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The Impact of a Psycho-Sport Counseling Program on Reducing Aggressive Behavior among School Sports Team Players: An Experimental Study Conducted on School Sports Teams in Mostaganem

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Abstract: This study aimed to design a psycho-sport counseling program and examine its effectiveness in reducing aggressive behavior across its four dimensions (physical, verbal, anger-related, and indirect) among school sports team players. The study sample consisted of 30 players from school sports teams (football, handball, and basketball). An experimental research design was adopted, involving two groups: an experimental group and a control group, with 15 players in each group. To analyze the study data, SPSS version 26 was used. The results revealed statistically significant differences between the control and experimental groups in the post-test, with a notable reduction in aggressive behavior in favor of the experimental group. These findings indicate that the psycho-sport counseling program had a positive effect on reducing aggressive behavior across its four dimensions (physical, verbal, anger-related, and indirect). This contributes to improving the quality of the training process in both team and individual sports activities and supports the achievement of their intended outcomes.

Keywords: psycho-sport counseling; aggressive behavior

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Psychology is broadly defined as the scientific discipline dedicated to the systematic study of human behavior, emphasizing the dynamic interactions between individuals and their surrounding environment (Abdel Fattah, 1995). These interactions involve reciprocal processes, whereby individuals adapt to their environment while simultaneously modifying it to achieve greater equilibrium. Within this overarching framework, sport psychology has emerged as a distinct subfield, focusing on the psychological determinants of physical activity and athletic performance, while considering the moderating effects of personal and contextual factors. Complementing this theoretical orientation, there is growing recognition among athletic practitioners of the pivotal role of psychological variables in addressing detrimental phenomena that can undermine both performance and overall well-being (Al-Zuhairi, 1983).

In recent decades, aggressive behaviors within scholastic sports contexts have become a critical concern. Such behaviors—conceptualized as intentional hostile actions or verbal expressions aimed at causing harm to others or objects (Al-Badri)—are associated with adverse consequences for pedagogical processes and training outcomes. This rising issue underscores the need for interdisciplinary intervention strategies within educational and sporting institutions, highlighting the importance of rigorous scholarly investigation.

Within applied psychology, counseling represents a primary mechanism for behavioral intervention. It encompasses a range of developmental, preventive, and remedial strategies, delivered through individual or group formats to address behavioral challenges. Group counseling, in particular, is defined as a structured sequence of sessions tailored in scope and duration to the complexity of the presenting issues (Ibrahim, 2006, p. 115). The effectiveness of such interventions is closely linked to their integration within a systematically designed guidance program, grounded in scientific principles, which provides both direct and indirect counseling services to promote holistic personal development.

Empirical evidence supports the role of psycho-sport counseling in regulating athletes' psychological states and fostering constructive behavioral outcomes. Structured physical activities, including organized sport programs, are posited to serve as effective outlets for channeling aggressive tendencies into socially acceptable behaviors. For instance, Al-Amin (2005) demonstrated that engagement in physical activity significantly reduced aggressive behavior and enhanced multidimensional well-being among adolescents. Moreover, therapeutic interventions incorporating semi-sport exercises and relaxation techniques have been identified as effective components of counseling programs, aiding student-athletes in developing self-awareness, recognizing personal capacities, and acquiring strategies to manage everyday challenges.

This study is additionally informed by field observations and professional experience within secondary and tertiary education. Informal consultations with



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coaches and physical educators have indicated a prevalence of maladaptive aggressive behaviors among school athletes, surpassing normative levels and exerting negative effects on both athletic performance and academic achievement. These observations underscore the practical significance of integrating psycho-sport counseling interventions to address behavioral and psychological challenges in youth athletic populations.

2. Research Inquiry:

Aligned with the established theoretical and empirical context, this investigation is guided by the following primary research question: To what extent does a structured psycho-sport counseling intervention, integrating relaxation protocols and adapted sport-based activities, yield a significant and beneficial effect on the mitigation of aggressive behaviors exhibited by members of school-sponsored athletic teams in Mostaganem?

3. Study Aim:

The principal objective of this research is to empirically examine the efficacy of a specifically designed psycho-sport counseling program—featuring cognitive-behavioral relaxation strategies and cooperative semi-sport modalities—in reducing the incidence and intensity of aggressive conduct among adolescent athletes participating in institutional school sports programs in Mostaganem.

