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A Study on Homogeneity of Selected Psychological Performance Traits among Men Football Teams at Different Levels

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Abstract

The present study is meant to study the homogeneity of selected psychological performance traits among men football players at different levels, examine the psychological traits in school and university-level football players and also aimed to compare the psychological traits of the players of a team according to three positions i.e. defence, mid-fielder and forward. The investigator had collected data from school-level and university level football players with the help of standardized tools for mental health, self-efficacy, and sports emotions. The data was interpreted with independent t-test of inferential statistical technique. The findings revealed that the psychological performance traits of school and university-level football players differ significantly from each other. The psychological performance traits of school and university-level football players forward and defense position players does not differ significantly from each other. Whereas the psychological trait of self-efficacy of school and university-level football team forward position players differ significantly from each other, the psychological performance traits of school and university-level football player's mid-field players do not differ significantly from each other. The result highlights the need for improving player's psychological traits. The study contribute to the existing literature on the homogeneity of psychological performance traits in the field of sports, specifically football and serve as a basis for policy recommendations and strategies to promote better well-being for football players, ultimately enhancing performance.

Keywords: Football players, mental health, self-efficacy, sport emotions, sports performance

Introduction

Psychological traits are the characteristics and qualities that influence an individual's ability to perform optimally in various tasks and activities. These traits encompass a wide range of psychological factors that contribute to an individual's overall performance and success. Individuals with positive psychological performance traits exhibit mental toughness, perseverance, and a positive mindset, enabling them to maintain focus and motivation even in the face of adversity. These traits allow them to take risks, face new challenges, and perform at their best, as they trust in their skills and judgment. Further, emotional intelligence is an essential trait for psychological performance.

The present study is based on two factors i.e. homogeneity and psychological performance traits. Homogeneity can be described as uniformity in nature or character or attributes of individuals of the team, in sports, homogeneity is the absence of diversity among players, coaches, and teams regarding color, ethnicity, gender, or other traits. Psychological performance traits are specific parameters or characteristics of the individual which define the behaviors and thinking pattern when exposed to social practices, Therefore, with the characteristics of psychological performance, we understand that when an individual carries out a task, the behaviors and

thought patterns of the individual play an essential role for athletes and thus can set the limits of their performance apart from physical abilities, so it becomes essential to understand the patterns of these individuals who are considered to be performing at various levels of the game.

Psychological performance attributes play crucial roles in sports, often determining the difference between victory and defeat. Sports emotions, mental health, and self-efficacy are intrinsically linked to the sports performance of athletes. Athletes who excel in their mental game possess a set of traits that enhance their performance on the field. Mental health is a critical psychological attribute in sports. Self-efficacy holds significant relevance in the world of football and can greatly influence the performance and success of players. High levels of self-efficacy in football players can have several positive effects. Players with strong self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to set challenging goals and persist in the face of obstacles.

Emotions have a significant impact on football players, influencing their mindset, performance, and overall experience. Players who effectively manage their emotions can optimize their performance, maintain mental resilience, and enhance their overall well-being in the dynamic and emotionally charged world of football.

Review of Related Literature

Cindy Chang *et al.* (2018): Examined the Problems with mental health and athletes' psychological make-up: recognition, intervention, effects on performance, and prevention The American Medical Society for Sports Medicine put together a team of specialists to create an evidence-based, best practices guideline to assist sports medicine practitioners and other members of the athletic care network in identifying, treating, and preventing mental health issues in competitive athletes. In order to give players comprehensive psychological care, the members of the sports medicine team including team doctors, athletic trainers, and mental health specialists work together. The focus is on athletes' psychological makeup, including personality disorders and their psychological responses to illness and injury. The declaration addresses external factors like gender and athletic culture as well.

Karin Moesch *et al.* (2018): The findings showed that professional athletes have an approximately comparable risk of high-prevalence mental disorders (such anxiety and depression) as the general population. Other areas of mental health (such as eating disorders, substance abuse, stress, and coping) have inconsistent evidence. Furthermore, there is a shortage of intervention-based research on this topic. There is a lack of thorough, high-quality studies on professional athletes' mental health and wellness.

Rui Biscaia (2011): Examined how spectators feelings, levels of enjoyment, and behaviour intentions are related to football games. The sport emotion questionnaire was used to gauge the audience's feelings, and the results of a structural equation model indicate that specific emotions must be thoroughly investigated in order to comprehend the audience's reactions. The results show that only the sensation of pleasure has both a positive direct effect on contentment and a satisfying indirect effect on behaviour intentions. In a similar vein, satisfaction has a favorable effect on conduct intentions while dejection has a direct negative effect. These results have managerial ramifications, such as the need to improve social facilitation and the stadium atmosphere to provide spectators with a satisfactory overall experience that will support positive behavioural intentions.

Campo, M. *et al.* (2012) ^[9]: Understood that how emotional factors affect performance in team contact sports. The cognitive motivational relational theory of Lazarus (1999) provided a framework for considering the complete spectrum of emotions. Due to the competitive nature of team contact sports, anxiety and wrath were the most frequently reported emotions. Group dynamics had a significant influence on emotional experiences. According to the author, the need to develop emotion-specific management mechanisms and increase awareness of the emotional experience in team contact sports is emphasized.

