



Mental health among the athletes and non-athletes

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Abstract

This paper will highlight the Mental health and benefits for professional athletes and how Mental health can significantly enhance their performance. Mental health means ability to balance in one's daily living. In other words it is the ability to face and balance the reality of life (Bhatia, 1982). Mental health is a complex phenomenon depends on a set of familiarly personal, psychological and social variables. Mental health is as an important feature as the physical health of a person to make him complex with balance mental disposition of the children to cope with life more effectively and productively. Good mental health depends on the good state of both mind and body. Each exerts a direct influence on the other, but owing to the power of matter, good mental health is of supreme importance according to Hadfield (1952) mental health is the harmonious functioning of the whole personality. Out of four components of total health of the individual mental health is vitally important because our entire thought process takes place in mind, our all ideas originate from our mind and all kinds of directions are issued from mind which guide, shape and regulate our communication, conduct and behavior and determine our personal and social functioning as well as adjustment. Mental health is not static but it undergoes change in accordance with time and space and the pendulum of mental health continually oscillates as a continuum of optimism on the one hand and minimal on the other. Further, mental health has to be understood as different from mental disorders which represent a mental state as reflected through varied kinds of symptoms which are relatively enduring, which disrupt the social functioning and are beyond the control of the person who becomes their victim.

Keywords: mental health, physical health, athletes, non-athletes

Introduction

In modern competitive sports, psychological preparation of a team is as important as teaching them the different skills of a game with scientific methods. In these days, the teams are prepared not only to play, but to win the games. And for winning the games, it is not only the proficiency in the skills, which matters, but also the spirit and attitude of the players with which they play. The mental attitude of each individual player as well as of the team can help or hinder their performance. Most of the coaches agree that the physical characteristics, skills and training of the players are extremely important, but they also feel that good mental or psychological preparation for competition is a necessary component for success.

The aim of higher sports in this age of competition is to win in international meets or to attain peak performance in competition. And it is on this factor that the coaches try to concentrate. In order to reach the target an accomplish the social expectation; the players also work hard, ignoring their comforts in their daily lives and practice for many hours a day. Unless the players are prepared mentally and psychologically for the contest, they are not able to achieve the desired results. The psychological training has to be provided to the players by the coaches to face stressful situation occurring during the competition

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Indicators of Mental Health

Components of mental health are revealed by various authors in terms of indicators, criteria, characteristics etc. Here we are enumerating the various indicators given by Maslow and Mittelmann, Schultz, Park and Park, Johnson, Bhargava Singh, Shargava and Bhargava.

Maslow and Mittelmann (1951) have suggested the following criteria for normal psychological health

- Adequate feeling of security
- Adequate self-evaluation
- Adequate spontaneity and emotionality
- Efficient contact with reality
- Adequate bodily desires and the ability to gratify them
- Adequate self knowledge
- Integration and consistency of personality
- Adequate life goals
- Ability to learn from experience

- Ability to satisfy the requirements of the group
- Adequate emancipation from the group or culture
- Schultz (1977) has noted seven criteria of mental health
- Extension of the sense of self
- Warm relationship with self to others
- Emotional security
- Realistic perception
- Skills and assignments
- Self-objectification
- Unifying philosophy of life

Statement of the Problem

To measure and compare the level of Mental Health among the Athletes and Non-athletes

Significance and Relevance of the Study

The importance of this study may be summarized in the following manner

- This would enable them to understand and to know the level of psychological strengths and weaknesses of athletes with respect to their participation in different sports.
- To know the extent of help in providing guideline to physical education teachers and coaches for selecting and preparing players for their psychological makeup.
- To know the complex of physical, intellectual, emotional and social developmental patterns and success in sport is an integral part of this pattern. Thus, an understanding of behavior in sport will aid us in helping people to better fulfill their lives.
- To study the important factors for future selection and coaching of sportsmen for national and international events.
- To study the most important aspect of sport- a means of promoting interpersonal, national and international understanding. It would provide clue whether sports are truly fulfilling this much-publicized purpose or the differences in their mental health status are defeating the fundamental purpose of sports promotion.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the level of Mental Health between the Athletes and Non-athletes.
- To understand the differences in the Mental Health between Athletes and Non-athletes.

