



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS SCIENCE

**Developing The U20 Girls' Netball Psychosomatic Coping Skills Inventory At
Watershed College During The 2023-24 League Season.**

BSc2415

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE
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THE FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
HONOURS DEGREE IN SPORTS SCIENCE AND
MANAGEMENT.**

MAY 2024

Supervisor:

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family (Husband, Father and Mother inlaw, my children – Tayananiswa, Tadiswa, Takundiswa and Tavimbiswa), Aunty Nyatsanza, Chemhuru, my Brothers and Sister and to all my friends and colleagues who have supported me throughout this journey. I would not have done it without their unwavering support. Above all, I dedicate this opportunity to the Lord Almighty for taking me this far and managing to finish this programme.

Abstract

The research focused on developing the U20 Girls' Netball psychosomatic coping skills inventory at Watershed College during the 2023-24 league season. Netball was introduced as a sports expansion and participation strategy to decongest other sports. The inclusion of the Watershed U20 Girls in the 2023-24 league season appeared uncertain for them regarding their psychological dispositions. This was also the first time they were to participate in Netball competitively at Trust Schools level thereby entering the league as greenhorns. There is a lack of empirical data and methodical measurement tools tailored to this demographic particularly at Watershed and in Zimbabwe largely. The absence of such information hinders the development of targeted interventions to enhance the players' psychological coping skills. Therefore, this research aimed to establish the existing levels of psychosomatic coping skills of the U20 Girls Netball team at Watershed College. This was expected to lead to a comprehensive understanding of their psychological coping skills and coming up with appropriate interventions to guide their improvement during the 2023-24 league season.

A concurrent mixed method approach involving a qualitative approach through the use of interviews and quantitative data is obtained through the use of the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory (ACSI-28) questionnaire survey. A non-probability sampling method was used to determine the sample and consequently twenty-four (24) U20 Netball players, two (2) Coaches and one (1) School Psychologist were recruited in the study. The SPSS version 23 and NVIVO software were used to analyse data. In analysing relations between subscales, ANOVA was used. A triangulation of findings was conducted to assist in quantifying and validating the level of coping skills among the U20 Watershed Girls netball players. The study showed that the U20 Watershed Netball Girls displayed low scores in goal setting and mental preparation at 39% and freedom from worry score at 43%. The moderate scores were shown in peaking under pressure score at 45%, with the coping score at 46% and confidence and achievement motivation at 49%. Commendable scores were shown in concentration and coachability sub-scores at 52% and 70% respectively. The total psychological skills score for the players was 44%. Increased peaking under pressure, goal setting and peaking under pressure scores appeared to meaningfully correlate with increased coping skills according to these results at ≤ 0.05 . However, the coachability, freedom from worry and concentration scores did not appear to reliably predict coping abilities based on this sample at ≥ 0.05 .

The study revealed the psychological coping skills of the female Netball players contextual to Watershed College in Zimbabwe. It sets a benchmark for future research initiatives and interventions aimed at promoting holistic female athlete development in secondary school sports programmes in Zimbabwe.

Key Words

Netball, Psychosomatic, Girls, Coping, Skills, Inventory, Coachability, Concentration, Confidence, Achievement, Goal setting, Peaking, Freedom, Worry, Interventions.

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List of Abbreviations and Symbols

ACSI-28 - Athletic Coping Skills Inventory

Glossary

Coping Skills: Coping skills are strategies and behaviours that individuals use to manage or adapt to stress, challenges, or difficult situations in a healthy way.

Dispositions: Dispositions refer to enduring personality traits or tendencies, such as being optimistic, introverted, or conscientious.

Disrupting: Disrupting refers to actions or events that interrupt or disturb a process, pattern, or behaviour.

Emotional: Emotional refers to feelings, moods, or affective states that can influence thoughts, behaviour, and overall well-being.

Intrinsic: Intrinsic refers to something inherent, internal, or belonging naturally to a person or situation, rather than coming from external factors.

Inventory: An inventory is a list or catalogue of items, characteristics, or resources available for assessment, evaluation, or tracking.

Mechanisms: Mechanisms refer to processes, systems, or methods through which something operates or functions, especially concerning behaviour or mental processes.

Mindfulness: Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present and aware in the moment, without judgment, and with a focus on one's thoughts, feelings, and surroundings.

Psychosomatic: Is a condition caused by anxiety and worry and not by an infection or injury

Psychological: That is affecting, or arising in the mind; related to the mental and emotional state of a person.

Reinforcement: Reinforcement refers to the process of increasing the likelihood of a specific behaviour recurring by providing a consequence, whether positive (reward) or negative (removal of a negative stimulus).

Resilience: Resilience is the ability to bounce back or adapt positively in the face of adversity, challenges, or traumas.

Stressors: Stressors are external events, circumstances, or situations that cause stress or pressure, leading to physical, mental, or emotional strain.

CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.1 Introduction

In High School sports competitions, psychological or psychosomatic coping skills play a fundamental role in augmenting the performance and overall well-being of players. The circumstance often occurs in team sports, including Netball among others. Therefore, in Netball, coping with challenges, coping with pressure and setbacks can substantially impact a player's success on the field of play. The current study is consequently going to seek to understand the coping skills among the U20 Girls' Netball Players at Watershed College. The research may assist in developing psychological coping mechanisms or interventions essential for their performance growth, general success in sports and various aspects of life.

1.2 Background

Netball at Watershed was introduced during the 2023-24 season as a complementary sport for Girls. The teams were only meant to start participating in the Northern Netball League during the 2024 season. This came as a deliberate sports expansion and participation strategy offered to the 'Girl Child' in line with the trending trajectory of the Zimbabwe female Netball teams' participation at the World Cup level. The addition of Netball to the Watershed girls' sporting programme made the researcher cum coach of the U20 team, note that the girls appeared uncertain of their psychological dispositions following their inclusion into the league. To the Watershed girls, it was going to be their first time to participate in a Trust Schools Netball league and tournaments.

The researcher was tasked to spearhead the coaching and integration of the Watershed Girls Netball team into the 2024 league. Therefore, the researcher embarked on a study to investigate the Watershed U20 Netball Girls' psychological coping skills through empirical means. The Watershed Girls' teams, like all other previous years, have competitively participated in Basketball, Hockey, Athletics, Tennis and Swimming at Trust Schools' leagues and tournaments across all age groups.

In the 2023-24 Netball league, Watershed Girls were to play experienced teams in the league and tournaments including Falcon, Goldridge, South-Eastern College, Midlands Christian College, Gateway, St Johns' and St Georges. Watershed College is a renowned institution known for its commitment to all-inclusive student development. The College thus recognised the importance of nurturing mental resilience and coping mechanisms in the U20 Girls Netball team so that it may well compete at ideal levels besides entering the 2024 league as greenhorns.

The prospect of the 2023-24 league season then presented a prime opportunity for the researcher to investigate the Watershed U20 Netball girls' psychosomatic coping skills that may influence the development of appropriate interventions.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite the recognition of the significance of psychological coping skills in sports, there is a gap in research focusing specifically on U20 female Netball players at the Independent Trust Secondary Schools level, particularly within the context of Watershed College.

There is a lack of empirical data and methodical measurement tools tailored to this demographic which hinders the development of targeted interventions to enhance the players' psychological coping skills.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research holds significance at multiple levels. The findings and recommended interventions identified through this study may benefit the U20 Girls Netball team at Watershed College by enhancing their mental resilience and overall well-being.

The findings and recommendations of the study are intended to be presented as sport bulletins on notice boards and during assemblies for the Watershed College girls to apply the different psychological coping strategies that may assist them during training sessions as well as their participation in league game fixtures and tournaments.

The recommendations will be officially presented to the Watershed sports coaches during the school's coaching roundtables for their adoption and implementation during training sessions so that they incorporate psychological coping techniques or skills that may overallly enhance the players' mental strength, especially the girls.

This current study on the psychological coping skills of female Netball players contextual to Watershed College in Zimbabwe stands projected for presentation during academic/scientific sport conferences locally, regionally or internationally and submission to sport psychology journals for publishing as a contribution to the body of knowledge on youth sports.

Moreover, the study sets a benchmark for future research initiatives aimed at promoting holistic female athlete development in secondary school sports programmes in Zimbabwe.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Primary Research Question

What psychological coping mechanisms are currently being utilised by the U20 Girls Netball team at Watershed College during the 2023-24 league season?

1.5.2 Subsidiary Research Question

The following subsidiary research questions will be addressed:

- i. What are the existing levels of psychosomatic coping skills among the U20 Girls Netball players at Watershed College?
- ii. What are the current psychological coping skills interventions being used at Watershed for the U20 Girls Netball players?
- iii. What interventions can be developed to improve the psychological coping skills of the U20 Girls Netball players at Watershed College based on the study findings?

1.6 Research Objectives

1.6.1 Research Aim

This research aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of the psychological coping skills of the U20 Girls Netball team at Watershed College during the 2023-24 league season.

The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To assess the current levels of psychosomatic coping skills (i.e. coping with adversity, coachability, concentration, confidence and achievement motivation, goal setting, peaking under pressure and freedom from worry) among the U20 Girls Netball players at Watershed College.
- ii. To identify the current psychological coping skills interventions being used at Watershed for the U20 Girls Netball players.
- iii. To recommend interventions based on the findings to enhance the Watershed U20 Girls Netball players' psychological coping skills.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The study will be conducted exclusively on the U20 Girls Netball team at Watershed College during the 2023-24 league season. The research will use one psychological assessment tool. While efforts will be made to gather comprehensive and accurate data, limitations may include potential subjectivity in self-reported responses and external factors that could influence players' coping skills.

1.8 Study Outline

The study outline below offers a designed framework for researching and developing the psychological coping skills of the U20 Girls Netball team at Watershed College.

Introduction

Background of the study, Statement of the problem, Significance of the study, Research questions and Research objectives.

Literature review

Theoretical framework on psychological coping skills in sport, Research on psychological coping mechanisms in sport, Research on coping skills development in Netball, Current practices and interventions in developing coping skills in sport.

Materials and Methods

Research design (mixed method), Sampling strategy and participants, Data collection methods (questionnaire and interviews), Data analysis and ethical considerations.

