

PHYSICAL SELF – EFFICACY LEVEL OF SELECTED NIGERIAN SOCCER PLAYERS

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ABSTRACT

The study utilized 43 subject samples that were randomly drawn from professional soccer clubs in Nigeria and the general population. They consisted of 25 soccer players and 18 non-players with a mean age of 23.5 years, all males. They were all similar in educational qualifications. Soccer players scored 89.96 on the overall PSE scale, which was above the Nigerian National average of 83.16 as it is in the manual of the test. Significant differences occurred between soccer players and non-players on the overall PSE scale. The result showed that physical self-efficacy is a psychological construct necessary for success in soccer.

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Introduction

The link between physical self-efficacy and performance in most physical activities has undoubtedly been established. For instance Malherber et al (2003) found physical self-efficacy as a predictor of exercise adherence for a group of participants in physical exercises. Singer (1986), said “self-efficacy refers to one’s own confidence in being able to do what needs to be done. Self-efficacy is strengthened with winning and achievements” (p67).

Success in sports is said to be a little more than physical skills alone.

There are other determining factors and self-efficacy is one of such important psychological factors; it is so because, it is involved in skill acquisition, performance regulation, management of competition and high risk. Various studies have found that in basketball, efficacy accounts for some high percentage of anxiety (Bandura 1986; Stark and Mc Cullah, 1999).

Efficacy is not only restricted to players, it extends to coaches and managers. In assessing coaching efficacy, Fung (2003), found coaches to be most efficacious on the scale of character building and least efficacious on the scale of strategy use on a four point scale of assessment.

However, Ryckman et al (1982) said it is not a hidden fact that an individual’s deep-rooted expectations of his capabilities affect his cognitive, affective and psychomotor

Aspects, which subsequently affects his physical sports performance. Omoluabi (1999) therefore said it means that an individual's psychomotor component in the performance of sports skills depends on his physical self-Efficacy.

Bandura (1986) asserted that convergent evidence suggests that self-efficacy can be a useful explanatory and predictive concept. This may also apply to soccer players.

Furthermore, research shows that a high degree of self-efficacy has been shown to be related to behaviour change health wise (O'Leary 1988). Self-efficacy can also be used to positively modify behaviour of persons, including athletes. (Litt 1988).

According to Bandura (1977) people with abnormal behavioural pattern are said to have poor sense of self-efficacy.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Soccer is the most popular team sport in Nigeria. Various means have been explored by Coaches and Administrators in enhancing Nigeria's position in the sport on World rating. Regrettably, however, little has been done at the level of the application of psychological principles in enhancing performance of soccer players in the country.

It, therefore, becomes necessary to conduct research in this area or aspect of psychology to enhance performance, since it has been identified by various researchers that physical training alone is no longer enough for elite athletes to become champions in their events. Levels of physical self-efficacy can be utilised if known to enhance peak performance: hence this study.

The study therefore hypothesised that there will be no significant difference between soccer players and non-players on physical self-efficacy.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Subject:

A total of 43 subject samples were drawn by means of the simple random sampling technique from some professional soccer clubs in Nigeria. Most of the players have played in various clubs at home and abroad. Hence, they can fairly represent the elite male soccer players in Nigeria.

The sample subjects comprised 25 soccer players and 18 non-players who were similarly drawn by the random sampling technique.

All players have played professional soccer for five years and above. The age range of all subjects was 19-28 with a mean age of 23.5 years. Players and non-players used had similar educational qualifications.

INSTRUMENTS

The physical self-efficacy scale (PSE) authored by Ryckman R.M; Robins MA; Thornton B; Cantrell P. (1982) and the adapted and re-standardized version for use of Nigerian professionals edited by Omoluabi (1999) were used in this study. The norm for athletes and the general population in Nigeria on the PSE scale only is 83.16 for athletes as written in the PSE handbook. The sub-scales are:

- PPA-Perceived Physical Ability
- PSC- Perceived Self-Presentation Confidence
- PSE –Overall Score on PSE.

Procedure

The instrument was administered on the subject samples individually by the researcher. The instrument was scored using the instructions provided by the editor or the instrument. The data collected was analysed using the mean, standard deviation and the student t-test statistical techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measures	Soccer players n = 25		Non players n = 18	
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
P.PA	40.64	4.65	36.06	6.04
PSC	49.32	5.41	44.50	7.15
PSE	89.96	7.41	80.00	7.96

Results in Table 1 show that players scored higher than non-players on all the sub-scales, which probably indicate that players were found to have more perceived physical ability and perceived self- presentation confidence than non- players. The results also indicate that overall scores of players were higher than those of non-players on physical self-efficacy.

The score of 89.96, which is higher than the Nigerian norm of 83.16, showed that players performed well on the test, which probably indicates that they possess self-confidence in themselves more than non-players.

Table II: Summary of t-test Comparing Scores of Soccer Players and Non-players.

Measure	Soccer Players		Non Players		T
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	
P.PA	40.64	4.65	36.06	6.04	2.71*
PSC	49.32	5.41	44.50	7.15	2.41*
PSE	89.96	7.41	80.00	7.96	4.17*

* Significant at $P < .05$

$df = 41$

Critical $t = 2.02$

Table 2 indicates that significant difference occurred between soccer players and non-players on physical self-efficacy showing players to be more efficacious than non-players. Physical self-efficacy can promote adherence to sports and can consequently be assumed as a predictor for success by these set of subjects studied.

The finding of this study then is in conformity with the opinions of Burke 1999, Bandura 1986. Similarly it is in agreement with the study of Malherber et al (2003)

The hypothesis propounded for the study is hereby rejected as significant difference is established between Nigerian soccer players and non-players on physical self-Efficiency.

Conclusion

In conclusion this study showed that physical self-efficacy is a psychological construct needed for success in sports, and should therefore be explored and used when recruiting players for soccer teams.

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