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## Research Paper

## The Effect of a Proposed Program for Relaxation and Breath Regulation on Psychological Immunity and the Performance Level of the Long Jump Skill among Female Students of the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, University of Kufa

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ABSTRACT	Manuscript Info.
<p>The study addresses the effect of a proposed program for relaxation and breath regulation on improving psychological immunity and the performance level of the long jump skill among the students, as relaxation and breath regulation are among the effective techniques that aim to enhance psychological balance and increase the ability to face pressures, which is positively reflected on motor performance. Relaxation contributes to calming the nervous system and reducing tension, while breath regulation helps to achieve psychological and physical stability through controlling the breathing pattern. The researcher used the experimental method by the two-equivalent method. The results indicated a positive effect of the program on psychological immunity and the performance of the long jump skill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>ISSN No:</b> 2584- 184X</li> <li>✓ <b>Received:</b> 01-04-2025</li> <li>✓ <b>Accepted:</b> 28-04-2025</li> <li>✓ <b>Published:</b> 22-05-2025</li> <li>✓ <b>MRR:3(5):2025;50-56</b></li> <li>✓ <b>©2025, All Rights Reserved.</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Peer Review Process:</b> Yes</li> <li>✓ <b>Plagiarism Checked:</b> Yes</li> </ul>
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**KEYWORDS:** relaxation, breath regulation, psychological immunity, long jump, students

## INTRODUCTION

Psychological factors play a decisive role in the results of athletic performance, as achieving athletic achievement is no longer only associated with physical and skill abilities, but

psychological aspects have become the basis upon which success in sports competition is built. The importance of these factors emerges especially in individual games such as the long

jump, where performance depends on the level of concentration of the players, and their psychological readiness to deal with competition pressures, in addition to the ability to control anxiety and tension before and during performance.

The long jump skill requires high neuromuscular coordination and precise coordination between timing, strength, and balance, which makes any psychological disturbance or internal tension a direct negative factor on the quality of performance. Many studies have shown that psychological immunity, which includes the ability to adapt to pressures, face challenges, and quickly recover from setbacks, is closely related to effective athletic performance. The higher the psychological immunity of the athletic individual, the more capable he is of maintaining his psychological balance during training and competition. In light of this, there has been increasing interest in the need to develop psychological preparation programs parallel to physical and skill preparation, and among the most prominent methods used in this context are relaxation and breath regulation techniques, due to their effective role in reducing tension and negative emotions and enhancing the state of inner calm. Relaxation works to reduce the severity of the stimulation of the autonomic nervous system and restore the balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems, which is reflected in the psychological and muscular state of the athlete. As for breath regulation, it helps to bring in a sufficient amount of oxygen to the brain and muscles, increases focus, and reduces anxiety.

It has been noticed in the university educational environment, especially among third-year students in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, the presence of cases of tension and excessive excitement before the practical performance in fine motor skills, including the long jump skill. This tension may be due to the desire to prove oneself, fear of failure in performance, or academic pressures, all of which are factors that lead to a lack of concentration and weak control over the body during implementation.

Hence, the idea of preparing this research came to shed light on the importance of relaxation and breath regulation techniques as a means to enhance psychological immunity and improve the performance of the long jump skill among students, as strengthening psychological immunity not only contributes to improving direct results, but also builds a long-term basis for the student's ability to deal with academic and athletic challenges with confidence and competence. This study seeks to present a proposed program that includes various relaxation exercises and regular breath regulation techniques, to be applied to a sample of female students of the College of Education for Women at the University of Kufa, in order to verify the effectiveness of this program in reducing tension, increasing psychological adaptation, and improving the level of motor performance in the long jump skill.

### Research Problem

The long jump skill is one of the skills that requires high concentration, precise motor coordination, as well as psychological stability and self-confidence. However, the researcher noticed that a number of third-year female students at

the College of Education for Women / University of Kufa suffer from psychological problems such as anxiety, tension, and negative emotions during the performance of this skill, which directly affects their level of performance. This is due to a set of psychological factors, the most prominent of which is the pressure associated with practical evaluations, the desire to prove oneself, in addition to the weakness in the ability to control emotions.

