



Comparison of mental toughness between national level and State level male boxing players

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to compare the mental toughness between National level and State level Boxing Players of Punjab and Haryana State. A sample of fifty Male players (N=50) age ranging 18 to 25 years including twenty five National level players (N1=25) and twenty five State Level players (N2=25). The Data was collected by using mental toughness questionnaire developed by Goldberg (1998). The t-test was applied to assess the differences between National level and State Level Male Boxing Players. The level of significance was set at 0.05. Study revealed that there were significant differences between National level and State Level Male Boxing Players with regard to Rebound Ability, Ability to Handle Pressure, Confidence and Overall Mental Toughness and insignificant differences with regard to Concentration and Motivation.

Keywords: mental toughness, boxing players

Introduction

Psychological characteristics are now commonly accepted as being major contributors to success within the area of sporting performance - in particular, motivational factors, self-confidence levels, and the ability to cope with and interpret anxiety-related symptoms as facilitative under pressure (cf. Hanton *et al.*, 2008; Hardy *et al.*, 1996; Mellalieu *et al.*, 2006). In 1974, Alderman suggested that top-level sport was a ruthless, cold and hard business, and no place for the tender-spirited, with successful athletes being not only physically tough, but mentally tough as well. Luszki (1982) viewed mental toughness as an important factor to successful performance and one of the four principles required to win at the highest levels of competition. Luszki also suggested that, when the best athletes are competing, these four factors (i.e. physical well-being, skill, experience and mental toughness) were working together. Importantly, mental toughness was proposed as being ultimately responsible for the acquisition of the other three principles. Similarly, Tunney (1987) identified four factors that winning teams were built on: self-discipline, self-sacrifice, mental toughness and team work, and proposed that the individuals who were mentally tough possessed the self-control and focus to limit their efforts were the effective ones. Jim Loehr has written extensively on the subject of mental toughness, and in his three books (1982, 1986, 1995), suggested that the world's greatest athletes give testimony to the existence of mental toughness each time they perform. Mental toughness, according to Loehr, separates the few who achieve ultimate accomplishment from the thousands who are unsuccessful in sport, proposing that mentally tough performers consistently responded to problems, pressure, making mistakes and competition with the right attitude. In a similar manner, Goldberg suggested that most coaches readily believe mental toughness is necessary for success and that "the ability to handle competitive pressures is a cornerstone skill of mental toughness" (1992: 60). Loehr (1982) ^[14]

claimed that mentally tough individuals can consistently sustain their ideal performance state during the heat of competitive battle and increase their flow of positive energy in crisis and adversity. Jones *et al.* (2002) ^[12], the researchers suggested that further work was needed to finalize a working definition of mental toughness. Jones *et al.* 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. The psychological characteristics of Olympic champions identified that mental toughness as a significant contributor to sports performance enhancement (Gould *et al.*, 2002). According to recent findings the psychology of each individual player in such stiff competition played a significant role to perform at top level (Babian, 1990; Cox, 2002; Kureger, 1984; Loehr, 1982) ^[14, 1, 6, 13]. Sport psychologists (researchers and practitioners), coaches, sports commentators, sports fans, and athletes acknowledge the importance of mental toughness in sporting performance (Goldberg, 1998; Hodge, 1994; Tunney, 1987; Williams, 1988) ^[8, 10]. As far as mental toughness for Boxing Players are concerned, while reviewing the related literature, we could not find any rigorous analysis report. Therefore, we decided to take this work forward by considering Boxing as our domain of study. This study is an attempt to explore the possibility of, could be significant group differences in the distribution of mental toughness between National level and State level male Boxing Players.

Methods and materials

Subjects

A sample of fifty (N=50), which includes twenty five each, National level (N1=25) and inter-college (N2=25) Male Boxing players of age ranging from 18 to 25 years. All the participants were informed about the aim and methodology of the study and they volunteered to participate in this study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the subjects.

