

Sport Self Confidence as a Psychological Characteristic between Indian Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular Athletes

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Abstract

Background: The purpose of the study was to investigate the Sport Self Confidence (Trait and State) as a Psychological Characteristic between Indian Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular Athletes.

Methods: For the purpose of the study sixty male Paralympics sportsmen and sixty male regular athletes were selected randomly during the respective National Championships. Sport Self-Confidence was assessed by the total scores in Sport Confidence inventory (Trait and State) developed by Vealey, (1986). With the help of the questionnaire related to Sport Self Confidence (Trait and State) as a psychological Characteristic necessary data was collected. The data was analyzed by applying Descriptive Statistics i.e. Mean, Standard Deviation and Range & Independent ‘t’ test in order to compare the significant difference among Paralympics sportsmen and Regular Athletes. Further, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) technique was applied to determine significant difference among different games of Paralympics sportsmen. The level of significance was set at 0.05 levels.

Results: Paralympics sportsmen as a whole (Athletics, Badminton, Power- lifting and Swimming) possess higher trait and state sport self confidence. Paralympics (Badminton group) showed higher mean scores on trait and state sport self confidence than the other three groups namely Athletics, power-lifting and swimming. Insignificant difference was found between Paralympics sportsmen and regular athletes in relation to state sport self confidence whereas significant difference was found between Paralympics sportsmen and regular athletes in relation to trait sport self confidence. Significant differences were observed between different games of Paralympics sportsmen in relation to trait and state sport self confidence. Least significant difference (L.S.D) post-Hoc mean comparisons indicated that there were significant differences between paired mean of athletics & power lifting (6.93), badminton & power lifting (5.53) and power-lifting & swimming (4.60) on trait sport self confidence, athletics & power lifting (3.93) and badminton & power lifting (5.46) on state sport self confidence.

Key words: Sport Self Confidence, Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular Athletes.

INTRODUCTION

“In general terms, self-confidence refers to an individual’s perceived ability to act effectively in a situation to overcome obstacles and to get things go all right” (Basavanna, 1975). A self-confident person perceives himself to be socially competent, emotionally mature, intellectually adequate, successful, satisfied, decisive, optimistic, independent, self-assured, forward-moving, fairly, assertive and having leadership qualities (Agnihotry, 1987).

Vealey (1986) defined sport confidence as “the belief or degree of certainty that individuals possess about their ability to be successful in sports”. Vealey further distinguished between trait sport confidence (SC- trait) and state sport confidence (SC- State). Vealey defined trait sport confidence as “the belief or degree of certainty individuals usually possess about their ability to be successful in

sports and state sport confidence as “the belief or degree of certainty individuals possess at one particular moment about their ability to be successful in sports”.

Participation in sports can increase self-confidence. Self-confidence is a cognition that reflects one’s conviction that he/she can be successful. In the realm of sports, it is very possible that one’s self-confidence will be positively influenced because there is the occasion to accomplish goals, receive recognition, and rewards. If an athlete with a disability can find self-confidence in sports, it may be that this sports specific self-confidence will filter into other areas of life. That is, athletes who feel confident in their ability to be successful in sports may begin feeling more confident about being successful at other life tasks. In this way, sports for individuals with disabilities can become an arena for improving quality of life. Self-confidence can also be considered from a sports-specific perspective in terms of the relationship it has with performance. It is a well-known fact that athletes who have high self-confidence consistently outperform athletes who have low self-confidence. To have successful performances then, it is necessary to have high self-confidence. Therefore, coaches and sport psychologists should make every possible effort to create an atmosphere that is conducive to the development and maintenance of self-confidence (Bonnar, 1997).

Vealey (1986) contended that the model of sport confidence that is grounded in perceptions of ability could predict performance. The ability to be successful performance varies for different individuals. In the paradigm, Vealey included a competitive orientation construct that reflected what types of goals (performance or outcome oriented) were important to the athlete in defining success. Performance goals are based on performing well whereas outcome goals focused on winning. The conceptualization of sport confidence is a combination of competitive orientation and the certainty about the ability to be successful in sports to explain and predict behaviour.

Self-confidence is one of the most frequently cited psychological factors considered by many to be a key factor for a successful performance (Feltz 1988). In earlier studies, it was found that successful athletes exhibit higher self-confidence than unsuccessful athletes (Treasure *et al.* 1996). This study noted that athletes who have higher self-confidence during competitions are more likely to be successful. It is also important to note that confident athletes believe in their ability to perform well and win (Covassin & Pero 2002). Performance may be determined by an individual’s belief that he or she has the ability to execute skills which are required by the situation and the responsiveness of the environment. Therefore, the ability of personal self-confidence strongly contributes to success or failure.

