International Journal of Research in Engineering and Science (IJRES)
ISSN (Online): 2320-9364, ISSN (Print): 2320-9356
www.ijres.org Volume 9 Issue 2 ǁ 2021 ǁ PP. 11-17

Emotional Competencies among Athletes, Para-Athletes and Non Sportspersons

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ABSTRACT
Sports play a very crucial role in enhancing well-being. It maintains the equilibrium between physical and emotional state in both athletes and para-athletes. Para-athletes are disabled athletes who participate in Paralympic sports or sports for disabled. Para athletes have supplementary emotional challenges to overcome due to their physical ailments. This research aims at studying the emotional competencies among athletes, para-athletes and non-sportspersons. Emotional competency is the ability to effectively and successfully lead and express inner feelings or emotions. The objective of this research is to study emotional competencies in athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons. The sample consisted of 30 non-sportspersons, 30 able bodied athletes and 30 disabled athletes drawn by using random sampling procedure from various sports like swimming, cricket, badminton, archery, athletics and wheelchair sports that have represented at national or international level. The Emotional competency was measured by using a scale developed by Sharma and Bharadwaj (2007) to measure various components of emotional competency like adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions, ability to function with emotions, ability to cope with problem emotions and enhancement of positive emotions amongst non-sportspersons, athletes and para-athletes The obtained data was analysed by applying descriptive statistics and one way ANOVA. The results indicated athletes significantly higher than non-sports person in emotional competencies like adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions, ability to function with emotions and ability to cope with problem emotions.

KEY WORDS: *Emotional competencies, para-athletes, sport for disabled, athletes*

Date of Submission: 10-02-2021 Date of acceptance: 24-02-2021

I. INTRODUCTION

Determinants of Sports

Overwhelming amount of evidence exists on sports as a positive tool for enhancing physical health and psychological wellbeing. Various factors influence the impact of sports on health in different populations. Sports can also be used as a catalyst to change social stigmas related to athletes and athletes with disability. Sports involve components like emotion, competition, cooperation, involvement, achievement, stress, motivation, conflict, counselling, relaxation and socialization, thus providing a rich area for psychology to study. Sports also lead to various challenges related to anxiety, performance and competition. In modern days the concept of sports psychology has emerged where problems of the athletes are dealt effectively by sports psychologists on areas like performance anxiety, lose focus during competition, communication with teammates, controlling temper and other behaviours that account into issues that which may harm both the athlete and the team. The role of sports psychologists is to enhance athletes performance with help of various mental strategies, make athlete cope with pressures of competition, help them recover from injuries and make them enjoy their sport.

Para athletes

Apart from these challenges faced by athletes, there are more severe challenges by para athletes. Para athletes are athletes with impairment (mainly physical ailment). Special Paralympics (Para + Olympic) are held for such athletes based on the difficulties, these games sometimes are also considered as sports for the disabled.

The challenges encountered by the Para athletes begin with overcoming the social stigma associated with disability. Other major challenges that Para athletes face are accessibility to coaching and training, or even participate or compete, non-inclusion in normal society, stress due to physical ailment and also lack of job opportunities for them, lack of sponsorships compared to athletes and lack of special sporting equipment for them.

Overcoming Challenges

Research studies have reported that sports, meditation and other cultural artwork enhances individuals lives and allow them to cope with stressful situations in a controlled manner. Stress management is observed to me more organized among the people who take up sport or any task like running, gymnasium or yoga that involves physical strength and relaxation techniques as athlete features stress on a daily basis while performing or sometimes also training. Stress indeed acts as a tool to enhance performance, minimal amount of stress is needed to evoke a healthy response. If the stress level over exceeds then it may lead to anxiety and affect them on various areas like performance or even their routine tasks. However, non-sportspersons belong to the normal population where they too come across stressful situations at various contexts like stress caused due to job, family, relationships, technology, health or may be even society.

Health

Health is the state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO). Health is a dynamic condition resulting from a body's constant adjustment and adaptation in response to stresses and changes in the environment for maintaining an inner equilibrium called homeostasis. There are many determinants of health. Sport is one of them acting as a tool to help an individual maintain equilibrium and acquire the state of homeostasis.

