



# How Self-Imagery Shapes Self-Confidence in Male and Female Golf Athletes Effects of Game-Based Teaching Modules on Fundamental Movement Skills of Elementary School Students

Ahmad Hamidi, Muhammad Sultan Firmansyah, Tian Kurniawan

Department of Sport Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia

\*Correspondence: E-mail: [ahmadhamidi@upi.edu](mailto:ahmadhamidi@upi.edu)

## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the relationship between self-imagery skills and self-confidence levels among golf athletes in the Golf Student Activity Unit at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, as well as to compare self-confidence levels between male and female athletes. Using a quantitative approach with a correlational design, this research involved 40 participants (20 male participants and 20 female participants) selected by using purposive sampling. The Sport Imagery Ability Questionnaire (SIAQ) and the Trait Sport Confidence Inventory (TSCI) were used as instruments to measure self-imagery ability and self-confidence levels, respectively. The data were analyzed by using Pearson's correlation test and independent samples t-test. The results showed a non-significant positive correlation between self-imagery skills and self-confidence levels ( $r = 0.214$ ,  $p = 0.37$ ), indicating that higher self-imagery ability tends to be associated with higher self-confidence, although the relationship was not statistically significant. Additionally, the comparison of self-confidence levels between male and female athletes revealed no significant difference ( $t = 0.90$ ,  $p = 0.37$ ). These findings suggested that both male and female athletes possessed comparable levels of self-confidence and mental imagery ability may contribute to the development of self-confidence in golf athletes regardless of gender.

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## INTRODUCTION

A lack of understanding of sports psychology can negatively affect athletic performance and psychological well-being, leading to feelings of anxiety, worry, and despair (Permana et al., 2022). Such psychological distress often arises when individuals lack confidence in their abilities, which can interfere with focus and performance. Therefore, self-confidence plays a crucial role in supporting athletic performance, as athletes with strong self-confidence are less likely to doubt themselves or their teams (Ilham, 2021). Self-confidence is also essential for sustaining athletic achievement and enhancing individual well-being in sports contexts (Effendi, 2016).

Self-confidence is closely related to the philosophy of self-fulfilment and self-confidence. Athletes with high self-confidence believe in their ability to perform as expected and perceive themselves as capable of achieving success (Fatmawati et al., 2022). In sports, self-confidence helps athletes manage anxiety before and during competition, thereby supporting consistent performance and long-term achievement (Hamdani & Sartono, 2021). Moreover, individuals with high self-confidence tend to have a positive influence on their teammates and social environment, fostering enjoyment and motivation during sports activities (Annisa & Abadi, 2023). Beyond physical, technical, and tactical preparation, athletes must also develop mental skills, which are the focus of sports psychology (Supriady, 2020). Coaches play an essential external role in fostering athletes' confidence both before and during competition.

According to Hallisoy et al. (2024), self-confidence is a person's ability or ability to achieve certain achievements and accomplishments. So self-confidence is very important for progress in any field because one of them can avoid doubts and anxiety within oneself, thereby producing maximum results (Purnomo et al., 2023). Having self-confidence or confidence in one's abilities can have a good impact on one's performance and can also create an active atmosphere, which is what individuals need and must have (Annisa & Abadi, 2023). In sports contexts, self-confidence contributes to active engagement, emotional comfort, and sustained motivation (Maryati et al., 2023). As a result, self-confidence is one of the most frequently discussed psychological factors in sports due to its strong influence on performance (Jekauc et al., 2025).

