CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1. Background of the study

The knowledge of Psychological Intervention Strategies (PIS) is paramount in the pursuit of coaching excellence in many sporting codes especially soccer. One of the important characteristics of knowledge of coaching soccer is that soccer is constantly changing as a result of research and experience. Also soccer is a sport associated with emotion and stress that requires one’s ability to deal with the dynamic performance challenges on a daily basis. Ideally soccer players need the coach’s astuteness to be able to handle the stresses associated with performance in training and competition.

Stakeholders in sport are realising that the mental state of the athlete makes the difference between a successful and unsuccessful performer. Carlstedt (2007: 4) holds that psychological intervention strategies mediate performance, especially during a particular time when athletes are most vulnerable to negative intrusive thoughts. Psychological skills similarly to physical skills, can be taught, learned, practiced and perfected. Currently there is a growing awareness of the significant impact a trained mind has on athletic performance. This mind-set can be developed through training and coaching over the years. It is a mandate of South African Football Association (SAFA) that a soccer coach must be equipped with the relevant knowledge to be able to help the players excel in performance.

During training and competition, players with weak mental strength, for example would struggle to keep up with the demanding training regimen or when trailing the opposition with goals. A coach well equipped with PIS would manipulate the transition from low self-esteem to self-
actualisation and enhance the team’s ability to perform competitively. Zakrasjsek & Zizzi (2007: 2) illustrate that there is a close coach-athlete relationship which at times results in the coach being viewed by players as a close friend, mentor, or father/mother figure, and as such athletes will be more inclined to respect and trust their coaches’ judgement and directives. In their investigation of factors influencing track and swimming coaches’ intentions of using PIS Zakrasjsek & Zizzi, (2007: 2) report that the coach-athlete interpersonal relationship creates a mutual understanding between the two parties, from where behaviour, emotion and constructive thoughts would be mediated.

One of the foremost coach’s responsibilities is to effectively use planned interventions to impart PIS to the team members with a focus to enhancing their athletic performance. Pain and Harwood (2004: 814) report that the English Football Association after a frank realisation of the role that psychology plays in soccer introduced what it called “psychology for football” strategy for coaches in the English Football Association on November 2002 as policy document. The aim of the policy document according to Harwood & Pain (2004: 814) was to increase the awareness and application of PIS from amateur to professional clubs, youth academies and national squads. This decision was taken in the belief that psychological intervention strategies have a positive impact on performance of athletes.

1.2 Statement of the problem

After a long period of racial segregation the South African Football Association (SAFA) was founded on the 8th December 1991 (Alegi 2004: para. 1). Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) welcomed South Africa back into the world soccer on 3rd July 1992.
Currently SAFA administers four male national soccer teams, namely under 17; under 20; under 23 and the senior national team. There are highly qualified soccer coaches employed by the soccer federation to coach each level of the national soccer team. In 1996 South African national soccer team also known as “Bafana Bafana” won the Confederation of African Football Cup, and was then ranked 5th in Africa and 29th in the world. To date 2012, Bafana Bafana is ranked 10th in Africa and 60th in the world. These rankings by FIFA form a relative indicator of strength and how an association is managed, administered and the general coaching expertise that sought to improve performance standards.

During the preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, SAFA employed one of the best tactical and technical coaches Mr Carlos Parreira. However despite these well intended decisions Bafana Bafana continued on a downward spiral in the world rankings. The performance of the national soccer team continued to drop and failed to live up to the stakeholders expectations since the 1996 AFCON competition.

The decline in performance of the South African national male soccer teams can be attributed to many challenges including it would appear a limited usage or lack of usage of PIS. This lack of mental preparation though not popular in South African soccer, can be one of the contributing factors to the decline of performance within soccer players and or teams. It would also seem that there is a dearth of scholarly literature on PIS in South African sport in general and soccer in particular.

Pain and Harwood, (2004: 814) endorse the view that mental training concepts are not fully understood by many people in the mainstream sports including soccer. To illustrate their point, these scholars emphasise that players and coaches who lack knowledge of sport psychology
concepts tend to confuse the effort to focus on improving the mental aspect of performance with psychiatry, hence the use of the word “shrink” is associated with a sport psychologist. Apparently this situation appears to be common within SAFA. The duty of the sport psychologist is to help players with behavioural problems return to normalcy and mobilise their resources toward playing soccer and become successful.

The lack of knowledge of PIS particularly seems to negatively affect the delivery of the soccer coaches for male teams in SAFA; hence the performance of the teams would always be compromised. National soccer coaches should be assisted by qualified and registered sport psychologists some of whom are working within South African tertiary institutions. For unknown reasons, there appears to be a lack of collaboration between sport psychology researchers/practitioners and professional soccer coaches within SAFA structures. The situation has affected the delivery of soccer coaches to the extent that the psychological preparation of the soccer teams has not been a popular training feature in the coaching content of most soccer coaches. In view of these circumstances the current study understands that PIS have not been previously studied by scholars interested in South African soccer. Therefore this pioneering study focuses at interrogating the psychological preparation of soccer coaches who coach the South African soccer under 17, under 20 and under 23 male national teams.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of the current study was to examine the PIS that are used by coaches for male soccer teams in South Africa to enhance the performance of the national soccer teams.
1.4 Research questions

- To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise psychological intervention strategies in their coaching?
- To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams demonstrate knowledge of psychological intervention strategies?
- To what extent does the SAFA’s coaching manual “Psychological aspect” incorporate psychological intervention strategies?

1.5 Research objectives

- To establish the extent to which the South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise psychological intervention strategies during coaching.
- To establish the extent to which the South African soccer coaches for male teams demonstrate the knowledge of psychological intervention strategies.
- To assess the content of the SAFA coaches’ manual “psychological aspect” if it contains adequate and related content of psychological intervention strategies.

1.6 Delimitations

This study focuses on SAFA’s under 17, under 20, and under 23 soccer coaches for male teams only hereby referred to as “national soccer coaches”. These three divisions form the foundation of the South African senior men’s team famously known as “Bafana Bafana”. The study is therefore delimited to coaches for the three national team male divisions with exception of the senior team. The current study is further delimited to a questionnaire and an interview protocol.
1.7 Limitations

Due to limited number of soccer team divisions by SAFA this study involved 4 practising soccer coaches. The results of the study were affected by the participants not fully volunteering to provide more information. Coaches’ cooperation in providing information. However concerted efforts were made to appeal to the coaches’ conscience about the importance of the study and to volunteer towards providing accurate information.

1.8 Significance of the study

The results of the study will form a basis to advocate for a comprehensive PIS program that will equip coaches including also the use of clinical sport psychologists or educational sport psychologists in soccer to help impart PIS within soccer. PIS definitely empower soccer coaches to improve their performance and take their team’s competitive performance to higher levels than previously expected. The study will further enrich the body of sport psychology literature research in South Africa. The study will hopefully motivate the SAFA’s Technical Committee to review the content of their coaching manual and introduce and or improve on PIS that have been covered.

1.9 Definitions

Choking: A below-standard execution of a well-learned sports skill as a result to mental pressure.

(Cox 2012: 151)
Goal orientation: A person’s disposition to be task goal oriented and/ or ego goal oriented. (Cox 2012: 98)

Imagery: The use of all senses to recreate or create an experience in the mind. (Cox 2012: 294)

Performance: from a psychological viewpoint performance depends as well as the learning processes that an individual has undergone. A learning performance in sport has occurred when a lasting behavioural change can be observed following motor learning, (Haag & Haag, 2003: 358).

Progressive relaxation: A muscle relaxation procedure in which skeletal muscles are systematically tensed and relaxed. (Cox 2012: 245)

Psychological intervention strategies (PIS) are various psychological constructs used to mediate performance.

Psychological momentum: A positive or negative change in cognition, affect, physiology and behaviour that will result in a shift in performance and outcome. (Cox 2012: 78)

Self-efficacy: A person’s belief that she is competent and can succeed in a particular task. (Cox 2012: 78)

Self-talk: An effective overt or covert cognitive technique for reinforcing situation-specific self-confidence and ultimately behaviour. (Cox 2012: 245)

Team cohesion: A dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency for a group or team to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of goals and objectives. (Cox 2012: 371)
Thought stopping: In sport, the process of replacing a negative thought with a success-oriented, positive thought. (Cox 2012: 153)

1.10 Theoretical framework

Two theories that are related to study and use of mental skills have been adopted to guide the current empirical study. The attribution theory Heider (1958) looks at how male soccer coaches explain their successes and failures. On the other hand the self-efficacy theory Bandura (1977) explains the coach’s ability to perform a task successfully.

1.10.1 Attribution theory

The Attribution theory advanced by Heider (1958) and supported by Weinberg and Gould (2007: 63) states that, “literally thousands of possible explanations for success and failure can be classified into a few categories”. The three basic attribution categories are stability, locus of causality and locus of control. Firstly, the stability category is further divided into two sub-categories, i.e., stable and unstable. When soccer coach for example attributes success to be a stable factor, (i.e., a result achieved through ability), then the coach forms an increased expectation of success. In the same breadth when a soccer coach attributes success to be an unstable factor, (i.e., a result obtained through good luck) then the coach forms a decreased expectation of success.

Secondly the locus of causality is a factor that is also further divided into sub-categories that are internal to the individual and those that are external to the individual. These explain how
individuals understand complex events that are happening around them and how they interpret these events to relate to their thinking and behaviour. Soccer coaches attributions are important because they inform us about (1) an internal attribution, which is an inference that for an example, a player is behaving in a certain way because of something about the player such as, the player’s attitude, character or personality; (2) an external attribution, which is the inference that a player is behaving in a particular manner because of something about the situation the player finds him or herself in.

Thirdly the locus of control refers to a factor that is or is not under control. For example when a soccer coach feels that for the particular match he is facing, events are under control, the said coach is likely to gain increased motivation in his efforts. However, when the same coach feels that the events are out of his/her control, the said coach is likely to be under decreased motivation. As far as the locus of control is concerned such attributions will affect not only expectations of future success or failure but also affect the emotional reactions of the performer (Weinberg & Gould 2007: 63).

1.10.2 Self-efficacy theory

As developed by Bandura (1977a) the self-efficacy theory addresses beliefs regarding individuals’ capabilities to produce performances that will lead to anticipated outcomes. In a study examining self efficacy and psychological skills during the amputee soccer world cup by Lowther, Lane & Lane (2002: 29), reported that; high self-efficacy scores were associated with successful performance in sports. The significant correlation between self-efficacy and performance indicates that there is a direct relationship between the two phenomena.
Bandura (1997) points out that one of the six principal sources of self-efficacy is verbal persuasion that can be from others as well as the self. As a strategy self talk can be successfully used to influence positive performance effects which can be explained in terms of increased efficacy.

Therefore, during athletic performance successful experiences generally elicit self-efficacy, albeit repeated failures can result in expectations of lower self-efficacy. This implies that a soccer coach who plans the training sessions for specific competitions (so that they elicit successful experiences) will succeed in raising the level of self-efficacy among his /her players. On the same breadth a soccer coach who provokes repeated failures among his /her players will result in expectations of lower self-efficacy within the team. Bandura (1997) warns that, when the task is difficult to assess, participants will struggle to give accurate estimates of confidence to perform successfully, therefore the knowledge that the coach possesses should be utilised to ensure that the difficult task is made easy for the players for a favourable outcome.

Attribution theory and self-efficacy theories therefore share a positive relationship with PIS in a sense that the two theories lead to expectations of future success (Weinberg & Gould 2007: 64, 331). These theories are therefore important in the current study as they are providing guidance in many aspects of improving athletic performance. Coaching effectiveness therefore can be perceived to be influenced by several factors related to PIS.

1.11 Summary

Soccer coaches’ work involves positively motivating players to change a below par performance into one that is desirable. For soccer coaches to achieve this feat they need to be knowledgeable
about PIS as their work primarily involves getting the best out of performers/ soccer players. The knowledge about the PIS relevant to the soccer coaches is covered by the literature in the next chapter.
CHAPTER TWO

The related literature review

2. Introduction

Coaches, sometimes as former athletes, have accumulated their coaching knowledge through many hours of practicing coaching with different teams as well as attending seminars, attending courses, mentoring and peer feedbacks. Sport psychology is a significant body of research that has accrued knowledge in the recent years and has demonstrated the positive impact between psychological interventions and improvement of athletic performance, (Gilbert, Gilbert, Loney, Wahl, & Michel, 2007: 67).