Findings

Current psychological coping skills in the U20 Girls Netball players at Watershed College, Psychological coping interventions used at Watershed College, Recommendations for developing interventions to improve coping skills.

Discussion

Interpretation of findings in relation to study objectives, implications of the study for the U20 Girls Netball team at Watershed College, Application of findings in training sessions, league and tournament matches, recommendations for future studies and practice.

Conclusion

Summary of key findings, contributions to the study or body of knowledge, practical implications for coaching and players

References

Appendices

The psychological coping assessment tool, Informed consent, and Interview guide for coaches and the Psychologist.

1.9 Summary

Chapter 1 introduced the research topic, outlining its background, problem statement, aim, objectives, research questions, significance and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 will review relevant literature on psychological coping skills in sports, gender differences in coping mechanisms and existing measurement tools. Chapter 3 will detail the research methodology, including data collection procedures and analysis techniques. Chapter 4 will present the findings of the study, followed by a discussion in Chapter 5, where implications, recommendations and avenues for future research will be explored.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2 Introduction

In the context of competitive sports such as Netball at Hig School, the psychological and emotional well-being of players plays a crucial role in their performance and overall success. The development of psychological handling skills among the U20 Girls Netball players is essential for managing stress, anxiety and other emotional challenges that may arise during training and competition. According to Sheard (2010), individuals with greater mental strength and coping abilities tend to exhibit a stronger determination to win in competitive situations.

This suggests that those who can effectively manage psychological challenges and external pressures, regardless of the circumstances, are more likely to achieve success. This literature review aims to explore existing research on psychosomatic handling skills in sports, specifically focusing on developing a tailored inventory for the U20 Girls netball players at Watershed College during the upcoming 2023-24 league season.

2.1 Psychological Stress and Coping in Sports

Numerous studies have highlighted the impact of psychological stress on athletes' performance and well-being. Effective management mechanisms are essential for dealing with stressors and enhancing resilience among athletes in general. Lazarus and Folkman's transactional model of stress and coping provides a theoretical framework for understanding how individuals appraise and respond to stressful situations in sports contexts (Lazarus and Amp; Folkman, 1984). In the realm of sports psychology, 'coping' refers to cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage external stressors and maintain psychological balance (Nicholls et al., 2015).

Coping with adversity in sports, such as netball, is a critical aspect of an athlete's performance and well-being (Whitehead et al., 2021). Some studies have been conducted to understand coping strategies used by athletes in various sports, but research specifically focusing on Netball is limited. However, some studies provide insights into coping tactics used by Netball players and the effectiveness of these strategies in dealing with adversity. One study conducted on national standard adolescent Netball players examined the stressors experienced in sport and other areas of life, as well as the coping strategies used to manage these stressors (Reeves et al., 2011).

The study involved thirty-three female Netball players who participated in one-on-one interviews and focus groups. The participants reported experiencing stressors not only in sport but also in academic and social situations (Reeves et al., 2011; Nicholls et al., 2015). The findings of this study revealed that Netball players faced stressors related to striving for important personal goals in various areas of their lives (Nicholls et al., 2015). These stressors included the pressure to perform well academically, socially and in their netball games. To cope with these stressors, it showed that the Netball players exploited various coping approaches. The strategies included future-oriented coping tactics such as planning, prioritising, time management, goal setting and problem-solving (Devonport et al., 2013; Nicholls et al., 2016). The use of these coping strategies was associated with successfully managing multiple stressors and achieving a sense of well-being (Devonport et al., 2013).

2.2 Coachability in sport

Analysing coachability in sport, involves measuring how well athletes are open to instructions and learning from them (Weinberg and Gould, 2014). That is how well to accept constructive criticism without becoming upset (Devantier, 2011). In the study conducted by Cosma and Colleagues (2020), coping strategies in sports performance were assessed using the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory (ACSI) with a 28-item version. The study found that freedom from worry and coachability were the most prevalent coping strategies among participants while peaking under pressure and handling adversity were less common (Cosma et.al 2020). There were significant differences observed between male and female athletes in mental preparation, goal setting, confidence and achievement drive. The results suggest the importance of psychological preparation and interventions for players and coaches to enhance performance by effectively addressing strategies of coping. This highlights the importance of coachability through optimising athlete development and performance simultaneously.

Coachability is a key factor in sports performance as it not only influences an athlete's ability to learn and develop new skills but also impacts their overall success in their chosen sport (Weinberg and Gould, 2014). Research in the field of sports psychology has explored various aspects of coachability, including but not limited to individual differences, motivational factors and the impact of coaching styles on players or athletes (Favor, 2011). Athletes with high levels of coachability demonstrated greater improvements in technical skills and tactical understanding compared to those with lower coachability ratings (Cosma et.al 2020). Furthermore, intrinsically motivated athletes show higher levels of coachability and are more receptive to feedback and instruction from their coaches.

There are usually positive correlations between a supportive coaching approach and increased levels of coachability among young athletes (Cosma et.al 2020; Devantier, 2011). Studies on coachability in sport prove the critical role it plays in shaping athlete's performance and development. The factors such as individual differences, personality, motivation and coaching styles all influence an athlete's coachability. This shows that overall, it impacts the athletes' success in sport. Therefore, to an extent, intrinsic motivation plays a significant role in enhancing coachability and fostering a positive coach-athlete relationship (Nicholls et al., 2015). The studies thus underscore the importance of creating a positive and nurturing coaching environment to enhance athlete or player development and performance.

2.3 Concentration in sport

The measure of how well athletes can stay focused on the task at hand is known as concentration (Kemp 2013). It also involves looking at how athletes easily get distracted and maintain their abilities even when adverse and disrupting situations occur (Devantier, 2011). Focusing on relevant cues from the environment makes the athlete stable and able to execute sporting skills without any undue pressure. This psychological aptitude calls for the athlete to be able to shut out any disturbing clatters from the surroundings during the performance. Irrelevant stimuli can affect an athlete's concentration and in turn affect performance (Karageorghis and Terry, 2011; Kemp 2013). The senses receive different stimuli and the mind processes this information in different ways. The processing determines which way the athlete will be affected.

The U20 Girls Watershed netball team players are also bound to be affected by issues of concentration entering the league as novices. The issues of selecting the right stimuli are important as evident in the studies undertaken during football matches (Weinberg and Gould, 2014). Concentration was also a psychological issue affecting University students participating in sport in Indonesia during the Provincial Student Sports Week. This is a university athletic competition held as a form of selection of outstanding athletes who are representatives of universities at the provincial level (Azim, Rahayuni and Widiawati, 2023).

2.4 Confidence and achievement motivation

This is the measure of how well athletes are confident and positively motivated, including how much effort athletes put into practice and into improving their skills (Weinberg and Gould, 2014). The athletes or players should be assisted to increase their motivation to optimal levels for it has a direct influence on their performance during play. Sports psychologists have this mandate and influence on athletes besides motivation also being considered intrinsic. The level of self-confidence is affected by worry or anxiety which causes poor performance to be exhibited by athletes. The lack of confidence can be evidenced through repeated faults during skill execution. The constant worrying may cause athletes to contemplate that their abilities are less capable of succeeding.

The association between psychological variables like self-efficacy, self-confidence and achievement motivation in futsal players and competitive anxiety was investigated by Widodo and Colleagues (2022). Thirty male and ten female members of the Star Abadi Futsal team were recruited for this cross-sectional study. Data was gathered using a variety of instruments, including the Sports Achievement Motivation Test. The findings demonstrated a significant correlation between achievement motivation and both self-efficacy and self-confidence (Widodo et.al 2022). Self-confidence had both direct and indirect effects on competitive anxiety and achievement motivation was also significantly correlated with competitive anxiety. This suggests that the association between achievement motivation and competitive anxiety was influenced indirectly by both self-efficacy and self-confidence.

Therefore, lowering competitive anxiety may benefit futsal athletes by raising their levels of self-efficacy, self-confidence and achievement motivation (Widodo et.al 2022). Athletes who apply less effort in working as a group frequently display a lack of confidence, are susceptible to failure and tend to be highly anxious (Pluhar et.al 2019). Maturity and a high level of skill foster confidence and motivation (Azim, Rahayuni and Widiawati, 2023). Furthermore, the motivation of athletes is reliant on the reinforcement received including approval from parents, comments from coaches, a perceived pride or sense of accomplishment in one's performance and the importance of the task (Azim et.al 2023; Pluhar et.al 2019). Ideally, motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic.

In another dimension, achievement motivation stems from the athlete's personality which causes them to hunger for success in sport. Thus, the drive makes the athlete want to continue trying even when are not managing or facing obstacles.

According to Atkinson's need achievement theory in 1964 athletes can be grouped into the need to achieve or the need to avoid failure group. The difference between the motives makes an athlete's achievement motivation. An athlete who is positively motivated trains and performs at ideal levels with success. The coaches, parents, managers and key team support members to have athletes operating at optimal levels of motivation or optimal zone of functioning. Athletes who become overconfident or motivated negatively affect their performance which also affects their significant others like coaches, managers parents and team support members. Self-motivation and internal motivation are different in that the former refers to pure enjoyment or interest while the latter is not subjected to performance pressure (Karageorghis and Terry, 2011).

2.5 Goal setting

Mental preparation measures how well athletes will be able to set and work towards specific performance goals. It considers how well to plan and mentally prepare for performance and having identified game plans for specific situations (Weinberg and Gould, 2014). The goal or goals set by an athlete or player must be SMART. This means each goal set should fulfil the basics of being specific (show exactly what needs to be done), measurable (quantifiable), action-orientated (by doing something to achieve the goal), realistic (within reach), timebound (reasonable timeframe) and above all self-determined (the input from the person for whom the goal is intended).

