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The Effects of Unrealistic Optimism on the Cognitive Intuition of Young Athletes in Selected Track and Field Events

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Abstract

This research aimed to develop two measurement scales (i.e., one for the assessment of Unrealistic Optimism and another of Cognitive Intuition) and investigate the levels in young athletes, specifically from track and field. Furthermore, the study sought to examine whether there was a link between unrealistic optimism and cognitive intuition. The researcher tested the following the hypothesis: there is a significant relationship between both scales. A descriptive correlational approach was used, and the study sample included 198 young track and field athletes from clubs in Baghdad at season (2024 /2025). A purposeful sampling was used with 8 athletes as a pilot sample, 100 athletes for scale construction and 90 for main application sample. Having conducted the proper steps to develop these 2 scales, they were given to the main sample; and data were analyzed through SPSS. The results showed that both scales had strong validity and reliability, meeting the scientific standards for sports psychology tailored to young track and field athletes. Furthermore, the result also showed a strong positive correlation that high level of unrealistic optimism is related to higher level of cognitive intuition and vice versa. The study suggests that sports clubs should organize self-development programs, and also strengthen athletes' cognitive skills. It is indicated the necessity of including a specialist in sports psychology when developing developmental and counseling programmed to reduce unrealistic optimism in young athletes as well as to conscious enhancing cognitive intuition.

Keywords: Unrealistic Optimism, Cognitive Intuition, Track and Field.

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Introduction

The majority of track and field athletes, like the rest of us, have their thinking primarily economic rather than rational or empirical. This inclination is reflective of their cognitive knowledge that sensual input training and competitive situations do not reflect 'reality'. In sense, they don't sense that "mind-independent" nature of this reality because there's actually a mind-based interpretation-of it. Knowledge or conception alone has no power or sufficiency for apprehending the real truths which we learn from our senses. In such a world these athletes are on an endless quest; only those blessed with both extraordinary physical and mental attributes will succeed. While experience may serve to improve the quality of intuitive judgments about expected outcomes in professional sports, self-awareness is developed through reflection, contemplation and physical awakening. This conversation is within the domain of evolutionary psychology specifically as evidenced in sport psychology, grounded in philosophical precepts seeking to understand our understanding of the mind/body experiences of track and field athletes. It also attempts to provide rational explanations for all their thought processes from psychological assessments so that they are grounded in reality and the good feeling they have is a measure of themselves and what they can do both in training and competition, rather than speculation about a world that does not exist regarding competition realities.

Intuition is defined as "the ability to acquire knowledge without employing cognitive processes—that is, acquiring knowledge that is not based on numerical data derived from the senses when estimating future events" (Ibrahimi, 2025, p.139). It is also defined as "the immediate mental apprehension of self-evident truths, or the ability to understand truth directly and suddenly without inferential logical reasoning. Intuition lies behind axioms and the direct comprehension of the essence of things before scientific experimentation gradually reaches that essence, enabling awareness of both internal and external realities encountered by individuals" (Mikhail, 2022, p.101). Furthermore, "intuition is a strong faculty that the mind accepts with certainty, eliminating doubt. It differs significantly from perception, as perception—at its advanced stages—requires intuitive grounding, whereas intuition transcends the limits of perceptual processes and sensory input, which are restricted by the boundaries of time and space" (Al-Saad, 2023, p.42).

Event whatever nature and situation of events that shape the future conditions is one of the distinctive characteristics that separate human beings from other natural entities" (Al-Mahdi, 2023, p.4). Intuitive thinking, that is based on certain cognitive determinants, is also highly affected by the mental effort experienced by the player ensured in every day situations or problems. This level of cognitive response enables fast, active and an interlist priming support (Razouqi et al., 2019, p.249). Cognitive intuition goes beyond academic progress; it refers to the faculty in grasping

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connections between events, learning about environmental processes without relying on thorough analysis or logical inferential thinking and depending on insight (Al-Lihyani, 2019, p.24).

