ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY

Mental Skills Training Program Implementation and Its Impact on Performance Enhancement among Long Distance Runners in Ethiopia

By: Fitsumbrhan Shishay

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Addis Ababa

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By: Fitsumbrhan Shishay

Advisor: Ato Girma Lemma

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A thesis Submitted to the school of graduate studies of Addis Ababa University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of masters of art in counseling psychology

June, 2010

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Approval of Board of Examiners

Name _____ Signature _____

Chairperson, institute's Graduate Committee

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Advisor

_____

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Abbreviations

AAU- Addis Ababa University

BASC- Bankers' Athletics Sport Club

DFASC-Defense Force Athletics Sport Club

EEPAASC-Ethiopian Electric Power Agency Athletics Sport Club

FPASC-Federal Police Athletic Sport Club

FPRASC-Federal Prison Athletics Sport Club

GZASC-Getazeru Athletics Sport Club

KCTE- Kotebe College of Teachers Education

MASC-Muger Athletics Sport Club

MST- Mental Skills Training

OPLASC-Oromia Police Athletics Sport Club

OPRASC-Oromia Prison Athletics Sport Club

SGASC-St. George Athletics Sport Club

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Appendix A: questionnaire in mental skills training to be completed by first division club long distance runners of Ethiopian athletes.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the Mental Skills Training Program Implementation and Its Impact on Performance Enhancement among long distance runners of Ethiopia.

The methodology employed was descriptive study method.100 athletes were selected from 10 first division long distance athletics sport clubs. And the athletes from each club were selected by simple random method of sampling. A Questionnaire with a total of 25 questions was distributed to the sampled athletes and was returned after properly filled. Focus group discussion Interviews also conducted with 30 athletes who were purposefully selected from 5 clubs of the 10 athletics clubs of research sample. 10 coaches of selected clubs and five lecturers of sport science from AAU & KCTE were also participating in the interview. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics; frequency counts, percentage, mean, and grand mean and simple narratives were used as data analysis techniques.

The results of the study indicates, there is a problem related to mental skills training program in giving emphasis to it parallel with the physical aspect of sport training by coaches. And the coaches are not aware about MST. Moreover there is no efficient use of MST by the athletes due to less support from their coaches. This is firstly due to lack of awareness and attitude of the coaches and secondly the sport administrators' low attitude and less emphasis to the MST program.

Based on these findings, the possible solutions are the lack of awareness and attitudes about MST by coaches and sport administrators should be changed through consistent seminars and awareness creating trainings. The researcher concludes that there is lack of awareness and attitude about the MST program implementation and its impact in performance improvement. Due to the failure of understanding how to implement MST program, the athletes fail to solve different psychological injuries and problems which happen during/ after training or competition.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This section consists: background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, definition of operational terms and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

We all have different level of physical ability but there is one aspect which we are equal; the capacity to develop our mental ability. We all can be equally focused, disciplined and determined. While there is a limit to how much physical training any of us can do, the mind is an area of unlimited potential and one that has a powerful influence on performance (Aberbuch, 1986).

Athletes, coaches and other individuals with a committed investment in improving their sporting performances recognize intuitively and experientially the important role psychology has to play in this venture. Psychologists, from sometimes remote and uninvolved positions, have sought to understand the psychological determinants of successful performances. For many years there were two perspectives. One, framed as a request for serious involvement, and the other a stance of scientific ran like tramlines, in parallel, and with only a hope of meeting on the horizon (Butler, 1999).

Recently, over the last decade or so, the two perspectives have meshed. Psychologists tentatively stepped into the sporting arena, with their bag of 'mental training' techniques, apprehension about acceptance and hesitant questions conserving their role. Athletes and coaches, mainly of who were initially quizzical or openly scathing of 'shrinks' in white coats who were set on disrupting training and offering analysis of the psyche, discovered with delight that psychological

approaches could be successfully applied to improve their performances (Butler, 1999).

Initially, sports psychology was simply a branch of clinical psychology offered in counseling or personality studies. Now sports psychology is a field of its own, with techniques specifically designed for performance enhancement. It is also possible to obtain clinical counseling services where interpersonal and emotional factors are involved in performance (Suinn, 1980). As Averbuch(1986) describes the recognition of the intellectual is the reason the field of sports psychology is growing so rapidly, an area in which Europeans have long excelled. The majority of top athletes practice some form of mental training and a number of them even claim that their success on any given performance is 80-90% dependent on mental readiness. Mental preparation consists of various factors such as goal setting, motivation, imagery, concentration and relaxation. Understanding and developing these techniques will help you run best in the same way that training your body does.

According to Gould and Damarjian (1999), mental skills training refer to procedures that enhance an athlete's ability to use his /her mind effectively in the execution of sport related goals. It involves developing those psychological factors that are found to enhance athletic performance. It can be used to help develop important characteristics in athletics such as self-esteem and moral values

1.2 Statement of the Problem

How important are mental skills in determining athletic performance? Are there distinctions between more and less successful athletes with regard to psychological skills and attributes? What are the psychological characteristics of peak performance? These are just some of the questions sport psychologists have studied in their quest of better understand the role that mental factors play in athletic performance.

The application of mental skills in sports is linked with the development and maintenance of expert performance in sport (Orlik, 2000). In addition to this according to Martens (1987) mental skills are similar to physical skills; therefore, to develop and maintain them it requires individual's commitment. Because as some coaches and psychologists say that it is the mind that controls the body and once a race begins, it is 90% mental and 10% physical training.

It is obvious that to develop mental skills it requires sport psychologists but as the research done by Edwards (2007) in South Africa, sport psychology has developed considerably in America, Europe, Asia and Australia but not in Africa. This shows that as we are part of Africa there is lack of professionally licensed sport psychologists. We can ask a question how our coaches implement it and measure its impact. That means how these skills are applicable to our young athletes and experienced one to use mental training strategies to contribute to their future athletic career is in question. According to Daniel (1998) long distance runners are required to be mentally tough than physically because to cover much distance, it needs discipline, determination, and commitment. For this reason, this research gives high emphasis for this event because most Ethiopian athletes participate in this type of athletic event. But they are few in number when we compare to athletes in other African countries (e.g. Kenya). That means, we always see homogenous athletes in the athletic arena.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions were:

1. Do the coaches give emphasis for mental skills training program in line with the physical skills training for long distance runners?
2. Do long distance runners have awareness about the impacts and implementation techniques of mental skills training program?
3. What is the attitude of long distance runners about the impacts and implementation techniques of mental skills training program

4. What are the challenges of mental skills training program implementation and the possible solutions to encounter the challenges?

1.4 Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to assess the ways how Ethiopian athletes and coaches use the methods of mental skill training program in line with physical skill training program for performance enhancement in athletic sport. Moreover, the specific objectives of the study are:

- To examine whether the coaches give emphasis for mental skills training program in line with the physical skills training for long distance runners.
- To evaluate athletes' awareness and attitude towards impact and implementation techniques of mental skills training program.
- To identify the challenges of mental skills training program implementation and the possible solutions to encounter the challenges.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research study signifies as a great input for those individuals who are interested to further study this area of research. Coaches can also get a track and sort of direction on how to use mental skills training in line with physical skills training program to upgrade performance of athletes. Furthermore, athletes can also be beneficial from this mental skill training program.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Because of the nature of the discipline, that is so wide, that the researcher is interested to conduct the study only on distance runners of first division clubs.

Actually there are 20 first division athletics clubs in Addis Ababa town. But this study is delimited in ten clubs among the 20 first division athletics clubs.

1.7 Definition of Terms

- **Athlete**- A professional sports person who participate in track and field or athletics event more specifically here in long distance race.
- **Coach**- A professional person who trains or directs athletes or athletic teams in sport events.
- **Concentration**-being able to attend to what is going on, the degree to which you can attend and how long you can continue to attend to what is going on around you.
- **Goal setting**- a specific standard of proficiency on a task, usually with in a specific time limit from attaining a practical perspective
- **Imagery**- can be defined as a skill that utilizes all the senses or create or recreate an experience in the mind and/is the language of the brain.
- **Long distance run**- a distance covers the 5 kilometers, 10 kilometers, half marathon, and marathon (42.195 km) events in athletics.
- **Mental skills training**- is designed program to produce psychological states and skills in athletes that will lead the performance enhancement
- **Motivation**- can be defined in terms of direction and intensity of one's effort.
- **Relaxation**-means letting go and doing absolutely nothing with one's muscles and/is marked by a reduction or complete absence of muscular activity in the voluntary muscles.
- **Sport psychology**- A discipline or subject which deals with increasing performance by managing emotions and minimizing the psychological effects of injury and poor performance of athletes in sport.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research paper is in general organized in five chapters. The first chapter deals with background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, definition of operational terms, and organizational of the study. The second chapter treats with review of the related literature which gives the general background information about the study. The third chapter contains research methodology and procedures employed. The fourth chapter deals with results of the study. The summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study are presented in the fifth chapter. Finally, references, sample questionnaires, interview, and focus group discussion are attached to the last part of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Definitions of Mental Skills Training

Mental skill training involves the process of developing the mental skills needed to strengthen condition the mind as we pursuit our performance potential. Think of the mind and body as a quality performance engine. In order to gain high performance, we need to maintain to fuel it properly and the correct tools to maintain the engine. An athlete who has developed physically and mentally has developed the mindset of expecting success (Moria, 2010).

According to Bruintjies (2007) mental skills training refer to procedures that enhance an athlete's ability to use his/her mind effectively in the execution of sport related goals. It involves developing those psychological factors that are found to enhance athletic performance. It can also be used to help develop important personal characteristics in athletics such as self-esteem and moral values.

Mental skills are internal capabilities that help athletes control their minds efficiently and consistently as they execute sport related goals. Mental skills training provides the methods and techniques to not only develop skills such as concentration and relaxation (positive body language), but also to foster characteristics such as self-esteem and positive competitive skills and behavior (http://www.peaksports.com).

2.2 Mental Skills Training Program

Mental skills are all interrelated with each other and form a unique, composite, inseparable whole (Weinberg and Gould, 2007). Their separation in to arbitrary

categories is for research, training and teaching purposes as applied in variety of setting such as sport. Mental skills currently focused on in sport include goal setting, motivation, imagery, relaxation and concentration (Wann and Church, 1998; Edwards and Bruintjies, 2007). While some mental skills training programs train only some of these skills, they will all be examined in order to provide a comprehensive review, as well as understanding of mental skills training program implemented during this study.

2.3 Components of Mental Skills Training program

Although each of the five skills is important, its primary importance will occur during one of three phases; long term development, immediate preparation, and during performance itself.