Limited knowledge or lack of knowledge on PIS has been reported to be related with perceptions that can be a barrier towards applied sport psychology, (Pain & Harwood, 2004: 813). When such perceptions about PIS are based on negative meanings they retard any psychological effort that is intended to enhance performance. Despite the success of empirical studies in the use of PIS, negative connotations still exists (i.e., associating PIS with players with behavioural problems) particularly within sports such as soccer that have been reported to resist change (Pain & Harwood, 2004: 825).

Within the context of this pioneering study in South African soccer coaching, this chapter presents the discourse of the psychological intervention strategies, i.e., goal setting, self talk, team cohesion, mental imagery, and relaxation training that are anchoring the profession of sports coaching successfully. Although not the only PIS they form basic knowledge base that is crucial especially for South African soccer coaches. In line with the popular thinking that sport
is currently 80% mental and 20% physical goal setting, self talk, mental imagery and relaxation training are critical cognitive interventions that combine with team cohesion which is a social strategy in order to cement the athletes’ performance and success.

2.1 Psychological intervention strategies

Within the context of this groundbreaking study, the review discusses the psychological intervention strategies specifically goal setting, self-talk, team cohesion, mental imagery, and relaxation training in relation to athletic performance. Albeit not the only PIS, the selected strategies somehow form a knowledge base that is acquired by coaches and specifically soccer coaches. Four of the five PIS, namely goal setting, self-talk, mental imagery and progressive muscle relaxation are cognitive strategies whereas team cohesion is a social strategy. The abstract of PIS are presented (fig. 1) to form a network pattern as they influence athletic performance.

2.1.1 Goal setting

People are involved in goal setting challenges all the time however; the challenges include lack of knowledge on how to set effective goals and design a program to achieve the set goals. According to Locke & Latham (2006: 266) goal setting implies discontent with one’s present condition and the desire to attain a favourable outcome. When one is involved in a task, one gets feedback that may indicate failure and therefore one may be forced to change the approach and seek an alternative one.
In a review of both laboratory and field studies of the effects of setting goals when performing a task Weinberg & Gould (2007: 346) endorse Locke, Shaw, Saari, & Latham, (1981: 126) view in defining goals as a focus towards attaining a specific standard of proficiency on a task and general statements of intent. For example if one wants to be competitive locally, nationally or internationally one would be challenged to set specific and achievable goals and plan strategies of achieving them. This review is in agreement with previous scholars that goals mobilise ones
effort and enhance persistence by providing a standard necessary to achieve other goals through feedback (Locke & Latham 1990; Wilson & Taylor 2005: 105; Weinberg & Gould 2007: 349).

Generally goals can be divided into three main categories, i.e., process goals, performance goals, and outcome goals. Process goals have been delineated as those goals that focus at improving form, technique and strategy (Wilson & Taylor 2005: 105), (Weinberg & Gould 2007: 347), (Burton & Raedeke 2008: 53). For example to achieve a directed free-kick one needs to maintain a follow-through with the kicking foot – performance goals relate to goals for the overall personal or team performance, (i.e. training for accuracy, 70 to 80% of direct place kicks directed at top corners of goal posts) – and lastly outcome goals focus on the “end result”, (i.e. whether a team wins or loses a match). Within this line of thinking, goal setting becomes a useful PIS that the coach uses to achieve a specific level of achievement. However we do not know whether SAFA coaches and their players use goals and are able to set clear goals and own them. Goal setting is one of the critical PIS for helping the team realise positive outcomes.

2.1.1.1 Goal usage

Looking at the goals, themselves it is important to understand the goals’ usage and be able to distinguish one goal from another. For an example setting a general goal like winning a match (i.e. a basis for outcome goals) is considered detrimental to athletic performance. Ongoing studies are in agreement that emphasis on outcome goals can lead to an unstable self-confidence among players and disillusionment especially when expected desired results are not realised (Burton 1989: 106; Maynard & Graydon 1999: 234; Weinberg & Gould 2007: 347; Burton & Raedeke 2008: 55; Filby, Horn 2008: 355). Outcome goals unlike process and performance
goals are said to be highly unpredictable, and as a result would therefore impact negatively on athletes’ self-esteem and debilitate performance.

Contemporary studies emphasise that process and performance goals are effective and relevant because they can be improved on and measured against opponents, (Damon 1989: 107; Filby et al 1999: 232; Weinberg and Gould, 2007: 347). If one loses in a game competition, that result can be based on a set of personal or group goals that are controllable and will therefore be conspicuous to the players. When faced with a task and using goal setting as one of the PISs, the players and the coaches rehearse process and performance goals which in turn would improve their self-esteem and motivation. In a study on emotional and motivational mechanisms mediating the influence of goal setting on endurance athletes’ performance Bueno, Weinberg, Fernandez-Castro and Capdevila (2008: 788) understand that setting goals saves time and directs the efforts of soccer players’ attention. If well guided over time players should be able to learn about techniques of goal setting and continue to set difficult but achievable goals. For an example, a soccer player can improve the passing accuracy rate from 60% to 80% through setting realistic performance goals during training.

In a discourse of goal setting previous studies emphasise, that soccer players must set challenging and achievable goals, because these goals raise the players’ confidence that spur their physical skills (Locke et al 1981: 127; Taylor & Wilson 2005: 104; Weinberg & Gould 2007: 323). When soccer players begin to gradually achieve their preset goals during a match, it becomes a facilitating factor of their self confidence which inter alia triggers positive emotions, and improves performance. On the contrary, when soccer players have not scored goals, their attention wanders from one thought to another and causes the athlete to lose concentration and effort.
2.1.1.2 **Intrinsic motivation**

Goal setting can strengthen and change the locus of causality to be internal rather than external. For an example having lost an away match, a team utilising goal setting would appraise themselves as having lost due to lack of concentrating on set objectives; whereas a team that does not utilise goal setting would attribute the loss to unfamiliar circumstances, hostile crowd etc. The coach can help inspire an internal locus of control by implementing a strategy development, because the internal locus of control is the more powerful source of control because players determine their destiny instead of blaming external forces which they have no control over. Locke et al (1981: 132) report that strategy development is motivated by goals. Therefore when the soccer players use measurable goals, specific goals and short term goals, these goals will motivate strategy development and the players will be self confident.

2.1.1.3 **Self-confidence**

The self confidence becomes evident when soccer players perform in hostile environment (i.e., playing an away match) without choking. Goal setting has helped set the locus of causality to be more internal than external and therefore athletes do not have problems playing well even under trying conditions. Goal setting therefore facilitates the attribution theory’s locus of causality of a factor that is internal to the individual.
2.1.4 Impact of behaviour

In a study to examine psychological interventions on the skill of female soccer players Brobst & Ward (2002: 251) report that goal setting was found to be effective among others in improving practice performances for three behaviours, i.e., movement with the ball, movement during restarts and movement after the passes. Weinberg & Gould (2007: 349); Pain & Harwood (2008: 1165) together with Brobst & Ward (2002: 255) support Locke’s theory of goal setting that goal setting has a consistent and powerful effect on behaviour. Furthermore in a study on team building through team goal setting Widmeyer and Ducharme (1997: 102) found that team goals enhance team performance in sport.

2.1.2 Self-talk

Human beings reflect on their thoughts in every waking moment of their lives. These thoughts are like a constant stream that will never dry, and the thoughts continue pouring for as long as a person lives. Thoughts are therefore regarded as self-conversational, i.e., anytime one thinks of anything one is talking to oneself. Sometimes in sport one works hard and is able to improve performance, but still does not feel confident in one’s abilities because they believe that good performance is due to luck (an external cause). When the athlete begins to believe in the self, and includes a correct use of self-talk (an internal cause) their self-confidence will improve and thereby improving their performance (Hamilton, Scot & McDougall 2007: 236).
There is general agreement that self-talk involves verbal or non-verbal ways, in the form of a word, a thought, a smile a frown, (Hardy 2006: 82; Burton & Raedeke 2008: 102). In a study on the assessment of effectiveness of self-talk interventions on endurance performance, Hamilton et al (2007: 226) assert that self-talk interventions and procedures are some of the most widely applied and effective strategies used. Burton & Raedeke (2008: 102) on looking for answers for the question “what is self-talk?” emphasise that both positive and negative thoughts can be repeated enough to become beliefs. For an example, if an athlete doubts his or her ability as a soccer player his / her performance is most unlikely to improve as the doubt will ultimately manifest itself as a belief.

2.1.2.1 Instructional self-talk

Recent research explain positive self-talk as general and specific statements that are focused on improving energy and effort and view negative self-talk as self-humiliating and disrupts an individual reaching for their set goals (Taylor & Wilson 2005: 26; Burton & Raedeke 2008: 104; Karageorghis & Terry 2011; Cox 2012: 222). Furthermore Weinberg and Gould (2007: 380) add that instructional self-talk adds a third level, which helps the individual focus on task-related aspects of performance. Perhaps Hardy, Hall & Hardy (2005: 905) captures positive self-talk better by defining it as “a multidimensional phenomenon concerned with athletes’ verbalisations that are addressed to themselves, which can serve both instructional (“hit and follow through”) and motivational (“common Jack this is it”) functions”.

The use of positive self-talk associated with performance improvement is well documented by Hardy et al (2005: 914), Cox (2012: 223), Burton and Raedeke (2008: 104), however
Theodarakis et al (2000: 265) in a study that looked at the effects of motivational versus instructional self-talk on improving performance. The study makes a distinction between instructional and motivational self-talk that motivational self-talk may not be as effective as instructional self-talk on either of the tasks requiring more coordination and precision, and that motivational self-talk is effective on a task requiring strength and endurance.

2.1.2.2 Negative self-talk

Some studies are warning that Negative self-talk is regarded as the antitheses of positive self-talk to a point where Burton & Raedeke (2008: 103), Weinberg & Gould (2007: 380) view negative self-talk as self-demeaning to the individual and debilitating to performance and gets in the way of a person aiming to reach their goals. However Hamilton et al (2007: 236) contradicts these research results and that viewed self-talk as a bi-polar description of positive and negative. In a study that assessed the effectiveness of self-talk interventions on endurance performance, Hamilton et al (2007: 236) found that two of the three participants who received the assisted negative self-talk intervention improved their performance. The implications for the study are that negative self-talk may only be harmful to the performance of specific athletes and that for some individuals negative self-talk (e.g., being critical to oneself) may serve as a motivational tool.

According to Hardy (2006: 92), Weinberg and Gould (2007: 380), Bandura’s (1997) theory of self-efficacy provides credibility to self-talk as one of the six sources of self-efficacy. Coaches encourage athletes to concentrate on instructional and motivational self-talk as they both alert the athlete towards set performance outcomes. During teaching and learning of positive self-talk as
PIS, the athlete is encouraged to keep a self-talk log which will keep his/her progress in check, and be able to help the athlete make changes where necessary. The coach should facilitate practice conditions to simulate competition in order to help athletes deal better with adversity.

In a study on psychological skills training to develop soccer performance, Thelwell Greenlees & Weston (2006: 257) found “self-talk as another form of motivation increasingly important in both effort and arousal of the midfielder soccer player particularly prior to and during performance due to heavy physiological component of the midfielder’s role”. The results from a study on the impact of personality on self-talk patterns of adolescent female soccer players Burton, Gillham & Glenn (2011: 423) are in agreement with Thelwell et al (2006: 257) that mastery self-talk, which may include issues such as focus, self-confidence, and coping with difficult situations. These findings are relevant to the position of a soccer midfielder, as this form of self-talk appears to enable the performer to focus on process goals and link well with the appropriate motor coordination pattern throughout the game.

2.1.2.3 Impact on performance

Lastly on a study on the effects of motivational self-talk on self-confidence and anxiety Hatzigeorgiadis, Zourbanos, Mpoumpaki & Theodarakis (2009: 190) found that self-talk had a positive effect on task performance, increased self-confidence, reduced cognitive anxiety and also changes in task performance were related to changes in self confidence. Self-talk is linked with the theory of self-efficacy and this cascade effect leads ultimately to performance improvement.
2.1.3 Team cohesion

Considering that sport is a social phenomenon, participation in team sports is regarded as an important developmental experience. Team cohesion has been defined differently by different scholars; Weinberg & Gould (2008: 182) defines team cohesion as “the dynamic total field of forces which act on members to remain in the group”. Razae, Ghaffari & Zolfalifam (2009: 1010) state that if team cohesion and assignment cohesion are high, the cohesion of the group will also be high. Cox (2012: 357), Weinberg & Gould (2008: 182) explain task cohesion as the degree to which members of a group work together to achieve common goals. Soccer players demonstrate high task cohesion when they are able to defend as a team and then start a move from their own half with neat passes that result in a goal.