It is suggested by the investigator, that athletes' inability to rely on realistic truths emanated from a gut feeling, and may be attributable to internal reasons of which one is irrational optimism—an unrealistic expectation in anticipation of future events; it arises due to either misconceptions about an event's outcome or unsound logic. Accordingly, it is important to know which type of optimism this is, and how we can best inoculate against being caught off-guard in case its practitioners make an overdependence on their use in order perhaps too easily transit into pursuit of beneficial outcomes for themselves or their clubs.

Unrealistic optimism refers to “a disposition in which people believe that positive events are more likely to occur to them than negative events. Then there are the kinds of people who believe that they can have their cake and eat it too – meaning that they think they can get away with something others cannot: Immunity from danger by means of dangerous behavior. It is one of the defenses used by the ego to sooth away fear and anxiety associated with danger” (Joshi & Carter, 2013). It has also been described as “a positively biased, and unreasoned appraisal of the risk associated with a personal action which shows altered risk estimates through denial of potential harm, leading to self-centered thinking and potentially exposing individuals to physical or psychological harm due to an exaggerated judgment” (Mobini & Reynolds, 2013, p.73). It is also defined as “internal motivational appraisals felt by people when fantasizing about positive events partly because of a belief in being especially lucky whereby challenging activities are achieved with little effort” (Al-Mukhtar, 2025, p.133).

Unrealistic optimism is not equivalent to positive optimism; the latter was an adage of ancient Greece: "everything expected will arrive". All people face with positive and negative expectations as an inevitable psychological fact of life; one that they must meet since they are born with them based on their experiences and orientations (Al-Hamdani, 2023, p.55). Another cause of unrealistic optimism is associated with different factors such as success and failure experience, personnel predispositions and their socioeconomiclvstanding” (Ihsan 2024:107).

One of the fundamental reasons why specific track and field athletes regard unrealistic optimism is an internal defensive reaction that enables to guard the mind against anxiety about uncertain future. Note that this would be in line with a mental defending strategy and a dissonant rational motivation that avoids despair and engages in difficult task pursuit by forgetting about real barriers. However, these are dangerous traits because they jeopardize rational risk appraisal while encouraging momentary impulsivity.

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Positive psychology on the other hand focuses on increasing your self-satisfaction, well-being, hope, optimism and present and future happiness. It values the development of true self experiences by guarding against delusions, reducing pain, appreciating pleasurable moments and adjusting to circumstances in life. Thus, by definition, positive psychology is against the idealistic optimism that warps the brain with delusion and deceit (Al-Ifoun, 2025, p.29).

Significance of the Study

Theoretical Significance

Guiding sport psychology researchers toward understanding internal emotions and promoting logical reasoning regarding optimism and intuition among track and field athletes.

Contributing to enriching theoretical literature in sport psychology by addressing this topic and supporting coaches and athletes in developing realistic emotional and cognitive approaches.

Applied Significance

Providing two psychometric tools in sport psychology: one for measuring unrealistic optimism and another for cognitive intuition among track and field athletes.

Assisting coaches and sport psychologists in identifying and mitigating the escalation of unrealistic optimism and its impact on cognitive intuition among young athletes.

Offering support to athletes in local clubs to overcome undesirable psychological and cognitive tendencies that may negatively affect their professional future in their respective events.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher observed psychological phenomena among track and field athletes during discussions about their professional future, upcoming competitions, expected performance standards, and competitive opponents. Their responses often reflected illogical optimism and rapid answers, indicating reliance on cognitive intuition. These observations were made without measurement tools—based on the researcher's professional experience and academic expertise in sport psychology. This necessitated the development of specialized scales to assess both phenomena and explore the relationship between them. The study therefore aims to construct scales of unrealistic optimism and cognitive intuition and to determine their levels among young track and field athletes, as well as examining the relationship, contribution, and effect of unrealistic optimism on cognitive intuition. The researcher hypothesizes that unrealistic optimism will be significantly correlated with and contribute to cognitive intuition among the study sample.

