

## Individual-psychological features of athletes of a football team depending on the game role

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### Abstract:

Scientific research on the problem of individual and psychological characteristics of athletes has been analyzed and summarized in the article. The results of research of individual-psychological peculiarities of football players depending on the role of the game have been highlighted. The individual-psychological differences of football players of different game roles have been determined.

**Key words:** individual psychological features, personality profile, football, game role, defender, midfielder, goalkeeper, striker.

### Introduction

One of the main factors in a successful sports career in the game's team sports in general, and in football in particular, is a timely and adequate, in terms of the requirements of the activities and capabilities of the football player, the choice of the direction of training influences, which, in return, stems from the choice of the game-role of the athlete.

Trainers and psychologists in the field of sports in their work are dealing with significant intergroup differences in the individual psychological qualities of footballers of various game roles. Individual functions of players which, must be displayed in the type of game roles should be taken into account in forming general tactics of the game. Otherwise, a significant reduction in the effectiveness of technical and tactical actions and the effectiveness of the player and team are possible. Thus, taking into account individual psychological features will facilitate the individualization of the training process and optimize the selection of athletes for the game-role.

**A problem statement.** A critical analysis of the actual achievements of the psychology of sport in the format of the above-mentioned problem field shows that despite the availability of sufficient information about the individual psychological peculiarities of the players and the requirements of the game to the athlete, there is almost no explication of these connections as a condition for maximal realization of the player in a certain game role. Consequently, the raised issue requires a thorough study.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The problem of psychological peculiarities of the personality of athletes as the basis for their effectiveness and reliability was developed by G. Leyevik [10], B. Vyatkin, G. Lozhkin [25], V. Voronova, S. Shutova [23, 24], M. Polishkis [19], O. Dashkevich, I. Klesov [8], L. Matveyev [14], V. Rybchinskiy [20]; scientific and psychological interpretation of personal qualities of football players as the basis for the comprehensive development of an athlete was carried out by I. Belenko [2], L. Bukova [3], A. Figueiredo, C. Gonçalves, M. Coelho e Silva, R. Malina [5], U. Korniiiko [9], D. Sidelnikov, A. Fedorov [21]; the problem of individual-typological peculiarities of footballers of different roles was elaborated in detail by R. Cooper, R. Payne [4], O. Polyanchko, S. Grona [18], G. Lisenchuk [12,13], O. Honer, P. Feichtinger [4], P. Ford, A. Williams [6], I. Maksimenko [13], A. Mills, J. Butt, I. Maynard, C. Harwood [16], T. Morris [17]. Despite the existence of research in the outlined issues, they are still unitary, and sometimes contain contradictory data, so this problem required further work.

**The purpose of the article:** to investigate the individual psychological characteristics of the athletes of the football team, depending on the game role.

**Exposition of the main material and substantiation of received results.** It is quite logical that the accurate and as early identification of a player with a game role contributes to a significant increase in the efficiency of his gaming activity. First of all, at the expense of a long training process and specially created conditions, the most productive assimilation of the necessary skills and abilities is achieved, as a result, fully realized game abilities. At the same time, the manifestation of a high level of individual skill of a football player according to the logic of the development of the game situation implies his active participation in the non-

specific for game role technical and tactical actions and, at the same time, the maximum quality performance of functional responsibilities, inherent in other game roles. This universality of the player provides a high degree of efficiency of its activities within its own playing roles, which forms the necessary degree of confidence of the player in his own abilities. This contributes to the successful implementation of temporarily uncharacteristic to athlete technical and tactical functional responsibilities.

Taking into account the characteristic individual and psychological peculiarities of football players, depending on the game role, contributes to solving the following tasks:

1. Increasing the degree of reliability of the selection of a football player's role during the training. The realization of this task is achieved by necessarily introducing psychological indicators to the criteria for assessing the suitability of the athlete for a particular game role as the basis for the successful performance of functional duties. In this way, an integrated approach to the diagnosis of football players is provided for the purpose of sports orientation.

2. Optimization of the psychodiagnostic study of the athlete's personality in order to monitor changes in various aspects of football players' preparedness. Consideration of the requirements for the psychophysiological and personality characteristics of athletes of different roles contributes to adequate assessment of the compliance of the player's psychological readiness with the requirements of a particular game role.

3. The growth of the effectiveness of the player in the chosen game specialization due to the correction of the corresponding specific roles of personal qualities.

4. Rationalization and individualization of the training process of young footballers through an individualized approach: the consideration of personal characteristics of the game role, the selection of information about new technical actions and tactical elements and their mastering.