2.1.3.1 Group formation stages

Cox (2012: 357) supports Weinberg & Gould (2008: 182) that social cohesion is the degree to which members of a team like each other and enjoy one another’s company. An example of a team high in social cohesion is when teammates declare their love for the team because their best friends are in the team and that they enjoy spending time together during the off-season. There are three different theories of group development; however this study looks at the linear perspective theory by Tuckman (1965) to explain group development. The linear perspective states that groups move progressively through different stages. Recent studies have proposed
four stages of group formation namely; forming, storming, norming and performing (Weinberg & Gould 2007: 162; Cox 2012: 367). In the forming stage, athletes are excited by the new relationships and assess one another’s strengths and weaknesses. It is important to note that at this stage team cohesion is at its lowest because the members have just begun to form a team.

Secondly is the storming stage where athletes struggle with getting used to each other and the new system. This stage is reported to be characterised by resistance to the new setup, and interpersonal conflict are commonly experienced (Cox 2012: 367). The stage is also characterised by infighting among individuals as well as with their leader while they establish their roles and status within the group. Thirdly in the norming stage the members of the team hostile feelings are replaced by solidarity and cooperation (Cox 2012: 367). Members of the team start agreeing upon goals and establishing what the norms of acceptable and good performance are. Fourthly the last stage is performing, where team-members band together to channel their energies for team success (Cox 2012: 367). In this stage the team focuses on problem solving, using group process and relationships to work on tasks and test new ideas. In a study on peer leadership in sport Price & Weiss’s (2011: 60) support the stages of group formation and moreover assert that soccer team members associate leadership behaviours with peers who are confident in the soccer abilities.

In their study on team cohesion and team success Carron, Bray & Eys (2002: 124) found a strong relationship between task cohesion and success in sport teams. These views are supported by Widmeyer & Ducharme (1997: 103) in their study on team building through team goal setting. According to Cox (2012: 363) a significant relationship exists between team cohesion and athletic performance, and most importantly a stronger relationship when task cohesion as opposed to social cohesion is involved.
However problems against team cohesion may happen as reported by Zakrajsek, Abildiso, Hurst and Watson (2007: 183) that if athletes perceive the coaching staff as not being cohesive this creates a discrepancy between athletes and the coaching staff’s perceptions regarding the interaction and decision making among the coaching staff. However if soccer coaches communicate clearly without ambiguity this may help increase self-awareness among the players and thus work to bridge the gap between differences in perceptions.

2.1.3.2 Soccer team cohesion

In emphasising the importance of team cohesion, Pain & Harwood (2007: 1321), on performance environment of English youth soccer teams, found that team cohesion was the most frequently cited positive performance factor and that team cohesion was almost exclusively discussed in relation to its positive effect of performance. Other important antecedents of cohesion as reported by Pain & Harwood (2007: 1322) include player communication, strong leadership, retaining a core of players, low maintenance players, and having the team travel in its kit. However Smith & Smoll (1997: 114) are of the view that, participation in team sport like soccer is an important developmental and psychological experience for many youths. The rules and regulations of soccer are means of building team cohesion because they are universal.

2.1.3.3 Role of coach

The early engagement therefore with sport translates to early engagement with do’s and don’ts of society which are crucial in the development of a responsible citizen. It has been proposed that
aspects such as enjoyment, commitment, and self-esteem enhancement within a soccer team for example are influenced by the coach (Smith & Smoll 1997: 115). The team cohesion is definitely affected by the type of leadership provided by the coach and the coach’s influence has emerged as a major determinant of the quality of the youth sport experience.

The soccer coach’s role is not only limited to coaching but to be a friend, adviser, parent to mention but a few as a result of the amount of time he/she spends with the players. These roles have impact in the increase of team cohesion. While these approaches towards team cohesion have been successful in some soccer national teams, they have not been studied adequately in South Africa.

2.1.4 Mental imagery

Imagery has been perceived as a form of simulation; it is similar to real sensory experience; however it is unique because the entire experience occurs in the mind (Weinberg & Gould 2007: 296). A study on elite and novice athletes’ mental imagery use in open and closed sports reports that mental imagery is an important strategy for improving performance, (Arvinen-Barrow, Weigand, Thomas, Hemmings & Walley, 2007: 93). In a different perspective Taylor & Wilson (2005: 120) emphasise that whenever physical and mental practice are combined a greater skill acquisition will be expected among participants. Indeed imagining a sport skill is similar to performing the skill, except that athletes experience the action only in their minds.

Basson (2004: 6) is in agreement with Taylor & Wilson (2005: 119) that the value of imagery lies in its use as a structured program that uses scripts designed to address areas that athletes want to improve. Imagery therefore can be used to replay and create new experiences and hence
improve performance. In a study on using psychological skills to develop soccer performance (Thelwell et al 2006: 256) identify that when considering the task demands of the soccer midfielder, it would seem appropriate to suggest that imagery may be relevant for preparatory issues such as passing strategies on how the opposition may play and what tactical system is their own team playing. In situations where mental imagery has been honed as skill it can be put to good use by improving both physical and psychological and perceptual aspects of performance, because mental imagery has a learning effect on performance in which the body cannot discriminate between imagined and actual movement.

Jordet’s (2005: 152) single case intervention study on determining whether an ecological imagery program would affect elite soccer players’ perception and prospective control of future actions (i.e., exploratory activity and performance with the ball) in league games, found that indeed soccer players can benefit from using imagery when attempting to optimise the frequency and timing of exploratory activity to search for and perceive relevant information in real games.

Arvinen-Barrow et al (2007: 102); Driskell, Copper & Moran (1994: 490) agree that competitive level and skill-type have an impact on athlete’s imagery use, as elite athletes use significantly more cognitive specific and cognitive general imagery than novices. In a study that examined the relationship between mental toughness and imagery use Mattie & Munroe-Chandler (2012: 151) found that motivational general mastery is a strong and significant predictor of mental toughness.
2.1.4.1 Model for mental imagery

The seven point PETTLEP checklist model enhancing mental imagery proposed by Holmes & Collins (2001: 69) has recently been supported by Taylor & Wilson (2005: 126), Horn (2008: 304) and Cox (2012: 272). Fig 2 illustrates the how mental imagery is connected to PETTLEP components. The PETTLEP model is described thus:

i. The physical component of PETTLEP suggests that imagery should closely mirror the physical movements during motor preparation and execution. Imagery is seen as a physical process with measurable physiological outcomes. Athletes are encouraged to use relevant sports equipment and simulated movements to closely replicate the sensations associated with the actual movement. For example, when providing a mental imagery intervention for a soccer player, one should emphasise reaching a state of arousal that is similar to competitive environment.
According to PETTLEP creating an *environment* of mental imagery that precisely replicates the actual competitive setting is essential for effective imagery. In order to achieve functional equivalence, Holmes and Collins (2001: 69) state that mental imagery should be conducted in a similar environment to the competition. The competitive environment can be recreated with video tapes of athletes’ past performances in familiar training and competitive venues. These recordings will create the imaginations of the expected game situations. Players would then rehearse these situations practically.

The *task* aspect of PETTLEP suggest that imagery may differ along a number of dimensions, such as skill level of athletes, stage of learning, and complexity of the skills being rehearsed in imagery. For imagery to be most effective, it should be consistent
with the particular requirements of sport and specific nature of the athlete generating the imagery. An imagery script of a professional will not be the same as that of an amateur because of the difference in skill and experience. Apart from the difference in experience and skill an amateur has yet to gather enough experience to be able deal with challenges that come with the sport. For an example an amateur’s foot-trap with eyes on the ball to ensure connection, whereas an experienced player will have his eyes on the movements of the opposition while foot-trapping.

iv. PETTLEP asserts that the timing of an imagined performance should simulate the time needed to execute the actual performance. For example dribbling during practice should simulate dribbling in a competition. While slow-motion imagery can be used with beginners to introduce a complex skill, it has been found that it may actually be detrimental to performance among well skilled players because it interferes with temporal rhythm in tasks where timing is critical. Ideally the suggestion will be for the athlete to perform imagery in ‘real time’.

v. The learning component of PETTLEP involves changing the content of imagery over time to accommodate the acquisition of skills that occurs during the learning process. As the execution of skill becomes more refined and automatic, different types of imagery may be needed; for example, imagining the use of the skill in the soccer game performance. External imagery may be more useful in early learning where a visual perspective is necessary, and later learning will benefit from an internal perspective emphasising kinaesthetic feelings once the performer is well acquainted with the actual movement sensations and basic skill components.
vi. The *emotion* component of PETTLEP challenges athletes to use emotional responses in their repertoire of imagery to create similar emotional reactions as those experienced in actual competition. For example heightened positive soccer emotions that may be experienced before a competition should be included in mental imagery script to be practiced.

vii. *Perspective* is the last component of PETTLEP. As either an internal or external visual perspective may be utilised, a situation specific individualised approach to imagery should be considered. PETTLEP suggest that the differences in perspective may depend on the interaction between the athlete and the demands of the sport.

Smith, Wright, Allsopp & Westhead (2007; 90) and Wright & Smith (2009: 27) are in agreement that PETTLEP-based imagery has provided greater improvements than the traditional imagery. Further-more recent follow up study findings report that PETTLEP-based imagery to be effective with both novice and experienced performers though advanced performers benefit from mental practice to a much greater extent than beginners (Driskell et al 1994: 490; Arvinen-Barrow et al 2007: 102; Smith et al 2007: 90; Wright & Smith 2009: 27).

2.1.5 Relaxation training

The life of an athlete is filled with different physical and mental stressors, whether the athlete is performing well, or performing poorly. These stressors are caused mainly by the desire to perform well or to maintain a particular performance standard in other to be rated the best or among the contenders for the title. Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) was conceived by Jacobson in 1938, with the view that it is impossible to have a relaxed mind in a tense body.
PMR therefore involves a sequential contraction and relaxation of muscles, until all muscle groups are completely relaxed.

The goal of learning PMR as emphasised by Abrams (2010: 146) is to be able to turn the excitation volume either up or down. For example the same PMR script that has been used by soccer players cannot be used for weightlifters, because weightlifters require a turned up excitation volume in their script for peak gross motor function. Alternatively soccer players utilise more fine motor skills that require an excitation volume that is turned down to allow for peak concentration. Abrams (2010: 146) argues that the goal is not to put athletes in a relaxed, sedated state in the midst of competition because they cannot be successful in sport when they are under aroused.

2.1.5.1 Physiological benefits

Previous studies have reported that PMR has physiological benefits and contributes towards unwanted muscular tension Burton & Raedeke (2008: 84); Abrams (2010: 146); Cox (2012: 229). The PMR reduces excessive activation of the sympathetic nervous system and calming the mind by keeping it productively occupied. Competitive sport puts demands on athlete’s ability to be ready for other tasks such as penalty shots in soccer. PMR is necessary during penalty kicks because it is based on the premise that the player cannot maintain a relaxed state of mind if the player’s muscles are tense.
2.1.5.2 Psychological skills

In their study on using psychological skills to develop soccer performance Thelwell, Greenlees & Weston (2006: 256), report that relaxation strategies would benefit soccer midfielders’ sustained attention and focus when playing well, or when incorrect decisions or errors in perception and decision-making are made. Soccer competitions bring about anxiety which is a normal condition however if anxiety is not handled properly it can turn into anger and causing the players to be cautioned or worse expelled from the field of play. PMR is useful during the period when players are facing challenges that breed anxiety for example, kicks from the penalty spot or playing an away match in front of hostile fans. These situations expose performers stress to high levels that without any form of relaxation training could lead to untenable conditions on the part of players.

2.2 Summary

Psychological strategies are designed to improve performance and therefore likely to boost self esteem, build internal motivation and lead to self actualisation. PIS are an appealing concept in soccer training to improve and enhance the psychological acumen of players that would help them to handle challenging competitive situations. This is a pioneering study of PIS in South African soccer, and therefore there is no previous study on PIS in this field on soccer. As a result there is limited understanding of the role of PIS on coaching in South African soccer; hence the development of soccer on the country.
CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3. Introduction

The study focused at interrogating the Psychological Intervention Strategies used by the male soccer teams’ coaches employed by SAFA. This chapter presents the research methodology of studying the usage of these interventions for the success of the soccer teams.

3.1 Research design

A triangulation method approach has been chosen for this study. The triangulation research design outlays the choice of research methods and offers a justification thereof. A triangulation method approach is one in which the researcher collects data, analyses it and integrates both quantitative and qualitative results in a single research inquiry (Creswell 2003: 15).

Babbie & Mouton (2001: 309) assert that the strength of qualitative research lies in the fact that it enhances a deeper and comprehensive understanding of the situation based on experiences given by the respondents. Creswell, (2009: 3) infers that qualitative research is a process of exploring and appreciating the meaning behind the reported social challenge.