This negative psychological state not only affects the motor ability during jumping, but also leads to a decrease in self-confidence and hesitation in attempting, which prevents achieving good results in practical exams. On the other hand, psychological immunity is closely related to the student's ability to face those pressures and regain psychological balance, as it means the ability to adapt and flexibility in dealing with difficult situations and life pressures. Given the absence of supportive psychological programs within the curricula in the physical education specialization, the need arises to build a scientific intervention based on effective techniques such as relaxation and breath regulation, which have proven effective in improving the psychological state of athletes and increasing their motor efficiency. The problem of this research lies in attempting to answer the following question:

**Can a proposed program for relaxation and breath regulation contribute to improving psychological immunity and the performance level of the long jump skill among female students of the College of Education for Women / University of Kufa?**

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Preparing a proposed method using relaxation and breath regulation to be applied to the sample.
2. Knowing the effect of the proposed method on developing psychological immunity among female students of the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences / University of Kufa.
3. Identifying the effect of the proposed program on the performance of the long jump skill among female students of the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences / University of Kufa.

### Research Hypotheses

The researcher hypothesizes that:

1. The proposed program has a positive effect on psychological immunity among female students of the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences / University of Kufa.
2. The proposed program has a positive effect on the performance of the long jump skill among female students of the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences / University of Kufa.

**Research Fields:**

**Human field:** Female students of the University of Kufa, College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences.

**Spatial field:** The sports hall at the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, University of Kufa.

**Temporal field:** The period from 1/10/2024 to 15/4/2025

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The researcher used the experimental method by the method of (two equivalent groups) because it suits the nature of the problem and is considered “the closest and most reliable in solving many scientific problems.”

**Research Community and Sample:** The research community was identified as the female students of the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences / University of Kufa, and the research sample was determined as the second-year female students for the academic year 2024-2025. Their number reached (20) students, who were divided into two groups, control and experimental, randomly, with (10) students in each group.

The processes of homogeneity and equivalence were conducted in the variables that may affect the program, namely (weight, age, height, long jump skill performance, and psychological immunity level).

**Table 1:** Shows the homogeneity of the research sample individuals

Variables	Unit of Measure	Mean (S)	Median	Std. Dev.	Skewness Coefficient
Height	cm	158.35	159	2.4	-0.77
Age	year	18.4	18	1.2	0.91
Weight	kg	51.21	50	4.5	0.77

Table 1 shows the homogeneity of the individuals in the study variables, as the skewness coefficient for the variables ranged between (+1 and -1), indicating that the individuals are homogeneous in the variables mentioned in Table 1.

**Table 2:** shows the equivalence of the two research groups in the studied variables

Variables	Control Group	Experimental Group	T Value	Significance
	M	SD	M	SD
Psychological Immunity	110.36	3.69	110.96	4.97
Long Jump Performance	3.10	0.85	3.15	0.96

Table 2 shows the equivalence of the two study groups in the studied variables, which indicates the absence of a significant difference between the two groups in the studied variables.

**Devices, Tools, and Means Used for Data Collection:**

1. References and sources
2. Measuring tape
3. Scale
4. Laptop computer (Dell type)

5. Personal interviews
6. The internet

**Tests Used in the Research****Psychological Immunity Scale**

After the researcher reviewed the available scales that measure the psychological immunity variable, including the scale of Mohammed Hassan Allawi, Osama Rateb, and Israa Razzaq Jabbar, and after presenting the scales to experts specialized in the field of measurement and testing and sports psychology to choose the most appropriate for measuring psychological immunity among students, the experts unanimously agreed to choose the scale of (Rasha Hussein Ahmed), which includes (36) items to measure psychological immunity. The researcher found this scale more comprehensive in measuring psychological immunity for students.