It is especially important to determine the criteria for assessing the conformity of the player to the requirements of a specific game role correctly. Such criteria are used to determine and evaluate the player's qualities, and they are the starting point for a comprehensive diagnostics of his abilities, taking into account the possibility of compensatory mechanisms.

The excessive concentration of specialists on some indicators while ignoring others is a specific mistake in football when assessing a player's compliance to particular game role and his preparedness. The psychological criteria for evaluating the player's perspective within the specific game roles are the most frequent among the latter.

Coaches in assessing the psychological peculiarities of football players during the implementation of specific functions of the game role are most often guided by their own experience and personal perception of external manifestations of the psychic processes of the football player. Despite the fact that an experienced trainer is able to reveal the psychological characteristics of the personality of the athlete, there is a shortage of quantitative data of the psychological characteristics of the players necessary to establish causal relationships between these or other indicators.

The optimal solution to this problem is the use of a system of psycho-diagnostic measures, in combination with the assessment of other components of preparedness, this will increase the effectiveness of the selection of players.

The phase of sports specialization will be successfully completed provided the evaluation of the psychological inclination of the player to the implementation of certain game functions and its psychological characteristics. A comprehensive psychodiagnosics of personality features of football players should be at the stage of sport improvement.

M. S. Polishkis, O. Dashkevich, and I. A. Klesov devoted their research to studying the individual-typological peculiarities of football players that contribute to the efficiency and reliability of sports activities. Motivation, self-regulation, self-control and emotional stability have been identified by authors among the latter [19, 8].

D. P. Sidelnikov, A. P. Fedorov studied the complex of personal qualities of football players that make successful and comprehensive development of the athlete possible. To the list of such qualities, the researchers related the following:

- spontaneity, which is realized in unexpected behavior and promotes effective competitive activity;
- sociability helps to establish links between team members and coaches;
- energy is revealed in the physical and technical training of the player;
- exposure revealed during intense loads;
- purposefulness as a direction for success;
- perseverance;
- independence;
- reactive aggression, which is a stimulus to increase the effectiveness of physical and technical training;
- determination and courage in taking responsibility for the decision and its implementation [21].

In this context, the results obtained by O. V. Bairachniy play an exclusive role for our study. The scientist proved the existence of significant differences in the manifestation of a number of psychological qualities of the personality of athletes of high class within the realization of their game roles. In particular, defenders often show high self-control, low self-esteem and a focus on avoiding failures. The midfielders are distinguished by high volitional activity and relative balance of motivation for success and averting failures. High self-esteem and motivation for success distinguishes forwards [1].

The technical and tactical functions, the corresponding playing conditions, the influence of external factors – are factors that determine the psychological peculiarities of football players in view of the respective role playing. Footballers of all game roles are characterized by low sensitivity, dominance, self-control, courage, and therefore capable of making independent decisions and self-organized. The penetration is expressed in all representatives of the game-role, except the goalkeepers, due to the nature of the game. Indicators of anxiety and rigidity are more expressed in forwards and midfielders, and frustration – in goalkeepers. The most aggressive are defenders and midfielders. All of these features are predetermined by peculiarities of the game and the implementation of the functions of individual game-roles.

Among the conducted researches there are quite contradictory ones, in particular, according to V. F. Turovsky [22], the forwards, unlike defenders and midfielders, have a low self-esteem, but according to A. P. Mihnov [15], the highest self-esteem indicators are characteristic of the forwards. Defenders and midfielders have the most expressed trust, indicating unnecessary protection and emotional tension. The goalkeepers are more motivated to succeed than defenders, midfielders and strikers. At the same time, midfielders and forwards are more concerned with anxiety and aggressiveness, due to the expectations of the consequences of their play. In a detailed analysis of the individual psychological characteristics of the members of the football team conducted by O. Polyanychko, the forwards have been characterized as calm, confident, carefree athletes [18].

An analysis of recent researches on the identified problem has shown that the study of the relationship and mutual influence of the individual psychological characteristics of the athletes of the football team, depending on the game-role, is complex, controversial and caused by many additional factors. Consequently, the analyzed sources and certain forms of problems led to the need for empirical research.

### Material & methods

The basic position on which our empirical research is built is R. Cattell's definition of personality as a complex of primary personality characteristics that determine its internal meaning and behavior [26]. In this context, the study of functionally independent and psychologically meaningful personality dimensions plays an exclusive role for our study. First of all, individual-psychological features of the person should be the subject of analysis. A multi-factor personal test questionnaire of R. Cattell (Form A) was used for their study.

