
RELATIONSHIP AMONG PERSONALITY, MENTAL TOUGHNESS AND ATHLETE SATISFACTION: AN INVESTIGATION AMONG SPORTSPERSONS IN KERALA

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Abstract: The paper is a quantitative attempt to understand the inter-relationship among personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction by using the data given by active young sportspersons of the State of Kerala in India. Providing training in psychological skills along with physical training will enhance the ability of a player to perform consistently throughout the game, even in adverse circumstances. Using NEO-personality Inventory-Revised, Mental Toughness Questionnaire and Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire, the researchers collected data from one thousand male and female players throughout Kerala. The study found that the degree of inter-relationship among all three variables is varying with each other. A detailed bibliography is given at the end.

Keywords: Personality, Mental Toughness, Athlete Satisfaction, NEO-personality Inventory-Revised, Mental Toughness Questionnaire, Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Introduction: Doing sports guarantees physical and mental well being (Garcia-Falgueras, 2015). But, apart from this primary concern, sports is providing recreation and entertainment too. Over time, sports became a multibillion industry based primarily on players' performance during tournaments and other events (KPMG & CII, 2016). Such shows are demanding both physically and mentally skilled players, to begin with. But team management, administrators and coaches were equipping players to improve physical fitness only for a long time, particularly in non-developed sports nations. When the influence of psychological well-being on performance is hardly known, players are expected to mentally tough according to their physical preparedness (Asamoah, 2013). But in the last decades of the last century, ground-level experiments exposed the relevance of deliberate and exclusive training on psychological skills. The development of sports psychology helped to identify various relevant variables and their inter-relationship in the complex mechanism of players' psychological well-being. Among them, personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction of the player needs special attention.

As personality is the embodiment of one's behaviour in diverse circumstances, learning it helps to deal with him in the ground. Mental toughness is the capacity to perform consistently irrespective of the competitive atmosphere. It is the measuring rod of stress and anxiety management of players. As participation in sports activities is a voluntary act, creating satisfaction out of participation and performance is important. So that athlete satisfaction is the outcome of result oriented deliberate athletic activity. The researchers are investigating the relationship among personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction among sports persons of Kerala.

Background of the Study: Providing special attention to sports became a norm since it became an excellent symbol to carry the political representation in the international arena. The post-war period witnessed a continuous flow of funding to construct physical infrastructure to enable sports activities and practices, talented sports stars and all kinds of research activities to develop new insights and technology in the sector. By the nineties, sports became a symbol of national pride (Meier & Mutz, 2016). Parallely, the post-war period saw the entry of private investment into all fields of sports. When the sector became a profit earning and consistently growing as one of the multibillion industries, rising the entertainment value of each sport became necessary. So that improving the quality of on-the-ground performance of the player, as the base of the industry, became an urgent requirement. Demand for players with physical stamina, quick and unpredictable movements, team spirit and presence of mind increased, and talent got rewarded in lump sum figures.

Along with players, researchers who developed supporting technology and discovering helpful insights and those coaches who incorporated all-new helpful ideas and tricks for making a better player also recognised. Over time, the development of physical fitness of a player reached almost a maximum level. Hence, their attention gradually shifted to develop the player's non-physical skills to receive a competitive edge in any matches. The growth of sports psychology provided sufficient support in this regard. Creating a positive mindset and an optimistic attitude throughout any competition in any adverse circumstances is the core of this movement.

Unfortunately, the psychological skills' of players is still an untapped area in developing countries like India. The absence of international prestige by Indian players is partly due to the absence of competitive psychological skills. Pressure to win a match is increasing only according to levels of competition. Hence addressing such competitive pressure become of utmost importance. Training players to deal with such pressure and compete with optimism till the end become the primary requirement of any training process.

Statement of the Problem: A 'winning performance' is the minimum expected from a player in the present world of the sports industry. A player is not only expected to perform individually but also supposed to associate with other players in team sports. But ensuring continuous and consistent performance in the midst of growing pressure is not an easy task. The nature of sports star is in crucial examination in such a situation. The personality of fighting vigorously in adverse circumstances is closely associated with the mental toughness of the player. Bringing out the highest calibre of player results in athlete satisfaction even if the game is lost. Realising such a feeling once will instigate the player to perform more in the successive events. Thus winning personality of a player, his mental toughness and athlete satisfaction are closely associated with each other and behaving both as the cause and result of each other. So that the present paper is an attempt to identify the inter-relationship among personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction within a player.

Objectives and Research Questions: The paper is a quantitative investigation to discover the relationship among personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction among the college-going graduate students of Kerala without recognizing the differences in gender, geography and economic status. The research questions of the present paper are given below.

