



Comparative Analysis of Psychological Skills Between Men and Women Volleyball Players in Tamilnadu During Practice and Competition Conditions

KEYWORDS

Performance Strategies, Volleyball players, Practice and Competition condition

T. Thanemozhi

Tamil Nadu Physical Education and Sports University,
Chennai

Dr. Mrs. J. Glory Darling Margaret

Assistant Professor, YMCA College of Physical
Education, Chennai

ABSTRACT The purpose of the study was to analyze the Psychological Skills between men and women volleyball players in Tamilnadu during practice and competition condition. To achieve the purpose of the study the investigator selected 24 men volleyball players and 24 women volleyball players from Tamilnadu in the age group of 18-25 years. Psychological skills were assessed by Test of Performance Strategy (TOPS) Questionnaire authored by Thomas, Murphy, and Hardy (1999). It is a self-report instrument designed to measure specific psychological skills used by athletes during practice and competition conditions. It consists of eight subscales in the practice portion and eight in the competition portion. Within each of the 16 subscales, there are four items resulting in a total of 112 items. The maximum score on each section (practice and competition) of the TOPS is 160 (Frey et al., 2003). A higher score indicates a greater use of psychological skills. The results showed that women volleyball players were found better than men volleyball players in automaticity and relaxation variables of performance strategies during practice condition and in automaticity, goal setting and activation in competition condition.

INTRODUCTION

In general there are different types of sport skills. Trainings have proliferated and the records and the gap between athletes have shortened. Mental preparation and psychological skills have become increasingly important so that many coaches and athletes lay emphasis more on psychological skills to achieve sporting success. Generally, optimal performance of athletic skills depends on three factors which include physical skill, technical skill and mental fitness.

Sport psychologists are concerned about coping strategies and their importance in sport performance and emphasized the need to identify relevant coping strategies as well as to instruct sport consultants, trainers and athletes, about how they teach and how it is learned and how these strategies should be applied in practice (Smith et al., 1995). Participating in competitive sports place players under intense physical and psychological demands (Crockher et al., 1996). These rigorous challenges require players not only to use automated technical and tactical skills but also to develop and employ cognitive and behavioural coping skills to achieve performance success and satisfaction (Gould et al., 1993).

Psychological skills are divided into several types, one of which is creation, regulation, and management of motivation. It is defined as the intensity of behavior and the amount of effort and activity to achieve a target or determine the direction of behavior. Goal-orientation is also another mental skill indicating the ability to identify and classify goals and strive to achieve them. These skills help athletes and coaches to find both the goal and the successful way to achieve it. It also makes it possible to assess the quality and extent of progress. Thus the investigator was interested to analyze the Psychological Skills between men and women volleyball players in Tamilnadu during practice and competition condition.

Gender is an important interpersonal factor in competitive sport. Female athletes, compared with male athletes reported higher cognitive anxiety (Martens et al., 1990; & Russe-

let al., 1998) and lower self-confidence (Krane et al., 1994; & Martens et al., 1990). Also, males used more problem – focused coping strategies, while females used more emotion focused coping strategies (Anshel et al., 1998; & Antonini et al., 2005). Gill (2002) stated that male athletes were more win oriented and focused more on interpersonal comparison, while female scored higher on goal orientation and focused more on personal goals. To achieve success in this field of sport it is recommended that, in addition to preserve the current status by applying sport psychology, other factors influencing the performance of volleyball players such as physical skill, and tactical preparation should be monitored.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The purpose of the study was to analyze the Psychological Skills between men and women volleyball players in Tamilnadu during practice and competition condition. To achieve the purpose of the study the investigator selected 24 men volleyball players and 24 women volleyball players from Tamilnadu in the age group of 18-25 years.

TOOLS

The participants completed the Test of Performance Strategies (TOPS) questionnaire during the competition season of 2013-14 sessions. A TOPS is a 64-item self-report instrument designed by Thomas, Murphy, and Hardy (1999) to measure the psychological skills and strategies used by athletes in competition and during practice. It consists of two scales, competition and practice. Each scale is consisted of eight subscales. The 8 competition subscales are: self-talk (maintaining a positive internal dialogue), emotional control (controlling emotions under pressure), automaticity (performing with little conscious effort automatically), goal-setting (setting personal, specific goals), imagery (visualizing sport performance), activation (maintaining an optimal level of arousal), relaxation (practicing to remain calm under pressure), and negative thinking (thoughts of failure). The practice subscales are the same, except that negative thinking is replaced by attentional control (focusing attention effectively). TOPS has been used in numerous studies in order to evaluate the psychological skills used by ath-

letes from various sports (Katsikas et al., 2009).

