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A Comparative Study of Mental Skills and Competitive Anxiety among Different Para Sports Athletes

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Abstract

Introduction: The objective of this study was to investigate the mental skills and competitive anxiety among different para sports athletes (Powerlifting, Cricket, Judo and Yoga). **Methods:** The subjects for the study were selected from different sports centers in India using a random sampling method (25 para-athletes from Powerlifting, 25 from cricket, 25 from judo, and 25 from yoga). The subjects were between 18 and 25 years of age. All subjects were residents of India. A stand and progressive matrices organizational Ottawa Mental Skills Assessment Tool-3 (OMSAT-3) by Durand-Bush and Colleagues (2001) and Sports Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) by Martin Renier (1977) were opted as criterion measures for the data collection of mental skills and competitive anxiety. To find out significant of mental skills and competitive anxiety among different para sports athletes (Powerlifting, Cricket, Judo and Yoga), the one-way analysis of variance was used. The level of significance was set at .05 levels. **Results and Discussion:** The result reveals the one-way analysis of variance that there was significant difference ($p > .05$) find for mental skills and competitive anxiety among different para sports athletes (Powerlifting, Cricket, Judo and Yoga).

Keywords: Mental Skills, Competitive Anxiety, Para Sports Athletes

Introduction

In the latter half of the 20th century, sports performance emerged as a significant area of research. This growing interest reflects the increasing value that societies across the globe place on athletic competition. Recognizing the role of sports in national pride and global recognition, many developed nations have invested heavily in building strong sports infrastructures. These efforts aim to ensure success on the international stage. Ongoing laboratory and field research continues to explore the various factors that impact athletic performance.

Sports psychology plays a crucial role in the Sports performance, well-being and resilience of Para athletes. These athletes face unique psychological challenges and strengths, making mental skills training essential for success in competition and personal development. Para sports, also known as Para-athletics or adaptive sports, have evolved significantly over the years, providing competitive opportunities for athletes with disabilities. The development of Para sports has played

a crucial role in promoting inclusivity, breaking societal barriers and advancing sports science and rehabilitation techniques.

Most sport coaches observe that the victory against an opponent with similar physical abilities depends in ca. 50% on psychological preparation (Weinberg and Gould 2015). Research in sports psychology has revealed that mental training facilitates successful performance and enhances athletes' personal well-being (Vealey 2007). Therefore most athletes make additional mental efforts to enhance their performance as a supplement to physical training. Mental training interventions are used to facilitate specific positive outcomes such as passes efficacy in soccer (Thelwell et al. 2010) or forehand drive efficacy in tennis.

The concept of adaptive sports can be traced back to ancient times when individuals with disabilities participated in recreational activities. However, structured Para sports were not formally organized until the 20th century.

The International Paralympics Committee (IPC) has established ten disability categories. Athletes are divided within each category according to their level of impairment, in a functional classification system which differs from sport to sport. The IPC has established ten disability categories, including physical, visual, and intellectual impairment

Mental skills, such as visualization, self-talk, focus and goal setting, have been widely studied in sports psychology. Studies indicate that elite athletes often engage in mental training to enhance concentration and resilience. In Para sports, mental skill development is crucial due to the additional physical and psychological demands athletes face. Research by Martin (2017) suggests that structured mental training programs significantly improve performance outcomes among Para-athletes.

Competitive anxiety consists of cognitive components, such as worry and self-doubt, and somatic symptoms, including sweating and increased heart rate. Research suggests that moderate anxiety can sometimes enhance performance, whereas excessive anxiety negatively affects outcomes.

Methodology

The subjects for the study were selected from different sports centers in India using a random sampling method (25 para-athletes from Powerlifting, 25 from cricket, 25 from judo, and 25 from yoga). The subjects were between 18 and 25 years of age. All subjects were residents of India. A stand and progressive matrices organizational Ottawa Mental Skills Assessment Tool-3(OMSAT-3) by Durand-Bush and Colleagues (2001) and Sports Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) by Martin Renier (1977) were opted as criterion measures for the data collection of mental skills and competitive anxiety. To find out significant of mental skills and competitive anxiety among different para sports athletes (Powerlifting, Cricket, Judo and Yoga), the one-way analysis of variance was used. The level of significance was set at .05 levels.

Findings of the Study

Mental Skills:

Table No.-1

Descriptive statistics of mental skills among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga)

	Powerlifting	Cricket	Judo	Yoga
Mean	120.76	136.76	126.04	160.44
Standard Deviation	5.17	6.21	5.72	5.75
Range	20	23	19	21
Minimum	112	125	117	147
Maximum	132	148	136	168

It is evident from the table no.1, which shows the mean value of mental skills for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 120.76, whereas mean value for cricket para sports athletes were 136.76, whereas mean value for judo para sports athletes were 126.04 and the mean value for yoga para sports athletes were 160.44.

