



Analysis of Football School Japar Sidik Coach Training on Handling & Preventing Anxiety in Players Aged 10 & 12 Years

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Abstract

Anxiety is a psychological disorder that can affect the performance of football players in training or competition. This can result in players experiencing anxiety being unable to play as usual and losing focus and self-confidence, causing them to perform poorly during training and competition. This anxiety requires special attention and appropriate treatment because this phase is an important stage in developing players at an early age. This study aims to analyse the training methods used by Ssb Japar Sidik coaches for 10 and 12 year olds in handling and preventing anxiety. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design involving 2 coaches and 8 Ssb Japar Sidik players as research subjects. Data analysis was carried out using Nvivo 12 Pro software to identify patterns and main themes in the research results. The results of this study found that there were 6 main findings in handling and preventing anxiety carried out by Ssb Japar Sidik coaches, namely communication, mental reinforcement, positive psychological environment, mental formation, social support, and special training methods. This research contributes to improving the mental health of young players and developing a structured mental training model for young players in an effort to support football coaching that is oriented towards performance and the psychological well-being of players.

How to Cite

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INTRODUCTION

Sepahvand et al (2017) The anxiety experienced by football players during matches is a crucial problem that not only disrupts emotional stability, but also hinders the cognitive processes necessary for making quick and accurate decisions on the field. This condition often manifests itself in the form of negative thoughts, self-doubt, and fear of failure, thereby reducing concentration, slowing down responses to the dynamics of the game, and ultimately affecting overall physical performance. Kaplánová (2024) Cognitive anxiety, characterised by negative thoughts, is a significant predictor of how players cope with difficulties and perform under pressure. Liştea et al (2017) Anxiety not only affects individuals but also team dynamics, increasing the risk of errors, hindering strategic coordination, and reducing the effectiveness of game execution in high-pressure situations. Doron & Bourbousson (2017) The impact is not only seen in a decline in individual performance quality but also resonates in the team's collective performance, increasing the risk of technical errors, reducing strategic effectiveness, and even triggering a chain reaction of psychological pressure on other players who depend on team coordination. To address this condition, a comprehensive approach is needed that combines psychological support, mental training, and systematic and structured emotion regulation strategies. Wu et al (2023) Match pressure simulations, relaxation techniques, sports psychology counselling, and acclimatisation to intense competitive situations should be integral parts of the athlete development process. The urgency of addressing this anxiety is very high given the demands of performance in modern football, which is increasingly competitive, fast-paced, and based on precision of execution. Without proper intervention, players risk stagnating in their development, experiencing a long-term decline in confidence, and hindering their potential for achievement at both the individual and team levels. Thus, the formulation of specific strategies to reduce anxiety is an urgent need in today's football coaching environment.

Previous research has shown that training coaches in managing athletes' anxiety is an important aspect of sports coaching. Gaetano et al (2015) Highlight anxiety in adolescent physical activity and show that unmanaged anxiety can reduce motivation and performance. Lee (2021) Examined cognitive assessments of NCAA coaches and found that effective coping strategies can reduce coaches' anxiety

and emotional exhaustion. Kaplánová (2020) Examined the influence of financial incentives on football players and found that pressure to perform can increase anxiety if not accompanied by mental support from coaches. Bhatti & Albarq (2022) Affirm that a supportive coach-athlete relationship can enhance athletes' psychological control and reduce anxiety. Wang et al. (2024) Examined team behaviour and showed that cohesion and task-oriented achievement goals can reduce competitive anxiety. This study was conducted by referring to previous research, which found that anxiety has a negative impact on players and that management and prevention measures are needed to protect players from anxiety. This research was conducted because the age range of 10 to 12 years is a stage of child development where children are prone to anxiety. If not addressed and prevented, this can hinder the child's development in improving their football skills. In football schools, not only are regular training sessions conducted, but children also participate in regular competitions to see how far they have progressed in playing football. Sometimes pressure arises during matches, coming from both internal and external sources, which causes children to experience anxiety. This requires handling and prevention by coaches so that anxiety disorders do not interfere with children's development in improving their football skills. This research was conducted at the Japar Sidik Football School because the school regularly participates in football competitions for 10 and 12 year olds, which is in line with the focus of the research to analyse how coaches manage and prevent anxiety.

