



Information Article

Competitive Behavior and Its Relationship to Psychological Stress Among Football Players in Wasit Governorate Third-Division Club League

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:
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This study aims to identify the reality of competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players in the third-division club league of Wasit Governorate for the (2025–2026) season, as well as to examine the nature and strength of the correlational relationship between competitive behavior and psychological stress among the players.

The researcher adopted a descriptive approach using survey and correlational methods, as it best suited the nature of the research problem and objectives. The research population was purposively selected, consisting of (225) third-division football players from (11) clubs in Wasit Governorate who were officially registered in the league draw for the (2025–2026) season, excluding non-participating clubs.

The significance of the study lies in highlighting the relationship between competitive behavior and psychological stress, contributing to players' psychological and physical development. It also provides empirical data for coaches, sports psychologists, and club management to design comprehensive psychological support programs that enhance performance and channel competitive behavior positively.

The main conclusions indicated a moderate positive correlation between competitive behavior and psychological stress among the third-division football players in Wasit Governorate clubs. The study recommends that coaches utilize these findings as an essential psychological database to better understand players' competitive behavior and stress responses, optimizing their on-field performance to achieve victory.

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1. Introduction

Sport, in its various forms, is regarded as one of the social and cultural phenomena that has received increasing attention from governments worldwide in recent decades because of its psychological, physical, and educational dimensions, which directly affect both individuals and society. Sport contributes to achieving several objectives, including excellence, recreation, enjoyment, the development of various skills, and self-actualization through competition and winning for the purpose of gaining recognition. In addition, sport enhances the physical appearance of its practitioners through the considerable amount of exercise performed by athletes in various sporting activities, including football.

Football is one of the most widely followed sports at both the local and international levels because of its immense popularity and considerable influence on its practitioners. It has become a fertile arena for athletic competition based on the philosophy and principles of cooperation and competition. Teammates cooperate with one another to achieve victory by scoring goals, and this outcome reflects the attention devoted to various aspects of physical and psychological preparation, including competitive behavior.

Competitive behavior is considered one of the important factors affecting the performance of football players. It refers to the various behavioral responses displayed by athletes during competitive situations, which are aimed at outperforming the opposing team for the purposes of self-affirmation and achieving victory in the sporting context. This behavior is an important motivational factor that athletes should possess in order to achieve accomplishments, attain their goals, and demonstrate excellence. However, such behavior may become negative when characterized by excessive and uncontrolled intensity, which may affect the player's performance both on and off the field, particularly when associated with emotional reactions resulting from the psychological pressures experienced by the player.

Psychological stress, as described by (Arab & Kamel, 2009, p. 91), is one of the psychological phenomena to which athletes are exposed and which affects their psychological health. Repeated exposure to such stress has a negative impact on athletes' feelings and emotions. Stressful situations vary according to the type of personality characterizing the athlete and according to the psychological and behavioral structure of individuals. For some athletes, such pressures may lead to mental exhaustion as well as psychological and physical fatigue. There is no doubt that the nature of competition places responsibilities on every football player, who attempts, through various means and methods, to fulfill these responsibilities in order to achieve the goals established for the team's victory. As the responsibilities imposed on players increase, so do their efforts, which may expose them to considerable psychological stress and certain emotional reactions that may ultimately have a negative effect on both individual and team performance during competitive events. Psychological stress may also have a positive aspect when it remains within its normal limits and within the framework of moderate and balanced competitive behavior directed toward achieving victory.

Accordingly, the significance of the current study lies in shedding light on the relationship between competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season. This topic is important for developing players' psychological and



physical performance and providing scientific data that may be utilized by coaches, sport psychologists, and club administrations in developing integrated psychological support programs that contribute to improving players' performance and positively directing their competitive behavior.

The researcher identified the research problem through field follow-up and personal observations of numerous Third Division League matches involving clubs in Wasit Governorate, in addition to questioning club coaches. Clear manifestations of psychological stress were observed among some players, including excessive tension, physical confrontations with opponents, poor concentration, and excessive emotional reactions during matches. The researcher also observed variation in the level of competitive behavior among players within the same team and across different teams as a result of a lack of determination to win and a weak spirit of challenge. This raises a question regarding the nature of the relationship between these two variables.

Therefore, the problem of the current study is expressed in the following question: What is the relationship between competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season?

