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## **Effect of a 12-Week Skill Drill Programme on the Skills of Secondary School Female Football Players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria**

Andrew Aor Tyoakaa<sup>1\*</sup>, Donatus Chukwudo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Science and Technology, Vaatia College, Makurdi

<sup>2</sup>Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

\*Corresponding author: Andrew Aor Tyoakaa. [tyoakaaandy@gmail.com](mailto:tyoakaaandy@gmail.com) ; 08063129162

### **Abstract**

This study investigated the effect of a 12-week skill drill programme on the skills of secondary school female football players in Makurdi. The quasi-experimental research design was used for the study. A sample of 58 female secondary school football players was used. Participants' height and body weight were measured by the protocol of the International Society for the Advancement of Kinanthropometry. Passing was assessed using the Long-Lofted Pass Test, dribbling was assessed using the Zig-Zag Dribble Test, shooting was assessed using the skill shooting test, trapping was assessed using the passing and trapping test, the heading was assessed with the heading accuracy test and throw-in assessment test was used to assess players' throw-in skill. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the weight, height and age of the female football players. The independent samples t-test was used to assess the effect of a 12-week skill drill programme on the skills of female football players. The analyses were computed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v 21) and were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study indicated that there is a significant effect of a 12-week skill drill programme on passing, dribbling, shooting, trapping and heading skills of female football players in Benue State, Nigeria ( $P < 0.05$ ). It was concluded that there is a significant improvement across all measured skills as a result of a 12-week skill training programme among female football players. Coaches and physical education instructors should implement structured skill drill programmes in their training sessions.

**Keywords:** Drills, Skills, Female, Football, Effect, Female Football Players

### **Introduction**

Football, or soccer as it is commonly known worldwide, is a sport that demands a high level of technical proficiency, tactical awareness, and physical fitness. Essential technical abilities in football include passing, dribbling, shooting, trapping, and heading, which play a crucial role in a player's capacity to maintain possession, navigate past opponents, create scoring opportunities, and effectively manage and direct the ball in various game scenarios. These skills significantly impact both individual performance and the overall success of the team (McAuley et al., 2022; Panesar, 2023; Vega Orozco et al., 2020). These proficiencies can be honed through a structured skill drill training regimen.

Various studies have shown that skill drills, which are repetitive and focused exercises, can significantly enhance specific technical abilities in soccer players. For example, Das et al. (2023) demonstrated that a 12-week SAQ (Speed, Agility, and Quickness) and circuit training program greatly improved dribbling and shooting skills in soccer players, emphasizing the importance of targeted and consistent training routines (Das et al., 2023). Similarly, Polman et al. (2004) found that different conditioning programs implemented over a 12-week period led to notable enhancements in physical fitness parameters and agility among female soccer players (Polman et al., 2004). These results indicate that structured skill training can result in measurable improvements in athletic performance. Additionally, research conducted by Iri et

al. (2009) on football skill exercises for children aged 12-14 revealed significant improvements in motor skills and physical development following a 16-week training program, highlighting the potential long-term benefits of early and consistent training (Iri et al., 2009). Ari and Colakoglu (2017) also emphasized the positive impacts of a 12-week plyometric training program on speed, flexibility, and agility, all of which are crucial for the performance of football players (Ari & Colakoglu, 2017).

Much of the current research has concentrated on male athletes or mixed-gender groups, resulting in a lack of knowledge regarding the specific impacts on female athletes, especially at the secondary school level (Williams et al., 2020). Secondary school female football players are a vital group for examination, as this stage is crucial for skill enhancement and sustained involvement in the sport. Female athletes often face distinct challenges, such as diverse physical and psychological development paths compared to their male counterparts (Smith et al., 2021). Hence, customized training interventions are essential to cater to these unique requirements and promote fairness in sports training and performance. Consequently, this research is designed to assess the impact of a 12-week skill drill program on the abilities of secondary school female football players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria. By concentrating on this specific demographic, the study aims to bridge the existing gap in literature and offer insights into the potential advantages and effectiveness of targeted skill drills. The outcomes of this study will enhance the overall comprehension of female athletic progress and provide practical implications for coaches and trainers working with young female athletes.