Goal setting has a direct effect on motivation, worry and confidence regardless of one's age and level of skill. There are up to three types of goals an athlete or player can set individually. A process goal may be set whereby an athlete focuses on what he/she should do so that they can improve their performance. Process goals are important in cultivating motivation since they provide an explicit component of performance to concentrate on thereby nurturing learning and progression in the long run (Weinberg and Gould, 2014). An outcome goal relates to setting one's mind on the results of a game or event. This goal is temporary for it is not that motivating which leads to increases in worry and negatively affects concentration levels. The third goal focuses on performance. In this goal, the athlete individually evaluates their own previous and current levels of performance. It is a confidence boost when a well-set goal causes and encourages the athlete to perform at a higher skill level (Kemp, 2013). Athletes who constantly set goals achieve more through their performance than those who do not set goals. All athletes are encouraged to set goals at all levels for it has a direct effect on their success or failures and learning or collapsing performances with each game or playing opportunity.

2.6 Peaking under pressure

It is a psychological strand that measures how well athletes perceive pressured situations as challenging rather than threatening (Otting et al., 2020). This perspective involves looking at how well to perform under pressure and how well to respond to high-risk ventures (Devantier, 2011).

In Turkey, Miçooğullari et al. (2021) investigated the levels of sport psychological skills and psychosocial factors among players at different participation levels. The study revealed significant factors such as financial challenges, perceptions of performance impacts and negative effects of specific situations like scoreboard pressure and playing away matches (Sharpe et al., 2024; Miçooğullari et al., 2021). Furthermore, the study underscored the significance of cultivating effective sport psychological skills, promoting positive team dynamics and nurturing strong player-coach relationships (Brown and Arnold, 2019). Recommendations included the implementation of structured sport psychological training programmes and the consideration of various psychosocial elements in coaching approaches to improve player performance and team achievements in players.

2.7 Freedom from worry

The freedom from worry, often referred to as mental freedom or psychological freedom, is a crucial aspect of optimal performance in sports. Athletes who can maintain a clear, focused and calm state of mind are more likely to perform at their best and achieve their goals. Research in sports psychology has delved into the concept of freedom from worry and its impact on athletic performance (Swann. et.al 2017)

The measure of how much pressure athletes put on themselves by worrying about performing badly and making mistakes. The element considers how much athletes are concerned about what other people think about them during sporting activities (Weinberg and Gould, 2014). That is whether athletes focus on what they want to happen rather than on what they do not want to happen (Kemp, 2013).

Athletes who reported higher levels of freedom from worry experienced lower stress anxiety and stress levels, leading to improved performance outcomes (Hill and Hemmings, 2015). The participants who engaged in regular mindfulness practice demonstrated a significant reduction in worry and an increase in mental resilience, resulting in enhanced performance on the field (Swann. et.al. 2016).

The researchers implemented a mental skills training programme focused on relaxation techniques and positive self-talk strategies, which led to a decrease in worry levels and an improvement in performance among the athletes (Andrew, 2024). This suggests that targeted coaching interventions can help athletes cultivate mental freedom and optimise their competitive performance (Brown and Arnold, 2019).

This underscores the importance of mental clarity and emotional control in optimising athletic performance (Wang et al., 2021). It also highlights the potential benefits of mindfulness techniques in promoting mental freedom and overall well-being in athletes (Ozcan and Sahin, 2021). Therefore, freedom from worry in sport emphasizes the importance of mental well-being and emotional regulation in athletic performance. Strategies such as mindfulness training, mental skills development and coaching interventions can play a significant role in fostering mental freedom and enhancing athlete performance outcomes (Hill and Hemmings, 2015; Andrew, 2024; Wang et al., 2021).

2.8 Coping Skills Inventory Development

The development of a psychosomatic coping skills inventory specific to the U20 Girls netball players requires a multifaceted approach that considers the unique challenges and demands of the sport. Previous studies on coping skills inventories in sports have focused on assessing various dimensions of coping strategies or skills, including problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping and social support-seeking behaviours (Tamminen and Holt, 2010).

This shows that tailoring these dimensions to the specific needs of the U20 girls' netball players by playing position can provide valuable insights into their coping mechanisms and psychological resilience. Omar-Fauzee and colleagues (2014) conducted a study in Malaysia to examine the coping abilities of student-athletes across various levels of participation in university sports, utilising the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory – 28. Their findings showed significant differences in all seven coping skills among the four levels of participation. Notably, the attributes of freedom from worry and coachability were particularly low among college representatives, highlighting the importance of targeted support and intervention from coaches (Omar-Fauzee et al., 2014).

Ragab's 2015 study on 18 handball players at Zagazig University in Egypt found a strong correlation between mental toughness and athletic coping skills and performance success using the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory—28. These studies show a correlation between coping skills, mental toughness and performance outcomes, making them valuable for shedding light and enhancing sport development and performance study.

A netball-related study was conducted by Grobbelaar and Eloff (2011) in South Africa. The study aimed to explore how psychological skills vary among different playing positions of South African provincial netball players. They divided 185 players into seven positions, such as goal shooter, goal attack and centre positions. The researchers assessed their psychological skills using the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory (ACSI-28). The findings revealed notable differences in psychological skills across positions, with goal attack and wing defence players generally exhibiting higher levels compared to others, while goal shooters displayed the lowest skill levels (Grobbelaar and Eloff, 2011).

This suggests that players in various positions may require tailored psychological skill development programmes. The study underscored the importance of recognising these positional differences when designing training interventions to enhance the psychological skills of netball players.

Furthermore, it calls for further research to evaluate the effectiveness of such programmes and their impact on the overall performance of netball players in general (Grobbelaar and Eloff, 2011). The development of a Netball psychosomatic coping skills inventory would benefit from the insights provided by the studies on psychological coping skills and their measurement in various sports contexts. The current literature emphasises the importance of psychological skills for athletic performance and the need for reliable and valid instruments to assess these skills (Miranda et al., 2018; Kemp, 2013; Taha et al., 2018).

2.9 Gender Differences in Psychological Coping Skills

Research also suggests that gender differences may influence athletes' coping strategies and responses to stress in sports settings. Studies have shown that female athletes tend to utilise more emotion-focused coping strategies, such as seeking social support and engaging in positive self-talk, compared to male athletes who may employ more problem-focused coping strategies (Nicholls et al., 2017).

In Hungary (Kovács and Nagy, 2016) investigated the coping strategies and motivation among adolescent handball players in Debrecen. In this research, they assessed gender differences in sport motivation, self-efficacy, athletic coping skills and anxiety levels between male and female athletes during matches. Results indicated that male players exhibited better self-efficacy, coping skills and intrinsic motivation compared to female players. The study found that females experienced higher levels of anxiety during matches, but this difference was not statistically significant. The research, however, revealed no significant gender differences in coping strategies or their impact on anxiety levels in adolescent handball players, (Kovács and Nagy, 2016).

Understanding these gender differences is essential for developing a psychosomatic coping skills inventory that effectively addresses the needs of the U20 Girls' netball players at Watershed College.

2.10 Implications for Practice and Research

The development of a tailored psychosomatic coping skills inventory for the U20 Girls netball players can have significant implications for both sports performance and mental health outcomes. The development of a Netball psychosomatic coping skills inventory should consider the multidimensional nature of coping skills as reflected in the ACSI-28 (Miranda et al., 2018; Kemp, 2013) and the need for psychometrically robust measures (Baaziz M et al., 2023; Pereira et al., 2023). By identifying and enhancing athletes' coping skills, coaches and sports psychologists can better support players in managing stress, improving resilience and optimising their performance on the field of play. Furthermore, this research endeavour contributes to the growing body of literature on psychosomatic coping skills in sports and paves the way for future studies examining the effectiveness of such interventions in enhancing athletes' well-being.

Remarkably, some studies have found significant relationships between psychological coping skills and performance outcomes (Cresswell and Hodge, 2004; Taha et al., 2018), while others have noted the lack of psychometrically sound measures for assessing coping in adults, highlighting the variability of subscale analyses in existing instruments (Baaziz et al., 2023; Pereira et al., 2023). Additionally, the role of personality traits in coping skills and performance has been explored, suggesting that different personality types may still possess considerable coping skills suitable for certain sports like archery for example (Musa et al., 2019).

Several countries have undertaken the initiative to take stock of the sport psychological inventories for different sporting disciplines and performance levels. The inventories have also correlated these with other variables like personality and coping with day-to-day activities.

In Zimbabwe, there is a scarcity of studies on developing psychological coping skills inventory in sport at any level.

2.11 Conclusion

The literature provided an overview of key concepts and research findings related to developing a psychosomatic coping skills inventory for the U20 Girls' netball players at Watershed College. It synthesised existing knowledge in the field of sports psychology and underscored the importance of tailor-made interventions to enhance athletes' mental well-being and performance.

The development of the U20 Girls netball psychological coping skills inventory at Watershed College presents a unique opportunity to advance understanding of coping mechanisms among young female high school athletes in a competitive sports environment. By integrating theory-driven approaches to coping skills assessment and considering gender-specific factors, this initiative has the potential to empower the U20 Girls netball players with the psychological tools needed to navigate the challenges they may encounter during the 2023-24 league season and beyond.

CHAPTER 3: MATERIALS AND METHODS

3 Introduction.

The following research methodology outlines the approach for developing the U20 Girls Netball Psychosomatic Coping Skills Inventory at Watershed College during the 2023-24 league season. The study aims to explore and assess the psychological coping skills of the U20 Girls netball players comprehensively.

3.1 Research Approach

The study seeks to establish the significance of psychological coping skills and the elaborate nature of individual experiences which describes the adoption of a mixed-method approach. The study will therefore offer a more comprehensive conceptualisation of Netball players' coping skills or mechanisms. A qualitative approach through the use of interviews will offer a contextual insight into Coaches and Psychologist's views of their experiences regarding psychological coping skills. The quantitative data to be obtained using a questionnaire survey will assist in quantifying and validating the level of coping skills of the U20 Watershed Netball Girls. The mixed method approach will allow for triangulation of findings that enhances the credibility of results, conclusions and proffering of possible recommendations.

