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COMPARATIVE STUDY ON PERSONALITY AMONGST ATHLETES OF INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SPORTS

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ABSTRACT

Objective of the study is to assess the mental toughness level of the archers and shooter and to compare the mental toughness level between the two sports athletes i.e., archers and shooters. **Methods:** For the purpose of the study two hundred forty eight (248) athletes participate in individual sports (124) and athletes participate in team sports (124) were selected from various parts of India i.e., (R.G.U) Itanagar, Amritsar, Pune, Delhi, Guwahati, Chennai, Imphal, Shillong and Kohima were selected for the purpose of the study. The age of the athletes were ranged from 21 to 29 years. And to assess the personality of the athletes the Big Five Inventory Questionnaire by John, O. P. and Srivastava, S. (1999) used. The descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, std. error mean etc. was used and for the comparison between the two groups on the factor of personality the independent "t-test" was used.

Results: The mean and standard deviation of the factors of personality for individual and team sports are Extraversion (24.53 ± 4.26) and (26.41 ± 4.28), Agreeableness (29.98 ± 5.47) and (31.06 ± 5.13), Conscientiousness (29.11 ± 5.14) and (29.42 ± 5.23), Neuroticism (23.81 ± 4.71) and (24.00 ± 4.70), and Openness (31.36 ± 4.78) and (34.83 ± 5.22) respectively. The "t-test" results depicts that out of all the selected factors there exists a significant difference in Extraversion ($p = .001$), and Openness ($p = .000$) as the obtain p values were less than 0.05 ($p = .05$). This implies that in spite of similarities in nature of sports events there exists differences, or there are special requirements for participation in these sports. The existence of similarities in between individual and team sports is prevalent in Agreeableness ($p = .107$), Conscientiousness ($p = .642$) and Neuroticism ($p = .746$), as their obtained p values were less than 0.05 ($p = .05$).

Conclusion: The present study shows that team sports athletes are bit better in extraversion and openness than individual sports athletes and rest of the factors of personality are similar. It must be noted that the present research was solely a comparison in nature and that future studies would be needed to assess how athletes actually interpret behavior in competitive sports situations. Again additional research is needed to find out the real reason of similarities and difference exists in the present study. And elaboration of this information could be potentially useful to coaches and athletes in order to optimize the experience of participants in sport and exercise activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Previous research on psychological aspects and comparison of individual sports and team sport is rather limited. If the body is strong but the mind is weak, all physical gains are lost (Austin *et al.*, 2012). But some studies stated that stay motivated and setting a strong goals and targets is necessary for all the athletes and are contributing for prediction of performance for

athletes (Wielinga *et al.*, 2011). "Characteristics of great athletes: ruggedness, courage, intelligence, exuberance, buoyancies, emotional adjustment, optimism, conscientiousness, alertness, loyalty and respect for authority". Successful athletes did indeed possess more positive mental health characteristics and fewer negative mental health characteristics than the general population.

Successful athletes were above the waterline (population norm) on vigor, but below the surface on the more negative moods of tension, depression, anger, fatigue and confusion. But little evidence exists to support the existence of a given athletic personality type, a personality profile that separates elite athletes from the rest of athletes or specific personality types associated with specific activities (Gill, 1986). Kleianthous (2013) state that it is impossible to be successful in any sport without the correct mental attitude. Galloway (2012) stated that factors such as course difficulty, training volume, age and gender, personality trait are widely accepted for determining success in most of the sports. Mental fitness as well as physical and technical aspects developed the attention of athletes. Factors such as motivation, will power, concentration, anxiety and determination have a decisive influence on developing profile for elite athletes (Wielinga *et al.*, 2011).

