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Review

ESTABLECIMIENTO DE OBJETIVOS EN EL FÚTBOL: UNA REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA

GOAL SETTING IN SOCCER: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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ESTABLECIMIENTO DE OBJETIVOS EN EL FÚTBOL: UNA REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este estudio fue realizar una revisión sistemática de la técnica de modificación de conducta del establecimiento de objetivos en el fútbol. Se revisó la literatura científica siguiendo las directrices PRISMA en las bases de datos Web of Science y Scopus. Las palabras clave utilizadas fueron: "goal", "setting", asociadas a las palabras "football" o "soccer". La búsqueda arrojó 378 artículos, ocho de los cuales cumplían los criterios de inclusión. Los resultados más significativos indicaron que, el uso de técnicas psicológicas de visualización y fijación de metas favorece el desarrollo de la competencia, proporcionando respuestas acordes a las demandas del entorno. La técnica psicológica de establecimiento de metas permite alcanzar estados altamente beneficiosos que optimizan el rendimiento deportivo. El autodiálogo, el diálogo entrenador-atleta, el uso de imágenes, videoclips y la relajación como proceso de autorregulación, son estrategias de retroalimentación fundamentales para la motivación de los deportistas.

Palabras clave: (Revisión sistemática, modificación de conducta, fútbol, establecimiento de objetivos).

GOAL SETTING IN SOCCER: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to conduct a systematic review of the behavior modification technique of goal setting in soccer. The scientific literature was reviewed following the PRISMA guidelines in the Web of Science and Scopus databases. The keywords used were: "goal", "setting", associated with the words "football" or "soccer". The search yielded 378 articles, eight of which met the inclusion criteria. The most significant results indicated that, the use of psychological techniques of visualization and goal setting favors the development of competence, providing responses according to the demands of the environment. The psychological technique of goal setting allows us to reach highly beneficial states that optimize sports performance. Self-dialogue, coach-athlete dialogue, the use of images, video clips and relaxation as a process of self-regulation, are fundamental feedback strategies for the motivation of athletes.

Keywords: (Systematic review, behavior modification, soccer, goal setting).



INTRODUCTION

Goal setting is a psychological technique to modify incorrect behaviours or to encourage appropriate behaviours. In sport, goal setting is a programme of goals adjusted in a planned way to the needs, conditions and challenges of the athlete and the competition. Goal setting is a useful and effective technique that can help improve desired performance and experience in sport (Healy, et al., 2018). In its implementation, care should be taken with the difficulty in goal setting as it could cause negative effects on self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Ordóñez et al., 2009). Therefore, in the context of sports training, it is recommended that the coach and the athlete set goals as this affects the improvement of their ability and motivation (Locke, & Latham, 1985). The athlete's perception of his or her own performance facilitates coping skills and allows for a more logical analysis of situations that arise in training and competition (Nicholls, Polman, & Levy, 2012). Goal setting is based on Goal Setting Theory (GST) (Locke, & Latham, 2002). GST is supported by a large body of research in the economic and labour field. However, information on how goal setting criteria should be adapted to the field of team sports is more limited (Jeong, et al., 2021).

Goal Setting Theory states that goal setting can improve performance through four mechanisms: 1) the individual focuses his or her attention and effort on goal-related actions and disengages from irrelevant activities. 2) goal setting can motivate the individual, increasing his or her effort in pursuit of more challenging goals. 3) goals influence the individual's persistence in achieving tasks, and 4) pursuing goals favours the development of task-relevant strategies and knowledge. In the same vein, GST recommends setting goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (S.M.A.R.T goals) (Doran, 1981), as this allows for the necessary adjustments to be made and maintains the athlete's motivation (Weinberg & Butt, 2014). Coaches and athletes are accustomed to setting goals that allow for short (one match) and medium-term (one season) results (Burton, & Weiss, 2008). These goals can be related to winning a match (outcome goals), achieving a personal record (performance goals) or perfecting technique or strategy in competition (process goals) (Healy, et al., 2018). According to the sport context, these goals can be set individually or collectively.

