The role of mindfulness in improving concentration and performance among players in the Iraqi second division football league

Research Article

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Abstract.

Background Attention to the psychological aspect of players has become an essential part of sports preparation programs, as many studies indicate that psychological abilities such as concentration, attention, and emotional control play an important role in achieving athletic accomplishment, especially in team sports such as football, which are characterized by rapid performance and multiple changing situations during the match.

Objectives The research aims to identify the role of mindfulness in improving concentration and sports attention among football players.

Methods The researcher used the descriptive method due to its suitability to the nature of the research. The research sample consisted of (37) football players, To collect data, the researcher used a mindfulness scale and a sports concentration and attention scale, after verifying their validity and reliability. The analysis in this study was assisted using the SPSS 26 application.

Results The results of the study showed that the dimension of attention to the present moment ranked first among the dimensions of mindfulness, with an agreement percentage of (80.88%), followed by the dimension of attention control with (73.71%), while the dimensions of awareness of feelings and thoughts and body awareness during performance recorded moderate percentages,The results also showed that the dimension of attention shifting ranked first among the dimensions of sports concentration and attention with (91.50%), followed by the dimension of response speed to stimuli with (82.42%).

Conclusion The results further revealed the existence of statistically significant positive correlations between the dimensions of the mindfulness scale and the dimensions of the sports concentration and attention scale among football players. This indicates that the higher the level of mindfulness among players, the higher their level of concentration and attention during sports performance,In light of these results, the researcher recommended the importance of developing mindfulness skills among football players and incorporating them into psychological preparation programs, due to their important role in improving concentration, attention, and sports performance.

Keywords: mindfulness, concentration, performance, football players.

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INTRODUCTION

Competitive sport in the modern era is considered one of the fields that require integration between physical, skill-based, and psychological aspects in order to achieve the best levels of athletic performance (Ali et al., 2026; Ebrahim & Hussein, 2025; Ivanov, 2025; Sulaiman et al., 2025). Attention to the psychological aspect of players has become an essential part of sports preparation programs, as many studies indicate that psychological abilities such as concentration, attention, and emotional control play an important role in achieving athletic accomplishment, especially in team sports such as football, which are characterized by rapid performance and multiple changing situations during the match (Pérez-Gómez et al., 2022; Serpiello et al., 2017; Temur & Gulesce, 2019).

Reilly (2003) indicated that football is one of the most widespread sports in the world, as it requires a high level of concentration and attention from the player during performance, due to the rapid change of situations within the field and the necessity of making quick and accurate decisions in a

short time. Therefore, the player's ability to maintain concentration and attend to different stimuli within the field is considered one of the fundamental factors that contribute to improving the level of technical and tactical performance during competitions (Reilly, 2003: 14). Al-Zaabi and Al-Khayyat (2011) stated that sports psychology indicates that athletic performance does not depend only on physical and skill abilities, but is also influenced by a group of psychological skills that help the player deal with psychological pressures during competition. Among these psychological skills is the skill of mindfulness, which has received increasing attention in recent years as one of the effective strategies for improving athletic performance. (Al-Zaabi, Al-Khayyat, 2011: 63).

Mindfulness is defined as a state of awareness and attention to the present moment in an intentional manner without making judgments, where the individual focuses on current experiences of thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations in a conscious and open way. Mindfulness represents an effective method for enhancing self-awareness, regulating emotions, and improving the ability to concentrate (Yassin, 2020: 18). Jadhav (2025) explained that training in mindfulness helps athletes improve their ability to control attention and regulate emotions, which contributes to improving their performance during competitions. These trainings also help players reduce competition-related anxiety and increase their ability to face different psychological pressures during matches. (Jadhav, 2025: 63)

Some recent studies also indicate that mindfulness contributes to improving mental skills related to athletic performance, such as attention regulation and cognitive flexibility, which are important factors that directly affect the level of athletic achievement among players. Practicing mindfulness techniques also helps players maintain their psychological balance during competition. (Ali, 2023: 23). On the other hand, many studies have confirmed that mindfulness contributes to improving the state of psychological flow among athletes, which is the state in which the player is at the highest levels of concentration and immersion in performance, where the player becomes fully engaged in the sporting activity and performs skills automatically and effectively.