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Methodology

The researcher employed the descriptive method using the correlational approach, as dictated by the nature of the current research problem. The boundaries of the research population consisted of young track and field athletes from various clubs in Baghdad Governorate participating in the following events: 100 m sprint, 200 m sprint, 400 m sprint, 800 m run, shot put, and long jump. The total number of available athletes was (198), aged between 15–17 years, with a training age ranging from 5–6 years, and all of whom were actively engaged in training during the 2024/2025 sports season. All athletes were deliberately selected using a comprehensive census method (100%) as the total research sample, given their suitability for fulfilling the requirements of the current study and its field procedures.

From this population, (8) athletes were randomly chosen as the pilot sample, representing (4.04%). Additionally, (100) athletes were randomly selected—representing (50.505%)—to form the scale-construction sample for the two phenomena under investigation, meeting the required standard of having five participants per item when developing paper-and-pencil psychometric instruments. The remaining (90) athletes—(45.455%) of the population—were assigned to the main application sample.

Because the current study required the availability of two psychometric scales to address the research problem, the following steps were implemented while maintaining the principle of efficiency in field procedures and statistical analyses:

The need to construct the two scales arose from the absence of specialized tools measuring the phenomena among young track and field athletes.

To develop item content appropriate for the age, level, and characteristics of the target sample, the researcher analyzed their shared characteristics.

The names and purposes of the two scales were defined as follows:

- Unrealistic Optimism Scale for Young Track and Field Athletes
- Cognitive Intuition Scale for Young Track and Field Athletes

The researcher developed (20) items for the Unrealistic Optimism Scale and (20) items for the Cognitive Intuition Scale, based on the theoretical framework of the two phenomena. Items were formulated to reflect the diversity of situations encountered in training and competition among young track and field athletes in Baghdad clubs and were designed in accordance with ethical and scientific standards for paper-and-pencil psychometric instruments.

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The items of the Unrealistic Optimism Scale were structured using three response alternatives (Always, Sometimes, Never) with a Likert-type scoring system of (3, 2, 1). Higher scores indicated higher levels of undesirable unrealistic optimism.
The items of the Cognitive Intuition Scale also used three alternatives (Always Applies to Me, Sometimes Applies, Does Not Apply to Me) with the same Likert scoring system (3, 2, 1), where higher scores indicated higher levels of undesirable cognitive intuition.

To establish face and logical validity, the researcher prepared a paper questionnaire including the initial versions of both scales and submitted them to (15) experts in sport psychology, measurement and evaluation, and track and field. More than 80% agreed on retaining the items, response alternatives, scoring keys, and instructions without modification, deletion, or merging.

The researcher conducted the pilot study on Monday (1/7/2024) by administering both paper-based scales to the (8) pilot participants to identify potential obstacles in the forthcoming field application, assess clarity of instructions and items, and determine the average completion time. The average response time was (8) minutes per scale, and no difficulties were reported.

The researcher then established construct validity, reliability, and normal distribution through separate statistical procedures. Both scales were administered to the statistical-analysis sample of (100) athletes from Friday (5/7/2024) to Thursday (25/7/2024). The discriminatory power of each item was examined by ranking scores in descending order and selecting the top and bottom 27% of participants, resulting in two equal groups of (27) athletes each. Differences between the two groups were calculated using the independent-samples *t*-test, as shown in Tables (1) and (2).

Table 1. *Results of the Discriminatory Power of the Items of the Unrealistic Optimism Scale among Young Track and Field Athletes*

No.	Group	N	M	SD	t-value	Sig	Significance	Item Discrimination
1	Upper	27	2.15	0.362	6.615	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.37	0.492				
2	Upper	27	2.63	0.492	9.046	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.41	0.501				
3	Upper	27	2.67	0.480	10.198	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.33	0.480				
4	Upper	27	2.70	0.465	8.928	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.52	0.509				
5	Upper	27	2.11	0.320	8.055	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.26	0.447				
6	Upper	27	2.63	0.492	14.439	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.07	0.267				
7	Upper	27	2.70	0.465	9.207	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.48	0.509				