Goal setting depends on commitment to the objective and is determined by the achievement of results. When setting goals, the player, the context in which they will develop them, and their characteristics must be taken into account. The coach-athlete relationship is fundamental to know the degree of difficulty, specificity, proximity and types of objectives to be realised (Locke, & Latham, 2019). Constant and frequent feedback is important to inform progress and make necessary adjustments to goals (Healy, et al., 2018). The complexity of the task must consider the competitive level of the athletes, directing the effort, resources and intervention time set. In this line, previous studies (Healy, et al., 2018; Jeong, et al., 2021) show the need to increase knowledge on goal setting in specific sport contexts. This review would provide specific information on their use, recommendations and clearer performance strategies in the sport of football. The aim of the present study was to conduct a systematic review on the implementation and application of goal setting in football players.

METHODS

Search Strategy

The eligibility criteria for the systematic review of the existing literature were based on the guidelines of PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses: the PRISMA statement) (Moher et al., 2009).

Literature search

The electronic databases Web of Science (Core Collection) and SCOPUS were used; the search terms were: "goal", "setting", associated with the words "football" or "soccer". The advanced search for Web of Science used the command: (ts= (goal* setting*) AND (ts= (soccer*) or ts=footba*)) and for SCOPUS the command: (TITLE-ABS-KEY ("goal" "setting") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("soccer*") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("football*")). The search was restricted to English language journals published up to September 20, 2020. A total of 378 potential articles were obtained: 222 in Web of Science and 156 in SCOPUS.

Selection of studies

In the first stage, the following inclusion criteria were used: (1) goal setting as the object of study; (2) soccer players. In a second stage, articles were



excluded if: (1) the object of study was not goal setting; (2) they were studies of other sports; (3) they were conferences. As a result, eight articles were included. Figure 1 shows the selection process.

The studies retrieved that met the inclusion criteria from the abstracts and full texts of empirical studies were analyzed by two authors with a minimum of 5 years of research experience in the area. Cases of doubt or disagreement were resolved by a third author, obtaining reliability values of 0.94.

Quality of studies

The methodological quality of the studies included in the systematic review was analyzed using the Sarmiento et al., (2018) checklist. The following were analyzed for each article: clarity of purpose, relevant background literature, appropriate study design, study sample, justification of sample size, informed consent, reliability of outcome measures, validity of outcome measures, detailed description of method, reporting of results, methods of analysis, description of practical importance, description of dropouts (if any), conclusions drawn appropriately, implications for practice, and acknowledgment of study limitations. Each item was rated on a binary scale (0 and 1), one yes and zero for no, and the methodological quality of the studies was calculated and expressed as a percentage using a simple rule of three. The methodological quality of the studies was recorded by two trained observers, obtaining minimum values using Cohen's Kappa coefficient of 0.94.

To establish the methodological quality of the studies, the classification of Low et al (2019) was used: 1) low quality for scores $\leq 50\%$; 2) good quality for scores between 51% and 75%; and 3) excellent methodological quality for scores $> 75\%$.

Data extraction

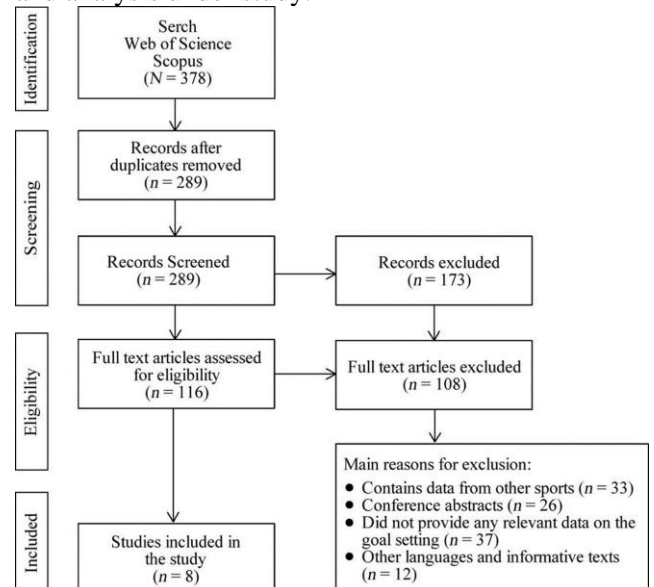
The following variables were analyzed from each of the studies: (a) study title; (b) main research objective; (c) sample; (d) gender; (e) variables analyzed; (f) key research findings; (g) quality score; (h) competitive level (formative soccer, university soccer, elite youth sport, semi-professional or high performance); (i) type of intervention (direct, indirect); (c) intervention time; j) person responsible for establishing objectives and frequency of feedback; k) type of study (longitudinal, naturalistic, evaluative, descriptive or experimental research); l)