The study involved 30 footballers: 3 teams (10 people each) in Okhlyrka (Ukraine), Romny (Ukraine), Vancouver UBC (Canada).

### Results And Discussion

Let's turn to the presentation of the empirical data we have received for each group of players, depending on their game role (see Figure 1).

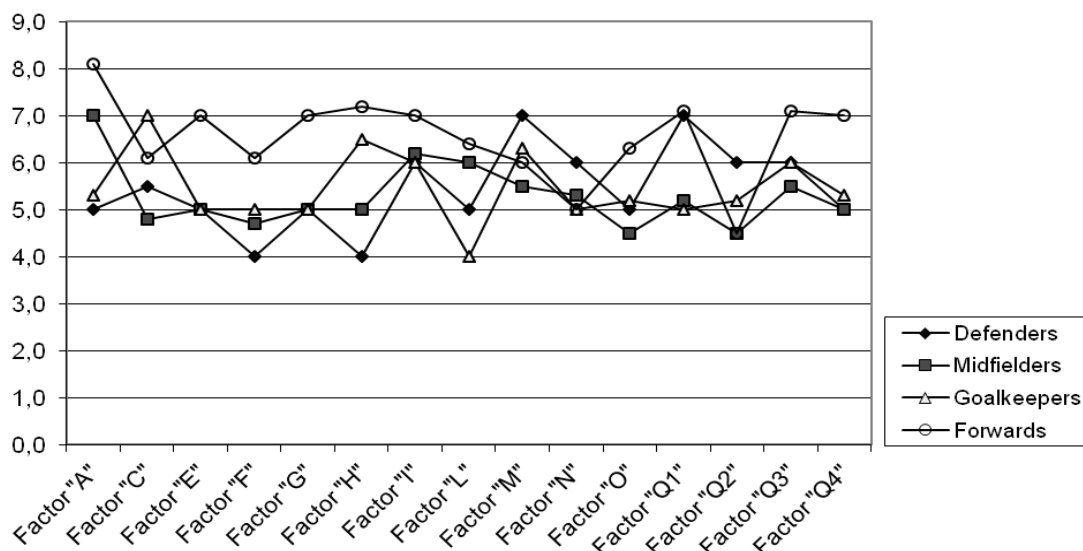


Figure 1. Profiles of the personality of footballers of different game role (according to R. Cattell's test)

The given data testify to the absence of pronounced defenders' qualities of the person. Therefore, one should pay attention to the slight deviation of personality characteristics from the average estimate of 5.5 stens. According to the data, the factor "C" has an average value, so the defending players are distinguished by such personality traits as: sensitivity, emotional instability. Qualitative analysis of the data by factor "I" makes it possible to characterize defenders as realistic, flexible in judgments, practical, rational.

Indicators by the factor "M" reflect the fact of "dreaminess" predominance as a personal property of defenders. Thus, the latter characterized by the rich imagination, the absorption of their ideas, the internal illusions, the ease of refusal from practical judgments, the ability to operate abstract concepts, orientation to their inner world; dreaminess.

The visual analysis of the profile of the group of defenders by the factor "N" indicates that they are characterized by diplomacy: the ability to behave in society, to show diplomacy in communication, find a way out of difficult situations, prudence, emotional self-control, insight, and caution.

As well as the defenders, the midfielders have not clearly revealed qualities. Therefore, pay attention to minor deviation of characteristics. Indicators by factor "A" bring the midfielders closer to the pole of communicability, which characterizes them as good, careless, sociable, open, natural, indifferent, assembled, penetrating people, those who active in establishing contacts, able to work well together in a team and work with people.

As indicators of factor "B" show, midfielders have abstract thinking and high general mental abilities, they think on their feet and quickly learn, they are collected and smart.

Based on the indicators of the factor "I", personal characteristics of midfielders are associated with the desire for high success and discipline, orientation in behavior on the requirements, at the same time, combining both – sensitivity and practicality, realism. Indicators of the factor "L" demonstrate the presence of such personality traits of the midfielders as caution, egocentricity, wariness towards people, sometimes autonomy and independence in social behavior. As can be seen from the above results on the factor "M", the indicators of midfielders occupy a middle position between "dreaminess" and "practicality", so the representatives of this game role are marked both by rich imagination and practicality; are interested in abstract problems and are busy with the solution of practical issues.

