



An Examination of Social Integration Among Physically Disabled Players in Paralympic Volleyball

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DOI:

[https://doi.org/10.37359/JOPE.V38\(SpecialIssue\)2026.2286](https://doi.org/10.37359/JOPE.V38(SpecialIssue)2026.2286)

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Article history: Received 23/April/2025; Accepted 30/April/2025; Available online 28/October/2026

Abstract

The importance of the study lies in social integration in disabled players in Paralympic volleyball. Integrations entitles enhancing self-confidence as well as trusting in team mates that can be activated through guidance sessions that develop psychological and behavioral aspects for disabled volleyball players. The problem of the study lies in the lack of social integration among teammates in general a matter that affect their psychology and behavior. This lack of integration causes a problem in the players' psychology and performance. The study aimed at the following: Constructing a scale for social integration in disabled volleyball players. Identifying the level of social integration in disabled volleyball players. Designing a psychological and behavioral guidance program for social integration in disabled volleyball players. Identifying the effect of guidance program for social integration in disabled volleyball players. The researcher hypothesized that there are statistical differences between pre and posttests of the experimental group in the level of social integration in disabled volleyball players. The researcher used the experimental method on disabled volleyball players of the international league season 2024 – 2025 in the Iraqi Paralympic committee / Paralympic volleyball federation. The researcher constructed a scale for social integration, distributed a questioner on experts followed by a pilot study and the main experimental group, and guidance program. The guidance program consisted of (14) guidance sessions with two sessions per week. Each session lasts for 40 – 60 minutes including psychological – cognitive – behavioral aspects. The researcher concluded that the designed guidance program have a positive effect on improving social integration in disabled volleyball players. Finally the researcher recommended the necessity of generalizing the results of the current study on the Iraqi Paralympic volleyball federation.

Keywords: Guidance programme, Social integration, Physical disability, Paralympic volleyball

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Introduction

The social inclusion of people with physical disabilities through Paralympic volleyball reflects the significant progress made by societies in promoting inclusivity and recognizing the value of individuals regardless of their physical challenges. This sport, which offers people with disabilities the opportunity to take part in competitive physical activity, is more than just a match, a training session, or a form of entertainment; it is an effective means of boosting self-confidence, building relationships, and fostering positive social interaction (Al-Amir, 2024). Furthermore, the social inclusion of people with physical disabilities means fully integrating them with one another and providing them with equal opportunities to take part in sports training and competitions on an equal footing with people without disabilities. This includes providing the appropriate infrastructure and the necessary support to enable them to realise their full potential and achieve success in their various sporting disciplines (Al-Abd, 2024).

Previous studies

1.study: (Al-Jubouri, Ammash and Sabri, 2022)

The aim of this research is to: Investigate the impact of certain physical games on the social integration of pupils aged between 6 and 8. Investigate the impact of certain physical games on reducing aggressive behaviour among pupils aged between 6 and 8. The researchers chose the experimental approach as the most appropriate method for addressing the research problem and defined the research population as pupils in the first and second stages of primary school aged 6–8 years (boys). The research population comprised 230 pupils. The sample was selected at random and comprised 30 pupils comprising 15 from the control group and 15 from the experimental group, to serve the purposes of the study the selection and division were based on scientific criteria.

2. Study: (Ismail and Fahad, 2021).

Title of the study (The effectiveness of a recreational counselling programme in reducing academic failure and psychological disorders amongst first-year female students at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences for Women University of Baghdad). The research problem was identified through interaction and observation of the students during the first stage. We found that most of the students admitted to the Physical Education programme did so because of their academic average or because they were pressured by their parents, as the faculty is for women only they were not keen to attend the programme which led to feelings of failure and psychological distress thereby affecting the course of their lives and their various activities across different fields. A guidance and recreational programme was therefore developed to reduce their sense of failure and psychological distress.

3. Study: (Ahmed Ben Ghazala) (Ben Ghazala, 2016).



Title of the study: (The role of physical education and sport lessons in psychological and social development).

Title of the study: The role of physical education and sport lessons in psychological and social development (secondary school pupils in the municipality of Sidi Khaled, Biskra Province). The aim of the study is to determine the extent to which physical education and sports lessons can influence the psychological and social well-bein

4. Study: (Mohamed Salem Al-Sayed Salem) (Al-Sayed Salem, 2020, pp. 217–250)

Title of the study: (Social integration and its relationship to levels of ambition and self-confidence among players of certain team sports).