Self-confidence refers to an individual's attitude and belief in their own abilities, which enables them to perform activities without excessive anxiety, with a sense of autonomy, and with strong achievement motivation derived from an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses (Zulfriadi, 2017). This sense of self-confidence is obtained from life experience which is related to the level of ability to do something. Self-confidence is also a form of belief that oneself is capable of achieving an achievement. Through a good level of self-confidence, a person can actualize their potential to the maximum. The characteristics of people who have good self-confidence are unselfish, independent, tolerant, optimistic, ambitious, confident in their own opinions, and have a positive attitude towards themselves (Putri, 2025). However, the development of self-confidence is a gradual process that requires patience and sustained effort over time (Benson, 2018). Despite its importance, many individuals continue to experience difficulties related to low self-confidence, which can negatively affect daily functioning. Manifestations of low self-confidence include self-doubt, lack of initiative, pessimism, and excessive anxiety (Carver & Scheier, 2019). Therefore, engagement in positive and constructive activities, such as reading, writing, and physical exercise, is essential to support the development and strengthening of self-confidence.

Exercise is an essential strategy for developing and maintaining a strong and healthy physique, as it exerts significant benefits on overall physical health and well-being; therefore, regular exercise is a fundamental human necessity (Salahudin & Rusdin, 2020). From the perspective of sports physiology, exercise consists of a series of planned, structured, and purposeful physical movements performed consciously to enhance functional capacity in accordance with specific objectives. Based on their nature and purpose, sports can be categorized into achievement sports, recreational sports, health sports, and educational sports (Zulyaden et al., 2022). In this context, golf in Indonesia has evolved into a socially engaging sport that is widely practiced across diverse age groups, including children, adolescents, adults, and older adults. The increasing popularity of golf has contributed to the establishment of numerous clubs dedicated to the development of golf athletes at both grassroots and elite levels (Adnan & Amin, 2020). Consequently, athlete development must be addressed holistically, encompassing physical, technical, tactical, and psychological aspects. Therefore, coaches are required to monitor and support athlete development comprehensively, with particular attention to psychological components that play a crucial role in optimizing athletic performance (Irfandi & Rahmat, 2022).

Psychology comes from the word psychology, which comes from Greek, which comes from two words, namely psyche, which means soul, and logos, which means deep discussion or science. So, on this basis, psychology is defined as the study of the human psyche (Saifudin, 2022). Within this framework, sport psychology represents a branch of applied psychology that focuses on psychological factors influencing athletic performance, including both internal factors within the athlete and external factors arising from the surrounding environment. Psychological skills training in competitive sports is designed to enhance athletes' mental readiness, emotional regulation, and competitive mindset, which ultimately contribute to improved performance outcomes (Effendi, 2016). Sport psychology examines psychological aspects related to athletes' training, performance, and physical activities, aiming to support optimal performance and long-term development (Cherry, 2021). Consequently, sport psychology plays a vital role in explaining, predicting, and regulating athlete behavior in competitive settings, thereby supporting achievement and success in sporting events (Candra & Mislana, 2021). Among various psychological training methods, mental training—particularly self-imagery training—has been widely recognized as an effective approach to enhancing athletes' psychological skills. Self-imagery enables athletes to mentally rehearse movements, strategies, and performance situations, thereby strengthening mental preparedness and supporting performance enhancement.

Self-imagery ability plays a crucial role in the athletic training process and performance by enabling athletes to create, control, and refine mental representations of movements, sensations, and performance situations. Athletes with higher imagery ability tend to demonstrate greater psychological and mental development compared to those with lower imagery ability, as they are better able to regulate focus, confidence, and emotional responses during training and competition (Singnoy et al., 2015). Imagery training refers to a systematic mental practice in which athletes consciously visualize sport-specific movements and scenarios without any external physical stimulation (Nopiyanto et al., 2022). This cognitive process allows athletes to mentally rehearse performance execution, thereby strengthening neural pathways associated with motor skills. According to Cumming & Eaves (2018), the essence of the ability to imagine is the ability to imagine and illustrate something that is in the mind. Moreover, it is a complex cognitive process that not only generates images/visualizations but also maintains images over time. Imagery training has been proven

to provide benefits for athletes in recreating movement experiences in their brains so that athletes are able to display these movement patterns well.