### Methods

The quasi-experimental research design was used for the study. The pre-test posttest control experimental method was adopted. The population of the study comprised of all the 222 female secondary school football players from twelve (12) secondary schools that registered for the all-secondary school games in Makurdi in March, 2024. The sample for this study was (58) female secondary school football players which were drawn from Vaatia College Makurdi (20) (experimental group 1), Bright Star Academy Makurdi (18) (experimental group 2) and Peniel College Makurdi (20) (control group). The intact schools were adopted making the research feasible without disrupting the school routine. The drills that the experimental groups were exposed to are as follows:

<b>Drills</b>	<b>Experimental Group 1 (Adapted from Sharma &amp; Rawat, 2011)</b>	<b>Experimental Group 2 (Adapted from Edu &amp; Sports Ertheo, 2001)</b>
<b><i>Passing drills:</i></b>	Kicking the ball on the ground for accuracy Kicking stationary ball for accuracy	Short passing to longer passing
<b><i>Shooting</i></b>	Shooting a stationary ball for accuracy Kick off	Pass and shoot Turn and shoot
<b><i>Dribbling</i></b>	Zigzag run with the ball Figure 8 dribbling	Suicide dribbling 1v1 controlled scoring
<b><i>Trapping</i></b>	Receiving a rolling ball Receiving an aerial ball	Keep it in the cones Receiving throw ins
<b><i>Heading</i></b>	Heading in “3”	Run in and head

<b>Throw-in</b>	Up and down	Throw, head, catch
	Short throw-in	Short throw-in
	Long throw-in	Long throw-in

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The drills were conducted in 12 weeks with increasing intensities ranging from 50-60% in the first four weeks, 60-70% in the 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> week and 70-85% from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> weeks respectively. Training was held three days in a week (Tuesdays (passing and shooting drills), Thursdays (dribbling and trapping drills) and Saturdays (heading and throw-in drills) between 5-6.30pm). The control group continued with their normal unstructured training. Participants' height and body weight were measured in accordance with the protocol of the International Society for the Advancement of Kinanthropometry (Stewart, et al., 2011).

#### ***Assessment of passing.***

Passing was assessed using the Long-Lofted Pass Test (Miller, 2022). There are three (3) players as receivers, each receiver having a different color. There is 1 player passing and receiving (tester), 1 coach (or player) passing the ball and 10 football balls. The coach had 10 balls and the test begins when a player checks in to receive the ball. As the ball is traveling from coach's pass, coach calls out a color, player scans and receives on the turn then pings long pass to correct color. The coach waits until player checks in and immediately passes. This process is repeated until all 10 repetitions have been completed. The test is timed. The timer is started as soon as coach makes first pass, the timer is ended as soon as receiver receives 10th ball. The test is scored as follows: 1 second added if receiver cannot control pass (bad pass), 1 second deducted if player completes all 10 passes successfully. Complete score = Entire time +/- Deductions/Additions. For beginners, a completion time of between 3-4 minutes indicates good pass accuracy.

#### ***Assessment of dribbling.***

Dribbling was assessed using the Zig-Zag Dribble Test" or the "Slalom Dribble Test (Bangsbo, et al., 2006). A 12-meter slalom course is marked with five cones spaced 2 meters apart. Cones are staggered 0.5 meters from a central line, forming a zig-zag pattern. The start and finish lines were marked, typically with 3-5 balls placed at the starting line. The player starts at the starting line with a ball and dribbles through the course as quickly as possible. The player must weave in and out of the cones while maintaining control of the ball and staying within the marked lane. The test ends when the player crosses the finish line. The player's ability to navigate through the cones without knocking them over or straying outside the marked lane is noted. The total time taken to complete the course is recorded using a stopwatch. Faster times indicate better performance. Norms for what constitutes a good dribble can vary based on factors such as age, skill level, and specific test protocols. Beginner Players complete the course in more than 16 seconds with efforts focused on accuracy and control.

#### ***Assessment of shooting.***

Shooting was assessed using the skill shooting test (Leung, 2019). The set up of this test include a penalty area and full-size goals with nets, on a regulation field. Four to eight balls at the top of the penalty arc. The player starts at the penalty spot, run to the first ball, collect the ball, dribbles into the penalty area and shoots the ball in the air into the goal. The player can shoot from whatever distance she chooses once she is inside the penalty area. As soon as the player takes the shot, she returns and repeats with another ball. A whistle was blown after one minute to signify the end of the test. The player scores ten points for each shot traveling from foot to goal in the air. Five points for each shot that touches the ground before entering the goal. Zero points for a missed goal. A score of 40 points and above indicates good shot.