Some studies have also explained that mindfulness helps improve self-regulation and attention among athletes, as it leads to increasing the player's ability to focus on the current task and reducing distraction resulting from negative thoughts or external pressures during competition (Hassed, 2016: 36). In recent years, psychological training programs based on mindfulness have begun to spread within the sports field, where they are used as part of psychological preparation programs for athletes with the aim of improving athletic performance and the psychological well-being of players, in addition to enhancing the ability to face psychological pressures during competition.

In light of the above, interest in studying the role of mindfulness in the sports field has become necessary to understand its effect on improving the mental abilities of players, especially in team sports such as football, which require a high level of concentration and attention during performance. From this point comes the importance of this study in attempting to identify the role of mindfulness in improving concentration, attention, and performance among football players. Despite the significant development witnessed in physical and skill training programs in football, attention to the psychological aspects of players is still less compared to physical and technical aspects. Many specialists in sports psychology confirm that weakness in concentration and attention during matches is considered one of the problems that negatively affect the level of performance among football players (Derbachew, 2019; Hoffman et al., 2004; Kaplánová, 2024).

The nature of the game of football is also characterized by speed of performance and continuous changes in situations within the field, which requires the player to have a high ability to concentrate, pay attention, and make the appropriate decision at the appropriate time. However, it is often observed that some players suffer from distraction of attention or weakness of concentration during competitions, especially in decisive situations of the match. On the other hand, many recent studies in sports psychology indicate that mindfulness is considered one of the effective psychological methods that help improve the ability to concentrate and regulate attention among athletes, in addition to its role in reducing competition-related anxiety and increasing the ability to control emotions during performance (Jones et al., 2019; Nusri et al., 2022).

Through the researcher's experience and observation of a number of football players, it became clear that some players face difficulties in maintaining their concentration during training and competition, which may affect the level of their technical and tactical performance. Hence, the research problem emerges in attempting to identify the role of mindfulness in improving concentration and attention among football players. This research aims to identify the role of mindfulness in improving concentration and attention among football players, through achieving the following objectives:

Identifying the level of mindfulness among the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club participating in the Iraqi Second Division Football League. Identifying the level of sports concentration and attention among the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club participating in the Iraqi Second Division Football League. Revealing the relationship between mindfulness and sports concentration and attention among the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club participating in the Iraqi Second Division Football League.

Research Questions: What is the level of mindfulness among the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club participating in the Iraqi Second Division Football League? What is the level of sports concentration and attention among the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club participating in the Iraqi Second Division Football League? Is there a statistically significant correlation between mindfulness and concentration and attention among the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club participating in the Iraqi Second Division Football League?

METHOD

Participant.

Consisting of (18) players for the purpose of standardizing the two research scales and conducting validity and reliability coefficients, representing (32.73%) of the total sample, and from outside the main sample. Consisting of (37) individuals representing (67.27%) of the total sample to apply the research scales to them, as shown in Table (1).

Table 1. The total research sample distributed according to the exploratory sample and the main sample

Research Categories	Research Sample	Exploratory Sample		Main Sample	
		Number	Percentage %	Number	Percentage %
Naft Al-Shamal and Al-Hawija players (Second Division)	55	18	32.73%	37	67.27%
Total	55	18	32.73%	37	67.27%

Research Design.

The researcher used the descriptive method due to its suitability for the nature of the research. The research population consists of the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club football teams in the Iraqi Second Division League. The researcher selected an intentional sample of (55) players from the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club football teams in the Iraqi Second Division League.

Mindfulness Scale for the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club football teams in the Iraqi Second Division League (prepared by the researcher). Sports Concentration and Attention Scale (prepared by the researcher).

First: Mindfulness Scale for Football Players: The researcher designed a mindfulness scale for the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club football teams in the Iraqi Second Division League. The football players are attached in Appendix No. (2) for the members of the research sample shown in Table No. (1) as a basic tool for data collection. The researcher followed the following steps to construct the mindfulness scale for the players of Naft Al-Shamal Club and Al-Hawija Club football teams in the Iraqi Second Division League:

Steps for Building the Scale: Reviewing scientific references and studies related to the research topic such as: Ali (2023), Hussein (2022), Yassin (2020), Aseel Jalil Kataa (2019), Younis (2015). Conducting a personal interview with some players. Through the previous steps, the researcher established four dimensions for the mindfulness scale for football players, represented as follows:

1. First dimension: Attention to the present moment
2. Second dimension: Awareness of feelings and thoughts
3. Third dimension: Attention control
4. Fourth dimension: Body awareness during performance

Scientific Coefficients of the Mindfulness Scale for Football Players

Validity

To determine the validity of the mindfulness scale for football players, the researcher relied on: Content Validity (Expert Validity): The researcher presented the dimensions to a group of specialized experts who met the requirement of holding the academic rank of Professor Doctor, and their number was (5) experts (Appendix No. 1), in order to survey their opinions regarding the suitability of the proposed dimensions and to express their views on their appropriateness in achieving the research objectives. The experts approved the validity of the dimensions proposed by the researcher with a percentage of (100%).

