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MENTAL SKILLSASSESSMENT BETWEEN ACHIEVERS& NON-ACHIEVERS OF STATE LEVEL PLAYERS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to assess mental competence between state-level achievers and non-achievers. A total of one hundred and six (N=106) male subjects, including fifty-three (n=53) achievers who earned medals for state football tournaments and fifty-three (n=53) non-achievers who entered but did not achieve medals in that respective tournament were selected for this study. . Targeted and random sampling were used for the selection of subjects. The age of the subjects was between 18 and 21 years. Mental skills were assessed by completing a mental skills questionnaire developed by Hardy and Nelson (1996). Mean, SD, M.D., SEDM and "t" values were calculated to determine the significance of the differences between high achievers and low achievers between State level. The significance level was set at 0.05. The results showed significant differences in the sub variables mental willingness, self-confidence, concentration and (total) mental competence between high achievers and non-achievers. However, non-significant differences were observed with respect to the sub variables, namely, image ability, anxiety and worry management, relaxation ability.

Keywords: Mental skills, State level, achievers, non-achievers.

INTRODUCTION

Mental skills have been recognized as cornerstone as well as one of the most valuable measures in order to attain the optimum level of performance at the time of competition (Singh, Valsaraj, & Mohammad, 2013). Sports psychologists consider that apart from training aspects, there are many other variables which have the potential to influence one‟s sports performance and even can contribute to improve consistency in the performance level of players during the practice session as well as at the time of competition. Peak performance during competitions is not only the outcome of physical training but other factors such as climate conditions, training means and methods, diet and psychological factors do contribute for the same (Murphy, 1987; Khan, Ali, & Ahmed, 2015). Weinberg and Gould (2003) supported that „in most of the competitions; however, players win or

lose all that depending up on how they (and their opponents) perform on that particular day. Physical abilities being fairly equal, but the winner usually the athlete, who has better mental skills (Singh, Valsaraj, & Mohammad, 2013). Therefore, the authors advocated psychological factors account primarily for day-to-day performance fluctuations". The top mental training consultant Ravizza (2001) emphasized that „an important part of the education phase of an athlete should integrate his/her familiarity or awareness with the role of mental skills and how psychological factors persuade one's performance". Although most athletes are aware of fact that their psychological state influence their performance positively as well as negatively but very few are able to use psychological skills necessary to help them. Sport psychologist substantiated that if psychological training associated with physical training, it helps in the attainment of desirable results. Mental skill helps an individual to control the negative emotions which act as hindrance or obstacle in the path of his/her achievement. Cox and Yoo (1995) had substantiated that mental aspect of training is very important for high performance in sports. In order to attain high level of performance, mental aspect of performance should be given due importance. Beswick (2010) had stated that mental skills are designed to produce psychological states and skills in athletes that will lead to performance improvement. It focuses on the mental skills that need to be developed to further propel players performance beyond which can be achieved through physical and technical training (Williams & Krane, 2001). Rushall (1989) has stated psychology is the key to athletic excellence. Suinn (1977) psychological skills deals with the ability to concentrate completely on performance in situation in which physical skills which ultimately becomes the critical factor that determines who wins. Football is a team sport where the success and failure of the team depend upon the physical as well as mental makeup of team members. Beswick (2010) corroborated that nature of this sport demands a player to react physically and mentally. During the strenuous match conditions, if one is not certain about his/her decision then his/her doubt is reflected through stance or may result in mistakes or errors which may plays a crucial role in winning or losing a match. Sharma (2003) stated that football claims a perfect blend of physical and psychological qualities to be a title holder. In the current sports setting trainer and coaches" apprehend the vitality of sports psychology and use it as an effective resource in order to get competitive edge.Therefore, the purpose of the investigators was to assess the mental skills between inter-university achievers and non-achievers.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Subject

Total one hundred six (N=106) female subjects, which includes, fifty-three (n=53) achievers who got medals in the football inter-university tournament held at state. fifty- three (n=53) non- achievers who had just participated but failed to get medals in this respective tournament. The purposive and random sampling techniques were used for the selection of subjects for the present study. The age of the subjects was ranged between 18 to 21 years.

Tool

Mental skills were determined by administrating mental skill questionnaire developed by Hardy and Nelson (1996).

Scoring: The lower the score will represent weaker whereas the higher score represents stronger level of mental ability. The reliability of the scale was administered by calculating reliability coefficient on the sample of 277 subjects. The split half reliability coefficient was found 0.86, however, validity was calculated, which indicated high validity on account of being 0.89.

Statistical Technique

The mean, SD, MD, SEDM and t-values were calculated to find out the significance of differences between state achievers and non-achievers. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

RESULTS

Table 1: Significance of difference between inter-university achievers and non-achievers on the variable mental Skill

The results with regard to the sub-variables of mental skill between inter- university achievers and non-achievers have been presented in the Table 1.

