

DECODING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BLUEPRINT OF MALE ELITE KABADDI ATHLETES - A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF ANXIETY, GOAL ORIENTATION, MENTAL TOUGHNESS, GROUP COHESION, AND PERSONALITY DYNAMICS

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ABSTRACT

In the realm of elite sports, psychological factors play a pivotal role in shaping athletes' performances. This comprehensive analysis decodes the psychological blueprint of male elite Kabaddi athletes, examining anxiety, goal orientation, mental toughness, group cohesion, and personality dynamics. The study involves twenty outstanding male Kabaddi players, exploring the interconnectedness of these psychological elements and their impact on performance. Anxiety, a ubiquitous facet in sports, is scrutinized for its nuanced manifestations in Kabaddi, highlighting the delicate balance between performance enhancement and potential hindrance. Goal orientation emerges as a strategic compass guiding split-second decisions, crucial in the dynamic landscape of Kabaddi. Mental toughness, a linchpin for overcoming adversities, is investigated, emphasizing its interaction with anxiety and influence on performance.

Group cohesion, integral in team sports, is examined in Kabaddi's intricate team dynamics, unraveling the interpersonal relationships and shared objectives that define successful teams. Personality dynamics among elite Kabaddi athletes add a multifaceted dimension, providing insights into unique psychosocial profiles contributing to success. Descriptive statistics reveal moderate anxiety levels, strategic goal orientation, and robust mental toughness among elite Kabaddi athletes. Group cohesion is evident in teamwork and shared objectives. Personality dynamics showcase high extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and moderate neuroticism.

The study's practical implications span sports psychology interventions, coaching strategies, training programs, team dynamics, and individualized support. Tailored approaches are proposed for mental toughness training, goal-oriented drills, and team-building activities. Recognizing individual differences, personalized support plans can optimize athletes' psychological development.

Keywords: Kabaddi, elite athletes, anxiety, goal orientation, mental toughness, group cohesion, personality dynamics.

Introduction:

In the fiercely competitive arena of elite sports, the pursuit of excellence extends far beyond physical prowess (George & Dhull, 2023; Nara, 2018, 2020a, 2020b; Sagre & Ahlawat, 2023). Athletes at the highest echelons of their respective disciplines often grapple with challenges that extend into the realm of psychology (Deepak Kumar, 2023; Dhull, 2017; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023; Nara & Singh, 2020). Understanding the intricate interplay between the mind and athletic performance has become an imperative undertaking, with researchers delving into the psychological nuances that define the success of elite athletes (D. Kumar, Nara, et al., 2023; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023; NARA et al., n.d.; Nara, 2015, 2018; Nara & Singh, 2020). This comprehensive analysis seeks to unravel the psychological blueprint of elite Kabaddi athletes, a group known for their unparalleled agility, strategic acumen, and unmatched resilience (D. Kumar, Dhull, et al., 2023; NARA et al., 2022a, 2022b; Nara, Kumar, Rathee, & Kumar, 2022a; Nara, Kumar, Rathee, & Phogat, 2022). Beyond the surface-level scrutiny of physical conditioning and skill proficiency, this study aims to explore the intricate web of psychological factors that underpin the success stories of these extraordinary individuals (Deepak Kumar, 2023; Deepak et al., 2022; Deepak & Yadav, 2016; D. Kumar, Dhull, et al., 2023; D. Kumar, Nara, et al., 2023; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023; S. Kumar et al., n.d.; Nara, Kumar, Rathee, & Kumar, 2022b; Sagre et al., 2022).

Anxiety, a ubiquitous facet of competitive sports, plays a pivotal role in shaping an athlete's performance (Deepak Kumar, 2023; Dhull, n.d., 2017, 2018; Kasnia & Dhull, 2022; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023; S. Kumar et al., n.d.). This investigation delves into the nuanced manifestations of anxiety within the context of Kabaddi, examining how elite players navigate the delicate balance between the adrenaline-fueled edge that enhances performance and the potentially debilitating impact of excessive stress (Deepak Kumar, 2023; Deepak & Yadav, 2016).

Goal orientation, another critical psychological determinant, serves as a compass guiding athletes towards their objectives (Deepak et al., 2022; Dey et al., 1993; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023). Within the dynamic landscape of Kabaddi, where split-second decision-making can tilt the balance of a match, understanding how elite players set and pursue goals becomes essential. This study scrutinizes the goal-setting strategies employed by Kabaddi athletes and their correlation with success on the field (Deepak Kumar, 2023; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023; Nara, 2015, 2018, 2020a; Nara & Singh, 2020; Pal et al., 2020; Singh & Sharma, 2020).

