

THE EFFECT OF GROUP COMPETITION TECHNIQUE ON DEVELOPING CERTAIN FOOTBALL SKILLS IN MENTALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

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Abstract

This paper proposes a training technique based on group competition to train and lead mentally disabled young footballers. To do so, a group of mentally disabled children engaged in football has been chosen to test this technique. Drawing on

Keywords: Group competition, Physical test, Football, Mental handicap, Training techniques, Young players, Children's sports.

Introduction

It is well-known that group competition and recreational games play a significant role in children's lives, as such games develop personality, facilitate restriction-free livelihood, enable experiences, help gain new knowledge and know-how, help develop language abilities, and successfully enable interpersonal communication. These games, additionally, foster creativity and innovation in children, help physical, mental, and sensual abilities grow, and make edutainment possible. Group competition play, therefore, is a fun-creating environment for children whereby children can develop abilities and skills, as these faculties ultimately get discoverable through play and competition. In such settings, a child makes better than others, and those children, accordingly, develop communication, inclusion, and acceptance. Thus, social and interpersonal communication in children starts. Some sports techniques with specific and inclusive activities are built to develop physical and skillful advancement of both individuals and communities. (Abdullah et al. 2022, p.11).

Group competition play is a modern, indirect, and student-centered technique of learning and playing (Hilail & Yousif, 2018, p.254). In this respect, Khalaf and Ismail (2021) stressed the need to integrate competition composite exercises into the football education curriculum.

The fact that football is a competitive game, where goal-making depends on competition, is based on the proposition that playing techniques create competition and motivation in learners and, thus, these techniques help learners achieve skillful actions (Attia & Qassim, 2016, p.249).

Research Statement

It has been observed that mentally handicapped children show differences in sports characterization and socialization with their peers. Notwithstanding, researchers working on those children noticed that those children developed playing abilities enough for competition especially when they are all engaged in athletic teams such as football teams or other

games. These children, as elaborated on by many studies, were found to be interested in sports, which makes this topic the core of this research. This case study, hence, has been tackled using a group competition-based learning technique that is proposed to develop certain football skills in mentally disabled children. Moreover, this study draws on efforts to combat challenges, shed light on mentally handicapped children, and provide an academic, objective, and learning-friendly environment.

Aims

This paper attempts to achieve the following;

1. Preparing a group competition-based training curriculum to develop certain football skills in mentally handicapped (10-12 years old) children.
2. Measuring some basic football skills in mentally handicapped children.
3. Recognizing how the group competition-based training curriculum can develop certain football skills in mentally handicapped children.

Hypothesis

This paper hypothesizes that the group competition-based learning technique, designed to develop certain football skills in mentally handicapped children, is statistically significant in pre-tests and post-tests and in favor of post-test.

Area and Scope

This paper involves three main areas as the scope of analysis.

Subjects

The subjects are fifteen (10-12 years old) mentally handicapped children affiliated with the Paralympic Training Centre, Baghdad, Iraq.

Time

The time of technique design and test administration is from January 1, 2023, through July 1, 2023.

Place

The place is the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Game Hall, Iraqi Paralympic Committee, Baghdad, Iraq.

Methodology and Procedures

Methodology

Being applicable and workable for the current research design and method, the experimental method has been chosen to control all the research factors found to be effective, except for a single researcher-controlled factor bound to a certain change. This factor was separated in order to determine and measure the possible impact on the variable or subordinate variables.¹

Corpus

Research corpus is considered the cornerstone of any academic paper, with the aim to find concrete, analyzable, and researchable subjects, respondents, or informants. Such sets of data often represent reliable sources of information (Fahmi, 1994, p.95). To achieve this end, 15 mentally handicapped footballers, out of 30 footballers*, (aged 10-12 years) were deliberately chosen as the data of the study all of whom are affiliated with the Iraqi Paralympic teams.

