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Developing a Scale for Attentional Control and its Relationship to Competitive Anxiety in Sports Among Players of some First Division Football Clubs for the 2024-2025 Sports Season

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General Background: Competitive football requires sustained concentration and attentional regulation because players must respond to rapidly changing situations while managing competitive pressure and anxiety. Specific Background: First-division football players encounter concentration difficulties, anxiety, distraction, and decision-making challenges during matches, creating a need to examine attentional control and competitive anxiety systematically. Knowledge Gap: The study addresses the need for a specific attentional control scale and an assessment of its relationship with competitive anxiety among first-division football players. Aims: This study develops an attentional control scale, determines competitive anxiety levels, and examines the relationship between attentional control and competitive anxiety. Results: The study used a descriptive survey design involving 128 players, including 18 players in the exploratory study and 110 in the main study. The attentional control instrument comprised 30 items across five dimensions: task focus, attentional control, resistance to distractions, selective attention, and maintaining focus and attention. Expert agreement ranged from 88.88% to 100%, while Cronbach's alpha coefficients were 0.836 for attentional control and 0.824 for sports competition anxiety. The reported correlation coefficients between competitive anxiety and the five attentional-control dimensions were 0.035, 0.038, 0.074, 0.070, and 0.029, respectively. Novelty: The study develops and applies two structured psychological scales specifically for first-division football players. Implications: The findings support continued psychological guidance and training focused on concentration, attentional control, distraction resistance, selective attention, and sustained attention during football preparation and competition.

Keywords: Attentional Control, Competitive Anxiety, Players, Focus, Football

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Articles

INTRODUCTION

Football represents a public meeting place for all the peoples of the world, regardless of their different sects, backgrounds, and religions, as it brings them together within a rectangular space, through which the players provide the best level to achieve positive results that guarantee them superiority and success at the expense of other teams through organizing the physical effort and the training and tactical load that the technical staff puts in place for those teams, whether these competitions are local or international. Therefore, it seeks to attract many players and coaches for the purpose of achieving excellence, and this requires the players to make more efforts and training to develop their level. By focusing on the atmosphere of the match and providing the best performance, therefore, the psychological aspect has become an important factor in the stability of players and teams because of the pressures of competitions, fans, and the nature of refereeing. The stability of the players requires a great ability to focus throughout the match period to take advantage of opportunities, keep the ball, act calmly in different playing situations, and not worry and be upset about facing competing teams because it distracts attention. The technical and skill aspects require high concentration in accomplishing the tasks assigned to them and not distracting attention under any pressure, while taking caution and caution against any negative behavior that has a direct impact on the players because it affects the attention of the players, which requires more intensive training units.

To develop the skill of concentration, the importance of the research lies in the fact that attentional control represents one of the important psychological factors that improve the performance of players in various sports because they are exposed to many variables related to the strength of the opposing team or sudden variables such as humidity, rain or the crowd, as well as continuing psychological support to confront competition anxiety as it is an important factor that affects their confidence in themselves, which is reflected in their concentration. Therefore, the effort is devoted by urging players to invest in opportunities and build attacks according to what is planned. The mistakes that are committed put the team in an unenviable position and this is attributed to this. Because of the speed in organizing the attack due to the loss of attention control, this results from the presence of three obstacles, which are excessive speed in handling the ball, lack of control and control, and loss of concentration, being one of the most prominent factors in attentional control. The weakness that players suffer from this control increases the symptoms of anxiety, especially attentional bias (individuals with anxiety respond more quickly to threatening information, which increases the rate of anxiety and hinders thinking). Attentional bias towards threats. Anxiety causes a weak ability to concentrate, difficulty retrieving important information, and distraction towards Threatening stimuli that require incorrect responses, leading to a continuous cycle of anxiety and decreased performance because of cognitive interference.

Eysenck et al. (2007) consider attentional control one of the concepts that has received great attention in the recent period by researchers because it is linked to many cognitive and personal processes, considering that this process is what directs and controls behavior because it plans the player's thoughts and behavior.

Research Problem

Football is considered one of the largest social gatherings as it promotes a spirit of camaraderie, love, communication, and exposure to different cultures, whether within the same environment or different environments, to achieve the best results that enhance the status of those teams in the league. This excellence and enhancement do not come by chance, but rather through the combined efforts of all those involved in the club's management, technical staff, and players. In every league around the world, players face numerous obstacles, especially in the Iraqi league. These include physical challenges such as injuries, psychological obstacles like pressure and frustration, and administrative issues such as player salaries and contracts. However, this research focuses on the skill level and the loss of concentration during matches, as this is the primary indicator of on-field performance. Most attacks, even those initiated by the goalkeeper, fail to pose a significant threat to the opposing team. Most passes and balls are disjointed due to prolonged play, resulting in a loss of possession and easy turnover. The opposing team often has many players in their own half, and the lack of support for the player in possession forces them to clear the ball without focus, fearing an opponent's advance. Therefore, it is crucial to encourage players to concentrate, control the tempo of attacks, and improve their teammates' speed (motor responsiveness). Distributing roles across multiple areas allows players greater freedom in ball movement. These roles require training to develop focus and control over assigned tasks. This is what we call He must maintain attentional control to ensure harmony and coordination among team members. Otherwise, the results will be negative, contributing to losing possession of the ball due to a loss of attentional control. This stems from the anxiety experienced by players during competitions, resulting in a lack of focus and poor coordination of physical effort. Organized balls that players strive to control are lost because of anxiety in one player, causing him to be unstable and unable to make the appropriate decision to perform the required skill, leading to an incorrect response. Muris et al. (2008) indicated a relationship between attentional control and the intrusion of anxiety-inducing memories. Thus, attentional control is inversely proportional to cognitive interference; the stronger the players' levels of attentional control, the more task-related thoughts they experience. The determinant of attentional control is neurotic symptoms that promote intrusive thoughts and memories.

Khalifa et al. (2009) believes that anxiety is one of the most important emotions faced by athletes, both in their daily lives and in competitive sports situations. Daily life is rarely free from anxiety due to the presence of some difficult-to-solve problems. Competitive situations are also full of anxiety-inducing problems. Symptoms of anxiety are numerous, such as fear, discomfort, extreme arousal to any stimulus, inability to concentrate, increased heart rate, increased respiratory rate, and elevated blood pressure. Based on the above, the research problem arises from observing several matches of the Iraqi Premier League, as follows:

1. Most passes are prone to being intercepted, especially in the opponent's half, due to a lapse in concentration.
2. Loss of focus due to physical exertion hinders a player's ability to position themselves correctly and make accurate passes.
3. Excessive force in winning aerial duels causes players to clear the ball instead of controlling it and building organized attacks.
4. A lack of coordination results from random, long passes.
5. The anxiety experienced by goalkeepers and some players due to clearing the ball and removing it from the danger zone is a mistake. Instead, they should maintain a sense of relaxation and composure, preparing to build organized attacks and circulate the ball across different areas of the field.