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8	Upper	27	2.44	0.506	10.180	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.19	0.396				
9	Upper	27	2.37	0.492	6.251	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.52	0.509				
10	Upper	27	2.37	0.492	6.814	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.44	0.506				
11	Upper	27	2.33	0.480	4.000	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.89	0.320				
12	Upper	27	2.26	0.447	8.754	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.22	0.424				
13	Upper	27	2.30	0.465	10.119	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.15	0.362				
14	Upper	27	2.33	0.480	11.000	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.11	0.320				
15	Upper	27	2.56	0.506	8.378	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.41	0.501				
16	Upper	27	2.22	0.424	7.211	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.33	0.480				
17	Upper	27	2.44	0.506	9.121	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.26	0.447				
18	Upper	27	2.59	0.501	8.378	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.44	0.506				
19	Upper	27	2.70	0.465	9.207	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.48	0.509				
20	Upper	27	2.56	0.506	14.566	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.04	0.192				

Note: Item discrimination is considered acceptable when Sig > 0.05 at the significance level of 0.05 and with 52 degrees of freedom.

Table 2. *Results of the Discriminatory Power of the Items of the Cognitive Intuition Scale among Young Track and Field Athletes*

No.	Group	N	M	SD	t-value	Sig	Significance	Item Discrimination
1	Upper	27	2.19	0.396	9.282	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.19	0.396				
2	Upper	27	2.67	0.480	8.523	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.52	0.509				
3	Upper	27	2.70	0.465	9.515	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.44	0.506				
4	Upper	27	2.74	0.447	9.121	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.56	0.506				
5	Upper	27	2.15	0.362	2.347	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.96	0.192				
6	Upper	27	2.67	0.480	12.367	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.19	0.396				
7	Upper	27	2.74	0.447	8.892	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.59	0.501				
8	Upper	27	2.48	0.509	10.444	0.000	Significant	Discriminative

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	Lower	27	1.19	0.396				
9	Upper	27	2.41	0.501	5.757	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.63	0.492				
10	Upper	27	2.33	0.480	6.934	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.41	0.501				
11	Upper	27	2.37	0.492	8.241	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.30	0.465				
12	Upper	27	2.41	0.501	9.389	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.22	0.424				
13	Upper	27	2.37	0.492	11.144	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.11	0.320				
14	Upper	27	2.30	0.465	3.917	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.85	0.362				
15	Upper	27	2.33	0.480	8.509	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.26	0.447				
16	Upper	27	2.37	0.492	4.742	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.78	0.424				
17	Upper	27	2.59	0.501	6.597	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.74	0.447				
18	Upper	27	2.26	0.447	4.695	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.67	0.480				
19	Upper	27	2.48	0.509	8.153	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.37	0.492				
20	Upper	27	2.63	0.492	7.904	0.000	Significant	Discriminative
	Lower	27	1.56	0.506				

Note: Item discrimination is considered acceptable when Sig > 0.05, at a significance level of 0.05 and 52 degrees of freedom.

The researcher verified the discriminatory power of both scales by calculating the Pearson correlation coefficients between each item score and the total score of the corresponding scale. This procedure was applied using the same data obtained from the scale-construction sample (n = 100). The results of these analyses are presented in Tables (3) and (4).

Table 3. *Internal Consistency of the Unrealistic Optimism Scale among Young Track and Field Athletes*

No.	**Item–Total Correlation (r)**	**Sig**	**No.**	**Item–Total Correlation (r)**	**Sig**
1	0.437*	0.000	11	0.645*	0.000
2	0.552*	0.000	12	0.589*	0.000
3	0.704*	0.000	13	0.715*	0.000
4	0.611*	0.000	14	0.644*	0.000
5	0.872*	0.000	15	0.683*	0.000
6	0.593*	0.000	16	0.726*	0.000
7	0.669*	0.000	17	0.554*	0.000
8	0.647*	0.000	18	0.719*	0.000
9	0.702*	0.000	19	0.439*	0.000
10	0.812*	0.000	20	0.586*	0.000

Note: All items are consistent with the scale at Sig > 0.05, with 98 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.05.