Data Homogeneity

Data Homogeneity

Data homogeneity has been applied to the anthropometric variables, which are age, height, and weight. The table below demonstrates the mean, the standard deviation, and the twist coefficient value of the data set for analysis.

| Variable | | Mean | Standard Deviation | Average | Twist Coefficient |
|--------------------------|--------|-------|--------------------|---------|-------------------|
| Anthropometric Variables | Age | 10.16 | 0.461 | 11.00 | 1.69 |
| | Height | 1.58 | 0.047 | 1.49 | 1.48 |
| | Weight | 38.66 | 3.510 | 37.71 | 1.97 |

As Table (1) above shows, of all the anthropometric values, twist coefficient values were lower than (+ 3, -3), which indicates a moderate distribution of the data sets across these variables. While the mean of the subjects' ages achieved about (10.16) with a standard deviation of about (0.461), the mean of the subjects' weights achieved about (38.66) with a standard deviation of about (3.510), and the mean of the subjects' heights achieved about (1.58) with a standard deviation in about (0.047).

Research Design and Instrument

Research Instrument

The research instrument chosen in this study involved;

1. Iraqi, Arabic, and foreign resource materials and references
2. Personal interviews
3. Skill tests

Tools

As for the tools used in the study, they are;

1. Data gathering sheet
2. Data transcription sheet
3. Assistant team*
4. Indoor game hall (football hall)
5. Timer
6. 20 balls
7. Measuring-tape
8. Ground distance measuring-tape
9. Ground distance adhesive tape
10. Multi-coloured signals and flagged markers
11. Medical weight scales (to measure heights and weights)

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Pilot Test

As in any experimental study, pilot tests are a must to design methods and test hypotheses. For this study, a preliminary pilot test, aided by an assistant team, was conducted on a 10-footballer sample on Sunday, February 2, 2023. This test aimed at;

1. Recognizing any potential obstacles, avoiding mistakes, and disjoining activities.
2. Checking how far study-specific tests are reliable and applicable.
3. Verifying whether tests are easily applicable and subject-reliable.
4. Checking whether the tools, devices, and instruments used in the study are valid.
5. Checking whether the action members are familiar with the measuring procedures, tests, and result recordings.
6. Checking whether the tools used are valid and whether there are possible difficulties.
7. Making sure that the group competition technique is applicable across all curricular syllabi to achieve the intended ends.

Field Procedures

Pre-tests

A pre-test was conducted on the experimental group Saturday, February 18, 2023, to test certain football skills in mentally handicapped children.

Main Test: Application of the Proposed GCT

1. Aim: The proposed GCT 1 aims at developing basic football skills in mentally handicapped children (See Appendix 1), including farthest ball hurling, ball running, a 25-meter cross-pole dribbling, goal scoring, and ball possession (hopping).

2. Duration: An eight-week application has been proposed set in three classes a week (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays). The total GCT classes, therefore, amount to 24 classes. In each class, there are three GCT-delivered tutorials. The GCT-based learning lasted two months from February 20, 2023, to April 20, 2023. All the GCT items were conducted in Baghdad's paralympic game indoor halls.

3. Design: An average GCT class consists of three sub-classes which are detailed as follows;

Introductory Sub-class:

The researchers, aided by team trainers, warmed up both test groups (the control group and the experimental group) and simultaneously conducted a warming-up. Here, warming-ups involved general and special warming-up, where the subjects' body muscles and joints are pre-trained and their blood circulations are activated, in order to prepare those trainees for the main GCT sub-class.

Main Sub-class:

This makes up about 80% of the entire GCT class in which the experimental group is trained and the GCT items are applied (See Appendix 3). In other words, the basic football skills (farthest ball hurling, ball running, a 25-meter cross-pole dribbling, goal scoring, and ball possession (hopping)) are put into action. These skill-specific practices are illustrated in Appendix (4).

*All the Paralympic players are required to pass IQ tests, they are listed as higher than average players, and they made 60% in pre-and post-tests.

Furthermore, the application of the proposed GCT items considered the following;

1. All the group games practiced in the GCT help develop the basic football skills addressed in this study.
2. The proposed GCT takes into account the physical, skillful, and mental abilities of the subjects.
3. The proposed GCT pays attention to competition and thrill regarding the games played in the classes, which makes these games boredom-free and respects different mental disabilities.
4. The proposed GCT is flexible in case conditions arise while applied.

Closing Sub-class:

This sub-class aims at bringing subjects to normality by relaxation and light trot.

Post-tests

Post-tests were conducted on basic football skills on Saturday, April 22, 2023, in the same place, time, duration, and conditions under which pre-tests were made.