Research Objectives

1. To develop an attentional control scale for players in selected first-division football clubs.
2. To determine the level of competitive anxiety among players in selected first-division football clubs.
3. To identify the relationship between attentional control and competitive anxiety among players in selected first-division football clubs.

Research Hypotheses

1. There are statistically significant differences in the dimensions of attentional control among players in some first-division football clubs.
2. There are statistically significant differences in competitive anxiety among some players in first-division football clubs.
3. There is a statistically significant relationship between attentional control and competitive anxiety among players in some first-division football clubs.

Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance lies in understanding the main dimensions of attentional control and competitive anxiety among some first-division football club players and the extent to which each variable contributes to addressing competitive anxiety in these players.

Practical Significance

The practical significance lies in the extent to which this research can help coaches understand the components of attentional control within each dimension, thereby improving concentration, preventing ball distractions during passes, and simultaneously reducing the level of anxiety players experience during competitive matches.

Research Areas

a. Human Scope: Players of first-division football clubs in the Republic of Iraq.
b. Temporal Scope: The exploratory study was conducted (May 25, 2025 - June 3, 2025), and the main study was conducted (August 20, 2025 - June 10, 2025).
c. Spatial Scope: First-division football club stadiums for the 2025 season.

METHOD

Research Methodology

The researcher used the descriptive survey method as it was suitable for the nature of the research.

Research Population

The research population includes some Premier League football clubs for the 2025 sports season.

Research Sample

The main research sample was selected purposively, with a sample size of (128) players for the 2025 sports season. These players represent clubs in Nasiriyah (Al-Furat), Basra Governorate (Al-Sadiq - Al-Qurna), Diwaniyah (Afak), Kut (Naft Al-Wasat), Babylon (Al-Kifl Club), and (Al-Samawah Club) in Muthanna Governorate. The total number of players is (128), distributed among the following clubs, as shown in the table below.

[Table 1. About here.]

Table (1) represents the numerical description of the research sample according to academic qualifications in the exploratory and main studies. n=128

It is clear from the table above, which pertains to the numerical description of the research sample, that the total research sample consisted of (128) first-division football players, distributed across (6) clubs. The exploratory study was conducted on (18) players, representing (14.06%), and the main study was conducted on (110) players, representing (85.94%). The highest participation rate was among players from Al-Furat Club in Dhi Qar Governorate, with (25) players, representing (19.53%). This was followed by Al-Sadiq Club in Basra Governorate with (22) participants, representing (17.19%), then Al-Diwaniyah Club in Al-Diwaniyah Governorate with (21) participants, representing (16.41%), then Al-Kifl Club with the same number and percentage (16.41%), and finally Al-Qurna Club in Basra Governorate with (20) participants. (15.62) Finally, Al-Samawah Club in Al-Muthanna Governorate, where the number of participating players reached (19), representing (14.84) players.

[Table 2. About here.]

Table (2) provides the numerical description of the research sample according to the exploration and main studies.

The research sample consisted of (128) players, distributed as follows: The exploration study included (18) players (14.06%), comprising (2) goalkeepers (11.11%), (8) defenders (44.44%), (5) midfielders (27.78%), and (3) forwards (16.67%). The main study included (12) goalkeepers (10.91%), (37) defenders (33.64%), (38) midfielders (34.54%), and (23) forwards (20.91%). The largest age group among participants was (19-25), with (105) players, as shown in Table (2) above.

Sample Selection Criteria

1. The participant's age must be at least 19 years.
2. The participant must be a registered player with the Central

Football Federation.

Sample Homogeneity

To ensure the homogeneity of the research sample in the primary variables (age level and player position), the arithmetic mean, median, standard deviation, and skewness coefficient were calculated as shown in Table (3).

[Table 3. About here.]

Table (3), which pertains to the homogeneity of the research sample in the primary variables (age level and player position), shows that the skewness coefficients range between (0.1688 and -0.038), indicating that the extracted measurements are close to normality. The skewness coefficient values range between (±3) and are very close to zero, confirming the homogeneity of the entire research sample in terms of age level and player position.

Steps for Constructing the Scale

Reviewing some references and previous studies related to the research topic in the fields of general psychology and sports psychology: Razouki (2020) and Abdel Samie and Ramadan (2020).

The researcher formulated (5) axes related to the attentional control scale and presented them to (12) expert reviewers for their feedback, whether approving, disagreeing, or suggesting modifications and additions to the following axes.

[Table 4. About here.]

Table (4) shows that the percentage of agreement among the experts regarding the axes of the Attention Control Scale ranged between (88.88-100). The researcher accepted an agreement percentage of more than (80) and above, thus making all the axes in their initial form measurable for attention control, as shown in Table (4).

The statements were distributed for each of the six axes of the scale and presented to experts for their feedback on the suitability of these statements, their suitability to some extent, or their unsuitability. These statements were distributed systematically for each axis separately, resulting in a scale consisting of 30 statements.

The researcher randomly distributed the statements for the Attention Control Scale and administered it to the pilot study to ascertain the extent of the sample's response to the scale statements and to identify any obstacles the sample might face when answering, with the aim of applying it to the main study.

After confirming the participants' response, the scale in its final form was administered to the pilot study. The first source included statements (1, 6, 11, 16, 21), the second source (2, 7, 12, 17, 22), the third source (3, 8, 13, 23, 28), the fourth source (4, 9, 14, 24, 29), and the fifth source (5, 10, 11, 11, 16, 21). 15 – 25 – 30).

Internal and external consistency validity of the Attention Control Scale for First Division Football Players: To determine the relative importance of the number of experts (12 judges), the correlation coefficient for each item, and the axis to which it belongs, as shown in Table (5).

[Table 5. About here.]

Table (5), which details the expert opinion survey on the suitability of the statements for the Attention Control Scale for some first-division football clubs, shows that the percentage of expert agreement ranged between (83.33-100). The researcher accepted an agreement percentage of (80%) or higher for a statement to be considered valid. Therefore, the researcher confirmed that the statements aligned with the dimensions at a rate greater than 80%. As can be seen from the table above, the correlation coefficient for the scale as a whole recorded the highest consistency in statement number (2) of the first axis to which the statement belongs, with a percentage of (0.723**). It recorded the lowest consistency in the second axis between the questions posed and the dimension to which the statement belongs, specifically in question number (20), where the correlation coefficient reached a percentage of (0.163).

External and internal consistency validity and relative importance: for the competitive anxiety scale for first-division football club players, and the correlation coefficient for each axis and dimension to which the statement belongs.

[Table 6. About here.]