***Assessment of trapping.***

Trapping was assessed using the passing and trapping test (Leung, 2019). The set up of this test was as follows: two cones were set to form a “passing gate” 5 meters wide, 7 meters from the starting line. Two passing “target gates” (cones and 1-meter flags if possible). Four to eight football balls needed. The coach rolled the ball at moderate pace to the waiting player. The player may wait on the line or move toward the ball once it has been rolled. Player controls the ball and dribbles through the passing gate. Coach randomly calls and physically indicates “left” or “right” to designate target. Players can dribble as close as they like before passing the ball through the target. The coach rolls the next ball as soon as the player returns to the starting line. The test ends after one minute. Player scores 10 points for each successful pass through a target gate. A ball that hits the cone and goes through counts. A minimum of 40 points indicates good ball control ability.

***Assessment of heading.***

Heading was assessed with the heading accuracy test. Two players stood 5m apart. Player “A” throws the ball to player “B” who was expected to head it straight back to the thrower. Ten heading attempts were made by a player. A player was judged to have good heading if she is able to head the ball directly to the person that throws the ball in 7 out of 10 attempts.

***Assessment of throw-in.***

Throw-in skill assessed using the throw-in assessment test. Players were allowed to make ten throw-in attempts. A player was judged to have good throw-in skill if she correctly executes at least 7 out of 10 throw-ins by picking up the ball with both hands, one on each side of the ball, arch the back slightly, bring the ball up and over the head and release the ball with a forward flick of the wrists.

**Method of Data Analysis**

Data for this study was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse continuous variables such as the weight, height and BMI of the female football players. The independent samples t-test was used to assess the effect of 12 weeks skill drill programme on the performance components of physical fitness of the female football players by comparing the mean scores of the experimental and control groups. In order to assess which skill drills has more effect, a multiple t-test analyses were done to compare experimental group 1 and control group as well as experimental group 2 with the control group. The analyses were computed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v 21) and was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results**

Table 1

**Frequency of combined experimental group and control group (n=58)**

<b>Groups with experimental group combined</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Experimental	38	65.5
Control	20	34.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Groups with experimental group separated</b>		
Experimental Group 1	20	34.5
Experimental Group 2	18	31.0
Control group	20	34.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 indicated that, out of the total number of the participants, the control group were 20 female football players representing 34.5%, whereas, the experimental group were 38 female football players representing 65.5%. Furthermore, the experimental group was divided into two groups: group one had 20 female players representing 34.5%, whereas, experimental group 2 had 18 female players representing 31.0% respectively.

Table 2

**Mean and standard deviation of the variables of the participants of the control and experimental groups before the experiment (n=58)**

Variable	Experimental group 1 (n=20)		Experimental Group 2 (n=18)		Control Group n=20)	
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
Age	14.10	1.33	14.17	1.50	14.65	1.14
Pre_Weight.in.kg	46.54	10.74	56.76	11.23	57.50	10.83
Pre-Height.in.m	1.55	1.00	1.62	.09	1.64	0.06
Pre-Passing	5.95	1.00	5.22	0.73	4.10	0.85
Pre-dribbbling	21.95	1.05	22.11	0.96	21.95	1.05
Pre_shooting	33.00	1.02	31.33	1.57	32.20	1.70
Pre_trapping	33.25	0.91	31.50	1.72	32.50	1.50
Pre_heading	2.90	0.85	2.61	0.61	2.20	0.52
Pre-Pre-throw-in	3.60	0.82	3.27	0.67	2.65	0.49

Table 2 indicated that the mean and standard deviation of the variables of the participants for the experimental group 1 were as follows: age ( $14.101 \pm 1.33$ ), weight ( $46.54 \pm 10.74$ ), height ( $1.54 \pm 1.00$ ), passing ( $5.95 \pm 1.00$ ), dribbling ( $21.95 \pm 1.05$ ), shooting ( $33.00 \pm 1.03$ ), trapping ( $33.25 \pm 0.91$ ) heading ( $2.90 \pm 0.85$ ) and throw-in ( $3.60 \pm 0.82$ ). Experimental group 2 has age ( $14.17 \pm 1.50$ ), weight ( $56.76 \pm 11.23$ ), height ( $1.62 \pm 0.09$ ), passing ( $5.22 \pm 0.73$ ), dribbling ( $22.11 \pm 0.96$ ), shooting ( $31.33 \pm 1.57$ ), trapping ( $31.50 \pm 1.72$ ) heading ( $2.61 \pm 0.61$ ) and throw-in ( $3.28 \pm 0.67$ ). The control group has age ( $14.65 \pm 1.14$ ), weight ( $57.50 \pm 10.83$ ), height ( $1.64 \pm 0.06$ ), passing ( $4.10 \pm 0.85$ ), dribbling ( $21.95 \pm 1.05$ ), shooting ( $33.20 \pm 1.74$ ), trapping ( $32.50 \pm 1.50$ ) heading ( $2.20 \pm 0.52$ ) and throw-in ( $2.65 \pm 0.49$ ).

