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A comparative study on mental skills of team players and individual game players at inter college level

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Abstract

It's now accepted that it is the mental game that ultimately wins any race or competitive game. It is what distinguishes the very top athletes from the ordinary. So, why are mental skills so important for success in sport? To fulfill the purpose of this study, total 50 girls between the age group of 17-25 years were selected as subjects for the study. Out of these, 25 players from team games and 25 individual game players of different colleges of hoshiarpur district were selected. The variable selected for the study was mental skills, which was a psychological characteristic in sports psychology. To collect the data for mental skills, Hardy and Nelson's mental skill Questionnaire (1996) was used to compare the variable among team players and individual game players at inter college level. The value of mean and standard deviation of the test was computed by applying 't' test at 0.05 level of significance. In the study there was significant differences found on trait of mental skill among team players and individual game players. In the end, having solid mental skills can be more important for elite performance than an athlete's physiological capabilities.

Keywords: Psychology, team, individual, sports, skills

Introduction

One way to identify times when mental skills are especially important is to examine the nature of the sport in question. Clearly there will be different demands for sports depending on whether sports are individual in nature, or team sports. One commonality among sports will be those times when there are breaks in having to perform. These could be due to injury or, breaks that are part of the nature of the game (time between playing periods such as half time), judicial breaks (umpires/referees consulting), or breaks between execution of skills (e.g., in golf, trap shooting etc.).

Sports that involve teams of individuals will require different mental skills for each individual due to the different demands of their specific roles within the team. For example, goalie needs will differ from those who take penalty corners, and roles that are responsible for re-starting a particular phase (e.g., hooker in rugby) will have separate needs. A coach should be able to identify these needs through observation and assessment. The assessment will usually take the form of some form of mental skills profiling. There are many ways this can be achieved, but a coach is usually required to help the individual become self aware of their perceptions of the mental demands placed upon him or her. Once these have been identified, the athlete should be encouraged to examine where he or she is in terms of his or her mental strengths and weaknesses and processes should be put in place to improve those areas that have been identified as needing improvement.

Procedure and Methodology

A trait of 50 girls comparing 25 girls players for team games and 25 girls individual games players of different colleges of Hoshiarpur District were selected from different colleges affiliated to Panjab University, Chandigarh. The age of the players ranged between 17-25 years. The variable selected for the purpose of the study was mental skills. The scores on mental skills were obtained by using Hardy and Nelson's mental skill questionnaire (1996). This questionnaire comprised of 24 questions and includes six aspects of mental side of sports performance:-

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- Imagery ability
- Mental preparation
- Self confidence
- Anxiety and worry management
- Concentration ability
- Relaxation ability

Prior to the collection of data, he subjects were clearly informed about the purpose and they were also motivated sufficiently. They were encouraged to give their proper and realistic answers. Statistical analysis for the psychological variable was used to calculate mean, standard deviation and 't' test was applied at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion of Findings

For comparing the two groups both team players and individual game players of different colleges on mental skills. The mean, standard deviation and 't' test were computed. The findings are presented below in the table. The mean and standard deviation of bath groups along with the significance of difference by way of 't' test has been presented on the trait of mental skills.

Table 1: Significance of differences between team players and individual game players on mental skills

Group	Mean	S.D	't' ratio
Team game player	9.45	3.11	0.67
Individual game player	9.72	2.73	

T value (n-2=48)2.00 at 0.05 level

The above table indicates that the mean of team players and individual game players of inter college level on the trait of mental skills was 9.45 and 9.72 respectively. The obtained 't' value was 0.67 which was found to be in significant at 0.05 level of significance. On the basis of these data analysis, there was insignificant difference found among team players and individual game players of inter college level on the trait of mental skills.

Conclusion

Insignificant difference was observed in mental skills among team players and individual game players of inter college level. The study also indicated that the individual game players had higher mean in terms of mental skills than team players. Often people put too much emphasis on the physical capabilities of an athlete, when the mental skills they may have, or lack, are just as critical to their success. It's as though they don't acknowledge the fact that mental skills, self-awareness and the ability to understand and work with other people, are just as vital to your success as being able to run fast or step off of both feet, or throw a long ball. Coaches and trainers should conduct the Hardy and Nelson's mental skill Questionnaire among his players and trainers to evaluate their mental strength and power to achieve higher performance in respected play fields. This test also enhance the performance level of players at various situation comes in competition.

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