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The statistical analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 19.0. Descriptive statistic (Mean and Standard Deviation) and Independent sample t test was performed to compare the performance strategies used by men and women volleyball players under practice and competition condition.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tables below show the descriptive statistics (Mean and standard deviation) and independent t- test for different parameters of performance strategies used by men and women volleyball players during practice and competition condition

Table-I.
Independent t-Test For Differences Between Men And Women Volleyball Players For Performance Strategies During Practice Condition

S.No.	Variables	Men		Women		T Ratio	df	P value	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D					
1	Self-Talk	13.07	2.93	14.75	2.67	-0.947	22	0.35	-1.08	1.144
2	Emotional Control	12.38	2.54	11.83	3.10	0.648	22	0.52	0.75	1.156
3	Automaticity	10.50	2.54	13.83	1.75	-3.743	22	0.001*	-3.33	0.890
4	Goal Setting	13.17	2.41	13.00	2.04	0.183	22	0.86	0.17	0.911
5	Imagery	12.30	2.43	14.08	2.15	-1.690	22	0.11	-1.58	0.937
6	Activation	11.25	1.76	12.75	2.38	-1.812	22	0.08	-1.50	0.838
7	Attention Control	12.08	3.23	12.17	3.46	-0.061	22	0.95	-0.08	1.366
8	Relaxation	10.33	1.96	14.17	2.89	-3.342	22	0.003*	-3.33	0.997

*significant at P≤ 0.05

Table -I shows that Independent t –test were found to be significant in the performance strategies used by men and women volleyball players during practice condition.

It reveals that women volleyball players had better automaticity than men volleyball players which is the ability to do things without occupying the mind with the low-level details required, allowing it to become an automatic response pattern or habit of playing volleyball during practice. It is also usually the result of learning, repetition, and practice. Women also showed better relaxation which is the state of being free from tension and anxiety. This may be due to the influence of coach, pattern of training which balances food, training and rest.

No significant difference was found in Self-Talk, Emotional Control, Goal Setting, Imagery, Activation and Attention Control between men and women volleyball players during practice condition. In all the cases the level of significance was fixed at 0.05 at 22 degree of freedom (p≤0.05).

Table-II
Independent t-Test For Differences Between Men And Women Volleyball Players For Performance Strategies During Competition Condition

S.No.	Variables	Men		Women		T Ratio	df	P value	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D					
1	Self-Talk	12.38	2.77	13.50	2.24	-1.138	22	0.27	-1.17	1.028
2	Emotional Control	11.42	2.11	12.58	2.84	-1.142	22	0.27	-1.17	1.021
3	Automaticity	12.00	2.89	14.17	1.99	-2.137	22	0.04*	-2.17	1.013
4	Goal Setting	12.00	1.71	13.67	1.37	-2.639	22	0.02*	-1.67	0.631
5	Imagery	13.75	2.93	13.50	2.11	0.240	22	0.81	0.25	1.041
6	Activation	12.00	2.63	15.25	2.67	-3.006	22	0.01*	-3.25	1.081
7	Attention Control	13.58	2.75	13.42	2.15	0.166	22	0.87	0.17	1.006
8	Relaxation	12.00	3.41	14.25	2.45	-1.855	22	0.77	-2.25	1.213

*significant at P≤ 0.05

Table -2 shows that Independent t -test were found to be significant in the performance strategies used by men and women volleyball players during competition condition.

In competition condition women were better compared to men volleyball players in automaticity ('t' ratio –2.137) goal setting ('t' ratio – 2.639), and activation ('t' ratio – 3.006), at 22 degree of freedom (p≤0.05). No significant difference was found in Self-Talk, Emotional Control, Imagery, Attention Control and Relaxation of Men and Women volleyball players during competition condition. This may be due to proper psychological training and competition experience that they would have undergone in previous matches. In all the cases the level of significance was fixed at 0.05 at 22 degree of freedom (p≤0.05).

Figure 1
MEAN VALUES OF MEN AND WOMEN VOLLEYBALL PLAYERS ON PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS DURING PRACTICE CONDITION

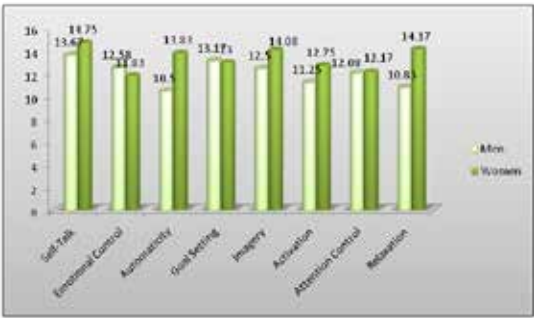
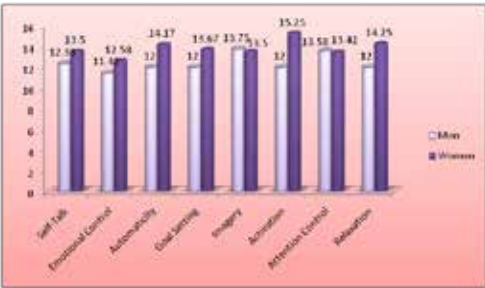


Figure 2
MEAN VALUES OF MEN AND WOMEN VOLLEYBALL PLAYERS ON PSYCHOLOGICAL SKILLS DURING COMPETITION CONDITION



CONCLUSION

Looking at the present findings it is evident that women had better performance strategies than men in both practice and competition condition. This proves that women are committed for the common cause, achievement oriented and playing volleyball becomes automatic without preoccupied mind which is focused on training and competition.

1. It reveals that women volleyball players had better Automaticity and relaxation than men volleyball during practice condition
2. No significant difference was found in Self-Talk, Emotional Control, Goal setting, Imagery, Activation and Attention Control between men and women volleyball players during practice condition.
3. In competition condition women were better compared to men volleyball players in automaticity, goal setting and activation.
4. No significant difference was found in Self-Talk, Emotional Control, Imagery, Attention Control and Relaxation of Men and Women volleyball players during competition condition
5. Women volleyball players were found better than men volleyball players in most of the variables of performance strategies during practice condition and competition condition

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