Table 3

**Mean and standard deviation of the variables of the participants of the control and experimental groups after the experiment (n=58)**

Variable	Experimental group1 (n=20)		Experimental Group 2 (n=18)		Control Group (n=20)	
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
Age	14.10	1.33	14.17	1.50	14.65	1.137
WK.12.Weight.in.kg	46.05	9.95	55.48	10.25	57.40	10.74
WK.12.Heigh.in.m	1.55	0.10	1.62	.09	1.64	.06
WK.12-passing	3.95	0.89	4.00	0.91	3.90	0.85
WK.12-dribbling	17.00	1.03	17.11	1.02	21.55	1.14
WK.12-shooting	44.80	1.64	43.27	1.90	35.90	4.67
WK.12-trapping	45.70	1.30	43.89	2.49	36.40	4.64
WK.12-heading	4.95	0.60	5.06	1.11	2.95	0.60
WK 12-throw-in	5.65	0.88	4.89	1.07	3.95	0.75

Table 3 indicated that the mean and standard deviation of the variables of the participants for the experimental group 1 were as follows: age ( $14.101 \pm 1.33$ ), weight ( $46.05 \pm 9.95$ ), height ( $1.55 \pm 0.10$ ), passing ( $3.95 \pm 0.89$ ), dribbling ( $17.00 \pm 1.02$ ), shooting ( $44.80 \pm 1.64$ ), trapping

(44.70±1.30) heading (4.95±0.60) and throw-in (5.65±0.88). Experimental group 2 has age (14.17±1.50), weight (56.76±11.23), height (1.62±0.09), passing (4.00±0.91), dribbling (17.11±1.02), shooting (43.28±1.90), trapping (43.89±2.49) heading (5.06±1.11) and throw-in (4.89±1.08). The control group has age (14.65±1.14), weight (57.50±10.83), height (1.64±0.06), passing (3.90±0.85), dribbling (21.55±1.15), shooting (35.90±4.68), trapping (36.40±4.65) heading (2.95±0.60) and throw-in (3.95±0.76).

Table 4

**t-test analysis of effect of 12-week skill training programme on skills of female football (n=58)**

Football skills	Experimental group (n=38)		Control group (n=20)		df	t	Sig
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std			
Passing	3.98	0.95	4.1	0.85	56	5.955	.001
Dribbling	17.05	1.01	21.55	1.15	56	15.368	.001
Shooting	44.08	1.91	35.90	4.68	56	9.442	.001
Trapping	44.84	2.13	36.40	4.65	56	9.497	.001
Heading	5.00	0.87	2.95	0.60	56	9.393	.001
Throw-in	5.29	1.04	3.95	0.76	56	5.093	.001

Table 4 indicated that, there is significant effect of 12-weeks skill drill programme on the pass ( $t(56) = 5.955$ ,  $p = .001$ ), dribbling ( $t(56) = 15.368$ ,  $p = .001$ ), shooting ( $t(56) = 9.442$ ,  $p = .001$ ), trapping ( $t(56) = 9.497$ ,  $p = .001$ ), heading ( $t(56) = 9.393$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and throw-in ( $t(56) = 5.093$ ,  $p = .001$ ) of female football players.

