

An exploratory perspective on the practice of ritual behaviors as a means of psychological preparation among football players

Imad Eddine MEGA

Eshahid Sheikh Larbi Tebessi University - Tebessa (Algeria)
mega.imed@univ-tebessa.dz

/

Abderrafik BENDERRADJI

BATNA 2 University (Algeria)
ab.benderradji@univ-batna2.dz

/

Abdelmalek GUERRAD

Eshahid Sheikh Larbi Tebessi University - Tebessa (Algeria)
abdelmalekguerrad@univ-tebessa.dz

RASS. Pensées Genre. Penser Autrement. VOL 4, No 3 (Novembre 2024)

Abstract

The study aims to identify and determine the forms of ritual practices among football players and to reveal the reasons and motivations behind players resorting to these practices. It also seeks to understand the players' opinions and beliefs regarding the impact and functions of these practices on their behavior during competition. The study sample consists of 41 football players. We used the descriptive method, and the results indicate that players tend to engage in religious-based rituals to a very high degree, often practicing them individually and privately. In addition to religious rituals, players also highly engage in routine rituals (such as chants, motivational gatherings...), while they avoid practicing non-religious rituals (such as superstitions, charms, etc.). Uncertainty, anxiety, and a strong desire for achievement and control over situations are among the main reasons and motivations for practicing rituals. Moreover, players believe that ritual practices have a positive impact on their behavior, helping them control their emotions and increase their focus during competition.

Keywords: Rituals, Psychological Preparation, Football, Ritual, motivations.

Une perspective exploratoire sur la pratique des comportements rituels comme moyen de préparation psychologique chez les joueurs de football

Résumé

L'étude vise à identifier et déterminer les formes de pratiques rituelles chez les footballeurs, ainsi qu'à révéler les raisons et motivations qui poussent les joueurs à recourir à ces pratiques. Elle cherche également à comprendre les opinions et croyances des joueurs concernant l'impact et les fonctions de ces pratiques sur leur comportement lors des compétitions. L'échantillon de l'étude est composé de 41 footballeurs. Nous avons utilisé la méthode descriptive, et les résultats indiquent que les joueurs ont tendance à s'engager dans des rituels à base religieuse à un degré très élevé, les pratiquant souvent de manière individuelle et privée. En plus des rituels religieux, les joueurs s'engagent également fortement dans des rituels de routine (tels que les chants, les rassemblements de motivation...), tout en évitant les pratiques non religieuses (comme les superstitions, les talismans, etc.). L'incertitude, l'anxiété et un fort désir de réussite et de contrôle des situations figurent parmi les principales raisons et motivations pour pratiquer des rituels. De plus, les joueurs estiment que les pratiques rituelles ont un impact positif sur leur comportement, les aidant à maîtriser leurs émotions et à augmenter leur concentration pendant les compétitions.

Mots-clés: Rituels, préparation psychologique, football, motivations.

Introduction

The fundamentals of playing modern football require high and optimal performance by organizing and efficiently utilizing the physical, tactical, and technical energies by both coaches and players alike. However, players often face situations such as tension, anxiety, fear, and hesitation due to sporting challenges and the demands of competition. It is frequently said that the psychological preparation of players for matches is the reason behind either achieving victory or suffering defeat (S. Zaabar, 2001). This has led to a broad interest in this aspect of preparation and the factors related to and influencing it, as psychological preparation encompasses all the procedures and duties set by the coach with the aim of stabilizing certain traits. M. H. Allawi, 1992, p. 16) states that International-level athletes are very close in terms of physical and technical (skill-tactical) levels, but there is an important factor that determines the outcome of their struggle during sports competitions for victory, and that is the psychological factor, which plays a significant role and is largely foundational to achieving success.

Recently, football has seen significant development across all aspects, particularly the psychological aspect, which is considered one of the most crucial factors influencing sports competition. There has been increasing attention to integrating psychological sports preparation as an important and complementary factor to physical and technical training. This has been done by training specialists in sports psychological counseling to develop players' psychological skills and help reduce anxiety levels during and after sports competitions (O. Zan, 2016, p, 117). Additionally, (B. Jarsh, Youb, and Souhailia, 2022) note that the demands of this game go beyond physical, technical, and tactical aspects. The psychological side now plays a vital role in improving players' performance and helping them focus on the task at hand, being a key essential factor no less important than other aspects.

