

*Field* : Sport Psychology

*Type* : Research Article

*Received*: 26.04.2017 – *Corrected*: 30.04.2017 – *Accepted*: 29.05.2017

## **Self-efficacy among Football Players between 16-19 Years**

**Kenioua MOULOUD, Boumesjed Abd ELKADER**

Institute of Physical Education and Sport, University of Mostaghanem, ALGERIA

**Email:** [moukenioua@gmail.com](mailto:moukenioua@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to know the level of self-efficacy and to investigate self-efficacy of football players in different playing positions. The sample consisted of male amateur football players (N =61) between the age 16 and 19 years. General self-efficacy scale-schwarzer (GSES) was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics and kruskal-wallis test were applied in order to evaluate data. The results indicated that there was high self-efficacy among football players. No statistically significant difference found in football players' self-efficacies according to their playing positions. Future qualitative researches which would cover tests including multi-variables on self- efficacy and other psychological characteristics should be performed in order to reach more detailed and concrete information.

**Keywords:** Self-efficacy, Bandura's theory, football players.

## Introduction

Self-efficacy is posited as the basis for such conduct in the sense that it influences the strength of decisions, the quantity of energy invested in the effort, the level of perseverance in the face of obstacles and failures or the resilience to adversity. In this sense, this psychological dimension is an individual resource to adapt to situations and contexts of activity grueling interesting sports psychology as the Health Psychology and Occupational Psychology (Decamps, 2012).

The concept of self-efficacy dates back several decades, and psychologist Albert Bandura was one of the first researchers exploring this topic. Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy theory was developed within the framework of social cognitive theory. Although, originally, the theory was proposed to account for the different results achieved by diverse methods used in clinical psychology for the treatment of anxiety, it has since been expanded and applied to other domains of psychosocial functioning including health and exercise behavior (McAuley, 1992; McAuley & Mihalko 1998; O'Leary, 1985), and sport and motor performance (Feltz, 1988). The reasons why athletes want to compete depend in the contrast between internal and external rewards as well as an athlete's performance assessment. In other words, if an athlete believes he or she can be successful, he or she is more likely to participate. In sport psychology, this is generally referred to as self-confidence or self-efficacy. High self-efficacy is judgment about one's capability to perform a particular task at an elevated level, with certainty, and repeatedly over time. Motivationally, athletes with higher self-efficacy tend to try harder, persist longer, choose greater challenges, experience effort more positively, and feel less anxious. NHL players who can picture winning a Stanley Cup, for example, will bust their butts come playoff time (and year-round, for that matter), but minor-league rookie who is enticed by a call-up for the postseason, yet thinks of himself as unready and cannot see himself competing with the "big boys", may be afraid to put his all on the line and may end up slacking off in practice (Murphy, 2005). Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the source of action required to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 1997). The concept of self-efficacy is vital to coaches, athletes, and even spectators, for several reasons. First, as a coach, knowing what athletes feel and think about their skills, abilities, and talents is important in the development of those characteristics. Second, a better understanding of an athlete's psyche can significantly improve the resulting sport performance (Moritz, Feltz, Fahrback, & Mack, 2000).

Self-efficacy refers to athletes' beliefs that they can execute the behaviors required to produce desired outcomes, and they are distinct from outcome expectations, which involve beliefs that certain actions lead to specific consequences. For example, a javelin thrower might believe he is able to execute the correct technique and attain a certain distance. His outcome expectation is that the distance will result in him winning a competition. Both self-efficacy and outcome expectations influence behavior and performance. Athletes who do not believe a desired outcome will result from a specific behavior (low outcome expectancy) may be less motivated to try or persist in those actions. Even if they do think a specific behavior will result in a desired outcome, they may still lack motivation if they doubt their ability to perform that behavior (low self-efficacy), (Tod, 2014).

There are three dimensions along which self-efficacy can vary, including level, generality and strength. Level refers to the standard of performance athletes believe they can achieve or the degree of difficulty they perceive they can surmount. For example, Chris from the opening case example might be confident he could achieve eight out of ten attempts at the free throw

line, whereas John might believe he could only get two out of ten attempts. Regarding generality, people may view themselves as capable across a range of domains (e.g. sport, education and career) or only in a small number of areas of functioning. Generality also varies across types of activities, capability modality (e.g. thinking, emotion and behavior), different situations and the types of people with which athletes interact. For example, a hockey player might believe she can play well both defensively and offensively in an upcoming game. Her self-efficacy, however, might vary depending on the type of surface she will play on (natural or artificial turf) or the opposition the team is up against. Self-efficacy also varies in strength. Weak self-efficacy is easily negated by disconfirming experiences, whereas people with strong self-efficacy have tenacious beliefs in their abilities and typically persevere in their efforts despite difficulties and obstacles. These athletes are not put off by adversity. Self-efficacy strength not related to choices athletes make about what tasks to attempt in a straightforward way. A minimum threshold of self-efficacy is needed before they will initiate an attempt, but stronger levels of self-assurance result in the same behaviors. Stronger self-efficacy, however, leads to greater perseverance and likelihood that the chosen activity will be performed successfully (Tod, 2014).