The novelty of this research, although previous studies have highlighted anxiety, there are still important gaps regarding how coaches' competence in anxiety management can be systematically developed through standardised training programmes in the context of athlete performance and the role of coaches in psychological regulation. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of various psychological approaches, ranging from stress management and mindfulness to coping strategies, into a comprehensive football coach training framework. This approach focuses not only on technical performance but also on the mental well-being of athletes through the development of a supportive sporting environment that is free from excessive psychological pressure. Based on this description, how can an effective coach training programme be designed to prevent and manage anxiety in football athletes?. Based on

this description, the purpose of this study is to analyse how coaches handle and prevent anxiety in players.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. Merriam (2009) Case studies were chosen because they allow researchers to explore phenomena holistically in a real context. The case study design was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the psychological dynamics experienced by football players when facing anxiety during matches, namely the interaction between players, coaches, match situations, and the team environment. Through field observations, interviews, and documentation analysis, the researcher sought to explore how coaches play a role in the psychological regulation of players, how anxiety arises and is managed in competitive situations. This approach provides space to reveal subjective meanings, personal experiences, and dynamic processes that cannot be explained solely through quantitative data.

Research procedures are a section that presents a structured series of research steps in finding research data, processing data, and drawing conclusions. Le et al (2024) Research usually follows a structured sequence of steps, ensuring that each phase is interconnected and contributes to the overall study.

Table 1. Research procedure

Phase	Main Activities	Focus of results
Preparation	Coordination of permissions, instruments	Gaining access to re-search sources, valid in-struments
Data collection	Data collection using triangulation techniques: observation, interviews, documentation	Obtaining re-search data
Data analysis	Processing data by reducing data (summarising data), displaying data (presenting data in patterns or relationships), presenting conclusions	Obtaining data conclusions as answers to re-search questions
Final stage	Final stage: Results report	Preparing a report on the processed data

The research participants in this study included two coaches and eight players from Football School Japar Sidik, located in Darmaraja, Sumedang, West Java, who were selected using purposive sampling. Campbell et al (2020) Pur-

posive sampling is widely used in qualitative research to ensure that the sample is highly relevant to the research objectives, thereby increasing the accuracy and reliability of the data. Participants consisted of Coaches; 1 coach handling the 10 year old group and 1 coach handling the 12 year old group. Players: 4 players aged 10 years and 4 players aged 12 years with positions as goalkeeper, defender, midfielder, and forward.

Data collection for research includes observation, interviews, and documentation. Levin & Forward (2021) The use of various data collection methods can increase the reliability and validity of research findings, combining triangulation of observation, interview, and documentation research techniques. Total data collection duration (operational recommendation): 3–5 weeks following the training schedule of the Football School Japar Sidik club.

Data analysis using the Mils and Huberman technique with data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing with the help of the Nvivo 12 Plus application to assist in coding and categorising the main themes. Fatimah & Syaifudin (2020) Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming data that appears in written field notes or transcriptions. Data presentation is the organisation and arrangement of reduced data into formats including matrices, graphs, charts, and networks. Conclusions or data interpretation are presented to draw meaningful conclusions.

In qualitative research, the term trust encompasses credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Velloso & Tizzoni (2020) the validity of qualitative research can be strengthened through four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This is maintained through triangulation of observation techniques, interviews, and documentation to ensure that the data obtained has consistency and credibility. For credibility, dependability refers to relevant sources. Regarding the credibility of the interview data results, coaches and players were asked to provide clarification to ensure that the data transcripts accurately represented the statements they intended to make. The triangulation used in the study helped reduce bias by using various methods such as observation, interviews, and documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research conducted, the findings of this study are divided into six main concepts in managing and preventing anxiety and

obtaining anxiety levels in four players aged 10 and 12 years. The concepts of anxiety management and prevention implemented by coaches for 10-year-olds and 12-year-olds encompass six main concepts, namely communication, mental strengthening, a positive psychological environment, mental development, social support, and special training methods. These concepts are presented in the discussion as follows **Figure 1** & **Figure 2**.