When discussing this important aspect of the athlete's preparation process, it is essential to address the factors and elements that influence it. Ritual practices are considered one of the influences that affect the level of psychological preparation for the player, especially given the challenges and psychological pressures imposed by competition. Also, many studies have proven that achieving high performance requires resorting to scientific and rational methods. Despite the shift toward technological advancements in the field of psychological preparation in football, athletes still rely on hidden forces and seek to employ irrational resources, turning to ritual practices as a way to control the external environment (S. Zaabar, 2001, p. 17). Furthermore, (T. Broch & E. Kristiansen, 2014) note that ritual practice is a form of meaning-

making intended to alleviate stress, negative perceptions, psychological strain, preconceptions, and uncertainties before competition, making ritualistic behavior a means of reducing external pressures.

Studies on this topic are relatively scarce, as K. Patrick et al. (2018) mention that there is a relative neglect of rituals and superstitious behaviors in sports psychology literature, and there is a need for further documentation of their importance in the lives of athletes. This includes various factors such as parental discipline, societal culture, and educational level.

In the same context, Fisher and Wrisberg, as cited by (K. Patrick, & al., 2018), noted that throughout history, people have used rituals based on religion, magic, or superstitions to deal with doubts, uncertainties, and the unknown, such as spirits. Since sports competitions, which involve a high level of stakes, put athletes in a state of anticipation, fear, and uncertainty about their success, it is not surprising that many athletes engage in certain rituals and superstitious behaviors to feel as though they have some control over what happens to them on the field.

R. Rappaport (1999) also considers that practicing rituals enhances focus on the goal, as it provides a solution to problems by reducing complex information to a single answer (yes/no, on/off, either/or). G. Gimilch (2004) adds that rituals bring comfort and introduce order to the athletes' world, which is often characterized by a lack of control.

In the same context, B. Rafas et M. Hassani (2022) mention that important indicators in our society today that demonstrate the impact of sports on both society and the individual athlete include dedicating time slots for sports, as well as allocating numerous pages in official newspapers for it. There are also many specialized sports newspapers that focus solely on sports topics and the personal lives of athletes. Christiansen et al. note that some ritual practices in the Western environment include wrestlers always stepping onto the mat with their left foot first, and Catholic athletes making the sign of the cross (cited in K. Patrick, & al., 2018). In contrast, manifestations of ritual practices in the Algerian environment revolve around what is promoted in newspapers and national channels regarding the religious commitment of some Algerian players in the national football team, such as reading the Quran, as well as practices like legal exorcism rituals or prostrating in gratitude to God, along with some non-religious practices represented by superstition or other superstitious behaviors. Based on the above, we aimed to direct our study towards understanding the extent of these ritual practices, the reasons and motivations for resorting to them, and the players' beliefs regarding their effects on their behaviors, through posing a set of questions to define the research problem.

This study addresses the following issue: Is there widespread practice of rituals in their various forms among football players, and what are the reasons and motivations for players to

engage in these rituals? What effects and functions do these rituals have on their behaviors and emotional control during competition? The research aims to determine the extent and the most common forms of ritual practices among football players, uncover the reasons and motivations that drive them to practice these rituals, and understand the role rituals play in mitigating behaviors resulting from emotions.

The importance of the study lies in highlighting the role of rituals in controlling emotional behaviors and understanding the players' motivations for relying on these rituals, which emphasizes the significance of psychological preparation and its impact on the outcomes of teams and players. The study also investigates the relationship between psychological preparation and rituals, inquiring whether rituals are considered an effective means of improving players' psychological preparation, while providing a set of recommendations that can be beneficial in the future.

A number of studies address the topic of rituals and superstitious behaviors as coping strategies among athletes. The study by K. Patrick, & al. (2018) titled "An Exploratory Look at Superstitious Behaviors, Coping, and Personal Control Strategies among Ghanaian and British Student Athletes" aimed to examine the relationships between control strategies, coping, and superstitious behavior, involving a sample of 349 student-athletes from the UK and Ghana. The results indicated that personal control and coping mechanisms predicted superstitious behavior, suggesting that athletes use these behaviors as coping mechanisms.

