



The Effects of Psychological Skills Training on Putting Performance and Competitive State Anxiety in Amateur and Youth Golfers

Megan Fisher,¹ Amanda Paluch,^{1,2} Rebecca M.C. Spencer,^{2,3} and Christine W. St. Laurent¹

University of Massachusetts Amherst: ¹Department of Kinesiology, ²Institute of Applied Life Sciences, ³Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences



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INTRODUCTION

Mental toughness (ability to recover quickly from mistakes in high-pressure situations) is one of the most important determining factors of a successful performance in golf (1,2).

Psychological skills training is used to help improve both mental and physical performance in athletes (3,5).

Self-talk is a common skill golfers employ to rework mental instructions constructively, leading to greater performance success (4).

Imagery is another skill used by golfers, which alters their cognitive processes and improves perceived ability to perform and action (6).

Compared to elite golfers, amateur and youth may lack access to resources that facilitate coping with the psychological nature of the game or to help improve competitive performance.

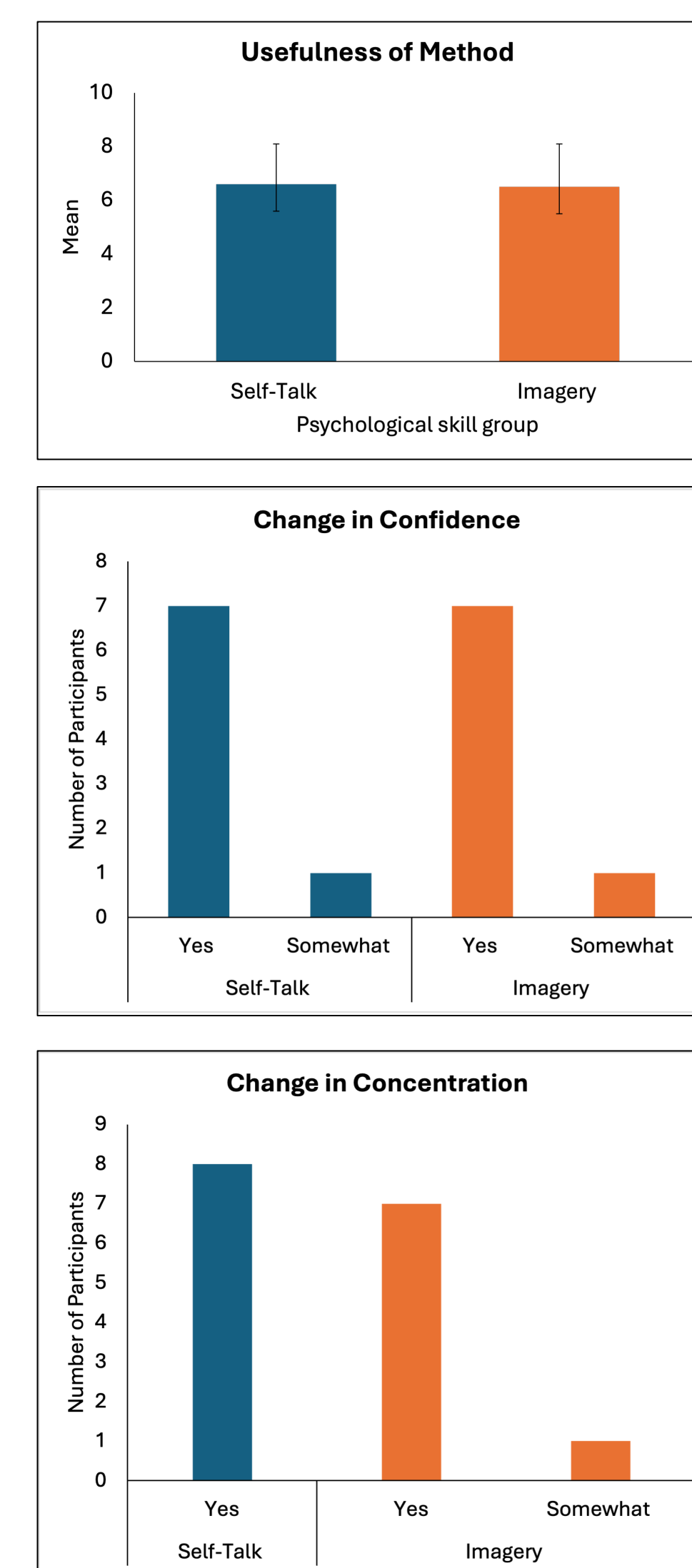
PURPOSE

To assess the feasibility and acceptability of a two-week intervention of either self-talk or imagery training in adolescent and youth golfers and examine the preliminary efficacy of the intervention on putting performance and competitive state anxiety.