However, most existing studies have primarily emphasized the role of self-confidence in enhancing athletic performance, while giving limited attention to self-imagery as a cognitive mechanism that may contribute to the development of self-confidence. Moreover, empirical research investigating the relationship between self-imagery ability and self-confidence within the specific context of golf—particularly with respect to gender-based comparisons—remains scarce. This gap highlights the need for further investigation to better understand how cognitive imagery processes may influence psychological readiness and confidence among male and female golf athletes.

This study aimed to examine the relationship between self-imagery ability and self-confidence among male and female golf athletes, while also providing coaches and athletes with a deeper understanding of the role of sport psychology in supporting athletic performance. Previous studies have demonstrated that self-confidence is a crucial psychological attribute that athletes must possess at a high level to achieve optimal performance (Nopiyanto et al., 2022). Furthermore, the development of sport-related psychological skills, particularly self-confidence, can originate from self-imagery abilities, which have been shown to contribute to enhanced confidence levels during training and competitive situations (Murni et al., 2020). These findings indicate that athlete development is not solely dependent on physical and technical factors, but is also supported by cognitive skills such as self-imagery, which can help athletes strengthen their confidence when participating in official competitions. Therefore, this study seeks to address the existing gap in the literature by investigating the relationship between self-imagery ability and self-confidence in golf athletes, with specific attention to gender-based differences—an area that remains underexplored in previous research.

## **METHODS INTRODUCTION**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative research approach, as it aimed to test theoretical relationships by measuring variables numerically and analyzing them using statistical techniques. Quantitative methods are appropriate for examining relationships among variables and drawing conclusions based on empirical data. A correlational research design was adopted to identify the degree of association between self-imagery ability and self-confidence without manipulating the variables (Putri et al., 2025). In this study, the relationship between self-imagery and self-confidence was examined among male and female golf athletes. Additionally, descriptive analyses were conducted to explore potential gender-related trends in self-confidence levels, providing further insight into how self-imagery ability may be associated with self-confidence across genders.

### **Participants**

The population of this study consisted of athletes who were members of the Golf Student Activity Unit (UKM Golf) at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, totaling 40 individuals. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants based on specific criteria relevant to the objectives of the study. Purposive sampling allows researchers to deliberately select participants who possess characteristics deemed essential for addressing the research questions. The inclusion criteria for this study were active participation in golf training and involvement in official tournaments within the past year. Based on these criteria, the final sample comprised 40 athletes, consisting of 20 male and 20 female golf athletes.

### **Sampling Procedures**

The population of this study consisted of 40 athletes who were members of the Golf Student Activity Unit (UKM Golf) at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants based on predefined criteria aligned with the objectives of the study. This non-probability sampling method enables researchers to focus on individuals who possess specific characteristics relevant to the research questions.

Participants were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) active involvement in regular golf training sessions and (2) participation in official golf tournaments within the past year. Based on these criteria, the final sample comprised 40 competitive golf athletes, including 20 male and 20 female participants. The use of purposive sampling was considered appropriate as it ensured that all participants had sufficient experience and physical preparedness representative of university-level competitive golf athletes.

### **Materials and Apparatus**

Data were collected using self-report questionnaires. Questionnaires are a common data collection technique that involves administering a set of written questions or statements to respondents for completion. The instruments used in this study were the Sport Imagery Ability Questionnaire (SIAQ) and the Trait Sport Confidence Inventory (TSCI). The Sport Imagery Ability Questionnaire (SIAQ) was administered to assess participants' levels of self-imagery ability through a series of structured statements. The Trait Sport Confidence Inventory (TSCI) was used to measure athletes' levels of positive self-confidence in their abilities. Sport confidence, as assessed by the TSCI, comprises three key dimensions: (1) physical skills and training, (2) cognitive efficiency, and (3) resilience.