On the other hand, the study by T. Broche & E. Kristiansen (2014) titled "Rituals and Coping with Psychological Stress" sought to reveal ritual practices as coping strategies, addressing the impact of sports cultures and media attention on athletes' stress. The findings showed that rituals are psychological and social processes that help athletes cope with stress.

In the same context, S. Zaabar's study (2001) titled "Rituals as a Means of Psychological Preparation in Algerian Professional Football Players" focused on the most common types of rituals in the football environment, with results indicating that religiously-based rituals were the most utilized, highlighting their significant impact on the players' psychological state. Finally, the study by E. Thill (1986) titled "Performance Preparation Rituals" aimed to uncover the reasons for using rituals as a means of psychological preparation and found that the most anxious athletes were the most likely to resort to rituals, which enhance focus and direct attention in challenging times, reflecting the association between ritual practices and the belief aspect among athletes.

1- Theoretical framework and Study Methodology

1.1.Theoretical framework

Rituals: According to M. Jaen (1998, P 6) The term **rite** is derived from the Latin word **ritus**, which means religious worship (celebrations or customs, traditions, and norms) These various meanings exist within the commonly spoken and familiar dialects.

Terminologically: Rituals are not confined to a single field of knowledge. According to the anthropological dictionary, rituals are traditional activities and actions that often relate to religion and magic, where customs determine their reasons and objectives. Rituals are always derived from the life of the people who practice them and involve various activities such as slaughtering sacrifices, performing prayers, chanting hymns, and dancing. It can be said that rituals are a set of actions performed by a community to appease higher powers (S. Zaabar, 2001).

Conversely, T. Broche & E. Kristiansen (2014) suggest that the majority of ritual definitions, as outlined by C. Geertz (1973) and R. Rappaport (1999), emphasize rituals as repetitive, structured, formal, symbolic, and communicative practices designed to create meaning, while also fostering collaboration or partnership.

Operational Definition of Rituals: These are routine or symbolic practices and behaviors, whether religious (such as prayer and supplication) or non-religious (such as superstitious behaviors and sorcery) or customary symbolic actions (such as sports greetings and motivational chants). They are characterized by communicative or cooperative elements to create meaning and are performed by football players, instilling a sense of comfort and reassurance, as well as a feeling of some control over what happens to them on the field.

Psychological Preparation: Or psychological preparation refers to the level of development of the psychological abilities possessed by athletes and certain characteristics of an athlete's personality that are necessary for successful and appropriate performance in competitive or training conditions (O. K. Rateb, 1997).

Football: It is a game played between two teams, each consisting of eleven players who use an inflated ball on a rectangular field. At each end, each team attempts to get the ball into the opponent's goal to score a point (goal) and to surpass the opponent in scoring points (M. AL-SALMANE, 1998, p 09).

1.2. Methodology

For the methodology, the researcher employed a descriptive approach in this study due to its suitability for the nature of the posed problem. The study population consisted of senior football players from the provincial league of Tebessa. A sample was selected from three teams within this league. The sample consisted of 41 players active in these teams, chosen randomly to ensure fair representation of all players in the targeted population, thereby enhancing the accuracy of the results obtained from the study.

Table I : Distribution of the Research Sample Across the Selected Teams

Name of the club	Number of players
Mustaqbal Laouinat	11
Taraji El Ouenza	13
Mustaqbal Bir El Ater	17
Total	41 players

In this research, we used a questionnaire as a means to collect data, which was prepared and designed by S. Zaabar (2001) to measure and understand the reasons why Algerian football players from certain professional clubs engage in rituals, as well as the types and methods of performing these rituals. The questionnaire was modified after consulting educational literature and relevant scientific sources. This questionnaire helped us achieve the study's objectives and answer the questions posed.

The questionnaire was distributed manually to the research sample and consists of two parts. The first part contains general information about the study sample, including gender and educational level, while the second part contains the core questions of the questionnaire, comprising 18 questions divided into three areas. The first area concerns the characteristics of the ritual phenomenon and how it is performed, the second area addresses the reasons and motivations for engaging in rituals, and the last area focuses on the functions and effectiveness of practicing rituals. Responses are provided as (Yes, Sometimes, No), while other questions required selecting the appropriate options.

1.2.1. Materials and Methods

The study tool is characterized by its reliance on reliability as one of the important scientific foundations.

