

# *The Influence of Psychological Factors on Players' Performance in Basketball Match*

Cong Zhixin

*Physical Education Department, North China Electric Power University, Baoding, 071000, China*

**Keywords:** Basketball player; Psychological quality; Competition performance; Psychological training

**Abstract:** This article mainly discusses the composition of basketball players' psychological quality and how these psychological factors specifically affect their performance. This provides a theoretical basis for the psychological training and counseling of basketball players. This article studies and constructs the psychological quality framework of basketball players, which includes key psychological factors such as self-confidence, anxiety management, motivation and team cohesion. On this basis, this article analyzes in detail how these factors affect the performance of athletes. The results show that the psychological quality has a vital influence on the performance of basketball players. Self-confidence, anxiety management, motivation and team cohesion are important components of athletes' psychological quality, and they are also the key factors to determine the outcome of the competition. Through scientific psychological training, the psychological quality of athletes can be effectively improved, so as to play the best level in the competition. The conclusion emphasizes that the psychological training of basketball players should focus on self-confidence, anxiety management, motivation stimulation and team building, so as to improve their performance.

## **1. Introduction**

Since ancient times, basketball has attracted the attention of hundreds of millions of viewers around the world with its fierce antagonism, high degree of cooperation and ever-changing field situation [1]. On the field, athletes have to face extreme physical challenges and bear great psychological pressure [2]. Every shot and every defense is not only a contest between technology and physical strength, but also a test of psychological quality [3]. How to keep calm judgment in a tense competition atmosphere, resist pressure at critical moments and give full play to the best level has become a psychological challenge that every basketball player must face [4]. Based on the above, this article thinks that it is of certain significance to deeply discuss the psychological factors in basketball for understanding the competitive state of athletes and improving their performance.

The purpose of this study is to deeply analyze the psychological challenges faced by athletes in basketball games from the theoretical level, and how these psychological factors specifically affect their competitive performance. By systematically analyzing the mechanism of key psychological factors such as self-confidence, anxiety, motivation and team cohesion, this article hopes to reveal the dynamic changes of basketball players' psychological state and how these changes are closely

related to the game results. This study will also explore how to help athletes improve their psychological quality through scientific psychological training and counseling, so as to maintain the best competitive state in the fierce competition. This is of great theoretical significance for enriching the research content of sports psychology and deepening the understanding of the psychological mechanism of basketball. It can also provide practical guidance for basketball coaches and psychological counselors to help athletes achieve better results on the field.

From the early motivation theory and anxiety management to the later research on self-efficacy and team cohesion, scholars have been exploring the internal relationship between psychological factors and sports performance [5]. However, the psychological research on basketball as a specific sport is still insufficient [6]. This study will build a comprehensive theoretical framework based on the previous research results and the uniqueness and competitive characteristics of basketball. This framework focuses on the core psychological factors such as self-confidence, anxiety, motivation and team cohesion, and probes into their specific action mechanisms in basketball games and how to improve the psychological quality of athletes through scientific psychological intervention.

## **2. Composition of psychological quality of basketball players**

### **2.1. Self-confidence and self-efficacy**

Self-confidence is an important part of basketball players' psychological quality. It directly affects the performance of athletes on the field [7]. Athletes with strong self-confidence dare to take responsibility at critical moments and dare to try difficult shots or breakthroughs. This positive attitude can often be translated into actual scores and even change the direction of the game. Self-efficacy is an athlete's belief in his ability to complete a specific task. Athletes with high self-efficacy believe that they can overcome difficulties and achieve their goals through hard work [8]. This belief urges them to be more tenacious in the face of challenges and constantly break through their own limits. In the basketball game, self-confidence and self-efficacy complement each other, which together constitute a strong psychological support for athletes.

### **2.2. Anxiety and stress regulation**

The fierce competition and high-intensity confrontation in basketball matches are often accompanied by great psychological pressure and anxiety. Moderate anxiety can stimulate athletes' fighting spirit, but excessive anxiety may lead to movement deformation and decision-making mistakes [9]. Therefore, it is very important for basketball players to learn effective stress regulation skills. Including deep breathing, mindfulness meditation, positive psychological suggestion, etc., these are all effective ways to help athletes stay calm and relieve tension in the competition. Scientific psychological training is very important for athletes. It can help athletes manage their emotions, turn their anxiety into positive strength, and improve their psychological resilience, ensuring that they can stay calm, concentrate and play their best at the critical moment of the competition.