1. What is the level of personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction of college students of Kerala?
2. What is the degree of relationship among personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction?

It is hypothesized that there will be a significant association between every two variables among personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction among college students in Kerala.

Review of Literature: There were extensive studies on all the three variables of personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction. The literature on personality deals with many diverse aspects related to it. It includes personality effects on athletic success (Tziner, Nicola, & Rizac, 2003) and comparing personality traits between different groups of players. Researchers compared personality traits of competitive athletes between individual and team sports (Ball, Singh, & Dhesi, 2012; Jalili, Hosseini, Jalil, & Salehian, 2011), between male and female players (Karad, 2010), between athletes and non-athletes (Jalili, Hosseini, Jalil, & Salehian, 2011) and between traditional and alternative sports players (Rhea & Martin, 2010). Similarly, there were studies on the relationship between personality and life satisfaction (Patel, 2011). Personality traits were divided into extroversion, neuroticism, responsibility, flexibility and sociability. Scholars examined exclusively about them too (Weisberg, DeYoung, & Hirsh, 2011; Eagleton, Mckelvie & Man, 2007; Rogulj, Srhoj, Nazor, Srhoj, & Cavala, 2005; Wang, Marchant, Morris, & Gibbs, 2004; Heinström, 2003; Stuntz & Weiss, 2003). Personality will vary by using steroid (Perry, Kutscher, Lund, Yates, Holman, & Demers, 2003).

As the one shows the psychological edge of a player, there were many studies on the mental toughness of players in general and in particular sports like basketball (Kumar, 2016), volleyball (Khoubi, Minoei, & Fadaee, 2016), kho-kho (Kumar & Paramanik, 2016; Kumar S., 2016), track & field (Truelove, 2014), kabaddi (Nizama, 2013), football (Omar-Fauzee, Saputra, Samad, Gheimi, Asmuni, & Johar, 2012; Nizam, Omar-Fauzee, & Samah, 2009; Crust, 2007), cricket (Balaji & Jesudass, 2011; Gucciardi, 2011), rugby (Kruger, Potgieter, Malan, & Steyn, 2010) and in others. Some studies compared the mental toughness of players in different games (Singh, Thapa, Baro, & Singh, 2016; Nizama, 2013; Rawat & Bangari, 2013; Rathore, Singh, & Dubey, 2009), players in different positions in the same game (Khoubi, Minoei, & Fadaee, 2016), different age groups (Balaji & Jesudass, 2011),

gender-wise (Kumar, 2016; Kumar S., 2016; Kashani, Farokhi, Motesharee, & Mokaberian, 2011), and nationalities (Kumar & Paramanik, 2016). As a reflective act, athlete satisfaction influences athletic experience. There were investigations on the relationship between athlete satisfaction and coaches' leadership style (Nazarudin, Fauzee, Jamal, Geok, & Din, 2009) and between athlete satisfaction and athletic experience (VanSickle, 2004). There was gender comparison (Goodarzi, Rajabi, Yousefi, & Mansoor, 2008) of athlete satisfaction too.

Methods and Materials: For the study, five hundred each male and female athletes were selected from the different colleges of the University of Kerala, the University of Calicut, the University of Kannur and the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam. The age of the players ranged between 17 to 24 years, and the average age of subjects was 20.5 years. All respondents were All India Inter-University level players. The sports selected for the study were basketball, football, handball, hockey, volleyball, swimming and gymnastics. The testing variables for the study were personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction. NEO-personality Inventory-Revised (NEO PI-R), Mental Toughness Questionnaire and Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ) were used to collect the data.

The NEO PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 2008) provided a comprehensive and detailed assessment of adult personality based on the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality. The FFM is a taxonomy of personality traits in terms of five broad dimensions (the 'Big Five'), and each of the five domains of the NEO PI-R is represented by six specific scales that measure the facets of the domain: Neuroticism (Anxiety, Angry, Hostility, Depression, Self-consciousness, Impulsiveness and Vulnerability), Extroversion (Warmth, Gregariousness, Assertiveness, Activity, Excitement-seeking and Positive emotions), Agreeableness (Trust, Straightforwardness, Altruism, Modesty, Tender-mindedness, and compliance), Conscientiousness (Competence, Order, Dutifulness, Achievement Striving, Self-discipline and Deliberation) and Openness (Fantasy, Aesthetics, Feelings, Action, Ideas and Values). Mental Toughness Questionnaire (Goldberg, 2004) was divided into five sub-variables: reboundability, to deal with the ability to handle pressure, to deal with your concentration ability, to deal with your level of confidence and factors that affect confidence and to deal with motivation. The Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (Chelladurai & Riemer, 1997) is designed to measure whether an athlete is satisfied with his/her athletic experience or not. The subscales are individual performance, team performance, ability utilization, strategy, personal treatment, training and instruction, team task contribution, team social contribution, ethics, team integration, personal dedication, budget, medical personnel, academic support services and external agents. The responses were written down according to directions given in these questionnaires.