The aim of this research is to identify the nature of the relationship between social integration and its relationship to levels of ambition and self-confidence among players of certain team sports. In light of the research objective, the researcher formulated the following hypotheses: There is a statistically significant correlation between social integration and the level of aspiration amongst players of certain team sports there is a statistically significant correlation between social integration and self-confidence amongst players of certain team sports there is a statistically significant correlation between the level of aspiration and self-confidence amongst players of certain team sports social integration can be predicted on the basis of the level of aspiration and self-confidence amongst players of certain team sports.

5. Study: (Hamed Suleiman Hamad, Mohammed Majid Mohammed) (Hamad and Mohammed, 2023)

Study title: (The impact of a cognitive-behavioural counselling programme on reducing negative behaviour among volleyball players in Jalosah, Anbar Governorate)

The researcher aims to identify the level of negative behaviour among volleyball players in Anbar Governorate by developing a cognitive-behavioural counselling programme, and to determine the greater effectiveness of the training included in the counselling programme compared with the training currently in use. The researcher employed an experimental approach using a two-group design with pre- and post-tests. The research problem stemmed from the scarcity of available studies in this field, and the approach to addressing the problem by monitoring the players according to their coaches views namely that players with disabilities generally suffer from a lack of integration within the team as a whole as the players experience poor social integration amongst themselves, which affects their psychological state and behaviour in this context in other words,



there is a problem within the team and this problem affects on the players psychological state and, at the same time on their performance.

Research objectives

To develop a scale measuring the social integration of players with physical disabilities in Paralympic volleyball.

To identify the level of social integration of players with physical disabilities in Paralympic volleyball.

Method and Tools

The researcher employed a descriptive, survey-based approach, which is a method of studying scientific phenomena or problems by providing a scientific description, thereby arriving at a logical conclusion supported by evidence and proof that enables the researcher to establish specific frameworks for the problem; this is used to determine the research findings (Omar and Saad, 2009).

The research sample comprised 100 Paralympic volleyball players, distributed across three clubs in Anbar (with a total of 8 players) Diyala (with a total of 8 players) and Mosul (with a total of (8), (6) committees from Muthanna with a total of (8) players Nasiriyah (8) players, Karbala (8), Babil (8) Anbar (8) and Diyala (8) all of whom are taking part in the Iraqi League for the 2024/2025 season. The research sample consisted of 28 players 14 representing the national team and 14 from the national reserve team for Paralympic volleyball accounting for 28 per cent of the research population.

The research instrument—a scale developed by the researcher—consists of 32 items distributed across five domains: the first domain introversion, comprising 6 items; the domain of effective communication, comprising 8 items; the domain of aggression comprising 8 items; the domain of self-esteem comprising 4 items; and the domain of low comprising 6 items.

The scale exhibits high reliability and validity with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.949.

Results

Table 1. *shows the level of social integration and the T-value between the arithmetic mean and the hypothetical mean for the application sample*

Scale	Mean	SD	D M	df	T	SIG	Significance
Social	106.1429	7.38497	10.14286	27	8.125	0.000	Significant
Integration	Hypothetical Mean		96				

Significant at (0.05) with 27 df



Table 2. *shows the level of introversion and the value of (T) between the arithmetic mean and the hypothetical mean for the study sample*

Variable	Mean	SD	D M	df	T	SIG	Significance
Introversion	16.1714	4.38236	1.82857	27	2.469	0.019	Significant
	Hypothetical Mean					18	

Significant at (0.05) with 27 df

Table 3. *shows the level of effective communication and the value of (T) between the arithmetic mean and the hypothetical mean for the application sample*

Variable	Mean	SD	D M	df	T	SIG	Significance
Effective communication	30.8286	2.70605	6.82857	27	14.929	0.000	Significant
	Hypothetical Mean					18	

Significant at (0.05) with 27 df

Table 4. *shows the level of aggression and the value of (T) between the arithmetic mean and the hypothetical mean for the application sample*

Variable	Mean	SD	D M	df	T	SIG	Significance
Aggression	28.4571	3.31079	4.45714	27	7.965	0.000	Significant
	Hypothetical Mean					24	

Significant at (0.05) with 27 df

Table 5. *shows the level of self-esteem and the (T) value between the arithmetic mean and the hypothetical mean for the application sample*

Variable	Mean	SD	D M	df	T	SIG	Significance
Self-esteem	15.3429	1.58936	3.34286	27	12.443	0.000	Significant
	Hypothetical Mean					12	

Significant at (0.05) with 27 df

Table 6. *shows the level of low self-confidence and the T-value between the observed mean and the hypothesised mean for the application sample*

Variable	Mean	SD	D M	df	T	SIG	Significance
Low self-confidence	15.3429	4.57579	2.65714	27	3.435	0.002	Significant
	Hypothetical Mean					18	

Significant at (0.05) with 27 df



Discussion

Assessing the reality of social integration. This objective was achieved by presenting the post-test results of the social integration scale developed by the researcher through a comparison of the actual mean and the expected mean as shown in the table above. The sample demonstrates a good level of social integration.

