

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF CONFIDENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERFORMANCE ON TRACK AND FIELD STUDENT-ATHLETES

Vincent Parnabas

*Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation, University of MARA Technology (UiTM), Shah
Alam*

Julinamary Parnabas

Institut Pendidikan Guru, Kampus Darulaman, Jitra, Kedah, 06000, Malaysia.

Antoinette Mary Parnabas

Medical Unit, Hospital, Taiping, Perak, 34000, Malaysia.

Received: 13 March, 2023

Accepted: 16 June, 2023

Published: 15 Sept, 2023

Corresponding Author

Vincent Parnabas

Email: vincent@uitm.edu.my

*Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation,
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam*

Malaysia

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF CONFIDENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERFORMANCE ON TRACK AND FIELD STUDENT-ATHLETES

Vincent Parnabas¹, Julinamary Parnabas², & Antoinette Mary Parnabas³

¹Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation, University of MARA Technology (UiTM), Shah Alam, 40450, Malaysia
vincent@uitm.edu.my

²Institut Pendidikan Guru, Kampus Darulaman, Jitra, Kedah, 06000, Malaysia.
julina1974m@gmail.com

³Medical Unit, Hospital, Taiping, Perak, 34000, Malaysia.
annesnow65@yahoo.com.my

ABSTRACT

Psychological performance is a crucial ingredient for athletes' success in sport. In many research reviews, researchers have found that low level of self-confidence can have deteriorating effect on athletes' performance. However, to date there has been very limited research to examine self confidence level and psychological performance according to the levels of skills, especially on track and field athletes. The main aim of the study was to compare and correlate the self-confidence and psychological performance level among track and field athletes who represent national, state, district and university level during Sport between Universities event. Data was collected from 77 student-athletes, using Self Confidence and Psychological Performance Inventory (PPI). The results showed that national level athletes obtained the highest score on self-confidence, $F(3, 77) = 15.212$, and psychological sport performance $F(3, 77) = 13.442$. Positive correlation ($r=0.007$) existed between self-confidence and psychological performance. Based on the current results, it is recommended that sport psychologists, sport counsellors and coaches in Malaysia use the findings to design appropriate training programs to help athletes acquire higher level of self-confidence to enhance athletes' psychological performance in sports.

Keywords: *Self-confidence, Track and field, Psychological performance*

INTRODUCTION

The definition of self-confidence in sport known as sport confidence, is an athlete's belief that he or she can successfully execute and carry out an appropriate performance (Weinberg & Gould, 2019). It originates from the Latin word 'con' means for, and 'fidere' means trust. Self-confidence athletes are motivated to achieve success and they show high levels of self-confidence or self-belief that is essential in deciding how far they are prepared to strive to achieve their goal (Ampofo-Boateng, 2009). Self-confidence has been identified as a most important mental skill for a success in sport by individuals engaging in competitive sports, including athletes and coaches (Vealey & Chase, 2008). Self-confidence generates positive emotions, such as, optimism, less anxiety, relaxation, and happiness in athletes (Ampofo-Boateng, 2009; Vealey, Hayashi, Garner-Holman & Giacobbi, 1998). Further, it helps athletes to achieve superior performance (Craft, Magyar, Becker & Feltz, 2003). Self-confidence plays an important role in reducing anxiety (Humara, 2001). Besides that, self-confidence also enhances positive emotions and concentration, and decreased muscular tension (Ampofo-Boateng, 2009; Weinberg & Gould, 2019).

Athletes who shows a lack of self-confidence contributes their poor performance in sports. According to Martens (1987), lack of self-confidence makes athletes vulnerable to make mistakes. Low level of self-confidence tends to deteriorate performance in sports. Winning has been called the science of total preparation, and confidence certainly grows from the belief that you are fully prepared for the task ahead (Dickenson, 2011).

A number of researches have been done to determine the level of self confidence among athletes of different skill, especially on elite and non-elite athletes. Quite a number of research indicated that high self confidence among elite athletes enhance performance (Hanton, O'Brien, & Mellalieu, 2003; Perry & William, 1998; Jones, Hanton & Swain, 1994). Elite athletes are well-known for high confidence levels. Schinke and Da Costa (2001), Cleary and Zimmerman (2001) and, Jones and Hardy (1990) found that in general, elite athletes tended to have very high levels of confidence. Hemery (1986) study of 63 elite athletes showed that 90% of the sample had a very high level of self-confidence. Quite a number of researches indicated that high self confidence among elite athletes enhance performance (Jones, Hanton & Swain, 1994; Perry & William 1998; Hanton, O'Brien & Mellalieu, 2003). However, research of Williams and Krane (1998) showed there is no difference between the level of self confidence among elite and non-elite athletes.