Quantitative research methods create fundamental connection between human behaviour and numerical values because it processes objective facts (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 418). That is research questions are transformed into statistical values with assigned numerical codes e.g., a five point Likert scale. Based on numbers, researchers are able to generalise and replicate the findings.
Golafshani (2003: 597) contributes that a quantitative researcher attempts to fragment and delimit phenomena into measurable or common categories that can be applied to all of the subjects or wider and similar situations. Golafshani (2003: 600) further states that qualitative research is one that produces findings arrived at from real-world settings where the phenomenon of interest unfolds naturally.

The advantage of quantitative research according to Golafshani (2003: 599) is that the results can be replicable, and the validity is lush. How counter ideas have been observed as noted by Golafshani (2003: 600) that being able to replicate the results is not enough but, precision, credibility and transferability of results provides the lens of evaluating the findings justified by the qualitative research. Based on these scientific arguments, the current study resorted to the use of triangulation methodology where Golafshani (2003: 604) justifies that triangulation is a research approach utilised by studies for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to increase the credibility of the results.

### 3.2 Triangulation

In the current study the triangulation method involved questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis. Data triangulation has been favoured in the current study to increase the measure of credibility of findings. Triangulation provides the diversity and quantity of results for detailed analysis. Therefore the interviews and questionnaires added a depth to the results that would not have been possible using a single strategy study. Perlesz & Lindsay, (2003: 27) argue that the purpose for using triangulation method is to increase validity and reliability of the results. That means the validity and reliability of the results from the current study were strengthened by the
questionnaire, interview and document analysis. Hussein (2009: 3) supports the use of multiple data sources in the same study as the current study has undertaken.

3.3 Participants and Sampling

This focused study was primarily designed to look at the use of PIS among the national soccer coaches employed by SAFA. It is hoped that the results might open up the need for a wider study of soccer coaches in all soccer league levels. Therefore due to a small number of male team soccer coach employed by SAFA e.g. (the population of male soccer team coaches is 4), a purposive sampling method was used (N = 4, mean age = 43). According to Devers & Frankel (2000: 263) qualitative research most often uses purposive sampling strategies. In South Africa, soccer coaches for male teams are the only highly qualified soccer coaches that coach at professional level. On the other side the soccer coaches for female teams ply their trade at amateur level; therefore they were not involved in this study.

These coaches hold level III SAFA coaching qualification which is currently the highest qualification in the country. That means they have been developed by SAFA to reach this professional qualification. All male team soccer coaches involved in this study were employed to coach under-17, under-20, and under-23 male national soccer teams.
3.4 Instrumentation

The study used questionnaire, in-depth interview and document analysis as tools for data collection. In the questionnaire, a five point Likert scale questionnaire was used. The close ended questionnaires covered topics in goal setting, team cohesion, mental imagery, progressive muscle relaxation and self talk. Questionnaires on their own right provide a fundamental connection between human behaviour and mathematical expression because they measure objective facts (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 416).

The in-depth interview covered similar questions as there were in the questionnaire. In-depth interviewing in the opinion of Adams & Cox (2008: 18) is unstructured interview used to elicit information in order to understand the interviewee’s experiences at a deeper level. To get this information in-depth interview involves asking participants open-ended questions and probing questions whenever necessary to obtain in-depth views of certain issues. The in-depth interview seeks to gain insight information as experienced by the participants.

The document for the study was titled “Psychological Aspect” and was secondary literature. The analysis covered the psychological topics that were part of the coaching education. The researcher found that the training manual covers a few items of PIS that is mental training and techniques for relaxation and energisation.
Table 1. Rationale of the methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Justification</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Allows respondents to independently provide information they feel is correct.</td>
<td>Subjects may not be entirely truthful in their responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth interview</td>
<td>The open-ended questions supported by probing questions get deeper information from the respondents, such that at the end of the interview they feel exposed too much. The method makes a follow-up of what has been reported from the questionnaire.</td>
<td>It may be difficult to replicate the results due to the fact that humans are thinking beings. Their perceptions vary over time and space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document analysis</td>
<td>A close investigation of the content entailed in the document may help to gain understanding of the truth behind what may have been reported in the face to face interview and questionnaire.</td>
<td>The interpretation must be controlled to reduce bias of information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 Validity

Content validity was used in this study. Validity refers to the tool that has been chosen that it measures that which it intends to measure (Golafshani 2003: 599). In determining the levels of content validity of the questionnaire and interview, the current study utilised two experts in the field of sport psychology to determine whether the content of the methods was focused at measuring what the researcher intended to measure.

The formulated content of the questionnaire and in-depth interview were submitted to the 1st expert in qualitative data analysis for a review. After approval with some modifications the instruments were submitted to the 2nd independent qualitative expert for critical review of the agreement reached between the researcher and the 1st expert. The final approval was granted that the developed content for the questionnaire and the in-depth interview measured what they were
supposed to measure. The content validity of the questionnaire was established at 97% and for the in-depth interview was 98%.

3.6 Reliability

Gratton & Jones (2004: 85) define reliability as the consistency of the results obtained, for an example if two researchers use the same study under a similar protocol and using the same number of participants under similar conditions it is expected that results would be obtained. The current study piloted the questionnaire and interview instruments to establish their reliability. Equivalence is measured through inter-expert reliability procedure which refers to the consistency with which observers or experts make judgements. This was done by calculating the percentage of agreement from number of agreements divided by the number of opportunities for agreement, \((17/20 = .85 \times 100 = 85\%)\). The tallying of the two experts responses appears in appendix A.

3.7 Pilot study

The purpose of the pilot study was to improve the reliability of the methods of data collection as well as increase the competence of administering the instruments. The pilot study involved the first division soccer coaches in the Province of the Eastern Cape. Furthermore the purpose was to increase the reliability of methods selected for data collection. The reliability of the questionnaire was at 85% of agreement.
3.8 Procedure for collecting data

Research that involves human beings has to adhere to the ethical considerations as stated in the UFH ethics policy. Before research was undertaken ethical approval was sought for the study and was duly granted by the University of Fort Hare. Permission to undertake the study was also sought and granted by the participating organisation i.e., the SAFA’s Chief Executive Officer. The first contact with SAFA was made telephonically to ascertain exactly from whom an official request was to be made to conduct research.

SAFA explained the protocol of meeting the coaches. The researcher then went to meet with the coaches in person to conduct both the questionnaire and the in-depth interview. After self introduction and explaining the purpose of the study, consent forms were explained and given to the coaches for ethical reasons. The interview lasted for ± 45 minutes whereas the questionnaire was ± 15 minutes.

3.8.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaire was administered face to face with respondents. This was done with a view to carefully assist the subjects with understanding the questions. The time for completion of the questionnaire was ± 15 minutes. The current study used the five-point Likert scale which allows the respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree with given statements. The closed statements were used and in some cases questions were explained to the subjects. The author of the study supervised the exercise to help the participants complete all questions and explain where it was not clear. At the end of the exercise the researcher thanked the participants for a good volunteering spirit.
3.8.2 Interviews

After the subjects had completed the questionnaire the in-depth interview was conducted face to face. Interviews are helpful in the sense that they furnish the researcher with wide angles on issues that were previously unexpected. Gratton & Jones (2004: 141) reports that interviews tend to provide much richer data than, for example, a questionnaire survey, where respondents are generally limited to short and relatively simple responses. During in-depth interviews respondents were challenged by open questions to express themselves deeper on the matter at hand. The elapsed time for an in-depth interview was ± 45 minutes.

As such probing questions were used to make follow ups on respondents’ views so as to gain more understanding about their concerns on specific issues. The face to face interview was a personal contact whereby each participant was encouraged to talk about their own experiences in their own words and allow them to elaborate on any area of particular interest. These interviews were conducted in the respondents’ places of work behind closed doors. During the interviews each and every participant was warned that a voice recorder was being used to record the conversation. The participants consented to a voice recorder being used. Before thanking each and every one of them for volunteering information, the author informed the participants that the verbatim text would be sent back to them to read and confirm that it was a true reflection of their views.
3.9 Ethical issues

The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the ethics committee of the University of Fort Hare. The researcher made an undertaking that since the study involved human beings, every attempt was made not to infringe their dignity and human rights. The participants signed a consent form, and were informed that they were at any time free to withdraw from the study.

The researcher assured the participants that confidentiality of the responses is highly assured. The consent forms requested coaches to volunteer their participation in the research. Also they could withdraw anytime they felt so. Attached to the questionnaire was the covering letter which had several key objectives. Among the many objectives was to introduce the researcher, and the institution from which he came from.

Furthermore it was to introduce the research programme, including the statement of why the research is being undertaken and why the research is important to football in South Africa. Lastly it was to state the importance of their participation in the research and the also to stress the anonymity of the respondents responses.

3.10 Document analysis

The analysis was done by the researcher and the document sent to an expert on sport psychology to establish the level of agreement on the document. The analysis found that the document severely lacked PIS and as such a level of agreement was reached with the expert about the inadequacies of PIS in a document titled “psychological aspect”.
3.11 Data analysis

Data were entered in the SPSS version 20. Questionnaire data was analysed to establish frequency of responses. The in-depth interview information was inductively analysed. The content was analysed based on consensus agreement of the emerging themes from the unit statements.

3.11.1 Content analysis

The content analysis refers to the analysis of the content of communications and that content analysis involves the use of systematic procedures to describe the content of a text (Gratton and Jones 2003: 167). In the current study the content was recorded interview responses from the national soccer coaches. The verbatim text was read and the sentence units were identified in each page. The researcher generally determined the meanings and relationships of certain words and concepts in the text. The units were reduced into themes of statements. The analysis went on further to reduce the text into main themes, which were lastly reduced to categories of main meaning.

The analysed results were submitted to the expert of qualitative analysis to generate levels of consensus. In this case the agreement was 85% of the identification of the sub-themes, themes and categories of main meaning. The analysed results were submitted on an independent researcher to review and confirm the level of inductive analysis agreement. The results were then confirmed.
3.12 Trustworthiness

Shenton (2004: 63) accuses positivists that they often question trustworthiness of qualitative research, because the positivists’ concepts of reliability and validity cannot be addressed in the similar way with the naturalist’s approach. A naturalist depends only on numbers to make inferences. As a solution to this challenge Guba (1981) established the four constructs of trustworthiness (i.e., credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability). That means in order to claim trustworthiness of information for a given study an exercise using the four constructs must be performed.

a. *Credibility* is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. Shenton (2004: 64) underscores that credibility addresses the aspect of congruency of the findings with reality. In the current study the researcher spend eight months communicating with SAFA in an effort to familiarise himself with the culture of the organisation. Moreover the researcher also consulted SAFA’s document on sport psychology titled “Psychological aspect” in order to familiarise himself with its contents. Based on the information from this “psychological aspect” training manual, the researcher can surmise that a relationship of trust has been established. Furthermore, during data collection participants were informed of their right to discontinue with the study whenever they felt so. This measure was taken to ensure that only those that were genuinely willing to participate are prepared to offer data freely.

Shenton (2004: 67) suggested the use of specific ploys (e.g., iterative questioning) be incorporated to uncover deliberate lies. The current study applied this technique by using
the same questions in the questionnaire and interview. Frequent debriefing sessions took place between the researcher and the supervisor and helped develop the project. The project was subjected to a peer scrutiny from conception and as such fresh perspectives were implemented in the project with a view to refine methods and offer and the research design. During interviews a voice recorder was used to record the participant’s verbatim responses. After transcribing their views, the respondents were asked to read the text and confirm that it contained what they had reported during face to face interviews. They all agreed and therefore the information was correctly captured.

b. Transferability is explained through external validity. Shenton (2004: 69) understands that external validity addresses one’s ability to generalise one’s research findings to other people and other situations. The findings from the current study can be generalised to the SAFA population and other related soccer coaches. Shenton (2004: 69) points out that it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that sufficient contextual information about the fieldwork sites is provided to enable the reader to make the transfer. The research gave a brief introduction about the organisation’s background and the current environment wherein the organisation finds itself in.

c. Dependability is being close to credibility in practice, in a sense that a demonstration of credibility goes some distance in ensuring the dependability (Shenton 2004: 71). In order to address the dependability issue more direct, the processes within the study should be reported in detail (Shenton 2004: 71). This means that the research design may be viewed as a “prototype model”. The current study includes the research design and its implementation wherein it describes what was planned and executed at a strategic level.
The study includes the operational detail of data gathering, addressing the finer points of what was done on the field and lastly an evaluation of the whole study was done.

d. **Confirmability** is the qualitative researcher’s objective concern (Shenton 2004: 72). Care must therefore be taken to ensure as far a possible that the study findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the participants, rather than a figment of the researcher’s ideas. The current study used triangulation method to promote confirmability as well as to reduce the effect of researcher bias.