3.2 Time Horizons

Pilot study 25th of June 2024

Fine-tuning research tools and procedures 26th of June 2024

Participants recruitment on 27th of June 2024

Participants consent 27th of June 2024

Questionnaire Survey 28th of June 2024

Formal interviews with Coaches 30th of June 2024

Formal interviews for the School's Psychologist 30th of June 2024

Data analysis 1st of July 2024

Results presentation 3rd of July 2024

Research submission 7th of July 2024

3.3 Research Strategy

The research will be conducted using a concurrent mixed methods design, which involves integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively assess the coping skills of under-20 (U20) girls participating in netball. By combining these two research methodologies, the study aims to leverage the complementary advantages offered by each approach. Quantitative methods offer the advantage of producing factual and reliable outcome data that can be generalised to larger populations. Through quantitative analysis, the study can gather statistical data on the profile of U20 girls netball players' coping skills at Watershed College. The qualitative strand will establish the various coping strategies employed by the U20 Girls netball players. These findings can provide valuable insights into the overall trends and patterns of coping skills within this specific demographic.

On the other hand, qualitative methods allow for a deeper exploration of the participants' experiences, perceptions and lived realities. Qualitative research enables the collection of rich, nuanced and valid process data based on the perspectives and interpretations of the participants themselves. This approach helps uncover the underlying motivations, emotions and contextual factors that influence the coping skills of the U20 Girls involved in Netball at Watershed College.

Therefore, by combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the study can achieve a level of comprehensiveness that would not be possible with either approach in isolation. The quantitative data can provide a broad overview of coping skills within the population, while the qualitative data can offer in-depth insights into the individual experiences and psychosocial dynamics at play. This integrated approach will enhance the richness, validity and applicability of the findings, ultimately leading to a more holistic understanding of the coping skills of the U20 Girls netball players at Watershed College.

3.4 Study Population and Sample

3.4.1 Population

The study population comprises fifty-seven open or under-20 (U20) girls actively participating in different sports at Watershed College. It is from within this group that a sample of fifteen U20 netball players will be purposively selected for inclusion in the study. The selection of these netball players will take into consideration their availability and willingness to participate in the research.

3.4.2 Sampling Procedures

Purposively, two netball coaches who are involved in coaching the U20 netball team at Watershed College will also be included in the study. Furthermore, the study will involve the participation of one School Psychologist from Watershed College, who will provide valuable insights and perspectives on the psychosomatic coping skills of the U20 girls participating in netball. The Psychologist's expertise and experience in mental health and well-being within the school setting will contribute significantly to the qualitative data collected in the study.

In convening this diverse group of participants - U20 netball players, netball Coaches and a School Psychologist, the study aims to capture a comprehensive range of perspectives on the psychosomatic coping skills of the U20 Girls involved in netball at Watershed College. The inclusion of these individuals will enable a more holistic understanding of the factors influencing coping mechanisms and mental well-being within the context of youth sports.

3.4.3 Sample Size Determination

The nonprobabilistic sampling method will be used to determine the quantitative and qualitative sample sizes. A sample of twenty-four (24) U20 Netball players, two (2) Coaches and one (1) School psychologist will be recruited in the study. The sample determination is influenced by Suresh and Suresh (2011) who opine that subjects are consecutively selected in order of appearance according to their convenient accessibility. Thus the sampling process comes to an end when the total amount of subjects known as sample saturation is reached. The determination for the sample is thus heuristic or exploratory (Lakens, 2022).

3.5 Data Collection

3.5.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study will be conducted to test the feasibility and effectiveness of the research instruments and procedures. This phase will involve a small-scale implementation of data collection tools among a sample of five Netball players, one assistant netball coach and one assistant school Psychologist. The procedure will allow the researcher to identify any potential challenges with any of the tools and make any adjustments needed before the main study commences.

3.5.2 Main Study

3.5.3 Research Study Tools

Athletic Coping Skills Inventory (ACSI-28)

The Athletic Coping Skills Inventory (ACSI-28) is a well-established questionnaire specifically designed to assess an athlete's coping skills and strategies in the context of sports participation. The ACSI-28 consists of 28 items that measure various dimensions of coping skills that are relevant for athletes facing the demands and challenges of competitive sports.

The questionnaire covers a range of coping strategies, including mental preparation, concentration, confidence, motivation, goal setting, relaxation and stress management. Athletes are asked to rate the frequency with which they engage in each coping behaviour on a scale, typically ranging from "rarely" to "almost always" on a Likert system *see Annexure A*.

On each scale, there is a range from 0 to 12 score. The 0 indicates a low level of skill in that area or coping skill and 12 indicates a high level of coping skill in that category. The scores are added up per each subscale to get a total score for the psychological skills.

To calculate a player's psychological skills, the following scale is used:

In statements that do not have an asterisk (*) next to them the scoring is shown below:

almost never = 0, sometimes = 1, often = 2, almost always = 3.

In statements that have an asterisk (*) next to them, the scoring is shown below:

almost never = 3, sometimes = 2, often = 1, almost always = 0.

The total score will range from 0 to 84 and again 0 indicating low levels of psychological skills and 84 signifying high levels of skill.

When the ACSI-28 questionnaire is completed, the researcher will gain insights into the athletes' or players' current coping abilities and identify areas for improvement. Coaches, sports psychologists and researchers can also use the results to tailor interventions and training programmes to enhance athletes' coping skills and overall performance.

Overall, the ACSI-28 questionnaire serves as a valuable tool for assessing and understanding how athletes cope with the stress, pressure and challenges inherent in competitive sports, ultimately contributing to their mental toughness and resilience in the face of adversity.

Table 3. 1***Summary of psychological/psychosomatic skills categories for the ACSI-28 questionnaire***

Ser	Psychological Skill	Sum of Questions	Evaluation
1	Coping score	5, 17, 21 and 24	When a player has a high score on this scale, they are more likely to stay calm, positive and enthusiastic when things do not go their way. This means they can handle holdups positively during a game.
2	Coachability score	3*, 10*, 15, 27	If a player scores high on this scale he/she is more likely to listen to coaches or managers. Such players focus on following the coach's instructions to improve performance rather than taking critique personally.
3	Concentration score	4, 11, 16, 25	A player with a high score on this scale means he/she is less likely to get distracted by other things. Such a player will concentrate on the important aspects of their sporting performance.
4	Confidence and achievement motivation	2, 9, 14, 26	Players who score high on this subscale are more likely to give their best effort in both competitive matches and training sessions. They are also likely to be confident in their skills, stay motivated by challenges and give their 100% effort.
5	Goal setting and mental preparation	1, 8, 13, 20	The players with a high score on this scale are more likely to set effective goals and create plans to achieve them. They are good at planning their sport performance effectively.
6	Peaking under pressure	6, 18, 22, 28	Players with a high score on this scale find high-pressure situations challenging and see them as opportunities to improve performance, rather than threats that could hinder their performance.
7	Freedom from worry score	7*, 12*, 19* and 23*	Players who score high on this scale are less likely to put pressure on themselves by worrying about making mistakes or what others think about their performance, especially if they don't perform well.

The total psychological skills score is the sum of the player's subscale scores. The higher the score on this scale, the higher the level of a player's psychological skills you have.

3.6 Qualitative Research Tools

The U20 Netball Coaches Interview

The structured interview for the Coaches will consist of ten open-ended questions to gather insights from the two Netball Coaches. The researcher will seek to explore qualitative information from the Coaches about their length of training, psychological interventions they employ during training and matches and how they generally rate the psychological skills of the U20 netball players at Watershed *see Annexure B*

School Psychologist interview

The interview will consist of five open-ended questions to explore psychological aspects related to coping skills. The interview will lead to the aspects involving developing psychological recommendations for netball coaches and the U20 netball players *see Annexure C*.

3.7 Study Procedure

The researcher will recruit the players after seeking permission from the school authorities to undertake the study. The included U20 netball players will be gathered during the 3rd session of afternoon sport in the sports pavilion together with their Teacher in Charge. The researcher will take this opportunity to explain to the students the nature of the study, expectations and benefits to be drawn from participating in the study. Players will be informed that their participation will be voluntary and free to withdraw at any time.

The players willing to take part in the study will be given the ACSI-28 questionnaire to respond to. They will be allowed to ask questions on any area they will not understand. The players will be given about 45 minutes to complete and allowed to leave for their next sports session.

The researcher will seek consent from the Coaches and school Psychologists and sign to indicate their readiness to participate in the study. This will follow an explanation of the study to the Coaches and Psychologists. A formal interview setting will be organised at the Sports office and allow each Coach to respond to the questions. The interview will be recorded in audio. The Coaches and School Psychologist will be interviewed on different days. They will be informed to respond with as honest answers as possible. The researcher will also take notes during the interviews.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The researcher will seek permission to undertake the study from the Watershed School Head and Sport Department and the Bindura University of Science Education Sports Science Department. A signed informed consent will also be obtained from the Coaches and School Psychologist.

Information collected and records will be handled with the highest degree of confidentiality under lock and key cabinet at the Watershed Sports Office. Records of players, coaches and psychologists will be kept under high secrecy and privacy while maintaining the utmost levels of confidentiality. The derived data shall be serially coded without players', coaches' or school psychologists' names and saved in a computer that is password protected.

3.9 Data Analysis

The analysis of the data will be performed using SPSS version 23 to identify coping skill patterns among the netball players. Themes related to psychological coping skills will be identified, coded and analysed using NVIVO software to derive meaningful insights.

3.9.1 Data Presentation

Findings will be presented using graphs and descriptives to effectively communicate the results derived from the study. Quotes from participants may be used to illustrate specific points.

3.10 Conclusion

This research methodology aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the U20 Girls Netball players' psychosomatic coping skills through the implementation of a mixed methods study design, combining quantitative assessments and qualitative insights from coaches and the school psychologist. The following chapter will look at data presentation and analysis.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS, DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4 Introduction

The preceding chapters served to provide a context for the purpose and significance of the present study. The current chapter now presents findings and analyses the responses obtained from the administered questionnaires and held interviews in relation to the research questions and objectives. The concurrent mixed research methodology was used involving the use of a questionnaire and interviews. The findings are elaborated in this chapter before a summary, conclusion and recommendations are presented in chapter 5.

4.1 Response Rate

The researcher recruited 24 netball girls into the study and all these players responded to the ACSI-28 questionnaire. This presented a 100% response rate. The response rate was necessitated by the researcher allowing players to ask questions on areas they did not understand. It also avoided some questions being skipped if players were not comprehending them as stated on the questionnaire.

