

## ASSESSMENT OF MENTAL SKILLS BETWEEN INTER-UNIVERSITY ACHIEVERS AND NON-ACHIEVERS

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the present study was to assess the mental skills between inter-university achievers and non-achievers. Total one hundred and six (N=106) female subjects, which includes, fifty three (n=53) achievers who got medals in the inter-university football tournament held at Panjab university during the session 2014-15 and fifty three (n=53) non-achievers who had just participated but failed to get medals in this respective tournament were selected subjects for the present study. The purposive and random sampling techniques were used for the selection of subjects. The age of the subjects was ranged between 19 to 28 years. Mental skills were determined by administering mental skill questionnaire developed by Hardy and Nelson (1996). The Mean, S.D., M.D., SEDM and 't'-values were calculated to find out the significance of differences between inter-university achievers and non-achievers. The level of significance was set at 0.05. The results revealed significant differences with regard to the sub-variables i.e. mental preparation, self-confidence, concentration ability and mental skill (total) between inter-university achievers and non-achievers. However, insignificant differences were observed with regard to the sub-variables i.e. imagery ability, anxiety and worry management, relaxation ability.*

**Keywords:** Mental skills, inter-university, achievers, non-achievers.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Mental skills have been recognized as cornerstone as well as one of the most valuable measures in order to attain the optimum level of performance at the time of competition (Singh, Valsaraj, & Mohammad, 2013). Sports psychologists consider that apart from training aspects, there are many other variables which have the potential to influence one's sports performance and even can contribute

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to improve consistency in the performance level of players during the practice session as well as at the time of competition. Peak performance during competitions is not only the outcome of physical training but other factors such as climate conditions, training means and methods, diet and psychological factors do contribute for the same (Murphy, 1987; Khan, Ali, & Ahmed, 2015). Weinberg and Gould (2003) supported that 'in most of the competitions; however, players win or lose all that depending up on how they (and their opponents) perform on that particular day. Physical abilities being fairly equal, but the winner usually the athlete, who has better mental skills (Singh, Valsaraj, & Mohammad, 2013). Therefore, the authors advocated psychological factors account primarily for day to day performance fluctuations'. The top mental training consultant Ravizza (2001) emphasized that 'an important part of the education phase of an athlete should integrate his/her familiarity or awareness with the role of mental skills and how psychological factors persuade one's performance'. Although most athletes are aware of fact that their psychological state influence their performance positively as well as negatively but very few are able to use psychological skills necessary to help them. Sport psychologist substantiated that if psychological training associated with physical training, it helps in the attainment of desirable results. Mental skill helps an individual to control the negative emotions which act as hindrance or obstacle in the path of his/her achievement. Cox and Yoo (1995) had substantiated that mental aspect of training is very important for high performance in sports. In order to attain high level of performance, mental aspect of performance should be given due importance. Beswick (2010) had stated that mental skills are designed to produce psychological states and skills in athletes that will lead to performance improvement. It focuses on the mental skills that need to be developed to further propel players performance beyond which can be achieved through physical and technical training (Williams & Krane, 2001). Rushall (1989) has stated psychology is the key to athletic excellence. Suinn (1977) psychological skills deals with the ability to concentrate completely on performance in situation in which physical skills which ultimately becomes the critical factor that determines who wins. Football is a team sport where the success and failure of the team depend upon the physical as well as mental makeup of team members. Beswick (2010) corroborated that nature of this sport demands a player to react physically and mentally. During the strenuous match conditions, if one is not certain about his/her decision then his/her doubt is reflected through stance or may result in mistakes or errors which may plays a crucial role in winning or losing a match. Sharma (2003) stated that football claims a perfect blend of physical and psychological qualities to be a title holder. In the current sports setting trainer and coaches' apprehend the vitality of sports psychology and use it as an effective resource in order to get competitive edge.

Therefore, the purpose of the investigators was to assess the mental skills between inter-university achievers and non-achievers.