Methodology

Questionnaire method was used to collect the data. Mental toughness was measured by applying mental toughness questionnaire developed by Goldberg (1998) [8]. Mental toughness questionnaire consists of 30 items measuring the mental toughness in five areas, i.e. rebound ability, ability to

handle pressure, concentration, confidence and motivation. There were only yes/no options to answer the questions and subjects have to tick only one option. Before filling up the questionnaire necessary instructions were given and questions were explained to the subjects. T-test was employed for data analysis. *The level of significance was set at 0.05.*

Results

Table 1: Comparison of mean scores of National level and state level Male Boxing Players

Variables	National level (N=25)		State Level (N=25)		Mean Difference	t-value	Sig.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Rebound Ability	4.20	0.65	3.52	1.16	0.68	2.563	0.014*
Ability To Handle Pressure	4.32	0.90	3.60	0.87	0.72	2.882	0.006*
Concentration	3.80	1.08	3.64	1.11	0.16	0.516	0.608
Confidence	4.32	0.99	3.72	0.98	0.60	2.156	0.036*
Motivation	4.00	1.04	3.76	0.92	0.24	0.862	0.393
Mental Toughness (Total)	20.64	1.35	18.68	2.05	1.96	3.984	0.000

*Significant at.05 level

't'. 05 (48) =2.011

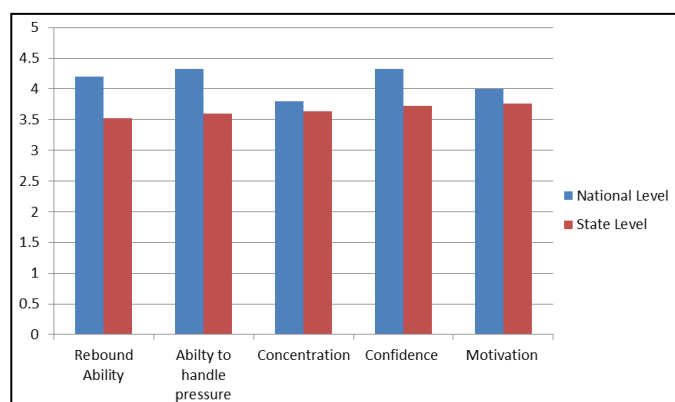


Fig 1: Graphical representation of Mean score of National level and State level boxing players in relation to their mental toughness.

It is depicted from the above table that the significant difference was found in National level and State level male Boxing players on Rebound Ability, Ability to Handle Pressure, Confidence and Overall Mental Toughness since the value obtained were 0.014, 0.006, 0.036 and 0.000 respectively. The calculated 't' value in case of national level and State Level male Boxing players on Concentration and Motivation was not found to be statistically significant as the value obtained was 0.608 and 0.393 respectively whereas, the tabulated value was 2.011 which 48 degree of freedom at .05 level of significance.

Discussion

Results of the present study showed that National level Male Boxing Players have exhibited statistically significant differ with regard to rebound ability, ability to handle pressure, confidence and mental toughness (total), when compared to State Level Male Boxing Players. Present research findings are in line with the study of Singh, J. *et al.* (2012), they concluded that there were significant differences between foreigner professional footballers and Indian professional footballers on the account of rebound ability, ability to handle pressure and mental toughness (Total).

R. C. Yadav (2014) also revealed in his study that mental toughness of national Male volleyball players is higher than the national Male kabaddi players. Rajender Singh and Rajesh Kumar (2011) [17] concluded in their study that All India intervarsity soccer players exhibited significantly differed in mental toughness than their counterpart; intercollegiate soccer players.

Conclusion

It is concluded that significant differences were found between National level and State Level Boxing Players with regard Rebound Ability, Ability to Handle Pressure, Confidence and Overall Mental Toughness but insignificant differences were found with regard to Concentration and Motivation. The results show that National level Boxing Players had significantly greater Rebound Ability, Ability to Handle Pressure, Confidence and Overall Mental Toughness than State Level Boxing Players. However, Concentration and Motivation of both groups found almost same.

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