The researcher attributes this to the use of the counselling programme developed by the researcher. This improvement enhances team cohesion amongst team members, enabling them to achieve their objectives and reach the required standard, as well as demonstrating the progress made by the group through the implementation of counselling sessions and the key elements of these sessions namely social integration a sense of belonging, ambition, self-esteem, goal attainment, perseverance social participation behavioural modelling respect, self-confidence and effective communication.

This indicates that the guidance programme was correctly implemented with the sample. Examining the reality of the introversion dimension: this objective was achieved by presenting the post-test of the Social Integration Scale which was developed by the researcher by comparing the arithmetic mean with the hypothetical mean. The study's results indicate that the sample's mean score on the introversion dimension was 16.1714, with a standard deviation of 4.38236 which is 1.82857 points lower than the hypothesised mean of 18. When using the t-test for a single sample it was found that the calculated t-value was 2.469 at 34 degrees of freedom, and the p-value was 0.019, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the difference between the observed mean and the hypothesised mean is statistically significant.

This result implies that the level of introversion amongst Paralympic volleyball players who underwent the cognitive-behavioural counselling programme is lower than expected suggesting that the programme has a positive effect on promoting their social integration. These results can be explained by the role played by the psychological and behavioural counselling programme in reducing the players levels of introversion.

This type of programme aims to improve social integration and enhance their communication skills, which in turn helps to reduce feelings of isolation and introversion.

Through behavioural therapy techniques such as social skills training – which was discussed during the counselling sessions shown on Data Show – the players gain confidence in interacting with others helping them to integrate better both within and outside the team. This is achieved through the counselling sessions focusing on introversion, as discussed by the researcher. He succeeded in reducing the level of introversion as much as possible amongst Paralympic volleyball players. The researcher attributes the progress made by the players to the effectiveness and correct implementation of the counselling programme, which the counselling programme (Zahrán) as the process of helping an individual to understand and analyse their aptitudes, abilities,



potential inclinations available opportunities problems and needs and to use this knowledge to make choices and decisions that achieve harmony enabling them to live happily. (Zahrn, 2005).

To examine the reality of effective communication. This objective was achieved by presenting the post-test results of the Social Integration Scale which was developed by the researcher by comparing the real-world and virtual environments.

The results indicate that Paralympic volleyball players who underwent the behavioural counselling programme demonstrate a higher level of effective communication than expected. These results can be explained by the role played by the behavioural counselling programme in enhancing the players' communication skills; this type of programme, which helped to develop and improve their ways of interacting with others both within and outside the team. The aim of the counselling programme was to help players improve the quality of their communication with teammates and others outside the team Furthermore providing a supportive environment during counselling sessions encourages players to develop skills in the context of communicating with their team and the wider community in which people with disabilities live, thereby boosting their self-confidence and reducing any anxieties relating to social interaction. The researcher attributes the positive impact of the cognitive-behavioural counselling programme on enhancing effective communication amongst Paralympic volleyball players This supports the idea that combining psychological and behavioural programmes with physical activity is an effective strategy for improving social skills and promoting the social inclusion of people with disabilities.

The level of aggression amongst Paralympic volleyball players is significantly high, suggesting that disability was not a factor leading to reduced aggression in them; on the contrary, there may be other factors leading to an increase in this behaviour amongst them. The researcher notes that the players' aggression was not reduced by the counselling programme; in other words, the programme was not effective. On the contrary the programme was effective across all dimensions, and the reason for the failure to reduce aggression levels amongst people with disabilities is the disability itself.