Both instruments have demonstrated strong validity and reliability in previous research. The SIAQ, developed by Williams and Cumming (2011), has shown good construct validity and internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.93 across its subscales. Similarly, the TSCI, developed by Vealey (1986), has been widely used to assess athletic self-confidence and has consistently demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.85 in various studies. In the present study, both instruments were adapted and translated to align with the characteristics of the sample. Limited pilot testing was conducted to ensure clarity, cultural appropriateness, and consistency of the questionnaire items prior to data collection.

### **Procedures**

The research procedure carried out by the researcher was to determine the population and then take samples from the population that met the researcher's requirements and criteria. The sample was asked several questions using the instrument that had been prepared by the researcher. After completing the data collection process, the data were analysed and processed.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted in several stages. Descriptive statistics were first used to summarize the data, including minimum scores, maximum scores, means, and standard deviations, to provide an overview of participants' self-imagery ability and self-confidence levels. First, the normality test was conducted to assess whether the sample data were derived from a normally distributed population and to determine the appropriate statistical procedures for subsequent analyses. The normality tests commonly employed include the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, the Lilliefors test, and the Shapiro–Wilk test. In this study, the Shapiro–Wilk test was applied due to the relatively small sample size ( $n < 50$ ). Second, a homogeneity of variance test was performed to examine whether two or more groups of sample data originated from populations with equal variances (homogeneous). Third, parametric hypothesis testing required the data to meet the assumptions of normality and

homogeneity. When these assumptions were not satisfied, non-parametric statistical tests were employed. The assessment of data normality was based on the Shapiro–Wilk test results, given that the number of subjects was fewer than 50.

## RESULTS

This study aimed to describe the relationship between self-imagery ability and self-confidence levels among golf athletes from the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia Student Activity Unit (UKM UPI), as well as to examine trends in self-confidence differences between male and female athletes.

**Table 1.** Participant Distribution by Gender

| Gender | n  | %   |
|--------|----|-----|
| Male   | 20 | 50  |
| Female | 20 | 50  |
| Total  | 40 | 100 |

As shown in Table 1, the total sample consisted of 40 athletes, including 20 male and 20 female participants. Data were collected through the online administration of the Sport Imagery Ability Questionnaire (SIAQ) and the Trait Sport Confidence Inventory (TSCI) using Google Forms.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics of Self-Confidence Scores by Gender

| Gender | n  | Minimum | Maximum | M      | SD    |
|--------|----|---------|---------|--------|-------|
| Male   | 20 | 94      | 170     | 140.15 | 21.98 |
| Female | 20 | 97      | 174     | 137.85 | 17.38 |

The descriptive analysis presented in Table 2 indicates that female golf athletes had self-confidence scores ranging from 97 to 174, with a mean of 137.85 and a standard deviation of 17.38. In contrast, male golf athletes had scores ranging from 94 to 170, with a mean of 140.15 and a standard deviation of 21.98. These results suggest that male athletes exhibited slightly higher average self-confidence levels than female athletes.

**Table 3.** Correlation between Self-Imagery and Self-Confidence

| Variable                | 1 | 2    |
|-------------------------|---|------|
| 1. Self-Imagery Ability | — | .214 |
| 2. Self-Confidence      |   | —    |

The correlation analysis (Table 3) revealed a positive but non-significant relationship between self-imagery ability and self-confidence ( $r = 0.214$ ,  $p = 0.37$ ). This finding suggests that higher self-imagery ability tends to be associated with higher self-confidence; however, the strength of this association was weak and did not reach statistical significance.

**Table 4.** Independent Samples t-Test: Self-Confidence Scores by Gender

| Gender | n  | M      | SD    | t    | df | p   |
|--------|----|--------|-------|------|----|-----|
| Male   | 20 | 140.15 | 21.98 | 0.90 | 38 | .37 |
| Female | 20 | 137.85 | 17.38 |      |    |     |



The independent samples t-test (Table 4) revealed no statistically significant difference in self-confidence between male and female athletes ( $t = 0.90$ ,  $p = 0.37$ ). This indicates that both male and female golf athletes from UKM UPI possessed comparable levels of self-confidence.