Table (6), which details the expert opinion survey regarding the suitability of the statements in the Sports Competition Anxiety Scale for some first-division football clubs, shows that the percentage of expert agreement ranged between 83.33% and 94.44%. The researcher accepted an agreement percentage of 80% or higher for a statement to be considered acceptable. Therefore, the researcher confirmed that the statements aligned with the dimensions at a rate greater than 80%. As can be seen from the table above, the correlation coefficient recorded the highest consistency for statement number (12) and the axis as a whole, with a correlation coefficient of 0.500**. The lowest consistency was recorded for statement number (20) between the questions posed and the dimension to which the statement belonged, with a correlation coefficient of 0.275**.

Scale Reliability: The researcher confirmed the reliability of the Attentional Control Scale and the Competition Anxiety Scale for some first-division football club players using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, as shown in Table (6).

[Table 7. About here.]

It is noted from Table (7) that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Attention Control Scale reached (0.836), which indicates a high index of the scale. Looking at the table above about the Sports Competition Anxiety Scale, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient reached (0.824), which indicates that both scales are valid, reliable, and objective.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Presentation and Discussion of Results

Presentation and Discussion of Results: This chapter will present and discuss the results considering the acceptance rates.

[Table 8. About here.]

[Table 9. About here.]

Table (9) shows that the average responses of the sample members to the statements of the focus and attention axis on tasks constitute a high acceptance, as the arithmetic means reached between (3.17 - 3.79), and the total arithmetic mean for the axis reached (3.54), and the average standard deviation reached (1.196).

[Table 10. About here.]

Table (10) shows that the average responses of the sample members to the statements of the (Attentional Control) axis indicate high acceptance, with the arithmetic means ranging between (2.84 - 3.82), the overall arithmetic mean for the axis reaching (3.51), and the average standard deviation reaching (1.138). The sample's attitude strongly agrees.

[Table 11. About here.]

Table (11) shows the response of the research sample to the axis of (resistance to dispersion), which constitutes a relatively high acceptance, as the arithmetic means reached between (3.17-3.98), and the total arithmetic mean for the axis reached (3.42), and the average standard deviation reached (1.152), and the direction of the sample is towards agreement.

[Table 12. About here.]

Table (12) shows the research sample's response to the axis of (selective attention focus). It indicates a relatively high level of acceptance, with arithmetic means ranging from (3.16-4.43), an arithmetic mean for the axis of (3.655), and a mean standard deviation of (1.019). The sample's attitude is towards agreement.

[Table 13. About here.]

Table (13) shows the responses of the research sample on the axis of (continuity of attention focus). It constitutes a relatively high acceptance, as the arithmetic means reached between (2.53-4.16), and the arithmetic mean for the axis reached (3.65), and the average standard deviation reached (0.874), and the direction of the sample is towards agreement.

[Table 14. About here.]

Table (14) shows the average responses of the research sample to the items on the Competition Anxiety Scale for First Division Football Players. The responses indicate a relatively high level of acceptance, with arithmetic means ranging from (3.41-4.46) and an overall arithmetic mean of (3.76), resulting in a standard deviation of (1.020). The scale trend suggests that the responses are appropriate.

B. Discussion of Results

The researcher discusses the results obtained through statistical analyses and data. Table (5) shows the relative importance and correlation coefficient for each statement and its corresponding axis. The highest consistency for the first axis was recorded in statement (2) with a consistency of (0.723**), while the lowest consistency was recorded in statement (1) of the first axis with a consistency of (0.547**). Table (9), which pertains to the same axis (focus and attention on tasks), shows that the average responses of the sample members to the statements indicate high acceptance, with arithmetic means ranging between (3.17 - 3.79). The overall arithmetic mean for the axis was (3.54), with a standard deviation of (1.196). This highlights that focusing players' attention on their assigned tasks is a fundamental duty for each player, given their skill, physical, and mental capabilities in these competitions to achieve positive results. These duties represent the essential pillars that motivate the player, as a key element of the team. Consequently, they bear the responsibility of adhering to their assigned tasks, focusing on the flow and tactics of the game, whether those devised by their own team or those of the opposing team. As is customary, the first half is called the players' half, while the second half is called the coaches' half, as they have gathered numerous observations about the players' movements in the first half and which areas pose a threat to their team. Instructions are given, observations are made, and these are reinforced with numerical support to ensure focus and attention on tasks involving movement towards opposing players. Each match differs from the others according to the methods and tactical plans employed, relying on players with a high level of awareness and concentration, and on how to adhere to these tasks and implement them on the field with skillful precision. The more the coaching staff can analyze the opposing team's style, the more effective the instructions will be for the players. Present because it requires focusing on those tasks in order to reduce the threat posed by the opposing team.

Vernacchia (2003) considers concentration to be one of the main factors that contribute to achieving good performance. It is the ability to perform with clear and continuous focus on carrying out the tasks assigned to the players. In order to achieve success in competitive situations, athletes must be able to understand and know how to focus attention and control their thoughts. As former Manchester United goalkeeper Edwin Van der Sar pointed out, the importance of concentration in football is that “concentration is an essential part of a football player and revolves around how to maintain focus on duties for (90) minutes during the match. But the moment you start to feel tired, concentration levels decrease and begin to decline.” According to Van der Sar, outstanding performance requires players to ignore and not react to potential distractions, whether these distractions are internal or external, visual or auditory, from other competing teams, spectators, or the media. Distractions may include a range of internal factors such as negative talk, emotional behavior, and physical exhaustion.

Smith (2003) states that it is clear from this that outstanding and purposeful performance is only achieved when players voluntarily focus on agreed-upon cues that suit their

abilities, while simultaneously being able to avoid and ignore potential distractions.

This study aligns with San Raffaele's (2019) study, titled "Focus and Self-Talk in Football".

The researcher believes that focusing on tasks is the responsibility of all players. This includes adhering to the general advice provided by the coaching staff regarding players' daily lives and mental health, such as avoiding anything that causes weight gain, consuming alcoholic beverages, smoking, and staying up late, as these lead to loss of focus, lethargy, and decreased physical fitness. It also involves adhering to the tasks assigned to players on the field, according to each player's duties, whether goalkeeper, defender, midfielder, or forward, and executing these duties with complete professionalism. This can be achieved through team training sessions, training camps, and friendly matches with other teams. The other requires calmness and mental relaxation during the attack and defense process.

Looking at Table (5), which shows the relative importance and correlation coefficient of each statement and the second axis to which it belongs, the highest consistency in the second axis (attentional control) was recorded in statement (8) with a percentage of (0.714**), and the lowest consistency was recorded in statement (12) with a percentage of (0.043). As can be seen from Table (10), the average responses of the sample members to the statements in the (attentional control) axis indicate high acceptance, with arithmetic means ranging between (2.84 - 3.82) and the overall arithmetic mean for the axis reaching (3.51) with a standard deviation of (1.138). Table (5) also shows that the highest consistency for the second axis was recorded in statement (8) with a consistency of (0.714**), and the lowest consistency was recorded in statement (12) with a consistency of (0.43).