**Scale Description:** The scale consists of (36) statements, and the student responds to the statements by choosing one of five options: (Very High, High, Medium, Low, Very Low), and they are scored (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) respectively. The total score of the scale ranged between (36 – 180), and the hypothetical mean was (108).

**Scoring:** The psychological immunity scale score is calculated for the research sample students, and the closer the score is to the highest score of 180, and the more it exceeds the hypothetical mean (108), the more the student is characterized by a higher degree of psychological immunity.

**Psychometric Properties of the Scale:****1. Validity of the scale:**

The researcher presented the scale to a group of experts specialized in testing, measurement, and sports psychology (5 experts), and they confirmed the validity of using the scale.

**2. Reliability of the scale:**

The reliability coefficient was extracted using the test-retest method to ensure the stability of the scale. The psychological immunity scale was applied to the exploratory sample consisting of 5 students on 15/10/2024, and after 13 days, the test was repeated on them. The reliability coefficient was 0.87.

**Measuring the technical performance of the long jump skill for the sample members**

**Test objective:** Evaluating the technical performance of the long jump skill through the three sections of the skill (preparatory, main, final).

**Tools used:** Legal long jump field, pre-prepared evaluation form.

**Performance method:** The tested student performs the long jump skill.

**Scoring:** Three assessors evaluate the performance of each tested student, and each assessor gives three scores. The final score for each attempt is (10) points, divided into the three sections of the skill: (3) points for the preparatory section, (5) points for the main section, and (2) points for the final section.

The best score from each assessor is chosen, and the arithmetic mean of the best three scores is calculated to extract the final score for each tested student.

**Note:** Evaluation was done through video recording and then shown to experts.

### Implementation of the Research:

#### - Preparing the proposed relaxation and breath regulation method:

To prepare the proposed relaxation and breath regulation method, the researcher followed the following:

Reviewing the available sources and studies that dealt with relaxation training programs in addition to watching and listening to many audio and visual tapes related to the use of some relaxation techniques and benefiting from them in preparing and applying the training method. The sources in sports education, including (Osama Rateb) and (Mohamed El-Arabi Shamoun), indicated that there are various muscular relaxation methods, namely:

- Imaginary relaxation (visualization)
- Autogenic relaxation
- Progressive (sequential) relaxation
- Biofeedback relaxation

The researcher used the two methods and combined them into one method that combines the attempt to change the athlete's real environment, which contributes to tension and stress, into another environment characterized by calm and comfort, and at the same time teach the player to relax the muscle groups of the body while focusing on slow and easy breathing and imagining that the tension is leaving the body, to increase the benefit and save time. Several previously prepared programs for relaxation training were used, including the curriculum prepared by Osama Kamel Rateb, Mohamed El-Arabi Shamoun, Sanaa Bahaa El-Din Al-Tikriti, Suleiman Abbas Suleiman, and Moayad Munir Kamel Al-Tamimi.

The proposed relaxation and breath regulation method was presented in a questionnaire form to a group of experts and specialists in the field of psychology and psychological testing to determine its validity and appropriateness for application to the research sample.

#### Pilot Experiment:

The researcher conducted the pilot experiment on 15/10/2025 in the sports hall of the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences,

University of Kufa, on a sample consisting of (5) female students. The objectives of the experiment were as follows:

1. Preparing the requirements for the pre-test and preparing the assisting team for their duties.
2. Identifying the obstacles that the researcher might face during the application in the pre- and post-tests.
3. Determining the duration required to apply the proposed relaxation and breath regulation method.

#### Main Experiment:

**Pre-test:** The researcher measured the level of psychological immunity by distributing the psychological immunity measurement form on 1/11/2025. After that, the level of long jump performance was measured by informing the students of the test date and confirming to them that it is a practical midterm exam to motivate the students and increase their interest in the exam.

#### Application of the proposed relaxation and breath regulation method:

After completing the pre-test, the researcher applied the proposed relaxation training method to the experimental group members on 2/11/2025, at a rate of two training units per week for two months. The duration of each training unit was (17–20) minutes, meaning that the number of training units was (16) for relaxation and breath regulation. As for physical training, it was not interfered with since it was conducted by the course instructor and not the researcher. The relaxation method was applied after the practical lesson, i.e., it was used to achieve calm and recovery.