Merriman (1960) study indicated that motor ability is related to personality traits. The accuracy for coaches in individual sports was higher than coaches in team sports. And the dynamics of the interaction between a coach and an athlete play a key role in how accurately they perceive each other (Lorimer. and Jowett., 2009). O'Sullivan *et al.* (1998) studied on male's college teams of baseball and football, and female teams of field hockey and lacrosse (combined) and equestrians, and the results indicated that there were significantly higher on the activity and lower on the Neuroticism-Anxiety scales than the general college population of the University of Delaware. And there was a significant difference between the two groups (individual and team sports) in terms of psychological skills and motivation of athletic success but there wasn't a significant difference between the two groups (individual and team sports) with respect to overall emotional intelligence (Kajbafnezhad *et al.*, 2011). Extraversion and neuroticism were significant predictors of happiness, leisure satisfaction had its incremental effects after

those of personality traits and other domain satisfaction were controlled (Lu and Hu., 2005). The women athletes who compete in individual sports rated higher on the personality factors of dominance, adventurousness, sensitivity, introversion, radicalism, and self-sufficiency and lower on the factor of sophistication when compared to women athletes who compete in team sports. No differences were found in the factors of sociability, intelligence, stability, surgency, conscientiousness, suspecting, guilt-proneness, high self-sentiment, or high ergic tension (Peterson *et al.*, 1967). Hays *et al.* (2007) studied on successful world class athletes to identified sources of confidence Gender was related to both the sources of confidence and the subsequent types of confidence experienced by the athletes. For example, females placed more importance on good personal performances than males who derived confidence from winning. Results were discussed in the context of previous sport confidence literature and implications for sport psychology and coaching practices were drawn.

The extraverted athletes, who were also emotionally stable and open to new experiences, reported a greater use of problem-focused coping strategies. Conscientious athletes, and athletes displaying high levels of extraversion, openness, and agreeableness, reported a greater use of emotion-focused coping strategies, and athletes with low levels of openness, or high levels of neuroticism, reported a greater use of avoidance coping strategies. Different personality characteristics were observed between higher-level and lower-level athletes, between men and women athletes, and between individual and team sport athletes. The five-factor model of personality can help distinguish various levels of athletic involvement or participation in sports (Allen *et al.*, 2011). So the researcher wants to assess the types of personality of Indian individual and team sports and to check whether both sports having similar characteristics of personality.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of individual and team sports on personality

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Extraversion	Individual sport	124	24.53	4.26	.38
	team sport	124	26.41	4.28	.38
Agreeableness	Individual sport	124	29.98	5.47	.49
	team sport	124	31.06	5.13	.46
Conscientiousness	Individual sport	124	29.11	5.14	.46
	team sport	124	29.42	5.23	.47
Neuroticism	Individual sport	124	23.81	4.71	.42
	team sport	124	24.00	4.70	.42
Openness	Individual sport	124	31.36	4.78	.43
	team sport	124	34.83	5.22	.47

The mean and standard deviation of the factors of personality for individual and team sports are Extraversion (24.53 ± 4.26) and (26.41 ± 4.28), Agreeableness (29.98 ± 5.47) and (31.06 ± 5.13), Conscientiousness (29.11 ± 5.14) and (29.42 ± 5.23), Neuroticism (23.81 ± 4.71) and (24.00 ± 4.70), and Openness (31.36 ± 4.78) and (34.83 ± 5.22).

Table 2. Comparison between individual and team sports on personality by applying "t-test"

	df	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
				F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Extraversion	246	-1.87903	.54227	.490	.485	-3.465	.001*
Agreeableness	246	-1.08871	.67350	.671	.414	-1.616	.107
Conscientiousness	246	-.30645	.65855	.430	.512	-.465	.642
Neuroticism	246	-.19355	.59741	.004	.952	-.324	.746
Openness	246	-3.46774	.63552	1.513	.220	-5.457	.000*