data collection system (tool or instrument designed, adapted or used to collect information); and m) statistical technique used to process the data collected.

RESULTS

Search results, selection and inclusion of studies

A total of 378 articles were found, of which 89 were found to be duplicates in the databases. The other 289 were analyzed based on title and abstract to determine their relevance. At this stage, 173 studies were discarded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Of the remaining 116 articles, 108 were eliminated, based on the exclusion criteria. Finally, 8 articles were selected for data extraction and analysis under study.



Flow diagram of the procedure used in the systematic review

**Table 1.** Individual study summary and quality score

| N° | Title Study | Target | Sample | Gender | Variables Analyzed | Key Findings % Improvement | Quality Score |
|----|--|--|--|--------|--|--|---------------|
| 1 | Achievement goals, competitive and wellness assessments, and illness of elite youth soccer players in two competitive seasons. | To research the temporal relationships between achievement goals, evaluations of competence, and indexes of psychological and emotional well-being among elite adolescent soccer players. | 54 male soccer players (ages from 11 to 18) from 6 teams | Male | a) command approach - M _{Ap} (striving for their own competence / reference competence in the task). b) command avoidance - M _{Av} (trying not to show their own incompetence / reference incompetence in the task). c) performance approach - P _{Ap} (focusing on achievement of normative benchmark competence). d) performance avoidance - P _{Av} (trying not to show normative benchmark incompetence). | It is suggested that elite youth soccer programs consider strategies to optimize M _{Ap} goals to shape the way their athletes view competition, and in turn, to build their self-esteem. | 100% |
| 2 | Goal setting in youth soccer - are coaches missing an opportunity? | (1) To use naturalistic research to identify and describe the motivational choices made by elite youth soccer players as they go through the goal-setting process. (2) To examine the influence of the coach on | 10 elite young footballers (five men and five women) from four English league soccer clubs | Mixed | Structured target setting | 1) Players' motivational choices in setting and evaluating their discrete goals could be examined in the context of the cognitive and social motivational principles of personal goal motivation, personal agency beliefs, and affective response. 2) The fundamental role of the coach and the mismatch between the needs of | 93.3% |



this process in the elite soccer environment.
 (3) To understand the goal-setting process.

the players and the responses of the coaches throughout this process.
 3) The target setting process varied from the heuristics of the target setting theory.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|------|---|---|-----|
| 3 | Evaluation of a motivational program to goal setting to optimize | To discover the benefits of a training program by | 34 soccer players in the 1st division of the Spanish Professional Football League (LFP) and in the 10th Group of the Spanish 3rd division of the Spanish Football League, between 17 and 34 years old. | Male | Objectives: Physical, technical-tactical, individual and group psychological objectives in the short, medium and long term. | It is concluded that most of the objectives set by the players are mainly psychological, rather than physical or technical-tactical, as are the objectives pursued by midfielders and goalkeepers. The results conclude that goal setting positively influences soccer players at the individual and collective levels. | 80% |
|---|--|---|--|------|---|---|-----|



| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--------|--|---|-------|
| 4 | Effects of public posting, goal setting, and oral feedback on the skills of female soccer players. | To evaluate the effects of public announcements, goal setting, and oral feedback on the skills of 3 high school female soccer players during training. | 3 high school soccer players (ages between 15 and 17) | Female | The dependent variables were the percentage of appropriate responses when the player (a) maintained and retained possession of the ball, (b) moved to an open position during the restart of play (e.g., goal or corner kick), and (c) moved to an open position after passing the ball. | Two players reported that the intervention positively affected their playing behaviors. Two reported that seeing their performances below the 90% criterion frustrated them and caused them some distress. The coach was very supportive of the intervention and reported that the participants' play improved markedly with each intervention. | 80% |
| 5 | Effects of a program for formulating objectives and pass shaping in young soccer players. | To analyze the effects of a goal-setting program using the zapping technique aimed at passing in soccer from the progressive formulation of goals based on mental programs. | 13 players of the national youth team of the Real Murcia SAD club. | Male | Cognitive anxiety Self-confidence in soccer Perceived competence related to passing. | The players showed a higher level of perception of competence in passing after the intervention, while their levels of anxiety and self-confidence regarding soccer in general remained stable. | 73.3% |
| 6 | Visualization and goal setting in | To analyze the use of psychological techniques of visualization and goal | 25 players playing in group 10 of the third division of | Male | Visualization and goal setting | There are three different subgroups: one of them uses the goal-setting technique for training and competition; | 73.3% |



| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--------|--|---|-------|
| | soccer players. | setting in a team of semi-professional soccer players. | the Spanish Football League (ages between 17 and 24) | | | another one, to improve their sports career; and the third one states that sometimes they set goals, but at other times they do not. | |
| 7 | Effects of goal setting and individual and group contingencies on learning and effort in talented young soccer players. | To compare the effects of goal setting alone, an individual contingency (signed player photograph) and a group contingency (extra playing time) on learning and effort in practice. | 9 children (ages 7 to 8) | Male | Condition A - practice with goal setting Condition B - Juggling for stickers or tokens Condition C - Juggling overtime and choice of match ball. | Results showed that individual and group contingencies enhanced technical learning, group contingency promoted greater practice effort, but goal setting alone did not promote significant learning or practice effort. | 73.3% |
| 8 | Goal Setting with a College Soccer Team: What Went Right, and Less-Than-Right. | To institute a goal setting program with a women's varsity soccer team using 3 levels of goals for a competitive season. | 32 players on a women's varsity soccer team | Female | Individual athlete objectives Objectives of the position group Team-level objectives | On individual objectives, athletes reported being more focused on training sessions. The position group objectives resulted in the greatest gains in both quantity and quality of positive outcomes. | 53.3% |

1. (Adie et al., 2010) 2. (Maitland & Gervis, 2010) 3. (González-Campos et al., 2018) 4. (Brobst & Ward, 2002) 5. (Carmona et al., 2015) 6. (González et al., 2016) 7.



(Holt et al., 2012a) 8. (Gillham & Weiler, 2013).

Table 2. Methodological description of the studies

| Nº | Competitive Level | Type of Intervention | Intervention Time | Responsibility for Establishing Objectives and Frequency Feedback | Type of Study | Data Collection System | Statistical Technique |
|----|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Elite youth sports | Direct | 2 seasons | Objectives taken from the questionnaire on Achievement Objectives for Sports - Before training at the beginning of the first season - Near the end of the first season - At the beginning of the second season - In the middle of the second season - At the end of the second season. | Longitudinal study | - Achievement Objectives Questionnaire for Sport - The general 10-item scale of the Self-description Questionnaire-II. - Adapted version of 10 elements of the constructive measure of challenge and threat - Nine items to assess the frequency with which participants experienced positive and negative affectivity | - Multilevel regression using MLwiN - Descriptive statistics - Bivariate correlations by a series of repeated-measures ANOVAs - Wilks Lambda |
| 2 | High performance | Indirect | Four weeks | Self-setting of objectives by the players. Frequency: Not stated | Naturalistic research | - Weekly diary for four weeks - Semi-structured interview | Inductive analysis, using grounded theory, to identify the themes and categories of the data. |



| | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|--------|-------------------|---|--------------------------|---|--|
| 3 | High performance | Direct | Does not indicate | Self-setting of objectives by the players. Frequency: Not stated | Evaluative research | Ad-hoc designed file | - Descriptive and correlational statistics SPSS version 24 - Qualitative analysis - Atlas.ti software version 6 |
| 4 | Formative soccer | Direct | One season | The researchers and the trainer set objectives by mutual agreement Frequency: Daily performance table | Descriptive research | Open-ended questionnaire to assess the acceptability of the intervention. | Descriptive statistics |
| 5 | Formative soccer | Direct | Four weeks | Objectives established by the investigators Frequency: After the execution of each action during the intervention. | Quasi-experimental study | - Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2, (CSAI-2) - Psychological Characteristics Questionnaire for Sports Performance - Scale created by the authors consisting of 8 items measuring the perceived competence for the different types of passes. - A register was created based on the classification of pass types by Amado-Peña, Cobo, Oiartzabal and | - Shapiro-Wilks test - Wilcoxon W statistic - Mann-Whitney U test |



Zinkunegi (2003).

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
| 6 | Semi-professional | Indirect | One week | Objectives self-set by the players. Frequency: Not stated | Descriptive research | - Mental Abilities Scale of the Questionnaire of Psychological Characteristics Related to Sports Performance (CPRD). - LOEHR Psychological Sports Performance Inventory visualization and imagery control scale. | Descriptive statistics |
| 7 | Formative soccer | Direct | 21 training practices | Objectives set by the trainer Frequency: Before each practice | Experimental research | Questionnaire to assess their satisfaction with the various training procedures and practice conditions employed. | Descriptive statistics |
| 8 | College soccer | Direct | One season | The researchers and the trainer set objectives by mutual agreement Frequency: At the end of each game | Descriptive research | Own list of individual objectives | Descriptive statistics |

1. (Adie et al., 2010) 2. (Maitland & Gervis, 2010) 3. (González-Campos et al., 2018) 4. (Brobst & Ward, 2002) 5. (Carmona et al., 2015) 6. (González et al., 2016) 7. (Holt et al., 2012a) 8. (Gillham & Weiler, 2013).



Methodological quality of the studies

The average methodological quality score of the eight studies analyzed was 78.3%. No study scored below 50%. Fifty percent of the sample was rated with excellent methodological quality (one study with 100%, one study with 93.3% and two studies with 80%), while the remaining 50% was of good quality (three studies with a score of 73.3% and one study with 53.3%).

Individual summary of the studies

The articles were organized according to their quality score going from highest to lowest. Table 1 shows the title, objective, sample, gender, variables analyzed, key findings and quality score of each of the selected studies. Table 2 shows the following variables: competitive level, type of intervention, intervention time, frequency of feedback, type of study, data collection system and statistical technique.

Responsibility for setting objectives

According to the findings, three of the studies demonstrate self-setting of goals by the players; two of the studies indicate that the researchers and the coach set them by mutual agreement, while in one study the goals were set by the researchers, in another study they were set by the coach, and in the remaining study the goals were taken from the Achievement Goal Questionnaire for Sport.

DISCUSSION

According to the object of study of this systematic review, the results evidence the importance of the use of psychological techniques of goal setting that favor the development of competence, providing responses according to the demands of the environment, through stimuli of motivation, confidence, commitment and necessary knowledge during a given period of time (Eckhoff & Weiss, 2020).

The main findings have revealed that 37.5% of the studies were conducted in training level teams, whose participants, in the first case, improved their game behaviors, highlighting the improvement of decision-making in real game situations, higher level of perception in competition with stable levels of anxiety and self-confidence; the intervention in this study was conducted in training sessions during a season (Carmona et al., 2015). In the second study,

66.6% of the athletes manifested an immediate change with the intervention carried out in four weeks, positively impacting their performance in training and competition conditions (Brobst & Ward, 2002). In the third study, progress was evidenced with the help (motivation) of the coach, where participants significantly improved their performance based on previous performances, intervention conducted during 21 training practices (Holt et al., 2012b). The use of goal setting is a method that has favorable effects on problem solving, positively affecting performance and competition results.

It should be noted that 25% of the research was conducted in high performance teams. The first case, with a four-week intervention, demonstrated that, goal setting helps define the degree of satisfaction with individual performance and establish athletes' perception of their own performance, increasing the control of distracting elements, eliminating negative thoughts and processing information that allows them to: increase confidence, manage emotions and compare both individual and collective performance indicators, highlighting the influence of the coach in the context of cognitive and social principles throughout the process (Maitland & Gervis, 2010). In the second case of the same competitive level, (González-Campos et al., 2018) demonstrated that, at the psychological level, goal setting demands more attention-concentration versus the physical level, facilitating its productivity at the collective and individual level.