**Post-test:** The researcher measured the level of psychological immunity by distributing the psychological immunity measurement form on 2/1/2024. After that, the long jump performance level was measured by informing the students of the test date as a practical midterm exam to increase the students' interest in the exam. The measurements were taken in the same way as in the pre-test.

**Statistical Methods:** The statistical program (SPSS) was used to analyze the data.

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### Presentation of the Results of Psychological Immunity Level and Long Jump Skill Performance for the Pre- and Post-tests of the Control Group

**Table 3:** shows the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and the calculated (t) value for the pre- and post-tests of the control group in psychological immunity and performance:

Groups	Measurement	Pre-test Mean	Std. Dev.	Post-test Mean	Std. Dev.	T Value	Table T	Significance
Control Group	Psychological Immunity	110.36	3.69	112.15	3.69	1.54	2.26	Not Significant
	Long Jump Performance	3.10	0.61	3.15	0.42	0.62		Not Significant



Table 3 shows the results of the pre- and post-tests for the experimental and control groups of the research sample. The arithmetic mean of psychological immunity in the pre-test for the control group was (110.36) with a standard deviation of (3.69), while in the post-test the arithmetic mean was (112.15) with a standard deviation of (3.69). After applying the (t) test for paired samples between the pre- and post-tests, it was found that the calculated (t) value was (1.54), which is less than the table value (2.26) at the degree of freedom (9) and significance level (0.05), indicating no significant difference between the pre- and post-tests of the control group. As for the arithmetic mean of long jump performance in the pre-test for the control group, it

was (3.10) with a standard deviation of (0.61), while in the post-test it was (3.15) with a standard deviation of (0.42). After applying the (t) test for paired samples between the pre- and post-tests, it was found that the calculated (t) value was (0.62), which is less than the table value (2.26) at the degree of freedom (9) and significance level (0.05), indicating a random difference between the pre- and post-tests of the control group.

#### Presentation of the Results of Psychological Immunity Level and Long Jump Performance for the Experimental Group in the Pre and Post-tests

**Table 4:** shows the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and the calculated (t) value for the experimental group in the pre- and post-tests:

Group	Test	Pre-test Mean	Std. Dev.	Post-test Mean	Std. Dev.	T Value	Table T	Significance
Experimental Group	Psychological Immunity	111.69	4.97	119.24	4.98	3.84	2.26	Significant
	Long Jump Performance	3.05	0.2	3.45	0.41	3.29		Significant

The arithmetic mean of psychological immunity in the pre-test for the experimental group was (111.69 with a standard deviation of (4.97), and in the post-test it was (119.24) with a standard deviation of (4.98). After applying the (t) test for paired samples between the pre- and post-tests, it was found that the calculated (t) value was (3.84), which is greater than the table value (2.26) at the degree of freedom (9) and significance level (0.05), indicating a significant difference between the pre- and post-tests in favor of the post-test. The arithmetic mean of long jump performance in the pre-test for the experimental group was (3.05) with a standard deviation of (0.2), and in the post-test it was (3.45) with a standard deviation of (0.41). After applying the (t) test for paired samples, it was found that the calculated (t) value was (3.29), which is greater than the table value (2.26), indicating a significant difference between the pre- and post-tests in favor of the post-test. From Tables (3, 4), we note that the psychological immunity level and long jump performance have developed in the experimental group due to the proposed relaxation and breath regulation program.

The researcher attributes these results to the importance of the used program in the sports field, which led to "reducing the high tension in long jump to a level of control positively and providing more awareness of motor sensation and returning to the point of balance. Using relaxation and breath regulation techniques during intervals allowed by the nature of the competition removed tension in specific muscle groups during matches and helped in mental recall of pre-competition strategies through positive mental imagery and stress relief caused by psychological pressure. Regular relaxation training may lead to increased efficiency of the respiratory system and lungs, metabolism processes, and rebuilding of energy sources consumed during performance and training to reach more than the initial level, which is called overcompensation, as "physical performance leads to increased efficiency in metabolic processes and rebuilding of energy sources spent during training performance to exceed the first level."