Figure 4. 1 Mean Percentage Score of psychological skills



The findings of the ACSI-28 questionnaire are presented in Figure 4.1 above shows the scores for each of the psychological components for the U20 Girls Netball players at Watershed College.

Table 4.1

Statistics on Coping skills

Descriptive Statistics							
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Coping Score	24	5	14	8.9583	2.0319	0.469	1.056
Coachability score	24	5	12	9	2.02162	-0.069	-0.846
Concentration score	24	5	15	9.875	2.32776	-0.196	0.702
Confidence score	24	5	12	9.3333	2.25864	-0.553	-1.186
Goal Mental	24	4	12	8.4583	2.30272	-0.035	-0.927
Peaking score	24	4	13	8.5417	2.57039	0.375	-0.664
Freedom score	24	7	15	11.3333	2.46129	-0.44	-1.064

Table 4.1 shows moderate variability in Coping Scores, as evidenced by a mean of 8.9583 and a standard deviation of 2.0319. Positive skewness and kurtosis imply the data is unevenly distributed with higher scores than expected. Study results show that Coachability, Concentration, Confidence, Goal Mental, Peaking and Freedom Score means of around 9 and deviations near 2 portray similarity in average ratings but diversity between players showing a positive skewness over 1, with kurtosis exceeding 1, characterizing right-shifted, heavier-tailed distributions. As such this baseline statistical profile offers insight into typical performance levels and diversity within responses.

4.2 Psychosomatic coping skills among the U20 Girls Netball players

The findings provide insight relevant to the research questions and study objective of assessing the current levels of various psychosomatic coping skills among the U20 Girls Netball players at Watershed College. Specifically, the research aimed to evaluate coping with adversity, coachability, concentration, confidence and achievement motivation, goal setting, ability to peak under pressure, and freedom from worry. The descriptive statistics characterized typical performance and diversity within responses on each psychological construct assessed. This offered a baseline understanding of the athletes' psychosomatic attributes. The regression analyses explored relationships between certain factors. The statistical results helped to address the goal of gaining insight into these netball players' coping skills profiles.

The information can aid the development of targeted improvement strategies by identifying strengths as well as individuals or skills requiring more support.

4.2.1 Coping with adversity score

This psychological component is also known as the Coping score. In the coping score for the 24 Netball players at Watershed, a mean score of 46% was recorded as shown in Figure 4.1. The score indicates a moderate level of ability to manage stress and setbacks. This coping score includes three players who scored between 11-20%, with one player each attaining between 21-30%, 71-80% and 81-90%. Five of the players scored 31-40%, with thirteen recording between 41-50% in their coping score index.

None of the players scored between 0 -10% or 51-70% as well as 91-100% in the coping score subscale as shown in Table 4.2 below. The higher a team or individual player scores on the coping score subscale, the more the player or players are expected to stay collected, optimistic and eager to play even when the competition is not working in their favour. Similar views were raised by one of the coaches during the key informant interviews as she had this to say

“Although I have experience coaching netball elsewhere, here at Watershed I have had only one term coaching the U20 Girls’ team. Players showed a lot of passion for the game of netball, the players had respect and players could also organise themselves for warm-up sessions before I arrived at some of the sessions”. (Key Informant interview with the Netball Coach)

A higher score in this index shows that the player or players were expected to manage setbacks during league or tournament matches. The Watershed College U20 netball players showed a coping score sum of 133 as shown in Figure 4.2 out of a possible sum of 288. This may indicate that the U20 Watershed College netball players experience potential challenges in managing stress and setbacks during high competitive league and tournament games. The exception is the only ten players included in this study who recorded a 50% and above in this coping score as shown in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2.

4.2.2 Coachability score

The coachability score for the 24 Netball players at Watershed showed a notable high mean score of 70% as shown in Figure 4.1. The score suggests that the team players were open to feedback, instruction and learning opportunities from their coaching staff. The coachability score included one player each that scored between 11-20% and between 31-40% score, while two players scored between 61-70% and also between 92-100% score. During the key informant interviews with one of the coaches, it was noted that all the coaches commended the

coachability levels of the U20 Netball players. This was emphasised by the second coach who said,

“ I rate those U20 players at 8 out of 10 in terms of their coachability because they adapted to the umpiring levels and even to the changes in strategy” (Key Informant interview with the second coach).

Three players scored between 41-50%, with four players scoring between 81-90%, five scoring 71-80% and six players scoring between 51-60%. None of the players scored between 0 -10% or 21-30% as in the coachability score subscale as shown in Table 4.2. The higher a team or individual player scores on the coachability score subscale, the more likely they are to be receptive to guidance from their coaches or managers and to concentrate on using their instructions to benefit their performance. Such players do not get upset easily or take coaches' feedback too personally. The Watershed College U20 netball players showed a coachability score sum of 202 as shown in Figure 4.2 out of a possible sum of 288. This sum is high indicating that the U20 Watershed College netball players are open to receiving instruction from the coaching staff. It further showed that only two players included in this study recorded less than 50% in this coachability score as shown in Table 4.2 and Table 4.3.

4.2.3 Concentration score

The concentration subscale score of the U20 Girls Netball players at Watershed College was at a moderate 52% as shown in Figure 4.1. The score indicates a slightly above-average ability of the players to maintain focus and attention during league and tournament games. The U20 Watershed College Girls Netball players' concentration score included one player each scoring 11-20% and another 81-90%. Two players were scoring 0-10%, with the other two scoring 21-30% and the last pair scoring 91-100%. Three players scored between 51-60% and eleven players attained between 41-50% in the concentration score as shown in Table 4.3. The higher a team or individual player scores on the concentration score subscale, the less likely they are to be side-tracked by any disruptions. These Watershed College U20 netball players showed a concentration score sum of 151 as shown in Figure 4.2 out of a possible sum of 288. This suggests that the players are moderately more disposed to focus on the essential aspects of their netball performance. The exclusion is for five players included in this study who recorded less than 50% in this concentration score as shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3.

Table 4.2 shows the Percentage Attainments per number of players and Table 4.3 shows the Individual player attainments per each Psychological Index or subscale.

Table 4.2

Percentage Attainment and Number of Players

Psychological Index	Score Ranges									
	0-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51- 60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
<i>Coping score</i>	0	3	1	5	13	0	0	1	1	0
<i>Coachability score</i>	0	1	0	1	3	6	2	5	4	2
<i>Concentration score</i>	2	0	1	2	11	3	2	2	0	1
<i>Confidence and achievement motivation</i>	1	3	3	1	5	8	3	0	0	0
<i>Goal setting and mental preparation score</i>	2	3	5	2	6	3	3	0	0	0
<i>Peaking under pressure score</i>	2	3	5	3	5	2	0	4	0	0
<i>Freedom from worry score</i>	1	4	5	1	5	3	3	2	0	0
<i>Total psychological skills score</i>	0	1	3	9	6	2	2	0	0	0

Table 4.3

Individual Player Attainments per Psychological Index

<i>Psychological Component</i>	<i>PLAYER</i>																							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<i>Coping score</i>	8	50	33	50	42	33	83	50	42	42	50	17	33	17	50	33	50	50	42	25	58	42	75	33
<i>Coachability score</i>	50	75	83	67	58	33	75	92	75	58	58	58	58	50	83	17	50	75	83	67	100	75	83	58
<i>Concentration score</i>	8	75	50	58	50	50	75	50	58	33	42	50	50	25	67	8	42	92	50	33	67	42	42	58
<i>Confidence and achievement motivation</i>	8	58	50	25	58	58	58	67	58	25	58	17	17	17	58	42	58	67	50	25	67	33	42	50
<i>Goal setting and mental preparation score</i>	42	58	42	67	58	25	67	58	8	67	25	0	50	25	50	50	17	17	33	25	42	33	17	25
<i>Peaking under pressure score</i>	0	58	50	33	17	17	75	42	25	33	75	50	17	8	25	25	75	58	42	33	75	25	42	25
<i>Freedom from worry score</i>	17	50	58	17	33	8	75	67	17	25	25	42	58	42	17	67	25	75	25	42	67	58	25	42
<i>Total psychological skills score</i>	13	52	46	36	37	29	63	52	39	31	44	33	33	23	43	27	43	60	42	32	62	39	44	38

The coaches agreed that the concentration of the U20 players was often disturbed during games. Coaches opined that it was quite a challenge for the team to concentrate especially during competitive games or when playing on different courts like slippery surfaces. The second coach indicated that,

“the U20 Watershed Goal Shooter and Goal Attacker had challenges in concentration when they were being distracted by the opposition defenders”.(Key Informant Interview views from the netball coach)

4.2.4 Confidence and achievement motivation score

The confidence and achievement motivation score for the 24 Netball players at Watershed stood at 49% as shown in Figure 4.1. This score suggested that players may have been facing challenges in believing in their abilities and staying determined to achieve success in netball. The confidence and achievement motivation score included one player scoring 0-10% and the other 31-40%. Three players scored between 11-20%, 21-30% and 61-70%. Five of the players scored 41-50%, with eight players scoring 51-60%.

Although none of the players scored between 71-100% score in the confidence and achievement motivation subscale, fourteen players scored 50% and above indicating they were determined to achieve in netball as shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3. The higher a team or individual player scores on the confidence and achievement motivation subscale, the more the player or players are likely to give their maximum effort during training, league games and tournaments. One of the coaches concurred with the views as she highlighted that

“Confidence was high among the wing players, centre players and defenders but our Goal Shooter and Goal Attacker were not very confident because scores depended on them”.

The current Watershed College U20 netball players showed a confidence and achievement motivation score sum of 142 as shown in Figure 4.2 out of a possible sum of 288. This may indicate that the U20 Watershed College netball players are nearly less confident of their abilities and subtly motivated by challenges. in managing stress and setbacks during high competitive league and tournament games. Therefore the fourteen of the players that had a score of 50-70% in this subscale indicated that they had high confidence and achievement motivation as shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3

4.2.5 Goal setting and mental preparation score

This psychological component is also known as the Coping score. In the coping score for the 24 Netball players at Watershed, a mean score of 46% was recorded as shown in Figure 4.1. The score indicates a moderate level of ability to manage stress and setbacks.