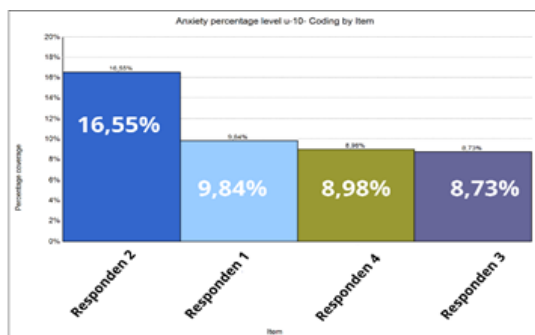


Figure 1. Chart of anxiety percentage among U-10 players

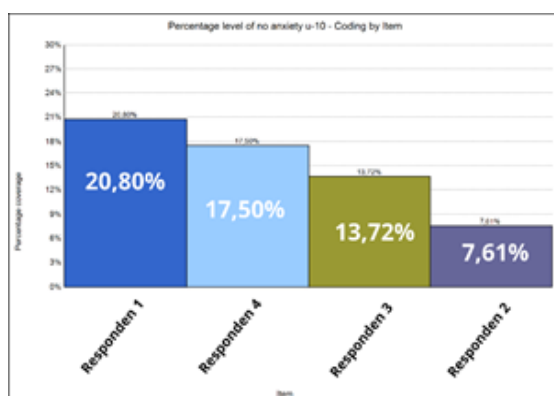


Figure 2. Chart of anxiety-free percentage of U-10 players

Based on the analysis of data from four players **Figure 1** & **Figure 2**, it was found that three players had a lower percentage of anxious codes compared to non-anxious codes. Respondent 1; anxious 9.84%, non-anxious 20.80%. Respondent 2; anxious 16.55%, non-anxious 7.61%. Respondent 3; anxious 8.73%, non-anxious 13.72%. Respondent 4; anxious 8.98%, non-anxious 17.50%. Thus, among the 10-year-old players, only one player experienced high anxiety compared to the other three respondents.

Meanwhile, based on the results of data analysis **Figure 3** & **Figure 4**, it was found that among 12-year-old players from 4 respondents, the percentage of anxious codes was smaller than

that of non-anxious codes. Respondent 1: anxious 15.32%, not anxious 16.44%; Respondent 2: anxious 5.56%, not anxious 34.95%; Respondent 3: anxious 17.15%, not anxious 18.95%; Respondent 4: anxious 2.32%, not anxious 29.57%. Thus, it shows that 12-year-old players have low anxiety levels, indicating that they have good mental health when training and competing.

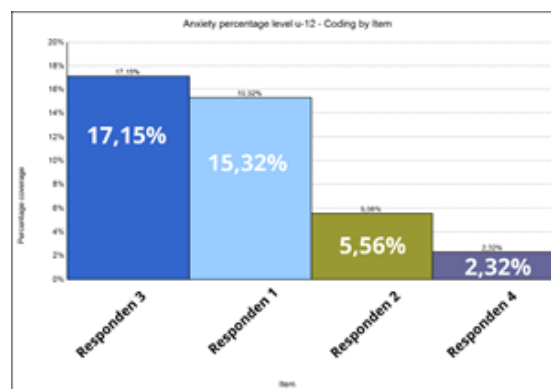


Figure 3. Chart of anxiety percentage among U-12 players

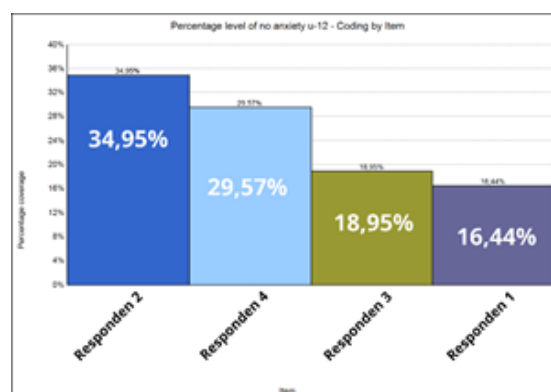


Figure 4. Chart of anxiety free percentage of U-12 players

Anxiety in football players can affect their performance during matches. When a player's anxiety increases, their thoughts and muscle coordination are affected by this anxiety, as confirmed by Mork et al (2018) Physiological responses to anxiety, such as increased muscle tension and heart rate, can interfere with motor function and coordination. Players experiencing anxiety cannot perform to their full potential during competition, unlike players who do not experience anxiety and can perform at their best. Mojtabedi et al (2023) Players with mental resilience and good strategies for managing anxiety experience improved performance. Meanwhile, players who experience anxiety tend to have decreased performance, as reinforced by Paić & Jurakić (2021) High levels of competitive anxiety can disrupt

an athlete's ability to concentrate, leading to decreased performance.