Emotional Competency

One of the components for healthy lifestyles is emotional competency. Quality of life increases ultimately due to emotional competence as it enhances one's personal, relational and professional performance. According to Daniel Goleman, Emotional Competence is a learned ability grounded in Emotional Intelligence. Emotional Intelligence influences our potential for learning the practical emotional competencies, and developing the emotional literacy necessary for quality of life, life satisfaction, and overall happiness. Such skills include development of Self/Social/Relational Awareness, Management and Competence.

Emotions, whether pleasant or unpleasant, always sustain activity which maintains or enhances the organism. Incongruent and devaluating experiences are perceived as threats, arousing anxiety that force oneself to take defensive measures. Immature persons unable to defend against these threats relate to adequacy and worth as they fail to foresee the probable consequence of action which refer in disintegration and catastrophic psychological break-downs. Thus emotions is an impulse towards a definite form of behaviour, (Drever, 1972) may arouse, sustain and direct activity and play an energising role, (Coleman, 1970) in the undaunted expression of behaviour. Allport (1961) stated that we survive through competence, grow through competence and actualize ourselves through competence. Emotional competence as an efficiency to deal effectively with several dissociable but related processes is a blending of five competencies (Coleman, 1970) namely Adequate Depth of Feeling (ADF), Adequate Expression and Control of Emotions (AEC), Ability to Function with Emotions (AFE), Ability to Cope with Problem Emotions (ACPE), and Enhancement of Positive Emotions (EPE).

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to access the quality of life of Athletes, Para Athletes and Non-Sportspersons by measuring them on these five emotional competencies with the help of Emotional Competency Scale by Bharadwaj & Sharma.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Frinch and Sloper (2002) in a research entitled 'Survey of young people in disability and sport' by the University of York identified sport as a unique contribution in tackling social exclusions and providing wider benefits in relation to health. Middleton, Marsh, Martin, Richards and Perry (2002) through a qualitative research studied the mental toughness of 10 elite athletes and stated that mental toughness is significantly influenced by the interaction between the factors within the individual and the stressor or environmental characteristics. The interaction between mental toughness characteristics and factors within the stressor or environment remain a significant direction for future investigation.

Krane and Orkis (2009) in their research on sports and employment among American disabilities found that people with disabilities who indicate that they are physically active are more likely to be employed, to believe that being physically active has helped them advance in their jobs, and to lead to a healthier lifestyle. Those physically advance in their jobs, and to lead to a healthier lifestyle. Those physically active report a

greater life satisfaction and are more sociable and positive about their life prospects. Trevedios (2015) in his cross sectional study on sponsorship for disabled athletes reported the disturbance in focus of athletes due to the stress created because of sponsorship.

III. METHOD

Statement of the problem

Do Athletes, Para athletes and Non-Sportspersons differ significantly in Emotional Competencies?

Objectives

To study emotional competencies among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons namely adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions, ability to function with emotions, ability to cope with problem emotions and enhancement of positive emotions.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on emotional competencies.

Variables

Independent Variables - Athletes, Para-athletes, non-sportspersons

Dependent Variables – Emotional competencies

Research Design

Exploratory research study to compare emotional competencies among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons.

Sample

Sample consists of 30 athletes, 30 para athletes and 30 non-sportspersons drawn randomly from the respective population.

● Inclusion Criteria:

○ Athletes and Para athletes.

- Current performing athlete and achievement in past 3 yrs
- National level / First Class or International Level
- Age range between 18 to 30years

○ Non-sportspersons.

- Non participant of any type of professional sporting activity
- Age range between 18 to 30years

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● Exclusion Criteria:

○ Athletes and Para athletes.

- Retired athletes
- Athletes with a gap from sports profession for more than 3 year
- Age range beyond 18 to 30years

○ Non-sportspersons.

- Psychological disorder
- Physical illness or disability
- Age range beyond 18 to 30years

Test

The Scale of Emotional Competencies (revised) by Sharama & Bharadwaj (2007) consist of 30 items with a five-point scale based on the lines of Likert having five alternatives to each items. Each item constitutes to one of the five given emotional competencies.