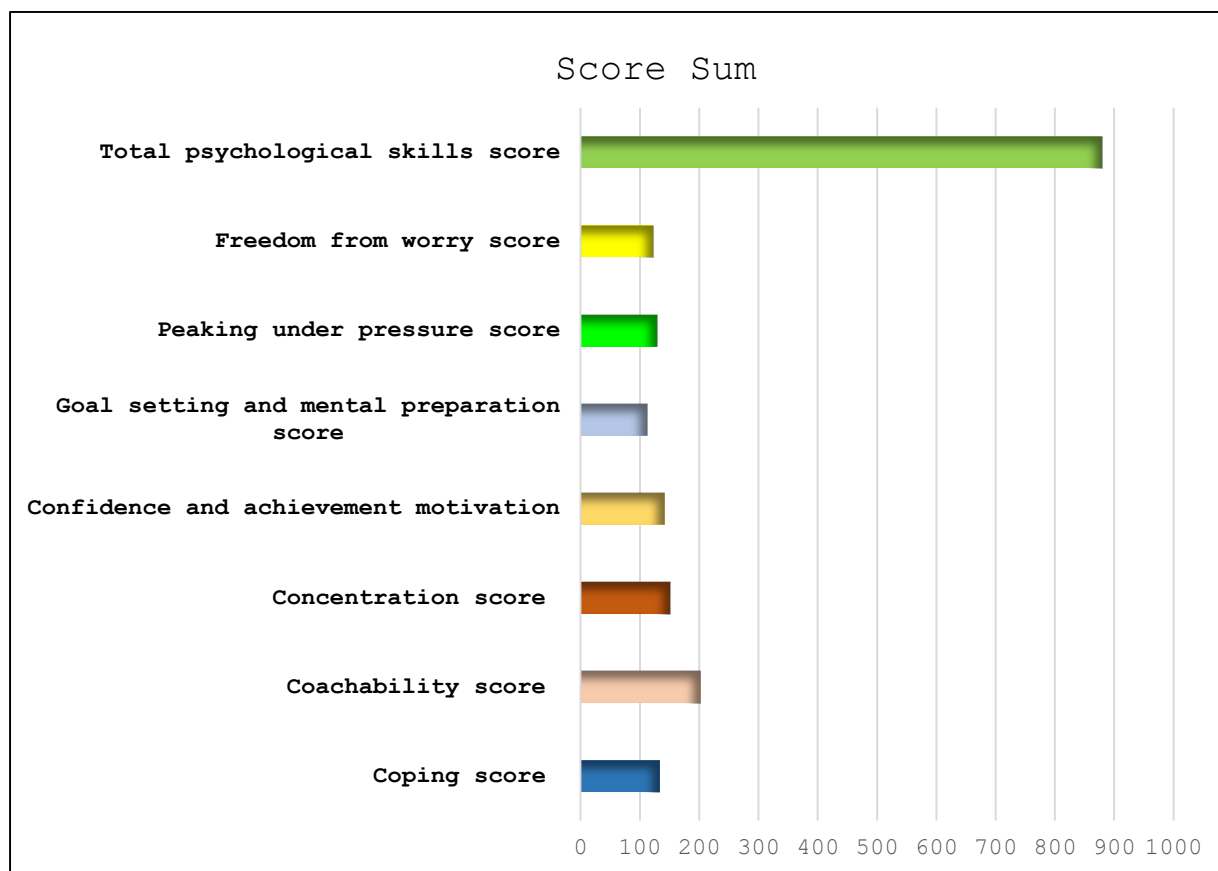
This coping score includes three players who scored between 11-20%, with one player each attaining between 21-30%, 71-80% and 81-90%. Five of the players scored 31-40%, with thirteen recording between 41-50% in their coping score index. None of the players scored between 0 -10% or 51-70% as well as 91-100% in the coping score subscale as shown in Table 4.3.

The higher a team or individual player scores on the coping score subscale, the more the player or players are expected to stay collected or calm, optimistic and eager to play even when the competition is not working in their favour. A higher score in this index shows that the player or players were expected to manage setbacks during league or tournament matches.

The Watershed College U20 netball players showed a coping score sum of 133 as shown in Figure 4.2 out of a possible sum of 288. This may indicate that the U20 Watershed College netball players experience potential challenges in managing stress and setbacks during high competitive league and tournament games. The exception is the only ten players included in this study who recorded a 50% and above in this coping score as shown in Table 4.2.

Figure 4. 2

The Sum of Scores for each Subscale



4.2.6 Peaking under pressure score

The score for peaking under pressure among the 24 Netball players at Watershed was 45% as shown in Figure 4.1. This moderate score showed that there was room for improvement by the girls towards managing their stress levels during high competitive game situations. The higher a team or individual player scores on this scale, the more likely the player or players found high pressure circumstances challenging as well as performing optimally during critical moments of the competitions. Corresponding to this, it showed that the peaking under pressure score included two players that attained between 51-60% and six scoring 41-50% in this subscale as shown in Table 4.2. The lower the score the less likely the player or players found high pressure situations challenging. Hence, the study confirmed that only two players had scored between 0-10%, with three players scoring between 11-20% and five players scoring 21-30% in the peaking under pressure subscale. The Watershed College U20 netball players showed a peaking under pressure sum of 129 as shown in Figure 4.2 out of a possible sum of 288. This further shows that the U20 Watershed College netball players had a reasonable ability to perform at their optimum during high-pressure league and tournament games.

4.2.7 Freedom from Worry score

The freedom from worry score for the 24 Netball players at Watershed was 43% as shown in Figure 4.1. This score suggests that players struggled with controlling negative thoughts and anxieties that hindered their performance in netball. The freedom from worry score included one player scoring 0-10% and the other 31-40%. Four players scored between 11-20%, five scored 21-30% and another five scored 41-50% as shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3. The higher the freedom from worry score, the less likely the player or players placed pressure on themselves by worrying about performance and when making errors. An exception of eight players then scored 51-80% in the freedom from worry score as shown in Table 4.3. The current Watershed College U20 Netball players showed a freedom from worry score sum of 123 as shown in Figure 4.2 out of a possible sum of 288. This indicated that players were putting themselves under pressure regarding what others thought about them especially when they performed not so well as shown in Table 4.2.

4.2.8 Total Psychological Skills Score

The total psychological skills score for the 24 Netball players at Watershed stood at a commendable 44% as shown in Figure 4.1. The score shows that players' overall psychological skills needed some enrichment to optimise their mental aptitudes. The total psychological skills score included nineteen players scoring between 11-50%.

Five layers only managed to show an above-average total psychological skills score attaining between 51-70% as shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3. The current Watershed College U20 Netball players showed a total psychological skills score sum of 880 as shown in Figure 4.2 out of a possible sum of 2 016. This indicated that players required a variety of psychological interventions to advance their psychosomatic coping skills.

4.2.9 Current psychological coping skills interventions being used at Watershed for the U20 Girls Netball players

The coaches indicated the following interventions as the ones that they were using during sessions and games:

First coach, “ *I made players do war cries which somehow improved their confidence in some games and would also have team talks so that they would be aware of the team strategies*”. (*Key Informant Interview views from the netball coach*)

Second coach, “ *My intervention was usually creating bonding time through watching netball games on TV together with them to ensure unity within the team*”..*(Key Informant Interview views from the netball coach)*

4.3 Discussion and Statistical Analysis

Table 4.4

Overall Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.755 ^a	.570	.418	1.54985	.570	3.755	6	17	.015

a. Predictors: (Constant), Freedom_score, coachability_score, concentration_score, Goal_Mental, peaking_score, confidence_score

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.702	3.201		-.219	.829
	coachability_score	-.250	.268	-.249	-.933	.364
	concentration_score	.033	.197	.037	.166	.870
	confidence_score	.381	.220	.423	1.728	.102
	Goal_Mental	.370	.191	.419	1.933	.070
	peaking_score	.425	.192	.538	2.213	.041
	Freedom_score	.112	.166	.136	.678	.507

a. Dependent Variable: Coping_Score

The regression model shows coachability score explains only 24.9% of the variance in coping scores, which is not significant at the 0.05 level in Table 4.4. The coefficient of -0.250 indicates that for every one-unit increase in coachability, the coping score decreases by 0.250 units on average. However, the high p-value of 0.364 suggests this relationship could be due to chance. Overall, coachability does not appear to reliably predict coping abilities based on this sample.

Concentration score also does not reliably predict coping score as evidenced by the very small coefficient of 0.033 and high p-value of 0.870. The positive coefficient shows higher concentration relates to higher coping, but the effect is negligible and not statistically meaningful. Concentration alone does not seem to impact coping scores according to these results.

Confidence score has the largest positive coefficient of 0.381, suggesting it may better predict coping abilities. While not significant at 0.05, the p-value of 0.102 approaches significance. Higher confidence is tentatively linked to greater coping. Out of the variables, confidence displays the strongest relationship with coping score based on this data.

Goal-setting ability has a coefficient of 0.370, similar to confidence, but an even higher p-value of 0.070. While the trend is that better goal setting links to higher coping, individually it does not reliably predict coping scores. The effect of goal setting on coping is marginal based on these statistics.

Peaking under pressure performance has the highest coefficient of 0.425 and is the only variable significant at the 0.05 level with a p-value of 0.041. Increased peaking appears to meaningfully correlate with increased coping according to these results. Peaking may be the strongest psychological factor related to coping skills based on this analysis.

Freedom from worry score has the smallest coefficient of 0.112 and the highest p-value of 0.507, suggesting it does not uniquely contribute to predicting coping abilities. Freedom does not impact coping scores according to the statistics provided. Study results have shown that the regression model as a whole with all 6 predictors remains statistically significant (ANOVA $F=3.755$, $p=0.015$). However, when examining the individual predictors, only the peaking score continues to make a uniquely significant contribution ($p=0.041$). None of the other variables, including the new variable of freedom score, are significant on their own.