4. Hypothesis:

The central hypothesis posits that the administration of the proposed psycho-sport counseling program will result in a statistically significant reduction in measured aggressive behavior.

This is further operationalized through the following sub-hypotheses:

1. Baseline assessments will reveal a clinically elevated level of aggressive behavior among the sampled population of school sports team participants.
2. No statistically significant difference in aggressive behavior scores will be observed between the experimental and control groups during the pre-intervention (pre-test) phase.



3. A statistically significant difference in aggressive behavior scores will be found between the experimental and control groups during the post-intervention (post-test) phase, with the experimental group demonstrating lower scores.

4. A statistically significant reduction in aggressive behavior scores will be evident within the experimental group when comparing pre-test and post-test measurements.

5. Significance of the Research:

This study is of paramount importance for several reasons. Theoretically, it seeks to elucidate the functional role of integrated sports-psychological interventions in modifying the psychological and behavioral characteristics of adolescent athletes, thus contributing to the applied literature in sports psychology. The study addresses an important but underexplored dimension of athletes' mental health by focusing on the context of aggression in school sports settings. Practically, the findings are expected to yield evidence-based strategies for coaches, sports psychologists, and educators to address the negative psychological factors that impede athletic performance and psychosocial development in school sports teams. [Definition of key terms]

5.1.. Counseling Program:

- General Definition: A counseling program is formally characterized as a systematically organized service framework intended to offer holistic support. Its objective is to assist individuals in resolving challenges or enhancing their adaptation across diverse domains, including personal, educational, vocational, health-related, and ethical spheres.

- Operational Definition (for this study): Within the parameters of this investigation, a counseling program is conceptualized as a structured educational and psychological intervention. Its primary aims are to facilitate psychological adjustment, foster self-awareness and personality understanding, cultivate latent abilities, and address specific problems within an individual's educational and training milieu. The ultimate goal of this intervention is to support the attainment of personal objectives and the preservation of mental well-being.

5.2. Aggressive Behavior:

- General Definition: Aggressive behavior, as defined by Al-Badri, encompasses any act of verbal or physical assault directed at a person or object. This broad



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classification includes, but is not limited to, property destruction, physical violence, verbal abuse, ridicule, sarcastic humor, and severe criticism.

- Operational Definition (for this study): For the purpose of this research, aggressive behavior is operationalized as any observable conduct executed with the intent to cause physical or psychological harm to oneself or others, or to damage personal or communal property. This construct is quantified and measured by an individual's total score on a standardized aggressive behavior assessment scale.

6. Previous Studies and Related Research:

6.1. Study by Azizi Ibrahim and Nafi Sufyan (2014):

The present study sought to investigate the effectiveness of a structured psycho-sport counseling program in alleviating competitive anxiety among football players aged between 18 and 20 years. An experimental research design was adopted, involving a total sample of 30 athletes who were randomly assigned to two equal groups: a control group ($n = 15$) and an experimental group ($n = 15$). Competitive anxiety was assessed using a standardized Competitive Anxiety Scale administered before and after the intervention. The statistical analyses demonstrated that participation in the psycho-sport counseling program resulted in a significant reduction in competitive anxiety levels. Furthermore, the findings indicated a positive impact on the players' overall athletic performance, highlighting the practical value of integrating psychological counseling strategies within competitive football training contexts.

6.2 Study by Al-Sayed Abdel Rahim Mahmoud Selim (2023):

The present research aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a proposed psycho-sport counseling program in enhancing the performance level of novice football players. An experimental approach was implemented on a sample comprising 20 beginner athletes. To assess performance outcomes, a battery of skill-based tests was administered, including measures of dribbling proficiency, passing accuracy, ball control, and shooting precision.

The results demonstrated that participation in the psycho-sport counseling program contributed to a marked improvement in the players' self-confidence regarding their athletic capabilities. Moreover, significant development was observed in their technical skill performance, indicating that the integration of psychological support strategies can play a critical role in optimizing learning and performance outcomes among beginner footballers.



6.3 Study by Ben Akki Mohamed Akli and Ismail Makhoul (2011):

The present study examined the effectiveness of a structured psycho-sport counseling program in mitigating aggressive behavior among youth handball players. The intervention comprised a series of targeted sessions designed to strengthen self-confidence, enhance attentional focus and concentration, implement relaxation strategies, and foster adaptive coping skills.