Hypothesis of the Study

- There would be significant difference between in the Mental Health level of Athletes and Non-athletes.

Sample

Keeping the objectives in view, appropriate research design is adopted. The sample for the study is drawn from the Athletes and Non-athletes. 30 Athletes and 30 Non-Athletes were administered Mental Health scale to assess the differences in their Mental Health. The sample design is as under.

Tools

1. Personal Data Schedule: This is framed to collect information regarding the personal and socio demographic status of the sample.

2. Mental Health scale developed by Dr. Jagadish and Dr. A. K. Srivastava was used in the present study. The inventory contains 54 questions. The responses are scored with the help of manual.

Collection of Data

The data were collected from the Athletes and Non-athletes who were administered the Mental Health scale during the sports competitions.

Statistical Analysis

The t-test was used to assess the significant differences of Mental Health between Athletes and Non-athletes.

Table 1: Mental Health Level of Athletes and Non-Athletes

Players	M	SD	t-value
Athletes	159.76	10.08	2.44*
Non-Athletes	153.23	10.27	

*significant at 0.05 level

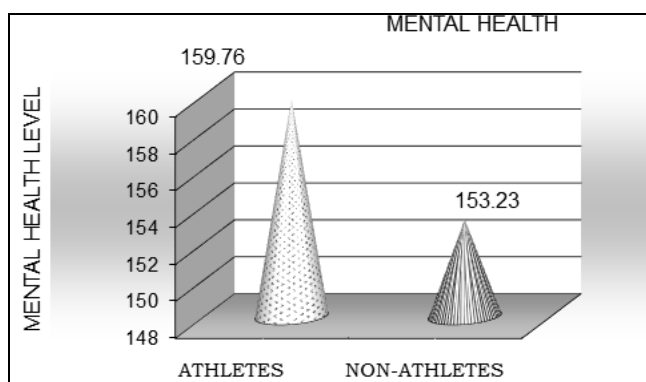


Fig 1

Table no. 1 and Figure shows the mean, SD and t-value of Athletes and Non Athletes in relation to their level of mental health. The Mean and SD of Athletes is 159.76 and 10.08 respectively and the mean and SD of Non- Athletes is 153.23 and 10.27 respectively.

The mean score of Athletes is higher than the Non- Athletes. It shows that the Athletes have high mental health and Non-Athletes have low mental health.

Because Athletes involves in sports and physical activity that may represent resources, that do not only contribute to an increased well-being, but also to an improved self concept as a cognitive representation of Athlete’s mental health-status. When t-value was applied to know the significant difference it was found that obtained t-value is 2.44, which is significant at 0.05 level.

Summary

Mental Health is proved to be a key factor in sports and games. The achievements in games and sports in possible when the players are mentally fit. Similarly, Mental Health level is a psychological factor that influences the performance. The objectives of the study are to measure and compare the level of mental health between the Athletes and Non-athletes. Hence the Athletes and Non-athletes were selected and the Mental Health Inventory is administered on the subjects. The results of the study are analyzed and the following conclusions were drawn.

Conclusions

The Athletes have high mental health and Non- Athletes have low mental health.

Recommendations

The experience of the present investigator during the period of this study as well as the findings of the present study may serve as a guideline for the researcher in the field of physical education and sports.

- The findings of the present study can be utilized by the HRD (Human Resource Development) experts and Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, and Sport Councils while formulating the policies and implementing the same at all levels.
- Cross sectional studies need to be conducted at the inter-university, regional and national levels.
- Large sample need to be taken for the effective generalizations about the findings of the study.
- Studies at the macro level have to be conducted at college levels to study the profile of the players.
- Studies should be conducted on different age groups.
- Comparative study among athletes and non-athletes should be conducted.
- There is a need to conduct further research on other variables like anxiety, cognitive competence, extraversion, neuroticism and attitude of sportsmen.
- The demographic factors like sex, level of education and their rural and urban background need to be considered by the future research studies.
- Results of study are capable of strengthening athletic performance in the form of 'sports package' to be used by coaches and trainers in the field of physical education and sports science.

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