According to Bandura, athletes' self-efficacy beliefs are constructed from four major sources: mastery experiences; vicarious experiences; verbal persuasion; and physiological and emotional states. These four sources can enhance or deflate self-efficacy. In ice hockey, for example, players on the bench watching teammates performing well against opponents may experience enhanced self-efficacy. Alternatively, these individuals' self-efficacy may drop if they observe teammates struggling. These sources, however, do not automatically change self-efficacy, but only when athletes interpret the information associated with that source. Benched ice hockey player's self-efficacies may not improve when observing teammates performing well if they think their teammates are much more skilled than themselves (Tod, 2014).

No research studies to date have combined this unique set of variables to specifically test self-efficacy with different playing positions. The identification of some psychological characteristics of football players with different playing positions is of sufficient scientific and practical interest, it enables to reveal psychological characteristics of football players depending on their roles (Koryagina & Blinov, 2013). This inclusion could provide new insights by analyzing the self-efficacy levels of football players as they progress forward in their experience levels and success (i.e., make the proverbial "big fish into a bigger pond" transition). It makes possible to determine the main directions and ways to increase the psychological potential of football players in order to optimize game performance. Coaches and others within the sport and football academy can use this information to better manage players and offer tailored programs to specific player needs based on their experience levels overall and at the academy level.

For this study, the research study hypotheses were as follows:

HYP.1 There is high level of self-efficacy among football players.

HYP.2 There is significant difference in self-efficacy among football players according to their playing positions.

The aim of this study was to know the level of self-efficacy, to investigate self-efficacy of football players in different playing position. Perhaps most importantly, the study operationalized and included some new variables (football academy players ranging from 16

years to 19 years and playing different positions – goalkeepers, defenders, midfielders and forwards).

Some studies have touched on the self-efficacy. A study conducted by Shelangoski, Hambrick, Gross, and Weber (2014) on self-efficacy in intercollegiate athletes. The purpose of study explores gender, playing experience, and class status (e.g., first year) differences related to self efficacy in student-athletes (over 22 years). The results indicated that students-athletes had high levels of self efficacy and they became more self-efficacious as their status increased (i.e., progressed).

Another study conducted by Helper and Chase (2008), the purpose of study was to examine the relationship between decision-making self-efficacy and task self-efficacy, and subsequent decision –making and task performance. Sixty undergraduate students participated in this study. The results showed high self-efficacy and strength of decision –making and task self-efficacy predicted physical performance.

Study conducted by Hassen and Hamza (2007) on self-efficacy among collective sports players. The participants were 44 student-players faculty of sport Babylon University. Results suggested that players had high general self-efficacy. And there were significant differences between collective sports players in self-efficacy.

## **Materials and Method**

### **Participants**

The study consisted of 61 football players from Fanzeres Academy -city of Porto Portugal-. The ages of players ranged between 16 and 19 years with a mean age of  $16.77 \pm 1.05$  years. On average, the players had played for  $7.97 \pm 2.43$  years. A large number  $N=21$  (34.4%) of the players were defenders, followed by midfielders  $N=18$  (29.5%), forwards  $N=16$  (26.2%), and goal keepers  $N=6$  (9.8%).

### **Procedure**

Clearance was obtained from the president of team prior to all study procedures. All testing took place in a meeting hall on sport complex. Participants provided informed consent. Then, they were provided with a questionnaire package and asked to respond to each question as honestly as possible. The coach assisted to the research in order to answer any questions that arose during testing (in Portuguese language). Answering the questionnaires took approximately 15-20 minutes.

### **Data analyses**

Descriptive statistics and kruskal-wallis Test. First, descriptive statistics was computed to characteristics the entire sample of football players, and to know level of self-efficacy. Second, kruskal-wallis Test was used to explore the differences of Football players' self-efficacies according to their playing position.