Thus, we can demonstrate that attentional control among players is one of the important variables that enables a player to maintain control over the ball when in possession, regardless of the number of passes. The plans and strength of opposing teams stem from the players' excellent preparation during both general and specific training periods, and their commitment to training sessions. This commitment is the key factor in developing these skills and achieving harmony among the players. Players possessing this skill are characterized by calmness and relaxation, avoiding any pressure, which allows them to conserve their energy and control the flow of organized attacks. They also know how to exploit spaces, thanks to their high level of physical fitness and psychological stability, which contributes to their vitality and activity as they interact with each other. In contrast, some players who lack this vitality and are often under pressure quickly lose control of the ball due to a loss of focus.

Friedman and Miyake (2017) confirm that attentional control refers to a player's executive ability to focus and choose which stimuli to pay attention to and which to ignore. This contributes to organizing the information that will be processed and shared with many other complex cognitive processes to achieve the desired performance goal.

Rubinsteing et al. (2009) explain that attentional control is manifested in several cognitive functions, most notably planning. This includes the cognitive definition of the goal and the objectives required for performance, striving diligently to achieve those objectives, and the ability to switch between different duties by shifting mental focus and allowing the player to think in a way that serves the achievement of the plans and goals they are pursuing.

This study is consistent with the study by Asaad Jawad Abdul Ali and Kadhim Abdul Hamza Kadhim (2023), entitled "Attentional Control and its Relationship to Communication among First Division Football Referees in Iraq."

The researcher believes that attentional control varies among players due to factors including individual differences, prior experiences, and the speed of motor response to the nature of the stimuli. Some players respond with high efficiency in attentional control, while others lose this ability due to fatigue or exposure to undesirable stimuli such as shouting from the crowd or receiving a warning.

Table (5), which deals with the relative importance and correlation coefficient of the third axis (resistance to dispersion), shows that the highest consistency was recorded in statement (14) with a percentage of (0.645**) and the lowest consistency was recorded in statement (13) with a percentage of (0.326**). Table (11), which shows the responses of the research sample to the third axis (dimensions and resistance to dispersion), indicates a relatively high level of acceptance, with arithmetic means ranging from (3.17-3.98), an overall arithmetic mean of (3.42), and a standard deviation of (1.152). The sample tended towards agreement.

It is clear from this that football is not merely a matter of physical skills related to fitness, but also a mental and psychological system that requires players to undertake extensive preparation to ensure they are ready to face opposing teams and the negative situations they encounter throughout this period. These situations can arise from aggressive behavior, early losses, or the influence of the crowd or media. Therefore, players must confront these challenges and resist all that causes them to... Distractions can disrupt a player's focus and concentration on the goals set for them according to instructions. Many distractions overwhelm players due to the nature of the competition, the strength of opposing teams, and the nature of the environment and natural conditions such as cold or heat. All these variables can contribute to distraction, especially when playing in conditions different from the team's usual environment. This requires players to adapt to these variables, remain calm, be confident, and confront these obstacles or distractions to maintain team cohesion from any sudden change, such as being exposed to aggressive behavior from opposing players or fans, as this can lead to losing the match and put the team in a difficult position. There are teams that experience the expulsion of players and are trailing by a goal, but the coach's instructions to control themselves and resist anything that causes the team to be destabilized allow us to see the team return to its normal state and achieve a good result. In the 1982 World Cup,

after Italy was trailing by two goals against Brazil, the coach made a substitution, bringing on Paolo Rossi, who managed to score (3) goals, ending the match with Italy winning the World Cup. Resisting distractions helps in rebuilding and reorganizing the team to achieve the goals it seeks to achieve.

Di Onofrio et al. (2019) state that the athletic training of amateur football players requires extensive exercises, including respiratory muscle training, which can improve physical capacity, lung function, and fatigue resistance for extended periods. This, in turn, enhances performance in many sports, particularly for football players. This is corroborated by studies by Farì et al. (2021) and Latino et al. (2023), which demonstrated a strong correlation between endurance functions and resistance to distraction in football players, including amateurs. Consequently, studies have shown that elite football players possess superior lung function compared to amateur players. This is attributed to genetic factors, adaptation to training regimens, and overall fitness levels. Furthermore, the continuous training of amateur players, which develops the cardiovascular and respiratory muscles and improves lung efficiency, can also have a positive impact. It is advised to avoid the use of medications, as they can affect the respiratory system and the control of resistance to distractions.

This study is consistent with the study by Tafuri et al. (2024), entitled: The Effect of Resistance Training on the Physiological Performance of Amateur Football Players: An Integrated Training Approach.

It is observed from Table (5), pertaining to the fourth axis, that the highest consistency was recorded in statement (24) at a rate of (0.699**), and the lowest consistency was recorded in statement (20) at a rate of (0.163). It is also observed from Table (12) that the research sample's response to the axis of selective attention concentration demonstrates a relatively high level of acceptance, with arithmetic means ranging from (3.16-4.43), the overall arithmetic mean of the axis reaching (3.655), and the mean standard deviation reaching (1.019). The sample's trend is towards agreement. Through this, we clarify that selective focus and attention are important aspects of measuring attentional control, as they determine the response and skill required for each variable, in accordance with the function and instructions given to each player. This includes selecting the skill, such as emphasizing cross passes due to the presence of tall strikers who excel at heading the ball, and other instructions that sometimes require quick motor responses to build counter-attacks, exploiting the lack of defensive cover for the attacking player and the opponent's advanced position. This approach is characterized by a type of selective focus on the required skill, which depends on the players' physical capabilities, fitness level, and accumulated experience from league participation or through training sessions on applying these instructions. Verburgh et al. (2014) define selective attention and focus as the process of identifying and selecting what is prominent while ignoring other stimuli and directing attention to a specific stimulus. When a player focuses on and controls the ball while dribbling, this can significantly contribute to the smooth execution of technical skills. This stems from their level of cognitive abilities regarding the skills they are performing, sometimes surpassing the level of other players due to their precise focus on the skills they are performing and their disregard for all internal and external influences.

This study aligns with the study by Ali Hidir Kurt and Gonca Ince (2022), titled "The Relationship Between Selective Attention, Agility, and Skill Performance in Young Football Players."

