



ISSN: 2456-0057
IJPNPE 2019; SP1: 25-29
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(Special Issue- 1)
International Conference
“Sports: An Integral Component of Nation-Building”
(February 19th-20th, 2019)

**A comparative study on motivation between
differently-abled and abled athletes**

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Abstract

Motivation is a key element for performance and success among athletes. While earlier research indicates that sport participation contributed a sense of competence, delay in the effects of disability as well as a social outlet for disabled-individuals (Page, Connor & Peterson, 2001), it has also shown that players with and without disability did not differ significantly with respect to sport motivation (Perreault & Vallerand, 2007). There seems to be a positive impact of sports on the motivation level of people irrespective of the status of ability/disability. This proves to be a positive impact of sports as it goes against the common belief that physical disability reduces one's self-esteem and motivation. This study aimed to compensate for the lack of such studies in India and compare the level of sports motivation between differently abled athletes and abled-athletes. The study also aimed at bringing to light the gender differences in sports motivation across the groups. The sample consisted of 30 able and 30 differently abled athletes currently residing in Bengaluru, India. Sports Motivation Scale-6 (Mallet *et al.*, 2007) was administered on the sample, and the data was correlated statistically using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20). The results indicate that there are no significant differences between able and differently abled athletes, in all the domains of motivation except for Identified Regulation ($p>0.05$) which reflects with the findings from the west. Gender differences were found to be significant only for able-athletes for total motivation and the domain of Introjected Regulation ($p>0.05$). The study implies that sports has a unanimous and positive influence on the motivation of athletes collectively and doesn't vary with physical disability. Further research is recommended to study the gender differences prevailing and their contributing factors among the able athlete group.

Keywords: Sports Motivation, Differently-abled Athletes, Sports Motivation Scale

Introduction

Motivation is generally understood to denote the strength of a person's desire to attain a goal (Schmidt, Palminteri, Lafargue, & Pessiglione, 2010). Motivation is the reason for people's actions, willingness and goals. Motivation is derived from the word 'motive' which is defined as a need that requires satisfaction. These needs could also be wants or desires that are acquired through influence of culture, society, lifestyle, etc. or generally innate. Individual's motivation may be inspired by others or events, known as Extrinsic Motivation, or it may come from within the individual, known as Intrinsic Motivation. One of the most important reasons that inspires a person to move forward could be motivation. It is necessary to allow sustained and deliberate practice is essential to achievement. Especially in fields such as medicine, music or sports.

Various psychological theories are based hold that motivation exists purely within the individual, but socio-cultural theories express motivation as an outcome of participation in actions and activities within the cultural context of social groups. There are various theories that attempt to explain motivation, that are based on the individual as well as socio-cultural

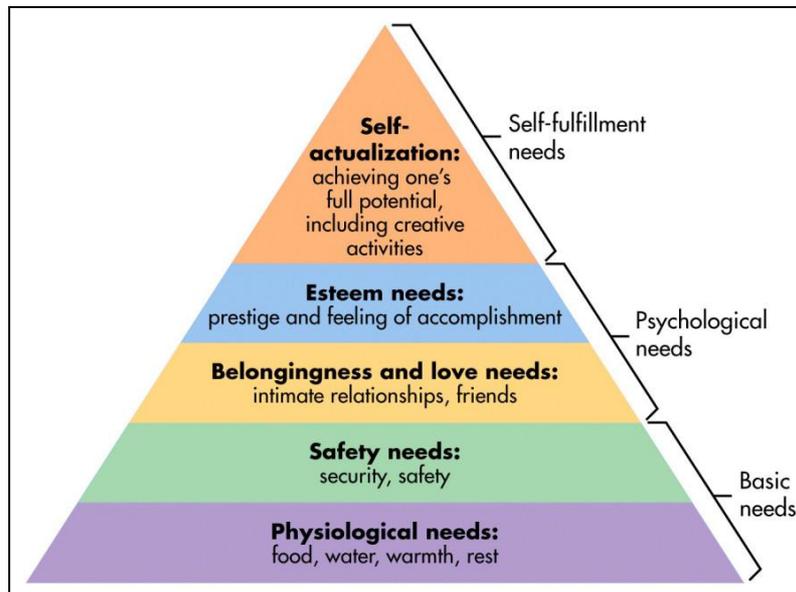
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factors, which view motivation as an outcome of participation in actions and activities within the cultural context of social groups. The various approaches that can be used to study motivation are:

- Humanistic approach: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
It comprises of comprising a five-tier model of human needs,

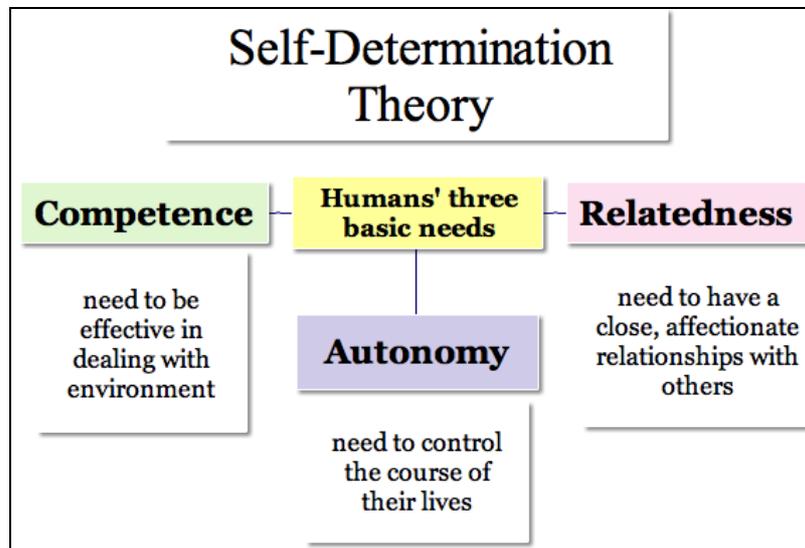
often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. From the bottom of the hierarchy upwards, the needs are: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization. Needs lower down in the hierarchy must be satisfied before individuals can attend to needs higher up.



1. Contemporary Approach: Self Determination Theory (SDT)

This is a macro theory of human motivation and personality that concerns people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs. It is concerned with the

motivation behind choices people make without external influence and interference. SDT focuses on the degree to which an individual's behaviour is self-motivated and self-determined.



Motivation is the foundation all athletic effort and accomplishment. Without desire and determination to improve sports performances, all of the other mental factors, confidence, intensity, focus, and emotions, are meaningless.

Motivation in sports is important because one must be willing to work hard in the face of fatigue, boredom, pain, and the desire to do other things. Motivation will impact everything that influences an athletes' sports performance: physical conditioning, technical and tactical training, mental preparation, and general lifestyle include sleep, diet, work, and relationships.

Motivation has a positive impact on performance. It is also the only factor over which an athlete can exercise control.

Motivation will directly impact the level of success that is ultimately achieved. Athlete participates in sport for its own sake is considered to have an intrinsic orientation. And athlete behaviour in sport that is dependent on social or material rewards has an extrinsic orientation. Motivation is broadly divided into three categories: Intrinsic, Extrinsic and Amotivation. And Extrinsic Motivation is further divided into: External Motivation, Introjection Regulation, Identified Regulation, Identified Regulation and Integrated Motivation. External motivation occurs as a result of influence from outside sources; inducement to act or change based on the expectations and examples of other people. While, introjected regulation refers to doing something in order to maintain self-

esteem or pride or to avoid guilt or anxiety. Identified regulation is a more autonomous or self-regulated type of extrinsic motivation. If a regulation or goal is personally valued by the individual, and is consciously accepted as one's own goal, the regulation is identified. And Integrated Motivation refers to integrating all the parts of the individuals' life that motivate and encourage them to achieve the goal.

Though research so far has focused on linking sports, self-determination and motivation, there are no studies conducted to understand the role of motivation among differentially-abled athletes. This study will help us understand if there is any significant psychological difference between abled and differently abled athletes in terms of motivation.