Then the researcher formulated the appropriate statements for each dimension, and the number of statements reached (32) statements. After that, the dimensions and the scale statements in their initial form (Appendix 2) were presented to the experts. The form was personally delivered by the researcher to the experts to express their opinions regarding:

1. The suitability of each statement for the dimension to which it belongs in achieving its objective.
2. The correctness of the linguistic formulation of each statement.
3. Deleting, merging, transferring, or modifying what they consider appropriate.

It became clear that the experts agreed on the initial version of the mindfulness scale for football players, where the approval percentage ranged between (20% – 100%). Based on the experts' opinions, the scale statements were modified as shown in Table (2).

Table 2. Modifications Made to the Mindfulness Scale for Football Players

Dimension	Statement No.	Statement Before Modification	Type of Modification	Statement After Modification
Third	16	I can direct my attention toward the tasks required on the field.	Deletion	----------
Fourth	24	I notice the physical changes that occur to me during play.	Deletion	----------

Based on the modifications made to the mindfulness scale for football players by deleting some statements, the number of statements in the mindfulness scale for football players after modification reached (30) statements, as shown in Appendix No. (3).

Internal Consistency Validity

The validity of the statements of the mindfulness scale for football players was verified by calculating the correlation coefficient between the score of each statement and the total score of the scale, as shown in Table (3).

Table 3. Correlation coefficient between the score of each statement, the score of the dimension to which it belongs, and the total score of the scale. N = 18

Statement No.	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Scale	Statement No.	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Scale	Statement No.	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Scale	Statement No.	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Scale
	First Dimension			Second Dimension			Third Dimension			Fourth Dimension	
1	0.901*	0.905*	7	0.539*	0.544*	13	0.631*	0.711*	21	0.621*	0.694*
2	0.758*	0.895*	8	0.486*	0.510*	14	0.634*	0.633*	22	0.714*	0.781*
3	0.500*	0.482*	9	0.592*	0.599*	15	0.554*	0.487*	23	0.620*	0.688*
4	0.520*	0.747*	10	0.767*	0.624*	16	0.637*	0.784*	24	0.715*	0.748*
5	0.514*	0.503*	11	0.658*	0.556*	17	0.687*	0.708*	25	0.499*	0.596*
6	0.462*	0.485*	12	0.558*	0.695*	18	0.634*	0.633*	26	0.547*	0.694*
						19	0.572*	0.506*	27	0.536*	0.687*
						20	0.578*	0.639*	28	0.517*	0.632*
									29	0.796*	0.892*
									30	0.714*	0.814*

* Statistically significant at 0.05 Tabulated Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.456

It is clear from Table (3) that the correlation coefficients between each statement and the score of the dimension to which it belongs ranged between (0.462 – 0.901), and with the total score of the scale ranged between (0.482 – 0.905). These values are statistically significant at the significance level (0.05).

Table 4. Correlation coefficient between the score of each dimension and the total score of the mindfulness scale for football players. N = 18

Scale Dimensions	Correlation Coefficient Value
First Dimension: Attention to the present moment	0.621*
Second Dimension: Awareness of feelings and thoughts	0.703*
Third Dimension: Attention control	0.692*
Fourth Dimension: Body awareness during performance	0.754*

* Statistically significant at 0.05 Tabulated Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.456

It is clear from Table (3) that the correlation coefficients between each dimension and the total score of the scale ranged between (0.621 – 0.754), and they are statistically significant at the significance level (0.05), which indicates the internal consistency validity of the scale dimensions.

Reliability

Reliability was verified using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to determine the reliability of the statements of the mindfulness scale for football players and the reliability of the scale dimensions, as shown in Table (4).