One of the best theories which explains self-confidence is self-efficacy, is a form of situation-specific self-confidence. According to this theory there are four fundamental elements effective in developing self-efficacy (Cox, 2012). They are successful performance, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and emotional arousal. In successful performance, the athletes must experience success in order for self-efficacy to develop. Furthermore, in vicarious experience, athletes experienced success through the use of models. In learning a new skill, the learner needs a template or model to copy. The vicarious experience of success will provide a good foundation for the experience of success in a real situation. Verbal persuasion usually comes in the form of encouragement from the coach, parents, or peers. Lastly, emotional and physiological arousal plays an important role in influence readiness for learning and success.

Most of the previous researches focus on elite athletes, while ignore other categories of athletes. Therefore, the difference in confidence level among different categories of skill among athletes remains unclear. In Malaysia, the level of self confidence among track and field athletes of national, state, district and university level are yet to be identified through research. The result of this research will determine the influence of confidence on psychological sport performance.

Aims

The aim of this research was to identify the level of self-confidence among track and field athletes. In other words, the rationale for this study was designed to examine the levels of self-confidence among track and field athletes of different skills. Since most of the previous research focus on successful athletes, this research go beyond to provide information the level of self-confidence on least successful athletes.

In addition, the present study also aims to test psychological performance. In other words, the aim of this research is to determine the influence of the confidence level on psychological athletes' performance. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine self-confidence, among track and field of different skills (national, state, district and university levels) and psychological performance.

METHODS

The track and field athletes of this study were recruited from Sport between Universities. The instrument used for the study comprised of a 9-item Confidence Questionnaire and Psychological Performance Inventory (PPI).

The Psychological Performance Inventory (PPI), a 42 items self-report inventory with seven subscales, designed to measure factors that reflect mental toughness in an athlete were administered to the athletes. Each subscale consisted of six items measuring the seven fundamental areas of mental toughness, self-confidence, negative energy control, attention control, visualization and imagery control level, motivation, positive energy control, and attitude control.

The sample consisted of 77 track and field athletes, with national athletes (N=10), state athletes (N=15), district athletes (N=22), and university athletes (N= 30). The higher level of achievement declared as their category in sport.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Profile

The respondents' profile described levels of skill, gender, level of education and age. Table 1 shows the overall re-sults of the respondents' profile of 77 track and field athletes. The overall mean age for these respondents was 20.71 years old. The age of male respondents varied from

18 to 24 years, where the mean age was 21.51 years old. The age of females ranged from the minimum of 18 to the maximum of 23 years old. The mean age for female respondents was 20.18 years old.

The variable “skill of athletes” which is gathered through this study is categorized into four levels. They are national, state, district, and university. The result showed that 10 respondents had participated at national, whilst 15 respondents participate at state, 22 had participated at district and 30 respondents participated at university level. There were 45 males and 32 females. The course category showed that majority of the respondents, 27 were Diploma and 50 Degree.

Table 1. Respondents' Profile (n=77)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Skill of Athletes				
National	10	12.99		
State	15	19.48		
District	22	28.57		
University	30	38.96		
Course				
Diploma	27	35.07		
Degree	50	64.93		
Gender				
Male	45	58.44		
Female	32	41.56		
Age				
Male			21.51	1.19
Female			20.18	1.37
Overall			20.71	1.70

Cronbach Reliability Coefficients

In this study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were found relatively high, ranging from .85 to .88 (Table 2).

Table 2. Cronbach Reliability Coefficients

Questionnaire	Cronbach's Alpha (n=77)
Sport Confidence	.8801
Psychological Performance	.8543

Level of Self-Confidence among different skills of Track and Field Athletes

One-way ANOVA showed significant differences of level of self-confidence among categories of track and field athletes, $F(3, 77) = 15.212, p=.01$ (Table 3).