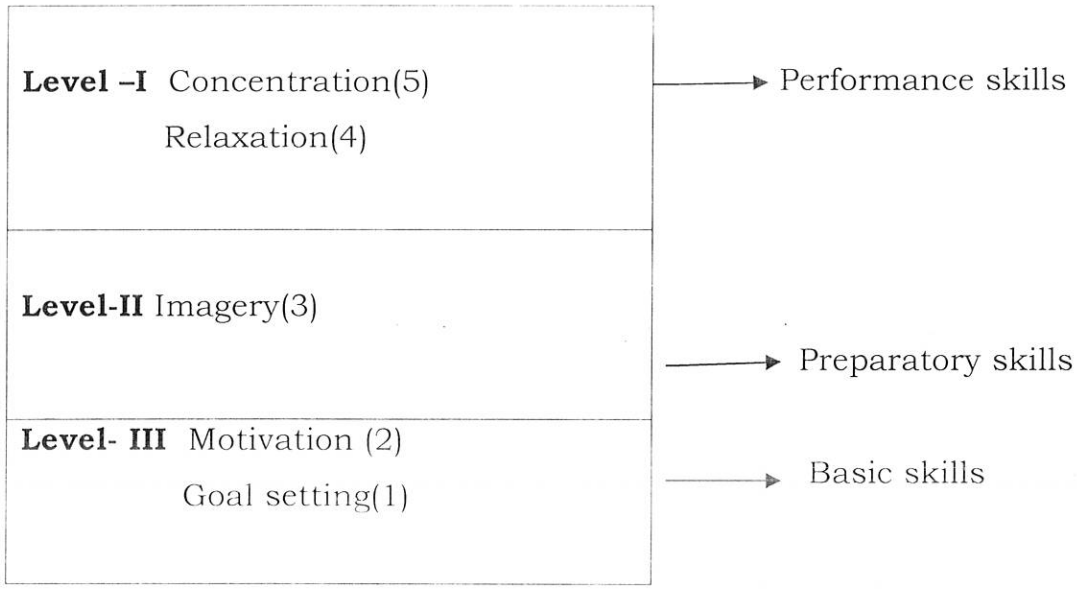
Level 1: these mental skills constitute a broad base for attaining long term goals, learning and sustaining daily practice. They are needed on a long day by day basis for long periods of time, often months and years.

Level 2: these skills are used immediately before performance to prepare for performance. They may be used just before competition begins, or immediately before specific performance actions.

Level 3: these skills are used during actual performance behavior.

The diagram below represents the relationship which the five prominent skills to one another. Each of the higher levels incorporates and is based up the skills of the preceding levels.

Figure 2.1 detailed description of the five mental skills



Source- http//:www.sportpsych.org/nine3.htm

2.4 Relationship of MST and Long Distance Run

Long-distance running can be as much a mental challenge as it is a physical test of strength and fitness. Some runners find that their body is willing to run longer, but it's too hard mentally to keep going. So long distance runners can use the following tips to help win the mental battle while running as mentioned in the web site (http://www.running.about.com):

- If you're running alone and struggling, give yourself a pep talk. Tell yourself that you're not physically tired -- you're just mentally fatigued and you can push through it. Say to yourself things like, "I'll have some water in five minutes -- that will make me feel better." If you're doing your longest run ever, remind yourself how proud you'll feel when you're finished.

- Dividing up your run into smaller segments will make the distance feel much more manageable. For example, if you're running 20 miles, think, "OK, it's four 5-mile runs." At the start of each new segment, visualize yourself just starting out on a new run with fresh legs and just focus on getting to the end of that segment.

- As you're doing a long run, remind yourself that it's not easy to train for a long-distance event. If it were, everyone would do it, right? Remind yourself that you're taking on a challenge and the difficulties you face will make your accomplishment all the more worthwhile in the end.

- Picking a short phase, such as "One step at a time," that you play over and over in your head while running can help you stay focused and centered. It can be your inner motivation when you need it most.

- When you hit a rough patch, try to imagine yourself as an Olympic athlete who's headed towards the finish line. Envision your running form as smooth, graceful, and relaxed. Think of a runner who you really admire and imagine you running just like him.

- Say, I love deciding what I want to do after I finish my run, especially if I'm running in morning. I'll ponder something basic, such as what to make for dinner. It helps me organize my day and gives me something to look forward.

- If you're training for a race, such as a marathon, picture yourself running the course -- every mile -- and crossing the finish line. Picture how you want to pose for your photo as you run through the finish. Try to see the clock with your goal time (if you have one) displayed. Imagine what you'll be thinking as a volunteer puts your race medal around your neck. Think about how it will feel to see your loved ones at the finish line cheering for you.

2.5 Goal-setting

Although any number of definition could be offered for the term "goal" Lock et al. (1981) has generated the most widely accepted definition. For these investigators, a goal is defined as attaining a specific standard of proficiency on a task, usually within a specified time limit from a practical perspective, then, goals focus on achieving some standard, whether it is increasing one's time in 5 kilo meter or losing 5 kilo gram in body weight. This definition also implies that such performance standards will be achieved within a specified unit of time.

Even though the definition by Locke and his associates (1981) provides good general description of a goal, sport psychologists have at times found it useful to make specific distinctions between types of goals.

Recent research, for instance, differentiates between subjective goal (e.g. having fun, getting fit or trying once best), general objective goals (e.g. Winning a championship or making a team) and specific objective goals (e.g. increasing the number of goals to be scored in a basket ball game). Similarly, Martens (1987) and Burton (1992) have made distinctions between outcome goals which represent standards of performance that focus on the results of a contest opponents or teams (e.g. beating someone), performance goals, which focus on the improvements relative to once own past performance (e.g. a 5000 meter athlete can set his or her performance goal for the next meeting between a time 13':23":50 and 13':24":00 after his time for a previous meeting was 13':24":70), and process goals, which help to focus the attention on task related aspects during training. As Anderman (1974) appoints, process goals are particularly effective in enhancing self-efficacy, confidence and reducing anxiety.

Generally, many reviewers concluded that all three types of goals, then, have purposes in directing behavioral change. The major point here is that knowing when

to focus on each type of goal and not falling in to the trap of focusing all once attention on outcome goals (Anderman, 1974; Weinberg and Gould, 1999; Cox, 2002; Bruintjies, 2007).

2.5.1 Impacts of goal setting

In their review of well over one hundred studies on goal setting , for example , Lock, Show, Saari and Lathan (1981) concluded that the beneficial effect of goal setting on task performance is one of the most robust and replicable findings in the psychological literature. Ninety percent of the studies showed positive or practically positive effects. Thus, a review of the psychological research clearly shows goal setting is a powerful technique for enhancing performance (Bruintijies, 2007).

Furthermore, as Lock and Latham's (1990) basic theory of goal setting, goals those are both difficult and specific lead to increase in motivation and performance. In addition to this goal gives direction, just as things to do list one to focus on a task and use time more productivity, so do sporting goals help the athlete to eliminate potential distractions and to focus on what is important (Cox, 2002).

In summary, the results of the psychological and sport psychological research literature provide strong support for using goal setting procedures to facilitate athletic performance. Moreover, as the research conducted by Morris and Summers (1995), goals can increase athletes' feelings of control, raise self esteem, lead to adopting better techniques and strategies, and leads to feelings of competence and satisfaction.

2.5.2 Challenges in implementing goal setting

Goal setting is not a difficult psychological technique to understand, but this does not mean that problems will not arise in implementing a goal setting program (Gould, 1998).

Based on years of experience as a sport psychologists working at U.S. Olympic training center, Shane Murphy identified several common obstacles to individual formal goal setting. These include the notion that goal setting takes too much time, their previous failure experiences setting goals; the perception that they will become a public failure if they do not reach certain goals; and the feeling that goal setting is too structured and will not work with "Spontaneous" people. Murphy points out that goal setting actually saves time because one becomes much better organized. He argues that failure typically results from an over emphasis on setting goals outside of once control (i.e. they choose outcome goal than performance goals, thought focusing on process and performance goals causes on less worry about failure), and he re assures athletes that writing out and working toward specific goals not mean losing spontaneity or becoming rigid. Anticipating these reactions and being able to effectively disarm them will help us to engage in effective goal setting.

According to Burton (1992) failing to adjust goals is also another problem; especially lowering those, once they have been set can be difficult. For example, athletes who had no difficulty adjusting goals upward found after an injury or illness that adjusting goals downward was extremely difficult from a psychological perspective. Furthermore, as such research identified that a problem coaches have all too frequently is setting goals at the start of the season and then not effectively using them throughout the year. A lack of follow up and evaluation is one of the major factors in the failure of goal setting programs (Weinberg and Gould.1999). It is imperative to develop a follow up and evaluation for goals and to examine it critically

for ease and efficiency. Goal setting without follow up and evaluation is simply a waste of time and effort (Cox, 2002).

2.5.3 Implementation Techniques

Research and practical experience have demonstrated that goal setting is a powerful technique for influencing the behavior of athletes at training, in competition and their daily lives (Morris and Summers, 1995). Goal setting is generally most effective when goals are SMART (i.e. the acronym has been used by sport psychologists to help athletes remember five important characteristics of well stated goals). Goals should be Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic and Timely (Weinberg and Gould, 1999; Cox, 2002; Shev, 2007).

Generally, the reviews by Locke and Latham (1990) identified three prominent techniques on how to implement goals to working well as follow:

- First, identify appropriate goal, an effective goal setting is to outline a specific strategy or plan for achieving the goal.
- Second, provide support and encouragement about their goals and publicity encourage their progress showing enthusiasm about the goal setting process supports the athletes and exercise participants, helping to keep them motivated to fulfill their goals.
- Finally, motivating and evaluating progress, a good goal setting program requires constant monitoring and evaluation by athlete and coach. A day should not go by without the athlete considering goals and evaluating progress. It may be that a particular goal cannot be achieved. In this case, the athlete should redefine the goal in a more realistic manner. However, in most cases the regular evaluation of progress will help athletes see improvements that will provide them additional motivation to achieve their goals.

2.6 Motivation

The concept of motivation is usually broken down into basic components that can be easily defined and measured. Perhaps the greatest difficulty with 'motivation' as a psychological construct is that it is not very consistent from one situation to another (Griffith, 1999).

As Sage (1977) Motivation can be defined in terms of the direction and intensity of one's effort Direction of effort refers to whether an individual seeks out, approaches, or is attracted to certain situations. And intensity of effort also refers to how much effort a person puts forth in a particular situation.

Sport and exercise psychologists view motivation from several vantages including achievement motivation, motivation with regard to competitiveness or competitive stress, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Bruintjies, 2007). These varied forms of motivation are all part the more general definition of motivation. Hence, one can understand the specifics of motivation through this broader, holistic context.

2.6.1 Impacts of Motivation

As many reviewers concluded that it is difficult to imagine anything being more important to success in sport than motivation (Cox, 2002). Some we assume that great sport performances are based upon innate natural ability some might think. However, close scrutiny of the training and preparation habits of all great performers can be traced to a combination of physical ability and a drive to be the very best. Especially in relation to long distance runners; because of the nature of the event the athletes should possess commitment, discipline, and determination (Daniel, 1998).

2.6.2 Challenges in Implementing Motivation

Even though defining motivation using Sag's (1977) in terms of direction and intensity, the term motivation is used in more varied ways daily. It is often vaguely defined or not defined at all.

Vague definitions of motivation and using the term in so many different ways have two disadvantages. First, if coaches tell to athletes that need more motivation without telling them what they specifically mean by the term, the athlete will have to interpret the meaning. Second, when practitioners develop specific strategies or techniques for motivating individuals, they may not recognize how these various strategies interact (Weinberg and Gould, 1999).

2.6.3 Implementation Techniques

The initial difficulties associated with implementation a mental skills training package can be alleviated by ascertaining the motivational characteristics behind the aim of increasing performance. Weinberg (1984) identified two distinct motivations underlying the desire for an athlete to improve performance, these were, extrinsic rewards and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic rewards are those motivations that are essentially external to the athlete. These include the more material aspects of competition, such as prizes, trophies, money and security, and also the more immaterial, ego-centered aspects of competitive vents, such as recognition and respects from people. Intrinsic motivations are mainly concerned with the desire for self-development, and to challenge and improve one self.

Weinberg (1994), Martens (1987) and Rushall (1979) emphasize athletes should be encouraged to improve performance from intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation to help with attaining specific goals. This is because extrinsic rewards tend to govern the concept of self, and event performance, that is, the athlete's self-

condition and over all satisfactions with training and performance are influenced and defined by external factors out of the control of the individual.