Table 5. Reliability coefficients of the statements of the mindfulness scale for football players using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. N = 18

Statement No.	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted		Statement No.	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted		Statement No.	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted		Statement No.	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	
	Dimension	Scale		Dimension	Scale		Dimension	Scale		Dimension	Scale
	First Dimension			Second Dimension			Third Dimension			Fourth Dimension	
1	0.853	0.91	7	0.856	0.88	13	0.907	0.92	21	0.853	0.90
2	0.781	0.91	8	0.818	0.88	14	0.900	0.92	22	0.748	0.90
3	0.841	0.91	9	0.856	0.88	15	0.902	0.92	23	0.719	0.90
4	0.856	0.91	10	0.856	0.88	16	0.892	0.92	24	0.895	0.90
5	0.775	0.91	11	0.714	0.88	17	0.890	0.92	25	0.818	0.90
6	0.793	0.91	12	0.764	0.88	18	0.800	0.92	26	0.874	0.90
						19	0.876	0.92	27	0.889	0.90
						20	0.883	0.92	28	0.902	0.90
									29	0.818	0.90
									30	0.779	0.90

It is clear from Table (4), which presents the reliability coefficients of the statements of the mindfulness scale for football players using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, that the reliability coefficients of the statements with the dimensions ranged between (0.714 – 0.907). Therefore, no statement was deleted.

Second: Sports Concentration and Attention Scale: The researcher designed the sports concentration and attention scale for football players (Appendix No. 4) for the members of the research sample shown in Table (1) as a basic tool for data collection. The researcher followed the following steps to construct the sports concentration and attention scale:

1. Reviewing scientific references and studies related to the research topic.
2. Conducting a personal interview with some players.

Through the previous steps, the researcher established six dimensions for the sports concentration and attention scale for football players, represented as follows:

1. First Dimension: Attention concentration during performance
2. Second Dimension: Attention shifting
3. Third Dimension: Attention distribution
4. Fourth Dimension: Attention stability
5. Fifth Dimension: Resistance to distractions
6. Sixth Dimension: Speed of response to stimuli

Scientific Coefficients of the Sports Concentration and Attention Scale

Validity

To determine the validity of the sports concentration and attention scale, the researcher relied on: Content Validity (Expert Validity): The researcher presented the dimensions to a group of specialized experts who met the requirement of holding the academic rank of Professor Doctor, and their number was (5) experts (Appendix No. 1), to survey their opinions regarding the suitability of the proposed dimensions and their appropriateness for achieving the research objectives.

The experts approved the validity of the dimensions proposed by the researcher with a percentage of (100%). The researcher then formulated the appropriate statements for each dimension, and the total number of statements reached (46) statements. The dimensions and the statements of the scale in their initial form (Appendix 4) were then presented to the experts. The forms were personally delivered by the researcher to the experts to express their opinions regarding:

1. The suitability of each statement for the dimension to which it belongs in achieving its objective.
2. The correctness of the linguistic formulation of each statement.
3. Deleting, merging, transferring, or modifying what they consider appropriate.

The experts approved the initial form of the sports concentration and attention scale, where the approval percentage ranged between (40% – 100%). Based on the experts' opinions, the scale statements were modified as shown in Table (6).

Table 6. Modifications made to the sports concentration and attention scale

Dimension	Statement No.	Statement Before Modification	Type of Modification	Statement After Modification
Second	13	I can adapt to sudden changes during play.	Deletion	----------
Fourth	26	I can maintain attention even at the end of the match.	Deletion	----------
	30	My concentration is not affected by the length of the match.	Deletion	----------
Fifth	35	My attention is not distracted by surrounding events during the match.	Deletion	----------

Based on the modifications made to the sports concentration and attention scale for football players by deleting some statements, the number of statements in the scale after modification reached (42) statements, as shown in Appendix No. (6). Internal Consistency Validity: The validity of the statements of the sports concentration and attention scale was verified by calculating the correlation coefficient between the score of each statement and the total score of the scale, as shown in Table (7).