Campo, M. *et al.* (2019) ^[17]: The study was to examine how identity mechanisms impact assessment processes in light of the following studies: Does the level of self-abstraction low (personal identity) vs. high (social identity) affect group-based emotion and performance? The findings were high levels of self-abstraction were linked to: more positive and less negative individual emotions; a lower correlation between team-referent and individual emotions; and better team and individual performances (explained variances: 50% and 19%). Once the potential effects of the degree of self-abstraction were taken into consideration, only positive team-referent emotions had an effect on performance.

Blake & Rust (2002): Examined the relationships between college students' self-efficacy and academic and physical impairment. There was a positive and significant correlation between general and social self-efficacy and collective, membership, and public self-esteem. The outcomes demonstrated that the scores were equivalent to the scores from the normative sample. Because of this, even while self-esteem and self-efficacy were closely associated to one another, the presence of a disability had minimal effect on either of them.

Theoretical Background of the Study

Understanding the psychological traits of footballers can help in optimizing their performance on the field. Factors such as motivation, confidence, concentration, resilience, and decision-making abilities can significantly impact a player's performance. By studying the psychological traits of footballers, researchers can identify risk factors for mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and burnout. This knowledge can help develop interventions to support the mental well-being of footballers and promote a healthier and more sustainable sporting environment.

Overall, studying the psychological traits of a footballer is essential for optimizing performance, promoting mental well-being, facilitating player development, improving team dynamics, and enhancing talent identification processes. By gaining a deeper understanding of the psychological aspects of the sport, stakeholders in football can make informed decisions and implement evidence-based strategies to support the holistic development of players. Certain factors, such as aggression, calmatives, and performance pressure, contribute to foul play. As a result, the individual and the team suffer in performance at various levels of the game. Therefore, working on these factors from the grassroots level becomes necessary using psychological conditioning.

Research Objectives

The study investigates the following objectives:

- i). To compare the sports emotions, self-efficacy, mental health of football players between school and university level.
- ii). To compare the sports emotions, self-efficacy and mental health of football players of forward position players between school and university level.
- iii). To compare the sports emotions, self-efficacy and mental health of football players of mid-field position players between school and university level.
- iv). To compare the sports emotions, self-efficacy, mental health of football players of defence position players between school and university level.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study can be understood from the following:

- i). The study may be helpful to understand the selected psychological variables among the football players at different levels.
- ii). The study may also be helpful to understand the self-efficacy, mental health and sports emotions among the football players at different levels.
- iii). The results of the study may also be useful for coaches and athletes to understand the impact of psychological variables among players.
- iv). The results of the study may also be useful to develop the psychological training program for footballers.

v). The study may also be useful to the players, physical educations teachers and researchers to understand the performance at different levels and the result of the study may further help to promote mental training programme.

Research Methodology

For the purpose of study, a total of 34 subjects (Football Players) were selected from Sports School Bathinda and Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. The age group of the subjects at school level was ranged between 12-18 years and the subjects at university level were ranged between 21-27 years.

On the basis of availability of literature and consultation with the experts/coaches of in the field of motor fitness and psychological variables tests, feasibility analysis as to which of the variables were taken for the investigation. Keeping in view about the availability of tools, acceptability to the subjects and the legitimate time that were devoted for tools and to keep the entire study unitary and integrated, the following variables were selected:

- i). Sports emotions
- ii). Self-efficacy
- iii). Mental Health

Table 1: Showing Motor Fitness Variables, Tests and Unit of Measurements.

Variables	Tools	Unit of Measurement
Sports emotions	Sports emotion questionnaire developed by Marc V. Jones, Andrew M. Lane, Steven R. Bray, Mark Uphill, James Catlin (2012).	Five point Likert scale is used and score recorded in numerical form.
Self-efficacy	Generalised Self-Efficacy scale developed by R. Schwarzer and M. Jerusalem (1995).	Four point Likert scale is used and score recorded in numerical form.
Mental Health	Trier Personality Inventory developed by Peter Becker (1989).	Four point Likert scale is used and score recorded in numerical form.

Table 2: Showing the variable description and scoring procedure.

Variable	Description	Scoring Procedure
Sports Emotion	This tool consists of 22 items which cover the mentioned dimensions as anxiety, dejection, excitement, anger and happiness. Along which 14 items are negative and 8 items are positive.	The positive items are scored 4 for extremely, 3 for quite a bit, 2 for moderately, 1 for a little and 0 for not at all. Scoring of all the negative statements is done in a reverse manner, i.e. 0 for extremely, 1 for quite a bit, 2 for moderately, 3 for a little and 4 for not at all.
Self-efficacy	This tool consists of 10 items which will cover dimensions as mentioned, emotion, optimism, work-satisfaction, depression, stress, burn-out, and anxiety.	The items are scored as 4 for exactly true, 3 for moderately true, 2 for hardly true, and 1 for not at all true.
Mental Health	This tool consists of 20 items where 8 items are negative and 12 items are positive.	The positive items are scored 4 for always, 3 for often, 2 for sometimes, and 1 for never. Scoring of all the negative statements is done in a reverse manner, i.e. 1 for always, 2 for often, 3 for sometimes, and 4 for never.