The guidance programme has helped to reinforce the positive self-image that players have of themselves and boost their confidence in their abilities. The researcher adds that improved self-esteem can be a direct result of enhanced social skills and interaction with others within the sporting environment; when a player succeeds in building positive relationships with their teammates and feels a sense of belonging to the team, this can reduce any negative feelings associated with their disability

It boosts their self-confidence and their ability to interact naturally with others. Based on these findings it can be concluded that the cognitive-behavioural counselling programme had a clear positive impact on improving self-esteem amongst Paralympic volleyball players This



highlights the importance of integrating such programmes into sporting environments to ensure the promotion of mental health and social inclusion for athletes with disabilities.

who underwent the behavioural psychological counselling programme was lower than expected, reflecting the programme's positive impact in reducing feelings of low self-confidence and boosting the players' confidence in their abilities. The researcher attributes this to the counselling programme, which, through its sessions, helped to reduce the level of low self-confidence by virtue of the role played by the behavioural psychological counselling programme in developing personal skills and fostering a positive self-image amongst the players. The programme aims to reduce low self-esteem by encouraging participants to think positively about their ideas and beliefs so that they become better prepared to face sporting and social challenges with greater confidence. As defined by (Al-Khalidi, 2019) is an internal feeling that diminishes an individual's self-esteem and causes them to doubt their abilities and skills, leading to hesitation in decision-making, a fear of failure and being overly influenced by the opinions of others. Participating in Paralympic volleyball itself can help build self-confidence, as it gives players the opportunity to test their abilities in an environment that is both competitive and supportive. Successfully performing sporting skills and interacting with team-mates and coaches enhances players' sense of competence and achievement. Furthermore constant encouragement from coaches and team-mates and the ability to make tangible progress in sporting performance help to reduce feelings of low self-confidence and increase the player's awareness of their true abilities and potential. (Zahran defines it as the process of helping an individual to understand and analyse their aptitudes, abilities, potential, inclinations, the opportunities available to them, their problems and needs and to use this knowledge to make choices and take decisions in order to achieve harmony so that they may live happily. (Zahran, 2005).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study sample accepted the scale due to the clarity of its statements and the ease of responding. The social integration scale revealed that the sample enjoyed an acceptable level of social integration and that the guidance programme developed by the researcher had a positive impact on the development of social integration amongst Paralympic volleyball players. As for the recommendations the researcher recommends that the current scale as a research tool by researchers in their studies and research. The researcher also recommends that the findings of the present study be disseminated to the Iraqi Paralympic Volleyball Federation. It is possible to conduct studies similar to the present one on different samples and in both able-bodied and Paralympic sports.



Appendix (1)

The final version of the scale

Items	I agree very strongly	I agree very	I agree to a moderate extent	I agree to a small extent	I agree to a very small extent
My isolation from the rest of the team affects my performance					
I find it difficult to participate fully in group activities with my colleagues					
I feel that my team-mates do not listen to me properly when I speak					
I feel that my team-mates do not offer me support when I need it					
I tend to isolate myself from my team-mates in social situations					
I prefer spending time on my own rather than taking part in group activities					
I feel that good communication with the coach helps me to engage better with the rest of the team					
I feel that my team-mates communicate with me in a clear and understandable way					
I feel comfortable communicating with my team-mates about matters relating to the game or training					
I feel that communication between me and my team-mates helps to improve my integration into the team					
The encouragement I receive from my teammates motivates me to take part in the team's social activities outside of training					
The team management takes my specific needs seriously.					
I feel that good communication with the team management helps me to improve my social integration within the team					
The team management provides psychological and social support alongside the team's support					
The way the coach treats me affects my performance in training and matches					
Not feeling that I have the necessary support from my coach and teammates triggers aggressive behaviour in me					



Journal of Physical Education

Volume 38 –Special Issue– 2026 Open Access

P-ISSN: 2073-6452 , E-ISSN: 2707-5729

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I feel that the aggression I face from others may drive me into isolation or reduce my social interaction					
I feel that the team management are not interested in hearing my views and ideas unless I express them in a confrontational manner\					
I feel humiliated by the team management during matches					
I feel under pressure and stressed because of the behaviour of the team management					
The team manager's negative behaviour affects my performance and self-confidence					
Harsh criticism from my teammates and coaches has a negative impact on my performance and self-confidence					
I feel at ease when socialising with my teammates					
I feel that my teammates rely on me during matches and training sessions					
I feel that my participation in the match plays an important role in enhancing the performance of the whole team					
I feel at ease when my coach provides me with emotional and moral support to help me achieve my goals as a player					
My confidence wanes when my teammates do not speak to me					
I hesitate to speak to my teammates for fear of criticism					
I feel that my teammates do not trust my sporting abilities					
I feel that my teammates' opinions affect my self-confidence					
I feel nervous when playing in front of my teammates.					
I feel that the coach isn't giving me enough support to achieve my sporting goals					



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