### 3.13 Summary

The use of triangulation approach in data collection will help address the issues that both qualitative and quantitative methods would not independently address. The methodology chapter sets the stage for the results which are presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR

Results

4 Introduction

The purpose of the current study was to examine the psychological intervention strategies used by national soccer coaches for male teams in South Africa. National soccer coaches are specialist coaches that are considered amongst the best coaches in the country. This chapter presents the PIS findings reported from engaging with the four national soccer coaches. The results were mainly based on qualitative data analysis methods.

4.1 Goal setting

To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise goal setting in their coaching?

The questionnaire sought to find out if coaches practice goal setting and which types of goals were used by South African soccer coaches. The goal setting results (Table 2) represent frequencies of coaches’ responses. All the (4) respondents were in agreement that a goal refers to attaining a specific level of proficiency on a task; usually within a specified time and that players should set goals for themselves. The respondents were divided on the context of goals. About half agreed that outcome goals are more important than process goals, and the other half (2) disagreed with the statement.
Three (3) of the respondents believed in setting more difficult goals for their players with the intention of improving performances whereas one (1) of the respondents disagreed with setting more difficult goals with the intention of improving performances.

Table 2. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of goals setting on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goals can also be subjective and more difficult to measure; e.g., increased satisfaction with a team-mate.

| Outcome goals are more important than process-performance goals | 1 | 3 | - | - | - |
| Do you set more difficult goals for your players with the intention of improving performance? | - | 2 | - | 2 | - |
| Do you believe in your players setting for themselves goals? | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - |

| Total | 10 | 7 | - | 3 | - |

Mean percentages of coaches’ (fig. 3) responses show that the responses that yielded statistical significance are those under “Strongly agree”; “tend to agree” and “tend to disagree” (p ≤ 0.05). Responses with the same letter superscript were not statistically significant.

![Bar chart showing coaches' responses](chart.png)

**Figure 3.** Coaches’ responses on the significance of goals setting on players’ performance
Based on the in-depth interview results, goal setting featured strongly in the responses from the participants (Appendix F). The results show that with the responses such as “We work with time frames to achieve team goals” and “We are not interested in the outcome of the match but the processes of play”, suggest that coaches had some knowledge of goal setting strategies. However in the same breadth, statements like “Difficult goals may frustrate players and the coach” and “The coach works on the goals set by the players” indicate lack of understanding of goal setting strategies among coaches.

The emerging categories of main meaning on goal setting as a PIS were that soccer coaches for male teams had “knowledge about goal setting” on certain aspects and showed “lack of knowledge of goal setting” on other aspects. On close inspection of the coaching manual, “Psychological aspect” the researcher did not find any substantial information on goal setting. The document does however address goal setting albeit in a form of characteristics that should be possessed by players. None of the research questions are supported by goal setting results. Therefore the results strongly suggest that goal setting as PIS is not fully understood nor fully utilised in coaching male soccer teams.

4.2 Mental imagery

To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise mental imagery in their coaching?

The following task was aimed at gauging the coaches’ insight on mental imagery. The frequencies of the coaches’ responses on mental imagery (table 3) show that all the four (4)
respondents agreed with the statement that said “*mental imagery is imagery, visualisation and mental practice or mental rehearsal*”.

**Table 3. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of mental imagery on players’ performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental imagery is imagery, visualisation and mental practice or mental rehearsal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental imagery is a process of internalised rehearsal involving precise multisensory representation of the athletic experience</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goal of mental imagery is to reproduce the athletic experience so accurately that athletes feel as if they are actually performing the skill.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean percentages of the coaches’ responses (fig.4). Parts of the graph on superscript letters ‘a’, ‘b’ and ‘c’ are statistically significant with (p ≤ 0.05).
Based on open-ended interviews three (3) of the respondents were in agreement with the statement that “mental imagery is a process of internalised rehearsal involving precise multisensory representation of the athletic experience”. The results further showed that the respondents agreed with the statement that said that “the goal of mental imagery is to reproduce the athletic experience so accurately that the athletes feel as if they are actually performing the skill”.

The results from the in-depth interview (Appendix F) indicated that overall the coaches lacked knowledge of mental imagery. Statements like “mental imagery is visualisation” indicate that coaches use mental imagery and visualisation interchangeably. The main categories of meaning were that soccer coaches for male teams showed “lack of knowledge of mental imagery”. The SAFA’s document the "psychological aspect” does not cover mental imagery, rather talks about mental training as a principle that ought to be the trademark of a soccer player. The results
strongly suggest that mental imagery as PIS is not understood and therefore not utilised by coaching male soccer teams.

4.3 Team cohesion

To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise team cohesion in their coaching?

The following task was aimed at measuring the coaches’ responses in relation to team cohesion (table 4). Three (3) respondents disagreed with the statement that said that “team cohesion is the functioning of the team without regard to the concerns for its individual members”, while only one (1) respondent neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. All four (4) coaches’ responses were in agreement with the perception that the general quality of the internal relationships of the team was significantly influenced by players’ appreciation of one another’s role in the field of play.

Table 4. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of team cohesion on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Team cohesion is the functioning of the team without regard to concerns for its individual members. 

Do you view the general quality of the relationship in the team as being important? 

How important is it for players to appreciate each other’s roles/positions in the field of play; e.g., strikers v/s defenders? 

A team can play better and is likely to adhere to the program if they enjoy each other’s company and experience a sense of social cohesion. 

The presence of cliques can negatively affect team cohesion. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team cohesion</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you view...</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How important...</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A team can...</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presence of...</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicate that one (1) of the respondents strongly disagrees with the statement that said "the presence of cliques can negatively affect team cohesion", whereas the other three (3) agreed with the statement.
The summary of the coaches’ responses on team cohesion (fig.5) presents significant views on the importance of team cohesion ($p \leq 0.05$). The on the bar graph 72% represents the correct responses given by the coaches, and the 11.1% represents the incorrect responses given by the coaches. Lastly all the four (4) respondents agreed with the statement that said “a team can play better and is likely to adhere to the program if they enjoy each other’s company and experience a sense of social cohesion”.

The in-depth interview results (Appendix F) show that soccer coaches lacked some knowledge about the significance of the concept of team cohesion. The coaches’ statements like, “cliques are unavoidable and are a consequence of time” and “senior players appreciate other senior players more than new players”. Furthermore soccer coaches showed some knowledge about team cohesion from statements like “the team far outweighs the individual in importance” and “a
coach needs to know his players”. In general coaches’ views on team cohesion are represented by the following categories of meaning “lack of knowledge of team cohesion”. Based on analysis of SAFA’s coaching document “psychological aspect” team cohesion was not addressed in the document indicating that the concept of team cohesion was unknown to SAFA’s coaching development program.

The research question that asked “to what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams demonstrate knowledge of psychological intervention strategies?,” was partially supported by the study findings, while the other two research questions were not at all supported by the study findings. The results (Appendix F) suggest that soccer coaches for male teams were not aware about using team cohesion to improve team performance in soccer.

### 4.4 Relaxation training

**To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise relaxation training in their coaching?**

The following task was undertaken to measure the coaches’ understanding of relaxation training as part of the PIS. Based on the results (table 5), all the four (4) respondents agreed with the statement that said that “it is important for the players in a competitive sport team to be able to control their arousal”. This suggests that the soccer coaches were aware that arousal should be controlled for optimal performance; however this does not suggest that they were aware of the use of relaxation strategies in their coaching skills.
Table 5. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of relaxation training on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important for the coach that his players in competitive sport learn to control their arousal.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players who perceive their anxiety as facilitative typically perform better; they also cope more effectively with anxiety.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that anxiety reduction strategies are useful and have a place in sport and exercise settings.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players who do not cope effectively with the pressure of competitive soccer however, may experience not only decreases in performance but also mental distress and even physical illness.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results two (2) respondents responded that they “tend to agree” with the statement that said that, “anxiety reduction strategies are useful and have a place in sport and exercise settings”, the other two (2) could “neither agree nor disagree” on that particular statement. While all the respondents agreed with the statement that said that “players who perceive their anxiety as facilitative typically perform better and cope more effectively with anxiety” it has to be mentioned that based on their responses the soccer coaches were not
convincing that they knew fully what they were responding to, i.e., they responded with “tend to agree” in most cases.

Figure 6. Coaches’ responses on the significance of relaxation training on players’ performance

Results from the statement that “players who cannot cope effectively with the pressure of competitive soccer, may experience not only decreases in performance but also mental distress and even physical illness”, show that all four (4) of the respondents agreed with the statement. The summary of the coaches’ responses on relaxation training (fig. 6) show that 87% of the responses agreed that relaxation training was important for the performance of the teams (p ≤ 0.05).
The in-depth interview results indicated clearly that some of the soccer coaches lacked knowledge about relaxation training by using statements like "relaxation is closing eyes and imagining" and asserting that relaxation training means "training should simulate competition to cope with anxiety". Some of the coaches had some clue about knowledge of relaxation training by using statements like "optimal anxiety is necessary for performance" and "singing before a match relaxes".

Therefore the results on relaxation training partially support the research question that “to what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams demonstrate knowledge of psychological intervention strategies?” the other two questions were not at all supported by the results. This means that some of the coaches might be aware of relaxation training strategies but lacked the knowledge of implementing such strategies in their coaching program.

4.5 Self-talk

To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise self-talk in their coaching?

Self-talk is one of the PIS that the current study was investigating. The results (Table 6) showed that all the four (4) respondents agreed with the statement that “coaches understand the importance of self-talk in a contest”. Two (2) of the respondents were in agreement with the statement that said “players should be able to utilise self-talk as a strategy during challenging periods in a match”, while the other two (2) respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The results further indicate that all four (4) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that “their players do not need to know about self-talk as a regulation strategy”.

58
Based on the results, there is an indication that most of the coaches were not sure that self-talk was important in coaching skills to optimise teams’ performance. This statement is supported by the participants’ views on “tend to disagree” as a cluster that shows ambiguity within the soccer coaches.

Table 6. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of self-talk on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand the importance of self-talk in a contest.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My players are able to utilise self-talk as a strategy during challenging periods in a match.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players do not need to know of self-talk as a self regulation strategy.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean percentages of coaches’ responses on self-talk (figure 7), where the bars with the different letter superscript are statistically significant from each other (p ≤ 0.05). The data generated from the in-depth interview show that soccer coaches had some knowledge about self-talk by indicating that “self-talk is used for self hype and self evaluation” and that “self-talk is used to correct errors”.

59
The data generated from both the questionnaire and the in-depth interview does not indicate a correlation of views, which leads to a perception of scant knowledge of self-talk. The SAFA document titled the “psychological aspect” does not mention of self-talk in any form of coaching interventions.

![Bar chart showing frequency of coaches' responses](image)

**Figure 7. Coaches’ responses on the significance of self talk on players’ performance**

The emerging categories of main meaning from the in-depth interview indicate some “knowledge about self-talk”. This perception in re-enforced by the fact that this responses from the questionnaire are not the same as those from in-depth interviews. The research question that asked “to what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams demonstrate knowledge of psychological intervention strategies?” has been partially supported by the study findings and the other two questions were not supported by the study findings. It is evident that SAFA coaching program for coaches does not integrate the scientific concept of self-talk.
4.6 Summary

The results from the coaches as analysed under different PIS, show that SAFA authorities seem to neglect the use of PIS for the teams’ performance. In the next chapter these views are discussed under the support from other scholarly studies. The results indicate that the soccer coaches do not possess the PIS knowledge and therefore do not utilise PIS in their soccer coaching. The psychological manual is poor in its coverage of PIS.
CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

5. Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings from the collected data on PSI used by SAFA coaches. These findings are linked with different research on PIS done elsewhere.

5.1 Goal setting

To establish the extent to which the South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise goal setting strategies during coaching.

The objective was to establish the extent to which SAFA soccer coaches utilised goal setting during coaching. The current findings on goal setting have been studied elsewhere. In a theory of goal setting Locke & Latham’s (2006: 266) explain that goal setting is caused by one’s discontent with present condition and the desire to positively transform one’s present condition. Goal setting is arguably a necessity and can be viewed as a life skill that those without it would fail in any endeavour towards changing their life. On a daily basis people set themselves goals, however what seems to be a challenge is setting achievable goals.