The questionnaires were administered to the athletes of various colleges in Kerala for the study by the investigator himself. The objectives of the test were explained to them, and they were asked to respond to each of the statement as truthfully as possible. As soon as they complete the test, the investigator collected the data. The athletes were assured of the confidentiality of the report. Descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation were used to know the nature of data, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to know the relationship of psychological variables such as among personality dimensions, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction.

Analysis and Findings of the Data: Here, descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation are calculated to know the general nature of the collected data, and the results are given below.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Personality, Mental Toughness and Athlete Satisfaction

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Personality	1000	146.38	9.78
Mental Toughness	1000	14.29	3.05
Athlete Satisfaction	1000	306.53	35.43

Source: Calculated Figures

As mentioned above, the total number of subjects is 1000 whereas both male and female have 500 each. The mean and standard deviation of personality is 146.38 and 9.78; mental toughness is 14.29 and 3.05; and athlete satisfaction is 306.53 and 35.43. So that, compared to personality, the tendency to deviate from the average is less in mental toughness and more in athlete satisfaction. That means the college students of Kerala do have a more or less similar score in mental toughness compared to the other two.

Karl Pearson's product-moment method is used to calculate the coefficient of correlation (r). If the ' r ' value is between 0.00 to 0.20, the relationship between variables is negligible. If it is between 0.20 to 0.40, the relationship is low, and if it is between 0.40 to 0.60, the relationship is moderate. The relationship is substantial when the value of correlation is between 0.60 to 0.80 and very high if the value is between 0.80 to 1.00. The calculated ' r ' value is compared with the ' p ' value. The details of correlation analysis in personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction in selected sportspersons are given in the following table.

Table 2: Significance of Correlation among Personality, Mental Toughness and Athlete Satisfaction in Selected Sports Persons

Athletes		Personality	Mental Toughness	Athlete Satisfaction
Personality	r	X	.164**	.064*
	p		.000	.043
Mental Toughness	r	.164**	X	.081*
	p	.000		.010
Athlete Satisfaction	r	.064*	.081*	X
	p	.043	.010	

*significant at 5% level ($p < 0.05$), **significant at 1% level ($p < 0.01$) Source: calculated figures

Table 2 indicates that the ' r ' value between personality and mental toughness is only 0.164 ($p < 0.01$). It is statistically significant and positive but a negligible correlation. So that any increase in personality score has resulted in a slight increase in mental toughness score. Similarly, the relationship between personality and athlete satisfaction is significant and positive but negligible poor correlation ($r = 0.064$, $p < 0.05$); hence increase in personality will result in a negligible increase in athlete satisfaction only. Again, the relationship between mental toughness and athlete satisfaction is statistically significant and positive but has a negligible poor correlation ($r = 0.081$, $p < 0.05$), so that any increase in mental toughness will result only in a very poor effect on athlete satisfaction.

Discussion of Hypothesis: The findings show a poor relationship between every two variables among personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction. As the respondents were less aware of the importance of psychological aspects in sports, their relationship among the selected variables is below average. The lack of psychological training is creating this lacuna. Or the respondents, even though college-going players, are not truly dedicated to having a sports career. They may do sports either for recreation or for gaining additional weightage in future career opportunities. If not, they will unconsciously be equipped with these psychological skills to a minimum level, and they will have a moderate association with each other. On the other side, both personality and athlete satisfaction has a significant level deviation from the central value, which means players are less exposed to such mental aspects that they are expected to learn to compete vigorously in the highly competitive field of sports. In general, the study exposes the fundamental faults in athletic training in the State of Kerala. So that the hypothesis that there will be a significant association between each two variables among personality, mental toughness and athlete satisfaction among college students in Kerala is accepted, but it has a negligible relationship.

Conclusion: To become a sports superpower, players should be trained in psychological training alongside physical training. As a state with more younger people than the population of several countries in the world, Kerala is still lagging behind in contributing internationally competing athletes. The absence of exposure to psychological training is a major reason for the state's poor performance considering its potential. The paper

can prove the lack of knowledge even about the primary concepts of psychological training among college-going players in the state; hence the government should give urgent attention to this neglected area if not all those legacy of sports achievements earned in the yesteryears by the state cannot be preserved for the future generations.

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