



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING SESSIONS IN DEVELOPING SELF-CONFIDENCE AMONG FEMALE FITNESS TRAINEES IN GYMS

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ABSTRACT

Background. The psychological preparation of athletes has become an urgent necessity, given the training pressures they face and the diverse sources of these pressures. **Objectives.** The purpose of this paper is to develop psychological counseling sessions to enhance self-confidence among female fitness trainees in gyms. It also sought to identify existing psychological counseling sessions designed to foster self-confidence in these women. **Method.** A two-group experimental design with pre- and post-testing was employed, deemed suitable for the nature of the research problem. The research community consisted of 23 female fitness trainees at Samana Beauty Gym in 2024. A census was used to select a 100% sample from this community, which was then randomly divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group, each containing 10 trainees. The Robin Velly Self-Confidence Scale, translated into Arabic by Mohammed Hassan Alawi and comprising 13 items, was selected for this purpose. After completing these procedures, the researcher conducted the psychological counseling sessions with the trainees for one month, with three sessions per week (Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday) before each training session, each lasting 30 minutes. The total number of sessions was 12. **Results.** The results of the study showed a significance value ($p < 0.05$) which means that there was a significant influence of using both psychological counseling sessions (experimental group) and the control group in developing self-confidence among female fitness training participants. **Conclusion.** Resistance exercise programs using single and double weight machines enhanced maximal The most important conclusions reached were that the psychological counseling sessions had a clear impact on developing self-confidence among the fitness trainees in gyms, and that these sessions played a significant role in motivating the trainees to perform their physical exercises fully and without hesitation.

Keywords; psychological, counseling sessions, self-confidence.



A. INTRODUCTION

The psychological preparation of athletes has become an urgent necessity, given the training pressures they face and the diverse sources of these pressures (Idaiani & Suhardi, 2006; Raglin, 2001). This need is further amplified by modern trends that view psychological care as essential to helping them achieve peak athletic performance and ensuring their mental and physical well-being (Kaplánová, 2024). Fitness training is also viewed as an educational tool that influences their behavior. Therefore, there has been increased interest in studying their psychological characteristics to determine the impact of gym training on their psychological development, and to identify the most important psychological characteristics associated with their athletic performance. Psychological preparation is thus considered an integral part of the training process (Samuel, 2015).

The problems that trainees face during exercise, and the physiological and psychological changes they undergo, necessitate special care throughout all training periods. Psychological preparation must go hand in hand with physical preparation, as it is a key pillar in raising athletes' performance levels (Chortane et al., 2022; Osete et al., 2025). This is achieved through various methods, including developing and enhancing psychological skills, which are among the important foundations of psychological preparation. For example, self-confidence. Self-confidence and self-guidance are among these skills that directly influence the level of daily training in gyms. It is one of several characteristics that collectively form the personality of the trainee athlete, and it is a value within the set of values that contribute to personality integration (Gyomber et al., 2016; Ji & Yu, 2023).

A self-confident trainee possesses spontaneity in thinking and simplicity in. He interacts with others and demonstrates a high degree of independence and self-reliance. He enjoys the renewal of life's pleasures, and his personality is filled with hope and driven by ambition to take initiative and achieve the best results (Ashwani Bali, 2015; Baptistella do Nascimento et al., 2022). From the above, the importance of research in preparing psychological guidance sessions in order to develop self-confidence for female fitness trainees in fitness gyms becomes clear. Guidance and psychological programs through structured sessions are important pillars for developing many psychological capabilities, including self-confidence, specifically for female trainees in fitness centers, as psychological and social pressures may

lead them to nervous tensions and psychological conflicts that affect their training level (Abdullah & Abdullah, 2025; Covassin & Pero, 2004).

Therefore, it is necessary to prepare them and address their weaknesses, and to emphasize and develop their strengths. On the other hand, there is a need for guidance and development services to be provided to them so that they can achieve the best levels during daily training (Bolotin & Bakayev, 2016; Bonnett et al., 2006; Lees, 2003). As a fitness instructor, I've noticed that most of the trainees experience significant hesitation when joining gyms, such as shyness and fear of performing exercises. This negatively impacts their self-confidence (Igeski et al., 2018; Silva et al., 2021). Therefore, believing that scientific research is the best way to solve problems, the researcher decided to study this issue by developing guidance and psychological sessions aimed at building self-confidence among fitness gym trainees. The hope is that this will contribute to strengthening their self-confidence, enabling them to perform the required exercises comfortably and without hesitation or fear. Research objective is to develop psychological guidance sessions to enhance self-confidence among fitness trainees in gyms.