### **Instrument**

In this study, “the general self-efficacy scale-Schwarzer (GSES)” developed by Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1992) was used to collect data. This is original scale, including one specific dimension, is comprised of ten items, designed for ages 12 and up, was created to assess perceived self-efficacy regarding coping and adaptation abilities in both daily activities and

isolated stressful events .it has been well known internationally for two decades. Items in the scale are in the form of four option Likert type scale “1=not all true, 2=hardly true, 3=moderately true, 4= exactly true”. Cranach alpha reliability value of the scale was found to be .76 to .90(Jerusalem & Schwarzer, 1992).

The adaption of this scale to Portuguese was done by Nunes, Schwarzer, and Jerusalem (1999). In the adaption process of scale of self-efficacy was translated into Portuguese. Validity and reliability were done (0, 75 - 0, 91). According the results, it was seen that the efficiency of original scale, with consisted of ten items, was preserved in the Portuguese form. The Portuguese scale also had one specific dimension like the original scale.

## Results

In this section, the findings obtained from the data analyses related to The Self-efficacy among football player are given in detail. Findings related to the level of self-efficacy among football players are shown in table 1.

**Table 1.** Level of self-efficacy among football players

Self-efficacy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough	61	3.31	.618
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.	61	3.31	.718
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.	61	3.20	.725
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.	61	3.05	.804
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.	61	3.08	.665
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.	61	3.40	.663
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.	61	3.31	.718
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions	61	3.13	.590
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.	61	3.08	.759
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.	61	3.15	.812
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>.707</b>

In Table 1, the average scores of self-efficacy among football players for each item are given. it may be observed that football players had high average scores in total (M =3.20), remarkably, they scored lower on the fourth (M =3.05) and higher on the sixth (M=3.40). Football players’ self-efficacies were also examined according to their playing position as indicated in Table2.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Football players' self-efficacies according to their playing position

Scale	Dimension	Position	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig.
Self-efficacy	Self-efficacy	Goalkeeper	6	3.15	.508	.901
		Defender	20	3.21	.573	
		Midfielder	19	3.17	.488	
		Forward	16	3.25	.485	
		<b>Total</b>	61	3.19	.513	

Table 2 shows football players' average self-efficacy in terms of their playing position was  $M = 3.19$ , so they have high level of self-efficacy. kruskal-wallis Test showed no statistically significant difference in football players' self-efficacy according to their playing position ( $p > 0.5$ ).

### Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, we sought to investigate the level of self-efficacy among football players, to compare football players' self-efficacies according to their playing position.

As results of this study, it was concluded that the football players had high levels of self-efficacy. And they were able to meet the challenges and sports competitions, and whatever the type of competition. "High self-efficacy will likely choose to attend training regularly, expend high levels of effort, and persist longer than those with low self-efficacy. These self-efficacious individuals will set higher goals and have more helpful thoughts and emotions" (Tod, 2014). As a result, they may have a better chance of success. Providing support for present study, both Cetinkalp and Turksoy (2011) and Munroe-Chandler, Hall and Fishburne (2008) examined self-efficacy as it relates to the situation and innate abilities of youth soccer players. They found high levels of self-efficacy produced high levels of performance in athletes.

Results were concluded that no significant differences between the football players' self-efficacies according to their playing position. This finding is inconsistent with the results of other investigations (Kirkcaldy, 1982; Andrew et al., 2007; Eloff et al., 2011).

The fact that the current study failed to concur with other investigations could be explained by the amateur level of participation of the sample tested in the present study. The results of the present study suggest that youth football players competing at amateur level they had homogeneously some psychological characteristics regardless of their respective position in the team. This finding, pertinent to soccer players, is corroborated by Kurt et al. (2012), who credited such homogenous results to the similar status (amateur/professional) of the participants.

Another probable reason for inconsistency between the current findings and those stemming from earlier research was the young age of the participants. McCarthy et al. (2010) postulated that young sport participants have less approximations of psychological skill usage compared to adult participants. The mean age of the sample in the present study was  $16.77 \pm 1.05$  years old, which could be attest to insignificant relationship noticed between psychological skills and playing position. Jooste, Steyn, and Van den Berg (2014) support this view by conceding that athletes in the specialization stage (mean age  $16.2 \pm 1.13$  years) may be at the ideal "windows of opportunity" for developing adult-like attributes and should, therefore, not be compared to older athlete's groups.