RESULTS

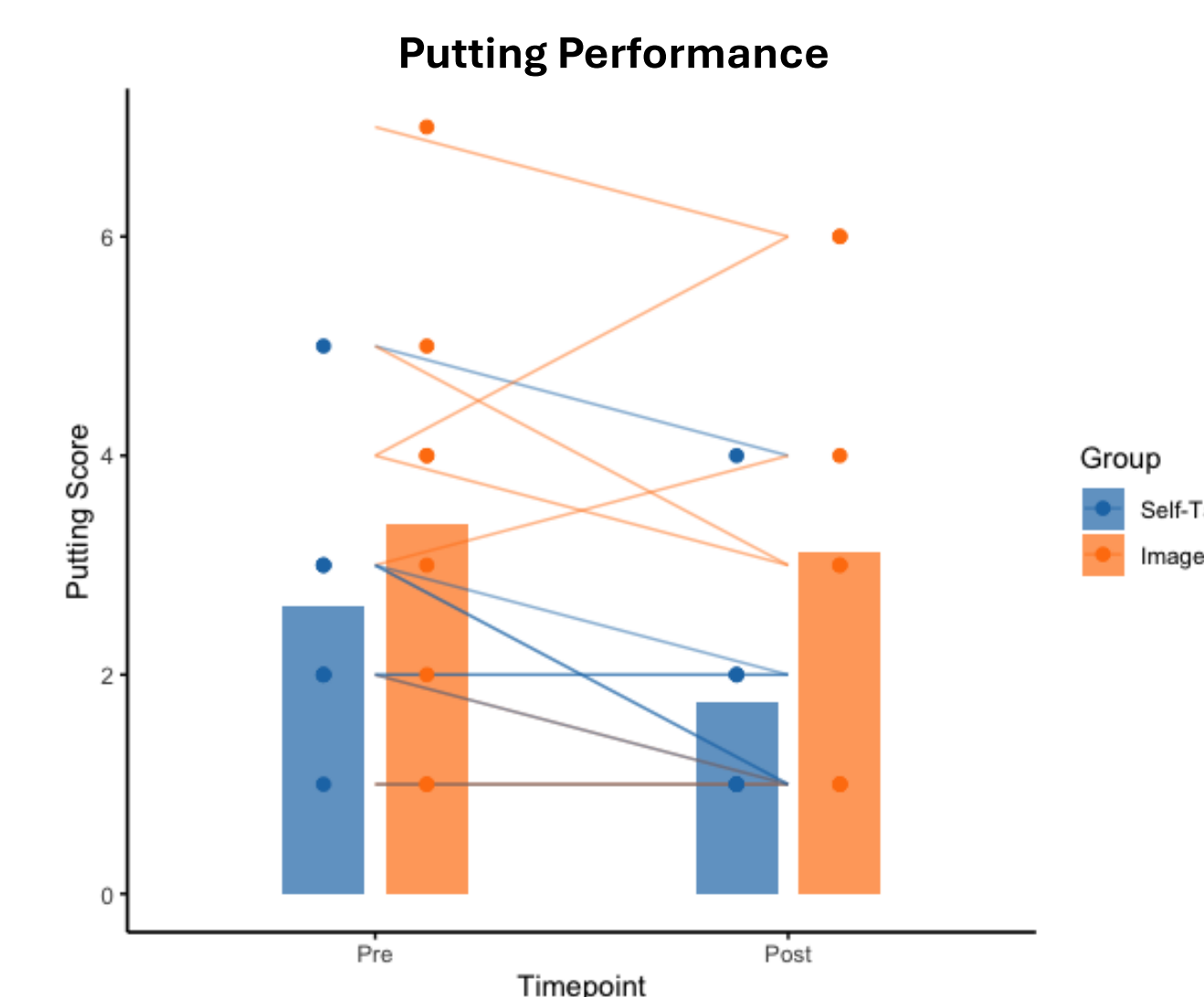
Feasibility and Acceptability

- The overall feasibility and acceptability was rated positively by participants.
- The perceived usefulness of the interventions was 6.6 for self-talk, and 6.5 for imagery (reported on a 1-10 Likert scale)
- In both the self-talk and imagery groups 7 participants reported a change in confidence, with 1 reporting somewhat of a change.
- All participants in the self-talk group reported a change in concentration, with 7 participants reporting a change in the imagery group, and 1 participant reporting somewhat of a change.