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Table 4. *Internal Consistency of the Cognitive Intuition Scale among Young Track and Field Athletes*

No.	Item–Total Correlation (r)	Sig	No.	Item–Total Correlation (r)	Sig
1	0.658*	0.000	11	0.511*	0.000
2	0.582*	0.000	12	0.778*	0.000
3	0.524*	0.000	13	0.555*	0.000
4	0.612*	0.000	14	0.547*	0.000
5	0.828*	0.000	15	0.581*	0.000
6	0.573*	0.000	16	0.802*	0.000
7	0.566*	0.000	17	0.573*	0.000
8	0.805*	0.000	18	0.659*	0.000
9	0.511*	0.000	19	0.731*	0.000
10	0.632*	0.000	20	0.594*	0.000

Note: All items are consistent with the scale at Sig > 0.05, with 98 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.05.

The researcher verified the reliability of both scales using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which was 0.874 for the Unrealistic Optimism Scale and 0.868 for the Cognitive Intuition Scale, at a significance level of 0.05 and 98 degrees of freedom, based on the scores obtained from the scale-construction sample (n = 100).

The statistical appropriateness of the scales for young track and field athletes was examined by assessing the normality distribution using the same sample scores. The data were statistically processed to extract the standard normal distribution values, as presented in Table (5).

Table 5. *Final Statistical Indicators and Normal Distribution of the Two Scales*

Scale	No. of Items	Total Score	Unit of Measurement	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Skewness
Unrealistic Optimism	20	60	Score	51.92	3.515	-0.143
Cognitive Intuition	20	60	Score	53.98	3.533	-0.175

Note: The construction sample consisted of 100 participants. The distributions of both scales are approximately normal, with skewness values within the acceptable range of ±1.

After completing all the aforementioned procedures and statistical analyses, the researcher finalized the construction of the two research scales in their final forms (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2), with a total score range of 20–60 for each scale and a hypothetical mean of 40.

The researcher then conducted a survey to collect responses from 90 young track and field athletes from clubs in Baghdad on both scales. The scales were applied directly to the implementation sample over the period from Sunday, 4/8/2024, to Thursday, 22/8/2024. The data for each athlete were subsequently entered into special forms for automatic processing using SPSS.

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The analyses included calculation of percentages, means, standard deviations, independent-sample t-tests, Pearson correlation coefficients, Cronbach's alpha, skewness, one-sample t-tests, and simple linear regression (Linear Correlation Coefficient).

Results

Table 6. *Comparison of the Mean Scores with the Hypothetical Mean for Each Scale*

Variable	Total Score	Hypothetical Mean	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Mean Difference	t	Sig	Significance
Unrealistic Optimism	60	40	51.76	3.778	11.756	29.516	0.000	Significant
Cognitive Intuition	60	40	53.82	3.800	13.822	34.508	0.000	Significant

Note: Unit of measurement: Score. The difference is considered significant if Sig > 0.05, with degrees of freedom (n-1) = 89 and a significance level of 0.05.

Table 7. *Simple Linear Regression Results between Unrealistic Optimism and Cognitive Intuition*

Predictor	Criterion	Sample Size (n)	Pearson Correlation (R)	Linear Regression Coefficient (R^2)	Contribution (%)	Standard Error of Estimate
Unrealistic Optimism	Cognitive Intuition	90	0.986	0.972	97.2%	0.635

Table 8. *ANOVA Results for the Goodness-of-Fit Test of the Simple Linear Regression Model*

Predictor	Criterion	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (MS)	F	Sig	Significance
Unrealistic Optimism	Cognitive Intuition	Regression	1249.643	1	1249.643	3096.6	0.000	Significant
		Residual (Error)	35.513	88	0.404			

Note: The F value is considered significant if Sig > 0.05 at a significance level of 0.05.

Table 9. *Effect Results of Unrealistic Optimism on Cognitive Intuition*

Dependent Variable	Predictor	β (Beta)	Standard Error	t	Sig	Significance
Cognitive Intuition	Constant	2.496	0.925	2.699	0.008	Significant
	Unrealistic Optimism	0.992	0.018	55.647	0.000	Significant

Note: A t-value is considered significant if Sig > 0.05 at a significance level of 0.05.

