



Effects 6 weeks of Psychological Skill training on the dribbling skills of male U-20 football project players

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ABSTRACT

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Football Training programs need to incorporate different forms of training components, which includes physical, technical, tactical and psychological. Psychological skills training (PST) is a process that relates to the development of daily routine activities and capability in relation to settings in sport and exercise. This study aims to search effects of 6 weeks psychological skills training on football skills of male U-20 in Dilla Gedeo Zone, Ethiopia. To achieve this objective, the researcher selected twenty five (N=25) male football players using comprehensive sampling. Their age between 17-19 years (Mean \pm SD: age 18.04 \pm 0.77 years, height 168 \pm 15.25, body mass 59.95 \pm 8.72 kg) selected. The trainees were regularly participated in Psychological skill training program three days/week for six weeks fifteen up to forty minutes. Informal design (quasi-experimental) and quantitative methods were used in this study. The football skill variable selected for this study was football dribbling (slalom dribbling test). Data was taken two times at pre-training and post training and, the data was analyzed using SPSS software version 24. A mean difference between pre-training and post-training was contrasted by Paired T-test. The results revealed that significant differences were observed on football skills of the trainees were improved due to the psychological skill training that was given. After six weeks, the trainee's football skills namely dribbling skill ($p=0.000$) was significantly improved after psychological skill training ($p=0.05$). This study assured that after psychological skill training significantly improves football skill of male U-20 football players.

Background of the study

Psychological skills refer to inherent or learnt (acquired) qualities of an athlete which make it possible and probable for him to succeed (Weinberg and Gould, 2007). The sport psychologists use psychological assessment techniques and intervention strategies in an effort to help individuals to achieve their optimal

performance. In order to bring football players performance, researchers all over the world have actively studied these practitioners in different areas of sports sciences, including sports psychology. In this context, Psychological skills training (PST) research has emerged as an important tool to support the psychological preparation of football players in the achievement

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of higher level of performances (Thelwell, Greenlees, and Weston, 2006, 2010).

Different studies of sport psychology literature have supported the effectiveness or impact of PST program in improving the performance and personal growth of athletes. According to Vealey (2007) stated that mental preparation is the learning and implementation of traditional cognitive-behavioral techniques —with the objective of assisting sports participants in the development of mental skills to achieve performance success and personal well-being. Likewise, Ritz (2012) introduces mental preparation as a crucial ingredient for success in performance enhancement. Mental training and preparation are important elements for all sports to spend some time on. Mental-preparation skills such as goal setting, self-talk, imagery, and optimistic thinking, etc... are important methods that athletes and coaches can use to enhance performance.

And again, psychological skill training is important part of training and plays an important role in the improvement of performance of the athletes. Psychological skill training for athletes includes goal setting, focus ,concentration, self-confidence, motivation, relaxation etc. the above mentioned skills are the most common and have direct relationship with the performance of the athlete. (Peter, L.J Thompson.2012).

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Previous studies (Thelwell and Greenlees, 2001) indicate that PST program is the most efficient when a combination of psychological traits was used. Based on the results of the previous studies (Green, 1992; Weinberg and Williams, 2001; Morgan, 2006; Paiva, 2006), so this football skills (dribbling and shooting) was the focus of the current study. This study selected because of two different basic reasons. Firstly, this kind of research is meager in Ethiopia. Secondly, this study is important for optimal performance in football players as well as other sport performers, and studies have shown the importance of these traits (Singer, Murphy, & Tennant, 1993; Wann, 1997; Weinberg & Gould, 2007).

Review Literature

Psychological Skills and Sport Skills

Trigger Words' as Cues to Concentrate

Most athletes utter _trigger words' either to motivate or coach themselves as they train or compete. For example, gymnasts may say forward' as a reminder to push their bodies upwards while practicing a floor routine. Similarly, basketball players may say rhythm' when dribbling with the ball and tennis players may say low to high' when preparing for a backhand topspin shot. Athletes' self-talk' can be either overt (words spoken out loud) or covert (_spoken' inside one's head) and may involve praise (for example _Yes! That's good'), criticism (_you fool – what a stupid mistake!')



and/or instruction (for example the use of a trigger word such as ‘_turn’). A good example of ‘_trigger words’ in action occurred during the 2002 Wimbledon ladies’ singles tennis final between Serena Williams and her sister Venus (who she defeated 7–6, 6–3). During the changeover time between games in this match, Serena read notes that she had written to herself as instructional cues to remind her to ‘_hit in front of you’ or to ‘_stay low’ (R. Williams, 2002, p. 6).

2.METHODOLGY

2.1.Participants

The target populations of the study were 25 male football players who attended regular training in Dilla, Gedeo, Zone U-20 football project players in the year 2022/23. These players were 18.04±0.77 years of age.

2.2. Sampling and sampling technique

Twenty five male players were selected by using a comprehensive/ whole sampling method b/c they were few in numbers.

Data Collection Instruments

Football skill tests (Slalom Dribble test)

Soccer dribbling skill was assessed using the slalom dribble test. The test will be chosen due its good ecological and construct validity as well as high intra-class correlation coefficient indicating a high test retest reliability ($r = .95$). The test assesses total body movement, requiring participants to dribble around a set obstacle course as quickly as possible. The dimensions for the slalom course are shown in Figure1. On the starter’s command the participant dribbled the ball from behind the start line to the right of the first cone and then alternately around the outside of the remaining five cones in a zig-zag path. The participant stopped and left the ball at the sixth cone before traveling in a straight line across the finish line (Figure 1). The time taken to negotiate the obstacle course was measured and recorded using Smart Speed timing gates (Fusion Sport, Brisbane, Australia). The participants were required to perform the slalom dribble twice, with a rest of 1min between trials with the mean of both times used as the test score(Keeron S. &, Jon O. 2009).

Table 1. The comparison between pre and post test of slalom dribbling test

Variables	N	Mean	MD	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
PT-slalom	25	17.78	1.272	1.756	.351	13.007	.000
POT-slalom	25	16.51		1.516	.303		

* Significant at 0.05 level, MD=mean difference.

The above table (Table-1) illustrated that the dribbling skills of all the samples showed improvements after taking post training. The mean difference showed that there was an improvement in dribbling skills after psychological skill training. According to the above data, the average speed of all the trainees (slalom test) was 17.78±1.756 seconds before training and this was improved to 16.51±1.516 seconds after progressive psychological skills training with a mean value difference of 1.272. Even if the post results seems small, this referred to significant difference by deducting time. This improvement was achieved due to the psychological training that they engaged in.

DISCUSSION

The present study investigated on the effects of psychological skill training on football skill of male football players. Subjects participated throughout the treatment period and cooperated for the success of collection

of necessary data. The entire subjects were participated in six-week psychological intervention program designed to the male player's. Again the dribbling skills of male players have been improved after the intervention which by decreasing the time, so that the psychological skill training can improve dribbling skills of players. Similarly, there is evidence that instructional self-talk is superior to motivational self-talk in enhancing the performance of tasks that require precision and fine motor coordination (Theodorakis et al., 2000) and improving athletes' skills in basketball (Perkos et al., 2002) Williams and Leffingwell, 2002). Therefore, we can concluded that psychological skill training can improved the dribbling skills of players.

Findings

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The result obtained in this study showed significant improvements in the football skills parameters in the participants of the study. After analyzing the pre and post mean difference of a variable, the study showed that football skill variables improved significantly. This was due to the effect of PST training program they were engaged in.

Conclusion

Psychological skills training greatly evoke male football players in the dribbling skill performance by decreasing the given value(time). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that Psychological skill training can improved the dribbling skill of male football players.



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