

Original Article

Inside the Minds of Champions: Understanding the Psychology of Elite Women Kabaddi Players

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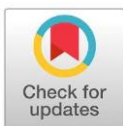
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Abstract

Study Purpose: This study delves into the psychological profiling of female elite Kabaddi players, focusing on variables such as anxiety, goal orientation, mental toughness, group cohesion, and personality. The aim is to provide valuable insights that can inform targeted support and training strategies for high-level athletes.

Methods and Materials: Twenty outstanding female Kabaddi players from various states participated in the study, with variables selected based on literature, related research, expert opinions, and the study's purpose. Psychological traits were measured using established questionnaires, and statistical analysis employed MS-Excel-10 for profile chart development and SPSS-24 for comparison.

Results: Descriptive statistics reveal moderate levels of anxiety among elite female Kabaddi players, with a strong focus on task-oriented goal orientation. Mental toughness profiles indicate high self-confidence and motivational control but challenges in managing negative energy. Group cohesion is a strength, with balanced individual and group dynamics. Personality traits suggest a well-rounded psychological profile, with high openness to experience.

Conclusion: This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the psychological characteristics of female elite Kabaddi players, offering insights into anxiety, goal orientation, mental toughness, group cohesion, and personality traits. The findings inform targeted interventions and training strategies for optimizing player performance and team dynamics.

Keywords: Anxiety, Goal Orientation, Mental Toughness, Group Cohesion, Personality

Introduction

The profiling of female elite Kabaddi players on psychological variables such as anxiety, goal orientation, mental toughness, group cohesion, and personality provides valuable insights into the psychological characteristics of high-level athletes, enabling targeted support and training strategies (D. Kumar, Dhull, et al., 2023; Panda et al., 2022).

Analyzing anxiety levels in female elite Kabaddi players helps in understanding how stress impacts their performance (Deepak & Yadav, 2016; NARA et al., n.d.; Nara, Kumar, Rathee, & Kumar, 2022a, 2022b). Lower levels of anxiety are generally associated with better performance, so identifying and managing anxiety can be crucial

for optimizing player output (Deepak et al., 2022; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023; NARA et al., 2022). Researching goal orientations among female Kabaddi players differentiates between those who are task-oriented, focusing on personal improvement and mastery of skills, and those who are ego-oriented, concentrating on outperforming others (D. Kumar, Nara, et al., 2023; Nara, Kumar, Rathee, & Phogat, 2022; Pal et al., 2020). Understanding these orientations can help tailor coaching methods to individual players' motivations, enhancing their dedication and focus (Dhull, n.d., 2017, 2018; Kasnia & Dhull, 2022; D. Kumar, Nara, et al., 2023; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023; S. Kumar et al., n.d.).

Mental toughness, encompassing traits like resilience and focus, is vital for athletes, especially in high-contact sports like Kabaddi. Profiling players for mental toughness helps in identifying individuals who can withstand pressure, cope with setbacks, and perform consistently well under challenging circumstances, thus guiding mental training programs (Dey et al., 1993; Nara, Kumar, Rathee, & Kumar, 2022a; Nara, Kumar, Rathee, & Phogat, 2022; Sidhu, 1986).

Examining group cohesion in female Kabaddi teams assesses the level of teamwork, communication, and trust among players (Pal et al., 2020; Sagre et al., 2022; Singh & Sharma, 2020). Strong group cohesion contributes to better collaboration, coordination, and overall team performance. Understanding the dynamics between female players can provide insights into the unique challenges faced by each gender and how team cohesion strategies might need to be tailored accordingly (Bovas, 2020; Thakur, 2016).

Studying personality traits, such as the Big Five (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism), helps in understanding how different traits impact playing styles, leadership roles, and team dynamics in female Kabaddi teams. Tailoring coaching approaches based on personality traits can enhance player development and team unity (Deepak et al., 2022; Dhull, n.d.; D. Kumar, Nara, et al., 2023).