Reliability: To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, the researchers used Cronbach's Alpha equation, known for its effectiveness in evaluating the reliability of research tools. This equation was applied to a pilot sample consisting of 5 players, and this sample was excluded from the total sample after measurement. The results indicated that the study tool achieved

suitable reliability coefficients, reflecting its ability to accurately measure the targeted concepts. Table (2) illustrates the reliability coefficients of the study tool, thereby enhancing the credibility of the results that will be collected from the main sample:

Table II : Reliability Coefficients of the Questionnaire

Topics	Number of statements	Stability of the axis
First Topic: Characteristics of Ritual Phenomena and How They Are Performed	6	0.790
Second Topic: Functions and Effectiveness of Ritual Practices	5	0.821
Third Topic: Reasons and Motivations for Practicing Rituals	7	0.853
Overall Stability of the Questionnaire	18	0.843

It is evident from Table (2) that the overall reliability coefficient for the study dimensions is high, reaching (0.843) for the total items of the questionnaire. The reliability of the dimensions ranged from (0.790) as a minimum to (0.853) as a maximum. This indicates that the questionnaire possesses a high degree of reliability, making it suitable for field application in the study according to the J. Nunnally & I. Bernstein (1994) scale, which set 0.70 as the minimum threshold for reliability.

Second: Validity: The validity of the questionnaire was verified by relying on face validity, which involved presenting it to 5 experts. We then took into account the various observations provided by the experts, excluding questions that did not align with the study and modifying those recommended for revision, until we reached the final version of the questionnaire.

1.2.2. Statistical Analysis Methods:

The data obtained were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25, employing the following statistical methods: (mean, standard deviation, percentage, Pearson correlation coefficient, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient, and chi-square test).

2.Presentation and Analysis of Study Results

2.1 Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Results of the First Question:

Text of the first question: Is there a widespread practice of rituals in their various forms among football players?

From the presentation of the results of the first domain (Characteristics of the Ritual Phenomenon and How It Is Performed), the following has been revealed:

Table III : Values, percentages, and chi-square test values for the statements in the first domain.

Statement Number	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Degree	Chi-square	Significance Level	Statement Number
1	When preparing for the match, do you practice the usual rituals such as the sports greeting, motivational gathering, and sacraments?	2.34	0.61	67%	High	26.56	0.05	Significant
2	When preparing for the competition, do you practice religious rituals?	2.76	0.47	88.3%	Very High	4.12	0.05	Significant
3	What forms do these religious rituals take?	Prayer		%19.5		9.70	0.05	Significant
		Reciting the Quran		%24.4				
		Supplication		%56.1				
4	When preparing for the match, do any of your teammates practice non-religious rituals such as superstitious behaviors, magic, or witchcraft?	1.07	0.54	3.5%	Very low	70.43	0.05	Significant
5	Do you generally perform rituals?"	In secret		%85.4		20.51	0.05	Significant
		Out loud or Openly		%14.6				
6	Do you generally perform rituals?"	Individually		%70.7		7.04	0.05	Significant
		Collectively or In a group		%29.3				

From Table (3), it is evident that the practice of religious rituals was at a very high level (88.3%), primarily represented by prayer, followed by reading the Quran and prayer at a lower level. The practice of customary rituals also achieved a high degree (67%), while non-religious rituals achieved a very low degree (3.5%). Regarding how rituals are practiced, (85.4%) preferred to practice them in secret, and (70.7%) preferred to practice rituals individually.

It is evident from the above that there is a widespread practice of religious rituals among football players, and these rituals have multiple sources. Players tend to practice religious rituals very frequently, and there is also a high level of practice for some customary rituals (such as sports greetings and motivational gatherings) due to their symbolic significance in promoting team unity and cooperation. Meanwhile, they tend to avoid non-religious rituals. The researcher believes that religiously sourced rituals are more commonly practiced because they align with the social culture of Algerian society and the sacred Islamic religious affiliation. Players resort to religious prayers, such as prayer and reading the Quran, more than other religious rituals because these fit better with various situations and stages of competition.

Engaging in various religious ritual practices helps players acquire a sense of rationality and attain tranquility and peace of mind, which serve as a refuge from pain, anxiety, and sports-related fears. It can be said that football players prefer to practice these rituals individually and secretly rather than openly and collectively. This may be because individual secret practices align better with pre-competition conditions, which are not always conducive to collective rituals, as well as due to the differing beliefs and perspectives of each player regarding these rituals. These rituals, whether collective or individual, often carry a religious character, and most players engage in prayers secretly due to the effectiveness of this method in achieving psychological comfort and relieving pressure.