The two objectives of the study were to identify the current levels of competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season, and to identify the nature and strength of the correlational relationship between competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season.

The researcher formulated the research hypotheses as follows: There are statistically significant differences between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean of the competitive behavior scale among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League. There are statistically significant differences between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean of the psychological stress scale among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League. There is a correlation between competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League.

The research domains included the following: the human domain comprised football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season; the temporal domain extended from (11/10/2025) to (16/2/2026); and the spatial domain consisted of the football stadiums of clubs in Wasit Governorate.

2. Research Methodology and Field Procedures

2.1 Research Method

The researcher employed the descriptive method using the survey and correlational approaches because of their suitability to the nature of the problem identified by the researcher and to achieving the research objectives, namely, identifying the current levels of the study variables among the sample and subsequently determining the nature of the correlational relationship between them.

2.2 Research Population and Samples

The research population is defined by (Al-Saadawi & Al-Janabi, 2013, p. 30) as "all units of the phenomenon studied by the researcher, or all individuals or persons who





constitute the subject of the research problem." Accordingly, the researcher deliberately identified the research population as football players from Wasit Governorate clubs in the Third Division for the 2025–2026 season who actually participated in the league draw. Their total number was (225) players distributed among (11) clubs, excluding Third Division clubs that did not participate in the league during this season. The population was divided as follows:

2.2.1 Pilot Sample

A sample of (10) players was randomly selected for the pilot experiment from the total population of (225) players, at a rate of (two players) from (five) clubs. After completion of the pilot experiment, these players were excluded from participation in the main experiment so that repeated exposure to the response procedure would not influence the results.

2.2.2 Main Experiment Sample

The main experiment sample consisted of (215) football players from Wasit Governorate Third Division clubs who remained from the original research population after exclusion of the pilot sample.

2.2.3 Information Collection Methods and Research Tools

The researcher used the following methods and tools in the current study:

- Previous studies addressing the research variables (competitive behavior and psychological stress).
- Personal interviews with club coaches.
- Arabic scientific sources addressing the concepts and definitions of the research variables.
- The international electronic information network.
- The Competitive Behavior Scale questionnaire.
- The Psychological Stress Scale questionnaire.
- One (1) HP laptop computer.
- One (1) electronic stopwatch.

2.2.4 Research Procedures

2.2.4.1 Procedures for Using the Two Research Scales (Competitive Behavior and Psychological Stress)

First: Competitive Behavior Scale

The researcher used the Competitive Behavior Scale originally developed by **Dorothy and Harris**, which in its original form consisted of (50) items. Responses were scored according to a three-point response key consisting of the alternatives (always, sometimes, never), with scores ranging from (3–1) for positive items and from (1–3) for negative items.

(Allawi, 1988, p. 275) adapted, Arabized, and shortened the scale to only (20) items while retaining the same response alternatives (always, sometimes, never). More recently, the scale was used by (Farih et al., 2024, pp. 457–458) with a sample of students from the College of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, University of Anbar, during boxing classes. The scale includes a number of positive items numbered (2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17), whereas the negative items are numbered (1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20). Accordingly, the highest score a respondent can obtain on the scale is (60), the lowest score is (20), and the hypothetical mean of the scale is (40), as shown in Appendix (1).



Second: Psychological Stress Scale

The researcher used the Psychological Stress Scale developed by (Hassan Hadi Al-Sharifi, 2009), which, according to (Al-Zubaidi & Al-Harouti, 2017, p. 135), was originally developed by (Muayyad Abdul-Razzaq Hassou, 2008). In its original form, the scale consisted of (46) items distributed across five domains: psychological energy, physical readiness, personality type, administrative stress, and social stress. The scale is scored according to a five-point response scale: (affects me to a very great degree, affects me to a great degree, affects me to a moderate degree, affects me to a slight degree, affects me to a very slight degree), with weights ranging from (1–5) for positive items and from (5–1) for negative items, noting that the scale is a negative scale. Subsequently, the scale was prepared by (Al-Sharifi, 2009) and reduced to (32) items after excluding (14) items based on the opinions of experts and specialists. Accordingly, the highest score a respondent can obtain on the scale is (160), while the lowest score is (32), resulting in a hypothetical mean of (96), as shown in Appendix (2).

2.2.4.2 Determining the Purpose of the Scales

The researcher determined that the purpose of using the two research scales was to identify the current levels of competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players from Wasit Governorate Third Division clubs during the 2025–2026 season and subsequently determine the nature and strength of the correlational relationship between them.