Intrinsic motivation drives from a desire to achieve for achievement's sake. Instead of defining oneself from the perspective of external agents, the individual measures themselves, success attributable only in as much as how they performed previously, regardless of the external reward. Intrinsic motivation allows the athlete a more objective perspective of themselves, decreasing an egocentric position that would normal be associated with external motivation, and freeing the individual to see performance as a means of self-development. Underling this, individual places awareness up on the implementation of persistence in training, vital to the adherence of psychological and physiological based training (Dishman, 1987).

Moreover, the athlete is not limiting themselves by external events, that is, only setting goals to merely "beat" their opponent for some material or ego-oriented, but opens the door for much higher aims in performance. This is because goals set as a construction of external events, i.e., wither one "wins" or "looses", has been shown to be a source of great stress and anxiety due to the inherent un controllability of external events (Burton,1992 ;Cox,2002). Furthermore, one's goals will be focused mostly on these things believed to be controllable in the external environment, instead of focusing internally on the way one perceives external events. Under intrinsic motivation a greater scope for self-development and self-improvement exists in comparison to external rewards because intrinsic assists in changing perception of external event, rather than external events precipitating a change in perception. Therefore, before mental skills training can begin an assessment of underlining motivation is important because of the qualitative nature of results and gradual progression of training.

To further enhance motivation, structured teaching and coaching environments must meet the needs of all participants need to recognize that an individual is critical to the motivational environment and must recognize that the influence

motivation both directly and indirectly. They must use behavioral techniques to change undesirable motives and strengthen week motivation (Rinke, 1992).

2.7 Imagery

Imagery is a powerful mental skill and one that can be used very effectively in sport, especially with practice and persistence, as well as enhancing sporting performances (Morris and Summers, 1995). Imagery comprise of various mental pictures that can exert a strong influence on thoughts, feelings and behaviors.

Imagery can be defined as a skill that utilizes all the essence to create or recreate an experience in the mind. The image is gradually enhanced with the development of certain qualities. One cannot mentally rehearse a performance until one is able to conjure up an image of what it is one aims to accomplish (Gould and Damarjian, 1999; Suinn, 1980).

Research has shown that imagery is the language of the brain. In a real sense, the brain cannot tell the difference between an actual physical event and the vivid visualization of the same event. For this reason, the brain provides repetitions, intensifications and preservation of important skills that can be used during imagery.

2.7.1 Impact of Imagery

Probably one of the most appealing aspects of imagery rehearsal is that it is an extremely versatile technique that can be used in a wide range of situations. Although it by no means comprehensive, the limits of using imagery depend on the limits of the imagination of athletes, coaches and sport psychologists.

There can be little doubt about the value of imagery as a resource in the practice of applied sport psychology. Imagery techniques have been used systematically in psychological skills training since the early peak performance of Mohaney and Avener(1977), and Ravizza (1977) and other practically-oriented texts, including those of Suinn(1980).The magnitude of use and the range of applications of imagery have grown and continue to grow. Similarly, there appears to be little waning interest in the study of imagery in order to provide knowledge that will optimize its use in sport psychology (Bruintjies, 2007). Because, as such sport psychologist concluded that imagery will clearly remain as a means of enhancing performance, solving problems, reviewing skills, building confidence, coping with stress, focusing attention, easing pain, facilitating recovery from injury or heavy exercise, and helping in other ways yet to be discovered, many of the questions raised by research and practice still urgently await answers (Bruintjies, 2007). It is intended that as underlying above and such research reviewed on the use of imagery should reflect the current best practice.

2.7.2 Challenges in Implementing Imagery

Research involving imagery is difficult. The primary difficulty involves the inability of the experimenter to control the kinds images that a subject experiences. One way to gain some control is to utilize objective imagery questionnaires. Research has shown that it is to utilize two different imagery questionnaires to categories athletes as high or low imagers. A number of questionnaires have been developed to measure imaging ability. These include vividness of visual imagery questionnaire, movement imagery questionnaire, and vividness of the imagery use questionnaire (Bruintjies, 2007).

2.7.3 Implementation Techniques

It is suggested that elite athletes favor internal imagery (i.e. requires an approximation of the real life experience such that the person actually feels those sensations, which might occur while participating in the real situation; it also involves seeing or feeling something from performer's own perspective called "kina-esthetic" imagery) over external imagery (i.e. accruing when a person views themselves from the perspective of an external observer or viewing our performance as if we were watching ourselves on videotape; and is an out of the body experience). Research has shown that were one's perspective is more beneficial than the other, it will generally depend on the nature of the task and the previous experience of the athlete (Bruintjies, 2007). Again, if one is a developing athlete, the skill of imagery may be difficult for one since it takes time and quality practice to master it and expectation towards this skill. Furthermore, for beginners it is common to start imaging well-known objects, such as the house they grew up in, a family get, or a favorite location, like a beach (Bruintjies, 2007). These are the recollections that are fairly easy for most people and, with practice, can be manipulated to enhance controllability of images. Once the athlete shows proficiency in these skills, the focus is moved to more sport-specific examples. They should be guided to use as many senses as possible when recreating themselves. The images can be restricted to actions that have taken place to tap into the memory portion of their minds. As they gain confidence in these skills, more self-directed imaging of possible changes to the mental pictures can be introduced.

Generally, imagery is a skill that can be utilized at any time and any place for a wide variety of reasons (Cox, 2002). Therefore, depending on the physical and imagery ability level of the athlete, different types of imagery, timing and locations are prescribed.

2.8 Relaxation

Every athlete experiences the stress preparing of a successful performance. Individual, who is then required to react in some way in order to cope with the situations, it is how one perceives these pressures that either facilitates efforts to be successful, or debilitates performance to be a disaster (Woodman and Hardy, 2000; Suinn, 1980).

Physically, emotionally and mentally, relaxation is characterized by an absence of need (Syer and Connolly, 1984). Relaxation means letting go and doing absolutely nothing with one's muscles. Although the muscles can't be switched off completely, they can be brought down nicely to do an "idling speed". This occurs when one drops off to sleep in the process of gradually letting one's muscles slip in to "neutral" gear.

Relaxation is marked by a reduction or complete absence of muscular activity in the voluntary muscles. This is accompanied by a reduction in the involuntary muscles as well. Relaxation is a tension in the skeletal musculature. Relaxation therefore means no muscular activity at all or getting as near to zero activity as possible. During relaxation one develops a greater sensitivity to ones bodily feelings and responses (Kauss, 2001).

2.8.1 Impacts of Relaxation

Performers often fail to achieve their best when they are too tight, anxious, and tense or stressed out. The problem is usually a consequence of losing perspective, test focus or mental control personal bests often occurs when mind and muscle combine in free-flowing way rarely occurs at the same movement. Developing one's ability to relax one's body and calm the mind is important because it allows one to

control one's intensity and channel focus. This will enhance performance (Orlick, 2001).

The ability to relax is a significant skill for two reasons (Bruintjies, 2007): first, the mind, especially when it is over anxious, can affect one's physical condition, causing the body to release chemicals that tend to disrupt body balance. One may cause stress and tension that in turn directly affects performance. Secondly it may also cause one to narrow or broaden concentration to such an extent that one focuses on incorrect cues or fall in to the trope to over thinking. Excessive states of tension or apprehension can be controlled by a variety of relaxation techniques.

Generally, true relaxation gives a sense of distance from where we can watch our sensations, feelings and thoughts dispassionately as they arise and eventually learn from them (Kauss, 2001).

2.8.2 Challenges in Implementing Relaxation

Being able to relax the body gives the athlete control over muscles important for keeping loose in competition. The feeling of "flow" is often associated with being loose and easy. Knowing how to relax can also be used if competition or conditions cause a tenseness or tightness. Finally, you can use relaxation as a basic step in other training, such as visualization, some concentration control, some stress management (Suinn, 1980). But unable to learn relaxation techniques, unable to focus on tensing muscle groups, and unable to follow correct centering breathing techniques can be considered as a problem to practice and implement relaxation training (Suinn, 1980).

2.8.3 Implementation Techniques

Relaxation requires practice because it is a skill. Consequently, the athlete and coach will have to experiment with the procedures and individual variation to produce the process for the athlete. The development of this skill is highly individual. Some will attain it almost immediately. Others will take as many as dozen sessions. The basis of mastering relaxation procedures is that of control. The athlete has to be able his/her attention on the task at hand its associated sensations. Usually, when this is the process is mastered (Rushall, 1979).

There are a number of relaxation methods used, many of have been derived from eastern yoga and meditation techniques. Two of the better known is autogenic training and progressive relaxation. The first, autogenic training consists of a series of exercises designed to produce two physical feelings, namely warmth and heaviness. Basically it is a technique of auto hypnosis. It has been used to help patients with heart disease, high blood pressure, migraine headaches and other physical illness. A sequence of commands to the autogenic nervous system gradually teaches the patient to become aware of and then one gain control over his breathing, body temperature and other hither_ to uncontrolled parts of that system. Using this method, one can learn to raise and lower arousal level at will (Bruintjies, 2007). The second, progressive involves tensing and relaxing each major group in turn, so that each group and sense of tension in each group may be identified and released. As one expands awareness of the difference between tension and release, we are increasingly able to release all our tension (Syer and Connolly, 1984; Suinn, 1980). In addition to the above two techniques, as the reviews of Bennett and Pravitz (1982) shows, there are other two techniques of relaxation. First, mental relaxation, this specifically to the relaxation of what is generally called "the objective mind" sometimes referred to as the "conscious" or "intellectual mind". This is the thinking, analyzing, reasoning mind that we all know when relaxed, this portion of mind slows down. The more relaxes the objective, intellectual mind, the easier it is

to introduce thoughts and ideas to the subconscious mind, where type in turn work in their own creative way to achieve the desired results. Second, physical relaxation, the use of physical relaxation is also a means of maintaining and repairing the body, just as in mental maintenance and repair. The mind can interrupt or otherwise affect any of the systems of the body. Every system in one's body can be touched and be affected by the mind. Relaxation is a pre-requisite to using the mind for these purposes, with maximum effectiveness (Bruintjies, 2007).

2.9 Concentration and Attention

Concentration is the ability to control thought processes, to focus on a task at hand (e.g., to "keep your eye on the ball"). Effective concentration is almost universally recognized as the most important key to effective performance in sport. It is the ability to maintain focus on relevant environmental cues. When the environmental changes attention focus must change accordingly. Thinking the past or future creates irrelevant cues that often lead to performance errors (Gallwey, 1979; Suinn, 1980).

Effective concentration is a state of being, which all sportspeople recognize as a prerequisite to good performance. It is unwavering awareness of a specific subject to the momentary exclusion of other subjects. It is the ability to focus all your affection on what you are doing may vary in intensity (Jennings, 1993).

Concentration or selective attention refers to being able to attend to what is going on, the degree to which you can attend and how long you can continue to attend to what is going on around you. Selective attention refers to being able to attend to specific thing going on or to ignore others or the ability to put the mind on one thing a time or on all things that relate to what is going on at that time (Harriss and Harriss, 1984).

2.9.1 Impacts of Concentration and Attention

Attention and concentration are separate psychological skills combined due overlapping conception. Attention involves focusing mental ability on a current task. Concentration entails sustaining attention over a period of time, while being aware of environmental and situational factors (Harriss and Harriss, 1984; Weinberg and Gould, 2007). It is particularly important during lengthy sporting competitions.

Moreover, as Harriss and Harriss (1984) elaborates, peak performance occurs when one voluntarily on the cues in the environment and perceives them as requiring an action that is with one's ability to execute. Attention is the means by which picks up and exchange information from the environment. When this process is under one's control one feels able to direct the flow or reciprocal information that unites one with the environment and what is going on within game. One chooses to interact with a system of continuous stimuli, which one can get meaningful feedback. When attention and concentration are maintained and athletes are not preoccupied with internal and/ or external distraction, they continually focused and generally exude the right level of self-confidence (Edwards, 2007). They complete activities as practiced and imagined, flow of energy is smooth and moderate and arousal is typically experienced. Unfortunately this focus can be easily broken-down in some athletes, when their attention and concentration are negatively affected by distractible factors.