### **2.3. Motivation and goal orientation**

Motivation is the internal driving force to push athletes forward [10]. It can be the pursuit of victory, personal honor, team honor and so on. Clear motivation can stimulate athletes' training enthusiasm and fighting spirit, and make them more persistent in the face of difficulties and challenges. Goal orientation is a concrete and measurable goal set by athletes according to their motivation. These goals are both short-term and long-term, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Athlete Goal Orientation

Goal Type	Specific Examples
Short-term Goals	Improve running speed by 5 seconds this week
	Complete 10 successful shots in tomorrow's training
	Reduce the number of mistakes to below 2 in the next game
Mid-term Goals	Increase physical fitness test scores by 10% this month
	Achieve personal best performance and win an MVP award this season
	Improve team coordination with teammates and complete a flawless team drill
Long-term Goals	Break personal records and rank in the top ten nationally this year
	Win a domestic/international major tournament championship
	Maintain continuous improvement to lay the foundation for future selection to the national team

Table 1 shows the goals that athletes may set in different time spans, from short-term to long-term, covering skills improvement, competition performance, teamwork and personal career development. These goals are set based on athletes' motivation. Its purpose is to stimulate their enthusiasm for training and fighting spirit in competition, and to help them maintain a persistent attitude in the face of difficulties and challenges. Reasonable goal setting can guide athletes' training direction and help them keep clear goal consciousness in the competition, so as to achieve self-transcendence more effectively.

## 2.4. Team cohesion and leadership

Basketball is a team sport, and team cohesion is one of the key factors to win. Team cohesion is reflected in the tacit cooperation, mutual trust and support among athletes [11]. It can stimulate the team's sense of collective honor and make every athlete willing to contribute to the team's victory. And leadership is an indispensable part of the team. Excellent leaders can lead the team to keep clear tactical ideas in the competition, mobilize the enthusiasm and fighting spirit of teammates, and even stand up at critical moments to lead the team out of the predicament. The cultivation of team cohesion and leadership requires athletes to constantly run in daily training and competition, and gradually establish deep team friendship and efficient leadership mechanism through common struggle and successful experience.

## 3. The concrete influence of psychological factors on basketball players' performance

### 3.1. Self-confidence and competition performance

Self-confidence is the cornerstone for basketball players to show themselves and develop their potential on the court. An athlete full of self-confidence can often make more decisive decisions in the competition. Whether it is the breakthrough and shooting at the offensive end, or the stealing and blocking at the defensive end, it can show higher efficiency and accuracy. Self-confidence can also help athletes stay calm in backwardness or adversity, quickly adjust their mentality and look for opportunities to fight back. On the contrary, athletes who lack self-confidence may hesitate for fear of mistakes, miss opportunities and even lead to low morale of the whole team.

### 3.2. Anxiety and error rate

Anxiety is a common psychological state in basketball games. Learning to adjust anxiety and maintain a stable mentality is very important for reducing the rate of mistakes and improving the performance of the game. Moderate anxiety can stimulate athletes' fighting spirit, but excessive

anxiety may lead to the deformation of technical movements and the increase of decision-making mistakes. In a high-pressure competition environment, if athletes can't effectively manage their anxiety, they may shoot wide, pass the ball incorrectly, and lose their defense. These mistakes may directly affect the direction of the game. At critical moments, such as free throws and dead shots, the ability to control anxiety is the key to determining the outcome of the game.

### 3.3. Motivation and sustainable competitiveness

Motivation is the internal force that drives basketball players to keep moving forward and pursue Excellence. Strong motivation can stimulate athletes' enthusiasm for training, make them more involved in daily training and constantly improve their skills. In competition, motivation can help athletes maintain a high degree of concentration and sustained competitiveness, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Motivation's Impact on Basketball Athletes' Performance

Aspect of Motivation's Impact	Specific Manifestations
Training Enthusiasm	Voluntarily increases training duration and intensity
	Actively seeks feedback to continuously improve technical skills
	Maintains high focus and engagement during training
Skill Improvement	Significantly improves shooting percentage
	Develops more proficient dribbling and passing skills
	Enhances defensive reaction speed and judgment
Game Focus	Stays calm during games and is not easily distracted by external factors
	Performs stably in crucial moments and executes key shots
	Continuously tracks opponent's movements and makes quick adjustments
Competitiveness	Maintains fighting spirit even when facing strong opponents
	Quickly adjusts mindset and initiates counterattacks when trailing
	Continuously challenges oneself to pursue higher levels of competitive performance

Cultivating correct motivation and maintaining continuous competitiveness are the keys to basketball players' long-term success. The strength and stability of motivation often determine whether the athletes' performance in the competition can be sustained and stable, or even extraordinary.