This table shows the standard deviation value of mental skills for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 5.17, whereas standard deviation value for cricket para sports athletes were 6.21, whereas standard deviation value for judo para sports athletes were 5.72 and the standard deviation for yoga para sports athletes were 5.75.

This table shows the range value of mental skills for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 20, whereas range value for cricket para sports athletes were 23, whereas range value for judo para sports athletes were 19 and the range value for yoga para sports athletes were 21.

This table shows the minimum value of mental skills for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 112, whereas minimum value for cricket para sports athletes were 125, whereas minimum value for judo para sports athletes were 117 and the minimum value for yoga para sports athletes were 147.

This table shows the maximum value of mental skills for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 132, whereas maximum value for cricket para sports athletes were 148, whereas maximum value for judo para sports athletes were 136 and the maximum value for yoga para sports athletes were 168.

Table No.-2

Analysis of variance of mental skills among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga)

Source of Variance	DF	SS	MSS	F-ratio	Significance Level	Value of Significance (3, 96)
Between Group	3	23233.76	7744.587	236.308	.05	2.70
Within Group	96	3146.24	32.773			

The values shown in table no. 2 clearly show that the calculated F-value is much higher than the value required for significance. Therefore, post hoc test has been used to find out the difference in mental skills among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga). The calculation of which is presented in table no.-3 and shown by figure no.-1.

Table No.-3

Comparison of mental skills among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga)

Powerlifting	Cricket	Judo	Yoga	M.D	C.D
120.76	136.76			-16	3.22
120.76		126.04		-5.28	
120.76			160.44	-39.68	
	136.76	126.04		10.72	
	136.76		160.44	-23.68	
		126.04	160.44	-34.4	

The post hock test is to compare the mental Skills among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga). It has clearly revealed the significant difference between the para sports athletes of Powerlifting and cricket where the calculated mean difference found (-16), Powerlifting and judo where the calculated mean difference found (-5.28), Powerlifting and yoga where the calculated mean difference found (-39.68), cricket and judo where the calculated mean difference found (10.72), cricket and yoga where the calculated mean difference found (-23.68) and judo and yoga where the calculated mean difference found (-34.4) was higher than the required critical difference value 3.22 at .05 level of significant.

The scores are also illustrated in the figure no.-1

Figure No.-1

Figure No.-1

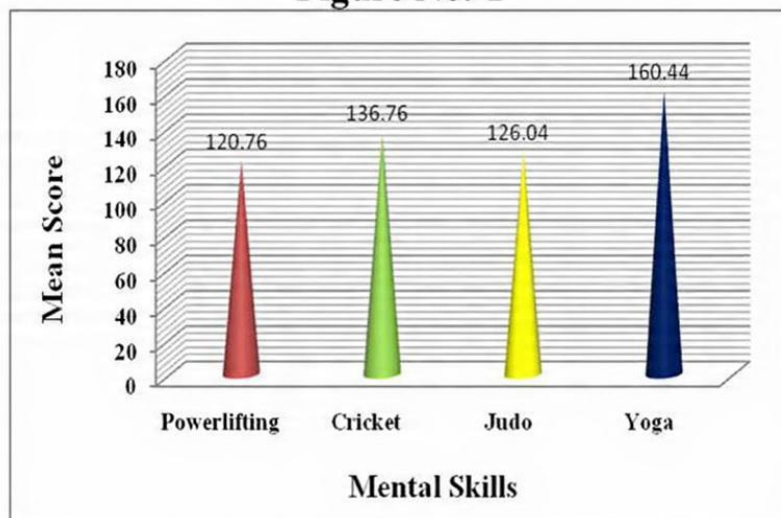


Figure No.-1: Graphical presentation of mean difference for mental skills among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga)

Competitive Anxiety:

Table No.-4
Descriptive statistics of competitive anxiety among deferent para sports athletes
(Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga)

	Powerlifting	Cricket	Judo	Yoga
Mean	25.84	20	22.72	19.20
Standard Deviation	2.41	2.48	1.72	2.58
Range	10	9	7	13
Minimum	22	16	19	13
Maximum	32	25	26	26

It is evident from the table no.4, which shows the mean value of competitive anxiety for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 25.84, whereas mean value for cricket para sports athletes were 20, whereas mean value for judo para sports athletes were 22.72 and the mean value for yoga para sports athletes were 19.20.

This table shows the standard deviation value of competitive anxiety for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 2.41, whereas standard deviation value for cricket para sports athletes were 2.48, whereas standard deviation value for judo para sports athletes were 1.72 and the standard deviation for yoga para sports athletes were 2.58.