2.9.2 Challenges in Implementing Concentration and Attention

Attention and concentration can be disrupted by inappropriate negative thought patterns, faulty cognitions about previous events, misinterpretations or control arousal as well as by anxiety, exhaustion, visual and auditory distraction (Wann and Church, 1998; Weinberg and Gould, 2007). Unfit or tired athletes can lose attention and concentration, and as a result focus on internal and/ or external

aspect rather than performance. The acquisition of training techniques in order to nullify distractible factors is one important aspect of focus enhancement (Weinberg and Gould, 2007). Training techniques improve attention, concentration ability and "sharpness".

2.9.3 Implementation Techniques

Maximal performance is based on acquiring the skills and discipline to execute the behaviors that are required within the situation. Developing these abilities requires extensive commitment of attention to learn and to practice so they can be applied when demanded. Total involvement or total concentration; in terms of how the attention is directed, where it is directed, and who is in control of the process, must be our responsibility (Harriss and Harriss, 1984).

In their detail review on implementation techniques of attention and concentration, for example, Moran (2004) Wann and Church (1998) Weinberg and concentration can be enhanced through cue words, routines, stimulation training, eye control, enhancement of other psychological skills and having a race competition strategy(Moran,2004; Weinberg and Gould, 2007).

Attention and concentration ability is maintained through various perspective and forms of focused energy, which incorporates visual, sensory and cognitive control. Nideffer (1985) views attention along a two dimensional matrix, comprised of width and direction. He describes four types of attention focus: broad, narrow, internal and external. An example of broad internal focus is a track athlete planning his/her race strategy. An illustration of broad external focus is a sports person viewing the athletic stadium. An example of narrow internal focus is an athlete controlling arousal through breathing. An illustration of narrow external focus is a track athlete focusing on his/her race lane (Potgieter, 1997)

Broad and narrow, internal and external attention focus should be continually rehearsed in a variety of setting. Similar to the way in which thought patterns can become distracted and loose visual focus one particular stimulus. Eye control can be enhanced through techniques such as focusing on specific object of choice for a period of time, then tracking objects while maintaining attention and concentration. Cue words like "stay focused" or "keep concentrating" are used to focus and refocuses an athlete when concentration ability has decreased or relapsed. As particular task, athletes can refocus on a point or object while a partner/ coach attempts to distract him/her by reading out negative statements. This particular method rehearses possible sporting scenarios in front of distracting crowds. Thought stopping and positive self-talk in conjunction with the above techniques is often used to optimize attention above concentration ability (Suinn, 1980; Wann and Church, 1998; Weinberg and Gloud, 2007). When focus is maintained and athletes are not distracted, optimum self-confidence is often achieved.

CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Design of the Study

After the research problem and both the general and specific objectives are stated, the related literatures were reviewed to gather empirical and theoretical facts which are related with the problem in focus. Before the data collection stage began, questionnaires were prepared by bearing in mind the research objectives. To meet the objectives and obtain reliable data, semi-structured interview questions for coaches were prepared. Experts' opinions were gathered through open-ended interview questions. In addition to this, focus group discussion with athletes had taken to gather further information. The information obtained from questionnaire was analyzed by using simple percentage, mean, and grand mean. The data collected from interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed using narrative approach. To large extent, the study was approached through quantitative and qualitative method to analyze the data in the discussion.

3.2 Population and Sampling Methods

There are 20 first division athletics club in our country currently, and most are found in Addis Ababa. The researcher selects 10 clubs purposefully based on their access to transport and availability of time to collect the data and also the number of research sample athletes from each club was selected by simple random sampling method. And the technique that have used was; first, 300 pieces of papers were prepared. Out of these papers 100 pieces of papers was with the word "selected" and the left 200 of the papers were named as "unselected". Finally the papers were combined and shake and researcher allows the athletes to pick up a single piece of paper once. Then, the athletes who got the paper with the name "selected" taken for the study.

The selected clubs and the total number of athletes in each selected clubs are summarized in table 3.1. Among the total population size (N=300) of club athletes, the sample size (n=100) were selected for the study; i.e. 33%+1 of the total population size were randomly selected by using the technique mentioned above to fill the questionnaire. These sampled clubs were believed to be adequate in representing the population. From the sampled clubs, 10 long distance run coaches were taken for in-depth interview. The focus group discussions were also conducted with 5-8 numbers of participants (athletes) only in five clubs those who have large population size.

In addition to the above respondents, the study was involved five sport lecturers from Addis Ababa University and Kotebe College of teacher education to give their opinion regarding mental skills training program implementation methods and its impact on performance enhancement in athletics and about the actual mental skills training system in long distance run in Ethiopia.

3.3 Data Gathering Instrument

The instruments used for data gathering were questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. The data used for gathering the intended information is an already existing data done by Bruintjies (2006) at the university of Stellenbosch and David John Edwards (2007) at the university of Pretoria South Africa.

Questionnaire: The questionnaire that was prepared for athletes were aimed at obtaining their response regarding MST program. The questions were divided into five components of MST; i.e. goal setting, motivation, imagery, relaxation, and concentration, with five items under each component. The questions were administered in face-to-face situation. In order to avoid refusal and clarity points, additional explanations were given for the target population regarding its aim and how to respond by taking experience from the time of pilot-test. After the

questionnaire was returned back and then organized, reliability coefficient of athletes' response for the 25 items was calculated as 0.73. The values and ranges used in tables presented are based on the rules stated by Gay and Airsaian (2000:156). The following values were employed for the statements and the items and were stated as: "Strongly Disagree"(SD)=1,"Disagree"(DA)=2, "Undecided"(UD)=3, "Agree"(AG)=4, and "Strongly Agree"(SA)=5. Based on the above rating scale the average value is 3. From this average rating scale it is possible to say the respondents' agreement if the average value is greater than three and disagreement if the average value is less than three with the stated issues.

Interview: In this part, in-depth interview were intended to conduct with coaches of long distance run on MST program impact, implementation techniques, challenges to implement, and the actual possible solutions to encounter the challenges. Unfortunately, only lone coach was voluntary to give his opinion about MST program in general. In addition to this, sport science lecturers from AAU and KCTE were participating in the interview.

Focus group discussion: Focus group discussions were conducted with athletes by designing a semi-structured nature questions and by establishing rapport between the interviewer and the participants (athletes). Each focused groups began discussion voluntarily about the raised issues from one participant to the next as each of the athletes answered the initial question. As the focus groups continued, questions and answers flowed from one participant to the next asymmetrically. The focus group discussion interview guides are composed five inter-related group questions and are listed in appendix C.

3.4 Pilot – Test

The draft questionnaire was given to Alpha Engineering College Athletics Sport Club. And reliability coefficient of their response was obtained using Crobach's-

Alpha formula and was 0.67. The questionnaire was administered in face-to-face situation. In order to avoid refusal and clarity points, additional explanations were given for the target population regarding its aim and how to respond.

3.5 Methods of Data Organization and Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching, arranging and organizing of the questionnaire, interview, and focus group discussion that have been collected from the intended study. It is helpful to increase one's own understanding and to be able present or introduce what have been discovered to others and show the trends, patterns new things and discovering what is important and what is to be learned from the result.

Thus, the study were attempted to catch information by using different instruments from different sources. The raw data obtained were organized into meaningful data. In line with this, the information obtained from the sample were coded and entered in to SPSS computer program to calculate frequency and mean of the responses for options of each items. The information obtained from questionnaire was analyzed and interpreted by using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and grand mean as the main methods of summarizing the data. Moreover, the data collected from interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed using narrative approach.

Table 3.1 Summary of Research Setting and Participants of the Study

Types of participants and Research tool used		Research settings & number of participants											
		AAU & KCTE	DFASC	FPASC	BASC	FPRASC	OPRASC	MASC	OPLASC	SGASC	EEPAASC	GZASC	TOTAL
Athletes	Questionnaire	-	12	5	6	15	16	10	15	3	5	13	100
	Focused group discussion	- -	5	-	-	6	8	-	6	-	-	5	30
Coaches	Interview	- -	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
Sport	Interview	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Total sample size													**145**

Keys:

DFASC-Defence Force Athletics Sport Club, **EEPAASC**-Ethiopian Electric Power Agency Athletics Sport Club, **FPRASC**-Federal Prison Athletics Sport Club, **FPASC**-Federal Police Athletic Sport Club, **OPRASC**-Oromia Prison Athletics Sport Club, **MASC**-Muger Athletics Sport Club, **OPLASC**-Oromia Police Athletics Sport Club, **SGASC**- St. George Athletics Sport Club, **BASC**-Banks' Athletics Sport Club, and **GZASC**-Getazeru Athletics Sport Club.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This chapter laid emphasis on the analysis and interpretation of the data which is gathered from participants through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussion. The data were analyzed in relation to the objective of the study formulated in the first chapter. The qualitative data is analyzed and presented through narrative approach and the quantitative data were also categorized and presented by percentage, mean and grand mean for analysis.

4.1 Background Information

In the previous chapter the researcher tried to examine the research design, population and sampling, data gathering instruments, pilot test, and methods of data organization and analysis of the study. In this part the data collected through different techniques were presented and interpreted statistically.

Table 4.1 Frequency distributions of athletes' concerning **Socio-demographic Characteristics**

No	**Socio-demographic Characteristics**	**Category**	**f**	**%**	Total
1	Sex	**M**	68	68%	100
		F	32	32%	
2	Field of Events	5 &10 km	78	78%	100
		21&42 km	22	22%	

Keys:

Km=kilometer, **yrs**=years, **f**=frequency, **%**=percentage, **F**=Female, **M**=Male

The data on table 4.1 offers the socio-demographic distribution of *athletes' response concerning* Sex and field of events. Out of the total respondents, 68 (68%) of them were males, and the remaining 32(32%) of them were females. The figure reveals that the majority of the athletes from the sampled athletic clubs were males. Item 2 of the same table above presents the distribution of field event (specialization of event) of athletes from selected athletic clubs, and as it can be clearly seen from table above out of the total athletes 78(78%) of them were in the 5km and 10 km event and the remaining 22(22%) were in the 21km and 42.195 km event. As the distance increases the number of athletes who join it decreases. Jack Daniel (1998) stated that long distance runners are required to be highly mentally tough than physically. Because, to cover much distance it needs discipline, determination and commitment and this data shows that why the athletes do not join to the long distance as the middle long distance is that because of losing the behaviors what Jack Daniel mentioned.

4.2 Results obtained using descriptive statistics

Table 4.2 Frequency distributions of athletes' response concerning Goal setting:

No	Variables/Item	f & %	Alternatives					Mean
			SD(1)	DA(2)	UD(3)	AG(4)	SA(5)	
1.1	I set challenging goals for myself	f	2	9	3	34	52	4.25
		%	2%	9%	3%	34%	52%	
1.2	I can't set specific goals for myself	f	14	19	16	33	38	3.22
		%	14%	19%	16%	33%	38%	
1.3	I set goals that I can achieve	f	2	8	13	32	45	4.10
		%	2%	8%	13%	32%	45%	

1.4	I reset goals when things don't turnout the way I intended	f	1	7	14	40	38	4.07
		%	1%	7%	14%	40%	38%	
1.5	I don't always analyze my performance after each training	F	25	25	13	31	6	2.68
		%	25%	25%	13%	31%	6%	
Grand mean								3.664

The above table presents the distribution of athletes' response for the variable-athletes Goal setting. The result of overall grand mean value was calculated to be 3.664. This indicates that most of the athletes had agreed for the given issue. And this figure designates that most of the athletes have awareness and attitude in goal setting but not consistently. We can say that most of the athletes do not have persistent skill in goal setting as the figure is below the value of four. And also as the opinion of the selected athletes focused group discussion reflection shows most of them have unstructured (not SMART) and unplanned goals feelings.