. Statistical Means

The following statistical means have been utilized to process test results;

1. Percentile Frequencies
2. Pearson Coefficient
3. Mean
4. Standard Deviation
5. Average
6. Twist Coefficient
7. T-test for analogous samples
8. T-test for independent samples
9. Data scales

Results and Discussion

Results Between Pre-tests and Post-tests in Basic Football Skills of GCT Application on Mentally Handicapped Children (Experimental Group)

Table (8) below shows the means, the standard deviations, and the two T-values (computed T-value and tabulated T-value between pre-tests and post-tests) of the basic football skills in mentally handicapped children.

| Variables (Skills) | Pre-test | | Post-test | | T-values | | Statistical Significance |
|-------------------------------|----------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|------------|--------------------------|
| | Mean | Standard Deviation | Mean | Standard Deviation | Computed* | Tabulated* | |
| Goal scoring | 2.543 | 0.558 | 3.551 | 0.556 | 6.213 | 2.14 | Significant |
| 25-metre cross-pole dribbling | 15.786 | 1.987 | 17.767 | 0.565 | 4.986 | | Significant |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Farthest ball hurling | 11.608 | 0.987 | 16.324 | 1.456 | 5.782 | Significant |
| Ball possession (hopping) | 9.323 | 1.234 | 13.235 | 1.976 | 5.454 | Significant |

*Tabulated value is below (14) and the significance is (0.05)

As shown in Table (8) above, the pre-test average of the experimental group in goal scoring amounted to 2.543 while the standard deviation amounted to (0.558). However, in the post-tests, average and standard deviation amounted to (3.551) and (0.556) respectively. Additionally, differences were found to be highly significant with the calculated T-value amounting to (6.213), which is higher than the tabulated T-value (2.14) under freedom degree (14) and significance (0.05). This means there were significant differences between the pre-test results and the post-test results with the latter as the dominant ones.

In ball running and 25-meter cross-pole dribbling tests, the post-test means hit (15.786) and the standard deviations hit (1.987). In the same tests, also, the pre-test means hit (17.767) and the standard deviation hit (0.565). It has been noticed, here, that differences were significant as the computed T-values hit (4.968), which is higher than the tabulated T-value (2.14), freedom degree (14), and significance (0.05). These figures mean there are significant differences between pre-test results and post-test results with the former as the dominant ones.

In farthest ball hurling, the means in the pre-tests amounted to (11.608) with a (0.987) standard deviation. However, in the post-tests, the means amounted to (16.324) with a standard deviation of about (1.456). In that skill test, differences have been found to be highly significant in both pre-tests and post-tests. The calculated T-values reached (5.782), which is greater than the tabulated T-value (2.14), degree of freedom (14), and significance (0.05). These frequencies, therefore, suggest significant differences between pre-test results and the post-test results with the latter as the dominant ones.

In the ball possession (hopping) skill test, the means in the pre-tests amounted to (9.323) with a (1.234) standard deviation. Additionally, the means in the post-tests amounted to (13.235) with a standard deviation of about (1.976). In that skill, also, differences have been found to be significant as the calculated T-values achieved (5.454), which is greater than the tabulated T-value (2.14), the degree of freedom (14), and significance (0.05). Such variation, thus, indicates a noticeable significant difference between pre-test results and the post-test results with the latter as the dominant ones. Figure (2) below demonstrates the differences between the pre-test results and the post-test results as far as the sample variables are concerned.

Discussion of Findings

As it is detailed in Table (3) above regarding statistical differences in pre-test and post-test results of the skills investigated in this study, there were statistically considerable significant differences at about (0.05) between pre-tests and post-tests with the latter as the dominant ones. These results are possibly variant due to the effective learning techniques designed to be practiced in a more competitive group, which aims to develop basic skills in footballers.

There were, also, certain principles and guidelines that were accounted for in the design of this GCT for a group of mentally handicapped young footballs as to the planning, preparation, and selection of skills, tests, and games. In this respect, Enad and Kunbar (2016) emphasized the adaptability of some disability-oriented learning principles to the training and teaching techniques applicable in such cases. Following Wehmann's (1981) model, mentally disabled learners' behavior should be compatible with the current performance, the learning techniques designed for disabilities, and the final assessment. (p.103).