2.2.4.3 Preparation of the Scale Response Instructions

The researcher prepared response instructions for the questionnaires of the two research scales to guide the sample regarding how to respond. The alternatives (always, sometimes, never) were used for the Competitive Behavior Scale, whereas the alternatives (affects me to a very great degree, affects me to a great degree, affects me to a moderate degree, affects me to a slight degree, affects me to a very slight degree) were used for the Psychological Stress Scale. The participants were instructed to answer all items without leaving any item unanswered. They were not required to provide their names so that the players would feel that their responses were being used solely for scientific research purposes. A completed example was also provided to demonstrate the response procedure.

To verify that the two research scales (competitive behavior and psychological stress) were suitable for use, the researcher was required to determine their content validity and reliability.

2.2.4.4 Content Validity

Although previous researchers who had used the two scales had verified their content validity by obtaining the opinions of several experts and specialists in sport and educational psychology, including most recently the Competitive Behavior Scale used by (Farih et al., 2024), the researcher considered it necessary to verify the content validity of both the Competitive Behavior and Psychological Stress Scales by presenting them to (11) experts and specialists in the field of sport psychology.

After collecting the forms and statistically analyzing them using the chi-square (χ^2) equation based on the opinions of the experts who were in agreement, the calculated value was found to be (11), which was greater than the tabulated value of (3,84) at (1) degree of freedom and a significance level of (0,05). This indicates agreement among the experts and demonstrates that both scales are applicable and capable of achieving



the purposes for which they were developed, thereby contributing to the success of the current study.

2.2.4.5 Pilot Experiment for the Two Scales

The researcher conducted the pilot experiment on Saturday, 10/1/2026, using a sample of (10) players distributed among (5) clubs. It was agreed with the assistant research team that each member would be present at one of the clubs on the day of the pilot experiment in order to distribute both scale questionnaires simultaneously before the beginning of the training session.

The purpose of the pilot experiment was to identify all potential obstacles that the researcher and the assistant research team might encounter on the day of the main experiment. The experiment showed that all items of both scales were understandable to the sample, that there were no questions or inquiries, and that the item statements reflected the emotional states experienced by the players during the league competition period. The questionnaires for both scales were collected by the assistant research team smoothly and without any obstacles.

2.2.4.6 Reliability of the Two Scales

After verifying the apparent content validity and in order to complete some of the scientific foundations aimed at confirming the feasibility of using the Competitive Behavior and Psychological Stress Scales, the researcher verified the reliability of both scales through the test–retest method using the same pilot sample of (10) players.

The questionnaires for both scales were redistributed on Saturday, 24/1/2026, using the same procedure, whereby the assistant research team was distributed among the five clubs, with an emphasis on repeating the experiment under the same previous conditions in terms of the time and place of the pilot experiment.

After collecting the questionnaires and statistically calculating the reliability coefficients using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the reliability coefficient for the Competitive Behavior Scale was found to be (0,799), whereas the reliability coefficient for the Psychological Stress Scale was (0,821). These two values are indicators of the reliability of both scales. Accordingly, the two scales, including their instructions and items, were ready for application to football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season after the researcher had verified their apparent content validity and reliability.

2.2.4.7 Main Experiment

The main experiment was conducted on an application sample of (205) players from the total research population of (225) football players from Wasit Governorate Third Division clubs who were actually participating in the Iraqi League during the 2025–2026 season. Ten (10) players were absent on the day of the experiment, and the pilot sample of (10) players was excluded.

Accordingly, the questionnaires for the Competitive Behavior and Psychological Stress Scales were distributed to only (205) players during the competition period and before the team's training session, as shown in Appendices (1) and (2). With the assistance of the research team, the questionnaires were administered over three days—Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday—during the period from 27 to 29/1/2026.

2.2.4.8 Scoring of the Two Scales

After collecting the questionnaires for both research scales and receiving them from the assistant research team, the researcher scored them by assigning a score to



each item according to the response alternatives and the nature of the item, whether positive or negative, in order to determine the final score for each questionnaire.

The scoring process resulted in the acceptance of (193) questionnaires out of (205) response forms, while (12) questionnaires were excluded because they did not comply with the response requirements. These included the presence of more than one response mark for the same item across several items and the absence of responses to some items according to the response alternatives. To ensure accuracy of the results, the researcher excluded these questionnaires from the study findings and relied on the remaining questionnaires for statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to achieve and verify the stated research objectives.

3. Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Research Results

3.1 Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Results of the First and Second Objectives

The first and second objectives of the study were to identify the current levels of competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season.

Table 1. Current Levels of Competitive Behavior and Psychological Stress among Football Players Participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League

Variable	Sample Size	Mean	SD	Hypothetical Mean	Calculated t-value	Sig. Value	Significance
Competitive Behavior	193	50,00	3,43	40	40,50	0,000	Significant
Psychological Stress	193	124,62	10,66	96	37,30	0,000	Significant

Tabulated t-value = (1,960) at (192) degrees of freedom and a significance level of (0,05).

The statistical data in Table (1) show that the sample mean on the Competitive Behavior Scale was (50,00), with a standard deviation of (3,43). The calculated one-sample t-value was (40,50), while the significance value (sig) was (0,000), which is lower than the significance level of (0,05). This indicates statistically significant differences between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean of (40) on the Competitive Behavior Scale in favor of the sample mean.

The table also shows, according to the statistical values obtained by the researcher, that the mean difference between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean was (10,00). This indicates that football players in the Wasit Governorate Third Division League demonstrate a good level of competitive behavior because the sample mean was higher than the hypothetical mean. The obtained results were consistent with the first research hypothesis.

The researcher attributes this good level and increased desire for competitive behavior to the athlete's sense of self-actualization and desire to demonstrate the best possible skill and physical performance, as well as adherence to tactical roles. Competition is based on assertive behavior and avoidance of errors and unjustified physical contact that may result in the player receiving yellow or red cards. Competitive behavior has a positive effect on the player's performance and ability to tolerate fatigue and high physical exertion during matches. This behavior represents a motive and incentive to persist in striving for victory through motivational perseverance.

Perseverance refers to the athlete's ability to maintain a high level of activity until achieving the desired goals. This characteristic may play a role in enabling the player to continue confronting difficulties encountered during training or sporting competition (Miqdadi & Al-Maayrah, 2003, p. 34). Al-Mayahy (2024, p. 47) states that motivational perseverance is often portrayed as an important source of differentiation



and as a stable and unchangeable characteristic. Some players tend to persist in their training and competitive tasks more than others, despite differences in their ability to select and pursue important and motivating training goals. Motivational perseverance is considered one of the structural constructs associated with understanding personal identity. Some individuals incorporate it as a distinguishing personality trait, whereas others regard it as an important factor in personality strength that influences teammates during matches by directing and encouraging them to exert greater effort.

Accordingly, the driving force and motivation underlying competitive behavior are the various incentives that football players seek to obtain. These include external motives represented by gains and internal motives that provide lasting rewards, such as self-actualization, self-satisfaction, and the enjoyment associated with achieving victory.

The statistical data in Table (1) also show that the sample mean on the Psychological Stress Scale was (124,62), with a standard deviation of (10,66). The calculated one-sample t-value was (37,30), while the significance value (sig) was (0,000), which is lower than the significance level of (0,05). This indicates statistically significant differences between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean of (96) on the Psychological Stress Scale in favor of the sample mean.

The table further shows, according to the statistical values obtained by the researcher, that the mean difference between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean was (28,62). This indicates that football players in the Wasit Governorate Third Division League experience psychological stress because the sample mean was higher than the hypothetical mean. The obtained results were consistent with the second research hypothesis.

The researcher attributes this level of psychological stress to competitive pressures and the sense of responsibility toward club management and the coach in order to achieve victory and obtain the highest rankings, which would allow the winning team to qualify and compete in the Third Division League for the Southern Region. Al-Khaikani et al. (2022, p. 237) state that the term psychological stress refers to the presence of external factors that create a feeling of intense tension in the player. When the severity of such pressures increases, the player may lose the ability to maintain behavioral balance and experience difficulty adapting, which may lead to changes in behavioral patterns and personality.

The causes of stress may also include internal variables such as psychological conflicts and excessive ambition that is inconsistent with the player's physical and skill abilities during that period. The manner in which the player interprets stimuli accompanying the competitive process may also determine whether stress becomes negative or positive. Within normal limits, psychological stress may assist the player in performance and achievement and increase efficiency because it serves as an incentive and motivation for sporting activity aimed at achieving victory.

