

Sport achievement motivation in youth football players

Motivación de logros deportivos en futbolistas juveniles

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Abstract

Objective: to know the sport achievement motivation of football players in different playing positions. **Method:** it was selected a sample of male amateur football players (N =500) under 17 years old (goalkeepers 56, defenders 173, midfielders157, attackers 114), from South Regional League of Ouargla-Algeria. The Sport achievement motivation scale of Wills (Arab version by Allawi) is used to collect these data. The scale consists of 20 items (the motive to achieve success 10 items, and the motive to avoid failure 10 items). Descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA test were applied to evaluate these data. **Results:** there was high sport achievement motivation among football players. No statistically significant difference is found in sport achievement motivation among football players according to their playing positions. **Conclusion:** future qualitative researches which would cover tests including multi-variables on sport achievement motivation and other psychological characteristics should be performed to reach more detailed and concrete information.

Keywords: motivation of success, motivation to avoid failure, need achievement theory, youth football players.

Resumen

Objetivo: conocer la motivación para el logro deportivo de futbolistas en diferentes posiciones de juego. **Método:** se seleccionó una muestra de futbolistas aficionados masculinos (N = 500), menores de 17 años (56 porteros, 173 defensores, 157 centrocampistas y 114 atacantes), de la Liga Regional del Sur de Ouargla-Argelia. Para recopilar los datos se usó la Escala de motivación de logro deportivo de Willis (versión adaptada al árabe por Allawi), que consta de 20 ítems (10 ítems sobre el motivo para alcanzar el éxito, y 10 ítems sobre el motivo para evitar el fracaso). Se aplicaron estadísticas

descriptivas y prueba ANOVA de una vía para evaluar los datos. **Resultados:** hubo una alta motivación para el logro deportivo entre los futbolistas. No se encontraron diferencias estadísticamente significativas en la motivación para el logro deportivo entre los jugadores, según sus posiciones de juego. **Conclusión:** se deben realizar futuras investigaciones cualitativas que cubran pruebas que incluyan múltiples variables sobre la motivación para el logro deportivo y otras características psicológicas, para obtener información más detallada y concreta.

Palabras clave: motivación del éxito, motivación para evitar el fracaso, teoría de la necesidad de logro, futbolistas juveniles.

Introduction

The main role of the study of sport achievement motivation is the search for motive through which the athlete can achieve success, improve performance, and perform his main tasks in the best conditions. The achievement motivation is often expressed as competitiveness, the desire to reach a higher level of performance (Weinberg & Gould, 2015). Achievement motivation focuses on the desire of athletes to strive for success and how certain situations affect their desires, emotions and behavior (Tod, 2014).

According to the need achievement theory (Atkinson, 1974; McClelland, 1961), the achievement motivation is a personal trait by which some individuals have the desire to succeed greater than the fear of failure. In this case, it can be said that there is high achievement motivation. But for some individuals the fear of failure is a very important factor, which leads to low achievement motivation. The personality is not the only factor influencing the motives, but it is important to know the probability and incentive of success (Jarvis, 2006).

The purpose of the need achievement theory is to explain why people are different in their predisposition to accomplish some tasks. Self-motivation is considered the achievement motivation “the achievement motivation = desire to succeed - fear of failure” (Atkinson, 1974; McClelland, 1961). Many researchers in sports psychology have pointed out that the most important personal components of the achievement motivation are the motive to achieve success and the motive to avoid failure. The motive to achieve success represents the internal motivation of the player to engage in specific activities which drive him or her to achieve excellence as well as feeling happy and satisfied; the motive to avoid failure represents the psychological formation associated with the fear of failure which focuses on the results of failure (Weinberg & Gould, 2015).

Football is a collective sport, characterized by multiple playing positions and specific tasks for each player, but to succeed players must help each other. In order to have a successful football team it should not be limited to training only physical qualities such as speed, flexibility and strength, but instead it should pay attention to the technical and tactical skills.

In accordance with that, each player must have physical, physiological and psychological qualities to perform his tasks according to the circumstances and the position of the game (Akin et al., 2009). The achievement motivation is one of the most important elements for players, especially young ones (Goswami & Sarkar, 2016), for which the successful development of their skills is necessary (Yalcin et al., 2017).

Some studies have analyzed the achievement motivation, like of the Yalcin et al. (2017) with the purpose to determine its levels on amateur football players, based on its importance on the athletes' success. Results indicated that amateur football players had high levels of achievement motivation. In the studies of Gardner et al. (2017) and Yahyaoui (2009), the results showed that youth players had a high motive to achieve success, and low motive to avoid failure.

The aim of this research was to know the level and the eventual differences of sport achievement motivation among youth football players, according playing positions. This area of research is valuable for several reasons, but perhaps the most important area of research for players, coaches, practitioners, and others in the field is to analyze how much one can accomplish with given set of goals during competition and facing problems.