To identify existing psychological guidance sessions for developing self-confidence among fitness trainees in gyms. Research Hypotheses there is a positive effect of counseling and psychological sessions on developing self-confidence among female fitness trainees in gyms.

B. METHOD

Participant

The research community consisted of the 23 female fitness trainees at Samana Beauty Fitness Gym in 2024. The research sample was selected using a census method, representing 100% of the research community, and randomly divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group, each consisting of 10 trainees.

Research Design

The two-group experimental method with pre- and post-testing was used due to its suitability to the nature of the research problem. To control for variables affecting the accuracy of the research results, the researcher verified the homogeneity of the research sample related to morphological measurements (height, body mass, chronological age, and

training age). The researcher used the skewness coefficient before conducting the main experiment on the two research groups (control and experimental), as shown in Table (1).

Table 1. Shows The Homogeneity of The Two Research Groups.

Variables	Measuring unit	Mean	Median	St.d	Skewness	Result
Height	Cm	184.56	184.01	1.888	0.657	Homogeneous
Body mass	Kg	75.742	75.212	2.562	0.298	Homogeneous
Chronological age	Year	33.5	18.676	1.516	0.591	Homogeneous
Training age	Year	1.222	1.101	1.321	0.555	Homogeneous

Equivalence of The Two Research Groups

In order to attribute any differences in the post-test results for the variables under study to the effect of the experimental factor (counseling and psychological sessions), the researcher verified the equivalence of the two groups using an independent samples t-test for the variables under investigation.

Table 2. Shows The Equivalence of The Two Research Groups.

Variables	Measurement unit	Control group		Experimental group		T value calculated	Sig. Level	Sig. Type
		M.	St.d	M.	St.d			
Self-confidence	degree	91.755	7.807	90.701	7.253	0.967	0.892	Insig.

Table (1-2) shows that the significance level (Sig.) of the test is greater than the significance level of 0.05 for all variables under investigation, confirming the homogeneity and equivalence of the two research groups.

Self-Confidence Measurement Test

After reviewing several available self-confidence scales, such as the Osama Kamel Rateb Scale and the Mohammed Hassan Alawi Scale, and after consulting with a group of experts in general and sports psychology to determine which scale was most suitable for measuring the trainees' self-confidence, the Robin Filly Scale, translated into Arabic by Mohammed Hassan Alawi, was selected. This scale comprises 13 items for measuring self-confidence.

Exploratory Study

The researcher conducted an exploratory study on a sample of (5) female trainees from the research population but outside the main sample on May 13, 2024. The Self-Confidence Scale was administered to them, along with some psychological counseling sessions, to identify the difficulties and obstacles the researcher faces and to assess the feasibility of applying psychological counseling sessions to the intended sample.

Scientific Foundations of Test

Scale Validity: The researcher presented the scale to a group of 11 experts specializing in general and sports psychology. Concurrent validity was calculated at (0.89), a value that accurately reflects the scale's validity.

Scale Reliability: The researcher established the scale's reliability using test-retest reliability. The researcher administered the scale to an exploratory sample of five female trainees with a time interval of (10) days between the two trials, obtaining a reliability coefficient of (0.879).

Pre-Test

After identifying the main research sample, consisting of the experimental and control groups, the researcher conducted a pre-test of the self-confidence variable on both the experimental and control groups, totaling (20) trainees, on May 30, 2024, at 4:00 PM in the Samana Beauty Hall in Karbala. The test lasted 45 minutes.

Psychological Counseling Sessions

Psychological counseling sessions are the main objective of the current research. To achieve this, a planning system was used in preparing the sessions. Therefore, the researcher developed and prepared psychological counseling sessions based on the research problem, following these steps (Al-Dossari, 1985): Needs Identification, Goal Setting, Developing Programs and Activities to Achieve the Objectives, Evaluating Results, Needs Identification: After identifying needs, the first step in developing and preparing psychological counseling sessions, the researcher prepared a framework that included session titles based on literature and previous studies. This framework was presented to a group of experts in the fields of education, psychology, educational counseling, and sports psychology, who discussed and approved the session titles, Goal Setting: The objective of the current program is to develop self-confidence among female fitness trainees in gyms, Developing Activities to

Achieve the Objectives: The activities included in the psychological counseling sessions depend on the session objectives and the available resources. The sessions were designed to include a range of activities, including the screening of educational films. These films were adapted through dramatization and explained through counseling lectures, Program Evaluation: Before implementing the psychological counseling sessions with the trainees, the researcher presented the program to a group of experts specializing in general and sports psychology to obtain their opinions on its suitability for achieving the objectives. After discussing the content of the counseling sessions and incorporating the experts' observations and suggestions, the psychological counseling sessions were finalized. It was found that the experts agreed on all sessions 100%. After completing these procedures, the researcher implemented the psychological counseling sessions with the trainees for one month, with three sessions per week (Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday) before the training unit, each lasting 30 minutes. The total number of sessions was 12.