Figure 5. Hierarchy chart of codes for handling and preventing anxiety in U-10 coaches

From the analysis of data **Figure 5** on anxiety management and prevention, it was found that communication, camaraderie, and calming players are the most important factors. Communication 26.09%, Mental reinforcement 18.06%, Positive psychological environment 13.69%.

Communication

Communication is a very important part of training to prevent and deal with anxiety. With good communication, coaches and players can exchange information about the problems players are experiencing and how coaches can solve them in a way that supports and strengthens the players' mental state. This is a positive thing, as communication plays a very important role in team sports in order for the team to achieve its main objectives. A U-10 coach stated,

"In my opinion, the most important thing when calming players under pressure is communication."

Two-way communication between players and coaches can lead to good solutions by coaches to handle problems that occur with each player who competes or trains, according to Higgins (2024) Effective communication in sports is important not only for conveying strategies but also as a means of emotional support for athletes in facing stressful situations. A U-10 coach stated,

"I encourage two-way communication with the players, listening to their opinions and finding solutions together. This approach helps the players feel more relaxed and reduces their anxiety."

Open communication is crucial and aligns with the views expressed in. Setyawan et al (2024) Building trust and open communication is essential for athletes to feel safe and comfortable expressing their concerns to the coach. Effective communication between coaches and players, or among players themselves, can prevent anxiety

during competitions.

"I like to chat with them first to make them feel comfortable so they don't get tense." U-10 coach.

This is reinforced by Amado et al (2019) Coaches should encourage athletes to engage in positive internal dialogue, as this helps athletes manage anxiety and improve performance by boosting self-confidence and concentration during competitions.

Mental reinforcement

Mental reinforcement is an important aspect in player development because it plays a major role in helping individuals manage pressure, anxiety, and challenges that arise during training and matches. Winning and losing in matches are common occurrences, but sometimes players are unable to accept defeat in a match, which can trigger negative thoughts if their team loses. Therefore, it is necessary for coaches to strengthen their players. U-10 coach,

"Anxious players need to be reassured that losing is a normal part of the game."

Cohen & Ochsner (2018) Mental strengthening helps players develop better emotional regulation strategies, which in turn improves their performance. U-10 coach,

"I keep reminding them that losing is not the end of the world, but a learning experience."

A strong mindset allows athletes to remain focused, confident, and able to make the right decisions in difficult situations, enabling them to perform optimally. However, this is not immediately effective in the short term; building such a mindset requires a gradual process. Hayes (2025) Mental resilience is built over time and through consistent practice. U-10 coach;

"But I don't force them; I give them time to try slowly."

According to Jun et al (2023) Mental strengthening through psychological skills such as concentration and attention control helps athletes maintain focus on the task at hand when facing competitive pressure. Through consistent mental strengthening and support from coaches and teammates, players will be better prepared to face failure or success, have psychological resilience, and be able to maintain motivation to continue developing. This is reinforced by Adiloğulları et al (2025) Psychological support from coaches and the team environment also strengthens players' mental state so that feelings of anxiety can be minimised. This is important for shaping players' character so that they can become skilled and competent at playing football, Muhtar et al (2020) Character building in sports education

aims to develop skilled individuals, foster high enthusiasm, and shape competent individuals. Through good mental strengthening, players with strong psychological resilience can be created.

Positive psychological environment

A positive psychological environment is a condition that supports emotional comfort, a sense of security, and self-confidence within a team or group. U-10 coach;

"In my opinion, anxiety arises from within the team. If the atmosphere within the team is supportive rather than accusatory, the players become calmer and more confident."

However, if the environment is negative, it can have the opposite effect and increase the potential for anxiety in each player, according to the U-10 coach;

"On the contrary, if players do not respect each other, are quick to criticise or blame each other, it causes anxiety."