But goal setting is the corner stone for athletes, because their training is based on the set goals and as suggested by Morris and Summers (1995) goal setting is a powerful technique for influencing the behavior of athletes at training, in competition and their daily lives and/or goal setting is the most effective when goals are SMART, i.e. Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic and Timely (Weinberg and Gould, 1999; Cox, 2002; Shev kirah 2007).

As the above data shows, we can say that Ethiopian athletes experience regarding goal setting is not well settled and experienced. So this shows that our athletes train without planned and programmed plans of in relation to goal setting. But goal setting is the crucial for athletes to enhance their performance from the base.

Table 4.3 Frequency Distributions of Athletes' Response Concerning Motivation:

No	Variable/Item	f& %	Alternatives					Mean
			SD(1)	DA(2)	UD(3)	AG(4)	SA(5)	
2.1	I am enthusiastic when preparing for important training	f	4	3	5	32	56	4.33
		%	4%	3%	5%	32%	56%	
2.2	I can't enjoy challenging training	f	39	30	9	14	8	2.22
		%	39%	30%	9%	14%	8%	
2.3	I am good at motivating myself to execute the task well	f	1	2	7	38	52	4.38
		%	1%	2%	7%	38%	52%	
2.4	After training I don't usually feel that I try my hardest	f	29	33	19	13	6	2.34
		%	29%	33%	19%	13%	6%	
2.5	During competition I do feel confidence	f	3	5	8	27	5 7	4.30
		%	3%	5%	8%	27%	57%	
Grand mean								3.514

Table 4.3 presents athletes' response concerning athletes' Motivation. The overall grand mean value was calculated 3.514. This indicates that most of the athletes were almost agreeing for the given statements that they have rated. But as the grand mean figure shows still there is problem in having optimal motivation within the athletes although they are motivated. The data gathered from semi-structured interview of selected athletes focused group discussion reflection also strengthened this idea. As they said they are excellent enthusiastic and prepared for important training, have enjoy the challenging training, well at motivating themselves to

execute the training, feeling of confidence and doing to the hardest during competition. The athletes view towards motivation is also, in order to have them sufficient and optimal motivation for training and competition, it is necessary to be guided by the coaches. This helps athletes to be motivated whatever the result of the training or competition. So, the motivation should not only run with results but also for defeats. Because there is winning after defeat.

As many reviewers, for example (Cox, 2002) concluded that it is difficult to imagine anything being more important to success in sport than motivation. Close scrutiny of the training and preparation habits of all great performers can be traced to a combination of physical ability and a drive to be the very best, i.e. much of greatness can attributed to an internal desire to work hard and to achieve success. According to Weinberg (1984), Martens (1987) and Rushall (1992) athletes should be encouraged to improve performance from intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation to help with attending specific goals. Because intrinsic motivation allows the athlete to have a more objective perspective of them, decreasing an egocentric position that would normally be associated with external motivation, and freeing the individual to see performance as a means of self-development.

To further enhance motivation, structured teaching and coaching environments must meet the needs of all participants need to recognize that an individual is critical to the motivational environment and must recognize the influences motivation both directly and indirectly. They must use behavioral techniques to change undesirable motives sand strengthen weak motivation (Rinke, 1992).

sAs it is vividly shown from the gathered data, the athletes have little awareness and attitude about the importance of motivation and still they have a problem in how to implement it in their training and competition. As it can be seen from table 4.2, which focused about the variable of athletes' goal setting, the grand mean result was 3.664 and the grand mean for the variable motivation was also 3.514 and this shows goal setting affects the motivation of athletes. Since motivation is the

intensity and direction of effort. Its relevance is to help athlete be encouraged, get hope and motivated. But the data shows the athletes little awareness and attitude and this is because of not getting support from their coaches and psychologists. If the coaches and athletes do not have the knowhow about the advantage, mechanism of application, and the monitoring and evaluation system of motivation the athletes can lose their performance and arousal level could be lowered.

Table 4.4 Frequency distributions of athletes' response concerning Imagery:

No	Variable/Item	f& %	Alternatives					Mean
			SD(1)	DA(2)	UD(3)	AG(4)	SA(5)	
3.1	I can see my performance in mind's eye	f	4	3	4	46	43	4.21
		%	4%	3%	4%	46%	43%	
3.2	I can't rehearse my skills in my mind before I used them	f	30	37	15	13	5	2.26
		%	30%	37%	15%	13%	5%	
3.3	It is difficult for me to form mental pictures	f	37	30	6	17	10	2.33
		%	37%	30%	6%	17%	10%	
3.4	I can't easily imagine how a movement feels	f	34	32	16	15	3	2.21
		%	34%	32%	16%	15%	3%	
3.5	I can rehearse my sport in mind	f	2	3	9	41	45	4.24
		%	2%	3%	9%	41%	45%	
Grand mean								3.05

The data in table 4.4 was about the variable of athletes' response concerning Imagery. The overall grand mean value was calculated and found to be 3.05. This

indicates that as we compare it with the variables of goal setting and motivation it is less and, which indicates the athletes do not have the experience of imagery their skill, training, performance and competition. But this is the bridge or preparatory skill for goal setting and motivation with relaxation and concentration. This figure demonstrates that the athletes have limited skill and experience of seeing their performance in their mind's eye, difficulty of forming mental pictures and in imagining easily how movements are felt, and shows the need for guiding and supporting from their coaches to develop skill of imagining the training, performance and competition. But sometimes because of resistance and failures to practice the skill they lose their rehearsing skill in their mind before competition. The data collected from semi-structured interview and focused group athletes discussion also confirmed this issue.

Sport psychologist concluded that imagery will clearly remain as a means of enhancing performance, solving problems, reviewing skills, building confidence, coping with stress, focusing attention, easing pain facilitating recovery from injury or heavy exercise, and helping in other ways yet to be discovered (Bruintjies, 2007).

When we compare again the data founded about the variable of athletes' imagery skill, awareness and attitude, the grand mean calculated was 3.05 but the grand mean of motivation was 3.514. So, from this we can say that the athletes little motivation affects negatively. The Ethiopia long distance athletes' awareness, attitude, toward imagery, as we can see from the interview is at a lower level and they need training from their coaches and psychologists regarding its implementation. Because it will clearly remain as a means of enhancing performance, solving problems, reviewing skills, building confidence, coping with stress, focusing attention, easing pain facilitating recovery from injury or heavy exercise, and helping in other ways.

Table 4.5 Frequency distributions of athletes' response concerning Relaxation:

No	Variable/Item	f&%	Alternatives					Mean
			SD(1)	DA(2)	UD(3)	AG(4)	SA(5)	
4.1	I able to relax before important training	F	4	9	5	39	43	4.08
		%	4%	9%	5%	39%	43%	
4.2	I become too tense before important training	F	27	42	9	16	6	2.32
		%	27%	42%	9%	16%	6%	
4.3	I know to relax in difficult circumstances	F	3	8	13	4	27	3.89
		%	3%	8%	13%	49%	27%	
4.4	I able to relax before competition	F	5	3	8	41	43	4.14
		%	5%	3%	8%	41%	43%	
4.5	I become too tense before competition	F	39	30	12	10	9	2.20
		%	39%	30%	12%	10%	9%	
Grand mean								3.326

Concerning table 4.5, this depicts the variable of athletes' response concerning Relaxation. The overall grand mean value was calculated and was 3.326. The results in the table indicate that to some extent the athletes were agreed in having an experience in practicing relaxation. But the figures demonstrate that the athletes are not effective and consistent in using relaxation skill before and after training, before and after competitions. The grand mean of the items under the variable relaxation represents that they have limited skill of relaxation before important

training, during too tense training, and during difficult circumstances and this figure tells us that their performance of relaxation in relation to it is that they have some knowhow and interest but they face difficulty in how to implement it.

Because, the ability to relax is a significant skill for two reasons (Bruintjies, 2007): first, the mind, especially when it is over anxious, can affect one's physical condition, causing the body to release chemicals that tend to disrupt body balance. It may cause stress and tension that in turn directly affects performance. Secondly it may also cause one to narrow or broaden concentration to such an extent that one focuses on incorrect cues or fall in to the trope to over thinking. Excessive states of tension or apprehension can be controlled by a variety of relaxation techniques. Relaxation requires practice because it is a skill. Consequently, the athlete and coach will have to experiment with the procedures and individual variation to produce the process for the athlete. The development of this skill is highly individual. Some will attain it almost immediately. Others will take as many as dozen sessions. The basis of mastering relaxation procedures is that of control. The athlete has to be able his/her attention on the task at hand its associated sensations.

Generally, true relaxation gives a sense of distance from where we can watch our sensations, feelings and thoughts dispassionately as they arise and eventually learn from them. So, the coaches and athletes should have been aware and ready to know the science of relaxation and also the coaches should help the athletes how to implement it, for what purpose, when and where.

Table 4.6 Frequency distributions of athletes' response concerning Concentration:

No	Variable/Item	f & %	Alternatives					Mean
			SD(1)	DA(2)	UD(3)	AG(4)	SA(5)	
5.1	During training I find myself focusing on irrelevant cues	f	26	17	11	2	18	2.95
		%	26%	17%	11%	28%	18%	
5.2	Unexpected distractions put me off	f	24	20	19	18	19	2.88
		%	24%	20%	19%	18%	19%	
5.3	Being easily distracted is a problem for me	f	25	28	11	22	14	2.72
		%	25%	28%	11%	22%	14%	
5.4	When I am distracted, I am able to refocused on the task at hand	f	4	2	11	40	43	4.16
		%	4%	2%	11%	40%	43%	
5.5	During training I am good to focus and cognitively stimulated	f	3	2	4	39	52	4.35
		%	3%	2%	4%	39%	52%	
Grand mean								3.412

sTable 4.6 presents the issue of athletes' response concerning Concentration. The overall grand mean value was calculated and it became 3.412. This indicates that most of the athletes have agreed in practicing concentration skills during training by not focusing on irrelevant cues, unexpected distractions, and even if they have

little distractions they have some experience in refocusing again on the task (training, competition) and other mental training and physical training skills. The experience of athletes in concentration and its effect for athletes' performance is evidenced by the works of different authors, Moreover, as Harriss and Harriss (1984) elaborated, peak performance occurs when one voluntarily perceives cues in the enhancement and act on them with one's ability to execute. Attention is the means by which information from the environment is needed and exchanged. When this process is under one's control one feels able to direct the flow or reciprocal information that unites one with the environment and what is going on within game. One chooses to interact with a system of continuous stimuli, to get meaningful feedback. When attention and concentration are maintained and athletes are not preoccupied with internal and/ or external distraction, they continually focus and generally show the right level of self-confidence (Edwards, 2007). They complete activities as practiced and imagined, flow of energy is smooth and moderate and arousal is typically experienced. Unfortunately this focus can be easily broken-down in some athletes, when their attention and concentration are negatively affected by distractible factors. In their detail review on implementation techniques of attention and concentration, Moran (2004), Wann and Church (1998), Weinberg and Gould (2007), and Suinn(1986) for example concluded that as a skill, attention and concentration can be enhanced through cue words, routines, stimulation training, eye control, enhancement of other psychological skills and having a race competition strategy.

We can say that since the grand mean of the variable about athletes' awareness and attitude concerning concentration were calculated to be 3.412. This is also highly decreased; as a result the athletes' performance level can be affected easily because of loosing concentration. When attention and concentration are maintained and athletes are not preoccupied with internal and/ or external distraction, they continually focused and generally exude the right level of self-confidence. They complete activities as practiced and imagined, flow of energy is smooth and

moderate and arousal is typically experienced. But the long distance runners fail to do consistently as the grand mean reveals.