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Discussion

Table (6) shows that the mean of the unrealistic optimism scale among young athletes in several sports games is higher than its hypothetical average, whereas there are statistically meaningful differences that favor it. This result suggests high incidence of this negative type of optimism in the young athletes. Average cognitive intuition also exceeded its hypothetical average, and statistical difference favored the average, indicating that this unwanted phenomenon appeared in the same group.

A review of the results derived from the simple linear regression model included in the Table (7) suggests that unrealistic optimism significantly predicts and supports cognitive intuition among young athletes at work in a group sample. This association is also supported by a good in-sample fit of the regression model in Table (8), indicating its statistical validity. The unaccounted variance is ascribed by the investigators to random factors other than those investigated in the current study.

The findings in Table (9) show that an increase of unrealistic optimism level among the application group has a significant effect on the cognitive intuition' level. The explanation of these findings lies, according to the researcher, in the features of unrealistic optimism that are typical for young athletes involved in some track and field events. These types of athletes demonstrate the following characteristics: a favorable expectation for success in new competitions; perceived negative initial experiences in preparation and competition situations that lack quality; internal validation or not considering outcomes separate from performance when judging oneself; analyzing their situation with only a focus on the positive aspects; strong belief in luck and feeling personally lucky with respect to accomplishing goals in the future through good fortune; and maintaining high expectations, while also believing it is possible to achieve dreams and believing they have more contacts for professional advancement from their area of specialty than do others.

On cognitive intuition, the researcher attributes this to how athletes make major decisions with less than full information of those events and depending on intuition rather that rational thinking when accepting decisions based on unloaded information. This intuition, based on predisposed beliefs rather than actual knowledge, explains why unrealistic optimism increases cognitive intuition: to the extent that expectations of a negative outcome (i.e., the no-go signal) are less intense.

These findings align with previous research emphasizing the importance of aligning personal beliefs with reality:

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"The task of changing one's beliefs from fantasy and unreality protects against the exacerbation of unrealistic optimism, which can lead to failure in achieving life goals" (Hevey & Others, 2009, p. 375).

"Individuals spend much of their free time reflecting on changing their beliefs to achieve better conditions, but this thinking must be realistic and based on an assessment of the feasibility of change; otherwise, excessive speculative thinking leads to irrationality" (Al-Sharif, 2023, p. 218).

"Intuition allows us to perceive truths inaccessible to abstract reasoning; it aims at the absolute, rather than utility, and depends on an initial knowledge framework and the symbols we use to express ourselves" (Al-Bakri, 2024, p. 94).

"Reliance on imagined information can lead an individual to believe in outcomes that are unlikely, increasing vulnerability to psychological frustration" (Al-Khawaldeh, 2022, p. 34).

"Individuals deliberately form unrealistic optimistic expectations when encountering obstacles (the 'strategic optimism' approach), which helps maintain motivation and self-efficacy and ultimately supports sustained high performance" (Seligman & Forgeard, 2012, p. 18).

"Hope in its multiple forms affects behavior and is connected to self-regulation; such as recognizing short falls in order to succeed (Clay & Others, 2014, p. 57).

"Psychologically, new or beginner athletes need a comprehensive direction to move forward for the right career path and without task related knowledge ability is nothing" (Burhan, 2015, p. 201).

An optimistic is 'a selective healthy status for people who are, by nature, intended to look forward for positive results or fruits that earn through their actions and efforts' (Al-Zahri, 2016,p.2).

"Competing in a variety of tournaments offers the athletes real-life exposure to the practicality of their skills and strategies needed according to each challenge ahead" (Shamoun,2021,p.117).

"The use of heuristics and lateral thinking allows individuals to engage efficiently whilst preserving cognitive resources available for future self-regulatory efforts" (Abdul-Ruba, 2020, p. 886).

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In conclusions, Results support a substantial and significant association between unrealistic optimism and cognitive intuition, suggesting that interventions to promote realistic self-evaluations and informed decisions are important for young track and field athletes.