Of the included studies, 12.5% were conducted in an elite youth team during two seasons, optimizing the performance of their athletes with respect to their levels of intrinsic motivation, forming positive self-judgments as indicators of psychological and emotional well-being to positively predict evaluations of challenges prior to sport competition (Adie et al., 2010). The 12.5% was conducted in a semi-professional team during the first week of the initial pre-season stage, showing that 60% agree or strongly agree that they tend to choose goals whose achievement is entirely dependent on themselves. Regarding the setting of goals before training and competition, 64% agree or totally agree that they do use this technique, and 32% highlight that sometimes they set their own goals while at other times they do not (González et al., 2016). 12.5% intervened a college soccer team for a full season, evidencing the



improvement of the objectives set. Positive results were observed from the perspective of the player and the coach. Athletes attributed their improved focus to their goals, which helped them transition from their academic day to their soccer training afternoons. Early in the season, athletes found that receiving feedback from coaches on specific areas of their game that needed improvement was valuable (Gillham & Weiler, 2013).

Performance strategies

Taking into account that the establishment of objectives is carried out to achieve changes in the behavior of athletes, group cohesion, effort capacity and motivational development, the interventions carried out allowed for the achievement of physical, technical-tactical, individual and group psychological objectives in the short, medium and long term, improving the levels of cognitive anxiety, self-confidence and perceived competence. These factors are involved and related to learning, context, emotions, time and tasks in induced real game situations and stimulate creativity in players as a method of activation for the pursuit of the proposed objectives (Brewer et al., 2019; Ismail & Ismail, 2019). Therefore, these psychological techniques help achieve highly beneficial states that optimize sports performance by focusing attention, self-talk, concentration, self-confidence, motivation, experience assimilation and performance satisfaction expectations (Nicholls et al., 2012).

The establishment of objectives demonstrates a close connection between the cognitive factors that influence decision making and the possible solution of correct action. Exploring the perception of performance (positive - negative) contrasted with expectation (real value) will help increase athletes' performance, handling criticism and both internal and external pressure factors during the game (González-Campos et al., 2018).

Within the performance strategies, identifying the player's perception and determining hits and misses during the game provide both the athlete and the technical staff with decisive information for the planning of training and specific activities that, added to situational variables such as: location (local - visitor), existing result of the match, and the level of the opponent, decrease the margin of error or blunders within the field, through the focus and clarity of the objectives set within the instructed

performance, without the athlete losing his or her way of playing, expanding creative thinking and the execution of tasks with fluency in certain situations of the match (Brobst & Ward, 2002; Carmona et al., 2015).

In soccer, the difficulty of the psychological technique lies in determining the strengths and weaknesses of each athlete, in order to establish individual or group objective goals, avoiding exceeding expectations or establishing too high commitments with reality (Gillham & Weiler, 2013). The results show that, when the goals are concrete, challenging, achievable and controllable, they help establish a commitment and motivational factor that leads to higher sports performance within a given time frame as a measure of probability of success. The level of specificity of the goals must be clearly defined, with specific instructions for each player or for the collective, facilitating their fulfillment (Maitland & Gervis, 2010).

Based on the evidence, it is suggested to implement variability in the selection of goals, with a moderate complexity tailored to the characteristics of each player, game idea and team needs (Adie et al., 2010). Similarly, it would be very interesting to implement the use of goal setting in athletes, optimizing the physical, psychological, technical and tactical aspects before and during training and competition, along with the technique of imagined practice, as training for better performance (González et al., 2016).

In accordance with the above, making public the goals achieved stimulates and reinforces the performance of athletes (Brobst & Ward, 2002), evidencing and valuing the progress of the players with appropriate reinforcements to the achievement (Holt et al., 2012b). This process will help understand the goals proposed from the preparation games (preseason) with a flexible level for their understanding and assimilation, capturing the meaning and why of these objectives, for their subsequent implementation. It is recommended to start with low complexity tasks and increase the difficulty gradient for motivation, expectation and satisfaction according to the fulfillment of the goals (Epton et al., 2017).