4.3 Results obtained using Interviews and focus group discussion

In the interview time, the researcher worked directly with the respondents in seeking opinions and impressions and after creating full introduction with the selected interviewees (i.e., with the athletes, coaches, and lecturers of sport science), the researcher was discussed with the respondents regarding time and place of interview. Finally, the interview was conducted with all the selected interview samples of the athletes, coaches and lecturers disjointedly. The major touch of the interview was regarding:

- Whether the coaches give emphasis for mental skills training program in line with the physical skills training for long distance runners;
- Whether the long distance runners have awareness and attitude about the impacts and implementation techniques of mental skills training program;
- the challenges of mental skill training program implementation and the possible solutions to encounter the challenges

Here, the researcher puts and analyses the response of the interviewees of the lecturers, coaches and athletes sequentially in quotes and then narrated. The data collected from semi-structured interview with the selected lecturers of sport science from AAU and KCTE build up on their opinion during interview time with the researcher regarding concentration skill and its effect for athletes' performance (both physical and mental skill performances) and concentration skill also queued (line up) with the athletes response and suggestions of different authors.

Lecturers' reflection from AAU towards MST with specific point to goal setting, motivation, imagery, relaxation and concentration regarding Ethiopian long distance run athletes and coaches was touched as:

> *"Ethiopian long distance run athletes do not give emphasis to the MST, like the physical aspect. This is because of less awareness and attitude about the importance of psychological preparation and this is resulted from failure of the Ethiopian coaches to know the value of MST for athletes. Long distance run athletes need mental preparation in order to have clear goals, Motivation, imagery, relaxation and concentration skills in their trainings and competitions to be fit psychologically. So, the coaches should give great emphasis to MST program like the physical one to make the athletes fit psychologically"*

As the lecturers view, the Ethiopian long distance run athletes' awareness and attitude about MST program is weak. This is because the coaches do not help them to have an experience of practicing the MST program like the physical aspect. Athletes' performance is highly affected negatively if it loses its tie with physical training. Because sport performance is the result of both mental skill training and physical skill training by giving great emphasis to goal setting, motivation, imagery, relaxation and concentration and then as a result athletes can be mature psychologically.

The above lecturers also do not only pass on the concepts and purposes of MST, but again implementation clues and the realization mechanisms was delivered as follow:

> *"The mechanisms to implement or to develop goal setting are performance accomplishment through MST, positive thinking imagine this. But they need to implement this skill at training practically with proper preparation. The coaches should give clues for athletes to plan how to practice MST program when athletes start training."*

Besides the above reflection regarding relaxation skill the lecturers also stated the following point:

> *"With regarding to relaxation, long distance run athletes face full of problems in-depth such as stress, tension, becoming anxious or for instance can exhibit with less goal setting, motivation and imagery that reduce their relaxation. Among others stress is one of the problems that an athlete can encounter during sport life. Stress is the imbalance between demand and response, and it comes about by frustration, outcome of the games and weather condition. So, athletes should get support from the coaches in how to get relief and relaxation from different sport related tensions and other life problems."*

The Lecturers from AAU also suggest important points again about the relaxation, which is one of the mental skill training, and the major tips of the interviewees view were:

> *"First, relaxation can be implemented by considering the nature of the task, athlete's experience, as one important part of the training. There are different techniques of it; for example, progressive relaxation- testing and relaxing each athlete, as a result athletes sense of tension may be identified and released, autogenic relaxation- which is performed by the athletes when they feel stress or tension, specific relaxation (mental relaxation)-if athletes feel negative thought they try to change it by rehearsing positive thoughts in their mind, body relaxation- if the mind is interrupted it affects in directly the physical body. So, it is possible to relax the tensioned body by taking massage, or other body relaxation techniques. But, our long distance runners, except the few ones who out shine, they don't know how to practice the different relaxation techniques. And it is possible to say that this is because the coaches*

don't help the athletes to become familiar about relaxation and how to implement when they feel any stress or tension because of trainings and competitions."

As the athletes response in table 4.4 shows, most of the athletes have intense interest but they have little experience which help them how to relax themselves. Athletes can use the mechanisms mentioned by the lecturers' interviewees above to relax themselves. Finally, the lecturers' interviewee also showed about concentration which is the other mental skill training which indicated performance stage skill. Lecturers' interviewees' reflection about concentration was:

"First, I need to start from the definition of concentration; and it is giving more attention for one phenomenon. It can be damaged by external disturbance. But to reduce this, athletes can be trained at a crowded situation. Internal disturbance can also be a problem of concentration. And it can be reduced through talking to oneself during the event. Generally, to practice MST, the athlete must know his or her own interest, accomplish program and try to make a competition because the mind controls our body."

The lecturers' interviewees from KCTE was what's more pointed out the judgment about MST in relation to athletes' goal setting, motivation, imagery, relaxation, and concentration as follow:

"Without practicing MST program athletes could not be effective in their training consistently. The importance of MST is as important as the physical training skill. There are, however, some problems in implementing MST in our long distance athletes. These are for instance; With reference to our country, lack of understanding with in coaches and sport administrators because these people believe in the physical aspect only. There is also an evident lack of professionals in our country- that is

why we do not understand the importance of it. For the fact that is newly emerged profession; there are some short comes in sport clubs, and other institutions are not yet well informed and organized. Besides, negative attitude towards the profession can affect MST program. When we come to the implementation process, first and for most, we need professionals, second reducing or eradicating misconceptions and misunderstandings within the coaches and sport administrators."

The researcher desires to come up with the suggestion about the athletes experience in practicing the MST program and coach's awareness and skill in implementing MST for their athletes. As we can look into from the athletes' response for the questionnaire and the lecturers' interview, almost, the Ethiopian long distance event athletes and coaches are not friendly to use mental skill training program because of shortage of knowledge and failures of getting awareness and training on it by concerned bodies. But it is not the result of athletes disinterest to practice it parallel with physical skill training; rather it is lack of getting opportunity to learn it from their coaches. As the data shows most of the athletes and lecturers agreed on positive impact of MST for peak performance not less than physical training.

On the other hand, Semi-structured interview questions were delivered with coaches and athletes (in the form of focus group discussion) from the selected athletics clubs. Almost all of the Coach interviewees, except one of them, were not totally keen to reflect their opinion regarding athletes MST. Focus group discussion with athletes had taken in to account to gather further information from their opinions regarding MST in addition to their physical training skill the researcher quoted and analyzed in narratives the opinion of athletes' forwarded during the group discussion as follow.

Most of the coaches were not interested to reflect their opinion regarding MST implementation by saying:

"We do not give deep emphasis and consideration to MST program as physical skill training program. But to speak frankly what we did is that we try to solve the problems and distractions of athletes' at the time of occurrence through discussion. But we do not give more emphasis like the physical training."

As the coaches' opinion confirms, even they fail to know the concept of mental skills training, and we can say that most Ethiopian coaches are not aware about the MST implementation for their athletes in relation to the purpose of it. So, this shows as that our athletes are trained without coach's guidance.

The lone coach, who is a coach of one club and lecturer of sport science at AAU, out of the selected coaches for interview, who was willing to express his reflection about MST in relation to goal setting, motivation, imagery, relaxation and concentration, stated his opinions as follow:

"For human being, performance is the combination of physical and mental skills; to me it is important for athletes to set their goals, focus, relaxation and other mental skill training issues. But, these have to be conducted at the right place and time in combination with the physical skills. For instance, goal setting is the act of putting goals which are SMART. But, our athletes up till now not informed about MST program generally. This is because of the coaches who do not have awareness and lack of training about it."

Besides the above view about MST, the lone coach from AAU suggests also about motivation as follow:

"Motivation is the intensity and direction of effort. Its relevance is to help athlete be encouraged, get hope and motivated. Let's say, we can take the situation of dog who tries to catch a rabbit, the dog has high

motivation to catch the rabbit using its effort intensely because it already knows the direction where the rabbit is heading towards. But there are also problems that are attached to goal setting. Take for example, the coaches and athletes may not have the knowhow about the advantage, mechanism of application, and the monitoring and evaluation system. Generally, they may focus only on effort but not on the qualitative aspect of it. When we come to the implementation techniques, what comes first is the awareness creation. But care should be taken in knowing group and individual's motivation experiences. Moreover, the coach has to know why an athlete comes for motivating his or her self and to do this the coach should has an information about whether the athlete is extrovert (need criticism only) or introvert (need encouragement only). Above all, individual motivation at the right place and time is very crucial in building internal motivation."

He also forwards his opinion about imagery as follow:

"Okay, imagery is brain language of what we do and what we plan to do. In creating of mental picture, the interest of the athlete should be known. The coach has to systematically understand the interest of the athletes. So that he/she can present them resembling examples of role models or heroes related to their training like in the motivation, imagery has also its own short comes. This may result from the less knowledge and experience of coaches. In such occasions athletes may be disinterest to receive the correct image of the skill training. Most of Ethiopian coaches do not have concept about the importance of imagery for athletes. As a result the athletes also detain to imagine their performance, training, skill and competition."

His final suggestion regarding relaxation and concentration was:

> *"My opinion on relaxation, it is reducing of physical, mental tense and is keys with athletes- otherwise it would produce muscles stiffness. The problems observed with regard to relaxation and concentrations in our athletes are over expectation, overexcitement, and failure of focusing and fear of rivals (opponent) who has lost a competition. When he/she is calm, the coach has also to teach how to know handling losing and winning at competition. To tell him/her how much important is his or her participation in the completion is also a good psychological encouragement. Our coaches are also unaware in considering the athletes relaxation and concentration skills. That is why they are looking small in number on this event when we compare with other countries."*

Even if the above reflection about MST concepts and its impact, challenges and implementation was forwarded by solo coach, we can say that, athletes' performance is the combination of physical and mental skills and it is important for athletes to set their goals, focus, relaxation and other mental skill training issues with the follow up of their coaches who have a knowledge and skill of conducting MST at right place and time in combination with the physical skills. In order to motivate, knowing his or her cultural background, age level, experience and other socio-demographic issues of athlete would be helpful for coach to implement MST properly. The coach has to systematically understand the interest of the athletes. So that he/she can present them resembling examples of role models or heroes related to their training like in the motivation, imagery has also its own importance. As a result the athletes could become fit psychologically.

Similarly semi-structured interviews in the form of focus group discussion were dispensing for the athletes regarding their MST; and their reflections are summarized and narrated in quotes and sentences as follows:

"As to our opinion, it is difficult to succeed in sport without being mentally tough. If you are weak psychologically you can lose it, and also if you are strong psychologically you can win it because it is the pillar and back bone to success in any aspects of life. When come to our coaches training system, they simply focus on the physical skills training without giving such emphasis for the MST. Because what they did is that, whatever emotion or feeling happened in athletes' mind, they shout on athletes without considering their psychological problems. So, we can say that most of Ethiopian coaches' psychology is shouting on athletes. This is because of lack of education and they have to learn or get consecutive trainings about MST program."

From the above reflection of the athletes, we can say that, Ethiopian long distance run athletes are in problem with full of stress, tension, anxiety and other psychological barriers created from training because of fail to solve by using MST program. As their discussion shows this may be resulted from less awareness about MST impact and implementation techniques. The athletes put also forward their opinion in order to rectify the problem of less awareness and lack of experience within the Ethiopian coaches; that is giving continuous training about MST and educating them as basic solution.

Again during the focus group discussion with athletes, they forward their opinion regarding the impacts of the components of MST as follow:

"An individual must stand always for his/her goals to reach the target. To do so, you should have be confident and / believe on yourself, and psychologically mature. But if you are enthusiastic and patient you can succeed it your target surely. And in order to have these skills, our coaches should train us about the importance and implementation techniques of psychology."