Table 7. Correlation coefficient between the score of each statement, the score of the dimension to which it belongs, and the total score of the scale. N = 18

Statement No.	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Scale	Statement No.	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Scale	Statement No.	Correlation with Dimension	Correlation with Scale
	First Dimension			Second Dimension			Third Dimension	
1	0.785*	0.799*	9	0.591*	0620*	15	0.896*	0.899*
2	0.653*	0.659*	10	0.850*	0.859*	16	0.514*	0.658*
3	0.756*	0.784*	11	0.500*	0.509*	17	0.721*	0.784*
4	0.537*	0.584*	12	0.523*	0.580*	18	0.784*	0.918*
5	0.669*	0.694*	13	0.731*	0.821*	19	0.589*	0.559*
6	0.756*	0.856*	14	0.624*	0.821*	20	0.633*	0.704*
7	0.591*	0620*				21	0.569*	0.765*
8	0.850*	0.859*				22	0.758*	0.796*

	Fourth Dimension			Fifth Dimension			Sixth Dimension	
23	0.596*	0.542*	29	0.759*	0.756*	35	0.650*	0.651*
24	0.687*	0.544*	30	0.647*	0.754*	36	0.500*	0.509*
25	0.654*	0.518*	31	0.643*	0.683*	37	0.634*	0.633*
26	0.641*	0.616*	32	0.731*	0.790*	38	0.572*	0.506*
27	0.618*	0.554*	33	0.809*	0.901*	39	0.578*	0.523*
28	0.512*	0.637*	34	0.696*	0.758*	40	0.802*	0.747*
						41	0.814*	0.711*
						42	0.530*	0.595*

* Statistically significant at 0.05 Tabulated Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.456

It is clear from Table (6) that the correlation coefficients between each statement and the score of the dimension to which it belongs ranged between (0.500 – 0.896), and with the total score of the scale ranged between (0.506 – 0.918). These values are statistically significant at the significance level (0.05).

Table 8. Correlation coefficient between the score of each dimension and the total score of the sports concentration and attention scale. N = 18

Scale Dimensions	Correlation Coefficient Value
First Dimension: Attention concentration during performance	0.596*
Second Dimension: Attention shifting	0.603*
Third Dimension: Attention distribution	0.625*
Fourth Dimension: Attention stability	0.524*
Fifth Dimension: Resistance to distractions	0.763*
Sixth Dimension: Speed of response to stimuli	0.711*

* Statistically significant at 0.05Tabulated Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.456

It is clear from Table (7) that the correlation coefficients between each dimension and the total score of the scale ranged between (0.524 – 0.763), and they are statistically significant at the significance level (0.05), which indicates the internal consistency validity of the scale dimensions.

Reliability

Reliability was verified using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to determine the reliability of the statements of the sports concentration and attention scale and the reliability of the scale dimensions, as shown in Table (9).

Table 9. Reliability coefficients of the statements of the sports concentration and attention scale using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. N = 18

Statement No.	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted		Statement No.	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted		Statement No.	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	
	Dimension	Scale		Dimension	Scale		Dimension	Scale
	First Dimension			Second Dimension			Third Dimension	
1	0.863	0.880	9	0.862	0.892	15	0.841	0.873
2	0.840	0.880	10	0.861	0.892	16	0.864	0.873
3	0.856	0.880	11	0.868	0.892	17	0.863	0.873
4	0.870	0.880	12	0.866	0.892	18	0.865	0.873
5	0.869	0.880	13	0.864	0.892	19	0.862	0.873
6	0.840	0.880	14	0.870	0.892	20	0.868	0.873
7	0.863	0.880				21	0.842	0.873
8	0.812	0.880				22	0.857	0.873
	Fourth Dimension			Fifth Dimension			Sixth Dimension	
23	.795	0.819	29	.784	0.856	35	.741	0.813
24	.812	0.819	30	.801	0.856	36	.734	0.813
25	.754	0.819	31	.813	0.856	37	.734	0.813
26	.753	0.819	32	.813	0.856	38	.741	0.813
27	.749	0.819	33	.823	0.856	39	.727	0.813
28	.799	0.819	34	.754	0.856	40	.729	0.813
						41	.741	0.813

	42	.739	0.813

It is clear from Table (8), which presents the reliability coefficients of the statements of the sports concentration and attention scale using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, that the reliability coefficients of the statements with the dimensions ranged between (0.727 – 0.870). Therefore, no statement was deleted.