In conclusion, when making literature reviews, as parallel with many researches, present study was inconsistent with some studies and consistent with some others. The findings indicated there was high self-efficacy among football players. And different playing positions were compared in terms of self-efficacy, there was no significant difference found between compared variables. It can be stated that this situation is largely related to the groups having similar status (amateur), similar age and football experience. Future qualitative research which covers the test having multi-variables on self-efficacy and others psychological characteristics need to be performed in order to reach more concrete findings.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interest.

### **REFERENCES**

- Andrew M, Grobbelaar H, Potgieter J (2007). Positional differences in sport psychological skills and attributes of rugby union players. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance, Supplement (September):* 321-334.
- Bandura A (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. *Psychological review*, 84(2), 191-215.
- Bandura A (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*, New York: WH Freeman and Company.
- Cetinkalp ZK, Turksoy A (2011). Goal orientation and self-efficacy as predictors of male adolescent soccer players' motivation to participate. *Social Behaviour and Personality: an international journal*, 39(7), 925-934.
- Decamps G (2012). *Sport psychology and performance (1st Ed)*. Brussels: Boeck Group S.A.
- Eloff M, Monyeki M, Grobbelaar H (2011). Mental skill levels of South African male student field hockey players in different playing positions. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance*, 17(4): 636-646.
- Feltz DL (1988). Self-confidence and sports performance. In K. B. Pandolf (Ed.) *Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews*, (pp. 423-457). New York: MacMillan.
- Fonseca AM, Brito AP (2005).the issue of the cross-cultural adjustment of instrument for psychology evaluation in national sport contexts -the case of the task and ego orientation in sport questionnaire (TEOSQ).*psychologia*,39, 95-118.(in Portuguese).
- Hassen NM, Hamza AH (2007) .self-efficacy among collective sports players' .16th scientific conferences Hassen N.M. and Hamza A.H. (2007) .self-efficacy among collective sports players' .16th scientific conferences of the faculties and departments physical education and sports Babylon University,Iraq.
- Helper TJ, Chase MA (2008).relationship between decision –making self-efficacy, task self-efficacy and intercollegiateathletes, 7, 17-72.
- Jerusalem M, Schwarzer R (1992). Self-efficacy a resource factor in stress appraisal processes. In R. Schwarzer (Ed.), *self-efficacy: thought control of action* (pp.195-213). Washington, DC: Hemisphere.

- Jooste J, Steyn BJM, Van den Berg L (2014). Psychological skills, playing positions and performance of African youth soccer teams. *South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation*, 36(1), 85-100.
- Kirkcaldy BD (1982). Personality and sex differences related to positions in team sports. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 13: 141-153.
- Koryagina JV, Blinov VA (2013). Psychophysiological characteristics of football players of various playing positions. *Defenders*, 427(33).
- Kurt C, Çatikkas F, Ömürlü İK, Atalay O (2012). Comparison of Loneliness, Trait Anger-Anger Expression Style, Self-esteem Attributes with Different Playing Position in Soccer. *Journal of Physical Education & Sport*, 12(1).39- 43. DOI:10.7752/jpes.2012.01007 .
- McAuley E (1992). Self-referent thought in sport and physical activity. In T. S. Horn (ed.), *Advances in Sport Psychology*, (pp. 101-118). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics,
- McAuley E, Mihalko SL (1998). Measuring exercise-related self-efficacy. In J. L. Duda (Ed.), *Advancements in sport and exercise psychology measurement* (pp. 371-390). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology.
- Moritz SE, Feltz DL, Fahrback KR, Mack DE (2000). The relation of self-efficacy measures to sport performance: A meta-analytic review. *Research quarterly for exercise and sport*, 71(3), 280-294.
- Munroe-Chandler K, Hall C, Fishburne G (2008). Playing with confidence: The relationship between imagery use and self-confidence and self-efficacy in youth soccer players. *Journal of sports sciences*, 26(14), 1539-1546.
- Murphy SH (2005). *The sport psych handbook*. Champaign, IL: Human kinetics.
- Nicholls JG (1989). *The competitive ethos and democratic education*: Harvard University Press.
- Nunes R, Schwarzer R, Jerusalem M (1999). General self-efficacy (Portuguese version). <http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~health/auto.htm> .
- O'Leary A (1985). Self-efficacy and health. *Behavior Therapy and Research*, 23, 437-452.
- Shelangoski IB, Weber Dj (2014) .Self-efficacy intercollegiate athletes'. *Journal of issues in the performance of sport skill*. *Journal of sport sciences*, 26(6), 603-610.
- Tod D (2014). *Sport psychology, the basics*, London: Routledge.