3.2 Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Results of the Third Objective

The third objective of the study was to identify the nature and strength of the correlational relationship between competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season.



Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, Calculated R-value, Significance Level, Type of Significance, and Direction and Strength of the Correlation between Competitive Behavior and Psychological Stress among Football Players Participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League

Variable	Unit.	Mean	SD	Calculated R-value	Significance Level	Significance	Direction and Strength of Correlation
Competitive Behavior	Score	50,00	3,43	0,643	0,000	Significant	Moderate Positive
Psychological Stress	Score	124,62	10,66				

Tabulated R-value = (0,146) at (191) degrees of freedom and a significance level of (0,05).

Table (2) shows that the sample mean on the Competitive Behavior Scale was (50,00), with a standard deviation of (3,43). The sample mean on the Psychological Stress Scale was (124,62), with a standard deviation of (10,66). The calculated Pearson simple correlation coefficient (R) was (0,643), with a significance value (sig) of (0,000), which is lower than the significance level of (0,05). This indicates a statistically significant correlation between the studied research variables, namely, competitive behavior and psychological stress.

Regarding the direction and strength of the correlation, the results showed that it was a moderate positive correlation. Several sources have indicated that when the correlation coefficient is greater than (0,5) and less than (0,7), this indicates a moderate correlation, depending on its proximity to or distance from (+1 or -1).

The results obtained by the researcher indicate that the greater the competitive behavior and desire to win, the greater the psychological stress experienced by players during matches. These results were consistent with the third research hypothesis, which states that there is a correlation between competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players participating in the Wasit Governorate Third Division Clubs League for the 2025–2026 season.

The researcher attributes the obtained moderate, statistically significant positive correlation between the research variables under investigation—competitive behavior and psychological stress—to the fact that competitive behavior requires the expenditure of physical and psychological effort to achieve victory in championships, obtain their rewards, and represent various teams with long-established popular support. Such effort generates psychological stress among players.

The causes of psychological stress are not limited to physical effort but also include all circumstances surrounding the match, such as the spectators and the nature of the opposing team, including whether it possesses comparable or superior financial and technical capabilities. Additional causes of psychological stress include the nature and importance of the match and the team's ranking in the league.

The nature of the obtained results indicated that competitive behavior generated moderate and balanced psychological stress that could be controlled by the players, as it served as an incentive and motivation for competitive behavior rather than representing high and negative psychological stress that could hinder achievement of the objectives. Control of psychological stress does not depend solely on the player but also involves the effective contribution of the coach. Al-Hamdani (2002, p. 16) stated that variation in psychological stress depends on the approach adopted by the coach in preparing the team psychologically at both the individual and collective levels and on the coach's personal experience in this field. It also depends on the coach's cognitive, perceptual, and evaluative abilities to diagnose areas of weakness among players and identify the nature of potential circumstances that contribute to increasing levels of psychological stress.



Rateb (2004, p. 133) states that the manner in which stress is managed determines whether it takes a positive or negative direction. For an individual athlete to be completely without stress would imply stagnation and death; however, the intensity of such stress, repeated exposure to it, and the resulting negative effects on psychological health are what should be avoided and prepared for.

Accordingly, the coach bears an additional responsibility to select the most appropriate methods for dealing with stress, particularly when planning training and during the implementation of the individual components of a training session. This requires coaches to exert additional effort to achieve balance and moderation, control players' motives to win, and regulate the rhythm of their competitive behavior so that it does not become a negative factor that increases their levels of psychological stress.

The results of the current study regarding the relationship between competitive behavior and certain other psychological variables were consistent with the study of (Asad & Mirza, 2014) in terms of the correlational relationship between competitive orientation and competitive behavior. They were also consistent with the study of (Farih et al., 2024) regarding the nature of the correlation between competitive behavior and the boxer's skill performance, as both studies demonstrated a positive correlation.

The findings of the current study were also consistent with other studies concerning the relationship between psychological stress and certain psychological variables, such as the study of (Al-Sharifi, 2009), whose statistical results demonstrated that advanced football players in Iraq were characterized by psychological stress. The findings were also consistent with the study of (Al-Hamdani, 2002) in indicating that the sample was exposed to psychological stress.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results, the researcher reached the following conclusions: the two research scales used in the study were suitable for application to the target sample. The results also indicated that some players demonstrated a low level of competitive behavior and a considerably high level of psychological stress, as indicated by the standard deviations of the study results. Furthermore, there was a moderate positive correlation between competitive behavior and psychological stress among football players from Wasit Governorate Third Division clubs during the 2025–2026 season.