Item number corresponding to each of the five competencies is given below:

	Description	Item Nos.
A.	Adequate depth of feeling (ADF)	1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26
B.	Adequate expression and control of emotions (AEC)	2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27
C.	Ability to function with emotion (AFE)	3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28
D.	Ability to cope with problem emotions (ACPE)	4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29
E.	Enhancement of positive emotions (EPE)	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30

● Validity : The validity of this scale is determined with factor A and C of 16 personality factor questionnaire and was found to be .64 and .69 respectively.

● Reliability : The reliability of this scale was derived by employing two methods

viz., test-retest reliability and split-half method. The obtained coefficient of reliability is as follows :

Method	Emotional Competencies					Total EC
	A ADF	B AECE	C AFE	D ACPE	E EPE	
Test- Retest (Interval 21 days)	.78	.85	.87	.75	.90	.74
Split-half	.71	.79	.82	.77	.81	.76

Procedure

The selected sample were personally contacted and their consent was obtained to participate in this research study. They were briefed about the nature of the study. The standard instructions were given as per the manual of instructions. The data thus collected has been scored and master sheet has been prepared.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data were analysed by applying descriptive statistics and one way analysis of variance to compare their emotional competencies in different areas.

Table 1

Mean and standard deviation among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on five emotional competencies scale.

Factor	Athlete (n=30)		Para Athlete (n=30)		Non-Sportspersons (n=30)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
A. Adequate depth of feeling (ADF)	19.13	2.67	18.40	3.82	16.70	4.20
B. Adequate expression and control of emotions (AEC)	21.30	3.03	19.83	3.94	18.37	3.98
C. Ability to function with emotions (AFE)	20.30	3.49	19.47	3.49	17.43	4.38
D. Ability to cope with problem emotions (ACPE)	21.83	3.04	20.97	3.38	18.90	5.21
E. Enhancement of positive emotions (EPE)	23.37	3.40	23.10	3.57	23.07	3.56

Table 2

Summary of one way ANOVA for factor A Adequate Depth of Feeling among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	93.48	2	46.74	3.56	.033
Within Groups	1142.96	87	13.13		
Total	1236.45	89			

The results were discussed as per the hypothesis formulated as there is no significant difference between Athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on different domains of emotional competencies. The results were discussed by formulating corollary hypothesis for different domains.

Corollary H_1

There is no significant difference in athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on adequate depth feeling.

There is significant difference between athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on factor A which measures adequate depth feelings ($F=3.56$, $p < 0.05$). The hypothesis has been rejected as there was a significant difference between the groups. To understand the difference between the groups Scheffes post hoc test was used.

Table 3

Scheffes Post Hoc Test for Factor A measuring Adequate Depth of Feeling.

(I) Category	(J) Category	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Athlete	Para athlete	.73	.73
	Non sportspersons	2.43	.03
Para athlete	Athlete	-.73	.73
	Non sportspersons	1.70	.19

The Post Hoc Scheffe's test revealed that there is a significant difference between athletes and non-sportspersons where athletes were found to have high level of adequate depth feeling when compared to non-sportspersons ($p<.05$). There was no significance difference between athletes and para athletes, and with para athletes and non-sportspersons. Athletes significantly differed from non-sportspersons and were found to have high confidence and capability with all reality assumptions that constituted into adequate depth feelings which were specially associated with effective judgement and personality integration that ensures vigorous participation in living. While para athletes also reflected high feeling of adequate depth feeling but no significant difference was found.

Table 4

Summary of one way ANOVA for factor B Adequate Expressions and Control of Emotions among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	129.067	2	64.53	4.76	.011
Within Groups	1179.433	87	13.55		
Total	1308.500	89			

Corollary H_2

There is no significant difference in athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons in adequate expression and control of emotions. A significant difference was observed between athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons of factor B that measured adequate expression and control of emotions ($F = 4.76$, $p < 0.01$). The hypothesis was rejected as there was a significant difference between the groups. Scheffes post hoc test was further applied to understand the difference between the groups.

Table 5

Scheffes Post Hoc Test for Factor B measuring Adequate Depth of Feeling.