The investigated subgroup of athletes reveals itself to be sufficiently organized, well-controlling their emotions and behavior according to the «Q3» indicators, which measures the level of internal control of behavior, the person's integration. An analysis of the data presented in the forwards' profile indicates the existence of pronounced individual characteristics of the representatives of the group: the expressed indicator of the factor "A" indicates the sociability of the attackers, which is revealed through the richness and brightness of emotional manifestations, naturalness and ease of behavior, readiness for cooperation and the ability to establish direct, interpersonal contacts. According to the research results (factor "E") domineering, seeking independence persons are dominant among the forwards. These athletes act courageously, vigorously and actively, defend their rights to independence and require the display of independence from others.

The value of the factor "G" indicates that the forwards are characterized by strong character, high standards, honesty, perseverance, balance, responsibility.

The courage is prevailing among the polar properties of the factor "N", so the main features of these athletes is the determination, the desire to risk, the propensity to activity related to rivalry, competition or risk.

Analyzing the profile of the group of forwards by the factor «Q1», we can assert that representatives of this game role have diverse intellectual interests, they are trying to be well informed, everyone wants to analyze and understand themselves, calmly perceive non-traditional views and new ideas, are critical thinking, patiently refer to contradictions.

Based on the «Q3» factor, we note that the forwards are organized, accurate, able to control their emotions and behavior well, act according to an informed plan.

Consider the prevailing personality traits of goalkeepers. We can certify the emotional stability of these players, based on the indicators of the factor "C. They are able to manage emotions and mood, emotionally stable, well-timed, calm, self-confident. Courage is one the main features of the athletes of this group; it is realized through adventurism, spontaneity, determination, freedom in establishing contacts.

Based on the indicators of the «M» factor, the representatives of the game role "goalkeeper" are characterized by the ability to operate with abstract concepts, orientation to their inner world.

We have calculated the average rank scores in order to compare the indicators of personality factors in the samples of footballers depending on their game role, (see Figure 2).

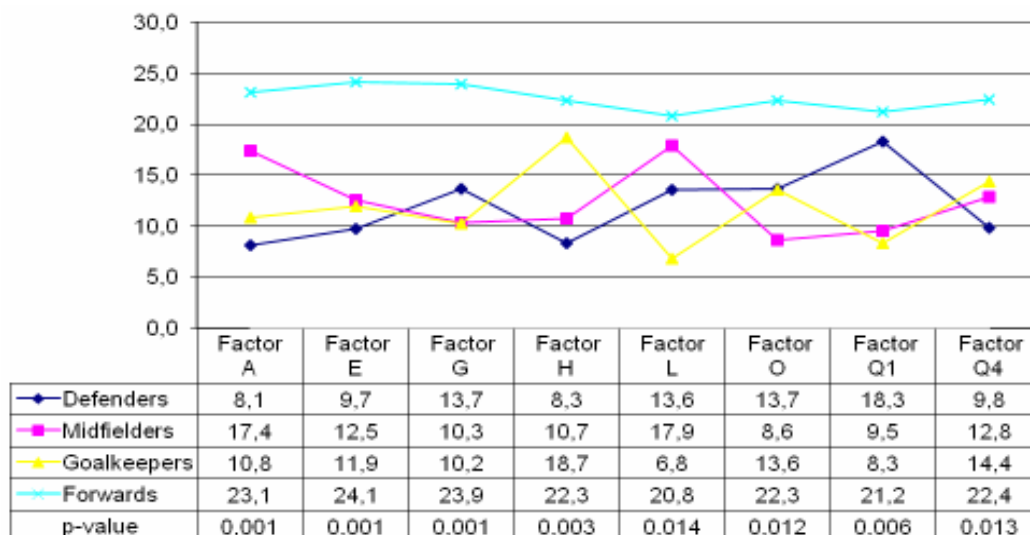


Figure 2. Indicators of average rank of personal factors of footballers of different game role

The profile of the forwards differs significantly from the profiles of others. In particular, it has been discovered that forwards are more conflicting than other team players, are more inclined towards authoritarian leadership, more independent in their thoughts. Statistically verified differences have been found for the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) (form A). The results are discussed below. Communicative properties and peculiarities of interpersonal interaction as a reliable distinctions according to Factor A (closeness / sociability) have been revealed among the studied football players of such game roles as defenders and midfielders: the advantage of high indicators of this factor indicates that the midfielders are more sociable, open, good-natured, ready for the commonwealth, trusting. They easily adapt to the conditions, attentive to people, sincere and funny. Such personal qualities of the midfielders allow support defenders and forwards depending on the situation in the game, and at the same time interrupt the opponent's attacks (see Table 1).