In summary, profiling female elite Kabaddi players on these psychological variables offers a comprehensive understanding of their mental strengths and challenges (Sterne, 2013). This knowledge is instrumental in developing personalized coaching techniques, mental conditioning programs, and team-building strategies (D. Kumar, Kumar, et al., 2023; Paoli et al., 2013). By addressing the specific psychological needs of both female players, coaches and sports psychologists can optimize their performance, foster a cohesive team environment, and ultimately elevate the standard of Kabaddi at the elite level (Deepak Kumar, 2023; S. Kumar, Ahlawat, et al., 2023; Thakur, 2016; Weiss et al., 1997).

Materials and Methods

Selection of subjects

The subjects of the study were twenty (20) outstanding female Kabaddi players from various states, forces, and departments who participated in the senior national women's kabaddi tournament held at Charkhi Dadri. The individuals ranged in age from 18 to 37 years old.

Table 1 Criterion Measure

S.No	Variable	Criterion Measure
1	Anxiety	Self-Evaluation Questionnaire (STAI) made by Spielberger C.D., R.L., Gorsuch and R.E. Lushare (1983)
2	Goal Orientation	Goal Orientation Questionnaire made by Joan I. Duda& John G. Nicholls, (1989)
3	Mental Toughness	Mental Toughness Questionnaire made by Alan Goldberg (2005)
4	Group Cohesion	Team Sports Cohesion Questionnaire (GEQ) made by Albert V. Carron
5	Personality	Big Five Personality questionnaire made by Lewis Goldberg, (1980).

Selection of variables

On the basis of the available literature, findings of the related research studies, expert's opinion, facilities & instruments availability, scholars own understanding of the problem and keeping in mind the specific purpose of the study following Anxiety, Goal Orientation, Mental Toughness, Group Cohesion, Personality variables were selected for the study.

Statistical analysis

The analysis part was divided into two parts: Descriptive and Comparative parts respectively. For development of profile chart of female elite kabaddi players on selected psychological variables MS-Excel-10 was used. To compare the female elite kabaddi players on selected psychological variables independent-t test was used as the statistical technique and the level of significance was set at 0.05. In addition, descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were calculated. The SPSS-24 software was used for analysis.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics for Selected Psychological Variables of Female Elite Kabaddi Players

Variables	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trait Anxiety	20	17.00	39.00	56.00	981.00	49.050	4.298
State Anxiety	20	12.00	44.00	56.00	983.00	49.150	3.249
Goal Orientation Task	20	19.00	14.00	33.00	475.00	23.750	5.369
Goal Orientation Ego	20	9.00	16.00	25.00	399.00	19.950	2.438
Self Confidence	20	11.00	11.00	22.00	317.00	15.850	2.907
Negative Energy	20	12.00	12.00	24.00	369.00	18.450	3.531
Attention Control	20	9.00	13.00	22.00	347.00	17.350	2.434
Visual And Imaginary Control	20	13.00	7.00	20.00	269.00	13.450	3.154
Motivational Control	20	11.00	11.00	22.00	312.00	15.600	3.169
Positive Energy	20	14.00	6.00	20.00	262.00	13.100	4.128
Attitude Control	20	18.00	9.00	27.00	312.00	15.600	4.806
ATGS	20	18.00	13.00	31.00	422.00	21.100	5.200
ATGT	20	23.00	4.00	27.00	243.00	12.150	7.358
GIS	20	27.00	11.00	38.00	370.00	18.500	6.485
GIT	20	30.00	7.00	37.00	574.00	28.700	8.215
Extroversion	20	20.00	16.00	36.00	545.00	27.250	6.324
Agreeableness	20	15.00	20.00	35.00	565.00	28.250	4.811
Conscientiousness	20	12.00	21.00	33.00	550.00	27.500	2.929
Neuroticism	20	15.00	16.00	31.00	501.00	25.050	4.032
Openness	20	21.00	26.00	47.00	707.00	35.350	6.651

Results

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for selected psychological variables of female elite kabaddi players. Mean and standard deviation for anxiety is trait anxiety 49.05 ± 4.29 and state anxiety 49.15 ± 3.24 . For goal orientation is task 23.75 ± 5.36 and ego 19.95 ± 2.43 . For mental toughness; self-confidence 15.85 ± 2.90 , Negative Energy 18.45 ± 3.53 , Attention Control 17.35 ± 2.43 , Visual and Imaginary Control 13.45 ± 3.15 , Motivational Control 15.60 ± 3.16 , Positive Energy 13.10 ± 4.12 , and Attitude Control 15.60 ± 4.80 . For Group cohesion; ATGS 21.10 ± 5.20 , ATGT 12.15 ± 7.35 , GIS 18.50 ± 6.48 and GIT 28.70 ± 8.21 . For personality; Extroversion 27.25 ± 6.32 , Agreeableness 28.25 ± 4.81 , Conscientiousness 27.50 ± 2.92 , Neuroticism 25.05 ± 4.05 and Openness 35.35 ± 6.65 respectively.