An experimental research design was employed, incorporating both a control group and an experimental group to ensure methodological rigor. The findings revealed statistically significant differences between the two groups in favor of the experimental group. These results underscore the efficacy of the psycho-sport counseling program in reducing manifestations of aggressive behavior and highlight the importance of integrating psychological skill development within youth handball training frameworks

6.4 Commentary on Previous Studies

From the review of the previous and related studies, several observations can be drawn:

- **Applied Interventions:** Reviewed studies implemented either psycho-sport counseling interventions or sport-based programs incorporating physical and recreational activities. Counseling-focused investigations primarily emphasized both preventive and therapeutic functions of psychological counseling, reporting beneficial effects on individuals' well-being across school and non-school settings.
- **Methodological Approaches:** Most studies utilized experimental designs, which are appropriate for assessing the causal effects of interventions.
- **Sample Characteristics:** Participant populations varied, encompassing club-level athletes and adolescent students from secondary schools.
- **Assessment Instruments:** A majority of studies employed psychometric scales to quantify aggressive behavior; some used broad aggression measures, while others applied more nuanced instruments such as Mohamed Hassan Alawi's four-dimensional aggression scale (physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger-related aggression, and indirect aggression).
- **Principal Findings:** The evidence consistently indicates that psycho-sport counseling—particularly when integrated with physical or sport activities—produces favorable behavioral change, including significant reductions in aggressive behavior and enhancements in psychological, social, and emotional well-being.



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7. Research Design:

The study employed an experimental research design using a two-group (experimental and control) approach, which is appropriate for the nature of this study.

7.1. Research Population:

The population of the study consisted of school sports players at Kterssi Mohamed Middle School in the Masra district. This included 60 junior athletes participating in football, handball, basketball, volleyball, and track and field events.

7.2. Research Sample:

The study sample was composed of 30 players who scored the highest on the Aggressive Behavior Scale, representing individuals with elevated levels of aggressive behavior.

7.3. Research Scope:

1. **Spatial Scope:** Kterssi Mohamed Middle School, Masra district, Mostaganem province.
2. **Human Scope:** School sports team players at Kterssi Mohamed Middle School, Masra district, Mostaganem.
3. **Temporal Scope:** The academic year 2022/2023, from January 15, 2023, to March 15, 2023.

8. Research Tools:

8.1. Aggressive Behavior Scale:

The scale was developed by Mohamed Hassan Alawi to measure general aggression as a personality trait. It consists of four dimensions of aggression, with 40 items in total, 10 items representing each dimension. Each dimension includes six positively worded items (in the direction of the dimension) and four negatively worded items (opposite to the dimension). Participants respond to the items using a five-point Likert scale: *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Moderately Agree*, *Slightly Agree*, and *Strongly Disagree*, in accordance with the instructions provided in the scale.

The table below summarizes the main characteristics and specifications of the scale:

Table 1: Experts' Agreement on the Dimensions of the General Aggression Scale

Dimension	Agree	Disagree	Agreement Percentage
Hostility	2	4	33.33%
Verbal Aggression	5	1	83.33%
Quick Temper / Irritability	2	4	33.33%
Indirect Aggression	6	0	100%

The table shows that expert agreement was highest for **indirect aggression (100%)** and verbal aggression (83.33%), while lower for hostility and quick temper (33.33%).

8.2. Internal Consistency of the General Aggression Scale:

Table 2: Items of the Dimensions after Removing Items 15, 24, 36, and 40

Dimension	Number of Items	Positive Items	Negative Items
Physical Aggression	10	1, 13, 16, 23, 31, 34	5, 9, 20, 27
Verbal Aggression	10	6, 10, 14, 21, 28, 35	2, 17, 32
Anger	9	3, 11, 18, 22, 25, 33	7, 29, 36
Indirect Aggression	7	8, 12, 19, 26, 30	4, 15
Total	36		

8.3. Reliability of the General Aggression Scale

8.3.1 Split-Half Reliability:

The researchers calculated the reliability coefficient using the split-half method by dividing the scale into two equal halves based on item order. The first half included odd-numbered items (1, 3, 5, ..., 35) and the second half included even-numbered items (2, 4, 6, ..., 36). The Pearson correlation coefficient between the two halves was computed and then adjusted using the **Spearman-Brown formula**.