Table 1

The reliability of the differences between the personal factors of defenders and midfielders

	<b>Factor "A"</b>
Mann-Whitney U-test	8,000
W Wilcoxon test	44,000
Z	-2,110
Sig. 2-tailed	<b>,035</b>

There were significant differences among personality factors of defenders and forwards (see Table 2). In particular, the indicators of the factors "A" (isolation / sociability), "E" (subordination / dominance), "F" (restraint / expressiveness) are more strongly manifested in the forwards, indicating their openness, sociability, sincerity, they are attentive to people and easily adapted to circumstances. Such personality traits as carelessness, impulsivity, vigor, expressiveness, sincerity in relationships, domination, self-confidence, persistence are peculiar more to forwards than defenders. The predominance of these personality traits in the forwards contributes to the implementation of the game tactics of attack, in particular violation of organized actions of the opponents' defense, overcoming the opposing, which allows successfully complete the attack.

Table 2

The reliability of the differences between the personal factors of defenders and forwards

	<b>Factor "A"</b>	<b>Factor "E"</b>	<b>Factor "F"</b>
Mann-Whitney U-test	6,000	2,500	17,000
W Wilcoxon test	42,000	38,500	53,000
Z	-3,057	-3,423	-2,073
Sig. 2-tailed	<b>,002</b>	<b>,001</b>	<b>,038</b>

The goalkeepers have high-level results according to the Factor "C" Scale (emotional instability / emotional stability). The goalkeepers not only have to defend the gate, but also be brave, energetic, strong and courageous. High indicators of this factor prove that the goalkeepers are more stable, able-bodied, emotionally mature, and realistic than the defenders (Table 3).

Table 3

The reliability of the differences between the personal factors of defenders and goalkeepers

	<b>Factor "C"</b>	<b>Factor "H"</b>	<b>Factor "Q<sub>1</sub>"</b>
Mann-Whitney U-test	7,500	8,500	8,500
W Wilcoxon test	43,500	44,500	29,500
Z	-2,247	-2,023	-2,044
Sig. 2-tailed	<b>,025</b>	<b>,043</b>	<b>,041</b>

They are able to follow the requirements of the group better; they are characterized by the consistency of interests. They have no nervous tiredness. Factor "H" (timidness / courage) is clearly manifested in the goalkeepers, and therefore they have social courage, activity, willingness to deal with unfamiliar circumstances and people. Factor Q1 (conservatism – radicalism) is clearly expressed in defenders, they are liberals, analysts, well-informed, tolerant to inconvenience and are characterized by intellectual interests, more than the goalkeepers.

Consider the indicators of midfielders and forwards (see Table 4). Reliable differences between the personal profiles of representatives of certain game roles are available only by the factor "G". Forwards have high rates of "G" factor. The received high scores characterize the forwards as persistent, balanced, responsible; they are persistent and emotionally disciplined.

Table 4

Indicators of average grades on the scale of psychodiagnostic techniques: midfielders and forwards

	<b>Factor "G"</b>
Mann-Whitney U-test	1,500
W Wilcoxon test	22,500
Z	-3,172
Sig. 2-tailed	<b>,002</b>

## Conclusions

The consideration of the characteristic psychological peculiarities of football players in identifying them with the game role and purposeful correction of specific for a particular game role personal qualities promotes rationalization and individualization of the training-competitive process; optimizing the functioning of a football player while performing a certain game role.

The main differences between teams of midfielder and defenders are revealed by factor "A" (sociability), hence we conclude that the midfielders are more sociable. According to their game role, such a feature is necessary in the implementation of support for defenders and forwards, depending on the situation. Compared to the goalkeepers, defenders are more radical (factor Q1), which allows them to be flexible in the implementation of game functions – taking the ball from an opponent and blocking their path to the gate. And goalkeepers, in their turn, show greater emotional stability (factor C) and courage (factor H). Such an endurance and ability to control the situation helps the goalkeeper in the direct defense of their own gate in anticipation of an opponent's attack. High normative behavior (factor G) distinguishes the attackers from the midfielders; resilience, determination, focus on achieving goals contribute to the functional purpose of the forwards – to attack and score goals. Sociability (factor A), dominance (factor E), expressiveness (factor F) are more pronounced by comparing with defenders.

Therefore, we conclude that the individual psychological characteristics of athletes of various game roles significantly affect the effectiveness of gaming activities in a sport and the performance of the football team.

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