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Emotional intelligence: A best predictor of performance in sports

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Abstract
The purpose of this research was to compare emotional intelligence of elite and non-elite players. For that 40 subjects (20 medalists and 20 non medalists) were chosen as samples by random sampling method. Emotional intelligence scale designed by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar (2002) was used to collect data. For assessing the level of emotional intelligence between two groups independent 't' test was used. The results showed that there is a significant difference between Emotional intelligence of medalists and non-medalist players respectively.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, medalist and non-medalist players

Introduction
Awareness of the vitality of sports psychology to assist athletes to perform sport skills better is emerging fast. Sport psychology has emerged as a field with a research tradition that provides a foundation for direct application with athletes (Illayasi, 2011) [5]. Athletes who failed to achieve their competitive goals are likely to feel unhappy and angry after competition. Emotions are pervasive and intangible so we all experience emotions and feelings as they provide vital information about whom we are; we cannot eliminate them but we can get a better handle on them. So that instead of our feeling determining how we act, we can ensure that they serve our purposes (Chronicle, 2013). Emotion is a very complex, disturbed state of the organism and intricate psychological process (Shergill, 2010) [8].

Sports psychologists and professional athletes have started to evaluate the linkages between emotion and competitive sporting performance. Recent research by Lane *et al.*, (2002) has identified the importance of distinguishing a specific set of emotion content that is optimal or dysfunctional for an athlete's performance. Based on this, emotional intelligence is argued to be a central variable in the regulation of emotions (Petrides, 2007). Many psychologists and educationists have been trying to bridge the gap between success and failure caused by head and heart (Balamurugan and Gowdhaman 2009) [1].

Although emotional intelligence is still a relatively new term in sport, it certainly is not a new concept. Research and work in emotional intelligence can be dated back to the early 1900s when it was described as emotional expression (by Darwin) or social intelligence (by E. L. Thorndike in the 1920s). The term emotional intelligence was introduced in 1990 by two American University Professors Dr. John Mayer and Dr. Peter Salvoey in their attempt to develop a scientific measure for knowing the differences between people's ability in the areas of emotions (Mangal, 2009) [7]. But it became most recognized through the work of Daniel Goleman. His bestselling book "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ" brought about the widely popularized use of the term and he is now seen as the modern day guru on the topic.

Emotional intelligence seems to be everywhere. Educators, executives, and life style gurus have all bowed to the notion that what people need most in contemporary life is emotional awareness, heightened sensitivity and street smart. Although very less research has been conducted on emotional intelligence in sports. Emotional intelligence has received very scant attention from researchers in the sport domain to date, yet emotions are keys to sport performance. Sport psychology researchers and practitioners have become increasingly vocal in their suggestions that emotional intelligence may be an important construct in the sport

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Domain (Barbara, Teresa, 2007) [2]. The role of emotions in sports and sports performance has been highlighted by many research studies (David *et al*., 2009; Wagstaff *et al*., 2012; Lane *et al*., 2009) [3, 9, 6].

Importantly, emotionally intelligent people can get themselves into the appropriate emotional states for the demand of the situation. If the situation requires high arousal, emotionally intelligent people are good at getting themselves psyched up and prepared. Equally, if the situation requires calmness, emotionally intelligent people are good at relaxing themselves (the sportinmind.com/ Emotional intelligence in sports: The Game within Game).

This means that emotional intelligence of sports person could determine their ability to understand their competence, access their knowledge to adapt to their immediate profession and become more successful. Emotional intelligence is the best predictor of the sports person's performance (Gill, 2009).

Objective
1. To find out Emotional intelligence of medalist and non-medalist players.
2. To compare Emotional intelligence of medalist and non-medalist players.

Methodology
In this chapter the procedure to be adopted for the selection of subject, selection of variables, criterion measurers, collection of data and statistical technique to be used has been described.

The selection of subjects
The subjects of this study were medalist and non-medalist players of Lovely Professional University. The total number of subjects for this study was 40 players (20 subjects were medalists and 20 subjects were non medalists).

Selection of tools
Emotional intelligence scale designed by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar (2002) was used to measure Emotional intelligence of sports person. The split–half reliability coefficient of this scale was found to be 0.88. This scale is having a high validity of 0.93.

Statistical technique
To compare Emotional Intelligence between medalist and non-medalist players, independent 't-test' was used.

Table 1.1

Athletes	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Medalist	20	80.5000	3.410
Non Medalist	20	73.20000	3.607

Table 1.2

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	.808	.374	6.57	38	.000	7.300	1.110

As in the table 1.1 it is clearly evident that t-value is significant as calculated p-value .000 is less at 0.05 level of significance thus leading to conclusion that there is significant difference in emotional intelligence of medalist and non-medalist players. Thus the null hypothesis of having no difference among the means have been rejected.

Conclusion and Recommendations
Emotional intelligence has been reported to be more realistic than other measures in evaluating performances in many fields of human activities. This study therefore investigated the difference of emotional intelligence among medalist and non-medalist athletes. The results revealed that there is a significant difference of emotional intelligence among medalist and non-medalist athletes. Findings show that emotional intelligence scores were associated with optimal and dysfunctional performance. Players who are able to effectively manage their emotions would be more disciplined, commit less transgressions due to the lack of emotional control and therefore ultimately perform better. It is therefore suggested to consider the importance of emotional intelligence as athletes could be taught to focus on awareness, expression, management and control of the various emotions experienced during participation in sport, by means of the effective channeling thereof to ensure optimal functioning of the individual player/the team.

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