As can be seen from Table (5), which deals with the relative importance and correlation coefficient of the fifth axis, the highest consistency was recorded in statement (30) with a percentage of (0.585**) and the lowest consistency was recorded in (27) with a percentage of (0.327**). Table (13) also shows that the average response of the sample members to the fifth axis constitutes a relatively high degree of acceptance, with arithmetic means ranging between (4.16 - 2.53). The arithmetic mean for the axis was (3.65) and the average standard deviation was (0.874), indicating a trend in the sample towards agreement. These results demonstrate the importance of maintaining focus throughout the match, as football requires concentration. Mistakes made by players can lead the team into a serious and uncontrollable predicament, especially if the team previously enjoyed a degree of stability and discipline on the field. An unintentional error caused this predicament. Therefore, players are required to be highly responsible, adhering to the points set by the technical staff. In this context, we recall the situation of the French player (Terry). Thierry Henry, during the 2007/2008 season after his transfer to Barcelona, when he was a legend and Arsenal's all-time leading scorer, recounts a match between Barcelona and Sporting Lisbon, which ended in a 5-2 victory for the Catalan team. Henry scored a goal, and things were going well. At halftime, coach Pep Guardiola suddenly substituted him. Instead of being substituted, Henry was substituted because he had moved from the left wing to the right to receive a pass from Lionel Messi, which resulted in a goal. This didn't please Guardiola, who appeared displeased and angry on the bench. The coach wants the entire plan implemented on the pitch, and if a player doesn't adhere to it, he will punish them. This illustrates that focusing on following the coach's instructions regarding positioning in the playing area is essential, stemming from a deep understanding of the coach's tactics on the field and how to maintain focus.

Wulf et al. (1998) state that maintaining focus and attention is a skill that requires Attention should be paid to it from the early stages of developing novice players until they become players in the elite league. When the performer executes a certain skill, he must provide himself with feedback, as it is an important part of the development of motor skills. He seeks through it to achieve success for that movement and the extent of his ability to change that skill to improve performance as the learning stages progress. Feedback for the skill of maintaining focus is not limited to self-feedback but also comes from other external sources such as the coach or other players. This is called reinforcement feedback, which has been developing in recent

years, as it is given to the player to increase focus and enhance his attention, as it has a great impact on the result of the skill that the player performs. This is closely related to other fields such as cognitive psychology, learning, decision-making, and perception.

Van Raalte et al. (2016) emphasize that the process of focusing attention is continuously achieved using certain internally agreed-upon signals among players, resulting from understanding and harmony. These signals can be verbal, such as uttering self-talk outside the context of conventional language, or kinetic, using a low or loud voice, gestures, or signals. Continued practice is essential for acquiring new skills, and learning is generally classified into three types: positive, educational, and negative. The first type, positive learning, involves increasing energy and effort without any hints related to the desired skill, such as "I can do it." This generates harmony, focus, and understanding among ideas, enabling us to manage difficult situations and cope with tensions more effectively. It increases motivation and thus contributes to achieving consistent and optimal performance.

Hardy et al. (2015) indicate that the second type, the educational type, helps players focus while performing the required skills. It facilitates their concentration on task-related cues, thus helping athletes focus on the technical aspects of performance and improve their motor skills.

This study aligns with that of Juan Martín Tassi et al. (2023), titled "Attentional Focus in Team Sports: Effects of an Intervention Program on Football Players."

Based on the presented evidence of a consistent relationship between the attentional control axes and the statements belonging to each axis, in addition to the sample's responses according to the acceptance rates for each axis of the scale, the overall mean for the axis as a whole, the overall mean of the standard deviation, and the overall mean of the percentage, it becomes clear that the first hypothesis, which stated, "There are statistically significant differences in the axes of players from some first-division football clubs," is confirmed.

Considering Table (6), which pertains to the relative importance of expert opinions regarding the suitability of the statements for the competitive anxiety scale and the correlation coefficient for each statement of the scale, the highest correlation coefficient was recorded for statement number (12, with a percentage of 0.500**), and the lowest correlation was recorded for statement number (20) between the questions posed and the dimension to which the statement belongs, with a correlation coefficient of (0.275**). As can be seen from Table No. (14), which shows the average responses of the research sample to the statements of the competition anxiety scale for first division football club players, it constitutes a relatively high acceptance, as the arithmetic means reached between (3.41-4.46), and the overall arithmetic mean for the axis reached (3.76), with a standard deviation of (1.020), and the direction of the scale is towards "applies to me". This makes it clear that football players face many physical and psychological challenges during the league season, which affect the nature of their performance, especially the factor of anxiety, which is accompanied by a kind of tension and fear of failure. This represents one of the negative aspects, as it affects the nature of mental thinking, as well as physical functions and some behavioral symptoms accompany the player as a result of being exposed to any situation that may put pressure on him, whether from opposing players, the audience, or even the referee, which constitutes a great threat. The player's responses become unrealistic, such as getting injured, acting aggressively towards the opponent, or feeling and frequently objecting to the referee's decisions. This causes a decrease in the athlete's performance level, due to the difficulty of the physiological systems adapting to these threats that a considerable number of players face. On the contrary, the player must take all possible precautions in terms of awareness, cognitive ability, and focus on the atmosphere of the match, and he must have self-confidence and a high level of optimism in the capabilities of his teammates and his team to overcome other teams without fear of failure.

Neil et al. (2012) indicate that competitive anxiety is not limited to performance alone, but also affects the physiological aspects of athletes by impacting bodily functions such as muscle tremors and heart rate. It also affects their psychological performance by influencing their emotions and perceptions, which can negatively impact their performance. Furthermore, it can lead to decreased enjoyment, withdrawal from participation, and an increased risk of injury.

Fawzi (2006) states that excessive anxiety leads to confusion and impairment of athletic performance, while insufficient anxiety leads to apathy in the face of the situation. In both cases—high or low anxiety—it is a negative element in competitive athletic situations. However, if the level of anxiety is appropriate to the type of threat the athlete faces or anticipates, and to the method of overcoming it, then it is suitable for exhibiting the required behavior and enabling the athlete to confront the threatening situation. In this case, anxiety is a positive element. This study agrees with the study by Ragini Adhikari et al. (2024), entitled "Competitive Sports Anxiety Among Football Players: A Cross-Sectional Study Beyond the Scoreboard." Based on the statistical tables presented, the second hypothesis, which states that "there are statistically significant differences in competitive anxiety among some first-division football players," is confirmed.

[Table 15. About here.]