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Table 3: Split-Half Reliability of the General Aggression Scale:

Number of Items	Sample Size	Pearson Correlation	Spearman-Brown Coefficient
36	15	0.678	0.808

The adjusted reliability coefficient of **0.808** indicates a high level of internal consistency for the scale.

8.3.2 Objectivity of the Scale:

The researchers ensured the clarity and simplicity of the items, avoiding ambiguity or difficulty. The scale was reviewed by a panel of experts and distributed to a pilot sample, with direct observation of participants' responses. Respondents showed good understanding and no difficulties in applying the scale. All necessary modifications suggested by the expert panel were incorporated. Based on these procedures, the researchers concluded that the proposed scale demonstrates a **high degree of objectivity**.

8.4. Determining Levels of Aggressive Behavior among School Sports Players:

The research team categorized aggressive behavior into three levels: **low, medium, and high**. These levels were used to analyze and interpret the study results. The levels were calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Level Range} = \frac{\text{Maximum Score} - \text{Minimum Score}}{3} = \frac{180 - 36}{3} = 48$$

Each subsequent level was obtained by adding 48 to the previous one.

Table 4: Levels of Aggressive Behavior

Aggression Level	Score Range
High	132 – 180
Medium	84 – 132
Low	36 – 84

9. Experimental Design:

To test the research hypotheses, the study employed a **two-group experimental design** with a **control group** and an **experimental group**, using **pre- and post-tests**. The design followed these steps:

1. Thirty players from the research sample who scored high on the Aggressive Behavior Scale during the pre-test were selected.
2. A post-test was conducted to identify differences between the control and experimental groups.

9.1. Equivalence of Control and Experimental Groups:

Table 5: Equivalence of Control and Experimental Groups in Pre-Test:

Measure	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-calculated	t-table	df	Significance Level	Statistical Significance
Aggressive Behavior	Control	16	153	7.51	0.807	2.45	30	0.01	Not significant
	Experimental	16	154	8.41					

The results show that the **t-value (0.807)** is less than the critical t-value (2.45) at the 0.01 significance level, indicating no statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups. Therefore, the two groups are considered **equivalent** before applying the intervention.

9.2. Proposed Psycho-Sport Counseling Program:

Table 6: Details of the Counseling Program:

Program Component	Description
General Objective (Core Competence)	Help adolescents regulate and express their emotions positively, adapt to societal norms and ethical standards, and develop a spirit of cooperation.
Program Duration	9 weeks (10/01/2023 – 10/03/2023)
Number of Training Sessions	9 sessions



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Sessions per Week	1 session (Tuesday, 14:00 – 16:30)
Session Content	- Muscle and mental relaxation exercises - Semi-sport games
Session Duration	80 minutes (1 hour 30 minutes)

10. Statistical Analysis Tools:

The researchers used **SPSS version 19** to process the data. The statistical operations included:

- Calculation of **means and standard deviations**
- **t-test** for comparing pre- and post-test results
- **Pearson correlation coefficient** for assessing relationships between variables
- **Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the General Hypothesis Results**
- The general hypothesis of this study stated that: *The implementation of the proposed psycho-sport counseling program has a positive and effective impact on reducing aggressive behavior among high school students.*

Table 7: t-Test Results for Post-Test Scores of Aggressive Behavior (Experimental vs. Control Groups)

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Statistical Significance	Effect Size (η^2 %)
Control	16	154.68	8.34	22.61	30	0.00	Significant	94%
Experimental	16	67.62	7.09					

- As shown in Table 7, the calculated t-value is **22.61** with **30 degrees of freedom** and a significance level of **p = 0.00**, which is lower than the critical level of 0.01. This indicates a **statistically significant difference** between the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups. Moreover, the post-test mean for the experimental group (**67.62**) is substantially lower than that of the control group (**154.68**), demonstrating that the implemented counseling program effectively reduced aggressive behavior among the school sports players in the experimental group.