In this regard, A. Ben-Maamer (2019) notes that the nature of Algerian society is Muslim and that the practice of religious rituals begins from a young age, as they are inherited ideological customs. This highlights the connection between the religious aspect and sports practice. Previous studies have reached similar conclusions, including a study by O. K. Rateb (1997) which indicated that professional Algerian football players are more attached to religious rituals than to other types. Additionally, the results of our study are similar to those of M. Akli (2012), who discussed the practices of professional Algerian players concerning rituals.

2.2. Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Results for the Second Question:

Text of the Second Question: What are the reasons and motivations for players to engage in rituals? Through the presentation of the results for the second area (Reasons and Motivations for Practicing Rituals).

It is clear from Table (4) that players' responses to questions in the second area regarding the reasons for practicing rituals were at a medium level, reaching an overall percentage of (48.47%). The highest response rate was for statement number (1), with a high percentage of (73.5%), which stated, "Do you practice rituals in important matches?" This was followed by statement number (4) and then (5), with high percentages of (68.3%) and (61.1%), respectively. On the other hand, statement number (7) achieved a low percentage of (26.5%), which stated, "Do pressures and criticisms from the media motivate you to perform rituals?"

From the above, it appears that athletes adopt this practice, which is a form of meaning-making aimed at alleviating pressure, negative perceptions, psychological stress, pre-competition doubts, and uncertainty. The ritualistic behavior becomes a means to reduce external pressures and is part of sports cultures directed toward goals, shifting focus to the task at hand. This was affirmed by S. Zaabar's study (2001), which indicated that Algerian football players, when they do not find what meets their psychological needs—especially security from danger and tranquility amid anxiety resulting from high-stakes competition—resort to the supernatural instinctively. This reliance may diminish during times of ease but quickly resurfaces during moments of difficulty and urgency.

J. Bleak & M. Frederick, (1998) add that the reason for resorting to ritual practices is merely an attempt to control highly stressful situations. G. Ferraro (2004) states that rituals provide comfort and create order in the world of athletes, who often experience a lack of control. Among these reasons are uncertainty, anxiety, a strong desire to succeed, and feelings of reduced control, severe uncertainty, and noticeable psychological stress. This finding aligns with S. Zaabar's study (2001), which concluded that the stakes and importance of sporting events are central reasons for Algerian professional football players engaging in rituals, a result also confirmed by M. Akli (2012).

Table IV : Values, percentages, and chi-square test values for the statements in the third domain

No.	The Phrase	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Degree	Chi-Squared	Significance Level	Degree
1	Does practising rituals collectively strengthen team cohesion?	2.8	0.44	%90.02	Very High	26.56	0.05	Significant
2	Does your ritual practice have positive effects towards the competition?	2.51	0.47	%75.6	High	10.75	0.05	Significant
3	Does ritual practice make you more calm and tranquil?	2.56	0.52	%78.04	High	13.07	0.05	Significant
4	Do you ritualise when you lose focus before a match?	2.41	0.54	%70.5	High	1.97	0.42	Significant
5	Does ritual practice give you the ability to manage your behaviour and control your temper?	2.24	0.42	%62.0	High	3.85	0.05	Not Significant
6	Functions and effectiveness of ritual practice	2.50	0.37	%75	High	9.25	0.05	Significant

From the above, it is clear that ritual practices have the function of controlling behaviors resulting from emotions and limiting them among Algerian football players. This is achieved through the employment of causal beliefs that influence the mental and intellectual dimension of the Algerian player via doctrinal, cultural, and religious influences, which are predominantly Islamic in nature. This makes their practice a form of protection for the player against anxiety and creates an emotional space that enhances their focus while providing psychological safety and future optimism for sports competition. As a result, players become more capable of controlling behaviors arising from emotions and the surrounding circumstances of competition.

Rituals serve as a source of internal security and satisfaction, offering a refuge from fear and the psychological pains associated with the demands of sports competition. Players affirm that rituals strengthen and enhance team cohesion, which aligns with R. CLaude (1997), who stated that rituals enable the building and rebuilding of cohesion among group members, integrating nature into society and forming social harmony. This is achieved through religious celebrations and even some more routine rituals.