The current results provide scant information that SAFA coaches utilise goal setting in their coaching duties. This observation is based on the relevance of the responses that were collected from the coaches’ views. The study re-emphasises that the correct responses are not in any way an indication of prowess in goal setting. It is also quite clear that some coaches did not utilise goal setting in their coaching even if it appears that they had knowledge of some elements of goal setting.
The coaches’ responses on whether they set more difficult goals for their players with an intention of improving athletic performance reflects random approach towards successful goal setting coaching skills. A relevant approach would be symptomatic of coaches that have attended comprehensive training courses to qualify with professional coaching grades. It is evident that soccer coaches for national teams do not utilise goal setting in their coaching strategies. The study finds that the content of coaching manual “psychological aspect” supports these views. There was no discourse of the PIS throughout the document. Previous studies have emphasised the need for goal setting in improving athletic performance in either a team or individual sport (Holt & Dunn 2004: 211; Lemyre, Roberts & Ommundsen 2002: 134).

When some of the top qualified coaches in the country pronounce statements like “difficult goals may frustrate players and the coach”, it is a revelation that their knowledge of goal setting is limited. This lack of knowledge impinges on their ability to carry out their primary duty of coaching successfully (Pain & Harwood 2007: 825). This lack of knowledge of goal setting was demonstrated by divided responses from the participants. During interviews, SAFA coaches did not demonstrate an understanding of outcome goals, process goals and performance goals.

Previous studies related to soccer have reported that challenging goals lead to higher levels of performance than easy goals, no goals or “do your best” goals (Goudas, Theodarakis & Laparidis 2007: 58; Locke et al 1981: 126). The statement that there was no knowledge of goal setting among soccer coaches is supported by the fact that the coaching manual did not contain goal setting literature. One can only assume that SAFA coaching education does not see the importance of goal setting or they do not know how potent goal setting is in influencing players’ performance levels. Based on the open-ended interviews, the main themes related to goal setting were “knowledge about goal setting” and “lack of knowledge of goal setting”. The mixed
feedback indicates uncertainty on the part of the coaches’ responses. The use of triangulation method unveils this uncertainty which appears to be an indication of lack of knowledge of PIS. The in-depth interview unmasked the misrepresentations from the questionnaire and presented a true depiction of the coaches’ knowledge.

5.2 Mental imagery

To establish the extent to which the South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise mental imagery strategies during coaching.

The objective of this concept was to understand how SAFA coaches use mental imagery during coaching to enhance performance of the players. According to Taylor and Wilson (2005: 120) combining physical and mental practice offers athletes greater skill acquisition than physical practice alone. Mental imagery is therefore an important aspect of skill acquisition during soccer coaching.

The current results show that national soccer coaches do not utilise mental imagery during coaching. This fact has been gathered from the coaches’ responses in the questionnaire as well as the responses from the in-depth interview. During open ended interviews the coaches stated that they encouraged their “players to use visualisation” instead of mental imagery. Visualisation is not the core of mental imagery (Jordet 2005: 153). Actually the content of the coaching manual emphasises the use of physical activities in training the mind.

The coaching manual emphasises the use of physical activities in training the mind. The manual further explains that the goal of mental training is to improve mental attitudes and also to help improve performance-related activities, for an example; “losing markers and intense physical fitness exercises”. Unfortunately the manual falls short of addressing core mental training
aspects that are important towards enhancing the performance of the players and a team as a whole.

Results from the questionnaire and the in-depth interview responses indicate that soccer coaches do not possess scientific knowledge of mental imagery. This deficiency was established during open-ended interviews where coaches further reported that “mental imagery is imagining oneself lifting the winning trophy”. Coaches were not able to make intelligible discussion of mental imagery. Based on in-depth information, the emerging main themes of meaning “lack of knowledge of mental imagery” indicates that soccer coaches do not possess basic knowledge of mental imagery and generally do not utilise mental imagery in their everyday soccer coaching duties.

The SAFA coaching manual, did not address mental imagery as a strategy for coaching. Knowledge could not be disseminated to the coaches if it was not part of the content of SAFA coaches training manual.

5.3 Team cohesion

To establish the extent to which the South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise team cohesion strategies during coaching.

The objective of this study was to investigate the extent that SAFA soccer coaches utilised team cohesion during coaching. Cox (2012: 357) pronounces that team cohesion is divided into task cohesion and social cohesion that explain the degree to which members of a group work together to achieve common goals. It is important that during this state members of a team like each other and enjoys one another’s company.
Unfortunately, South African soccer coaches do not seem to utilise team cohesion during coaching activities. This assertion is supported by empirical findings to the extent that they reported confusing statements on themselves. For example most coaches emphasised that “an individual is more important than the team”. This misunderstanding is probably due to lack of coaching education on team cohesion. The researcher feels that it is difficult to utilise a strategy that one has no comprehension of.

It is evident that SAFA coaches cannot be expected to use the knowledge that they do not possess. The current South African soccer coaches demonstrate little understanding of team cohesion. This claim is informed by miscellaneous responses to specific probing questions on team cohesion during the in-depth interview. Most of the soccer coaches have had extensive coaching careers with soccer teams therefore team building should be one of the primary focuses during coaching (Carron, Spink & Prapevessis 1997: 62).

Based on critical examination of SAFA’s coaching manual, there was nothing mentioned on team cohesion. This provides evidence that SAFA did not use the PIS for the development of education in soccer coaching. From the in-depth interview the main categories of meaning related to the domain of team cohesion was “knowledge and lack of knowledge” of team cohesion.

5.4 Relaxation training

To establish the extent to which the South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise relaxation training strategies during coaching.

The objective of relaxation training concept was to investigate the extent that soccer coaches utilise relaxation training techniques as part of their coaching duties. The goal of learning PMR
or for that matter any relaxation strategy is to be able to “turn the excitation volume up or down” as the environment dictates (Abrams 2010: 146). In soccer the arousal level can be turned up and down, for an example in a fifty-fifty situation in order to gain possession of the ball and during penalty kicks respectively.

The current study finds that the SAFA soccer coaches do not possess any knowledge as well practical skill of any relaxation strategy. Although the soccer coaches demonstrate some knowledge of relaxation training their knowledge seems to be similar to in nature to information coming from popular entertainment magazines. It is therefore superficial knowledge that cannot be classified or utilised as a potential source of coaching education (Pain & Harwood 2004: 818).

Sophrology and yoga are strategies that are mentioned as relaxation methods that are suitable for individual use, albeit not explained in the manual. Throughout the document no attempt has been made to unpack any relaxation method in an attempt to emphasize their importance. In view of these evidences, SAFA soccer coaches do not use relaxation techniques during coaching. Based on data emerging from the open-ended responses, the categories of main meaning were “knowledge and lack of knowledge” of relaxation training. Relaxation training strategies were not taught to the coaches hence their superficial knowledge on relaxation training was gained probably from independent reading.

5.5 Self-talk

To establish the extent to which the South African national soccer coaches for male teams utilise goal setting strategies during coaching.

The objective of the study was to investigate the extent that soccer coaches utilise self talk during soccer coaching. Self-talk interventions and procedures according to Hamilton, Scott &
McDougall (2007: 226) are some of the most widely used techniques to date for influencing athletic performances. Self-talk can also be utilised in soccer to excite or calm the players especially when they have to play decider matches.

Results show that soccer coaches utilise self-talk in their coaching program. However it is unclear about the frequency and how well they utilised self talk. This seems to suggest that soccer coaches seem to possess some basic knowledge of self-talk. On inspection of the SAFA coaching manual the document does not cover any topic on self-talk nor does it even explain what self talk is.

The lack of utilisation of self-talk in soccer coaching can be linked with the absence of self-talk in the coaching manual. This justifies the limited knowledge of self talk among coaches. Based on the in-depth interview on the component of self-talk the categories of main meaning are “knowledge about self-talk”. However there was no collaboration of responses between the questionnaire and the in-depth interview.

5.6 Summary

The reported psychological intervention strategies covered are essential skills for coaches in their endeavour to present an all rounded athlete. Based on discussions from different PIS reported by other related studies, there is a need to make a follow-up of this knowledge to the SAFA employed soccer coaches. The study established that the extent to which soccer coaches utilise PIS is extremely minimal and is informed by the lack of demonstrable knowledge of PIS. The two objectives are interlinked with the third which interrogated the manual “psychological aspect” and found it did not contain any substantial information on PIS.
CHAPTER SIX

Summary, Conclusion & Implications

6.1 Summary of findings

The purpose of the current study was to examine the PIS that are used by national soccer coaches employed by SAFA. The PIS that were targeted in the current study were namely goal setting, team cohesion, self-talk, mental imagery and relaxation training. The study found that the SAFA national soccer coaches (for male soccer teams) did not use PIS suggesting that a majority of the soccer coaches did not possess any formal knowledge of psychological intervention strategies. Lastly the study found that the coaching manual “psychological aspect” was devoid of any psychological coaching strategies as would be expected in any coaches’ educational manual. The possible reasons could be lack of knowledge of PIS.

The study has made successful efforts to establish congruency of the results. The current study findings are similar to the reality within the coaching education of SAFA. The second principle of credibility required incorporating ploys to uncover deliberate misrepresentations. To uncover such misrepresentations, the study used the same questions in the questionnaire and in the in-depth interview, therefore the noted response discrepancies are a result of misrepresentations by the soccer coaches. Further studies should focus on PIS in all soccer coaches in the Premier League to raise the coaching standard of the coaches. These results can only be generalised to all coaches that have only attended the SAFA coaches training program. The results cannot be generalised to foreign trained coaches in the country plying their trade in the Premier Soccer League and the Vodacom league.
6.2 Conclusions

The study finds that the level of PIS knowledge among SAFA soccer coaches is insufficient as is indicated by the results from the questionnaire and the in-depth interview. As a result of this lack of knowledge, soccer coaches do not use PIS in their coaching programmes. This knowledge has not been included in the SAFA “Psychological Aspect” manual; therefore all the four coaches that have had training by SAFA are illiterate of PIS.

Although the results cannot be generalised there is evidence that the SAFA trained soccer coaches fall short when it comes to PIS. The study found that soccer coaches are psychologically under-prepared for their arduous task of soccer coaching. By implication the players are also psychologically under-prepared that they cannot face their peers competitively. Current studies point to this mental preparedness as the psychological momentum.

6.3 Implications for further research

The findings of this study will hopefully open an introspective dialogue within SAFA. The important question that must be asked is whether coaching education has done enough within the current curriculum? Does psychology have a place in soccer and if so how important are PIS? It is the view of this study that among PIS can be introduced to the SAFA coaching education as well as sport psychology among other sporting disciplines.

SAFA stands to benefit from this as it is a pioneering one that gives a yardstick of how far behind is South African soccer compared to the rest of the world. Whilst the study was not exhaustive of the PIS the study never the less charts a way forward for other researchers in the field to investigate and provide more information to build a sport psychology research base for South African sport in general.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

April 25\textsuperscript{th} 2012

Dear Coach

I would like to thank you for taking the time to complete the attached questionnaire. From your responses I hope to better understand how coaches like yourself understand and use psychological strategies as part of your coaching. \textbf{Please be assured that all information collected is confidential.} NO ONE WILL HAVE ACCESS TO YOUR ANSWERS EXCEPT ME.

Please follow the instructions below when completing the questionnaire.

1) Please read and sign the consent form.
2) Please completely fill out the demographic questionnaire.

After I have received all the information from each of the coaches you will be expected to participate in the second part of this study. The second portion of this study involves an interview.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 040 602 2477 or at txoxo@ufh.ac.za

Thank you and good luck with your season.

Thank you,

Thabo D. Xoxo
APPENDIX B

25th April 2012

Agreement to participate in research

Responsible investigator(s): Thabo D. Xoxo

Title of protocol: A study of psychological intervention strategies used by national soccer coaches in South Africa.

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating the psychological intervention strategies used by national soccer coaches in South Africa.
2. You will be asked to complete a short interview conducted by the researcher.
3. There are no anticipated risks to the participants of this study.
4. Although the results of this study will be published, no information that could identify you will be included.

You are giving your consent voluntarily.

______________________________  _______________________
Signature                        Date

______________________________  _______________________
Researcher’s signature           Date
Dear Coach,

Coaching soccer is daunting task in that while some players may suffer from low levels of arousal others experience an excessively high level of anxiety and tension all leading to decline in performance.

A resourceful coach will impart psychological strategies training to the players to be able to improve their performance.