#### Presentation of the Results of Measuring Psychological Immunity and Long Jump Performance for the Experimental and Control Groups in the Post-test and Discussion

**Table 5:** shows the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and the calculated (t) value for the post-tests of the experimental and control groups in the research variables:

Test	Control Group	Experimental Group	T Value	Significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Psychological Immunity	111.15	3.69	119.24	4.98
Long Jump Performance	3.15	0.42	3.45	0.41

Table 5 shows the post-test results of the two groups, experimental and control. The arithmetic mean of psychological immunity in the post-test for the control group was 111.15 with a standard deviation of 3.69, while the experimental group had a mean of 119.24 and a standard deviation of 4.98. After applying the (t) test for independent samples, it was found that the calculated (t) value was (3.58), which is greater than the table value (2.101) at the degree of freedom (18) and

significance level (0.05), indicating a significant difference between the two groups in favor of the experimental group. The arithmetic mean of long jump performance in the post-test for the control group was (3.15) with a standard deviation of (0.42), while the experimental group had a mean of (3.45) and a standard deviation of (0.41). The calculated (t) value was (5.55), greater than the table value (2.101), indicating a significant difference between the two groups.

The researcher attributes this development in both variables, psychological immunity and long jump, to the effectiveness of relaxation and breath regulation training, which led to increased self-confidence in the student, as when a student is tense, their awareness of their surroundings decreases, as well as their attention focus, reducing their confidence. But if the student is calm and relaxed, they can better perceive their environment, increasing their confidence. Also, relaxation and breath regulation exercises activate the body's organs, improve the muscular tone of the respiratory muscles, and enhance respiratory processes. In addition, the two training methods increased muscular work and the functional capacity of the respiratory organs. We note a development in long jump performance and by observing the differences in arithmetic means, we find improvement. The reason is that the nature of teaching the long jump in the College of Education for Women, Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences / University of Kufa includes a limited time for each event, and thus there was not enough time to train the long jump skill sufficiently to develop performance. Mahmoud Abdel Fattah cites Helman that this type of performance is very beneficial in stimulating and assisting internal body organs to perform their functions optimally.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the discussion of the results, the researcher concluded the following:

1. The proposed program for relaxation and breath regulation has a positive role in psychological immunity and long jump performance of the students.
2. There are statistically significant differences in the post-test between the experimental and control groups in the level of psychological immunity in favor of the experimental group.
3. There are statistically significant differences between the post-tests of the experimental and control groups in the long jump performance of the students in favor of the experimental group.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends the following:

1. Long jump instructors should benefit from relaxation and breath regulation training, as they help the student increase psychological immunity and improve performance more effectively.
2. Conducting more research and studies to understand the nature of this study in other track and field events.
3. Conducting research on other sports and events and identifying other psychological variables such as personality traits, psychological satisfaction, or motivation.

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**Appendix (1): The Proposed Relaxation and Breath Regulation Method Used in the Study**

“Now I want you to gently close your eyes and pay attention and listen to my voice with all your strength, and try to do what I tell you... Lie down on the floor and let the middle of your head touch the ground so that your gaze is straight upwards, and the pressure of your shoulders is equally downward, as well as the thighs, legs, and heels. Lie straight and keep the spine in its natural position. Thighs and legs are close and touching. Stretch your arms to the sides with palms facing upward.

When relaxing, you must first remove all lines from your forehead (lines on the forehead are a definite sign of some kind of tension in the person).