This table shows the range value of competitive anxiety for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 10, whereas range value for cricket para sports athletes were 9, whereas range value for judo para sports athletes were 7 and the range value for yoga para sports athletes were 13.

This table shows the minimum value of competitive anxiety for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 22, whereas minimum value for cricket para sports athletes were 16, whereas minimum value for judo para sports athletes were 19 and the minimum value for yoga para sports athletes were 13.

This table shows the maximum value of competitive anxiety for Powerlifting para sports athletes were 32, whereas maximum value for cricket para sports athletes were 25, whereas maximum value for judo para sports athletes were 26 and the maximum value for yoga para sports athletes were 26.

Table No.-5
Analysis of variance of competitive anxiety among deferent para sports athletes
(Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga)

Source of Variance	DF	SS	MSS	F-ratio	Significance Level	Value of Significance (3, 96)
Between Group	3	677.24	225.747	41.805	.05	2.70
Within Group	96	518.40	5.40			

The values shown in table no. 5 clearly show that the calculated F-value is much higher than the value required for significance. Therefore, post hoc test has been used to find out the

difference in competitive anxiety among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga). The calculation of which is presented in table no.-6 and shown by figure no.-2.

Table No.-6

Comparison of competitive anxiety among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga)

Powerlifting	Cricket	Judo	Yoga	M.D	C.D
25.84	20			5.84	1.307
25.84		22.72		3.12	
25.84			19.20	6.64	
	20	22.72		-2.72	
	20		19.20	0.8	
		22.72	19.20	3.52	

The post hock test is to compare the competitive anxiety among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga). It has clearly revealed the significant difference between the para sports athletes of Powerlifting and cricket where the calculated mean difference found (5.84), Powerlifting and judo where the calculated mean difference found (3.12), Powerlifting and yoga where the calculated mean difference found (6.64), cricket and judo where the calculated mean difference found (-2.72) and judo and yoga where the calculated mean difference found (3.52) was higher than the required critical difference value 1.307 at .05 level of significant. But insignificant difference between the para sports athletes of cricket and yoga where the calculated mean difference found (0.8) was lower than the required critical difference value 1.307 at .05 level of significant.

The scores are also illustrated in the figure no.-2

Figure No.-2

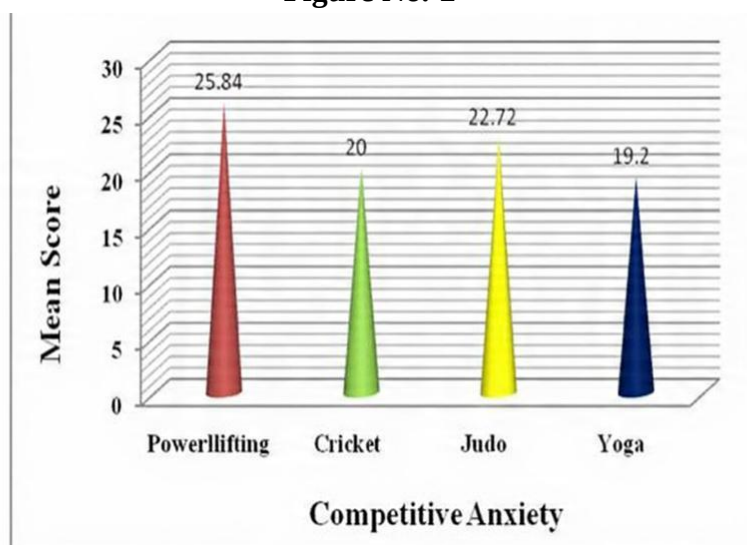


Figure No.-1: Graphical presentation of mean difference for competitive anxiety among deferent para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga)

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULT

The present investigation was designed to know the comparative study of mental skill and competitive anxiety among para sports athletes on performance. The research scholars did not intend to explore personal life of para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga). Various tools have been used to find out the important differences in aspects of various psychological characteristics of para sports athletes to achieve the purpose of this research.

The results of this study revealed significant differences in the mental capabilities of different para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga). This may be attributed to the distinct playing strategies inherent to each of these sports, which consequently lead to the observed disparities in their mental capabilities. The result of present study is also on the line of the studies conducted by Kumar S. & Pant M. (2025), “A Comparative Study of Mental Toughness among Para Sports Persons of Different Games”.

The results of this study revealed significant differences in competitive anxiety among different para sports athletes (Powerlifting, cricket, judo and yoga). This may be attributed to the distinct strategies and methodologies involved in playing each of these sports, which, in turn, leads to competitive anxiety manifesting at varying levels. The result of present study is also on the line of the studies conducted by Szajer P., Toth L., Szemes A. & et al (2019), “A comparative analysis of national Olympic swimming team members’ and para-swimming team members’ psychological profiles”.

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