Here, based on the above focus group discussion which shows that any one should set goals before running to succeed targets and to do this it is necessary to be mature psychologically. To do so athletes should get this skill from their coaches and their coaches should have the knowledge, skill and experience of MST.

The athletes' attitude about MST is summarized as follow:

> *"If you want to be successful in athletics, you are not only required to be physically matured and fit but also psychologically. Hence, if the mind is not mature enough to run, the body also shrink and contract, because the mind controls the body. Therefore, we have to give high emphasis to psychological aspects as physical aspect of training."*

Again on the over discussion they assured that athletes need to be physically and mentally fit in their training. And also they have positive attitude towards the psychology of mind as the physical one. From this we can say that the athletes need support from their coaches to have good experience and skill in implementing MST in addition to their need.

The researcher also open a discussion with the athletes to share their suggestion regarding whether their coaches give emphasis for mental skills training program in line with the physical skills training or not, and their discussion was summarized as follows:

> *"What we assume is that, the Ethiopian coaches are highly varied but all of them took the name "coach" without having the quality and competence of coaching. Even those who work in large clubs are not professionals or in short we can say that they are not educated in coaching rather they are working with experience which is not supported with science of coaching. So it is impossible to speak about MST in front of them even the physical training is delivered by guessing and direct*

experience by ignoring the science of sport training and without reading the athletes interest, level of performance, and other personal issues. So, from this point we can say that confidently, MST is still ignored totally in our country. Here most of our coaches, Ethiopian, are simply they were first athletes and directly they become coaches at the end of their career, and nothing is supported through education but what they did is that what they were getting directly during their year of training, when they were athletes, and they repeat what they were doing, like biblical word without considering scientific improvements, changes , athletes ability and interest."

According to the on top of discussion, the Ethiopian coaches train their athletes without having the quality of coaching. Because as their reflection shows, the coaches give training only by not considering athletes interest, level of performance and personal issues. In addition to this, the coaches also do not relate the physical and mental aspects of training for performance enhancement rather thy train their athletes as they were trained before.

On the other side discussion was held with the athletes regarding the challenges which may happen because of failing to implement mental skills training program during competition is summarized as follow:

"We can observe from our training experience when we enter to competition, we were never stressed because we consider winning is for the seniors. But later even our performance becomes equal in training with them; but, in competition we were seen in hesitation, feel fear and becoming stressed especially if the day of competition is tomorrow we feel anxious. Even what could be the solution for this is still not in our mind. But we expect that we need more support from our coaches and other sport psychologists if any one."

In addition, the long distance run athletes also reflected that if anyone wants success, it is not only required to be physically matured and fit but also psychologically from the athletes focused group discussion regarding the challenges which may happen because of failing to implement mental skills training program during competition we can say that most Ethiopian long distance run athletes expose to such psychological problems especially during competition. This may be the reason why we always seen few athletes or homogeneous athletes in the athletics arena when we compare with African countries (e.g. Kenya). This is strengthened by Daniel (1998), long distance runners are required to be mentally tough than physically because to cover much distance, it needs discipline, determination, and commitment.

Generally, the major results obtained from focus group discussion with the athletes' show that:

1. Ethiopian long distance run athletes are with stress, tension, anxiety and other psychological barriers created from training because of fail to solve by using MST program.
2. As their discussion shows this may be resulted from less awareness about MST impact and implementation techniques from their coaches.
3. The athletes also forwarded that to rectify the problem of less awareness and lack of experience within the Ethiopian coaches; it is necessary to give continuous training about MST and educating them as basic solution by concerned body.
4. Athletes need to be physically and mentally fit in their training. And also they have positive attitude towards the psychology of mind as the physical one. But as the athletes' reflection shows that the coaches give training only by not considering athletes interest, level of performance and personal issues and do not relate the physical and mental aspects of training for performance enhancement rather thy train their athletes as they were trained before when they were athletes.

5. We can say that most Ethiopian long distance run athletes expose to such psychological problems especially during competition. This may be the reason why we always seen few athletes or homogeneous athletes in the athletics arena when we compare with African countries (e.g. Kenya). This is strengthened by Daniel (1998), long distance runners are required to be mentally tough than physically because to cover much distance, it needs discipline, determination, and commitment.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This chapter embraces the summary of the major findings of the study, conclusion drawn from the overall findings and recommendations.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This study intended to point the ways how Ethiopian long distance run athletes and coaches use the methods of mental skill training program in line with physical skill training program for performance enhancement in athletic sport. Accordingly, attempts have been made to answer the research questions in chapter one. The research design was descriptive study method. The study was conducted using questionnaires, semi structured interview and focus group discussion as data gathering tools (instruments). The subjects for this study were athletes of long distance event, coaches of long distance event, and lecturers of sport science.
The data obtained from the research subjects were analyzed using statistical tools such as percentage, mean and grand mean analysis method.

Based on the analysis made on the data available through the above instruments in the specified area, the following major findings are obtained and summarized:
1. Among the respondents, almost all of them respond that MST has enormous value for sport performance enhancement not less than the physical training.

2. The result obtained from descriptive statistics from the athletes to evaluate athletes' have awareness and positive attitude towards the impact and implementation techniques of mental skills training program indicated that most athletes have awareness and attitude in practicing MST program, but they fail to do

it because of incapability in implementing and absence of any help from their coaches.

3. As the semi-structured focus group discussion of the athletes showed if an athlete wants to be successful, it is not only enough to be physically matured and fit but also psychologically. This shows that again the long distance run athletes have a need of getting psychological skill training in their training. Still they never get such opportunity because of lack of licensed psychologists and coaches.

4. Throughout the focus group discussion with the athletes, they reported that there is strong difficulty of applying MST by their coaches and sport administrators, because they simply give their emphasis for the physical aspect only even when an athlete has physical injury. This problem comes due to misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the MST's concept, impact and means of implementation.

5. As the interview of lecturers' indicates, physical aspect of athletes training is nothing for progressive performance achievement without MST implementation. So, to know athletes cultural background, goal setting, motivation, imagery, relaxation and concentration experience and other socio demographic issues of athletes would be helpful in coaching. But most of the coaches have not this competence rather coaching the athletes by trial and error.

5.2 Conclusion

From the data collected and analyzed by way of the MST program on performance enhancement, especially in its impact and implementation techniques, challenges, and solutions to counteract the challenges in the long distance run in Ethiopian, it can be concluded that:

1. The coaches do not give emphasis for mental skills training program in line with the physical skills training for long distance runners.

2. The long distance runners have somehow awareness and attitude about the impacts of MST. But, they fail in the implementation techniques of it.

3. The athletes do not get support about how to implement MST program to resolve their psychological problems during training and competition in line with the physical skills training from their coaches.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the major findings from the study, the following recommendation is forwarded:

1. In MST, the changing of attitude and awareness comes first before going to the actual practice or program of MST and we have to have first and for most professionally licensed psychologists who have skill in MST to guide athletes in addition to the physical aspect. So, to do this the government and/or especially the higher institutions should inculcate the sport psychology program as specialization in their institution.

2. Ethiopian athletics federation should give emphasis and held seminars and training sessions for coaches about MST program by cooperating with other voluntary institutions or individuals to increase their awareness.

3. Furthermore, these seminars and training sessions can be organized by making linkage with AAU & KCTE sport science departments and AAU institution of psychology to share skills and experiences regarding mental skills training program implementation and its impact on performance enhancement in the athletics sport.

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Appendices

Appendix-A

Addis Ababa University

Post graduate program

Institute of Psychology

Dear athletes,

This mental skills questionnaire is to be completed by first division club long distance runners of Ethiopian athletes.

- The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data on "mental skills training program implementation and its impact on performance enhancement." More specifically, the purpose of this questionnaire is to examine whether the Ethiopian athletes are familiar to use mental skills training program, evaluate athlete's awareness and attitude towards this program and to identify the challenges and solution taken to overcome. So, you are kindly requested to provide your genuine response to the questionnaire.

- Your response is confidential
- You are not responsible for the research outcome
- There is no need to write your name

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation

PART ONE- Personal data or socio demographic information

Complete the following information by putting an "x" mark in the provided boxes against each socio demographic character.

1. Sex - Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Club/Kilo meter you run _____

PART TWO- Below there are five categories of items (statements) that reflect athlete's awareness and attitude towards mental skill training program implementation and how they are familiar to use these skills practically to

enhance their athletic performance. For each item, alternatives are provided. Choose one of the alternatives which expresses your feeling and put "x" mark in front of each item.

The numbers 1-5 and abbreviations in the alternative column of the table below are represented as:

1=strongly Disagree (SD), 2=don't Agree (DA), 3=Undecided (Can't say) (UD) 4=Agree (AG), and 5= Strongly Agree (SA)

Please complete the following mental skills related items honestly as possible according to your feeling but there is no right or wrong answers.

No	Item	Alternatives				
		SD	DA	UD	AG	SA
1	**Goal setting**	1	2	3	4	5
1.1	I set challenging goals for myself					
1.2	I can't set specific goals for myself					
1.3	I set goals that I can achieve					
1.4	I reset goals when things don't turnout the way I intended					
1.5	I don't always analyze my performance after each training					
2	**Motivation**	1	2	3	4	5
2.1	I am enthusiastic when preparing for important training					
2.2	I can't enjoy challenging training					
2.3	I am good at motivating myself to execute the task well					

2.4	After training I don't usually feel that I try my hardest					
2.5	During competition I do feel confidence					
3	**Imagery**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3.1	I can see my performance in mind's eye					
3.2	I can't rehearse my skills in my mind before I used them					
3.3	It is difficult for me to form mental pictures					
3.4	I can't easily imagine how a movement feels					
3.5	I can rehearse my sport in mind					
4	**Relaxation**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4.1	I able to relax before important training					
4.2	I become too tense before important training					
4.3	I know to relax in difficult circumstances					
4.4	I able to relax before competition					
4.5	I become too tense before competition					
5	**Concentration**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
5.1	During training I find myself focusing on irrelevant cues					

5.2	Unexpected distractions put me off					
5.3	Being easily distracted is a problem for me					
5.4	When I am distracted, I am able to refocused on the task at hand					
5.5	During training I am good to focus and cognitively stimulated					

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix B

I am currently conducting a research in counseling psychology for my master's degree in the department of psychology: Addis Ababa University. My study is on mental skills training program implementation and its impact on performance enhancement of long distance runners in Ethiopia. As part of my study I am searching coaches and sport psychologists opinion on the definition of mental skills training program, its importance, challenges and solutions to encounter the challenges with reference to our country experience towards this program. I am collecting this data via face to face interview. All information will be kept and presented in a confidential manner.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated

1. What does mental skills training mean to you Including Goal setting, Motivation, Imagery, Relaxation, and Concentration skills on performance enhancement?
2. What is the importance or impacts of these skills
3. How do you implement these skills training during training/when train your athletes?
4. What are the challenges to implement these skills
5. What are the challenges and what techniques have you used to counter act the problems?

Thank you in advance for cooperation

Appendix C

Focused group discussion guides to be held with first division club long distance runners of Ethiopian athletes of selected clubs.

Dear athletes,

The main purpose of this discussion is to collect pertinent data regarding mental skills training program implementation and its impact on performance enhancement. The discussion will be conducted in ten clubs with 5-8 numbers of participants (athletes) in each club. The data obtained will be used for research purpose only. Therefore, your genuine participation in the discussion has great importance and your discussion would be kept confidential.