Post-Test Administration

The post-test was administered on July 2, 2004, under the same conditions as the pre-test. The experiment was conducted with the assistance of the research team.

Statistical Methods

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to statistically analyze the data according to the appropriate rules.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Presentation and Analysis of Self-Confidence Results between the Pre- and Post-Tests for the Control and Experimental Groups:

Table 3. Shows The Arithmetic Means, Standard Deviations, And Calculated T-Value For The Pre- And Post-Tests Of The Confidence Variable For The Control And Experimental Groups.

Sample	Pre-test		Post-test		Calculated T value	Sig. Level	Sig. Type
	M.	St.d	M.	St.d			
Control	91.751	1.708	99.198	20.306	5.616	0.000	Sig.
Experimental	90.701	9.429	115.691	11.872	7.888	0.000	Sig.

The results of the study showed a significance value ($p < 0.05$) which means that there was a significant influence of using both psychological counseling sessions (experimental

group) and the control group in developing self-confidence among female fitness training participants.

Table 4. Shows Means, Standard Deviations, And Calculated (T) Value For The Post-Test Between The Control And Experimental Samples For The Self-Confidence Variable.

Variables	Control group		Experimental group		Calculated T value	Sig. Level	Sig. Type
	M.	St.d	M.	St.d			
self-confidence	99.198	20.306	115.691	11.872	3.891	0.000	Sig.

The results in table 5 show a significant difference ($p < 0.05$), these results indicate that the experimental group provided better results than the control group.

Discussion

The results from the two groups (3-4) show a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the two groups, favoring the experimental group, in terms of the trainees' self-confidence. The researcher attributes this significant difference to the importance of the psychological counseling sessions she implemented with the research sample. These sessions helped the trainees develop self-confidence, "as a result of the new information and ideas presented by the counselor during the sessions. This helped the trainees reorganize their perceptions and thinking by addressing the root causes of their problems, leading to self-awareness, an understanding of their abilities and potential, and self-acceptance (Abebe et al., 2019; Baptistella do Nascimento et al., 2022; Idaiani & Suhardi, 2006).

The researcher attributes this significant difference between the two groups in terms of self-confidence to the application of the psychological counseling sessions, which developed the confidence variable in favor of the experimental group. In the individual's ability to change his wrong thoughts and attitudes once they become clear to him, and the lack of organizing perception and thinking in a logical way leads to negative thoughts controlling the individual and his disturbance (Wang et al., 2023).

The researcher attributes this improvement to the fact that self-confidence is the individual's potential and ability to achieve success in sports (Sampson et al., 2016). Undoubtedly, the athlete's expectation of the results of their performance is an important factor influencing the achievement results. Confidence can also be considered as an increase

in the degree of expectation of the results of achievement, or in other words, confidence means the extent to which the trainee is certain of their ability to achieve a certain accomplishment. This is what (Abebe et al., 2019) stated: People who are characterized by self-confidence propose realistic goals that stimulate the challenge and actively do their utmost to achieve those goals. As for people who are characterized by a lack of self-confidence, they suffer from fear of failure and doubt in their abilities and usually tend to set easy goals that are below their capabilities.

The researcher attributes the experimental group's superiority over the control group to the guidance and psychological sessions she employed. These sessions helped boost self-confidence through sports training, which is considered a multifaceted educational process. This process has a comprehensive impact on shaping the athlete's personality during training, under the guidance of the coach and the prevailing psychological atmosphere. This significantly influences the athlete's performance in the exercises. Osama Kamel Rateb stated, "Confidence helps the trainee focus her attention. This is because the trainee doesn't try to avoid failure, which stems from a lack of confidence, and instead focuses on performance. A trainee with low confidence is consumed by anxiety, negative thinking, and preoccupied with the results of the performance more than the performance itself" (Osama Kamel Rateb. 2000).

D. CONCLUSION

Psychological guidance sessions have a clear impact on developing self-confidence among female fitness trainees in gyms. Psychological counseling sessions play a crucial role in motivating trainees to perform physical exercises fully and without hesitation. The experimental group demonstrated exceptional compatibility with the counseling sessions and readily implemented the trainer's instructions. Psychological counseling sessions should be implemented for fitness trainees in gyms to alleviate hesitation and fear, enabling them to perform exercises with confidence. Longer, more comprehensive psychological counseling programs should be developed for new trainees attending gyms. Further research and studies should be conducted on athletes in other sports and disciplines.

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F. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Marwah Ali Hamzah played a role in finalizing the script

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