Martin and Gill (1991) integrated the three development constructs of sport confidence proposed by Vealey (1986) and investigated the relationship among sport confidence, self efficacy and performance. The participants respond to the items on the TSCI (Vealey, 1986). The trait sport confidence Inventory was found to be a predictor of state sport confidence. Martin and Gill indicated that “an individual’s enduring and consistent level of sport confidence (SC- Trait) is a powerful predictor of his or her more transitory pre-competitive state sport confidence levels”.

Some studies related to sports confidence of athletes with disabilities have indicated that participation in sports can help in developing confidence but that athletes with disabilities may not have had the same opportunities as able-bodied athletes to develop disposition and skills necessary to maintain self-confidence in competitive situations (Hanrahan, 2004). However, a study involving norwegian winter olympians and Paralympians indicated that even as similar in motivational profiles, the Paralympics athletes perceived a more mastery-oriented climate (Pensgaard, Roberts & Ursin, 1999), with a mastery-orientation likely to be associated with increased sport confidence due to the positive effect on self-efficacy as a consequence of successful task completion (Morris & Koehn, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the Sport Self Confidence (Trait and State) as a Psychological Characteristic between Indian Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular Athletes.

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that there might not be significant differences between Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular athletes on Sport Self Confidence (Trait and State) as a Psychological Characteristic.

PROCEDURE AND METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study sixty male Paralympics sportsmen (Athletics-15, Badminton-15, Power Lifting-15 and Swimming-15) and sixty male regular athletes (Athletics-15, Badminton-15, Power Lifting-15 and Swimming-15) were selected randomly during the respective National Championships.

Keeping the feasibility aspect in the mind and importance of psychological aspects, the following variable was selected for the purpose of this study: Sport Self Confidence (Trait and State). The criterion measures adopted for the study was as follow: Sport Self-Confidence was assessed by the total scores in Sport Confidence inventory (Trait and State) developed by Vealey, (1986).

With the help of the questionnaire related to Sport Self Confidence (Trait and State) as a Psychological Characteristic necessary data was collected. Collection of data was made in regarding psychological variable from sixty Indian Paralympics sportsmen and sixty Regular Athletes.

The data was analyzed by applying Descriptive Statistics i.e. Mean, Standard Deviation and Range & Independent 't' test in order to compare the significant difference among Paralympics sportsmen and Regular Athletes. Further, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) technique was applied to determine significant difference among different games of Paralympics sportsmen. The level of significance was set at 0.05 levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

Table No – 1: Descriptive Statistics of Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular Athletes on Sport Self Confidence (Trait and State)

Variables	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	Range	
				Minimum	Maximum
Trait Sport Self Confidence	Paralympics Sportsmen	104.40	5.12	96.00	115.00
	Regular Athletes	101.00	5.59	86.00	112.00
State Sport Self Confidence	Paralympics Sportsmen	100.46	4.84	92.00	110.00
	Regular Athletes	100.06	4.23	92.00	110.00

Table No – 2: Comparison of Mean Scores of Paralympics Sportsman and Regular Athletes between Different Games

Variable	Groups	Athletics	Badminton	Power lifting	Swimming
Trait Sport Self-Confidence	Paralympics Sportsmen	101.73	103.13	108.67	104.67
	Regular Athletes	100.46	102.20	101.66	99.66
State Sport Self-Confidence	Paralympics Sportsmen	99.66	98.13	103.66	100.47
	Regular Athletes	100.20	99.66	103.33	100.66

Figure No -1. Graphical Representations of Mean Scores Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular Athletes on Trait Sport Self Confidence

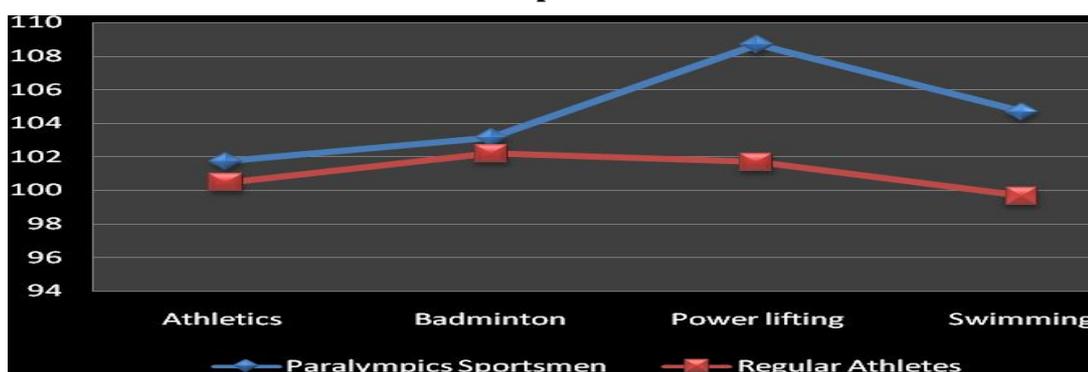


Figure No -2. Graphical Representations of Mean Scores Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular Athletes on State Sport Self Confidence