Table No. (15), which pertains to the correlation coefficient between the axes of the Attentional Control Scale and the Competition Anxiety Scale for players of some first division football clubs, shows that there is a correlation factor between the (Focus on Tasks) axis, as one of the axes of the Attentional Control Scale, and Competition Anxiety. The correlation coefficient recorded a percentage of (0.35), which indicates the existence of a weak correlation coefficient. Competition anxiety among football players is related and statistically significant to the Task Focus axis. Therefore, more effort and focus are

required from the technical staff to pay attention to the psychological aspects during the preparation and competition period. Attention is also required to emphasize training that develops the factor of focus on those tasks and instructions, as they contribute to achieving balance and coordination among the players. Most of the teams that are distinguished by having players who are competent in carrying out the tasks assigned to them are the most effective teams on the field and the most energetic as a result of the presence of harmony. As can be seen from the table above regarding the second axis (attentional control), there is a correlation coefficient with competitive anxiety, as its percentage reached (0.038). It is clear from this that the attentional control axis has a weak correlation coefficient among players, and it needs more physical, technical, and psychological training through which the player can control the nature of attention and distribute it according to appropriate opportunities. This requires him to relax and be calm, especially in situations of high pressure, strong competition, and critical times, so that he can control the nature of the skills he performs, whether they are related to his self-management and physiology through breathing processes to maintain his health and avoid rough play and unnecessary contact to avoid injury, as well as controlling skills towards his teammates. These skills need many trainings and repetitions to enable players to apply them in the match. Otherwise, it is difficult to adapt and control attention towards every gap that can be exploited to enhance the players' position, due to the importance of this axis, which is one of the priorities for football players. Looking at the table above, we observe a negative correlation coefficient between the "Distraction Resistance" axis and the competitive anxiety scale, with a correlation coefficient of -0.74. This indicates that competitive anxiety affects players' ability to confront and resist distractions. This is particularly evident among national team players, who experience numerous distractions that negatively impact their performance, leading them to hide or avoid certain challenges. A prime example is their reluctance to take penalty kicks and their absence from televised interviews, likely due to fear of the experience, the possibility of failure, or anxiety about the crowd. These distractions undermine players' efforts and necessitate continuous training to cultivate self-confidence. Missing opportunities and failing to capitalize on them effectively will be exploited by the opposing team, creating dangerous situations through ball clearances. This requires a concerted effort from the players to eliminate anything that hinders or distracts them, such as breaking free from marking and avoiding static positions. Focusing on eliminating distractions creates space for players to execute appropriate skills like passing. This direct shooting is a skill-based skill, while resisting any negative behavior the player encounters during or before the match, whether from the opposing team or the crowd, is a behavioral skill. This is because such behavior can affect the player, leading to a highly emotional performance and a poor response that could result in being disqualified from the match. As can be seen from the table above regarding the fourth axis (selective attention focus), the correlation coefficient for the competition anxiety scale reached (-0.70). This indicates that the selective attention focus axis of the attentional control scale has an inverse (negative) correlation with the competition anxiety scale. Football is a sport that requires significant effort and intensive training due to the varying capabilities of the teams. Some teams are particularly strong because they aim to secure promotion to the Premier League and then the Elite League. This necessitates players who excel at implementing strategies that enhance the team's standing in the league. This involves focusing on selecting ideas and skills that align with the nature of each match to manage the anxiety players experience during competition. Coaches strive to develop strategies, utilize substitute players, and provide opportunities for participation and adaptation. With matches and easing the tension they face in the future for any emergency situation, and resting some players in order to involve them in the tough match, as well as meeting the players to employ their capabilities in terms of the availability of the height factor in facing goalkeepers, as well as choosing players who are distinguished by the speed of launching to move the play on the sides, and selecting players designated to carry out penalty kicks and direct free kicks, all these tools form links and the key to the game for teams that try to focus on selecting training and choosing players for each skill.

This selection is not only for the technical staff, but the players must also benefit from their experience and skill in selecting skills such as penetration, passing, or shooting, in order to avoid keeping the ball for a long time, as this wastes that effort. It is noted that first-division players are in dire need of continuous guidance in carrying out the duties assigned to them during training sessions without worrying or fearing failure, and their commitment to the duties will give the team the opportunity to excel by focusing on selecting positive ideas and skills before and during the match. Looking at the table above regarding the fifth axis (Sustaining and Focusing Attention) of the Attentional Control Scale, a correlation was found with the Competition Anxiety Scale, with a correlation coefficient of (0.029). This indicates that the axis of sustained attention has a statistically significant positive relationship, requiring further training for players. Football demands seizing opportunities and capitalizing on mistakes. This axis primarily depends on the player's intrinsic motivation. Success in all aspects of the game will make them stand out and become valuable assets to other teams in the league or international clubs. External motivation, such as guidance from the coach or teammates, can also play a significant role, marking a turning point in the player's career. Players must remain attentive and alert throughout the match and extra time, relying on teamwork and coordination with the coaching staff. Lethargy, fatigue, and ignorance of the opposing team significantly contribute to a loss of focus and facilitate the opponent's goals. And it poses a risk more than once. It is also noted that while the impact of competitive anxiety is relative, its presence contributes to difficulties in future results.

Rateb (2000) points out that anxiety is one of the important emotions and is considered one of the most important

psychological phenomena affecting athletes' performance. This impact can be positive, motivating them to exert more effort, or negative, hindering performance.

Blankstein et al. (1990) indicate that attentional control, coupled with voluntary attentional processes in all aspects, forms a self-regulating system and represents a motivator for achieving a clear goal. The Attentional Control Theory (ACT) posits that anxiety creates a balance between these aspects. If an imbalance occurs between these aspects, it is reflected in deficiencies in performance on cognitive tasks. The reason for this imbalance is reaching a state that leads to an increased influence of the stimulus-driven attentional system and a decreased influence of the goal-directed attentional system due to the effect of anxiety.

This study is consistent with Eysenck's (2010) study, "Attentional Control Theory and its Relationship to Anxiety". The findings confirm the third hypothesis, which states that "there is a statistically significant relationship between attentional control axes and competitive anxiety among players in some first-division football clubs."

CONCLUSION

1. First Division football players agree on the "Task Focus" axis, showing high acceptance, with an overall average score of approximately 3.54 and a standard deviation of 1.192. The sample strongly agrees, indicating that task focus is one of the most positive aspects of the attentional control scale.
2. First Division football players showed a high level of agreement on the (Attentional Control) axis, with an overall average score of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 1.138. The sample strongly agreed, indicating that Attentional Control is a positive axis for measuring attentional control.
3. First Division football players showed a high level of agreement on the (Distraction Resistance) axis, with an overall average score of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 1.152. The sample strongly agreed, confirming that Distraction Resistance is a positive axis for measuring attentional control.
4. First Division football players showed a high level of agreement on the (Selective Attention Focus) axis, with an overall average score of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 1.019. The sample strongly agreed, confirming that Selective Attention Focus is a positive axis for measuring attentional control. Attention
5. First Division football players agree on the "Maintaining Focus and Attention" axis, showing high acceptance. The overall average for this axis was (3.65) with a standard deviation of (0.874), indicating a positive trend in the sample. This proves that the "Maintaining Focus and Attention" axis is a positive indicator for measuring attentional control.
6. First Division football players agree on the "Competition Anxiety" variable, showing high acceptance. The overall average for this axis was (3.76) with a standard deviation of (1.020), indicating a positive trend in the scale's statements. This proves that the competitive anxiety variable affects attentional control for football players.
7. The technical staff should be encouraged to pay attention to psychological factors during training sessions that develop the axes of the attentional control scale. This contributes to achieving harmony among players, focusing on the match atmosphere, and avoiding undesirable behaviors that distract players from the competitive environment.
8. First Division football players suffer from the anxiety of competition is evident in the atmosphere of the match, the frequent ball clearances, the high number of fouls and warnings, and the injuries sustained by players, all of which reflect a decline in performance.
9. Overcoming obstacles, focusing on financial support, establishing training camps, and playing friendly matches against higher-level teams are crucial to assessing player responsiveness to these factors and their importance in improving performance.