Table 5

**t-test Analysis of Effect of 12-week skill training programme on football skills between experimental group 1 and control group (n=40)**

Football skills	Experimental group 1 (n=20)		Control group (n=20)		Df	t	Sig
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std			
Passing	3.95	1.00	4.10	0.85	38	6.302	.001
Dribbling	17.00	1.03	21.55	1.14	38	13.229	.001
Shooting	44.80	1.64	35.90	4.68	38	8.028	.001
Trapping	45.70	1.30	36.40	4.64	38	8.613	.001
Heading	4.95	0.60	2.95	0.60	38	10.457	.001
Throw-in	5.65	0.88	3.95	0.76	38	6.563	.001

Table 5 indicated that, there is significant effect of 12-weeks skill drill programme on the pass ( $t(38) = 6.308$ ,  $p = .001$ ), dribbling ( $t(38) = 13.229$ ,  $p = .001$ ), shooting ( $t(38) = 8.028$ ,  $p = .001$ ), trapping ( $t(38) = 8.613$ ,  $p = .001$ ), heading ( $t(38) = 10.457$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and throw-in ( $t(38) = 6.563$ ,  $p = .001$ ) of female football players when the experimental group 1 was compared with control group.



Table 6

**t-test Analysis of Effect of 12-week skill training programme on skill levels of players between experimental group 2 and control group**

Football skills	Experimental group 2 (n=18)		Control group (n=20)		df	t	Sig
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std			
Passing	4.00	0.73	4.10	0.85	36	4.330	.001
Dribbling	17.11	1.02	21.55	1.15	36	12.541	.001
Shooting	43.28	1.90	35.90	4.68	36	6.236	.001
Trapping	43.89	2.49	36.40	4.65	36	6.085	.001
Heading	5.06	1.11	2.95	0.60	36	7.362	.001
Throw-in	4.89	1.08	3.95	0.76	36	3.128	.001

Table 6 indicated that, there is significant effect of 12-weeks skill drill programme on the pass ( $t(36) = 4.330, p = .001$ ), dribbling ( $t(36) = 12.541, p = .001$ ), shooting ( $t(36) = 6.236, p = .001$ ), trapping ( $t(36) = 6.085, p = .001$ ), heading ( $t(36) = 7.362, p = .001$ ) and throw-in ( $t(36) = 3.128, p = .001$ ) of female football players when the experimental group 1 was compared with control group.

### Discussion

This study assessed the effect of 12 weeks skill drills programme on the skill level of secondary school female football players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria. The result of the study indicated that there is a significant effect of 12 weeks skill drill programme on the passing skill of secondary school female football players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria ( $p < 0.05$ ). This finding is particularly encouraging for the development of female athletes at the secondary school level. In many regions, including parts of Nigeria, female sports programs often receive less support and attention compared to their male counterparts. Demonstrating that a structured program can significantly improve performance can help advocate for more resources, support, and development programs for young female athletes. The result of the study was in line with previous investigators. For instance, Raja et al. (2023) assessed the effect of small-sided game training (drill) on the accuracy of passing and dribbling skills in 10 years old junior soccer players and the results showed that there was a significant effect of small sided game training on improving the dribbling abilities of junior soccer players ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Sawali (2022) determined the impact of target shooting training on the level of passing accuracy in soccer games for students in Junior High School and concluded that shooting target exercise improved the accuracy of the pass in the soccer game. Wondirad and Atomsa (2019) examined the effect of ten weeks football training on dribbling, passing and shooting performance of Jimma University and Jimma Tesfa football project and the results indicated that there was significant difference between pre and posttest mean value of football passing performance of football players after the training intervention  $p < 0.05$ .

Similarly, the result of the study indicated that there is a significant effect of 12 weeks skill drill programme on the dribbling skill of secondary school female football players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria ( $p < 0.05$ ). The significant improvement ( $p < 0.05$ ) suggests that the skill drill program was particularly effective in targeting and enhancing the dribbling ability of the participants. This aligns with the principle of specificity in training, which posits that training should be relevant and appropriate to the sport for the best performance outcomes. The result of the study was in line with Raja et al. (2023) assessed the effect of small-sided game training (drill) on the accuracy of passing and dribbling skills in 10 years



old junior soccer players and the results of the Wilcoxon test on passing and showed that small sided game training had a significant effect on improving basic soccer technical skills, especially dribbling. Sridadi et al. (2021) also documented similar results when they investigated the extent of the effect, if any, of technical training (drill) using the ball on the dribbling speed of 10-12 years old football players and concluded that technical training using the ball. In the same vein, Darmansyah (2019) assessed the effect of drill and game method exercises on the dribbling ability of football games of extracurricular students of Arrummani Middle School, Tambang District, Kampar Regency and concluded that both method, drilling and game methods, significantly influence the dribble ability. Earlier, Wondirad and Atomsa (2019) examined the effect of ten weeks football training on dribbling, passing and shooting performance of Jimma University and Jimma Tesfa football project and the results indicated that there was significant difference between pre and posttest mean value of football dribbling performance of football players after the training intervention  $p < 0.05$ . This finding supports the implementation of structured, skill-specific training programs within youth sports to enhance technical abilities and promote greater participation and development in sports.