C. Geertz (1957) also emphasizes that the practice of rituals is a form of social interaction. Given that Algerian society is predominantly Muslim and engages in religious ritual practices, performing these rituals provides players with a sense of divine assistance from God, which creates a positive impression towards competition.

From all this, we conclude that rituals have the function of controlling and limiting behaviors resulting from emotions among Algerian football players. Some studies have revealed this, including S. Zabar's (2001) study, which indicated that rituals play a role in controlling behaviors resulting from emotions and limiting them among professional Algerian football players. Additionally, M. Akli's (2012) study also highlighted that rituals serve as a source of reassurance and security for professional Algerian football players.

3. Discussion

The study explores the role of ritual practices in football players' psychological preparation, focusing on how rituals—religious, superstitious, and customary—impact emotional regulation, team cohesion, and overall performance. The findings suggest that rituals play a significant role in alleviating anxiety, stress, and uncertainty, which are common challenges in high-stakes competitions.

The research shows that religious rituals, particularly prayer and Quran reading, are the most frequently practiced by football players, especially in the context of competition. These

rituals are seen as a means of achieving psychological comfort and focus, helping players deal with the pressures of the game. The high engagement in religious rituals aligns with Algeria's predominant Muslim culture, where such practices are deeply ingrained from a young age. Players prefer individual, private rituals before matches, which may be influenced by personal beliefs and the desire for psychological calm.

Rituals in sports are not limited to religion but extend to symbolic actions, such as motivational chants and team greetings, which serve to foster unity and collaboration within the team. These customary rituals are also seen as effective in building psychological resilience, improving team cohesion, and preparing athletes mentally for the challenges ahead.

The motivations for engaging in rituals are largely driven by the psychological pressures of competition. The athletes use rituals to gain a sense of control over uncertainties, alleviate stress, and mentally prepare for the game. The emotional comfort provided by these practices can be crucial in enhancing focus and reducing performance anxiety. The findings highlight that rituals are often used as coping mechanisms to manage the intense psychological pressures that come with competitive sports.

The study also notes the impact of media and societal pressures on athletes' decisions to engage in rituals. While some players rely on rituals to counteract external pressures and criticisms, the majority of ritual practices appear to be motivated by a desire for personal psychological reassurance rather than media influence. This suggests that rituals are deeply personal and culturally embedded strategies to cope with the emotional and psychological demands of sports.

In conclusion, rituals serve as an essential psychological tool for football players, helping them control their emotions, reduce anxiety, and maintain focus during competitions. The study emphasizes the importance of psychological preparation in football, showing that rituals, especially those rooted in religion and culture, can significantly contribute to the mental readiness of players. The findings advocate for further research into the psychological benefits of rituals in sports, particularly in the context of enhancing performance and emotional control under pressure.

Conclusion

Through the study we conducted, we aimed to uncover the forms and specifications of rituals most practiced by football players, as well as their importance by exploring the motivations and reasons behind resorting to these rituals. Additionally, we examined players'

opinions and beliefs regarding the effects and functions of these rituals on their behaviors and their ability to control their emotions during competition.

The study reached several conclusions, the most significant of which are: there is a widespread practice of rituals among football players, with a strong inclination towards religious rituals such as prayers, supplications, and reading the Quran. Players prefer to practice these rituals individually and secretly rather than openly and collectively. They also engage in habitual rituals, such as sports greetings and motivational gatherings, to a high degree, while steering clear of rituals with non-religious sources.

Moreover, players believe that practicing rituals positively influences their behaviors by helping them control their emotions and increase their focus, thereby assisting them in coping with events and alleviating the stress and anxiety associated with competition. In conclusion, situations of uncertainty and anxiety arising from intense competition, along with a strong desire for achievement and the pressure to succeed, are identified as the main reasons and motivations for resorting to the practice of rituals.

Based on the results obtained, the study recommends the need to address the cultural meanings embedded in rituals as an important aspect for both aspiring and elite athletes. This can be achieved by promoting the concept that ritual practices are part of goal-oriented sports cultures, alongside scientific methods of psychological preparation. The study also emphasizes the importance of teaching athletes specific strategies and procedures to overcome performance deviations and maintain focus on the task at hand.