Recommendations

1. Adopt the dimensions and axes studied in this research as key indicators for understanding attentional control among first-division football players.
2. The Iraqi Football Association should offer specialized training courses for technical staff and coaches, emphasizing the importance of psychological aspects in improving player performance throughout the league season.
3. Research other variables or axes that contribute to attentional control in football players.
4. Boost self-confidence among first-division players, emphasizing focus and continuous guidance throughout the match, addressing anxiety, avoiding dwelling on anything that might cause feelings of weakness and fear, and focusing on fulfilling their assigned duties rather than worrying about the match result.
5. Expanding the circle of training culture through international participation of coaches to develop their psychological culture, as they are the link in the continuity of players staying or their aversion to the teams they play for.

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LIST OF TABLE

Table 1 / Distribution of Sample Members Across Sports Clubs According to the Exploratory and Main Studies

No	Clubs	Sample		Exploratory study		Basic study	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	Euphrates	25	19.53	4	16	21	84
2	Al-Sadiq	22	17.19	3	13.64	19	86.36
3	Al-Diwaniyah	21	16.41	4	19.05	17	90.95
4	Al-Kifl	21	16.41	2	9.52	19	90.48
5	Al-Qurnah	20	15.62	3	15	17	85
6	Al-Samawah	19	14.84	2	10.53	17	89.47
Total	6	128	100%	18	14.16	110	85.94

Table 2 / Numerical Description of the Research Sample According to Playing Positions and Age Level

Center	Repetition	Ratio	Age	Repetition	Ratio	Exploratory study		Basic study	
						Repetition	Ratio	Repetition	Ratio
Goalkeeper	14	10.9	25-19	100	78.12	2	11.11	12	10.91
Defender	45	35.2	30-26	20	15.63	8	44.44	37	33.64
Midfielder	43	33.6	25-19	5	3.91	5	27.78	38	34.54
Attacker	26	20.3	30-26	3	2.34	3	16.67	23	20.91
Total	128	100	0.00	128	100	18	14.06	110	85.94

Table 3 / Descriptive Statistical Indicators for Age Level and Player Position

Variables	Statistical significance			
	Mean	**Median**	**Std**	**Skewness**
Age level	1.179	1.000	0.385	1.688
Player position	2.632	3.000	0.929	-0.038

Table 4 / Relative Importance and Expert Agreement for Attentional Control Scale Dimensions

Field	Agreement percentage						
	Suitable		Somewhat appropriate		Inappropriate		Agreement percentage
	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	
Focusing on tasks	12	100	0	0.00	0	0.00	100%
Attentional control	11	91.67	1	8.33	0	0.00	97.22
Distraction prevention and resistance	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.67
Selective focus and attention	11	91.67	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44
Maintaining focus and attention	9	75	2	16.67	1	8.33	88.88

Table 5 / Relative Importance and Correlation Coefficients for Attentional Control Scale Items

Axes	Suitable		Somewhat appropriate		Inappropriate		Relative importance	Correlation coefficient for the axis as a whole	Trust level	Phrase number
	Repetition	%	repetition	%	repetition	%				
First focus: Tasks	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	0.547**	.000	1
	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	0.723**	0.00	2
	12	100	0	0.00	0	0.00	100	0.624**	0.00	3
	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	86.11	0.707**	0.00	4
	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	0.595**	0.00	5
	11	91.67	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44	0.673**	0.00	6
Second axis: Attentional control	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	0.706**	0.00	7
	11	91.67	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44	0.714**	0.00	8
	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	0.595**	0.00	9
	9	75	2	16.66	1	8.33	88.88	0.628**	0.00	10
	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	0.625**	0.00	11
	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	86.11	0.043	0.10	12
	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	86.11	0.326**	0.00	13
Third axis Resistance to dispersions	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	0.645**	0.00	14
	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	0.593**	0.00	15
	8	66.67	2	16.66	2	16.66	83.33	0.636**	0.00	16
	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	0.357**	0.00	17
	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	86.11	0.390**	0.00	18
Fourth axis: Focus and selective attention	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	0.301**	.001	19
	11	94.44	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44	0.163	.065	20
	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	86.11	0.538**	0.00	21
	11	94.44	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44	0.598**	.000	22
	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	0.358**	.000	23
	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	83.33	0.699**	.000	24
Fifth axis: Maintaining focus and attention	11	94.44	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44	0.484**	.000	25
	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	0.444**	0.00	26
	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	0.327**	0.00	27
	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	86.11	0.567**	.000	28
	8	66.66	2	16.66	2	16.66	83.33	0.429**	.000	29
	9	75	2	16.66	1	8.33	88.88	0.585**	0.00	30

Table 6 / Expert Opinion, Relative Importance, and Correlation Coefficients for Competitive Anxiety Scale Items

No.	Suitable		Somewhat appropriate		Inappropriate		Relative importance	Correlation coefficient for the axis as a whole	Trust level
	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%			
1	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	.310**	0.00
2	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	.466**	0.00
3	9	75	2	16.66	1	8.33	88.88	.444**	0.00
4	8	66.66	2	16.66	2	16.66	83.33	.496**	0.00
5	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	83.33	.310**	0.00
6	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	.391**	0.00
7	11	91.67	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44	.387**	0.00
8	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	.327**	0.00
9	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	86.11	.379**	0.00
10	11	94.44	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44	.374**	0.00
11	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	.344**	0.00
12	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	.500**	0.00
13	9	75	2	16.66	1	8.33	88.88	.451**	0.00
14	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	88.68	.444**	0.00
15	9	75	1	8.33	2	16.66	86.11	.488**	0.00
16	8	66.66	2	16.66	2	16.66	83.33	.444**	0.00
17	10	83.34	0	0.00	2	16.66	88.88	.365**	0.00
18	9	75	2	16.66	1	8.33	88.88	.461**	0.00
19	10	83.34	1	8.33	1	8.33	91.66	.421**	0.00
20	11	94.44	0	0.00	1	8.33	94.44	.275**	0.02

Table 7 / Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients for the Attentional Control and Sports Competition Anxiety Scales