Therefore, to manage and prevent anxiety, there needs to be an environment that fosters a sense of security for every player. This is reinforced by the opinion of Li (2025) Psychological security functions as a buffer against stress and anxiety, thereby further supporting the mental well-being of the players. A positive environment is characterised by mutual respect and support, as well as harmonious relationships between coaches and players and among players themselves. A positive psychological environment helps individuals feel accepted and valued, thereby reducing anxiety, increasing focus, and fostering motivation and courage to express their abilities optimally, according to Ojio et al (2025) A safe and supportive team environment can reduce competitive anxiety and help players remain calm and focused during competition. With the creation of a conducive atmosphere, players will find it easier to develop mentally and emotionally, and demonstrate consistent performance in facing various training and match situations. U-10 coach;

"In my opinion, the sense of togetherness among players greatly influences anxiety, both in training and matches. If the team atmosphere is cohesive and supportive, players usually feel more comfortable and not alone."

This aligns with the views of Xu & Tian (2025) A psychologically safe environment can strengthen team cohesion, enhance athletes' mental resilience, and boost overall team performance.

Data findings from **Figure 6** the analysis of how 12 year old coaches handle and prevent anxiety show that mental formation (19.16%), social support (16.95%) and special training met-

hods (13.36%) are the most common approaches. This indicates that U-12 coaches motivate each player and enforce discipline and mutual respect to prevent and manage anxiety.

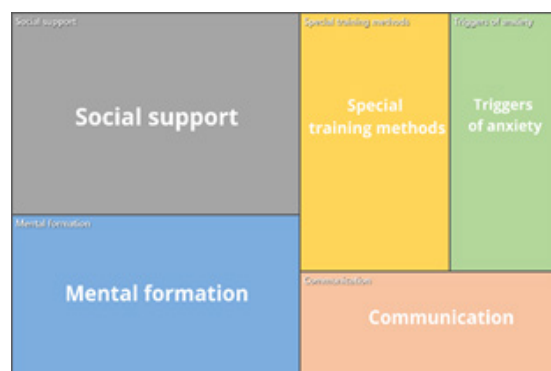


Figure 6. Hierarchy chart of anxiety management and prevention codes for U-12 coaches

Mental formation

Mental formation in players is essential to enable them to maintain their best performance during matches under pressure. To develop a strong mental character, it is important to start at an early age, Suherman et al (2019) Character building requires a considerable amount of time, a good environment, and appropriate strategies, techniques and methods. In football, it is not only technique and physical fitness that are required, but also a calm mind and strong mental fortitude to achieve the best results for the team and the players themselves. Developing a player's mental strength involves fostering a positive mindset from an early age, by changing how players perceive failure as part of the learning process rather than something to be feared. The U-12 coach; Pembentukan karakter memerlukan kesabaran, ketekunan, waktu yang lama, metode, teknik, atau strategi yang tepat, serta lingkungan yang mendukungnya.

"Building a positive mindset, changing how players view failure, focusing on self-improvement, and creating a supportive environment from the team, family, and coaching staff."

This is reinforced by Deng et al (2025) A positive mindset encourages individuals to view challenges and failures as part of the learning process. It also emphasises the importance of focusing on the process and self-improvement, as well as creating a supportive environment involving the team, family, and coaching staff so that players feel psychologically safe, which is also part of mental development, Moles et al (2017) Focusing on the process can improve performance and psychological resilience. U-12 Coach;

"This can be done in several ways, such as focusing on the process, praising every effort including failures to create a culture where players feel safe to push beyond their limits."

In addition, comments that build confidence and provide space for players to express their emotions and pour out their feelings in a structured manner are important strategies in strengthening players' mental strength. U-12 coach;

"One way is to give comments that build players' confidence, give players the opportunity to vent their emotions and pour out their feelings in a structured manner."

Jakobek & Ljubotina (2022) Constructive comments from coaches, such as praise for effort and positive feedback, play an important role in increasing players' confidence, intrinsic motivation, and psychological safety, especially at an early age. This helps players learn to manage their emotions, reduce anxiety, and develop self-confidence and mental resilience, enabling them to develop optimally both as young athletes and as individuals.

Social support

Social support plays an important role in creating a sense of togetherness that becomes a source of strength and enthusiasm for players, so that they feel comfortable, calm, and more confident when training and competing. Nols et al (2023) Team spirit is reflected through positive interactions between players who support each other, work together, and build mutual trust, creating a comfortable and psychologically safe atmosphere. The U-12 coach said,

"Team spirit among players creates strength and enthusiasm within them. Feeling comfortable and calm makes players more confident and focused so they can compete to the best of their ability."

