



MENTAL TOUGHNESS BETWEEN ELITE AND NON-ELITE ATHLETES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to compare the mental toughness of Elite and Non-Elite Athletes. For the purpose investigation 1000 male Elite and 100 male Non Elite Athletes (Total=200 Athletes) were selected as subjects of the study. Their age was ranged 18 to 25 year. Find out mental toughness of National level Athletes and State level Athletes. The collection of data Mental Toughness Questionnaire prepared by Allen Goldberg was administered. The questionnaire was comprised of 60 statement based on handling pressure (20 questions), concentration (17 questions), mental rebounding (14 questions) and winning attitude (9 questions). Each statement has two possible responses i.e. true and false. For the analysis of data, collected by administering the questionnaire to all the subject's t- test was employed at 0.05 level of significant. The result of the study concluded that there was statistically significant difference in mental toughness of the Elite and Non-Elite Athletes in U.P. It is clear that the mean mental toughness between of Elite Athletes is significantly higher than the mean mental toughness of the Non Elite Athletes.

Keywords: Mental Toughness, Elite Athletes, Non- Elite athletes' analysis.

Introduction

Mental toughness is a necessity in competitive sports in any situation. Competing against other athletes, or even against one's own personal best, can be a stressful process. Competing, in general, can cause anxiety in some athletes. In attempting to understand what mental toughness researchers initially focused on obtaining the perspectives of participants from different sporting disciplines (Jones et al. 2002, 2007). Other researchers have looked at more specific sporting disciplines, such as cricket (Bull et al. 2005; Gucciardi et al. 2009), soccer (Coulter et al. 2010; Thelwell et al. 2005) and Australian football (Gucciardi et al. 2008). A key issue with these qualitative investigations is that mental toughness is open to fairly diverse individual interpretation and there needs to be a more cautious approach to assuming a general research consensus, which is becoming a dominant approach to conceptualizing mental toughness. Specifically, it is argued that the lack of conceptual consistency in the area may be related to idiosyncratic differences in interpretation. Different people explain mental toughness differently depending on their personal experience and interactions within their own social world. Thus the term 'Mental toughness' may mean something different to different people depending on age groups, gender, cultures and is arguably interpreted differently within different situational circumstances (Sports performance, dealing with adversity such as career-ending injury, being disabled or suffering bereavement). In Games a player has to develop the attitude of "You don't have to like it, you just have to do it". The demand for peak performance is simply a form of challenge. The better is our mental toughness, the more likely we are to handle the challenge rather than give away. So the player's level of mental toughness also exerts a major influence over the extent to which he is able to perform with his best abilities. Mental toughness is the link between peak performance and stress management because any player cannot function to the best of his abilities unless it is being dealt effectively with the stresses and challenges.

Successful athletes are supposed not to be only physically, but mentally tough as well. The reason for this originates out of the realization that top sports are a ruthless, cold, and hard business, where there is no place for the tender-spirited. The Characterization of such trait indicates that the "Mentally tough" athlete can take rough handling is not easily upset about losing, playing badly, or being spoken harshly can accept strong criticism without being hurt and does not need too much encouragement from his coach.



Methodology

In the present study a sample of 100 male Elite Athletes(15th Federation Cup National Athletics Championship) and 100 male Non Elite Athletes(U. P. State Championship 2017) Total 200 Athletes. The collection of data Mental Toughness Questionnaire prepared by Allen Goldberg was administered. The questionnaire was comprised of 60 statement based on handling pressure (20 questions), concentration (17 questions), mental rebounding (14 questions) and winning attitude (9 questions). Each statement has two possible responses i.e. true and false. For the analysis of data, collected by administering the questionnaire to all the subject's t- test was employed at 0.05 level of significant.

TABLE .1.
 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ELITE AND NON ELITE ATHLETES ON MENTAL TOUGHNESS VARIABLE.

Type	Total number (N)	Mean	Standard Division	Critical Ratio	Significance Level
Elite Athletes	100	20.23	15.81	3.45*	Significant difference
Non Elite Athletes	100	18.23	14.12		

*Significant at 0.05 level of Significance

From the Table.1, reveals that the comparison of the elite and non elite athletes on mental toughness variable. The value of 'CR' value found 3.45* which is greater than tabulated value 0.05 level of freedom. Hence, It gave an indication that elite and non elite athletes significantly differ as per the score of mental toughness variable.

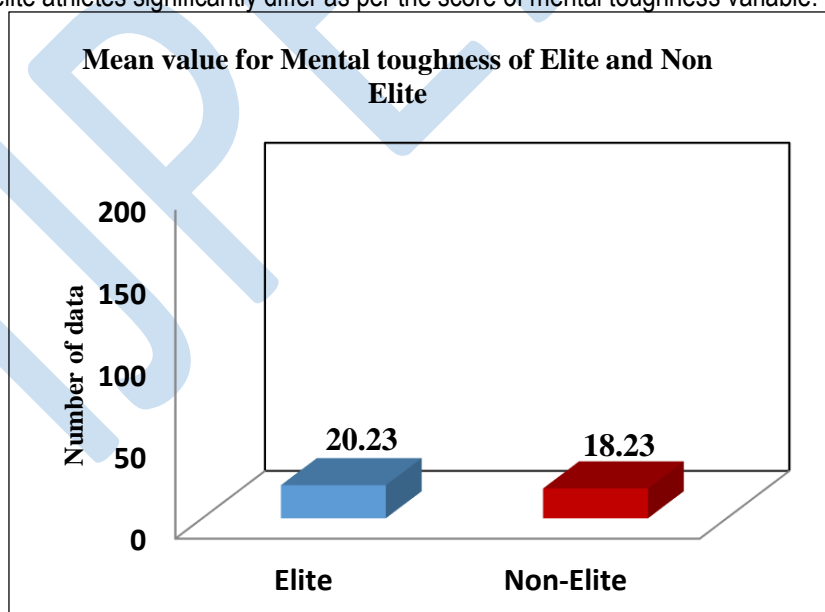


Figure No. 1: Graphical representations of mean score of elite and non elite athletes on mental toughness



The result from graphical representation of mean score of elite and non elite athletes on mental toughness and from Table .1, indicates that there is a significant difference between the mental toughness of the elite and non elite athletes this means that there is a significant difference in the mental toughness of elite and non-elite athletes.

The result clearly indicates that elite athletes have better mental toughness than non-elite athletes.

Results and Discussion

To find out the significant difference in mental toughness between Elite and Non Elite Athletes. The analysis of data, collected by administering the questionnaire to the entire subject's t- test was employed at 0.05 level of significant. The statistical analysis of data pertaining to mental toughness is given below. Finding of the study show that all there was significant the 100 male Elite Athletes(15th Federation Cup National Athletics Championship) and 100 male Non Elite Athletes(U. P. State Championship 2017) Total 200 Athletes. The result clearly indicates that elite athletes have better mental toughness than non-elite athletes. This may be attributed due to the reality that the players of prepare mentally for various competition and develop team composition in them and it also help them to distribute the pressure of the completion. It is necessary to train Athletes to enhance mental toughness. These outcomes may realize to develop the various training plans.

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