4.3.1 Relationship between Coping and Peaking under pressure

Table 4.5

Regression analysis on Coping and Peaking under pressure

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.596 ^a	.355	.325	1.66892	.355	12.093	1	22	.002

a. Predictors: (Constant), peaking_score

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.937	1.206		4.095	.000
	peaking_score	.471	.135	.596	3.477	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Coping_Score

It emerged from the study that peaking under pressure score has a moderate positive relationship with coping score, explaining 35.5% of its variance in Table 4.5. This is a meaningful amount of shared variance between the two variables according to the data.

The ANOVA analysis reinforces that the regression model is statistically significant, with a p-value below 0.05. This indicates peaking under pressure score reliably predicts variations in coping ability and is not simply due to chance.

The study results have shown that the unstandardized B value of 0.471 for peaking under pressure score suggests that for every one-unit increase in peaking under pressure, the coping score increases by nearly half (0.471) units on average when controlling for other factors. As such, the standardized beta coefficient of 0.596 confirms peaking has a strong influence. Most importantly, its highly significant p-value of 0.002 shows this predictive relationship is very unlikely due to random error.

One can therefore note that the findings provide compelling evidence that higher scores on peaking under pressure positively correlate with and reliably forecast greater coping skills in this sample of netball athletes. Among the assessed psychological attributes, peaking under pressure appears to be an important factor uniquely linked to coping abilities.

4.3.2 Relationship between Coachability score and Concentration score

Table 4.6

Coachability score and Concentration score

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
1	.111 ^a	.012	-.033	2.36540	.012	.274	1	22	.606

a. Predictors: (Constant), coachability_score

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	8.726	2.248			3.881	.001
	coachability_score	.128	.244	.111		.523	.606

a. Dependent Variable: concentration_score

Table 4.6 7 shows the coachability score has very little relationship with the concentration score, explaining only 1.2% of its variance in Table 4.6. This is a small and insignificant amount of shared variance according to the data. The ANOVA analysis also shows that the regression model is not statistically significant, with a high p-value of 0.606. This indicates coachability score does not reliably predict variations in concentration score and the relationship is likely due to chance.

Examining the coefficients provides further evidence of a weak and insignificant predictive relationship. The unstandardized B value of 0.128 for the coachability score suggests that for every one-unit increase in coachability, the concentration score increases very slightly by 0.128 units on average when controlling for other factors.

The study results show that among the assessed attributes, coachability appears to be unrelated to concentration based on these statistical results. Coachability did not emerge as a meaningful psychological predictor of concentration according to the data presented.

4.3.3 Relationship between goal setting and mental preparation score and coachability score

Study results showed that goal-setting and mental preparation scores have a moderate positive relationship with coachability scores, explaining 17.7% of its variance. This is a statistically meaningful amount of shared variance according to the data. It also emerged from the ANOVA analysis that, the regression model is significant with a p-value below 0.05. This indicates goal setting reliably predicts variations in coachability.

Table 4.7

Regression analysis on goal setting and mental preparation score and coachability score

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
1	.420 ^a	.177	.139	1.87563	.177	4.720	1	22	.041

a. Predictors: (Constant), Goal_Mental

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.879	1.487		3.954	.001
	Goal_Mental	.369	.170	.420	2.172	.041

a. Dependent Variable: coachability_score

Table 8 above shows that the unstandardized B value of 0.369 for goal setting suggests that for every one-unit increase in goal setting, coachability increases by over one-third (0.369) of a unit on average when controlling for other factors shown in Table 4.7.

Additionally, the standardized beta coefficient of 0.420 confirms goal setting has a notable influence. Most importantly, its significant p-value of 0.041 shows this relationship is unlikely due to chance.

One can note that the findings demonstrate compelling evidence that higher scores on goal setting are positively correlated with and reliably forecast greater coachability in this sample.

As such the study results showed that the regression model and coefficients successfully characterize the positive association between goal-setting mental preparation and coachability.

4.4 Discussion

The peaking under pressure among the 24 Netball players at Watershed was low since they were newly involved in the game for 2023-2024. This is confirmed by the fact that the girls were also young as compared to the study that was conducted by Otting et al., (2020) who discovered that proficient darts players over a year had no predispositions to choking or outclassing under pressure. That meant they remained calm throughout the season because of their professional exposure.

The goal-setting score for the Watershed netball players was also low indicating a moderate level of ability to manage stress and setbacks. The subscale was also related to a study conducted in India. The study found that individual athletes in athletics, gymnastics and diving were more likely to play their sports for goal-oriented reasons than those in team sports like soccer, football and hockey (Pluhar et.al 2019). Therefore, the child and adolescent team sport players they studied in India also experienced reduced goal-setting scores. Similarly, in Indonesia Malang University students showed that 60% scored moderately, 27% at a high level, and 13% at a very high level, (Azim et.al, 2023).

The coachability score of the U20 Watershed netball players was quite commendable at 49% though their confidence score was not wholly correlated. It may suggest that if the players would have received more positive feedback their confidence may have increased. The opinion is supported by Swann et.al, (2017) who conducted a study in Australia and found that rugby Union and Badminton players become more confident following coaches' positive feedback. The intervention of including positive feedback also translated to an exceptional game performance by the players (Swann et.al, 2017). However, in Malaysia, University students showed that they had very low freedom from worry score and coachability subscale among the sample recruited into their study (Omar-Fauzee et al., 2014).

In coping with adversity among the U20 Watershed Netball players the score at 46% which is a moderate score which fairly corresponds with the study conducted by Azim et al, (2023) in Indonesia. The Malang University students similarly showed that 4% were at low levels with 49% at medium levels, 29% at high levels and 18% at very high (Azim et.al, 2023).

The U20 Girls Netball players at Watershed College were at a moderate 52% in concentration score which resonates with the findings of Omar-Fauzee et al., (2014) which showed that concentration increased depending on the level of player representation. The concentration increased gradually starting with those at the college level, followed by national university level players and upwards until reached those representing the nation at international levels.

The total psychological scores for the Watershed Netball players was at 44%. Although the current study did not focus on positional play a study by Grobelaar analysed by position. In the current study, one of the coaches indicated that the goal shooter was challenged in terms of concentration. The findings relate to the study done in South Africa which also found that goal shooters showed the lowest psychological skill levels (Grobelaar and Eloff, 2011). In the current study, the coaches stated that confidence was high among the wing players, centre players and defenders but in South Africa the goal attacker and wing defenders consistently showed high confidence outperforming the other positions in the team (Grobelaar and Eloff, 2011). This confirms that psychological skills related to a player's position of play are manifested in sport. The study conducted by Jooste et.al (2014) also then found that there were inclinations of cricket all-rounders to be more psychologically skilled than the batsmen and bowlers in South Africa (Jooste et.al.,2014).

The secondary-level school athletes in Enugu State, South East Nigeria were found to have greater strength in psychological coping skills when participating in sport competitions at $49.92\% \pm 19.20SD$ (Iwuagwu et.al., 2021). The current study reveals almost similar trends among secondary school level netball players for the total psychological coping score was at 44%.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results both quantitative and qualitatively. It also outlined the data analysis before presenting the data or findings through graphs and descriptives. The following chapter will present the discussion, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5 5.1 Introduction

The current chapter will focus on the discussion of the study and comparing the findings with other conducted research. It will also include some general conclusions based on the study before recommendations are presented based on the current study.

5.3 Conclusions

The results of the study provided important insights into the psychosomatic coping skills of the U20 Girls Netball team at Watershed College. The overall response rate to the ACSI-28 questionnaire was high, demonstrating the players' willingness to participate in developing their mental skills. The majority of players completed the assessment tool providing their self-reported perceptions.

Study findings showed that coping with adversity and coachability were the relative strengths of most players, indicating their ability to manage challenges and receptiveness to coaching instruction and feedback. However, there appears to be room for improvement in other skills like concentration and peaking under pressure according to the data. Only a few players attained scores over 75% in these aspects, signifying potential areas of focus. Developing robust pre-performance routines and mindfulness practices tailored to their positions may help enhance players' focus and ability to perform under pressure like close scoreboard demands deep into matches.

The statistical analysis conducted revealed significant relationships between certain coping attributes assessed. A moderate positive connection was observed between coping with pressure and peaking under pressure subscale scores. This correlation suggests that helping players appraise and frame pressure as motivating rather than distracting could potentially benefit their mental toughness and performances in decisive moments of matches. Interestingly, the coachability and concentration ratings were also significantly and positively correlated to some degree. Fostering open and effective communication as well as building trusting relationships between coaches and players may support players' ability to sustain concentration during matches despite surrounding distractions.

The correlation between goal setting and mental preparation habits or tendencies and coachability ratings further implies the value of collaborative pre-season and in-season goal planning between players and coaches. Regularly defined, reviewed, and updated team and individual goals aligned with coaching philosophy, instruction, and feedback seem integral to

player development, growth mindsets, and reinforcement of intrinsic motivation levels. However, the overall mean coping skills scores attained were slightly below average for most players according to established ACSI-28 norms referenced in the research literature. Therefore, targeted and structured psychological skill development interventions appear necessary.

The research offered valuable insights into the current psychological coping mechanisms and tendencies of the Watershed U20 Girls Netball players. The statistical analysis and qualitative data gathered highlighted relative strengths to reinforce along with certain psychosomatic skills requiring guidance and development through well-planned interventions. With a dedicated long-term mental skills training plan implemented, the player group seems primed to potentially climb their collective confidence, coping and overall performance trajectories consistently if challenges are effectively handled psychologically.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The study only focused on one (1) High School, involving twenty-four U20 girls only, in Netball. There were only two (2) coaches involved and one (1) psychologist. The researcher cannot guarantee the honesty of the respondents since they were giving their opinions which may not be measured against any scale. The study did not include the actual implementation of the interventions to find their practicality.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Recommendations for Practice

The study recommends the following but not limited to:

The provision of access to sports psychology resources to the U20 Watershed Netball players. The resources may include workshops and individual counselling sessions to support players' well-being and mental health.

The coaches are encouraged to include applicable coping strategies during training sessions or matches. This involves activities such as deep breathing exercises, meditation techniques and mindfulness drills for it enhances netball player's resilience as well as focus in the field of play.

Furthermore, the coaches are encouraged to culture a coach-player communication. This can be complemented by collaboration which can further improve team cohesion and players' growth. Therefore, cultivating a culture of open communication, trust and support among players and coaching staff enhances team dynamics and unity.