This condition makes players feel accepted as part of the team, which ultimately fosters calmness and increases focus and confidence when competing. Robles & Owens (2024) Appreciation in the form of praise, recognition of effort, and verbal support from teammates plays an important role in strengthening players' self-confidence because they feel that their efforts and contributions are valued. Meanwhile, the coach's support is the main foundation in maintaining the players' emotional stability, through motivation, constructive guidance, and an empathetic attitude towards the players' conditions. U-12 coach;

"Appreciation from teammates can boost confidence, and with reduced anxiety, players can focus on their tasks and performance on the field."

The coach's role as a supportive figure ensures players have a clear support system, thereby reducing anxiety and enabling players to be better prepared to deliver their best performance on the field. Weng & Cheng (2023) A strong relationship between coach and player positively influences the mental wellbeing of athletes, where players feel supported and able to discuss any issues they are experiencing. U-12 coach;

"And providing social support, ensuring players know they have a support system from the coach and teammates."

Social support significantly influences preventing players from experiencing anxiety that disrupts their performance on the field.

Special training methods

In managing and preventing anxiety, special training methods need to be applied to players, designed in more detail to help players manage anxiety and improve mental readiness through an integrated physical and psychological approach. Applying relaxation techniques as an initial intervention, such as breathing exercises and mindfulness, conducted before or after core training to help players calm down, control their emotions, and improve concentration. U-12 coach;

"Relaxation techniques involve interventions such as breathing exercises and mindfulness (breathing relaxation)."

This is reinforced by Tomita et al (2026) Breathing relaxation exercises and focused attention meditation can reduce anxiety and improve athletes' concentration and mental readiness in stressful situations. Additionally, match simulations are used as an important method by creating training situations that resemble actual match conditions, including time pressure, tactical demands, and competitive challenges, so that players become accustomed and less anxious during actual competitions. U-12 Coach;

"One way is through match simulations, conducting training in conditions similar to actual matches, including pressure and challenges, to help players feel more prepared and reduce anxiety during competitions."

This aligns with Oudejans et al (2025) Match simulations that gradually introduce competitive pressure can help athletes adapt to match stress. Additionally, regular and structured training should be conducted and followed by players, especially in small groups, allowing coaches to provide more intensive attention to players, enhance positive interactions, and create a more comfortable and safe training environ-

ment, Shi (2025) Regular training that encompasses physical and psychological aspects plays a role in stabilising athletes' physiological and psychological readiness, thereby enabling anxiety to be controlled more effectively. U-12 coach;

"There are several ways, one of which is through regular training, especially in small groups, which can help reduce players' anxiety."

This approach not only helps reduce anxiety but also strengthens players' confidence, mental readiness, and ability to handle various match situations. This research contributes to the field of sports psychology, enriching the study of psychology and training of young players in managing and preventing anxiety.

The limitations of this study are that it only focuses on the management and prevention of anxiety by coaches working with 10- and 12-year-old groups and does not discuss the external role of parents. Another limitation is that it only covers one football school and does not compare it with other football school coaches in terms of managing and preventing anxiety. Furthermore, not all players can respond to the strategies instructed due to differences in character between players.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of football school coach Japar Sidik analysis of handling and preventing anxiety in players aged 10–12 years, it can be concluded that the role of the coach is crucial in managing the psychological condition of players. Coaches not only function as teachers of technical and physical aspects, but also as emotional support figures who build players' sense of security and confidence and shape their mentality so that they can avoid anxiety disorders that can affect their performance during training and competition. The results of the study explain that communication, mental strengthening, a positive psychological environment, mental conditioning, social support, and special training methods are the ways in which football school coach Japar Sidik handles and prevents anxiety in coaching the players' mental state. With an integrated approach between technical, mental, and emotional aspects, players become more capable of managing anxiety adaptively and performing optimally in accordance with their stage of development. Without anxiety management and prevention, many players are unable to perform at their best due to anxiety disorders that hinder them. This research contributes to science by enriching the study of sports psychology and early age football coaching

by providing empirical evidence of the role of coaches in managing and preventing player anxiety. This is necessary to ensure that players develop their full potential.

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