Data Analysis

The statistical treatments were calculated using the SPSS program (Version 2020) as follows: Percentage (%), Correlation coefficient (Pearson), Arithmetic mean, Standard deviation, Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient, and Chi-square (χ^2).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 10. Arithmetic mean, Chi-square value, and percentage of agreement for the responses of football players in the dimensions of the mindfulness scale. N = 37

Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation	Chi-square	Significance Level	Overall Response Likert	Agreement Percentage %
First Dimension: Attention to the present moment	14.56	1.08	36.78	.000	Yes	80.88%
Second Dimension: Awareness of feelings and thoughts	11.21	2.16	32.17	.000	To some extent	62.28%
Third Dimension: Attention control	17.69	1.81	30.49	.000	Yes	73.71%
Fourth Dimension: Body awareness during performance	16.92	1.14	29.49	.000	To some extent	56.40%

It is clear from Table (9), which presents the arithmetic mean, Chi-square value, and percentage of agreement for the responses of football players in the dimensions of the mindfulness scale, that the dimension (Attention to the present moment) obtained the highest agreement percentage of (80.88%) in the prevailing direction (Yes), followed by the dimension (Attention control) with a percentage of (73.71%) in the prevailing direction (Yes), then the dimension (Awareness of feelings and thoughts) in the prevailing direction (To some extent) with a percentage of (62.28%), and finally the dimension (Body awareness during performance) with a percentage of (56.40%) in the prevailing direction (To some extent).

Table 11. Arithmetic mean, Chi-square value, and percentage of agreement for the responses of football players in the dimensions of the sports concentration and attention scale. N = 37

Dimensions	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Chi-square	Significance Level	Overall Response Likert	Agreement Percentage %
First Dimension: Attention concentration during performance	18.95	2.51	33.47	.000	Yes	78.96%
Second Dimension: Attention shifting	16.47	1.69	24.69	.000	Yes	91.50%
Third Dimension: Attention distribution	15.80	1.88	17.25	.000	To some extent	65.83%
Fourth Dimension: Attention stability	13.54	2.03	21.69	.000	Yes	75.22%
Fifth Dimension: Resistance to distractions	11.36	1.01	18.47	.000	To some extent	63.11%
Sixth Dimension: Speed of response to stimuli	19.78	1.66	27.96	.000	Yes	82.42%

It is clear from Table (11), which presents the arithmetic mean, Chi-square value, and percentage of agreement for the responses of basketball players in the dimensions of the sports concentration and attention scale, that the dimension (Attention shifting) obtained the highest agreement percentage of (91.50%) in the prevailing direction (Yes), followed by the dimension (Speed of response to stimuli) with a percentage of (82.42%) in the prevailing direction (Yes), followed by the dimension (Attention concentration during performance) with a percentage of (78.96%) in the prevailing direction (Yes), followed by the dimension (Attention stability) with a percentage of (75.22%) in the prevailing direction (Yes), then the dimension (Attention distribution) with a percentage of (65.83%) in the prevailing

direction (To some extent), and finally the dimension (Resistance to distractions) with a percentage of (63.11%) in the prevailing direction (To some extent). In this regard, the results of the study by Suhair and Kataa (2019) indicated that attention and concentration skills represent an essential element in achieving distinguished athletic performance, as the player's ability to shift attention quickly between different stimuli within the field helps him adapt to changing situations during competition.

Table 12. Correlation coefficients between dimensions of Mindfulness Scale and dimensions of Sports Concentration and Attention Scale among football players. N = 37

Dimensions		Dimensions of the Sports Concentration and Attention Scale					
		Attention concentration during performance	Attention shifting	Attention distribution	Attention stability	Resistance to distractions	Speed of response to stimuli
Dimensions of the Mindfulness Scale:	Attention to the present moment	0.701*	0.694*	0.539*	0.638*	0.676*	0.611*
	Awareness of feelings and thoughts	0.546*	0.512*	0.458*	0.544*	0.693**	0.570*
	Attention control	0.714*	0.669*	0.622*	0.762*	0.710*	0.655*
	Body awareness during performance	0.558*	0.535*	0.610*	0.557*	0.543*	0.627*

* The value of "r" is significant at the level 0.05 = 0.320.

It is clear from Table (12), which presents the correlation coefficients between the dimensions of the Mindfulness Scale and the dimensions of the Sports Concentration and Attention Scale among football players, that there is: A positive statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of the mindfulness scale (attention to the present moment, awareness of feelings and thoughts, attention control, body awareness during performance) and the dimensions of the sports concentration and attention scale (attention concentration during performance, attention shifting, attention distribution, attention stability, resistance to distractions, speed of response to stimuli). This indicates that the higher the level of mindfulness among football players, the higher their level of sports concentration and attention.