Although the inferential analyses did not yield statistically significant results, the descriptive findings indicate a tendency for athletes with higher self-imagery ability to demonstrate greater self-confidence. These results highlight the potential relevance of incorporating mental imagery training into athletes' psychological preparation programs, as such interventions may contribute to the enhancement of self-confidence regardless of gender.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that male golfers in the UPI Golf Student Activity Unit tended to exhibit slightly higher levels of self-confidence than their female counterparts. This trend was reflected in the greater proportion of male athletes categorized as "very confident" and "completely confident." However, the observed difference did not reach statistical significance. This suggests that the variation in self-confidence between male and female athletes reflects an associative pattern rather than a gender-based or causal difference. Consequently, self-confidence in this context appears to be influenced by factors beyond gender alone, including psychological skills such as self-imagery ability.

Self-confidence in sports is a crucial psychological skill for supporting performance, particularly in sports that require high levels of concentration like golf. Jekauc et al. (2025) explains that self-confidence is closely related to an individual's belief in their ability to handle specific tasks or competitive situations. In the context of golf, self-confidence helps athletes maintain composure and focus when under pressure, resulting in more consistent performance from one shot to the next.

This finding aligns with those of Williams et al. (2015) that self-imagery, or mental imagery training, plays a role in improving motor coordination, controlling emotions, and strengthening mental readiness before competition. Cumming and Eaves (2018) also emphasized that imagery training allows athletes to maintain mental representations of movements repeatedly, thereby strengthening game technique and strategy. Therefore, stronger self-imagery abilities provide greater opportunities for athletes to develop and reinforce self-confidence during competitive situations.

Furthermore, the characteristics of self-confident individuals as described by Putri (2025)—namely independence, optimism, tolerance, ambition, and a positive self-view—are also relevant in the context of golf performance. These psychological traits are particularly important in sports like golf, where athletes frequently encounter situations that require quick decision-making and emotional control. It is possible that differences in self-confidence levels between male and female athletes could be influenced by social factors or different coaching styles, but this requires further investigation as it is not supported by empirical data in this study.

The observed variation in self-confidence scores across both groups suggests that self-confidence is not an inherent or fixed trait, but rather a psychological skill that can be developed through systematic and structured mental training. For athletes—particularly female athletes who demonstrated slightly lower mean scores—interventions such as guided imagery, performance visualization, and targeted psychological support may serve as effective strategies to enhance self-confidence. Through these approaches, coaches can assist

athletes in fostering a positive self-image, reducing pre-competition anxiety, and strengthening belief in their own capabilities.

Given the nature of golf as a sport that demands composure, independence, and mental resilience throughout both training and competition, self-confidence must be continuously developed and maintained. Therefore, imagery-based mental training should not be treated as a supplementary component, but rather as an integral element of long-term athlete development and performance enhancement programs.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, male golf athletes in the UKM Golf of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia tended to demonstrate slightly higher levels of self-confidence compared to female athletes, with most male athletes falling into the “very confident” category, while female athletes were predominantly classified within the “confident” category. However, despite these descriptive differences, statistical analysis indicated no significant difference in self-confidence levels between male and female athletes. Furthermore, the results revealed a positive, although non-significant, relationship between self-imagery ability and self-confidence, suggesting that athletes with higher imagery ability tend to exhibit greater confidence in their performance. This finding highlights the potential role of self-imagery as a psychological skill that supports the development of self-confidence in golf athletes, regardless of gender. In the future, coaches are encouraged to systematically monitor athletes’ self-confidence levels and integrate mental training strategies—particularly imagery-based interventions—into regular training programs. By fostering self-confidence through structured psychological training, athletes may be better equipped to perform optimally, both individually and as part of a team, in training and competitive settings.

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## AUTHORS’ NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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