## **2. METHODS AND MATERIALS**

### **2.1 Subject**

Total one hundred six (N=106) female subjects, which includes, fifty-three (n=53) achievers who got medals in the football inter-university tournament held at Panjab university during the session 2014-15 and fifty-three (n=53) non-achievers who had just participated but failed to get medals in this respective tournament. The purposive and random sampling techniques were used for the selection of subjects for the present study. The age of the subjects was ranged between 19 to 28 years.

### **2.2 Tool**

Mental skills were determined by administering mental skill questionnaire developed by Hardy and Nelson (1996).

**2.2.1 Scoring:** The lower the score will represent weaker whereas the higher score represents stronger level of mental ability. The reliability of the scale was administered by calculating reliability coefficient on the sample of 277 subjects. The split half reliability coefficient was found 0.86, however, validity was calculated, which indicated high validity on account of being 0.89.

### **2.3 Statistical Technique**

The mean, SD, MD, SEDM and *t*-values were calculated to find out the significance of differences between inter-university achievers and non-achievers. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

## **3. RESULTS**

The results with regard to the sub-variables of mental skill between inter-university achievers and non-achievers have been presented in the Table 1.

**Table 1: Significance of difference between inter-university achievers and non-achievers on the variable mental Skill**

Variables	Achievers		Non-Achievers		t-value	Sig.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Imagery Ability	18.57	3.24	18.19	2.47	0.67	0.502
Mental Preparation	20.15	3.15	18.68	3.28	2.35*	0.021
Self-Confidence	16.91	3.37	14.81	4.02	2.90*	0.005
Anxiety and Worry Management	14.15	5.12	12.60	4.10	1.71	0.089
Concentration Ability	16.13	5.40	13.94	4.76	2.21*	0.029
Relaxation Ability	17.58	4.15	17.41	2.80	0.24	0.806
Mental Skill (total)	103.49	15.27	95.64	12.11	2.93*	0.004
*Significant at 0.05 level				Degree of freedom=104		

Table 1 presented the results of inter-university achievers and non-achievers with regard to the variable mental skill. The mean score of achievers on the sub-variable imagery ability was found 18.57 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 18.19. The standard deviations (SD) of inter-university achievers and non-achievers were 3.24 and 2.47 respectively. The *t*-value 0.67 as shown in the table was found statistically insignificant ( $p>0.05$ ). When compared the mean score of both the groups, it can be seen that achievers had exhibited better imagery ability than their counterpart inter-university non-achievers.

The mean score of inter-university achievers on the sub-variable mental preparation was found 20.15 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 18.68. The standard deviations (SD) of inter-university achievers and non-achievers were 3.15 and 3.28, respectively. The *t*-value 2.35 as shown in the table was found statistically significant ( $p<0.05$ ).

The mean score of inter-university achievers on the sub-variable self-confidence was found 16.91 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 14.81. The standard deviations (SD) of inter-university achievers and non-achievers were 3.15 and 3.28, respectively. The *t*-value 2.90 as shown in the table was found statistically significant ( $p<0.05$ ).

The mean score of inter-university achievers on the sub-variable anxiety and worry management was found 14.15 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 12.60. The standard deviations (SD) of inter-university

