



ISSN: 2456-4419

Impact Factor: (RJIF): 5.18

Yoga 2019; 4(1): 1410-1412

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www.theyogicjournal.com

Received: 15-12-2018

Accepted: 20-01-2019

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Comparative study of mental toughness between inter college and inter university male athletes

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to compare the mental toughness between inter-university and inter-college level Athletes. The current study was directed on a sample of hundred (N=100) athletes, which includes fifty each, Inter-university (50) and Inter-college (50) male athletes of age ranging from 18 to 25 years. All the participants were informed about the aim and methodology of the study and they decided to participate in this study. Data was composed by using mental toughness questionnaire developed by Goldberg (1998). The independent samples t-test was applied to measure the differences between inter-university and inter-college level male athletes. The level of significance was set at 0.05. Results revealed statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) differences between inter-university and inter-college level male athletes with regard to Rebound Ability, Ability to Handle Pressure, Concentration, Confidence, Motivation and Overall Mental Toughness.

Keywords: mental toughness, athletes.

Introduction

Many coaches and athletes have become aware of the importance of mental skills in sport and are placing more emphasis on the development of these skills. Many researchers complete their research work on various mental skills or characteristics. As Sandeep and Amandeep Singh (2016) [19] found statistically significant differences between combat and non-combat sports group with regard to extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness, which are sub-variables of personality. However, Sandeep *et al.* (2019) also found in another study that there were no statistically significant differences between combat and non-combat sports athletes with regard to locus of control. As far as mental toughness for Athletes are concerned, while reviewing the related literature, we could not find any sufficient analysis report. However, early research on mental toughness indicated that 82% of wrestling coaches identified mental toughness as the most important prerequisite to competitive success. In support of this research, athletes, media personnel, and coaches regularly characterize successful performers as being mentally tough. While the term mental toughness is frequently used colloquially to describe athletic success, empirical support for the relationship between mental toughness and performance success has not been fully established. The development of these mental skills is not only important for those with the desire to win, but for those with a desire to become more consistent performers. Upon reviewing the literature on mental skills, mental toughness consistently emerged as one of the most important psychological characteristics of sport. The literature clearly shows that mental toughness is imperative for peak sport performance. Gould, Hodge, Peterson, and Petlichkoff (1987) [9], Illiams (1998) [22], all state that mental toughness is an important psychological characteristic of sport performance. Shin and Lee (1994) explored Mental Toughness between elite and non-elite Korean female athletes. The elite athletes were more mentally tough than their non-elite counterparts, although no differences were found for arousal and attention control. Hanton and Jones (2008) reported that competitive experience was a crucial factor in the development of MT among athletes. In early work on the issue, Loehr (1982, 1986) [14, 15] emphasized that athletes and coaches felt that at least fifty percent of success is due to psychological factors that reflect mental toughness. Similarly, Gould, Hodge, Peterson, and Petlichkoff (1987) [9] emphasized that coaches feel that mental toughness is important in achieving success, while Norris (1999) has emphasized the importance of mental

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toughness in developing champion athletes. Despite widespread agreement on the importance and benefits of mental toughness and calls to identify psychological attributes that create champions, high quality research into mental toughness is limited. Therefore, we decided to take this work forward by seeing athlete as our domain of study. This study is an effort to explore the likelihood of, could be significant group differences in respect of mental toughness between inter-university and inter-college level male athletes.

Materials and Methods

Subjects

A sample of hundred (N=100) athletes, which includes fifty each, inter-university (50) and inter-college (N50) male athletes of age ranging from 18 to 25 years. All the subjects were informed about the aim and methodology up to the mark and they volunteered to contribute in this study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the subjects.

Results

Table 1: Mean values (\pm SD), standard error difference of the mean and test statistic t of Mental Toughness between Inter-University and Inter-College Level Male Athletes

Variables	Inter-College (N ₁ = 50)		Inter-University (N ₂ = 50)		Mean Difference	T-value	Sig.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Rebound Ability	3.54	1.16	4.94	0.97	1.40	6.512	0.000*
Ability To Handle Pressure	3.46	1.18	4.46	1.26	1.00	4.085	0.000*
Concentration	3.40	1.01	4.18	1.39	0.78	3.202	0.002*
Confidence	3.28	1.05	4.70	1.18	1.42	6.348	0.000*
Motivation	3.40	1.14	4.56	1.34	1.16	4.652	0.000*
Mental Toughness (Total)	17.08	2.64	22.90	3.07	5.82	10.146	0.000*

*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 presents the mean scores of inter-university and inter-college level male Athletes with regard to Mental Toughness. The inter-university level Athletes when compared to inter-college level Athletes, have exhibited significant ($p < 0.05$) differences with regard to Rebound Ability, Ability to Handle Pressure, Concentration, Confidence, Motivation and Overall Mental Toughness.

Discussion

Results of the present study showed that inter-university level athletes have exhibited statistically significant differ with regard to rebound ability, ability to handle pressure, concentration, confidence, motivation and overall mental toughness, when compared to inter-college level athletes. Present research findings are in line with the study of Singh, J. *et al.* (2012), they concluded that there were significant differences between foreigner professional footballers and Indian professional footballers on the account of rebound ability, ability to handle pressure and mental toughness (Total). Ramesh Chand Yadav (2014) also revealed in his study that mental toughness of national female volleyball players is higher than the national female kabaddi players. Rajender Singh and Rajesh Kumar (2011) [17] concluded in their study that All India intervarsity soccer players exhibited significantly differed in mental toughness than their counterpart; inter-collegiate soccer players.

Conclusion

It is concluded that statistically significant differences were found between inter-university and inter-college level athletes with regard Rebound Ability, Ability to Handle Pressure,

Methodology

For the collection of data, questionnaire method was applied. Mental toughness questionnaire developed by Goldberg (1998) [8] was applied to assess the mental toughness. The questionnaire consists of 30 items assessing the mental toughness in five different areas, i.e. rebound ability, ability to handle pressure, concentration, confidence and motivation. The answer should be only in Yes/No of this questionnaire and subjects have to mark or tick only one option. Necessary instructions were given before filling up the questionnaire and each and every question was explained to the subjects.

Statistical Analyses

Data was analyzed using SPSS Version 16.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 16.0, SPSS Inc, Chicago, IL, USA). Independent samples t-test was used to test if population means estimated by two independent samples differed significantly.

Concentration, Confidence, Motivation and Overall Mental Toughness. The result shows that inter-university level athletes had significantly greater Rebound Ability, Ability to Handle Pressure, Concentration, Confidence, Motivation and Overall Mental Toughness than inter-college level athletes.

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