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

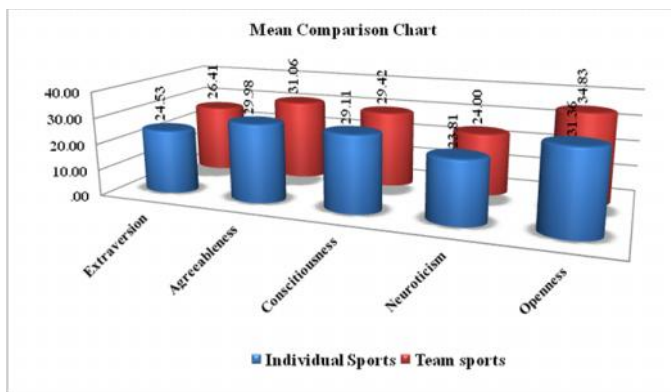


Figure 1. The mean comparison chart between individual and team sports on personality

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study two hundred forty eight (248) athletes participate in individual sports (124) includes swimming, triathlon, athletic, judo, badminton, tennis, gymnastic, shooting, archery, cycling, weight lifting and athletes participate in team sports (124) includes football, hockey, volleyball, basketball, handball, water polo, cricket were selected from various parts of India i.e., (R.G.U) Itanagar, Amritsar, Pune, Delhi, Guwahati, Chennai, Imphal, Shillong and Kohima were selected for the purpose of the study. The age of the athletes were ranged from 21 to 29 years. And to assess the personality of the athletes the Big Five Inventory Questionnaire by John, O. P. and Srivastava, S. (1999) used. The descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, std. error mean etc. was used and for the comparison between the two groups on the factor of personality the independent “*t-test*” was used.

RESULTS

Table 2 depicts that out of all the selected factors there exists a significant difference in Extraversion ($p = .001$), and Openness ($p = .000$) as the obtain p values were less than 0.05 ($p < .05$). This implies that in spite of similarities in nature of sports events there exists differences, or there are special requirements for participation in these sports. The existence of similarities in between individual and team sports is prevalent in Agreeableness ($p = .107$), Conscientiousness ($p = .642$) and Neuroticism ($p = .746$), as their obtained p values were less than 0.05 ($p < .05$).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Training and competition are two important contexts within the sport domain. Athletes in both individual and team sports types reported higher ego orientation in competition than in training, but did not differ in task orientation. Task orientation predicted effort positively in training. However, in competition, this goal predicted effort positively only in individual sport athletes who had low ego orientation. Task orientation also predicted enjoyment positively in both contexts; however, in competition this prediction was significantly stronger in individual than in team sport athletes (Van de Pol and Kavussanu, 2012). Darden (1972) studied on personality profiles of competitive bodybuilders and weightlifters and the groups indicated very similar personality

and quite average or normal in their personality profiles. Nia and Besharat (2010) individual sport athletes scored significantly higher on conscientiousness and autonomy than did team sport athletes. The team sport athletes scored significantly higher on agreeableness than did the individual sport athletes. No significant difference was found between the two groups on neuroticism, extraversion, and openness. Similarly in the present study there is no significant difference between the individual and team sports on agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism. Colley *et al.*, (1985) in their findings indicate that male sports participants were higher on extraversion and masculinity than nonparticipants. Female noncompetitive individual sports participants were lower on extraversion than competitive female participants, suggesting that extraverts are attracted to the competitive aspects of sport. The team participants scored higher on Extraversion than both individual sport participants and nonparticipants (Eagleton *et al.*, 2007). And similarly in the present study also shows the individual sports athletes scored less in extraversion and openness. Nia and Besharat (2010) study also support the present study that athletes’ personality characteristics are different for individual and team sports.

Conclusion

The present study shows that team sports athletes are bit better in extraversion and openness than individual sports athletes and rest of the factors of personality are similar. It must be noted that the present research was solely a comparison in nature and that future studies would be needed to assess how athletes actually interpret behavior in competitive sports situations. Again additional research is needed to find out the real reason of similarities and difference exists in the present study. And elaboration of this information could be potentially useful to coaches and athletes in order to optimize the experience of participants in sport and exercise activities.

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