Breathing regulation exercises begin by teaching correct breathing habits, then increasing the depth of very deep breathing by timing (this type is done by inhaling with a mental count of 1,2,3,4 – then hold the breath for a count of 1,2 – and exhale with the same count 4,3,2,1 with the same timing and in a slow, calm, continuous manner without interruption – called a breathing unit). The breathing unit is repeated in each exercise of the study exercises by increasing one count in each group until reaching (10) at the end of the training period.

Focus your attention on the head, relax your facial muscles and don't think of anything, and don't exert too much effort trying to relax, because relaxation is doing nothing. Just relax your nerves and don't think of anything. Now relax the muscles around your eyes until you feel they are relaxed and comfortable. Relax more and more. Now I want you to breathe slowly and regularly, and when you exhale, release all the tension. Breathe audibly if you want.

Now let your mind relax, try to relax your lips and tongue... now you feel relaxation in your facial muscles... well done, you have done a good job as you have relaxed the upper part of your body. Now I want you to relax all the muscles that support your head, breathe slowly, and to get rid of the tensions in your head, relax your shoulders, and then you will feel that all the tensions have disappeared from your neck. In general, don't try to do this quickly, take your time, and remember to breathe slowly and regularly. When exhaling, you will feel the tension leaving your body.

Now it's the turn of the hands (arms and shoulders), focus on the right arm muscle and command it to relax... you think it's relaxed, but relax it more and more. Then relax the back of your right arm, the forearm, and then all your fingers and right hand. Relax them all until you feel as if the flesh is hanging from the flesh. Now it's the turn of your left arm, also focus on the left arm muscle and command it to relax. Then relax the back of the left arm and imagine as if you don't have bones in your left hand... then relax your left hand, palm, fingers, and make sure both hands are equally relaxed.

Now it's the turn of the chest and rib cage. Take a deep breath and when you exhale, let your chest go down gradually. Do it again and let all the tension go out with the exhale. Then relax the muscles of your stomach and chest and abdominal cavity, let them rest and relax gradually, and this is the real opportunity to feel as if you don't have bones. Relax the abdominal area and

then you will feel heaviness on your buttocks (pelvic area), and at this point, if you have achieved even partial relaxation of the aforementioned areas, you will feel a pleasant, warm feeling sweeping over you, a feeling of joy and good health. This is the state of relaxation; it is great. Therefore, we want you to maintain this feeling and make it a habit.

Therefore, you should associate the state of relaxation with the word “relax” and always remember the word “relax” when you are in a tense emotional state and want to relax and rest – just remember this word “relax” – then you will have achieved a good state of physical relaxation for the upper half of the body.

Now let's make sure there is no residual tension. Check for tension in the upper half of your body quickly and imagine that you don't even have muscles to support your chest or stomach. Let everything drop gradually, and when you are fully relaxed, try to relax more and more. And remember, don't exert yourself trying to relax, just don't exert yourself and everything will come naturally.

Now the legs, thighs, ankles, lower legs, and toes must be relaxed. Command your right thigh muscles to relax and imagine there are no bones in your right leg. Let it press down onto the ground. Breathe slowly and when you exhale, relax. Now let's go to the leg muscles. Just relax them and then you will feel heaviness in your right foot. Then breathe slowly, deeply, and regularly and relax all the muscles around your ankle and right foot.

Shift your attention to your left thigh and get rid of any tension there. Now your left leg and the muscles associated with it. Relax them to the point where you feel like flesh hanging on bones. Then relax your ankle and left foot. From now on, both your feet should be weightless on the floor.

Now you are very close to the edge of sleep but I want you to remain awake enough while continuing to feel comfort and joy.

Take a deep inhale... and a slow exhale... Deep inhale... slow exhale... Now you are calm. With each exhale the body becomes more relaxed... calm... heavy... feel the relaxation in the face, neck, shoulders, arms, chest and abdomen, legs and feet... the feeling of tension leaving all parts of the body.

Imagine yourself in a beautiful place you would like to be in (here we choose the place we want to take the research sample to, such as a beach or a garden of trees and birds, or a meadow of flowers and butterflies – and we can vary these places to avoid boredom...) Take a deep breath... smile and open your eyes slowly...