Mental toughness, an intangible quality revered in elite sports, is a linchpin for overcoming adversities (Choudhary, 2018; Krutsevich et al., 2021; S. Kumar et al., n.d.; Wiese-Bjornstal, 2010a, 2010b). Investigating the resilience and fortitude of Kabaddi athletes sheds light on the mental attributes that distinguish the best from the rest. Furthermore, the study explores how mental toughness interacts with anxiety, influencing performance outcomes in the crucible of competition (D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023; S. Kumar et al., n.d.; Nara, 2015; NARA et al., n.d.).

Group cohesion, the bedrock of team sports, emerges as a crucial variable in Kabaddi's intricate team dynamics (Deepak Kumar, 2023; Dhull, 2017; George & Dhull, 2023; D. Kumar & Dhull, 2023). Beyond individual excellence, the study scrutinizes the interpersonal relationships, communication patterns, and shared objectives that define successful Kabaddi teams. Unraveling the intricacies of group cohesion unveils the synergies that elevate a collective of skilled individuals into a cohesive and formidable unit (D. Kumar, Dhull, et al., 2023; S. Kumar et al., n.d.).

Finally, the exploration of personality dynamics among elite Kabaddi athletes adds a multifaceted dimension to this analysis. Examining the personality traits that thrive in the high-stakes environment of professional Kabaddi provides valuable insights into the unique psychosocial profiles that contribute to success in this demanding sport. As we embark on this journey into the psychological landscape of elite Kabaddi, the aim is to not only dissect individual facets but to weave together a comprehensive narrative that captures the essence of the mental fortitude, strategic acumen, and collective spirit that define these remarkable athletes. By decoding their psychological blueprint, we aspire to contribute to the broader understanding of the symbiotic relationship between the mind and athletic excellence in the world of Kabaddi.

Methodology:

Research Objectives

Outline the specific objectives of the study, including the exploration of anxiety levels, goal orientation, mental toughness, group cohesion, and personality dynamics in elite Kabaddi athletes.

Selection of subjects

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

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

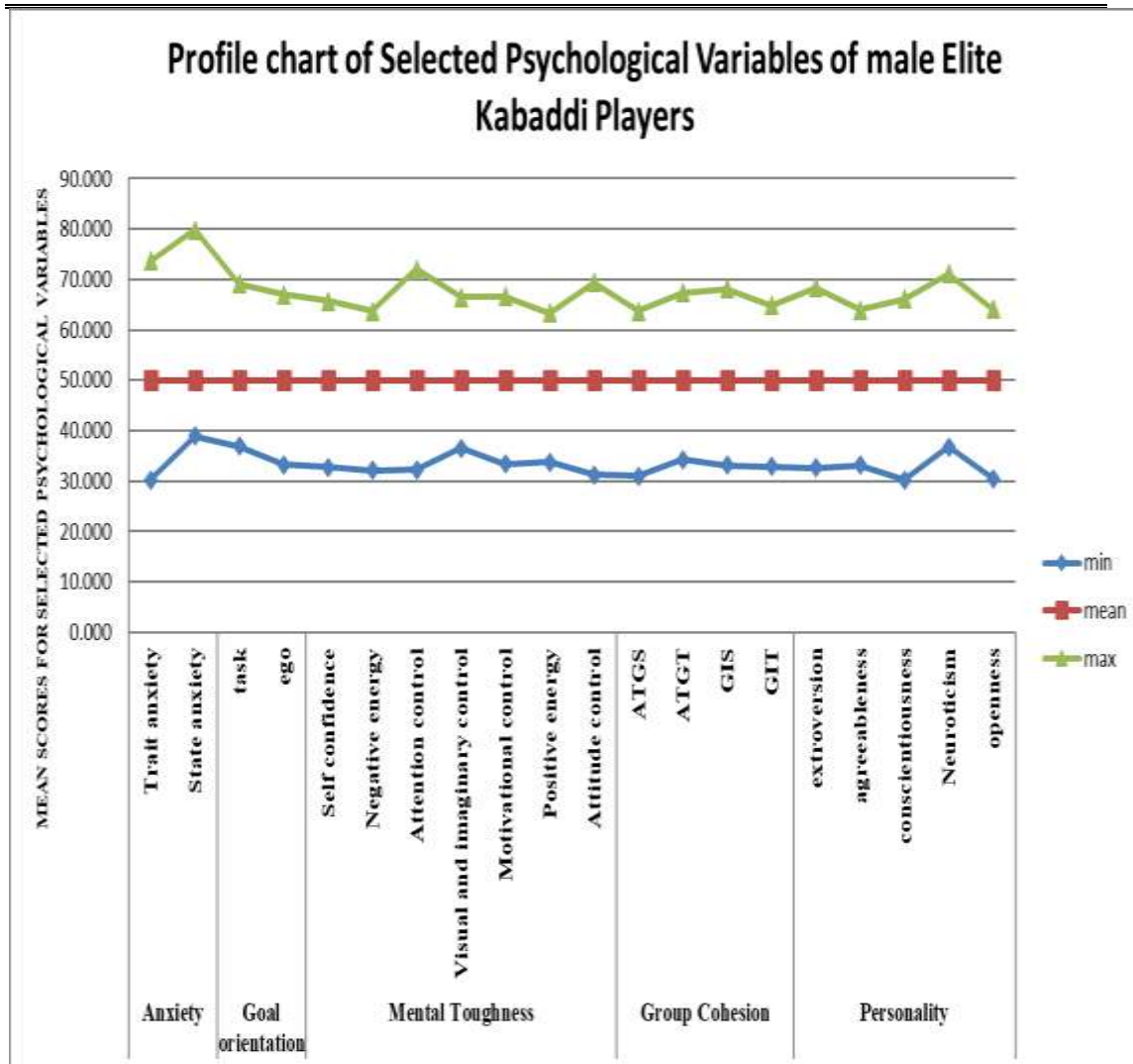
The analysis part was divided into two parts: Descriptive and Comparative parts respectively.