The most important recommendations proposed by the researcher were to conduct another study to determine the nature of the correlational relationship between competitive behavior and assertive behavior among football players from Wasit Governorate Third Division clubs, and to conduct another study to determine the nature of the correlational relationship between psychological stress and psychological burnout among football players from Wasit Governorate Third Division clubs.

The researcher also recommends utilizing the findings of the current study by the coaches of the clubs included in the research sample to familiarize them with the current levels of competitive behavior and psychological stress, as these findings constitute an important database for addressing psychological aspects that play a major role in players' behavior during matches in pursuit of victory. In addition, counseling programs should be employed, and specialized sport psychological preparation personnel should be utilized to improve the level of competitive behavior and reduce psychological stress to reasonable limits among certain team players identified according to the statistical results.



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Appendix (1). Competitive Behavior Scale

No.	Items	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	My performance level decreases in competitions attended by some important people.			
2	When I make some mistakes during competition, I do not find it difficult to regain my concentration.			
3	My self-confidence increases as the competition approaches.			
4	I blame myself when I make some mistakes during competition.			
5	When my coach or one of my teammates criticizes me during competition, I find it difficult to maintain my concentration throughout the remainder of the competition.			
6	My high level of ability becomes clearly evident during critical situations in competition.			
7	In important competitions, I feel anxious about my inability to perform well.			
8	Before participating in a competition, I do not need additional time to prepare myself psychologically and mentally.			
9	I experience intense anxiety before participating in an important competition.			
10	When things go badly during competition, this does not cause me confusion or anxiety.			
11	My performance in sports competitions is much better than my performance during training.			
12	During competition, when I believe that the referee has made an incorrect decision concerning me or my teammates, I become emotionally agitated.			
13	After the competition ends, I am able to remember everything that occurred during the competition.			
14	I fear the possibility of being injured while participating in competition.			
15	I try to avoid thinking about the upcoming competition because doing so causes me greater distress.			
16	Immediately before participating in competition, I feel that I cannot remember anything.			
17	My performance level remains stable during competitions and is within the limits of my maximum abilities.			





18	After the competition ends, I feel that I could have performed better.			
19	I enjoy training more than I enjoy competition.			
20	I make some mistakes during critical moments of competition.			

Appendix (2). Psychological Stress Scale

No.	Items	Affects Me to a Very Great Degree	Affects Me to a Great Degree	Affects Me to a Moderate Degree	Affects Me to a Slight Degree	Affects Me to a Very Slight Degree
1	I think about the consequences of losing the match.					
2	A minor physical injury hinders my performance.					
3	I feel dissatisfied with my body in its current condition.					
4	I am bothered by the club administration's attention to some players.					
5	I feel that my coach pays insufficient attention to my psychological condition.					
6	I experience mental fatigue before competitions.					
7	I feel that the administration is concerned only with results.					
8	My friends blame me for my mistakes during competitions.					
9	The sounds of the spectators provoke me.					
10	I feel that I am a nervous person.					
11	I am bothered by the interference of some administrators in the coach's affairs.					
12	I feel that the rewards for achieving victories are inadequate.					
13	I become frustrated when playing at the opponent's venue.					
14	I suffer from my family's lack of appreciation for my sporting achievements.					
15	I feel sad whenever my mistakes increase.					
16	I find it difficult to sleep on the night before the match.					
17	I am concerned about the lack of equipment and safety measures during training.					
18	I find it difficult to deal with other players.					
19	I am bothered by the administration's authoritarian style.					
20	I am subjected to ridicule by some players.					
21	I find it difficult to feel relaxed.					
22	I experience mental distraction before matches.					
23	I criticize myself whenever my performance declines.					
24	I lack material and moral encouragement.					
25	My psychological condition worsens as a result of irregular training.					
26	I feel a lack of motivation to achieve sporting accomplishments.					
27	I feel afraid of failure.					
28	I find it difficult to regain my energy after the match.					
29	My family problems negatively affect my performance.					
30	I feel indifferent toward my performance.					
31	I feel bored because of the long duration of competitions.					
32	My performance declines in the presence of important personalities.					