Method

Participants: the initial sample of the study was 664 male youth football players, under 17 years old, from South Regional League of Ouargla-Algeria. Some questionnaires were deleted by the statistical processor (SPSS), thus the number of final samples was 500 youth football players: goalkeepers 56, defenders 173, midfielders 157, and attackers 114.

Instrument: the *Sport Achievement Motivation Scale* was developed by Willis (1982), and Allawi (1998) developed it to Arab version. The scale consists of 20 items: 10 items about the motive to achieve success, and 10 items about the motive to avoid failure. The answers on all items from "1. I find difficult to sleep after my defeat in the competition" to "20. My goal is to be special in my sport" are indicated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly disagree (A)* to *strongly agree (E)*. In the present study, reliability and validity of the Scale were done.

Results

In this section, the findings obtained from the data analyses related to sport achievement motivation among youth football players are given in detail (table 1).

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of the sample on the sport achievement motivation scale.

Motive to achieve success	N	Mean	S D	Motive to avoid failure	N	Mean	S D
2	5.0	3.74	1.200	1	5.0	3.65	1.200
4	5.0	4.37	.905	3	5.0	3.31	.905
6	5.0	3.56	1.143	5	5.0	3.50	1.143
8	5.0	3.34	1.216	7	5.0	2.72	1.216
10	5.0	4.01	1.180	9	5.0	2.97	1.180
12	5.0	4.39	.991	11	5.0	2.93	.991
14	5.0	2.61	1.087	13	5.0	2.86	1.087
16	5.0	4.43	.941	15	5.0	2.78	.941
18	5.0	4.41	.947	17	5.0	2.84	.947
20	5.0	4.32	.991	19	5.0	2.54	.991
Total of dimension	5.0	3.92	1.165		5.0	3.00	1.166
Total of scale	5.0	3.46	1.164				

The table 1 shows that the total mean of the sample on the sports achievement motivation scale was (3.46), the standard deviation value was (1.164), the mean of motive to achieve success was (3.92) with a standard deviation of (1.165), as well as the mean of motive to avoid failure was (3.00) with a standard deviation reached (1.166). Therefore, the level of sport achievement motivation was high.

In table 2, analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) was used to test the significant differences in sport achievement motivation according to playing positions. F value reached (0.911), when the degree of freedom (3) between the groups, and the level of significance (0.05). Consequently, there were no significant differences between youth football players in sport achievement motivation according to their playing positions.

Table 2. Analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) to test the significant differences in sport achievement motivation.

Achievement motivation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	56.418	3	18.806	.387	.762
Within Groups	24082.77	496	48.554		
Total	24139.18	499			

Discussion

In this study, we sought to investigate the level of sport achievement motivation among youth football players, to compare it according to their playing positions. As results, it was concluded that the youth football players had a high level of sport achievement motivation, the link between sport achievement motivation and success is clear; a strong desire for

success is matched by great work and effort, whether in continuous training or various competitions. Some people are more willing to succeed than fear of failure; in this case, there is a high achievement motivation. For some, fear of failure is a very important factor; in this case, the achievement motivation is low (Jarvis,2006). Atkinson (1974) and McClelland (1961) pointed out that if the desire to succeed is greater than the fear of failure means that the achievement motivation is high. Weinberg & Gould (2015) indicated that high sport achievement motivation means high motivation for success, and low motive to avoid failure.

Results concluded that there are none significant differences between the youth football players' sport achievement motivations according to their playing positions. This finding is consistent with the results of Goswami & Sarkar (2016), who revealed that the defenders and midfielders football players had similar achievement motivation and other psychological skills. The finding is inconsistent with the results of other investigations (Andrew et al., 2007; Eloff et al., 2011; Kirkcaldy, 1982). The fact that the current study failed to concur with other investigations could be explained by the amateur level of participation of the sample tested.

The results of this study indicated that football players who play in the amateur section, have the same psychological characteristics regardless of their positions. This finding is corroborated by Kurt et al. (2012) who credited such homogenous results to the similar status of the participating players, whether amateurs or professionals. Another possible reason that the results of this study do not resemble previous studies is the young age of the participants. McCarthy et al. (2010) postulated that young sport participants have the same psychological skills, unlike adult participants. The mean age of the sample in the present study was 16.77 ± 1.05 years old, which could attest to insignificant relationship noticed between psychological skills and playing position. Jooste et al. (2014) support this view by conceding that athletes in the specialization stage (mean age 16.2 ± 1.13 years) may be at the ideal "windows of opportunity" for developing adult-like attributes, therefore, not be compared to older athlete's groups.

Conclusion

In conclusion, when making literature reviews parallel with other types of research, the present study proof to be consistent with some studies and inconsistent with others. The finding indicated there was high sport achievement motivation among youth football players. Different playing positions were compared in terms of sport achievement motivation, there were no significant differences found between compared variables. It can be said that this situation is largely related to the groups having similar status (amateur), similar age and football experience. Future research and studies among youth football players should be more specific in terms of playing positions and should also investigate in the construction of programs to develop the sport achievement motivation and other psychological factors such as self-efficacy, level of ambition and social motivation.

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