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 -1
Descriptive Statistics For Selected Psychological Variables of Male Elite Kabaddi Players

	N	Rang e	Minimu m	Maxim um	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviatio n
Trait Anxiety	20	39.00	34.00	73.00	1035.0	51.75	8.985
State Anxiety	20	38.00	42.00	80.00	1045.0	52.25	9.279
Goal Orientation Task	20	15.00	20.00	35.00	522.0	26.10	4.656
Goal Orientation Ego	20	12.00	16.00	28.00	439.0	21.95	3.546
Self Confidence	20	14.00	10.00	24.00	346.0	17.30	4.244
Negative Energy	20	16.00	9.00	25.00	361.0	18.05	5.052
Attention Control	20	11.00	13.00	24.00	358.0	17.90	2.770
Visual And Imaginary Control	20	14.00	10.00	24.00	326.0	16.30	4.680
Motivational Control	20	15.00	8.00	23.00	310.0	15.50	4.501
Positive Energy	20	17.00	6.00	23.00	306.0	15.30	5.750
Attitude Control	20	18.00	8.00	26.00	337.0	16.85	4.716
ATGS	20	17.00	12.00	29.00	437.0	21.85	5.184
ATGT	20	20.00	4.00	24.00	270.0	13.50	6.031

GIS	20	19.00	7.00	26.00	323.0	16.15	5.412
GIT	20	23.00	16.00	39.00	566.0	28.30	7.212
Extroversion	20	17.00	19.00	36.00	545.0	27.25	4.767
Agreeableness	20	11.00	24.00	35.00	600.0	30.00	3.569
Conscientiousness	20	14.00	21.00	35.00	574.0	28.70	3.895
Neuroticism	20	13.00	19.00	32.00	480.0	24.00	3.770
Openness	20	22.00	24.00	46.00	735.0	36.75	6.536



Result

Table – 1 shows descriptive statistics for selected psychological variables of male elite kabaddi players. Mean and standard deviation for anxiety is trait anxiety 51.75 ± 8.98 and state anxiety 52.25 ± 9.27 . For goal orientation is task 26.10 ± 4.65 and ego 21.95 ± 3.54 . For mental toughness; self-confidence 17.30 ± 4.24 , Negative Energy 18.05 ± 5.05 , Attention Control 17.90 ± 2.77 , Visual And Imaginary Control 16.30 ± 4.68 , Motivational Control 15.50 ± 4.50 , Positive Energy 15.30 ± 5.75 , and Attitude Control 16.85 ± 4.71 . For Group cohesion; ATGS 21.85 ± 5.18 , ATGT 13.50 ± 6.03 , GIS 16.15 ± 5.41 and GIT 28.30 ± 7.21 . For personality; Extroversion 27.25 ± 4.76 , Agreeableness 30.00 ± 3.56 , Conscientiousness 28.70 ± 3.89 , Neuroticism 24.00 ± 3.77 and Openness 36.75 ± 6.53 respectively.

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

For developing the profile chart of the for selected psychological variables of male elite kabaddi players we need minimum score, maximum score, mean and standard deviation out of all the descriptive statistics for selected psychological variables of male elite kabaddi players mentioned in the table 1.

Conclusion

This study delves into the intricate psychological dimensions of male elite Kabaddi athletes, offering a comprehensive analysis of anxiety, goal orientation, mental toughness, group cohesion, and personality dynamics. The findings illuminate the nuanced interplay of these factors, providing a deeper understanding of the psychological blueprint that distinguishes these athletes.

The descriptive statistics reveal that elite Kabaddi athletes exhibit a moderate level of trait and state anxiety, indicating a delicate balance between the arousal necessary for peak performance and the potential hindrance of excessive stress. Goal orientation, both task and ego, demonstrates a strategic mindset, essential for making split-second decisions in the dynamic landscape of Kabaddi.