Variables	**Achievers**		**Non-Achievers**		t-Value	Sig.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Imagery	18.57	3.24	18.19	2.47	0.67	0.502
Mental	20.15	3.15	18.68	3.28	2.35*	0.021
Self-	16.91	3.37	14.81	4.02	2.90*	0.005
Anxietyand Worry	14.15	5.12	12.60	4.10	1.71	0.089
Management						
Concentration	16.13	5.40	13.94	4.76	2.21*	0.029
Relaxation	17.58	4.15	17.41	2.80	0.24	0.806
MentalSkill	103.49	15.27	95.64	12.11	2.93*	0.004

*Significant at0.05level Degreeoffreedom=104

Table 1 presented the results of state achievers and non-achievers with regard to the variable mental skill. The mean score of achievers on the sub- variable imagery ability was found 18.57 whereas the mean score of non- achievers was recorded as 18.19. The standard deviations (SD) of State achievers and non-achievers were 3.24 and 2.47 respectively. The t-value 0.67 as shown in the table was found statistically insignificant ($p>0.05$). When compared the mean score of both the groups, it can be seen that achievers had exhibited better imagery ability than their counterpart inter-university non-achievers.

The mean score of State achievers on the sub-variable mental preparation was found 20.15 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 18.68.The standard deviations (SD) of

state achievers and non-achievers were 3.15 and 3.28, respectively. The t-value 2.35 as shown in the table was found statistically significant ($p<0.05$).

The mean score of state achievers on the sub-variable self- confidence was found 16.91 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 14.81. The standard deviations (SD) of State achievers and non-achievers were 3.15 and 3.28, respectively. The t-value 2.90 as shown in the table was found statistically significant ($p<0.05$).

The mean score of state achievers on the sub-variable anxiety and worry management was found 14.15 whereas the mean score of non- achievers was recorded as 12.60. The standard deviations (SD) of state achievers and non-achievers were 5.12 and 4.10 respectively. The t-value 1.71 as shown in the table was found statistically insignificant ($p>0.05$). The mean score of inter-university achievers on the sub-variable concentration ability was found 16.13 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 13.94. The standard deviations (SD) of inter-university achievers and non-achievers were 5.40 and 4.76, respectively. The t-value 2.21 as shown in the table was found statistically significant ($p<0.05$). The mean score of inter-university achievers on the sub-variable relaxation ability was found 17.58 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 17.41. The standard deviations (SD) of state achievers and non-achievers were 4.15 and 2.80 respectively. The t-value 0.24 as shown in the table was found statistically insignificant ($p>0.05$).

The mean score of state achievers on the sub-variable mental skill (total) was found 103.49 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 95.64. The standard deviations (SD) of state achievers and non-achievers were 15.23 and 12.11, respectively. The t-value 2.93 as shown in the table was found statistically significant ($p<0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The results show that statistically significant differences were observed on the sub-variables of mental ability, i.e. mental readiness, self-confidence, ability to concentrate and mental ability (total) between the performers and non-performers. However, group achievers and non-performers were also developed on the mental ability sub variables, i.e. image ability, anxiety and worry management, and ability to relaxation, as statistically non-significant differences were observed between the two groups on the question sub variables. The result of this could be due to the fact that the achievers were mentally prepared for their task and had better self-confidence, which would have facilitated their performance in competitions compared to the non-achievers. The current results are consistent with the study conducted by Bardel, Fontayne and Colombel (2003) in which they concluded that "winning" athletes showed significantly higher psychological skills than their "losing" counterparts. Similarly, Orlick and Partington (1988) had confirmed that a person with better psychological skills would have a competitive advantage in their respective sports competition. Singh (2005) also found significant differences between successful and unsuccessful athletes on selected psychological parameters, namely self-confidence and mental readiness. Greenleaf, Gould, and Dieffenbach (2001) compared teams that did or did not meet performance expectations at the Olympics and found that top performing athletes were more likely to use mental preparation than their counterparts. Williams and Krane (2001) concluded that top performing athletes were characterized by greater self-

confidence, greater self-regulation of arousal, better concentration, positive thoughts and images, and greater determination and greater commitment compared to their non-successful counterparts.

CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded from the above findings that significant differences have been observed on the on the sub-variables of mental skill i.e. mental preparation, self- confidence, concentration ability and mental skill (total) between State achievers and non-achievers. Hence, it is further concluded that State achievers had demonstrated significantly better on the sub-variables of mental skill i.e. mental preparation, self-confidence, concentration ability and mental skill (total) than their counterpart non-achievers. However, no significant differences were found on the sub-variables of mental skill i.e. imagery ability, anxiety and worry management and relaxation ability between state achievers and non-achievers.

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