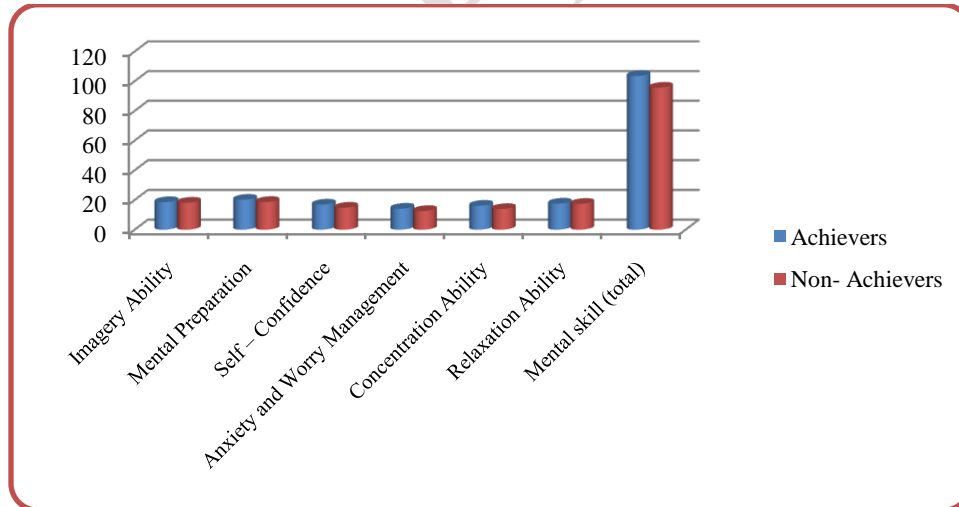
achievers and non-achievers were 5.12 and 4.10 respectively. The  $t$ -value 1.71 as shown in the table was found statistically insignificant ( $p>0.05$ ).

The mean score of inter-university achievers on the sub-variable concentration ability was found 16.13 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 13.94. The standard deviations (SD) of inter-university achievers and non achievers were 5.40 and 4.76, respectively. The  $t$ -value 2.21 as shown in the table was found statistically significant ( $p<0.05$ ).

The mean score of inter-university achievers on the sub-variable relaxation ability was found 17.58 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 17.41. The standard deviations (SD) of inter-university achievers and non achievers were 4.15 and 2.80 respectively. The  $t$ -value 0.24 as shown in the table was found statistically insignificant ( $p>0.05$ ).

The mean score of inter-university achievers on the sub-variable mental skill (total) was found 103.49 whereas the mean score of non-achievers was recorded as 95.64. The standard deviations (SD) of inter-university achievers and non achievers were 15.23 and 12.11, respectively. The  $t$ -value 2.93 as shown in the table was found statistically significant ( $p<0.05$ ).

**Figure 1: Graphical representation of mean scores with regard to the variable mental skill between inter-university achievers and non-achievers**



#### 4. DISCUSSION

It is evident from the results that statistically significant differences have been noticed on the sub-variables of mental skill i.e. mental preparation, self-confidence, concentration ability and mental skill (total) between inter-university achievers and non-achievers. However, both the groups achievers and non-

achievers were developed equally on the sub-variables of mental skill i.e. imagery ability, anxiety and worry management and relaxation ability as statistically insignificant differences were observed between both the groups on the sub-variables in question. The outcome of the present might be due to the fact that achievers were mentally prepared for their task and they had better self-confidence, which might have facilitated their performance in the competitions as compared to non-achievers. The present findings are in line with the study conducted by Bardel, Fontayne, and Colombel (2003) in which they concluded that the “Winning” athletes demonstrated significantly higher on psychological skills compared to their counterpart “Loosing” athletes. Similarly, Orlick and Partington (1988) had corroborated that person who possess better psychological skill would have competitive edge in their respective sports competition. Singh (2005) also revealed significant differences between successful athletes and unsuccessful athletes on the selected psychological parameters i.e. self-confidence and mental preparation. Greenleaf, Gould, and Dieffenbach, (2001) made comparison of teams that met or did not meet performance expectations at Olympics, explored that better performing athletes used mental preparation more often as compared to their counterparts. Williams and Krane (2001) concluded that more successful athletes were characterized by higher confidence, greater self regulation of arousal, better concentration-focus, positive thoughts and imagery, and more determined as well as more commitment as compared to their counterpart unsuccessful.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded from the above findings that significant differences have been observed on the on the sub-variables of mental skill i.e. mental preparation, self-confidence, concentration ability and mental skill (total) between interuniversity achievers and non-achievers. Hence, it is further concluded that interuniversity achievers had demonstrated significantly better on the sub-variables of mental skill i.e. mental preparation, self-confidence, concentration ability and mental skill (total) than their counterpart non-achievers. However, no significant differences were found on the sub-variables of mental skill i.e. imagery ability, anxiety and worry management and relaxation ability between interuniversity achievers and non-achievers.

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