(I) Category	(J) Category	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Athlete	Para athlete	1.46	.30
	Non sportspersons	2.93	.01
Para athlete	Athlete	-1.46	.30
	Non sportspersons	1.46	.30

Scheffe's Post Hoc test revealed significantly high difference between athletes and non-sportspersons on the factor adequate expression and control of emotions ($p<.01$), where athletes exhibited a significantly high tendency in comparison to non-sportspersons which was marked by adequate emotional expressiveness based on fulsome expression and control of emotions leading to controlled and emotionally organized behaviour. Para athletes also showed high feeling of adequate expression and control of emotions but the difference was not significant. A study by Middleton S. & Marsh H.(2001) identified high mental toughness in elite toughness.

Athletes are trained effectively cope up with disturbing emotions, moreover their aggressiveness is used as a powerful tool while performing their sport.

Table 6

Summary of one way ANOVA for Factor C Ability to Function with Emotion among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons.

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	130.46	2	65.23	4.48	.014
Within Groups	1265.13	87	14.54		
Total	1395.60	89			

Corollary H_3

There is no significant difference in athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on ability to function with emotions. There is high significant difference among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on factor C which measures ability to function with emotions ($F=4.48$, $p< 0.01$). The hypothesis was rejected as significant difference was found between the groups. To understand the difference between the groups Scheffes post hoc test was used.

Table 7

Scheffes Post Hoc for Factor C Ability to Function with Emotions.

(I) Category	(J) Category	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Athlete	Para athlete	.83	.70
	Non sportspersons	2.86	.01
Para athlete	Athlete	-.83	.70
	Non sportspersons	2.03	.12

Scheffe's Post Hoc test discovered significant difference between athletes and non-sportspersons where athletes were found to have high level of significance of ability to function with emotions when compared to non-sportspersons($p<.01$). There was no significance difference between athletes and para athletes, and between para athletes and non-sportspersons. Athletes showed a high developed characteristic pattern of emotional reactivity that helps them in adequate mode of functioning and performing actions of daily routines.

Table 8

Summary of one way ANOVA for Factor D Ability to Cope with Problem Emotions among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	136.26	2	68.13	4.26	.017
Within Groups	1389.83	87	15.97		
Total	1526.10	89			

Corollary H_4

There is no significant difference in athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on ability to cope with problem emotions. There is significant difference amongst athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on factor D which measures ability to cope with problem emotions ($F = 4.26$, $p < 0.05$). The hypothesis has been rejected as there was a significant difference between the groups. To understand the difference between the groups Scheffes post hoc test was used.

Table 9
Scheffes Post Hoc Test for Factor D Ability to Cope with Problem Emotions.

(I) Category	(J) Category	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Athlete	Para athlete	.86	.70
	Non sportspersons	2.93	.02
Para athlete	Athlete	-.86	.70
	Non sportspersons	2.06	.14

Schefffe's Post Hoc test indicated significant difference in ability to cope with problem emotions between athletes and non-sportspersons ($p<.05$). No significant difference was found in the factor stating ability to cope with problem emotions between athlete and para athletes, and para athletes and non-sportspersons. Athletes highly indicated understanding of role of sensitivity and the detrimental effects of such emotions in the beginning and development of the ability to resist their harmful effects thereafter.

Table 10
Summary of one way ANOVA for Factor E Enhancement of Positive Emotions in athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons.

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.62	2	.81	.06	.93
Within Groups	1075.53	87	12.36		
Total	1077.15	89			

Corollary H_5

There is no significant difference in athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on enhancement of positive emotion. No significant difference was noticed in enhancement of positive emotion factor among athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons. Athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons equally displayed that enhancement of positive emotions refers to their competency to develop a predominance. The hypothesis has been accepted as no significant difference was found in athletes, para athletes and non-sportspersons on enhancement of positive emotion.

V. CONCLUSIONS

- Athletes were found to have significantly higher level of adequate depth feelings compared to non-sportspersons.
- Significantly very high level of adequate expression and control emotions was instituted among athletes when compared with non-sportspersons.
- Athletes were found to have high level of ability to function with emotion in comparison to the non-sportspersons.
- Athletes were significantly high on ability to cope with problems as compared to non-sportspersons.

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