1. What is your suggestion about mental skills training program implementation and its impact on performance enhancement including goal setting, motivation, imagery, relaxation and concentration?
2. How do you see your coach's capability in utilizing or implementing the mental skills training program in line with the physical skills training program?
3. What is your awareness and attitude towards mental skills training program and are you familiar to use these skills practically?
4. What are the associate problems in conducting mental skills training program and the solutions you used to counteract the problems?
5. How do you see your coach's acquaintance with your interest and competence standards? And what are your opinions regarding the overall program practices in enhancing your performance?

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Appendix D

በአዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርስቲ

ድህረ- ምረቃ ፕሮግራም

የሳይኮሎጂ ትምህርት ተቋም

ውድ አትሌቶች

ይህ መጠይቅ በአንደኛ ደረጃ የረጅም ርቀት ሩጫ ክለብ ውስጥ የታቀፉ ኢትዮጵያውያን አትሌቶችን የሚሞላ ሲሆን አላማው ደግሞ ስለ አእምሮ ክህሎት /ችሎታ/ ስልጠና መርህ ግብር አተገባበር እና ብቃት በማበልፀግ ላይ ያለውን ተዕእኖ ለማወቅ መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ነው።

በዚህ መጠይቅ የሚገኝ መረጃ አትሌቶቹ በስልጠናው ፕሮግራም ላይ ያላቸውን ግንዛቤ እና አመለካከት እንዲሁም የሚያጋጥማቸውን ፈተናዎች እና የሚወስዱአቸውን የመፍትሄ እርምጃዎች ለማወቅ እና ለመገምገም ያስችላል ተብሎ ይታመናል። ስለዚህ እናንተ በዚህ መጠይቅ ውስጥ ለቀረቡ ጥያቄዎች በትክክል እና በሀቀኝነት መልስ በመስጠት ትብብራችሁን እንድትገልፁ እጠይቃችኋለሁ። የምትሰጧቸው መልሶች ሁሉ በሚስጥር የሚያዙና ለጥናቱ ውጤት ሃላፊነት የማትወስዱ መሆኑን እያረጋገጥኩኝ በመጠይቁ ወረቀት ላይ ስማችሁኝ መፃፍ የሌለባችሁ መሆኑን አሳስባለሁኝ። ለምታደርጉት ትብብር ሁሉ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ።

<u>ክፍል አንድ</u>፦ ግለሰባዊ ጥያቄዎች /ሶሾ ዲሞግራፊያዊ መግለጫዎች/

ለሚከተሉት ጥያቄዎች የ "X" ምልክት በትክክለኛው ሣጥን ወይም ክፍት ቦታ በመፃፍ መልሳችሁን ስጡ።

1. ፆታ- ወንድ ☐ ሴት ☐ 2. ክለብ/የምትሮጠው/ጪው ርቀት _____

ክፍል ሁለት፦ ከዚህ በታች በአምስት የተከፈሉ ሀሳቦች /መግለጫዎች/ ቀርበዋል። እነዚህ ሃሳቦች ክህሎት ወይም ችሎታ፣ ልምምድ/ስልጠና/ ፕሮግራም ትግበራ ላይ አትሌቶች ያላቸው ግንዛቤና አመለካከት ብሎም ለትግበራው ያላቸው ቅርበት ብቃታቸው በማሣደግ ላይ ያለው ተፅእኖ/አበርክቶ/ ዙሪያ ሀሳባቸውን እንዲገልፁ የሚያስችሉ ናቸው። በያንዳንዱ ሀሳብ ላይ አምስት አማራጮች ቀርበዋል። ከአማራጮቹ አንዱን የ "X" ምልክት በማስቀመጥ ትመልሣላችሁ። በሠንጠረዡ ከ1-5 የተቀመጡ አማራጭ፡ ቁጥሮች እንደሚከተለው የተወከሉ ናቸው።

1, **በጣም አልስማማም /ጠንካራ ተቃውሞ/ - /በአ/**

2, **አልስማማም/አለመስማማት/- /አል/**

3, **አልወሰንኩም/አለመወሰን/- /አለ/**

4, **እስማማለሁ/መስማማት/- /እስ/**

5, **በጣም እስማማለሁ/ጠንካራ ስምምነት/- /በእ/**

የአእምሮ ክህሎት /ችሎታ/ መጠይቅ

የሚከተሉት ከአእምሮ ክህሎት የተገናኙ ጥያቄዎች ከላይ በቀረበው አማራጭ መሠረት በትክክል እና በቀናነት መልሳችሁን እንድታስቀምጡ እየጠየኩኝ ሁሉም መልሶች ከናንተ እይታ አንፃር እንጂ ትክክል ወይም ስህተት የሚባል መልስ የለም።

ተ.ቁ	ገላጭ ሐሳቦች	አማራጮች				
		በአ	አል	አለ	እስ	በእ
1	ግብን ማስቀመጥ/ማቀድ/	1	2	3	4	5
	1.1 ፈታኝ /ጠንካራ/ የሆኑ ግቦችን አቅዳለሁ/አስቀምጣለሁ					
	1.2 ለግቤ መሣካት ዝርዝር እቅድ አሳዘጋጅም					
	1.3 ልደርስባቸው የምችላቸውን ግቦች አቅዳለሁ/አስቀምጣለሁ					
	1.4 ነገሮች በፈለኩት ሁኔታ ካልሄዱልኝ ግቤን እንደገና አስቀምጣለሁ /አስተካክላለሁ					
	1.5 ሁል ጊዜ ክልልምድ/ስልጠና/ በኋላ የነበረኝ					

	ብቃት /እንቅስቃሴ/ አልተነትንም /አልገመግምም					
2	**መነሣሣት/መነቃቃት/**	1	2	3	4	5
	2.1 ለጠቃሚ ወሳኝ ልምምድ /ስልጠና/ ስዘጋጅ የጋለ ስሜት ደስታ ይኖረኛል /ይሠማኛል/					
	2.2 ፈታኝ /ጠንካራ/ የሆነ ልምምድ /ስልጠና/ አያስደስተኝም					
	2.3 ልምምዴን በጥሩ ሁኔታ ለማከናወን ራሴን አነሣሣለሁ/አነቃቃለሁ/					
	2.4 ከልምምድ በኋላ ብዙውን ጊዜ የተቻለኝን ያህል እንደሰራሁ አይሰማኝም					
	2.5 በውድድር ጊዜ አሸናፊ ለመሆን በራሴ እተማማናለሁ/ጥሩ ይሰማኛል/					
3	**ምስልን በአእምሮ መሣል**	1	2	3	4	5
	3.1 ብቃቴን በአይነህሊናዬ ማየት እችላለሁ					
	3.2 ክህሎቴን ወይም ችሎታዬን ተግባራዊ ከማድረጌ በፊት በአእምሮ በመለማመድ ማስታወስ አልችልም					
	3.3 አእምሮአዊ ስእል/እይታ/ ለመፍጠር ያስቸግረኛል/ይከብደኛል					
	3.4 እንቅስቃሴው ምን አይነት ስሜት እንደሚፈጥር በቀላሉ በአእምሮዬ መሣል ወይም መገመት አልችልም					
	3.5 የምሠራው እንቅስቃሴ /ትሬኒንግ/ በአእምሮዬ በመለማመድ ማስታወስ እችላለሁ					
4	**መፍታታት/መዝናናት ወይም አእምሮአዊና አካላዊ ውጥረት ማጥፋት**	1	2	3	4	5
	4.1 ከወሳኝ /ጠቃሚ/ ልምምድ በፊት ራሴን ማፍታታት/ማዝናናት/ እችላለሁ					

	4.2 ከወሳኝ /ጠቃሚ/ ልምምድ በፊት ራሴን ማፍታታት እቸገራለሁ ወይም ውጥረት ያጋጥመኛል					
	4.3 በአስቸጋሪ ሁኔታ ውስጥ እንዴት ውጥረት የሌለው ልምምድ ማድረግ እንዳለብኝ አውቃለሁ					
	4.4 ከውድድር በፊት ራሴን ማፍታታት እና ማረጋጋት እችላለሁ					
	4.5 ከውድድር በፊት ራሴን ለማፍታታት እና ለማረጋጋት እቸገራለሁ					
5	**ትኩረት ማሰባሰብ/አስተውሎት**	1	2	3	4	5
	5.1 በልምምድ ጊዜ አስፈላጊ ባልሆኑ ነገሮች ወይም ምልክቶች ትኩረት አደርጋለሁ					
	5.2 ያልታሰቡ እክሎች/ያልተጠበቁ/ ሁኔታዎች ወይም ምልክቶች ትኩረቴን ይሰርቁኛል ወይም ያዘናጉኛል					
	5.3 በቀላሉ መረበሽ ችግሬ ነው/ የእኔ ችግር ነው/					
	5.4 ሀሳቤ በሚበታተንበት/በሚሠረቅበት/ ጊዜ እንደገና መልሼ ትኩረቴን ማሰባሰብ እችላለሁ					
	5.5 በልምምድ ጊዜ በትኩረት እና በተነሣሽነት ግንዛቤዬን ለማስፋት ጠንካራ ነኝ					

APPENDIX E

በአዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርስቲ

ድህረ- ምረቃ ፕሮግራም

የሳይኮሎጂ ትምህርት ተቋም

ይህ የቡድን ውይይት በአዕምሮ ክህሎት ስልጠና ዙሪያ የሚደረገግ ሲሆን በውይይቱ የሚሳተፉ ኢትዮጵያውያን የረዥም ርቀት ሩጫ አትሌቶች ሲሆኑ የውይይቱ አላማ በአዕምሮ ክህሎት ስልጠና አተገባበር ዙሪያ መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ነው።

በቅድሚያ ለትብብራችሁ እያመሰገንኩኝ የምትሰጡት ሃሳብ ለጥናቱ መሳካት ከፍተኛ አስተዋፅኦ ስላለው በግልፅነትና በቀናነት እንደምትገልጹ እየተማመንኩኝ ሃሳባችሁን በሚስጢር የሚያዝ መሆኑን አረጋግጥላችኋለሁ።

የመወያያ ነጥቦች:

1. ስለ አእምሮ ክህሎት ስልጠና ፕሮግራም አተገባበርና ፕሮግራሙ በስፖርታዊ ብቃት ላይ ያለው ተፅዕኖ ያላችሁ አመለካከት ምን ይመስላል? በተጨማሪም በግብ ማስቀመጥ፣ ተነሳሽነት፣ በአእምሮ ምስል መፍጠር፣ ከውጥረት ነፃ መሆን እና ሃሳብን በመሰብሰብ (አስተውሎት) ዙሪያ ያላችሁ ልምድና አመለካከት ምን ይመስላል?
2. አሰልጣኞቻችሁ በአእምሮ ክህሎት ስልጠና ፕሮግራም ትግበራ አጠቃቀም ላይ ያላቸው ብቃት እና ከአካላዊ ክህሎት ጋር አቀናጅተው የማሰልጠን ችሎታቸው ምን ይመስላል?
3. ስለአይምሮ ክህሎት ስልጠና ፕሮግራም አተገባበር ያላችሁ ግንዛቤ ምን ይመስላል?
4. ከአእምሮ ክህሎት ስልጠና ፕሮግም አተገባበር ጋር ተያይዞ የሚያጋጥሙ ችግሮች እና መፍትሄያቸው ምን ይመስላል?
5. የአሰልጣኞቻችሁ ቁርጠኝነትና ብቃት ከፍላጎታችሁና ከወቅታዊ ብቃታችሁ አንጻር ያላቸው የማሰልጠን ክህሎት ምን ይመስላል?

Declaration

I, under signed, declare that this thesis is my original work and that all sources of material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: _____

Signature _____

Place: Institute of Psychology, AAU Post graduate Program

Date of submission_____

I under signed, declare that this thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Name: Girma Lemma

Signature _____

Date June 10, 2010

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