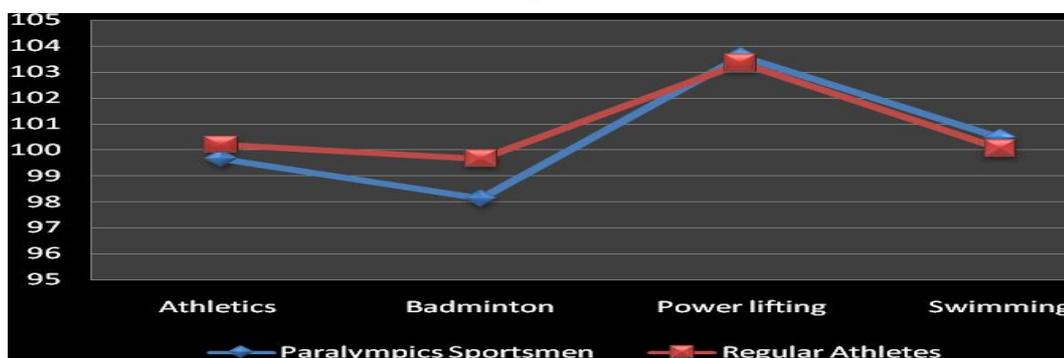


Table No – 3: Comparison of Mean Scores of Paralympics Sportsman and Regular Athletes among Different Games

Variable	Groups	Mean	Std.	N	df	MD	't'
Trait Sport Self-Confidence	Paralympics Sportsmen	104.40	5.12	60	118	3.40	3.46*
	Regular athletes	101.00	5.59				
State Sport Self-Confidence	Paralympics Sportsmen	100.46	4.84	60	118	0.40	0.48
	Regular athletes	100.06	4.23				

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table No-3 revealed that significant difference was found between Paralympics sportsmen and regular athletes in trait sports self-confidence $t(118)=3.46^*$, $P<.05$ whereas insignificant difference was found between Paralympics sportsmen and regular athletes in state sports self-confidence $t(118)=0.48$, $P>.05$.

Table No-4: Analysis of Variance of Trait Sport Self Confidence among Different Games of Paralympics Sportsmen

Source of Variance	DF	SS	MSS	F-ratio
Between Groups	3	405.46	135.15	6.599*
Within Groups	56	1146.93	20.48	

*Significant at 0.05 level of confidence, $F_{0.05}(3, 56) = 2.76$

Table No.-4 revealed that significant difference was found among different games of paralympics sportsmen in relation to trait sport self confidence, as obtained 'F' ratio of 6.599 was much greater than $F_{0.05}(3,56) = 2.76$

As the F-ratio was found significant in the case of trait sport self confidence, the least significant difference (L.S.D.) post-hoc test was applied to test the significant difference between paired means. Further, the L.S.D. analysis for paired means on trait sport self confidence has also been presented in the table-5.

Table No-5: Least Significant Difference Post-hoc Test for the Comparison of Paired Means of Paralympics Sportsmen in Relation to Trait Sport Self Confidence

Means				MD	CD
Athletics	Badminton	Power lifting	Swimming		
101.73	103.13			1.40	3.31*
101.73		108.67		6.93*	
101.73			104.07	2.33	
	103.13	108.67		5.53*	
	103.13		104.07	.93	
		108.67	104.07	4.60*	

* Significant at 0.05 level of confidence, $F_{0.05}(3,56) = 2.76$

It is evident from table No.-5 that mean difference between athletics & power lifting (6.93), badminton & power lifting (5.53) and power lifting & swimming (4.60) were found significant in relation to trait sport self confidence since mean difference was found greater than critical difference of 3.31 at 0.05 level. While mean difference between athletics & badminton (1.40), athletics & swimming (2.33) and badminton & swimming (.93) were found insignificant in relation to trait sport self confidence since mean difference was found lower than critical difference of 3.31 at 0.05 level.