Scale	Phrases	Cronbach's Alpha
Attentional control	**30**	**836.**
Sports competition anxiety	**20**	**.824**

Table 8 / Acceptance Levels for the Response Averages

Period	Sample direction
1.79-1	Strongly disagree
1.59 - 1.80	Disagree
3.39 - 2.60	Neutral
3.19 – 340	Agreed
5 – 4.20	Strongly agree

Table 9 / Average Responses for the Focus and Attention on Tasks Axis

Axis	Sample direction	%	Std	Mean	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agreed	Strongly agree	Phrase number
First axis: Focus and attention on tasks	Strongly agree	34.38	1.157	3.17	128	3	15	30	36	44	1
	Strongly agree	31.3	1.137	3.71	128	4	18	27	39	40	2
	Indifferent	25.8	1.238	3.33	128	10	27	33	31	27	3
	Strongly agree	28.9	1.163	3.68	128	5	18	29	37	39	4
	Strongly agree	33.6	1.174	3.79	128	7	13	23	42	43	5
	Strongly agree	37.5	1.309	3.56	128	2	39	21	18	48	6
Average of the first axis	Strongly agree	31.91	1.196	3.54	128	31	130	163	203	241	0.00

Table 10 / Average Responses for the Attentional Control Axis

Axis	Sample direction	%	Std	Mean	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agreed	Strongly agree	Phrase number
The second focus is attentional control.	Agreed	25.0	1.212	3.34	128	10	24	32	37	25	7
	Strongly agree	30.5	1.163	3.68	128	5	18	29	37	39	8
	Agreed	33.6	1.114	3.56	128	5	19	32	43	29	9
	Agreed	33.6	1.111	3.82	128	5	12	26	43	24	10
	Strongly agree	33.6	1.177	3.80	128	7	13	24	41	43	11
	Agreed	32.8	1.111	2.84	128	16	38	28	42	4	12
Average of the second axis	Strongly agree	31.52	1.138	3.51	128	48	124	171	243	144	0.00

Table 11 / Average Responses for the Distraction Resistance Axis

Axis	Sample direction	%	Std	Mean	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agreed	Strongly agree	Phrase number
Third axis: Distraction resistance	Indifferent	32.8	1.192	3.25	128	14	16	42	36	20	13
	Indifferent	34.4	1.158	3.17	128	9	28	44	26	21	14
	Indifferent	37.5	1.023	3.18	128	3	32	48	29	16	15
	Strongly agree	27.3	1.342	3.40	128	14	22	26	31	35	16
	Agreed	34.4	1.190	3.51	128	8	21	26	44	29	17
	Agreed	39.8	1.012	3.98	128	1	15	15	51	46	18
Average of the third axis	Agreed	34.37	1.152	3.42	128	49	134	201	217	167	0.00

Table 12 / Average Responses for the Selective Attention Focus Axis

Axis	Sample direction	%	Std	Mean	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agreed	Strongly agree	Phrase number
Fourth axis: Focusing Selective attention	Agreed	39.1	1.208	3.36	128	11	24	22	50	21	19
	Strongly agree	55.5	.749	4.43	128	0.00	4	8	45	71	20
	Indifferent	32.8	1.061	3.16	128	5	33	42	33	15	21
	Agreed	32.8	1.239	3.26	128	11	27	32	33	25	22
	Agreed	49.2	.814	4.15	128	2	2	16	63	45	23
	Agreed	34.4	1.048	3.57	128	2	21	34	44	27	24
Average of the third axis	Agreed	40.63	1.019	3.655	128	31	111	154	268	199	0.00

Table 13 / Average Responses for the Maintaining Focus and Attention Axis

Axis	Sample direction	%	Std	Mean	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agreed	Strongly agree	Phrase number
Fifth point: Continuing to focus and pay attention	Indifferent	50.8	.717	4.08	128	1	25	65	37	0,00	25
	Agreed	57.0	.692	4.16	128	0.00	3	13	73	39	26
	Disagree	56.3	.939	2.53	128	7	72	30	12	7	27
	Agreed	35.9	1.044	3.61	128	5	12	38	46	27	28
	Agreed	51.6	.788	3.84	128	1	4	33	66	24	29
	Agreed	38.3	1.068	3.66	128	3	19	27	49	30	30
Average of the fifth axis	Agreed	48.31	0.874	3.65	128	16	135	206	283	149	0.00

Table 14 / Average Responses for the Sports Competition Anxiety Scale

axis	Sample direction	%	Std	Mean	n	It doesn't apply to me at all.	It doesn't apply to me	To some extent, this applies	It applies to me	It applies to me strongly	Phrase number
Focus: Sports Competition Anxiety	It applies to me strongly	38.3	.980	4.03	128	2	9	20	49	48	1
	It applies to me strongly	38.3	1.013	3.62	128	2	18	49	26	39	2
	It applies to me	48.4	1.033	3.84	128	5	11	17	62	33	3
	It applies to me	35.9	1.025	3.57	128	3	17	37	46	25	4
	It applies to me	41.4	1.085	3.94	128	6	9	16	53	44	5
	It applies to me	25.0	1.224	3.29	128	9	30	31	32	26	6
	It applies to me strongly	37.5	.968	4.02	128	13	19	46	40	48	7
	Indifferent	32.8	1.154	3.41	128	9	16	42	35	26	8
	It applies to me	39.1	.990	3.98	128	2	10	21	50	45	9
	Indifferent	39.1	.878	3.54	128	0.00	14	50	45	19	10
	It applies to me	35.2	1.091	3.58	128	5	17	33	45	28	11
	It applies to me	39.1	.988	3.68	128	1	17	32	50	28	12
	It applies to me	36.7	1.063	3.76	128	5	10	31	47	35	13
	It applies to me	40.7	1.032	3.91	128	4	10	21	52	41	14
	It applies to me	32.8	1.107	3.45	128	6	20	36	42	24	15
	It applies to me	48.4	.833	3.83	128	1	6	33	62	26	16
	It applies to me	36.7	1.092	3.64	128	6	18	32	47	30	17
	It applies to me strongly	35.9	1.048	3.94	128	1	15	23	41	48	18
	It applies to me	51.6	1.051	3.71	128	2	16	34	41	35	19
	It applies to me strongly	38.3	.752	4.46	128	1	2	8	43	74	20
Average of the third axis	It applies to me	63.11	1.020	3.76	128	93	284	612	908	722	0.00

Table 15 / Correlation Between Attentional Control Axes and Competitive Anxiety

No	Attention Control Scale Axes	Correlation coefficient of sports competition anxiety	Trust level
1	Focus on tasks	0.035	0.697
2	Attention control	0.038	0.667
3	Resisting distractions	0.074	0.409
4	Selective attention	0.070	0.433
5	Maintaining focus and attention	0.029	0.748