In the same vein, the result of the study showed that there is a significant effect of 12 weeks skill drill programme on the shooting skill of secondary school female football players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria ( $p < 0.05$ ). This study highlights the potential for structured training programmes to enhance the skills of young female athletes. Historically, female athletes have had less access to quality training programmes compared to their male counterparts. This finding supports the need for equitable training opportunities and resources for female athletes to ensure their development is on par with male athletes. The result of the study corroborates previous investigators. Farooque et al. (2023) documented similar results when assessed the effect of 12 weeks SAQ and Circuit training on skill ability of soccer players. In a similar vein, Wondirad and Atomsa (2019) examined the effect of ten weeks football training on dribbling, passing and shooting performance of Jimma University and Jimma Tesfa football project and the results indicated that there was significant effect on shooting performance of football players after the training intervention  $p < 0.05$ . Furthermore, Atabaş and Yapıcı (2018) assessed the effect of different jump and speed training protocols applied to players on the shooting speed and accuracy performance and found that there was a statistically significant difference in the comparison between the shoot speeds, accuracy performance and lactate values ( $p < 0.05$ ). Taking together, this result suggests that the significant improvement in shooting skills demonstrates that targeted drills can yield substantial performance gains, suggesting that coaches should consider integrating such drills into their training regimens.

Furthermore, the study indicated that there is a significant effect of 12 weeks skill drill programme on the trapping skill of secondary school female football players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria ( $p < 0.05$ ). The significant improvement in trapping skills suggests that the skill drill programme was effective in enhancing this specific technical ability. According to Ali et al. (2018), repetitive and focused practice is crucial for skill acquisition in sports. The structured nature of the skill drill programme likely provided the necessary repetition and progression to improve trapping skills, which involve controlling and maneuvering the ball under pressure. The results emphasize the importance of incorporating skill-specific drills into coaching practices and physical education curricula. Ford et al. (2018) argue that effective coaching involves designing practice sessions that are tailored to improve specific skills relevant to the sport. The significant improvement in trapping skills highlights the value of targeted drills in yielding substantial performance gains, suggesting

that coaches and educators should integrate such drills into their training and teaching methods.

Moreover, the study indicated that there is a significant effect of 12 weeks skill drill programme on the heading skill of secondary school female football players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria ( $p < 0.05$ ). This outcome is particularly relevant given the crucial role of heading in football, both defensively and offensively. Improvement in technical skills, such as heading, can have a positive impact on players' self-efficacy and motivation to continue participating in sports. Increased competence in a specific skill area enhances players' overall performance and enjoyment, leading to sustained engagement in the sport (MacPhail et al., 2018). The significant improvement in heading skills observed in this study suggests that participants are more likely to remain involved in football, contributing to their long-term physical and psychological well-being.

Finally, the study showed that there is a significant effect of 12 weeks skill drill programme on the throw-in skill of secondary school female football players in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria ( $p < 0.05$ ). Though there was no direct comparison of the findings with previous results, the finding is consistent with the broader literature on the impact of targeted training interventions in sports. Williams and Reilly (2018) found that, structured and sport-specific skill drills can enhance athletes' technical abilities, physical fitness, and overall performance.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the study, there is a significant improvement across all measured skills: passing, dribbling, shooting, and trapping as a result of 12 weeks skill training programme among female football players. These findings indicate that structured skill drill programmes can effectively enhance the technical abilities of young female football players. Therefore, implementing such targeted training interventions could play a crucial role in the development of female athletes, promoting their performance and engagement in football especially at the grassroots.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made:

1. Coaches and physical education instructors implement structured skill drill programmes in their training sessions.
2. Educational institutions and sports organizations must guarantee that female football players have access to appropriate training resources and facilities.
3. Schools should incorporate skill-specific training programmes into their physical education curriculum. This will ensure that all students, regardless of their involvement in extracurricular sports, receive organized and efficient training to enhance their technical abilities.
4. Coaches and educators should establish a positive and supportive atmosphere that encourages long-term involvement in sports.

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