, resulting in heightened impression motivation and increased risk of self-presentational failure, may be at least two of the mechanisms in which competitive stressors operate (James and Collins, 2012) ^[16]. One way to approach self-presentation within team sport is to examine the research on group membership. Central to team sports is that behavior occurs within a group context, in which the group influences its members and may serve as a source of protection (Carron and Prapavessis, 2007) ^[7]. For example, groups serve to reduce self-presentational concerns in general social situations, thereby providing protection to individual group members (Carron and Prapavessis, 2007) ^[7]. Research has found that perceptions of security in group situations result in a reduction of anxiety associated with self-presentational concerns (Carron *et al.*, 2009) ^[6] and the enhancement and/or maintenance of the self-esteem of individual group members (Leary, Lavalley and Wylleman, 2013).

The relationship between self-presentation and concentration has been investigated using Carron *et al.* (2009) ^[6] conceptual linear model of cohesion in which cohesion may directly affect the self-presentational concerns of individual team members. Group influence has been found to reduce the experience of social anxiety associated with self-presentation (Carron and Prapavessis, 2007) ^[7]. These findings suggest that high cohesion may induce an environment in which self-presentational concerns are reduced, as indicated by the psychological benefits afforded to group members. It has been noted that higher perceptions of cohesion would be associated with lower self-presentational concerns (Carron, 2012) ^[34].

The result of the t-test analysis on the opinions of coaches and male players revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of coaches and athletes on the effect of concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players of tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. Mahoney (2014) ^[8] reported the effect of concentration or cohesion on high jumpers who have used mental practice in competition and went on to receive honours. This study provides evidence that concentration can successfully influence athletic performance. This study concludes that the athletes' concentration with stimulant mental ability often led to higher successful perspectives as compared to the absence of such an activity.

Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of psychological skills such as mental rehearsal, goal setting, and concentration on self-confidence of male soccer players of tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. From the results of the study, all the items have influence on self-confidence of male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State. The study recommended that the stakeholders in sports development in the tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State should facilitate the provision of environment that would encourage mental rehearsal, goal setting, and concentration so as to improve self-confidence of male soccer players of tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State.

Acknowledgments

The authors are grateful to sports directors and soccer players of tertiary institutions in Ebonyi state for their active participation to this study.

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose in this article.

References

1. Adegbesan J. *Idrottens karriärövergångar*. Idrottens hus: SISU Idrottsböcker; c2010.
2. Alfermann D, Stambulova N. Career transitions and career termination. In G. Tenenbaum & R. C. Eklund (Eds.), *Handbook of sport psychology* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley; c2007.
3. Bandura WN. The measurement of cohesiveness in sports groups. In: J.L. Duda (Ed.), *Advances in sport and exercise psychology measurement* (2nd ed., pp. 213-216). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology. Tesfay, A. H (MEJS),1982;8(1):62-74, 2016.
4. Ohuruogu BN, Nwigiji DI, Nwode RO, Mong MU, Osuoha VC, Njoku BO, *et al.* Psychological skills and self-confidence among male soccer players in tertiary institutions in Ebonyi state, *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*,2022;16(01):001-010.