Questionnaire instructions

Please indicate your response by putting a tick on the number that you think carries the most relevant information according to your understanding of the question or statement:

1. = Strongly agree
2. = Tend to agree
3. = Neither agree nor disagree
4. = Tend to disagree
5. = Strongly disagree
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A goal refers to attaining a specific level of proficiency on a task, usually within a specified time limit.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Goals can also be subjective and more difficult to measure; e.g., increased satisfaction with a teammate.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Outcome goals are more important than process-performance goals, (i.e. Outcome of a match more important than how players play in relation to players own standard of excellence.)?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Do you set more difficult goals for your players with the intention of improving performance?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you believe in your players setting for themselves goals?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mental imagery is imagery, visualisation and mental practice or mental rehearsal.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Mental imagery is a process of internalised rehearsal involving precise multisensory representation of the athletic experience.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The goal of mental imagery is to reproduce the athletic experience so accurately that athletes feel as if they are actually performing the skill.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Team cohesion is the functioning of the team without regard to concerns for its individual members.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Do you view the general quality of the relationship in the team as being important?</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How important is it for players to appreciate each other’s roles/positions in the field of play; e.g., strikers v/s defenders?</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Tend to agree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Tend to disagree</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
12. A team can play better and is likely to adhere to the program if they enjoy each other’s company and experience a sense of social cohesion. | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|

13. The presence of cliques can negatively affect team cohesion. | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

14. It is important for the coach that his players in competitive sport learn to control their arousal. | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

15. Players who perceive their anxiety as facilitative typically perform better; they also cope more effectively with anxiety. | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

16. I believe that anxiety reduction strategies are useful and have a place in sport and exercise settings. | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Players who do not cope effectively with the pressure of competitive soccer however, may experience not only decreases in performance but also mental distress and even physical illness.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I understand the importance of self talk in a contest.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. My players are able to utilise self talk as a strategy during challenging periods in a match.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Players do not need to know of self talk as a self regulation strategy.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Coach,

Coaching soccer is a daunting task in that while some players may suffer from low levels of arousal others experience an excessively high level of anxiety and tension all leading to decline in performance.

A resourceful coach will impart psychological strategies training to the players to be able to improve their performance.

**Interview instructions**

You are requested to briefly explain your views from questions/statements from each question on the spaces provided.
1. A goal refers to attaining a specific level of proficiency on a task, usually within a specified time limit.

2. Goals can also be subjective and more difficult to measure; e.g., increased satisfaction with a teammate.

3. Outcome goals are more important than process-performance goals, (i.e. Outcome of a match more important than how players play in relation to players own standard of excellence.)?

4. Do you set more difficult goals for your players with the intention of improving performance?
5. Do you believe in your players setting goals for themselves?

6. Mental imagery is imagery, visualisation and mental practice or mental rehearsal.

7. Mental imagery is a process of internalised rehearsal involving precise multisensory representation of the athletic experience.
8. The goal of mental imagery is to reproduce the athletic experience so accurately that athletes feel as if they are actually performing the skill.

9. Team cohesion is the functioning of the team without regard to concerns for its individual members.

10. Do you view the general quality of relationships in a team as being important?

11. How important is it for players to appreciate each other's roles/positions in the field of play; e.g., strikers v/s defenders?
12. A team can play better and is likely to adhere to the program if they enjoy each other’s company and experience a sense of social cohesion.

13. The presence of cliques in a team can negatively affect team cohesion.

14. It is important for the coach that his players in competitive sport learn to control their arousal to optimal level.
15. Players who perceive their anxiety as facilitative typically perform better; they also cope more effectively with anxiety.

16. I believe that anxiety reduction strategies are useful and have a place in soccer and exercise settings.

17. Players who do not cope effectively with the pressure of competitive soccer however, may experience not only decreases in performance but also mental distress and even physical illness.
18. As a coach I understand the importance of self talk in a contest.

________________________________________________________________
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19. My players are able to utilise self talk as a strategy during challenging periods in a match.

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20. Do players need to know about self talk as a self regulation strategy?

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
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Thank you
## APPENDIX E

### Goal setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence limits</th>
<th>Sub themes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Main meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A goal is like a destination; once the destination is reached the goal is</td>
<td>A goal is like a destination.</td>
<td>A goal is a subjective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achieved.</td>
<td></td>
<td>destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others run to win, others run to finish within a specified time and others</td>
<td>Others run to win others run to finish.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>run to complete a marathon, yes a goal is subjective.</td>
<td>A goal is subjective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players must perform well in order for them to have a positive outcome.</td>
<td>Players must perform to have a positive outcome.</td>
<td>We work with time frames to</td>
<td>Knowledge about Goal setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>achieve team goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We work very closely with time frames to achieve these goals within the team</td>
<td>We work with time frames to achieve team goals.</td>
<td>We work with time frames to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but also the individual players.</td>
<td>We work with time frames to achieve individual player goals.</td>
<td>achieve individual player goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We set times for specific things.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A player that fails to meet our objectives is given a personal training</td>
<td>Players falling behind receive personal assistance.</td>
<td>Weak players are personally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside the team setup.</td>
<td></td>
<td>assisted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes we are not interested in the outcome of the match but we test the</td>
<td>We are not interested in the outcome of the match but the processes of play.</td>
<td>The outcome is not as important as the process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>player to see whether they understand the way we want them to defend or attack.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A positive outcome is not as important as a positive performance.</td>
<td>A positive outcome is not as important as a positive performance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our goal depends on the nature of the match being played whether it is a</td>
<td>Types of goals during matches</td>
<td>Short, intermediate and long</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualifier or a group stage match.</td>
<td></td>
<td>term goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge about Goal setting
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is important that all players achieve the same goals for your team to function. When players set goals for themselves it means they have ambitions, they are prepared to work, and the work is done for the coach.</th>
<th>The coach works on the goals set by the players. Players must achieve the same goals for the team to function.</th>
<th>The coach works on the goals set by the players.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult goals may frustrate the players in turn frustrating the coach as well. As a national coach you don’t want to complicate things because you don’t have time to really make them understand complicated stuff. I don’t set players difficult goals because difficult goals require a lot of time which I don’t have.</td>
<td>Difficult goals may frustrate players and the coach.</td>
<td>Difficult goals may frustrate players and the coach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The nature of the match itself is a must win. We must not celebrate a loss against Brazil.</td>
<td>Matches are a must win.</td>
<td>To win at all cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don’t put players under pressure to perform in preparation games.</td>
<td>We don’t put players under pressure to perform in preparation games.</td>
<td>We don’t put players under pressure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lack of knowledge of Goal setting strategies
**Mental imagery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence limits</th>
<th>Sub themes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Main meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I make use of imagery without using the term imagery with players.</td>
<td>Coach uses imagery unknowingly.</td>
<td>I utilise imagery.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask a player with a weaker left foot that in order to accurately kick a ball he must visualise himself kicking with the right and try to do the same thing with the left foot.</td>
<td>I ask players to visualise using the correct skill.</td>
<td>I encourage players to use visualisation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagining yourself playing the match, scoring a goal, lifting a trophy, celebrating and preparing your mind for a specific goal. Mental imagery is imagining yourself scoring a goal and lifting the winning trophy.</td>
<td>Imagine yourself playing a match. Imagine yourself scoring a goal.</td>
<td>Imagine yourself achieving a goal.</td>
<td>Lack of knowledge of mental imagery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental imagery is closing your eyes and thinking about something.</td>
<td>Mental imagery is visualising yourself performing a skill.</td>
<td>Mental imagery is visualisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental imagery is visualising yourself performing a skill.</td>
<td>Mental imagery is preparing your mind for a specific goal.</td>
<td>Mental imagery is about achieving a good outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental imagery is preparing your mind for a specific goal.</td>
<td>Mental imagery is preparing your mind for a specific goal.</td>
<td>Mental imagery is about achieving a good outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Team cohesion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence limits</th>
<th>Sub themes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Main meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presence of cliques is a difficult thing to remove.</td>
<td>Presence of cliques will always be there.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of knowledge about Team cohesion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where people spent time together for a long time becomes a recipe for cliques to happen. In a national team setting there is no time for cliques to be formed because there is little time for cliques to be able to form.</td>
<td>Spending time together over a long period results in formation of cliques.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team cohesion is not possible without the concern of the individual</td>
<td>Team cohesion is not possible without the concern of the individual</td>
<td>The individual comes before the team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New players in the team are not trusted by senior players. Senior players appreciate other senior players even if the team is not doing well.</td>
<td>Senior players appreciate other senior players more than new players.</td>
<td>Senior players appreciate other senior players more than new players.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The coach must share his ideas with senior players for team cohesion to take place.</td>
<td>The coach must share his ideas with senior players for team cohesion to take place.</td>
<td>Senior players are more important than other players.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The most important thing is the team not the individual for me.</td>
<td>The team far outweighs the individual in importance</td>
<td>The team is important</td>
<td>Knowledge about team cohesion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is my opinion that satisfaction amongst teammates will be subjective.</td>
<td>Satisfaction among teammates will differ from person to person.</td>
<td>Team cohesion is strengthened by the individual traits that are brought together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In sport a coach needs to know his players.</td>
<td>In sport a coach needs to know his players.</td>
<td>A coach need to know his players.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You should be able to know if players are dissatisfied with their teammates.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals make a team.</td>
<td>Individuals make a team.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Relaxation training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence limits</th>
<th>Sub themes</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Main meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As far as it comes to players who cannot cope or manage their anxiety, the coach’s training should closely simulate the actual competitive situation very well.</td>
<td>training should closely simulate competition, for players to cope with anxiety</td>
<td>Training should simulate competition to cope with anxiety</td>
<td>Lack of knowledge about Relaxation training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By simulating competitive conditions during training your players should be able to cope with anxiety.</td>
<td>Relaxation is closing eyes and thinking about something.</td>
<td>Relaxation is closing eyes and imagining</td>
<td>Knowledge about Relaxation training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxation is closing eyes and thinking about something.</td>
<td>Relaxation is closing eyes and imagining</td>
<td>Relaxation is closing eyes and imagining</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t think relaxation strategies are done enough in South Africa but they are important.</td>
<td>Relaxation strategies are important however not done enough.</td>
<td>Relaxation strategies are important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much excitement may blur the performance. Too low excitement may be detrimental to performance.</td>
<td>Optimal anxiety needed for performance.</td>
<td>Optimal anxiety is necessary for performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You definitely need some form of anxiety; the levels of anxiety that contributes to their performance differ from player to player.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The benefits of sport psychology are controlling the anxiety and arousal levels. Anxiety must be controlled</td>
<td>Sport psychological skills control anxiety.</td>
<td>Sport psychology skills control anxiety.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing before the game may be good.</td>
<td>Singing before the game may be good.</td>
<td>Singing before a game relaxes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Self talk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-talk is very important not only to hype myself up but basically to evaluate myself during competition as well. I use self talk to hype myself up. I use self talk to evaluate myself during competition</th>
<th>Self talk is important to hype myself and evaluate myself.</th>
<th>Self talk used to hype and evaluate myself.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will talk myself through the mistake. I use self talk to correct my mistake.</td>
<td>I will talk myself through the mistake.</td>
<td>Self talk used to correct errors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge about self talk

Research questions

To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams' use PIS's in their coaching?

To what extent do South African national soccer coaches for male teams demonstrate knowledge of PIS's?

To what extent does SAFA coaching manual “Psychological aspect” incorporate PIS's?
APPENDIX F

**COACH A**: Overall it is always good to win a match but sometimes as coaches we say in this match we want to see if players understand the way we want them to defend or the way we want them to attack. So there is a specific goal within the actual outcome. Therefore win or lose in this case is not important for us. We say we have achieved our goal. Sometimes we have new players on camp and they have not been with the team and we want to see how they fit in the system.

Sometimes we are not worried whether they are going to play to win the match, we just want to see if they are going to settle down in the team. Some games are a must win, for an example if you play a qualifier and your striker is not doing well, but you get a goal even an own goal and you win the match, I will be happy to win the match. The nature of the match itself is a must win. Unfortunately for us when we start with qualifiers every game is a must win.

When I prepare I know I don’t want disruptions to hamper my plans. I don’t put players under pressure to perform in preparation games. In training a specific task will be performed in a specific way. When something is new it is perceived as difficult because it was never done before. As a national coach you don’t want to complicate things because you don’t have time to really make them understand complicated stuff. Try to keep it as simple as possible but at the same time new task are always going to be regarded as difficult.

When players set goals for themselves it means they have ambitions, they are prepared to work, and then the work is done for the coach. Self motivated players. Imagining yourself playing the match, scoring a goal, lifting a trophy, celebrating and preparing you mind for a specific goal. I don't think relaxation strategies are done enough in South Africa but they are important.

The most important thing is the team not the individual for me; individuals make a team as unique as they are. If the coach plays the second choice goalkeeper, the other players don’t really have trust. If goalkeeper choice number one is playing then the
other players relax and play. Playing with new and untested strikers and/or defenders affects the rest of the team negatively. Players appreciate if their top strikers are playing and not new comers. As a coach it is important to share with senior players about your ideas. This means you will be protecting the youngsters new in the team and therefore will not lose good players.