Key findings from the studies confirm that goal setting provides evidence of increased individual and collective commitment, increased use of coping strategies, performance enhancing qualities and



changes in well-being within the individual throughout each match, facilitating positive outcomes, improving player confidence and allowing prediction of athlete's satisfaction in training and competition conditions.

The importance of feedback in setting objectives

Establishing goals is as important as knowing how to transmit them to the athlete; in this way, commitment, acceptance and an inspiring vision necessary to determine the fulfillment and evolution of the goals is increased, allowing to relate goals and performance. The high degree of relationship between compliance, athlete's perception and the real value in performance is an indicator to increase the difficulty gradient of individual or collective goals (Kruk et al., 2017).

For players a fundamental aspect is to evaluate the fulfillment of the proposed objectives and for this, the coach has been identified as the preferred source for the process, in this way athletes obtain extrinsic motivations given by the recognition and reward (Maitland & Gervis, 2010). In this same sense, feedback also facilitates the conscious recognition of the mistakes made, which allows the player to optimize his/her decision-making capacity increasing his/her sports performance (Brobst & Ward, 2002; Carmona et al., 2015).

The frequency of feedback processes plays an important role in the detection and correction of errors, as research results demonstrated a significant decrease in negative actions and their conversion into efficient improvements at the individual and collective level to focus adjustments in performance (Gillham & Weiler, 2013).

Thus, self-dialogue, coach-athlete dialogue, the use of images, video clips and relaxation as a self-regulation process, are fundamental feedback strategies for the motivation of athletes and to dissipate distracting elements between goal and performance (Ismail & Ismail, 2019).

It should be noted that performance is not based on a single result (win, draw or lose the match); it is measured through the fulfillment and effectiveness of the tasks, whose effort presents an automatic summary of the knowledge acquired during the training sessions and the skills relevant to the achievement or loss of achievement in competition. If

the perception, level of self-efficacy, achievement satisfaction and real value are consistently negative, the objectives should be rethought, ensuring a balance between the athlete, the team and the goals. If, on the other hand, these aspects are consistently positive, the difficulty gradient on the established goals should be increased and athletes should be motivated with personal and collective rewards (Locke & Latham, 2002).

Limitations

The limitation of this study lies in excluding research conducted in sports other than soccer and published in a language other than English, as well as limiting the search to the Web of Science and Scopus databases, because, despite standing out internationally for the dissemination of scientific knowledge, doing it only through these databases does not guarantee the review of the totality of the scientific productions carried out on the object of study. Therefore, based on the results obtained and evaluated through this systematic review, it is considered necessary and pertinent to link future reviews in other languages, sports and databases.

CONCLUSIONS

The goal setting technique is consistent with the importance of the application of the physical and mental component in training and competition conditions, improving communication and generating empathy between the athlete and the coach.

The results of the studies affirm that the effects of goals at the individual and collective level improve sports performance and benefit socio-cognitive performance, levels of self-efficacy, self-control of emotions, attention and motivation skills as facilitators of achievement. These psychological strategies help identify the athlete's perception compared to the actual evaluation of his or her productivity, at the same time as the degree of immediate and conscious self-efficacy satisfaction, providing high commitment and confidence between goals and performance. Task control increases concentration, commitment and motivation for goal achievement.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS



All these data demonstrate the great usefulness of the goal setting technique as a behavior modification technique (it helps modify undesired behaviors or reinforce desired ones), as well as being an instrument that facilitates, both to the members of the technical team and to the athletes, an adequate assessment of the real effectiveness. The technique of goal setting, when used in groups, through infographics, videos, posters, etc., not only allows individual improvement but also group improvement, as well as an increase in other psychological factors such as group cohesion. That is why its application is recommended in group sports in general (and soccer in particular) so that players understand and know at all times what it means to play well, or what it means to play badly, focusing their actions on those aspects (technical, tactical, physical, etc.) previously established by the technical team and not exclusively on the achievement of performance (winning or losing the match).

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