Table No-6: Analysis of Variance of State Sport Self Confidence among Different Games of Paralympics Sportsmen

Source of Variance	DF	SS	MSS	F-ratio
Between Groups	3	238.53	79.51	3.891*
Within Groups	56	1144.40	20.43	

*Significant at 0.05 level of confidence, $F_{0.05}(3,56) = 2.76$

Table No.-6 indicates that the significant difference was found among different games of paralympics sportsmen in relation to state sport self confidence, as obtained 'F' ratio of 3.891 was much greater than $F_{0.05}(3,56) = 2.76$.

As the F-ratio was found significant in the case of state sport self confidence, the least significant difference (L.S.D.) post-hoc test was applied to test the significant difference between paired means. Further, the L.S.D. analysis for paired means on state sport self confidence has also been presented in the table 7.

Table No-7: Least Significant Difference Post-hoc Test for the Comparison of Paired Means of Paralympics Sportsmen in Relation to State Sport Self Confidence

Means				MD	CD
Athletics	Badminton	Power lifting	Swimming		

99.66	98.13			1.53	3.30*
99.66		103.60		3.93*	
99.66			100.47	.80	
	98.13	103.60		5.46*	
	98.13		100.47	1.00	
		103.60	100.47	3.13	

* Significant at 0.05 level of confidence

It is evident from table No-7 that mean difference between athletics & power lifting (3.93) and badminton & power lifting (5.46) were found significant in relation to State sport self confidence since mean difference was found greater than critical difference of 3.30 at 0.05 level. While mean difference between athletics & badminton (1.53), athletics & swimming (.80), badminton & swimming (1.00) and power lifting & swimming (3.13) were found insignificant in relation to state sport self confidence since mean difference was found lower than critical difference of 3.30 at 0.05 level.

DISCUSSION

Sports confidence is a strong psychological attribute to any sports, denotes a firm trust in oneself, i.e. one has confidence in own abilities and able to put to use them all in time. The sport confidence is a function of an athlete's personality trait of confidence, the situation and the competitive orientation. These factors interact to produce the psychological state of sport confidence in turn influences the quality of an athlete's behaviour.

Trait self-confidence refers to the belief or degree of certainty individuals possess about their ability to be successful in sports (Vealey 1986). The trait sport self confidence is positively related to use the problem strategies (Grove and Heard, 1977). This study revealed that the Paralympics sportsmen possessed greater trait sport self-confidence in comparison to regular athletes; whereas significant difference was found between Paralympics sportsmen and regular athletes. A higher level of trait sport self-confidence in Paralympics sportsmen may be due to their higher self-confidence by trait in comparison to regular athletes. Finally, significant difference was found between different games of Paralympics sportsmen in relation to trait sport self-confidence.

The belief or degree of certainty individuals possess at one particular moment about their ability to be successful in sport (Vealey, 1986). Further it revealed that the Paralympics sportsmen possessed greater state sport self-confidence in comparison to regular athletes whereas no significant difference was found between Paralympics sportsmen and regular athletes. The higher level of state sport self-confidence in Paralympics sportsmen may be due to situational conditions, emotional balance of athlete and ability to handle pressure while performing the task in comparison to regular athletes. Finally, significant difference was found between different games of Paralympics sportsmen in relation to state sport self confidence.

The similar trends had been cited by **Mahl (2007), Mellaliev and Hantons (2006), Kjormo and Halvari (2002), Voight and Callaghan (2000), Reddy et al. (1999).**

Discussion of Hypothesis

The hypothesis stated that there might not be significant differences between Paralympics Sportsmen and Regular athletes on Sport Self Confidence (Trait and State) as a Psychological Characteristic. Hence, the hypothesis set earlier was rejected in case of trait sport self confidence and accepted in case of state sport self confidence.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Paralympics sportsmen as a whole (Athletics, Badminton, Power- lifting and Swimming) possess higher trait and state sport self confidence.
2. Paralympics (Badminton group) showed higher mean scores on trait and state sport self confidence than the other three groups namely Athletics, power-lifting and swimming.
3. Insignificant difference was found between Paralympics sportsmen and regular athletes in relation to state sport self confidence whereas significant difference was found between Paralympics sportsmen and regular athletes in relation to trait sport self confidence.
4. Significant differences were observed between different games of Paralympics sportsmen in relation to trait and state sport self confidence.
5. Least significant difference (L.S.D) post-Hoc mean comparisons indicated that there were significant differences between paired mean of athletics & power lifting (6.93), badminton & power lifting (5.53) and power-lifting & swimming (4.60) on trait sport self confidence, athletics & power lifting (3.93) and badminton & power lifting (5.46) on state sport self confidence.

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