Discussion

The results of the study by Weinberg & Gould (2023) indicated that concentration and attention skills are among the most important psychological skills that contribute to improving athletic performance among players, as the player's ability to direct attention to the present moment helps improve the quality of performance and make appropriate decisions during competition. The results of the study by Gardner & Moore (2007) also confirmed that developing mindfulness among athletes contributes to increasing awareness of thoughts and emotions and attention to the physical state during athletic performance, and also helps improve the ability to control attention and reduce mental distraction during sports competitions.

The researcher believes that the high percentage of agreement in the dimension of attention to the present moment and the dimension of attention control reflects the nature of training in football, which focuses greatly on developing concentration and attention skills among players during training and competition. Meanwhile, the agreement percentages were relatively lower in the dimensions of awareness of feelings and thoughts and body awareness during performance, which may be due to the limited attention given to training players in mindfulness skills within psychological preparation programs in sports clubs. Therefore, the researcher emphasizes the importance of introducing training programs based on mindfulness within the psychological preparation programs for players, due to their role in improving self-awareness and the ability to control attention during athletic performance(Cosma et al., 2021; Kaplánová, 2024; Park & Jeon, 2023) .

The results of the study by Shehata and Mohamed (2023) also indicated that high-level football players are characterized by high cognitive abilities related to attention, concentration, and speed of response to various stimuli within the field, and these abilities contribute to improving tactical and skill performance during competition. The researcher believes that the high percentages of agreement in the dimensions of attention shifting and speed of response to stimuli reflect the nature of the game of

football, which depends greatly on the speed of reacting to changing events within the field, where the player needs to move quickly between offensive and defensive situations and make the appropriate decision at the appropriate time. Meanwhile, the agreement percentages were relatively lower in the dimensions of attention distribution and resistance to distractions, which may be due to the influence of some factors such as psychological pressure during competition or crowd noise in the stadium. This requires greater attention to developing attention and concentration skills among players through psychological preparation programs accompanying sports training.

The results of the study by Gardner & Moore (2007) indicated that mindfulness contributes directly to improving the ability of athletes to regulate attention, as it helps them direct their focus toward performance-related tasks and ignore irrelevant stimuli during competition. The study also confirmed that training in mindfulness skills leads to improved attention control and increased ability to concentrate on the present moment during athletic performance. The results of the study by and Kataa (2019) also indicated that developing mindfulness among athletes helps improve cognitive processes related to athletic performance such as attention, concentration, and speed of response to various stimuli during competition. The study also showed that athletes with a high level of mindfulness are more capable of controlling their attention and resisting external distractions during athletic performance.

The researcher believes that the presence of positive statistically significant correlations between the dimensions of mindfulness and the dimensions of sports concentration and attention among football players confirms the importance of mindfulness as one of the psychological factors affecting athletic performance. Mindfulness helps the player direct attention to the current situation on the field, become aware of thoughts and feelings, and control attention during performance, which contributes to improving concentration, resisting distractions, and responding quickly to different stimuli during the match.

CONCLUSION

In light of the results reached by the researcher through presenting and discussing the research findings, the following conclusions were drawn: Football players possess a relatively high level of mindfulness, especially in the dimensions of attention to the present moment and attention control. There is a good level of sports concentration and attention among football players, where the highest responses were in the dimensions of attention shifting and speed of response to stimuli. There are positive statistically significant correlations between the dimensions of the mindfulness scale and the dimensions of the sports concentration and attention scale among football players. The higher the level of mindfulness among football players, the higher their level of sports concentration and attention during performance. The attention control dimension of the mindfulness scale contributes significantly to improving the different dimensions of sports concentration and attention. Mindfulness plays an important role in improving players' ability to concentrate during performance, resist distractions, and respond quickly to different stimuli within the field. In light of the research results, the researcher recommends the following: Paying attention to developing mindfulness skills among football players, due to their important role in improving concentration and attention during athletic performance. Including psychological training programs based on mindfulness within the psychological preparation programs for football players in sports clubs. Training players in attention control skills during training and competition to improve their ability to concentrate and resist various distractions. Developing players' attention and concentration skills through the use of mental training techniques such as meditation, breathing exercises, and mental imagery. Increasing coaches' awareness of the importance of psychological aspects, especially mindfulness, in improving players' athletic performance. Reducing psychological and environmental distractions during training and competition to help players maintain a high level of concentration and attention. Implementing mindfulness-based training programs and measuring their impact on the skill and tactical performance of football players across different age groups.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Ahmed Jalal Ibrahim Responsible for the entire script.

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