Table 3. Level of Self Confidence among different skills of Track and Field Athletes

Categories According to Skills	Self-Confidence	
	Mean	Value-F
National	17.5417	15.212*
State	16.1255	

District	13.7110
University	11.5101

* $p = 0.01$

Table 4. Pos Hock Tukey: Level of Self confidence among different skills of Track and Field Athletes

Categories According to Skills	National	State	District	University	N
National		*(1.010)	*(2.3187)	*(2.9012)	10
State			*(2.1117)	*(2.9501)	15
District				*(1.7819)	22
University					30

* $p = 0.05$

The result showed that athletes in the categories of university skill exhibited lower level of self-confidence than categories of state and district, whereas national athletes showed the highest levels of self-confidence.

In Malaysia, no research has been done involving these four categories of skill, so this research fails to compare with previous research. However, many researchers has been supported that elite athletes inherited high level of self-confidence (Claudio & Laura, 2003; Hanton et al., 2003; Jones et al., 1994; Perry & William, 1998; Williams & Krane 1998). Therefore, self-confidence was considered the most powerful strategies to enhance performance among elite athletes (Hardy, Jones & Gould, 1996).

Level of Psychological Performance among different skills of Track and Field Athletes

One-way ANOVA showed significant differences of level of sport performance among categories of track and field athletes, $F(3, 77) = 13.442$, $p = .01$ (Table 5).

Table 5. Level of Psychological Performance among different skills of track and field athletes

Categories According of Skills	Psychological Performance	
	Mean	Value-F
National	17.7120	13.123*
State	15.1707	
District	12.5100	
University	11.4127	

* $p = 0.01$

Table 6. Pos Hock Tukey: Level of Psychological Performance among Track and Field Athletes

Categories According to Skills	National	State	District	University	N
National		*(1.0057)	*(1.8721)	*(2.4110)	10
State			*(1.4917)	*(1.9761)	15
District				*(1.0021)	22
University					30

* $p < 0.05$

The result showed that athletes in the categories of university skill exhibit lower level of sport performance than categories of state and district, whereas national athletes showed the highest levels of sport performance. Skill levels of the performers are one of the most important variables that will either facilitate or dampen the performance of the athletes. National and state

athletes exhibit higher level of skill with a lot of experience and success in sport, and high level of self-confidence, therefore it's not amazing that they scored the highest in sport performance.

Observation of the sport event also shows that most of the national and state level athletes perform stretching before the competition. Stretching is very important in increased flexibility, improved range of motion for the joints for a better balance, improved circulations since stretching increases blood flow to the muscles, promotes better posture, prevent muscles from getting tight and stress relief.

The Level of Self-Confidence and Psychological Performance

The correlation coefficient of 0.007 was noted between the level of self-confidence and psychological performance in the evaluation of 77 track and field athletes, which is significant ($P = .01$). In other words, the positive relationship existing between these variables is statistically significant (Table 7). Positive correlation indicates that both variables increase or decrease together.

Table 7. The Relationship between Self Confidence and Psychological Performance among Track and Field Athletes

Subject	Psychological Performance
Self Confidence	0.007** (0.000)

* * $p=.01$

This research gained support from previous study on volleyball that sport confidence is very important factor in sport performance (Skinner, 2013). The result supported multidimensional model of sport-confidence as a predictor of satisfaction and performance success (Cox, 2012). According to this theory self-confidence made changes in cognition, affect, and physiological arousal, followed by a change in behaviour, a change in performance, and finally a change in immediate outcome either success or failure.

People who are confident seem to be able to make things go their way. They appear to be the masters of their own destiny and can often turn the faintest opportunity into a successful outcome. They are typified by a resolve to keep going even when things are not going in their favor. Similarly, athletes who are high in self-confidence are more readily able to turn sporting potential into superior performance than those who are not. Because of this, confidence is a much-sought-after attribute in the world of sport (Dickenson, 2011). Therefore, the level of self-confidence determines the level of sport performance.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the research determined that there are differences in the level of confidence, showed by different categories of track and field athletes. These differences were related to their level of skill. The results showed that elite or national athletes exhibited higher levels of confidence. High confident levels are very important in high sport performance.

Sport psychologists, sport counsellors and coaches should use the present findings to recommend self-confidence strategies to low skill athletes to increase their level of psychological performance.

Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest involves in this research among authors or respondents chosen in this research. Since all the authors contribute in this research, no conflict of interest arises among respondents or family members. The scientific work done throughout this research is unbiased and objective as possible in the sense that non-scientific interests (financial or personal) or any significant role in the way in which the research work is conducted and its results are interpreted and presented. No typical interests taken the form of financial advantages and personal considerations (such as family relationships) in this study. Therefore, no conflict of interest involved with family members or close personal relationships with any authors or respondents involved in this study.

Author's contribution

All the authors involved in this study contribute in this research like analysis and interpreting the data, methodology, checking grammar and spelling, literature, changing ideas and theories, critical review, discussions, preparing questionnaire and manuscript preparation. All the authors, made a substantive contribution to this study.

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to all of those with whom I have had the pleasure to work during this project. I also thank all the members involve in this study giving motivation to write this manuscript. I would like to thanks all the authors involved in this study who helped me in gathering different opinion and ideas and guiding me from time to time in making this project unique, despite of their busy schedule.

Funding Bodies (if applicable)

This research had done without any financial support from any parties, therefore no investments, ownership or directorship of external entities, university consultancies, provision of good or services, receipt of royalties or any other considerations involved in this research.

REFERENCES

- Ampofo-Boateng, 2009. *Understanding Sport Psychology*. Selangor, Malaysia: UPENA.
- Cleary, T. J., & Zimmerman, B. J. 2001. Self-regulation differences during athletic practice by experts, non-experts, and novices. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 13, 185-206.
- Claudio & Laura. 2003. Intensity, idiosyncratic content and functional impact of performance-related emotions in athletes. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 21 (3), 171-189.
- Cox, R. H. 2012. *Sport Psychology: Concept and Applications*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Craft, L. L., Magyar, T. M., Becker, B. J., & Feltz, D. L. 2003. Differences in imagery content and imagery ability between high and low confident track and field athletes. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 25, 44-65.
- Dickenson, P. 2011. *Inside Sport Psychology*. Champaign: Human Kinetics
- Hanton, S., O'Brien, M. & Mellalieu, S.D. 2003. Individual Differences, Perceived Control and Competitive Trait Anxiety. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 26, 39-55.
- Hardy, L., Jones, G. & Gould, D. 1996. *Understanding psychological preparation for sport: Theory and practice for elite performers*. Chichester, England: John Wiley and Sons.
- Hemery, D. 1986. *The Pursuit of Sporting Excellence*. London: Collins.
- Humara, M., 2001. The relationship between anxiety and performance: A Cognitive behavioral perspective. *Athletic Insight 1(2): The Online Journal of Sport Psychology*.
- Jones, G., Hanton, S. & Swain, A.B.J. 1994. Intensity and interpretation of anxiety symptoms in elite and non-elite sports performers. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 17, 657-663.
- Jones, J.G. & Hardy, L. 1990. Stress in sport: Experiences of some elite performers. In G. Jones and L. Hardy (eds), *Stress and Performance in Sport*, Wiley: Chichester.
- Martens, R. 1987. *Coaches guide to sport psychology*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Perry, J. D., & Williams, J. M. 1998. Relationship of intensity and direction of competitive trait anxiety to skill level and gender in tennis. *The Sport Psychologist*, 12, 169-179.
- Schinke, R. J. & Da Costa, J. (2001). An organizational approach to major-games athletic performance. *Athletic Insight*, 3 (2), Available on the World Wide Web: <http://www.athleticinsight.com/Vol3Iss2/SupportInfrastructure.htm>.
- Vealey, R. S., & Chase, M. A. 2008. Self-confidence in sport: Conceptual and research Advances. In T. S. Horn (Ed.), *Advances in Sport Psychology*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Vealey, R. S., Hayashi, S. W., Garner-Holman, M., & Giacobbi, P. 1998. Sources of sport confidence: Conceptualization and instrument development. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* 20: 54-80.
- Wann, D. L. 1997. *Sport Psychology*. New Jersey: Simon and Schuster.
- Weinberg, R.S. & Gould, D., 2019. *Foundations of Sport and Exercise Psychology* (7th Edition). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Williams, J.M. & Krane, V. 1998. Psychological characteristics of peak performance. In J.M. Williams (Ed.), *Applied sport psychology: personal growth to peak performance*. Palo

Malaysian Journal of Sport Science and Recreation
Vol. 19. No. 2. 312 - 321, 2023.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24191/mjssr.v19i2.24006>



Alto, CA: Mayfield.