### 3.4. Team cohesion and competition results

Basketball is a team sport, and team cohesion has a decisive influence on the result of the game. A team that is United and trusts each other can show stronger overall combat capability in the competition. Whether it is the fluency of offensive and defensive conversion or the tacit cooperation at key moments, they can reflect the strength of team cohesion. Team cohesion can enhance players' sense of belonging and responsibility, and make them more willing to work hard for the team's victory in the game. Teams with insufficient team cohesion are generally prone to problems such as internal contradictions and coordination errors. These problems are often magnified in a tense game, thus affecting the result of the game. This article holds that cultivating team cohesion and building a United and harmonious team is an important guarantee for winning the game.

## 4. Conclusions

Through in-depth analysis of the composition of basketball players' psychological quality and how these psychological factors specifically affect their game performance, this article draws a series of valuable conclusions. It is found that self-confidence, anxiety management, motivation and team cohesion are the most critical aspects of basketball players' psychological quality. Self-confidence can significantly improve the performance of athletes and make them more decisive and efficient. Effective anxiety management helps to reduce the rate of mistakes and maintain a stable mentality. Strong motivation is the source of athletes' sustainable competitiveness, which pushes them to pursue Excellence continuously. Team cohesion is an important guarantee for the team to win and can enhance the overall combat capability. These conclusions enrich the research content of sports psychology and provide theoretical basis for psychological training and counseling of basketball players.

The theoretical framework and conclusions put forward in this study have broad application prospects. In the field of basketball, coaches and psychological counselors can design more scientific and effective psychological training programs based on these theories to help athletes improve their psychological quality, so as to play the best level in the competition. For example, improving athletes' sense of self-efficacy through self-confidence training; Reduce the tension in the game through anxiety management skills; Maintain the sustained competitiveness of athletes through motivation; Enhance the cohesion of the team through team building activities. These theories can also be extended to other competitive sports, providing reference for the cultivation of athletes' psychological quality and promoting the practical application and development of sports psychology.

## References

- [1] Hou Wendi, Jiang Guangjin, Wang Shuai, et. Al. Study on the Implementation and Effectiveness of Psychological Training for High School Club Tennis Players [J]. *Journal of Guangzhou Sport University*, 2020, 40(02): 68-72.
- [2] Liu Yunzhou, Li Yajing, Yang Yongtao. Meta-Analysis of the Effects of High-Intensity Interval Training and Moderate-Intensity Continuous Training on Inhibitory Function [J]. *Journal of Capital University of Physical Education and Sports*, 2024, 36(1): 105-116.
- [3] Zhang Yu, Wei Yifan, Tao Jingting, et. Al. Multi-Object Tracking and Trajectory Prediction for Basketball Players [J]. *Chinese Journal of Sports Medicine*, 2021, 40(10): 800-809.
- [4] Wang Yu. The Impact of Coach Leadership Behavior on Athlete Performance: The Mediating Roles of Psychological Preparation and Sport Anxiety [J]. *Journal of Physical Education*, 2023, 30(1): 74-80.
- [5] Chen Haoqun, Wang Hengdang, Lu Zhansheng. Research on Scientific Talent Selection Indicators for Pearl Ball Athletes Based on Competitive Status [J]. *Journal of Guangzhou Sport University*, 2021, 41(4): 71-75.
- [6] Zhu Dapeng, Qi Changzhu. Construction and Positioning of Mental Health Education Service Model for Athletes from a Big Data Perspective [J]. *Journal of Beijing Sport University*, 2023, 46(6): 113-122.
- [7] Shi Yan, Wang Ting. Theoretical Origins and Practical Review of Mental Health Services for Athletes [J]. *China Sport Science*, 2024, 44(4): 16-23.
- [8] Liu Yue, Han Bo, Ayanga. Construction of a Psychological Fatigue Prediction Model for Athletes Based on Self-Determination Theory [J]. *Journal of Tianjin University of Sport*, 2023, 38(1): 112-118.
- [9] Yi Yan, Liu Jingru, Zhang Yan, et. Al. Behavioral Performance and Brain Processing Characteristics of Mental Rotation Ability in Orienteering Athletes Under Different Cognitive Load Conditions [J]. *Journal of Physical Education*, 2022, 29(2): 136-144.
- [10] Huang Yajuan, Dong Rui, Yang Zhen, et. Al. Trait Mindfulness and Mental Health of Professional Athletes: Chain Mediation Effect and Gender Differences [J]. *Studies of Psychology and Behavior*, 2023, 21(2): 273-279.
- [11] Zeng Hongfa, Cui Jiabao. Formation and Transformation of Psychological Stress Responses in High-Level Orienteering Athletes in Competition Situations [J]. *Journal of Guangzhou Sport University*, 2022, 42(3): 16-22.