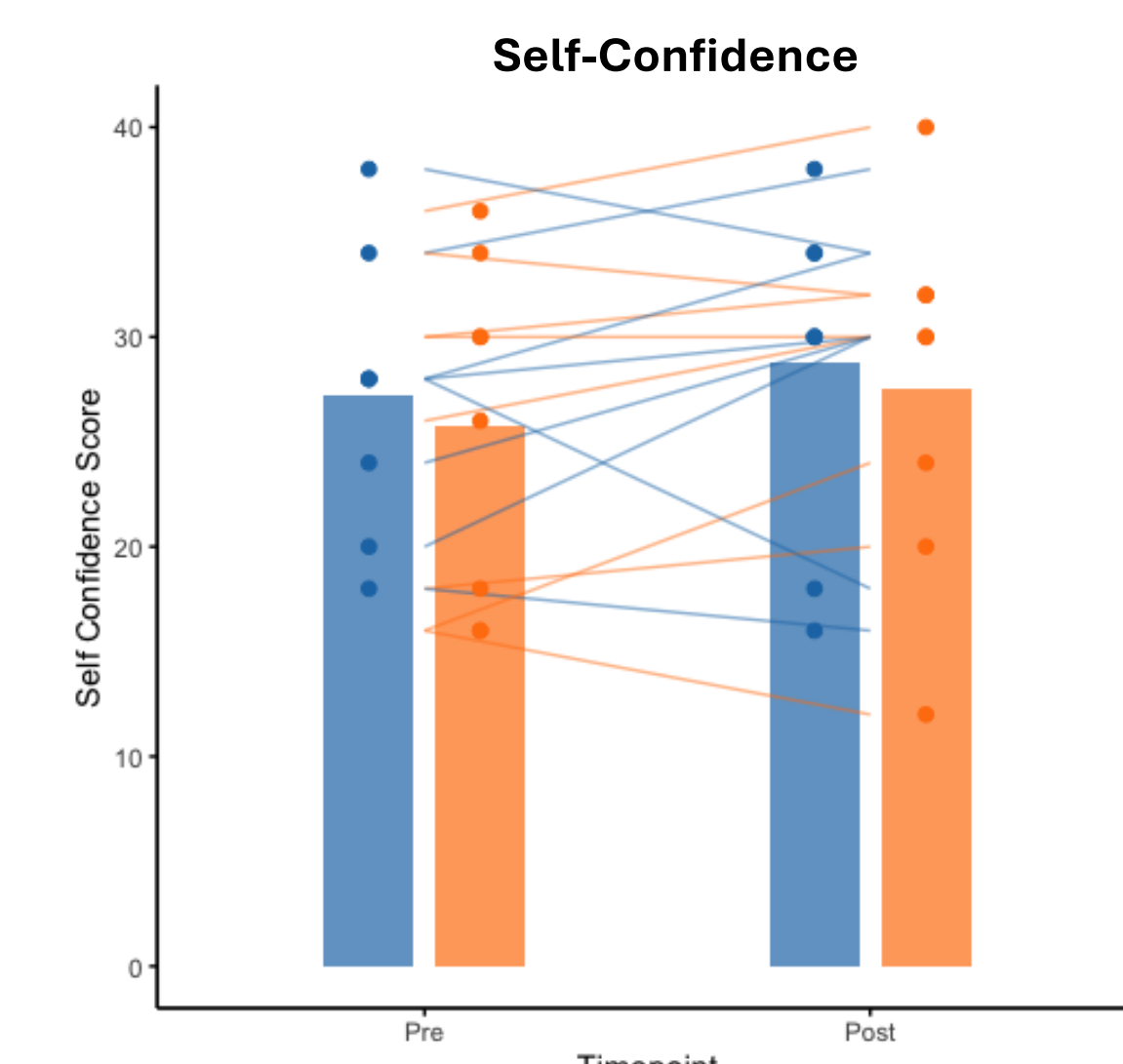
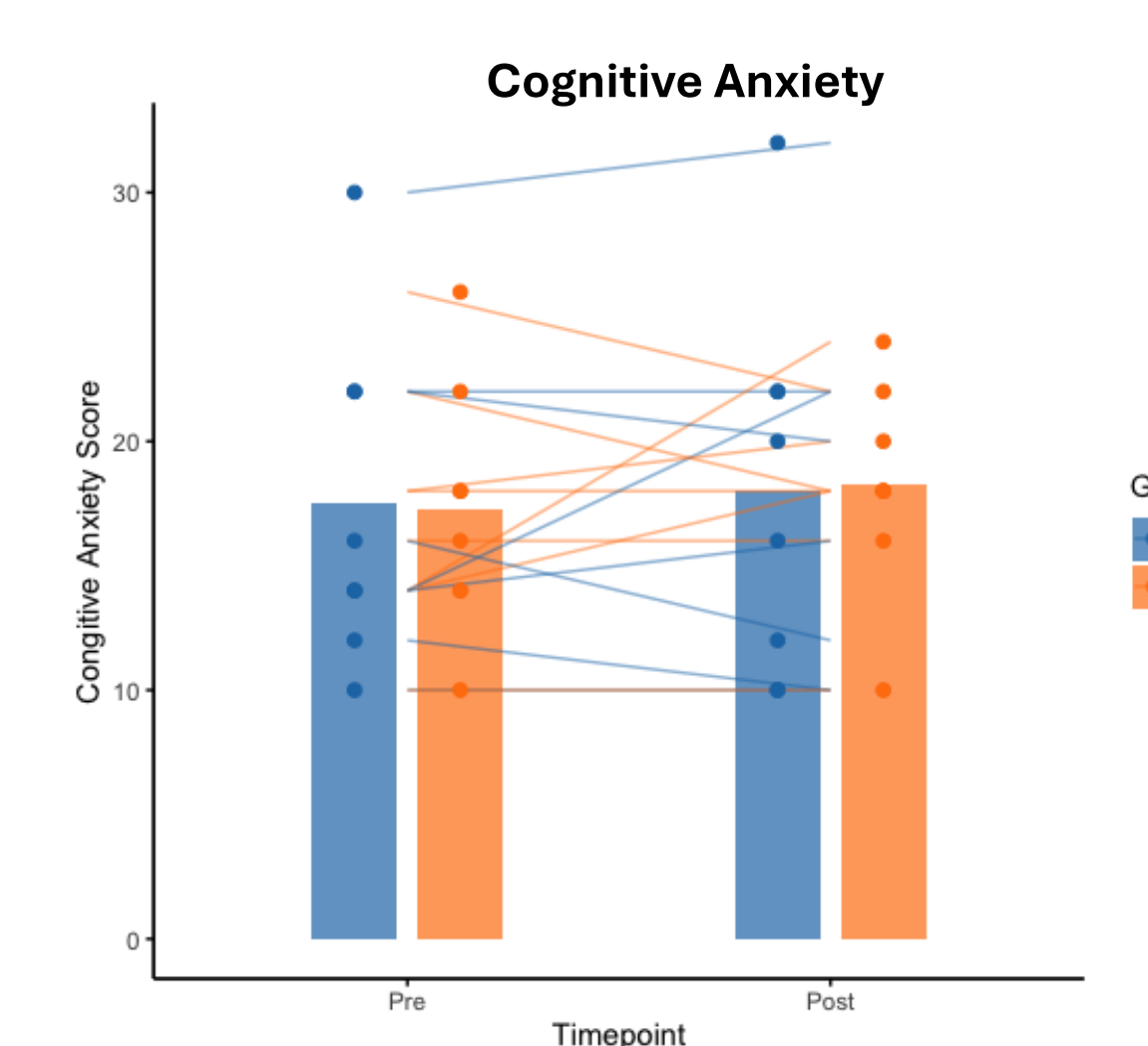