5. Bray SR, Martin KA, Widmeyer WN. The relationship between evaluative concerns and sport competition state anxiety among youth skiers. *Journal of Sports Sciences*,2010;18:353-361.
6. Carron AV, Widmeyer WN, Brawley LR. The development of an instrument to assess cohesion in sport teams: The group environment questionnaire. *Journal of Sport Psychology*,2009;7(3):244-266.
7. Carron AV, Prapavessis H. Self-presentation and group influence. *Small Group Research*,2007;28:500-516.
8. Chapman BP, Mahoney MJ. Psychological skills training in sport. In *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology online*; c2014. Retrieved from <http://www.google.se/books>.
9. Chelladurai P. Group dynamics in sport. In *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology online*; c2014. Retrieved from <http://www.google.se/books>.
10. Couture RT. Can Intentional Distractions Affect Endurance Performance Positively? *Diversity of Research in Health Journal*, 2021, 4. Doi: 10.28984/drhj.v4i1.337 141
11. Covassin EA, Pero GP. The application of goal setting to sport, *Journal of sport psychology*,2004;7:205-222.
12. Cumming J, Williams SE. The role of imagery in performance. In S. Murphy (Ed.), *Handbook of sport and performance psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press; c2012, 213232.
13. Feltz AO. Revitalizing sports in Nigeria: Practices Problems and Prospects Report of the National Committee on Problems of Sports Development in Nigeria,2009;6(6):47-57.
14. Gould D. Goal setting for peak performance. In J. M. William (Eds.). *Applied sport psychology: personal growth to peak performance (5th Ed.)*. New York, NY: Mc graw hill higher education, c2011.
15. James B, Collins D. Self-presentational sources of competitive stress during performance. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*,2007;19:17-35.
16. James B, Collins D. Self-presentational sources of competitive stress during performance. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*,2012;19:17-35.
17. Leary M, Lavallee R, Wylleman RM. Impression management: A literature review and two component model. *Psychological Bulletin*,2013;107:34-47.
18. Mahoney K. Corporate Sponsorship in University Sports. In V.C. Igbanugo (Ed). *NUGA FORUM*. Ibadan: Sterling Horden Publishers Nig. Ltd; c2014.
19. Mamassis M, Doganis M. The early start in sprots. A seminar paper presented on sports development in Enugu state. Benin-city; c2014.
20. Manz CC, Neck CP. *Mastering self-leadership: Empowering yourself for personal excellence (Second edition)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall; c1999.
21. Mattie M, Munroe-Chandler P. *The Lucky Touch*. Benin City: Printing and Packaging Aids Ltd; c2012.
22. McGowan E, Prapavessis H, Wesch N. Self-presentational concerns and competitive anxiety. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*,2008;30:383-400.
23. Munroe-Chandler S, Gammage O. A Blueprint for the National Committee on Problems of sports Development in Nigeria. In *Report of the National Committee on problems of Sports Development in Nigeria. Part A*, c2015, 474-498.
24. Rattanakoses R, Omar-Fauzee MS, Geok SK, Abdullah MC, Choosakul C, Nazaruddin MN, *et al.* Evaluating the Relationship of Imagery and Self-Confidence in Female and Male Athletes, *European Journal of Social Sciences*,2009;10(1):129-142.
25. Short L, Short A. Sports Sponsorship as Correlate of Sports Development in Delta State Nigeria Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, university of Ibadan, 4 Ibadan; c2015.
26. Smith RE, Cumming SP, Smoll FL. Factorial integrity of the Sport Anxiety Scale: A methodological note and revised scoring recommendations. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*,2013;28:109-112.
27. Tenenbaum G. Decision making in sport. In *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology online*; c2014. Retrieved from <http://www.google.se/books>
28. Thelwell JH, Greenlees JC, Weston JM. *Fundamentals of Management*. Texas: Business Publications Inc; c2010.
29. Treasure A, Sandin L, Hassmén T. Place of Nigeria Institutions in Producing Future Olympic Champions. In *National Institute for Sports Seminar/Symposium Series on Managing the Centennial Olympic experience (serial No.1)*; c1996.
30. Vernacchia R. *Inner strength: The mental dynamics of athletic performance*. Palo Alto, CA: Warde Publishers; c2003.
31. Widmeyer WN, Williams JM. Predicting cohesion in co-acting sports. *Small Group Research*,2009;22:548-570.
32. Wylleman P, Lavallee D. A developmental perspective on transitions faced by athletes. In M. Weiss (Ed.), *Developmental sport and exercise psychology: a life- span perspective*. Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology; c2014, 507-527.
33. Wylleman P, Lavallee D. A developmental perspective on transitions faced by athletes. *Developmental sport and exercise psychology: A lifespan perspective*,2004:507-27.
34. Mac Carron P, Kenna R. Universal properties of mythological networks. *EPL (Europhysics Letters)*,2012;99(2):28002.