Review of Literature

In India, the differently-abled population is 26.8 million. In percentage terms, this stands at 2.21%. About 75% of persons with disability live in rural areas, with just about 49% of disabled population able to read or write. And the employment rates of disabled people are at 34% (Census, 2011). Disability Sport refers to sport designed for, or specially practiced, by people with disabilities. While there is limited historical and statistical evidence of participation of people with disability in sports, this gap is decreasing over time. Today, the largest international competitions for differently abled athletes are: Deaflympics, Paralympic Games and Special Olympics World Games (Mehra, 2011) ^[8]. In 2015, about 6500 people participated in the Special Olympics World Games events. In the consecutive year, Paralympic Committee of India listed that there were 19 competitors (16 Men and 3 Women) to take part in Rio 2016 Paralympics. Participation of abled players in sports is also very limited and poor. Only 2 players took part in two sports from India, during Winter Olympics, 2018. And in the Asian Games of 2018, 571 people took part in 36 sports. Out of which 311 were men, and 260 women.

These statistics strongly indicate the clear lack of participation, be it abled players or differently abled players, in the field of sports and a vast difference in the participation of men and women in sports. With reference to these statistics, we look at studies that establish a relationship between sports motivation, performance and various different physical and psychological variables.

A study has concluded that transformative leadership may enhance intrinsic motivation in a task as intrinsic motivation acts as a mediator of the relationship between transformational leadership and sports performance (Charbonneau *et al.*, 2001).

Another study conducted on recreational and competitive athletes revealed that competitive athletes demonstrate less intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation and less intrinsic motivation to accomplish things than recreational athletes, while exhibiting more identified regulations and more amotivation than the other group and that female athletes were more intrinsically motivated to accomplish things and exhibited more identified regulation than male athletes, while displaying less external regulation and less amotivation than the other group (Fortier *et al.*, 2005).

Research has also revealed that the Body Mass Index (BMI) of athletes were comparatively higher than that of non-athletes (Radua, Popovicica & Punia, 2014). A study on senior high school athletes conclude that sports-domain gratitude positively predicts team satisfaction and life satisfaction, and

negatively predicts athlete burnout (Chen & Kee, 2008) ^[2]. Studies prove that resilience and hardiness are positively correlated with sport achievement and psychological well-being and negatively correlated with psychological distress (Nezhad & Bashrath, 2010) ^[11]. And a relationship between high levels of motivation and the achievements of an athlete has been established (Young, 2004) ^[9]. The results of a study concluded that athletes had significantly greater levels of self-esteem and social connectedness, as well as significantly lower levels of depression, than did non-athletes. However, the statistically strongest predictors of depression in this cohort were the variables of gender, self-esteem, social connectedness, and sleep (Amstrong & Oomen, 2010).

A number of studies have been conducted on abled sports individual with regard to sports, but little to no research has been conducted on disabled athletes. After reviewing all the above literature from the past decade, we understand that there is lack of research in sports, especially on the differently abled athletes, and this study will try to bridge the void. This will aid us in better understanding and bridging the gap between research sports and differentially-abled population.

Method

Objective

To analyse and compare sports motivation in abled and differently abled athletes.

To understand the gender differences in sports motivation.

Hypotheses

H₁: There is no significant difference between Abled and Differently Abled athletes with regard to sports motivation.

H₂: There is no significant gender difference with regard to sports motivation.

Variables

Quasi-Independent Variable: Extent of ability among sportspeople

Dependent Variable: Level of Sports Motivation

Measures

Sports Motivation Scale (SMS 6), developed by Mallet, Kawabata, Newcombe & Jackson (2007), is a tool used to measure sports motivation. It is a revised six factor motivation scale that focuses on sports. It measures six forms of motivation: Amotivation, External Regulation, Introjected Regulation, identified Regulation, Integrated Regulation, and Intrinsic Motivation. The scale contains 24 items that are used to measure the various factors of motivation. The subject is to choose one of the 5 alternate choices for each statement: Strongly Agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The scale has no time limit. The reliability of the scale is 0.8-0.9. And its validity is established with content cross validity.

Procedure & Analysis

Consent was taken from the subject, demographics were taken into account, after which, the Sports Motivation Scale (SMS-6) was administered. The responses were scored and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version-20 (SPSS 20).