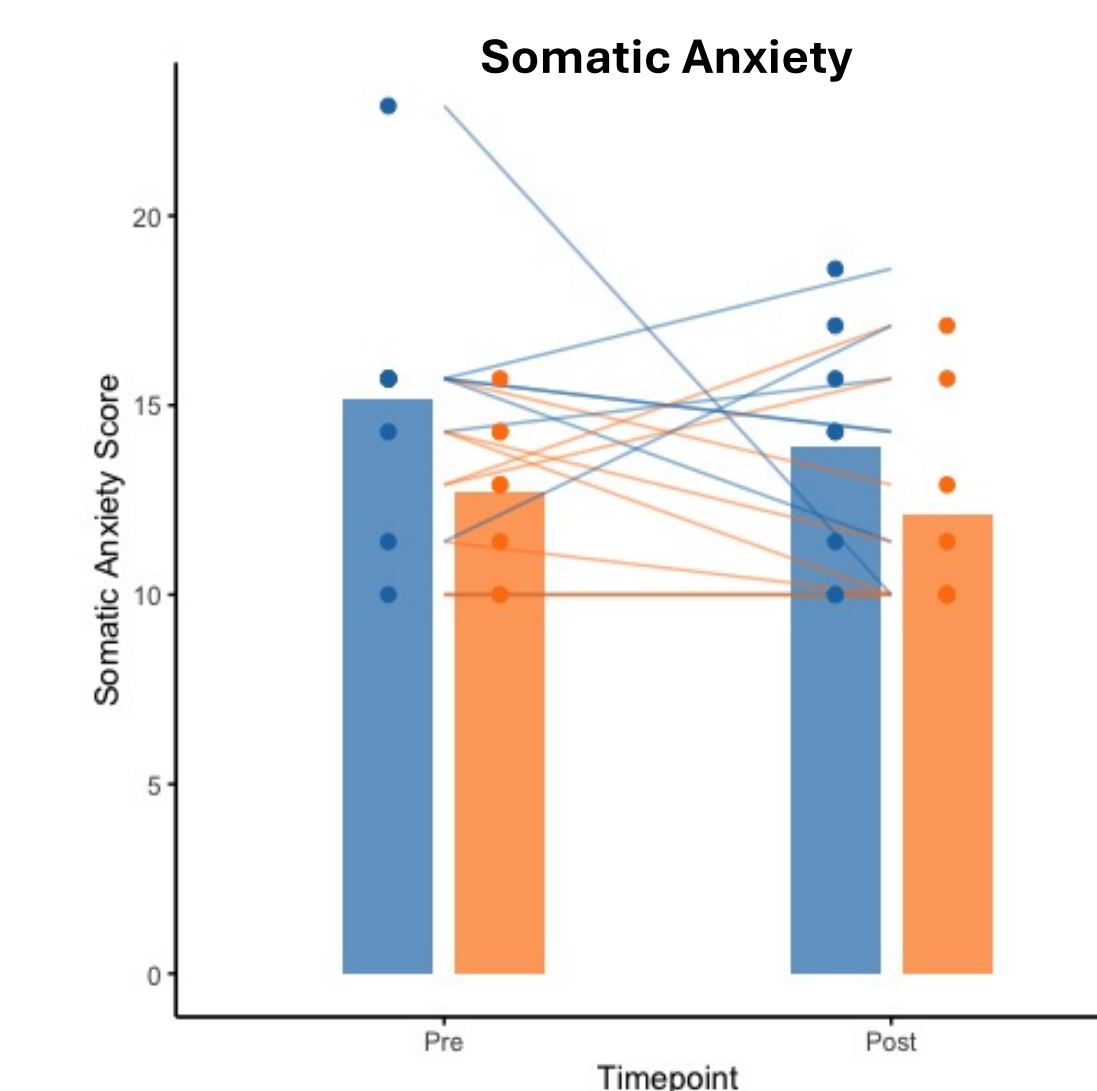
Putting Performance