The school psychologist may team up with coaching staff to implement a comprehensive mental skills program for training the netball players that is designed to address the identifiable psychological traits of the team. Therefore, psychologists and coaches can train concentration techniques as pre-game routines which can help the U20 Watershed Netball players to stay engaged and engage in quick decision-making. This may guarantee a consistent performance by the players at their optimum levels during matches of different competitive levels.

Coaches are encouraged to give positive reinforcement to players regardless of the situation for it builds self-confidence. Players are to be taught goal-setting which can help further players' morale while driving performance progress.

The technical team has to create a structured warm-up protocol which can enhance players' enthusiasm and performance readiness prior to competitions or even training.

The coaching staff may incorporate pressure simulation drills. The techniques may be complemented by practising relaxation drills. This means coaches will develop players' competitive but composed mindset which can help players flourish in high-demanding circumstances, delivering clutch performances when it concerns most.

In developing confidence players will be encouraged to engage in positive self-talk which can help players alleviate worries and concentrate on their game.

The psychology department can monitor and evaluate progress among the U20 Watershed players in their psychological skills development throughout the season so that coaches can also adjust strategies and interventions as and when needed for continuous improvement.

The collective psychological skills score for the U20 Watershed Netball team underscores the overall need for the College to invest in mental training and well-being initiatives to optimise players' performance to ensure success during the league seasons.

5.5.2 Implications for Theory

The study contextually involved girls at Watershed and the findings on their psychological coping skills are unique to their setting. The study also fills the gap in the absence of such studies at the high school level focusing on girls at the U20 level playing netball in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the study may contribute to the sport psychology body on knowledge presenting the Zimbabwean perspective.

5.5.3 Implications for Further Studies

The study sets out as a benchmark for further studies to take up the interventions and apply them to similar subjects with the same characteristics in netball and then compare it with their performance in a given season. The interventions may also be implemented in a research study set up for lower age groups in netball. The same study may also be conducted on other sports, considering playing positions and on different gender of subjects and or do a comparison between genders at a school, different schools or even at the national level.

5.5 Conclusion

The study asserts that by prioritising the enhancement of the team's coping mechanisms, concentration levels, confidence, goal-setting abilities, pressure management skills and overall psychological well-being, the Watershed Netball team can position themselves for success in the upcoming league seasons. This chapter explored the discussion before presenting the conclusions and recommendations of the current study.

Annexure A: Athletic Coping Skills Inventory - The ACSI-28 (Smith et al., 1995).



Read each statement and tick the response you mostly agree with in honesty. Complete the questionnaire and remember, there are no right or wrong answers and you shouldn't spend too much time on any statement.

Identification code _____

Question	Almost never	Sometimes	Often	Almost always
1. On a daily or weekly basis, I set goals for myself that guide what I do.				
2. I get the most out of my talent and skill.				
3. When a coach or manager tells me how to correct a mistake I've made, I can take it personally and can get upset.*				
4. When I'm playing sports, I can focus my attention and block out my distractions.				
5. I remain positive and enthusiastic during competition.				
6. I tend to play better under pressure because I can think more clearly.				
7. I worry quite a bit about what others think of my performance.*				
8. I tend to do lots of planning about how I can reach my goals.				
9. I feel confident I will win when I play.				
10. When a coach or manager criticises me, I become more upset rather than feel helped.*				
11. It is easy for me to keep distracting thoughts from interfering with something that I am watching or listening to.				
12. I put a lot of pressure on myself by worrying about how I will perform.*				
13. I set my own performance goals for each practice or training session.				
14. I don't have to be pushed to practice or play hard; I give 100%.				
15. If a coach criticises me, I correct the mistake without getting upset about it.				
16. I handle unexpected situations in my sport very well.				
17. When things are going badly, I tell myself to keep calm and it works for me.				
18. The more pressure there is during a game, the more I enjoy it.				
19. Whilst competing, I worry about making mistakes or failing to come through it.*				
20. I have my game plan worked out in my head long before the event begins.				
21. When I feel myself getting too tense, I can quickly relax my body and calm myself.				
22. To me, pressure situations are challenges that I welcome.				
23. I think about and imagine what will happen if I make a mistake.*				
24. I maintain emotional control regardless of how things are going for me.				
25. It is easy for me to direct my attention and focus on a single object or person.				
26. When I fail to reach my goals it makes me try even harder.				
27. I improve my skills by listening carefully to advice and instruction from coaches and managers.				
28. I make fewer mistakes when the pressure is on because I concentrate better.				

Annexure B Interview guide for Netball coaches.



1. How long have you been coaching netball at Watershed?
2. Have the U20 netball players been cooperative during training and why?
3. How do you view the Coping skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2023-2024 league season and explain?
4. How do you view the Coachability skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2023-2024 league season and explain
5. How do you view the Concentration skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2023-2024 league season and explain?
6. How do you view the Confidence and achievement motivation skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2023-2024 league season and explain?
7. How do you view the Goal setting and mental preparation skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2023-2024 league season and explain
8. How do you view the Peaking under pressure skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2023-2024 league season and explain?
9. How do you view the Freedom from worry skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2023-2024 league season and explain?
10. What interventions do you often use to improve the psychological skills of the U20 netball players you coach?

Thank you for your time!

Annexure C Interview Guide for School Psychologists



1. What causes the U20 Girls to display low psychological skills in netball?
2. What are the intervention strategies that players and coaches can embark on to improve their psychological skills (focusing on coping, coachability, concentration, confidence and achievement motivation, goal setting and mental preparation, peaking under pressure and freedom from worry) in netball?

Thank you for your time!

Appendix D Response Notes Taken for Coaches

1. How long have you been coaching netball at Watershed?

1 term

2. Have the U20 netball players been cooperative during training and why?

Yes they have been
maybe because of ① passion
② respect ③ the need to win

3. How do you view the Coping skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2030-2024 league season and explain?

① These were quite good for a new team.
- they got united
- they learnt the rules
- they recovered when they had lost.

4. How do you view the Coachability skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2030-2024 league season and explain

- Rated 8/10
- They easily adapted to the umpiring.
- they adapted easily to the change of strategy.

5. How do you view the Concentration skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2030-2024 league season and explain

GS and GA had challenges because the distraction by defenders.

6. How do you view the Confidence and achievement motivation skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2030-2024 league season and explain

Very high amongst the wings, centres and defenders.

GS and GA not very confident because scores depend on them.

7. How do you view the Goal setting and mental preparation skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2030-2024 league season and explain

mentally more preparation was needed.

A counsellor / psychologist may be needed on the technical bench.

8. How do you view the Peaking under pressure skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2030-2024²³ league season and explain

Rated 6/10.
The WDS, WAs did very well and drove the game usually. They also peaked due to support.

9. How do you view the Freedom from worry skills among the U20 netball players you coach during this 2030-2024 league season and explain

Worry is always part of the team.
This is because there were expectations from the College

10. What interventions do you often use to improve the psychological skills U20 netball players you coach.

- war cries - they lead to confidence.
- team talk - strategy is clear.
- bonding - watching netball games ^{together} to ensure unity.

Appendix E

Notes from Interview with Psychologist

1. What causes the U20 Girls to display low psychological skills in netball?

They are a range of factors, such as experience, training and individual personalities all these could influence their performance.

2. What are the intervention strategies that players and coaches can embark on to improve their psychological skills (focusing on coping, coachability, concentration, confidence and achievement motivation, goal setting and mental preparation, peaking under pressure and freedom from worry) in netball?

Building confidence in netball.

One of the key ways to build confidence is setting goals and visualising success. By setting clear achievable goals, players can have a sense of direction and purpose.

Developing a Positive mindset.

It involves cultivating a belief in one's own abilities and focusing on the positive aspects of one's performance. Instead of dwelling on mistakes or failures, players should focus on their strengths and past successes.

Practicing positive self-talk is an effective way to develop a positive mindset.

Overcoming Self-Doubt

Self-doubt can be a major obstacle to building confidence in netball.

2. What are the intervention strategies that players and coaches can embark on to improve their psychological skills (focusing on coping, coachability, concentration, confidence and achievement motivation, goal setting and mental preparation, peaking under pressure and freedom from worry) in netball?

Building confidence in netball.

One of the key ways to build confidence is setting goals and visualising success. By setting clear achievable goals, players can have a sense of direction and purpose.

Developing a Positive mindset.

It involves cultivating a belief in one's own abilities and focusing on the positive aspects of one's performance. Instead of dwelling on mistakes or failures, players should focus on their strengths and past successes.

Practicing positive self-talk is an effective way to develop a positive mindset.

Overcoming Self-Doubt

Self-doubt can be a major obstacle to building confidence in netball.

Appendix F: Research Participation Consent Form

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION



Title of Research Study: Developing the U20 Girls' Netball Psychosomatic Coping Skills Inventory at Watershed College During the 2023-24 League Season

Principal Investigator: BSc2415 - B213653B

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research study titled "Developing the U20 Girls' Netball Psychosomatic Coping Skills Inventory" at Watershed College during the 2023-24 league season. The purpose of this study is to assess and develop psychosomatic coping skills among U20 girls participating in netball.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. By agreeing to participate, you consent to the following:

1. **Role and Involvement:** Coaches, players, and psychologists will be involved in data collection and feedback sessions regarding the development of the psychosomatic coping skills inventory.
2. **Confidentiality:** Any information collected during this study will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. No personally identifiable information will be shared without your explicit consent.
3. **Benefits:** Your participation in this study will contribute to enhancing our understanding of psychosomatic coping skills in U20 girls' netball and may benefit future players and coaches in similar settings.
4. **Duration and Time Commitment:** Your involvement may require participating in data collection activities and providing feedback during the 2023-24 league season. The time commitment will vary depending on your role.
5. **Withdrawal:** You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

By signing below, you indicate that you have read and understood the information provided above and voluntarily consent to participate in this research study.

Please feel free to contact me at 0774 103 189 if you have any questions or concerns about this study. Thank you for considering participation in this important research.

Participant Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your consideration and support in advancing this research.

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