This study, accordingly, finds that competitive group play has achieved the aims addressed in the proposed GCT. When mentally handicapped players are engaged with peers following well-planned, scientific methods, adaption, and positive interaction develop in learning, playing, and basic football skills. In the same vein, Ali (2005) states that "It is critically important and necessary that mentally handicapped persons be involved in socially interactive and everyday life activities through some learning techniques, sports activities, and social events." (Enad&Kunbar, 2016, p.359).

Educational programs, therefore, have become an effective means of establishing and preparing individuals and groups, raising their skills and activities to meet game needs under various performances and conditions.

Futsal, also known as indoor soccer, is an officially recognized paralympic game out of other 30 games. In that game, "All soccer regulations and laws are equally applicable to all. The only difference is that a mentally handicapped player must undergo IQ tests and meet the minimum mental disability that allows them to participate in events and tournaments."1

The current study is, accordingly, in line with several previous studies and investigations which stated that coded educational systems have an impact on the basic football skills of younger footballers...second our discussion will focus on the review findings regarding sports participation and well-being, ill-being, and psychological health. However, the heterogeneity and methodological quality of the included research (especially controlled trials) should be considered during the interpretation of our results. Considering our findings, the Mental Health through Sport conceptual model for adults will then be presented and discussed and study limitations outlined., the evidence presented here indicates that for adults, sports participation is associated with better overall mental health [Qasem, S., & Sabah, N. (2018)], mood{(Abed al kareem, M., &Qassim, S. (2019))}, higher life satisfaction [Qasem, S., &Shakir, Z. (2018).], self-esteem [Qassim, S. (2014)], body satisfaction, self-rated health, and frequency of laughter. Sports participation has also shown to be predictive of better psychological well-being over time, higher positive affect {Mohamed Hassan Halil, & Youssef Mohamed Ali Youssef. (2018)}., and greater life satisfaction {Mohamed Hassan Halil, & Ahmed HaithamFadel. (2018)}.. Moreover, higher frequency of sports participation and/or sport played at a higher level of competition, have been linked to lower levels of mental distress, higher levels of body satisfaction, self-esteem, and overall life satisfaction in adults {Jabbar H. S., & Hillel M. H. (2014)}.

The most important conclusions are the absence of differences Significant results between the values of vital organizations The fatigue indicators of the research sample in the pretest test (rest

time, after the first effort, after the second effort, after the third effort) in the variables (urea, sodium, potassium, proteins, albumin, clopin) showed no differences for all variables except nitrogen and lactic acid when compared Between (rest time, after the first effort, after the second effort, after the third effort) to test before using similar exercises to compete.(Ameen William Tuwair is, Alaa Abdul Wahab Ali)

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Despite considerable heterogeneity of sports type, cross-sectional and experimental research indicate that team-based sports participation, compared to individual sports and informal group physical activity, has a more positive effect on mental energy [49], physical self-perception [57], and overall psychological health and well-being in adults, regardless of physical activity volume [35, 46, 47]. And, karate-do benefits the subjective well-being of elderly practitioners [51, 52.]

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Based on the hypothesis formulated earlier, and following the previous analyses and discussions elaborated on above, this study finds that;

1. 1.A proposed competition group-based technique has been developed and designed with the aim to develop some basic football skills in mentally handicapped young footballers.
2. 2.There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test results and the post-test results in the experimental group in the goal-scoring skill to measure precision and in favor of the post-test.
3. There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test results and the post-test results in the experimental group in ball winding and running and in 25-meter cross-pole dribbling in favor of the post-test.
4. There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test results and the post-test results in the experimental group in the farthest ball hurling to measure passing in favor of the post-test.
5. There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test results and the post-test results in the experimental group in ball hopping to measure possession in favor of the post-test.

Recommendations

Following the analysis and discussion elaborated earlier, this study suggests the following;

1. Attention must be paid to the learning and training curricula concerned with the development of football skills practiced by ordinary and handicapped players.
2. All paralympic teams should have periodical skillful and physical tests in order to showcase their physical, mental, and skillful readiness and to boost their participation in local, regional, and international events.
3. Cooperation and coordination are urged between sports bodies and academic athletic institutions to achieve educational and training-related objectives.

4. The GCT learning and training method proposed in this paper can be beneficial for players, trainers, or any other stakeholders whether by application, integration, or customization.

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