Analysis and Interpretation

To compare the football players between the school and university level teams, with the Independent t-test was used at the level of significance 0.05.

Table 3: Showing independent t-test table for the sports emotions of football players between the school and university level footballers.

Level of player's	N	M	σ	SED	df	t
School	17	64.94	10.17	4.02	32	2.70
University	17	54.06	13.11			

The above analysis of table no. 3 reveals that the mean scores of the school and university level students on sports emotion are found to be 64.941 and 54.06 respectively, whereas the standard deviation values are 10.17 and 13.11 respectively. When the mean scores were subjected to testing of their significance of differences, the calculated 't' ratio is found to be 2.70.

The analysis of the result revealed that the calculated 't' ratio is greater than the critical 't' ratio with degrees of freedom (32, 2) i.e. 2.04 at 0.05 level significance. Therefore, it can be interpreted that there exists a significant difference in sports emotions of players belonging to the school and the university level. Hence, there is a significant difference in the sports emotions of football players between the school and university level teams. It can also be interpreted that school level players have greater sports emotions score as compared to university level players.

Table 4: Showing independent t-test table for the self-efficacy of football players between the school and university level footballers.

Level of player's	N	M	σ	SED	df	t
School	17	35.7	2.14	1.32	32	3.87
University	17	30.58	5.04			

The above table no. 4 reveals that the mean scores of the school and university level students on self-efficacy are found to be 35.7 and 30.58 respectively, whereas the standard deviation values are 2.14 and 5.04 respectively. When the mean scores of school and university level players were subjected to testing of their significance of differences, the calculated 't' ratio is found to be 3.87. The analysis of the result revealed that the calculated 't' ratio is greater than the critical 't' ratio with degrees of freedom (32, 2) i.e. 2.04 at 0.05 level significance.

Therefore, it can be interpreted that there exists a significant difference in self-efficacy of players belonging to the school and the university level. Hence, there is a significant difference in the self-efficacy of football players between the school and university level teams based on examining the mean scores. It can also be interpreted that school level players have greater self-efficacy mean score as compared to university level players.

Table 5: Showing independent t-test table for the mental health of football players between the school and university level footballers.

Level of player's	N	M	σ	SED	df	t
School	17	61.35	4.94	1.98	32	2.68
University	17	56.06	6.50			

The above analysis of table no. 5 reveals that the mean scores of the school and university level students on mental health are found to be 61.35 and 56.06 respectively, whereas the

standard deviation values are 4.94 and 6.50 respectively. When the mean scores of subjected were testing their significance of differences, the calculated 't' ratio is found to be 2.68. The analysis of the result revealed that the calculated 't' ratio is greater than the critical 't' ratio with degrees of freedom (32, 2) i.e. 2.04 at 0.05 level significance.

Therefore, it can be interpreted that there exists a significant difference in mental health of players belonging to the school level and the university level. Hence, there is a significant difference in the mental health of football players between the school and university level footballers. It can also be interpreted that school level players have greater mental health score as compared to university level football players.

Discussion of Findings

On the careful analysis and interpretation of the objectives of the study, the investigator arrives at the following findings:

- i). The psychological performance traits (sports emotions, self-efficacy and mental health) of school level and university level football players differ significantly from each other. This difference was found due to the reason that sports schools is completely based upon the playing activities and the students which are studying in the university has broader approach of living and playing.
- ii). The psychological performance traits (sports emotions and mental health) of school level and university level footballers i.e. forward position players does not differ significantly from each other. Whereas the psychological trait of self-efficacy of school level and university level footballers playing in forward position differ significantly from each other. This happens because of the reason that schools level footballers have developed more confidence in the field of sports in comparison to university level players.
- iii). The psychological performance traits (sports emotions, self-efficacy and mental health) of school level and university level footballers playing in mid-field positions does not differ significantly from each other. The results occurred due to the reason that the approach and nature of mid-fielders is completely difference in terms of behaviour and other psychological variables.
- iv). The psychological performance trait (sports emotions and mental health) of school level and university level footballers playing in defence does not differ significantly from each other. Whereas the psychological trait of self-efficacy of school level and university level footballers playing in defence positions differ significantly from each other. The results may be differ due to the reason that the defence playing positions required more self-efficacy and they should have better and strong mental health.

Recommendations and Conclusion

In view of the results of the present study, the investigator lays down that a similar study can be performed on subjects of other games may also be conducted on the other variables, other age groups, different gender, other training programme, and different geographical areas respectively. Educational institutes should balance their focus on both academics and physical and sports activities, in order to give more exposure to students for developing personality.

The results of the present study found that the psychological performance traits i.e. sports emotions, self-efficacy and mental health of school level football players and university level football players differ significantly from each other in

terms of various playing positions mainly forward, mid-field and defense positioned players.

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