In conclusion, the study suggests conducting comparative studies between male and female athletes regarding the extent of ritual practice, as well as investigating superstitious behaviors and the phenomenon of altered states of consciousness resulting from the repeated use of rituals.

Bibliographic references

- Allawi, mohamed hassan. (1992). *Educational psychology*. Cairo: dar al-maaref.
- Al-salmane, mamour behassan. (1998). *Football between interests and legal corruptions*. Lebanon: dar ibn hazm.
- Ben-maamer, abdallah. (2019). Anthropology and rituals. *Mediterranean thought journal for research and studies in dialogue of religions and civilizations*, 8(1), 139-186.
- Bleak, jared, & frederick, christina. (1998). Superstitious behavior in sport: levels of effectiveness and determinants of use in three collegiate sports. *Journal of sport behavior*, 21(1), 1–15.
- Broch, trygve, & kristiansen, elsa. (2014). Ritual coping with cultural pressures. *Scandinavian journal of medicine and science in sports*, 24(5), 837–845.
- Claude, riviere. (1997). *Anthropologie des religions*. Paris: armand colin.
- Geertz, clifford. (1957). Ritual and social change: a javanese example. *American anthropologist*, 59(1), 32-54.

- Ferraro, gary. (2004). *Classic readings in cultural anthropology*. Toronto: thomson.
- Jaen, maisonneuve. (1998). *Les rituels*. Paris, france: presses universitaires de france.
- Akli, mohaned. (2012). *The impact of sports psychological preparation on professional football players* (unpublished master's thesis). University of algeria 03, algiers.
- Nunnally, jum, & bernstein, ira. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). New york: mcgraw-hill.
- Patrick, kwaku ofori, tod, david, & lavallee, david. (2018). An exploratory investigation of superstitious behaviors, coping, control strategies, and personal control in ghanaian and british student-athletes. *International journal of sport and exercise psychology*, 16(1), 1-17.
- Rateb, oussama kameel. (1997). *Sport psychology: applications and concepts*. Cairo, egypt: dar al-fikr al-arabi.
- Rafas, badis, & hassani, moustafa. (2022). Analysis of some physical characteristics of football players and their role in determining playing levels: a comparative study between professional and amateur players. *Al-tahadi journal*, 14(2), 252-267.
- Rappaport, roy. (1999). *Ritual and religion in the making of humanity*. Cambridge: cambridge university press.
- Zaabar, salim. (2001). *Rituals as a means of psychological preparation for professional algerian football players*. University of algeria 03, department of physical education and sports.
- Zan, omar. (2016). Psychological skills and their relationship to competitive anxiety among football players. *Scientific journal of physical education and sports*, 15(1), 117-126.

Imad Eddine MEGA is a Lecturer in sports psychology in sports psychology and a member of a research team studying the role of youth institutions in developing motivation for sports practice among young people and its impact on their behaviors. This team is affiliated with the University of Tebessa. His research and publications focus on anthropology within the sports field, particularly in sports competition, as well as developmental psychology and motor education. He also studies social and psychological changes in those who engage in sports activities. He is part of the Institute of Physical and Sports Activity Sciences and Techniques, in the Sports Training Department.

Imad Eddine MEGA
Eshahid Sheikh Larbi Tebessi University - Tebessa (Algeria)
mega.imed@univ-tebessa.dz

Abderrafik BENDERRADJI is a doctor in the field of recreational sports physical activity. He is affiliated with the Laboratory of Technological Sciences for Educational Sports Activities at the University of Batna 2. His research and publications focus on the psychological and social aspects of senior athletes, as well as the impact of recreational and leisure activities on self-esteem. He is part of the Institute of Physical and Sports Activity Sciences and Techniques, in the Educational Physical Activity Department.

Abderrafik BENDERRADJI
BATNA 2 University (Algeria)
ab.benderradji@univ-batna2.dz

Abdelmalek GUERRAD is a Lecturer in sports psychology and a member of a research team focused on a developmental study of health-related physical fitness levels among school students (ages 6–18), affiliated with the University of Tebessa. His research and publications center on sports leadership within the sports field and sports media. A portion of his research also focuses on sports psychology and psychomotor development in children

Abdelmalek GUERRAD
Eshahid Sheikh Larbi Tebessi University - Tebessa (Algeria)
abdelmalek.guerrad@univ-tebessa.dz