Results

The SPSS output for the statistical analysis are given below:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the sample

	N		Mean		SD	
	Abled	Differently abled	Abled	Differently abled	Abled	Differently abled
Amotivation	30	30	10.90	11.77	3.497	3.202
External Regulation	30	30	13.00	13.77	3.533	3.002
Introjected Regulation	30	30	14.87	15.00	2.897	2.560
Identified Regulation	30	30	14.90	16.40	2.683	2.143
Integrated Regulation	30	30	14.87	15.23	2.726	2.487
Intrinsic Motivation	30	30	15.37	15.33	2.965	2.708
Total	30	30	83.80	87.47	8.491	9.558

Table 1. contains the descriptive Statistics computed on able and differently abled athletes (N=30 each). It can be seen that total motivation for Abled Athletes is 83.80 ± 8.491 . While that of Differently Abled Athletes is 87.47 ± 9.558 . The data was analysed using appropriate tests of mean difference:

Table 2: 't' test between abled and differently athletes

Variable	't' value [#]	Significance level
Amotivation	-1.001	0.321
External Regulation	-.906	0.369
Introjected Regulation	-.189	0.851
Identified Regulation	-2.393*	0.020
Integrated Regulation	-.544	0.58
Intrinsic Motivation	.045	0.964
Total	-1.571	0.122

#: Levene's test for homoscedescity

*: Statistically significant correlation at 95% level of confidence.

Table 2. shows results of the Independent Samples 't' test. The 't' values of the sample suggest that there is no statistical significance between able athletes and differently abled athletes with respect to motivation and its domains, except for Identified Regulation. As the value for Identified Regulation, $t=-2.393$ ($p<0.05$), is statistically significant at 95% level of confidence. The first hypothesis is validated for all the domains of motivation except for Identified Regulation.

Table 3: 't' test for gender differences

Variables	Abled Athletes		Differently Abled Athletes	
	't' value [#]	Significance level	't' value [#]	Significance level
Amotivation	-1.09	0.285	-1.396	0.174
External Regulation	-0.207	0.837	-1.227	.230
Introjected Regulation	-2.991**	0.006	0.00	1.00
Identified Regulation	-1.145	0.262	0.308	0.760
Integrated Regulation	-.760	0.454	-1.736	0.094
Intrinsic Motivation	-0.446	0.659	0.135	0.893
Total	-2.441*	0.021	-1.194	0.243

#: Levene's test for homoscedescity

*: Statistically significant correlation at 95% level of confidence.

** : Statistically significant correlation at 99% level of confidence.

Table 3 shows the gender differences in abled athletes and differently abled athletes. The 't' values for the sample of able athletes show that there is a statistically significant difference at 95% confidence level for External Regulation and Intrinsic Motivation, with 't' values of -2.991 and -2.441 respectively. However, there is no statistical significant gender differences for the sample of differently abled athletes as none of the significant values.

Overall, the results show no statistically significant difference with regard to total motivation between Abled and Differently Abled athletes. And there is no significant difference in any domain of sports motivation, except Identified Regulation, which is statistically significant. Hence, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between abled and differently abled athletes is accepted with regard to motivation, with the exception of Identified Regulation.

There has been a statistically significant gender difference among abled athletes with regard to sports motivation. However, with respect to the domains, show a significant difference with regard to gender, except Introjected Regulation. Meanwhile, there is no significant difference in either total motivation or any domain of sports motivation for Differently abled athletes. Hence, the hypothesis that there is no significant gender difference with regard to sports motivation, is proved for abled athletes, but disproved for differently abled athletes.

The deviance in Identified Regulation could be attributed to

the athletes identifying themselves as either being abled or differently abled. It appears that people who identify themselves as being Differently Abled show a greater level of sports motivation than people who do not identify as being disabled.

Conclusions

This study concludes that there is no significant difference with regard to motivation, except in the domain of Identified Regulation. Further studies, such as qualitative studies, could help better explain various factors of this study, such as the cause for the difference in Identified Regulation, and sport factors that boost motivation among differentially-abled sports people. This study also helps us in understanding that there is no motivational difference between abled and differently abled individuals, and it is merely their sense of identity that contributes to difference in sports motivation. Future explorations will also help us decode the underlying dynamics of sports motivation, especially for differently abled athletes; which can be employed to enhance performance, enjoyment, pleasure, achievement in the Indian subcontinent.

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