Conclusions

1. The developed scales of Unrealistic Optimism and Cognitive Intuition are valid and reliable for measuring the intended psychological constructs. They meet the scientific criteria for acceptance in sports psychology and are suitable for young athletes participating in selected track and field events.
2. Unrealistic optimism is significantly associated with cognitive intuition among young athletes in certain track and field events.
3. An increase in unrealistic optimism contributes to a corresponding increase in cognitive intuition among young athletes, indicating an undesirable positive correlation.
4. Higher levels of unrealistic optimism lead to a proportional increase in cognitive intuition among young athletes in selected track and field disciplines.

Recommendations

1. Sports clubs should enhance their focus on self-development programs and support young athletes' experiences in cognitive skill development, particularly regarding their professional future in their specialized events.
2. Academic expertise in sports psychology should be integrated into development and psychological guidance programs to support young athletes' cognitive skill growth and to reduce the prevalence of unrealistic optimism and cognitive intuition.

Appendices

Appendix 1. *Unrealistic Optimism Scale for Young Track and Field Athletes*

No.	Item Statement	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	I feel optimistic about my positive beliefs regarding competitions I have never tried before.			
2	I feel optimistic about the challenges I try to overcome regardless of my abilities in training and competition.			
3	I believe past experiences are insufficient to meet the requirements of training and competition.			
4	I evaluate my decisions independently without considering the expected outcomes in training and competition.			

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5	I trust my abilities to change difficult circumstances in training and competition.
6	I focus only on the positive aspects when analyzing situations in training and competition.
7	I believe my dreams in training and competition will come true because I strongly want them to.
8	I feel lucky compared to others in achieving future competition accomplishments.
9	I believe achieving goals in training and competition depends solely on luck.
10	I expect positive outcomes in training and competition without relying on realistic evidence.
11	I believe I am an indispensable player regardless of my level in training and competition.
12	I believe it is not necessary to show my full effort to overcome difficult tasks in training and competition.
13	I find that my expectations are the most accurate in training and competition.
14	I believe everything I wish for helps me change the outcome of difficult competitions in my favor.
15	I feel optimistic about achieving my ideal expectations in difficult competitions without putting in effort.
16	I feel optimistic about changing unexpected events in my favor in training and competition.
17	I believe beautiful things happen by themselves, no matter what I do.
18	I trust my feelings that no reality contradicts my desires in training and competition.
19	I believe I am desirable for club contracts without needing to be tested in my event.
20	I believe in achieving success without having a clear plan for the path to sports professionalism.

Appendix 2. *Cognitive Intuition Scale for Young Track and Field Athletes*

No.	Item Statement	Always Applies	Sometimes Applies	Does Not Apply
1	I feel capable of making decisions without needing knowledge of event details.			
2	I believe my decisions will be accepted in training and competition.			
3	I see no need to strain my mind thinking about finding solutions to problems I face in training and competition.			
4	I trust my first instinct to solve problems I encounter in training and competition.			
5	I see no need to consider others' opinions when proposing solutions to problems in training and competition.			
6	I trust the knowledge I have is sufficient when finding solutions to problems in training and competition.			

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7	I can perceive my professional future at the club without reviewing the database of other players.
8	I find myself competent in processing my personal information immediately to overcome problems in training and competition.
9	I believe relying on discussions to gain knowledge of events is a waste of time needed for decision-making.
10	I believe making decisions quickly is better than being cautious.
11	I can form predictions about the club's future without needing to review achieved statistics.
12	I trust my decisions to improve the club’s level without reviewing past competition results.
13	I see past experience as past events that need not be revisited.
14	I can understand others without them showing any behavior.
15	I can know the intentions of new players from their first glance.
16	I can understand the coach's intentions toward me from his looks alone.
17	I believe quick decision-making is a personal intelligence that distinguishes me.
18	I find myself capable of predicting my results before the competition.
19	I trust my personal knowledge about upcoming competitions and what is necessary for them.
20	I believe the coach's evaluation of my knowledge about achievements is unnecessary for me.

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