Table 8: Comparison of Post-Test Scores by Aggression Dimension:

Dimension	Control Mean	Weighted Mean	Percentage	Aggression Level	Experimental Mean	Weighted Mean	Percentage	Aggression Level
Physical Aggression	42.33	30	68.78 %	High	19	30	30.00 %	Low
Verbal Aggression	44.61	30	72.22 %	High	17.21	30	27.56 %	Low
Anger	38.32	27	69.51 %	High	20.11	27	39.14 %	Low
Indirect Aggression	29.42	21	67.46 %	High	11.30	21	25.56 %	Low
Total Aggression Score	154.68	108	69.66 %	High	67.62	108	30.74 %	Low

- Table 8 shows that in the post-test, the **control group** exhibited high levels of aggression across all dimensions, with the highest percentage in verbal aggression (**72.22%**), followed by anger (**69.51%**), physical aggression (**68.78%**), and indirect aggression (**67.46%**). In contrast, the **experimental group** showed low levels of aggression across all dimensions: physical aggression (**30.00%**), verbal aggression (**27.56%**), anger (**39.14%**), and indirect aggression (**25.56%**), with a total aggression score of **30.74%**.
- These results confirm that the **psycho-sport counseling program** **effectively reduced aggressive behavior** among school sports players. The differences between the experimental and control groups are clearly reflected in the **post-test means**, showing that the program had a **substantial positive impact** on the participants' behavior.



11. Discussion of the Research Hypothesis:

This study investigated the efficacy of a psycho-sport counseling intervention in reducing aggressive behavior among adolescent athletes in school-based teams in Mostaganem. The empirical results, as detailed in the preceding analysis, demonstrate that the experimental group, which participated in the structured program, displayed a statistically significant decrease in aggressive behaviors relative to the control group. This positive effect was observed across all measured dimensions of aggression, including physical and verbal aggression, anger, and indirect hostility.

These findings are theoretically congruent with established psychological frameworks. The results support a social learning perspective (Alawi, 1998, citing Bandura), which posits aggression as an acquired behavior susceptible to modification through the systematic reinforcement of prosocial alternatives and the discouragement of antisocial acts. Concurrently, the data align with frustration-aggression theories (e.g., Miller & Dollard), which posit a functional link between thwarted goals and aggressive responses, suggesting the intervention may have provided alternative coping mechanisms for frustration. Furthermore, the outcome underscores the significant etiological role of socio-environmental factors. As scholars like Boukhrisah note, familial and social milieus are critical in personality formation, wherein unstable or adverse conditions can potentiate aggressive tendencies, while supportive structures foster resilience.

The present results also find resonance in contemporary empirical work. Recent research by Yousfi Fathi (2024) corroborates the utility of structured physical activities in alleviating psychological distress and fostering adaptive behaviors in student populations. This aligns with the operational definition of aggression employed in this study—encompassing any verbal or physical act intended to cause harm to others or the self, as quantified by standardized psychometric instruments—and affirms the potential of targeted psycho-sport programs as a viable intervention strategy within educational settings. The findings corroborate prior studies on the effectiveness of psycho-sport counseling programs in reducing aggression. For example:

- Ben Akki Mohamed Akli and Ismail Makhoulf (2011) reported that a psycho-sport counseling program significantly reduced aggressive behavior among youth handball players.
- Abdel Rahim Mahmoud Selim (2023) observed a reduction in aggression levels among beginner football players after applying a similar program.



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- Other studies by Fatma Zahra Imane Matoui (2013), Azizi Ibrahim and Nafi Sufyan (2014), Boujeltia Nasser (2013), and Si El Arabi Charf (2016) consistently reported statistically significant improvements in post-test results for groups exposed to psycho-sport counseling interventions compared to control groups.

Additionally, the results align with studies examining broader psychological outcomes. For example, Chtoui Nour Eddine and Derdoun Kenza (2024) found that recreational sports activities significantly reduced professional burnout among paramedical workers.

In conclusion, the results of the current study indicate that the partial hypotheses regarding reductions in all dimensions of aggression were achieved. Consequently, the general hypothesis—that the proposed psycho-sport counseling program has a positive and effective impact on aggressive behavior among school sports players in Mostaganem—is confirmed.

12.Conclusion:

The results of the study indicate that the proposed psycho-sport counseling program was effective in reducing aggressive behavior among the participants in the experimental group, with significant decreases observed across all four dimensions of aggression—physical, verbal, anger, and indirect aggression. Based on these findings, it is recommended to implement recreational and leisure-based sports counseling programs as a strategy to manage and reduce aggressive behaviors among adolescents. Furthermore, educational institutions should ensure the availability of adequate sports facilities, equipment, and resources, and allow students to utilize these facilities during designated physical activity periods (FASU) to productively fill their free time and enhance their athletic skills. Expanding psycho-sport counseling programs to other educational stages is also advised to prevent and address social maladaptive behaviors and promote positive psychological and behavioral development among adolescents.



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