



Research article

MENTAL TOUGHNESS AMONG INTER COLLEGE PLAYERS IN RELATION TO GENDER

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to find the mental toughness level between male and female players. For the present research work a sample of 50 male sports persons and 50 female sports women were taken from different sports events from Mansa district, Punjab. Mental toughness was assessed using the Sport Mental Toughness questionnaire. To find out the differences between male and female t- test was used. Results: No significant difference exists on the variable of confidence, constancy and control between male and female player. The results also reveal that there was no significant difference exists between male and female players regarding mental toughness.

Keywords: *Mental toughness, confidence, constancy, control.*

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INTRODUCTION

Every top sportsperson knows that their best performances come from their mind as much as from their body. Top sports persons today understand that winning goes far beyond just technique and encourage a new attribute known as the 'psychology of winning' which includes mental skill development to counter any situation. There's a thin line that exists between mentally-strong

sporting success and under-pressure failure.

The determining factor between a good athlete and a great athlete can come down to the quality and extent of their psychological preparation and how well these athletes apply their skills during high pressure game situations. Gucciardi, Gordon, and Dimmock (2009) use the concept 'Mental Toughness' as an

umbrella term for athletes who are considered to possess superior mental characteristics and they believe that it is the mental game that will differentiate the performers. It can be simply put that “Mental Toughness sets apart good and great athletes when physical, technical and tactical skills are equal”.

The quest for excellence in sport embraces the continuing development of four key aspects of performance, namely physical, technical, tactical, and mental skills. However, when physical, technical, and tactical skills are equally matched, which commonly occurs in competition especially at the highest level, performers who possess more of what is commonly referred to as “mental toughness” appear to dominate more often than those with less mental toughness.

Jones Graham (2002) defined mental toughness as “the natural or developed psychological edge that enables you to generally cope better than your opponents with the many demands that sport places on a performer. Specifically, be more consistent and better than your opponents in remaining determined, focused, confident, and in control under pressure”. Jones views mental toughness as a defining trait in which “people who become champions aren’t necessarily more gifted than others; they’re just masters at managing pressure, tackling goals, and driving themselves to stay ahead of the competition”

Some of the characteristics that are evident when a player is mentally tough include: Self-confidence, Self-motivation, Focus, Concentration, Composure, Calmness, Poise, Self-

control, Positive Energy, Determination, Persistence and Leadership

Thelwell et.al. (2005) and Jones Graham (2002) concluded following attributes for mentally tough athlete

(a) Having self-belief in one’s ability to achieve goals.

(b) Being able to recover from set backs and having an extra determination to succeed.

(c) Having a high amount of self belief that one has better abilities and more qualities than their opponents.

(d) Having a high amount of motivation and desire to succeed.

(e) Being fully-focused on the task even when there are distractions.

(f) Having the ability to regain psychological control following uncontrollable events.

(g) Having the ability to overcome emotional and physical pain.

(h) Being able to accept and cope with the anxiety experienced in competition.

(i) Thriving on pressure.

(j) Having the ability to not be affected by good or bad performances.

(k) Having the ability to remain fully focused even in the face of distraction.

(l) The ability to switch the focus on your sport on and off.

AIM OF THE STUDY: The purpose of this study is to find the mental toughness level between male and female players at intercollegiate level of Mansa District.

METHOD AND MATERIALS

Sample- For present research work a sample of 50 male sports persons and 50 female sports persons of inter college level was taken randomly from all games

and sports events. The subjects were selected randomly from Mansa District, Punjab.

Tools

Mental toughness was assessed using the Sport Mental Toughness questionnaire (SMTQ) (Sheard, Golby&Wersch,¹ 2009). The SMTQ is a 14-item self-report questionnaire for the assessment of mental toughness in sport. The SMTQ responses are rated on a 4-point likert scale with responses ranging from Very true(A) to not at all true(D). The SMTQ also contains 3 subscales: Confidence (6 items) represent question-1, 5, 6, 11, 13 and 14. Constancy (4 items) represent question-3,8,10 and 12. Control (4 items)represent question-2,4,7 and 9.

Administration of Test

Questionnaire schedule was distributed among sports persons and the purpose of the test was explained to the sports persons. Any difficulty in filling the questionnaire was sought out, the

scoring pattern was explained to the sports persons. After completing the test the questionnaire schedules were collected for scoring.

Scoring

Scoring was done by using the 4 point scale showing mental toughness level among sports persons. Items 1 to 8 were positively scored i.e. A=4, B=3, C=2 and D=1 and items 9 to 14 were reverse scored i.e. A=1, B=2,C=3 and D=4. Scores range between 14-56 with higher scores indicating higher levels of mental toughness. Each questionnaire was tabulated into three categories (a) Confidence (b) Constancy (c) Control. Scores range between 14-56 with higher scores indicating higher levels of mental toughness.

Statistical Analysis –

To find out the differences between male and female t- test was used Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

TABLE-I

	Male			Female			
	Mean	SD	S.E _m	Mean	SD	S.E _m	t-value
Confidence	16.5	5.28	0.75	15.7	4.94	0.7	0.8606
Constancy	10.9	3.51	0.5	10.8	2.86	0.41	0.1247
Control	11.6	2.70	0.36	12.2	2.58	0.37	1.13426
Total	39	7.23	1.02	38.6	5.37	0.76	0.283

$P < 0.5$

The above table1 indicates male sports persons have more confidence than female players having mean value of 16.5.10 and 15.7 respectively, But this difference does not make a difference statistically showing non significant t-

value 0.8606 at $p < 0.05$. The results reveals that male sports persons shows more confidence the reason being more expose to social environment than female counter parts. The results of Crust, L, and

Keegan, R (2010) supports the above study.

Another component of mental toughness is constancy in this component male shows slightly more mean value of 10.9 than female counterparts having mean value of 10.8 indicating non significant t-value 0.1247, The findings of Sheard Michael et.al (2009) also reveals that male and female sports person shows no statically difference in constancy, the mild higher mean value of male shows that male being more emotional stable than female counterparts.

Evident from control shows that female sports persons show more mean value of 12.2 as compared to male sports persons showing mean value of 11.6 showing non significant t-value of 1.1342 at $p < 0.05$. The results reveal that female sports persons had more control over their emotions as compared to male counterparts. Zeiger JS and Zeiger RS (2018) had shown in their studies lower levels of self-esteem in females and confidence and control as compared to male sports persons their findings does not corresponds with the present study,

The score in total mental toughness reveals that males indicates

more mean value of 39 than female players showing mean value of 38.6 indicating non-significant t-value of 0.283. The investigation done by BahariFahimeh et.al(2016) and KalkavanArslan et.al.(2017) corresponds with the above results. The results indicates that male players were more mentally tough then female players the reason being natural instincts and social environment. From the above data it is clear that inter college level male and female sports persons possess moderate mental toughness.

Conclusion From the above study following conclusion were drawn.

1. The result reveals that no significant differences exist on confidence between male and female players.
2. The result also reveals that no significant differences exist on constancy between male and female players.
3. The result also reveals that no significant differences exist on control between male and female players.
4. The result also reveals that no significant differences exist on mental toughness between male and female players.

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