Development of the profile chart for selected psychological variables of female elite kabaddi players:

For developing the profile chart of the for selected psychological variables of female elite kabaddi players we need minimum score, maximum score, mean and standard deviation out of all the descriptive statistics for selected psychological variables of female elite kabaddi players mentioned in the table 2.

Conclusion

In this study, we aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychological characteristics of female elite kabaddi players. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for various psychological variables, shedding light on key aspects such as anxiety, goal orientation, mental toughness, group cohesion, and personality traits. The findings reveal that, on average, elite female kabaddi players experience moderate levels of both trait anxiety (49.05 ± 4.29) and state anxiety (49.15 ± 3.24). In terms of goal orientation, players exhibit a strong task orientation (23.75 ± 5.36) compared to ego orientation (19.95 ± 2.43), indicating a focus on mastering skills and improving performance rather than emphasizing social comparison. The mental toughness profile of these athletes is characterized by high self-confidence (15.85 ± 2.90) and motivational control (15.60 ± 3.16), coupled with effective attention control (17.35 ± 2.43). However, challenges exist in managing negative energy (18.45 ± 3.53) and maintaining positive energy levels (13.10 ± 4.12).

Group cohesion, a crucial factor in team sports, is evident with moderate scores in aspects such as team integration (ATGS: 21.10 ± 5.20) and task orientation (ATGT: 12.15 ± 7.35). The players also display a balanced level of individual and group cohesion (GIS: 18.50 ± 6.48) and task and interpersonal cohesion (GIT: 28.70 ± 8.21). Examining personality traits, these female kabaddi players tend to exhibit moderate levels of extroversion (27.25 ± 6.32), agreeableness (28.25 ± 4.81), conscientiousness (27.50 ± 2.92), and neuroticism (25.05 ± 4.05). Notably, they demonstrate high openness to experience (35.35 ± 6.65), indicating a receptiveness to new ideas and a willingness to explore unconventional strategies.

Discussion

The profile chart developed for the selected psychological variables provides a visual representation of the female elite kabaddi players' psychological landscape. This tool facilitates a nuanced understanding of the interplay between different dimensions, offering insights into potential areas for targeted interventions or training. The moderate levels of anxiety suggest that while stress may be inherent in competitive sports, these players maintain a stable psychological state. The emphasis on task-oriented goal orientation aligns with the notion that elite athletes prioritize personal development and skill mastery over external validation. The mental toughness profile highlights a need for interventions targeting the management of negative energy and enhancement of positive energy. Strengthening these aspects could contribute to a more resilient and focused mindset during competitions. Group cohesion appears to be a strength among these players, with a balance between task and interpersonal aspects. Coaches and team managers can leverage these findings to foster a cohesive team environment, potentially enhancing overall performance. The moderate personality trait scores indicate a well-rounded psychological profile among elite female kabaddi players. The high openness to experience suggests a receptivity to innovative coaching methods and a potential willingness to embrace novel strategies.

In conclusion, this study not only provides a detailed overview of the psychological characteristics of female elite kabaddi players but also offers practical insights for coaches, sports psychologists, and team managers aiming to optimize performance and well-being in this unique sporting context. Future research may delve

deeper into the longitudinal aspects of these psychological variables to assess their dynamics over the course of a competitive season.

Implication of the study

Based on such findings, relevant adjustments in coaching and training programs may be induced in order to manipulate desired traits among kabaddi players, and some efforts can be made to adopt coaching methods based on their personality characteristics. The study's findings may act as a motivator for coaches to become more interested in the psychological conditioning of kabaddi players for improved performance and outcomes in future competitions. Aside from selecting kids based on game criteria, the importance of these factors can assist coaches and teachers in instilling these attributes in them.

Conflict of Interest: No Conflict of Interest declared among authors.

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