Presence of cliques is a difficult thing to remove. Where people spend time together for a long time becomes a recipe for cliques to happen. In a national team setting there is no time for cliques to be formed because there is little time for cliques to be able to form. Players need to know about self-talk.

**COACH B:** The reason why I agree to a specific time limit is that from a coach’s point of view, we have set times for specific things that we have to cover whether they are tactical or technical. We work very closely with time frames to achieve these goals within the team but also the individual players. As a coach if a particular player does not meet the objectives for that goal in that time period, we need to take that player and give him personal training outside the team training setup because in a team sport it is important that all players achieve the same goals for you team to function at a particular level.

That is my opinion, that satisfaction amongst teammates will be subjective. As coach you need to understand your players. Your first goal is to try and to know your players very well. If you could pick up whether there’s any dissatisfaction amongst players who are not happy with a particular player. As coaches we need to know our players relatively well.

As far as it comes to players who cannot cope or manage their anxiety, the coach’s training should closely simulate the actual competitive situation very well. It basically goes back to another form of self-imagery where I will talk myself through the mistake I have made and how I should correct that. Self-talk is very important not only to hype myself up but to basically evaluate myself during competition as well.

Not all of them not all the time because as coaches no time is spent on putting players on psychological processes that can benefit and enhance their performance.
Time involved in coaching generally from IAAF covered section on psychology. Challenges are awareness on sport psychology and amount of time coaches have on psychology. I make use of imagery without using the term imagery with players. I ask a player with a weaker left foot that in order to hit the ball to remember and visualise themselves hitting the ball with the right foot to visualise and try to do it the same way with his left foot. There was very little sport psychology covered still by level 3 coaching module.

COACH C: If you perform well obviously the outcome will be well. In most cases you’ll have luck against you like own goal by mistake but 99% of the time you will do well. A positive outcome is not as important as a positive performance. We must not celebrate a loss against Brazil. If we persist with this performance we will not be lucky again. There must be progression, it must come from inside and there must be personal goals set.

It won’t be possible to have effective team cohesion without the concern of the individuals. All positions are equally important – sometimes coaches themselves create monsters by allowing players to get away with gross indiscretions. If I belong to a clique even with the best option for my teammate I would not pass him because he is not part of my clique. It is important to be objective of everything you do as a coach even in general life.
6. A goal refers to attaining a specific level of proficiency on a task, usually within a specified time limit.
   a. Yes there must be time limits; otherwise a goal becomes an idea.
   b. I agree.
   c. I agree
   d. A goal is like a destination once the destination is reached the goal is achieved. It is a process with time lines.

7. Goals can also be subjective and more difficult to measure; e.g., increased satisfaction with a teammate.
   a. Yes in full agreement.
   b. Not entirely – goals should be measurable in order to measure success.
   c. I full agreement.
   d. Other, run to win, others run to finish within a specified time and others run to complete the marathon, yes a goal is subjective.

8. Outcome goals are more important than process-performance goals, (i.e. Outcome of a match more important than how players play in relation to players own standard of excellence.)?
   a. These goals influence one another. Players must perform well in order for them to have a positive outcome.
   b. It is important to understand team dynamics. Before placing too much emphasis on the outcome or end result.
   c. It depends on the nature of the match being played whether it is a qualifier or a group stage match.
   d. As a coach you are aware that a match has win, draw, and a loss. You get fulfilled when players have played to their potential. You may want to win, but lose playing very well. The process is very important.

9. Do you set more difficult goals for your players with the intention of improving performance?
   a. It is the only way to improve performance by setting the bar high.
   b. Yes. But it has to be in a systematic manner.
   c. When something is new it is perceived as difficult, I don’t have time to teach complicated stuff.
d. No – I set goals when I realise that the task given has been achieved. I increase the degree of difficulty. Difficult goals may frustrate the players in turn frustrating the coach as well.

10. Do you believe in your players setting goals for themselves?
   a. Yes, most definitely.
   b. Yes, it is important for individuals to have their own personal goals and ambitions. But it must be managed in the team context.
   c. Yes, strongly believe – it means they have ambitions and therefore our work easier.
   d. Yes, it is the only way they can improve. Players need to challenge themselves, e.g., I want to score 10 goals this year.

11. Mental imagery is imagery, visualisation and mental practice or mental rehearsal.
   a. Yes it is, and can be a form of recalling positive events/incidents in order to motivate.
   b. It is a very useful tool but not utilised by coaches.
   c. Yes in agreement.
   d. Agreed – in that a player or coach will rehearse what is likely to happen in a match and how one will overcome that.

12. Mental imagery is a process of internalised rehearsal involving precise multisensory representation of the athletic experience.
   a. In full agreement.
   b. I agree with statement.
   c. I agree.
   d. Agreed – as a player you must play the match in your head, and when you start playing you have played this match several times in your head – decreases the level of anxiety.

13. The goal of mental imagery is to reproduce the athletic experience so accurately that athletes feel as if they are actually performing the skill.
   a. Especially with positive incidents.
   b. I agree.
   c. I agree totally.
   d. True, you work out your options and internalise them so that when you play the actions are automated.

14. Team cohesion is the functioning of the team without regard to concerns for its individual members.
a. It won’t be possible to have effective team cohesion without the concern of individuals.
b. Do not agree entirely. Team consists of individuals with specific tasks and functions to make team perform effectively.
c. I don’t agree, individuals make a team, they are unique.
d. No – individuals form a team. Cohesion is brought about by individuals who form a team.

15. Do you view the general quality of relationships in a team as being important?
   a. Extremely important.
   b. Absolutely.
   c. Yes it is.
   d. Yes, very important. Cohesion and team spirit is brought about by quality of relations in a team.

16. How important is it for players to appreciate each other’s roles/positions in the field of play; e.g., strikers v/s defenders?
   a. Extremely important because all the positions contribute to the team effort/success.
   b. Very important.
   c. It is important, playing newcomers causes strife, and if you play experienced players it improves the morale of the players.
   d. It is very important – players need to complement each other – once an understanding of the roles is established and now cohesion of the team is achieved.

17. A team can play better and is likely to adhere to the program if they enjoy each other’s company and experience a sense of social cohesion.
   a. Yes in full agreement.
   b. Agree.
   c. I agree, by sharing information with the senior members of the team that will increase a team’s sense of social cohesion.
   d. Yes. Being close to each other enables players to understand each other’s strength and weaknesses.

18. The presence of cliques in a team can negatively affect team cohesion.
a. Most definitely, their performance will be affected.

b. Agree

c. True, cliques in a team are only looking for the negatives. The pay very little attention to positives. It does not promote positive spirit in the team.

d. Agree

19. It is important for the coach that his players in competitive sport learn to control their arousal to optimal level.
   a. Yes, extremely important as it will contribute to their performance.
   b. Agree.
   c. True, too much excitement may blur the goal to be achieved. Too low also detrimental to performance.
   d. Agree.

20. Players who perceive their anxiety as facilitative typically perform better; they also cope more effectively with anxiety.
   a. Yes definitely need some form of anxiety – the levels of anxiety that contributes to their performance differ from one player to another player.
   b. I agree.
   c. True, too much excitement may blur the goal to be achieved. Too low also detrimental to performance.
   d. For one to perform there must be a form of anxiety to propel one to perform.

21. I believe that anxiety reduction strategies are useful and have a place in soccer and exercise settings.
   a. It must be controlled.
   b. I agree.
   c. True, too much excitement may blur the goal to be achieved. Too low also detrimental to performance.
   d. Yes, singing before a match may be good or playing music may help.

22. Players who do not cope effectively with the pressure of competitive soccer however, may experience not only decreases in performance but also mental distress and even physical illness.
   a. I am in agreement.
   b. I agree.
   c. True, too much excitement may blur the goal to be achieved. Too low also detrimental to performance.
d. Yes, if one cannot cope with pressure of competitive soccer he may not cope with situation he is faced with in the football field thus affecting performance.

23. As a coach I understand the importance of self talk in a contest.
   a. It definitely contributes to the motivation of players, but also differs from player to player.
   b. Agree.
   c.
   d. Yes, it brings about confidence in a player, e.g., I am good, and I can do it.

24. My players are able to utilise self talk as a strategy during challenging periods in a match.
   a. Yes, it will definitely assist them.
   b. Not all the time.
   c.
   d. Yes, especially when we are trailing in a match, e.g., we can equalise, and they are not better than us.

25. Do players need to know about self talk as a self regulation strategy?
   a. Yes, they need to know and use it.
   b. Absolutely.
   c.
   d. Yes, as a coach you need to inculcate that in your players. It will keep them going.
APPENDIX G

Table 1. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of goals setting on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A goal refers to attaining a specific level of proficiency on a task, usually within a specified time limit.</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals can also be subjective and more difficult to measure; e.g., increased satisfaction with a team-mate.</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome goals are more important than process-performance goals</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you set more difficult goals for your players with the intention of improving performance?</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you believe in your players setting for themselves goals?</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Total | 10 | 7 | - | 3 | - |
Fig1. **Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of goals setting on players’ performance**

Bars are mean percentages of the coaches’ responses and those with the same letter superscript are not statistically significantly different (P > 0.05) from each other.
Table 2. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of mental imagery on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental imagery is imagery, visualisation and mental</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practice or mental rehearsal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental imagery is a process of internalised rehearsal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involving precise multisensory representation of the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>athletic experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goal of mental imagery is to reproduce the</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>athletic experience so accurately that athletes feel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as if they are actually performing the skill.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of mental imagery on players’ performance

Bars are mean percentages of coaches’ responses and those with the same letter superscript are not statistically significantly different (P > 0.05) from each other.
Table 3. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of team cohesion on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team cohesion is the functioning of the team without regard to concerns for its individual members.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you view the general quality of the relationship in the team as being important?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How important is it for players to appreciate each other’s roles/positions in the field of play; e.g., strikers v/s defenders?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A team can play better and is likely to adhere to the program if they enjoy each other’s company and experience a sense of social cohesion.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presence of cliques can negatively affect team cohesion.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of team cohesion on players’ performance.

Bars are mean percentages of coaches’ responses and those with the same letter superscript are not statistically significantly different (P > 0.05) from each other.
### Table 4. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of progressive relaxation on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important for the coach that his players in competitive sport learn to control their arousal.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players who perceive their anxiety as facilitative typically perform better; they also cope more effectively with anxiety.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that anxiety reduction strategies are useful and have a place in sport and exercise settings.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players who do not cope effectively with the pressure of competitive soccer however, may experience not only decreases in performance but also mental distress and even physical illness.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of progressive relaxation on players’ performance

Bars are mean percentages of coaches’ responses and those with the same letter superscript are not statistically significantly different (P > 0.05) from each other.
Table 4. Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of self talk on players’ performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand the importance of self talk in a contest.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My players are able to utilise self talk as a strategy during challenging periods in a match.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players do not need to know of self talk as a self regulation strategy.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequencies of coaches’ responses on the significance of self talk on players’ performance
Bars are mean percentages of coaches’ responses and those with the same letter superscript are not statistically significantly different (P > 0.05) from each other
APPENDIX H

One-way Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance for Goal setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7891.700</td>
<td>1972.925</td>
<td>6576.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Error</td>
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<td>4.500</td>
<td>0.300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev

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<tr>
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<th>StDev</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>50.250</td>
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<td>35.500</td>
<td>0.577</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>(*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.750</td>
<td>0.957</td>
<td>(*)</td>
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<td>0.000</td>
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Pooled StDev = 0.548

One-way Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance for Mental imagery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Response</td>
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<td>7767.300</td>
<td>1941.825</td>
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Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev

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<th>StDev</th>
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<td>33.500</td>
<td>0.577</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50.750</td>
<td>0.957</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.250</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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Pooled StDev = 0.548

One-way Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance for Team cohesion

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
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<td>7252.545</td>
<td>1813.136</td>
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Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev

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<td>4</td>
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<td>0.141</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.600</td>
<td>0.082</td>
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Pooled StDev = 0.233

119
### One-way Analysis of Variance

#### Analysis of Variance for relaxation strategies

<table>
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<td>Response</td>
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<td>656.300</td>
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#### Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev

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<th>Mean</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2.250</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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Pooled StDev = 0.387

#### One-way Analysis of Variance for self talk

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#### Individual 95% CIs For Mean Based on Pooled StDev

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<th>Mean</th>
<th>StDev</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>0.000</td>
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</table>

Pooled StDev = 0.442
APPENDIX I