- No difference pre-post in imagery group.
- Difference pre-post in self-talk ($p = 0.02$)
- No difference in relative change between groups.



Competitive State Anxiety

- No differences in pre-post intervention scores within groups for any of the three subscale scores.
- No significant differences between groups in any sub-scale scores.

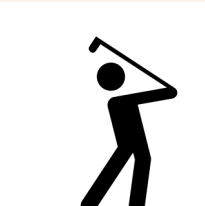


METHODS



DESIGN

- Between-subjects quasi experimental study
- Two-week duration



POPULATION

- 16 adolescent & youth golfers ages 16 to 24 years



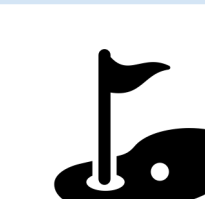
INTERVENTION

- Self-talk & imagery training interventions with cues and scripts



PRIMARY OUTCOME MEASURES

- Feasibility & acceptability of interventions
- Fidelity



SECONDARY OUTCOME MEASURES

- Putting Performance
- Competitive state anxiety

CONCLUSIONS

The feasibility and acceptability of the interventions were rated favorably by participants in both experimental groups

No significant associations were observed regarding the effects of the self-talk or imagery training interventions on putting performance or competitive state anxiety.

The limited duration of the study and reduced exposure to the skills may have contributed to the inability to detect clear performance outcomes.

Elevating the role of mental skills training and making such training accessible to recreational and youth golfers, may support performance enhancement.

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