Mental toughness emerges as a hallmark of these athletes, as reflected in their self-confidence, ability to manage negative energy, and attention control. The study underscores the importance of mental attributes in navigating the adversities inherent in competitive sports.

Group cohesion, a critical aspect of team sports, is evident in the interconnectedness of these elite Kabaddi players. The cohesion is reflected in their teamwork, communication patterns, and shared objectives, contributing to the success of the collective over individual excellence.

Personality dynamics among elite Kabaddi athletes reveal a unique psychosocial profile characterized by high levels of extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and moderate levels of neuroticism. These traits collectively contribute to their adaptability, interpersonal skills, and resilience in high-stakes environments.

The profile chart provides a visual representation of the psychological attributes, showcasing the range and distribution among elite Kabaddi athletes. This serves as a valuable reference for coaches, sports psychologists, and athletes aiming to optimize their psychological strengths for peak performance.

In essence, this study decodes the psychological blueprint of male elite Kabaddi athletes, shedding light on the intricate web of factors that contribute to their success. The findings hold practical implications for sports psychology interventions, training programs, and team dynamics in Kabaddi and potentially other sports with similar demands.

Discussion

The findings of this study contribute to the evolving discourse on sports psychology, particularly within the context of Kabaddi. The moderate levels of anxiety observed among elite Kabaddi athletes align with the inverted U-shaped relationship between anxiety and performance, emphasizing the need for optimal arousal levels. This suggests that interventions aimed at maintaining this delicate balance could enhance performance outcomes. The goal orientation patterns reflect the strategic mindset of Kabaddi athletes, emphasizing both task and ego orientations. Understanding how these orientations influence performance can inform goal-setting strategies tailored to the unique demands of Kabaddi. Coaches and sports psychologists can leverage this insight to cultivate a goal-oriented mindset among athletes.

Mental toughness emerges as a key determinant of success, with elite Kabaddi athletes exhibiting resilience and adaptability. The study highlights the interconnectedness of mental toughness with other psychological factors, emphasizing the need for holistic training approaches that address multiple facets of athletes' psychological well-being. Group cohesion stands out as a strength among elite Kabaddi players, contributing to their collective success. The study prompts further exploration into the specific team-building strategies employed in Kabaddi and the transferability of these strategies to other team sports.

Personality dynamics reveal a distinctive psychosocial profile characterized by high extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness. These traits align with the demands of Kabaddi, where effective communication, adaptability, and teamwork are paramount. Coaches and sports psychologists can tailor interventions to capitalize on these personality strengths. The profile chart provides a visual summary of the psychological attributes, offering a quick reference for practitioners. The distribution and range of scores

highlight individual differences among elite Kabaddi athletes, emphasizing the importance of personalized approaches in psychological support and training.

While this study provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations. The sample size, though carefully selected, may not represent the diversity within the broader population of elite Kabaddi athletes. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to infer causation. Future research could employ longitudinal designs and larger samples to further validate and extend these findings.

Implementation of the study

The practical implications of this study extend to various stakeholders involved in the training, coaching, and psychological support of elite Kabaddi athletes.

Sports Psychology Interventions Sports psychologists can design interventions to enhance athletes' mental toughness, goal-setting abilities, and anxiety management skills. Tailoring interventions to individual differences in personality can optimize their effectiveness. **Coaching Strategies** Coaches can incorporate goal-oriented training drills that simulate the dynamic decision-making required in Kabaddi. Emphasizing teamwork, communication, and shared objectives can further enhance group cohesion. **Training Programs** Strength and conditioning programs can integrate mental toughness training, focusing on aspects such as self-confidence, attention control, and energy management. This holistic approach addresses the physical and psychological demands of elite Kabaddi.

Team Dynamics Team-building activities can be designed to strengthen interpersonal relationships, trust, and communication among team members. Understanding the unique personality dynamics identified in this study can guide coaches in fostering a positive team culture. **Individualized Support** Recognizing the diversity in psychological profiles among athletes, personalized support plans can be developed. Athletes with different personality traits may benefit from tailored approaches to goal-setting, motivation, and coping strategies. **Future Research** Building on this foundation, future research can explore the effectiveness of specific interventions in enhancing performance and well-being among elite Kabaddi athletes. Longitudinal studies can provide insights into the dynamic nature of psychological attributes over an athlete's career. In summary, the implementation of the findings from this study can contribute to the holistic development of elite Kabaddi athletes, addressing both their physical and psychological needs. As the sports community continues to recognize the significance of mental attributes in athletic success, the insights gained from this research pave the way for informed and targeted interventions in the realm of elite Kabaddi.

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