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Comparative Study

Comparative Study: Self-Esteem, Resilience and Emotional Regulation among Sports-Person and Non-Sports Person

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze and compare the mean scores of self-esteem, resilience, and emotional regulation among male sports persons and non-sports persons. We selected 160 male adolescents between 13-18 years old from various schools of Delhi, India for this study. We used Rosenberg's self-esteem questionnaire for self-esteem, Nicholson Mcbride Resilience Questionnaire for resilience, and Difficulty in Emotional Regulation Scale-Short Form for emotional regulation. Results of the T-test analysis display that significant differences exist among sports persons and non-sports persons for self-esteem, resilience, and emotional regulation. Additionally, we found that sports-person showed higher mean scores than non-sports person for self-esteem and resilience, but they displayed lower mean scores for emotional regulation suggesting they experience less dysregulation. These results highlight the importance of participation in sports for male adolescents and how engaging in sports can be useful in building self-esteem, resilience and emotional regulation.

Keywords: *Participation in Sports, Self-Esteem, Resilience, Emotional Regulation, Male Adolescents*

In today's realm, engagement in physical activity and sports participation has become increasingly prevalent with a multitude of advantages extending beyond mere physical health. However, at the same time, there exists a sizable part of the population who choose not to engage in regular sports activities and are choosing alternative options of leisure and a sedentary lifestyle.

A study by WHO (World Health Organization) suggested that children are not simply moving and reported that 81% of 11–17-year-olds are inactive, with girls and young women most affected. Between 2020 and 2030 many of these adolescents will be adults, and cumulative healthcare costs due to inactivity would be 20 billion dollars in the UK. 566 billion dollars in the US, 10 billion dollars in France, and 4 billion dollars in Australia yet only 44 countries have developed physical activity guidelines for adolescents (Fedeli, 2023).

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Self-Esteem

"Self-esteem is defined as an individual's overall sense of his or her value or worth. It encompasses the extent to which a person approves of, acknowledges, treasures or respect themselves (Adler & Steward, 2004)."

Rosenberg (1965a) explains self-esteem as an individual's positive or negative outlook towards himself and individual's assessment of his thoughts and feelings with respect to himself which can be either negative or positive. Therefore, self-esteem can be understood as subjective appraisal of one's own value, worth and abilities.

Engagement in sports offers individuals the opportunity to enhance their self-esteem by fostering a positive body image and honing physical abilities. Parents opt to enroll their children in sports with the aim of nurturing their character and self-confidence. The interactions children experience with teammates, coaches, parents, and opponents play a pivotal role in shaping their self-perception and self-regard (C., 2015).

Resilience

"In the world of physical sciences, resiliences is often exemplified by a material's ability to revert to its original state post-distortion, as described by Pemberton (2015). Pemberton further elucidates resilience in human context as the capacity to maintain adaptability in thoughts, emotions, and actions admist life disruptions or prolonged stressors, leading to personal growth and strength (Pemberton, 2015, p.2). This perspective on resilience echoes the sentiment expressed by Sutton (2024)."

Resilience is a skill, the more individuals practice being resilient the more resilience levels will increase within an individual and so will their ability to react positively to challenging situations and overcome adversity. Therefore, the resilience young individuals build through participation in individual and team sports as well as the physical education programmes in schools, will not just help their performances in sports context but also benefit them in all other aspects of their life which means it's essential that we encourage children to build resilience from a young age (Saidon, 2023).

Conversely, individuals who choose not to engage in sports also experience a multitude of life stressors and situations that require resilient responses. These stressors can include academic pressures, family situations, personal relationships and friendships, and career uncertainties navigating through these stressors learning how to cope with them, and bouncing back from these experiences also help an individual foster resilience. Hence, understanding levels of resilience among individuals who do not engage in sports becomes important as well for examining the application of resilience among different populations and circumstances.

Emotional Regulation

"Emotional regulation involves the mechanism through which individuals exert control over the emotions they experience, determining their onset, intensity, and expression. This process explained by Gross (1998), encompasses both automatic and controlled, conscious and unconscious strategies, which can impact various stages of emotional response cycle (Gross, 1998)."

Engaging in sports can offer a unique space and dynamic environment in which a sports person can encounter a wide range of emotions like frustration, excitement, anxiety, and exhilaration. The demands of competitive tournaments, interpersonal interactions with opposite teams, coaches, and parents, and the pressure to always keep performing and winning all contribute to the emotional complexities of the sports experience of an individual. Therefore, in this environment, individuals can develop healthy emotional strategies which can help individuals to steer through these challenges and maintain top-notch performance and mental health.

Individuals who choose not to participate in sports also face their own set of emotional experiences, adversities and stressors in various areas of their lives. From academic pressures, career uncertainties, personal relationships and friendships, non-sports individuals steer through these confrontations within different contexts. Understanding how emotional regulation works becomes crucial within people who don't engage in sports.

While many studies have tried to explore various areas of athletic performance, skill development and psychological well-being in the contexts of sports, relatively lesser research endeavours have specifically centred around the concept of emotional regulation and sports participation. There has been significant literature about emotional intelligence and sports participation however the research with respect to emotional regulation and self-regulation has been scarce. Hence understanding how emotional regulation exhibits and works differently among individuals who engage in sports and individuals who choose not to engage in sports becomes crucial for advancing our knowledge of emotional regulation process.

Adolescence & their challenges

"Adolescence, characterized by specific health and developmental needs and rights, is a phase during which individuals develop essential knowledge, skills, and emotional management abilities (Adolescent Health and Development, 2021). This period is vital for acquiring attributes necessary for navigating both adolescent and adult roles."

Male adolescents may feel compelled to follow the narrow standards of society that prioritises physical appearance, physical strength and dominance. Therefore, boys who don't fit in with these standards of masculinity struggle with feelings of self-doubt, inadequacy, low self-worth. This can lead to negative self-evaluations and a diminishes sense of self-esteem impacting the other areas of their lives.

Research indicates that a considerable proportion of adolescents, particularly in early adolescence, grapple with low self-esteem, with estimates ranging from one third to one half (Harter, 1990; Hirsch & DuBois, 1991). The consequences of low self-esteem can range from temporary effects to more severe outcomes such as depression, eating disorders like anorexia, self-harm, and in extreme cases, suicide (Adolescent Self-Esteem, n.d.).

Engaging in sports seems to offer a promising avenue for dealing with challenges faced by male adolescents with respect to self-esteem, resilience and emotional regulation. Participating in sports can provide adolescents with an opportunity to develop and practice skills and techniques that can strengthen their self-esteem, resilience and emotional regulation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ouyang et.al (2020) wanted to investigate the connection between body image, self- esteem, self-efficacy and participation in sports by grade, gender and specialty. To obtain the sample they used stratified random sampling method and collected a sample of 1000 undergraduate students of western China. Results indicated positive correlation among self-efficacy, body image, self-esteem and participation in sports. It was also observed in the results that body image has an unmediated relationship with participation in sports.

A comparative study was done by Varga, M. G. (2020) to compare adult individuals who engage in sports activities and those who don't. They collected a sample of 60 subjects, men and women both, the age of the participants ranged between 30-50 years. Results of their study showed that individuals who engage in sports activities have a greater self-esteem as compared to those who did not engage in sports activities and the levels of stress were lower in people who would engage in sports activities. They concluded their study by suggesting that there are mental and physical advantages of engaging in sports activities.

Govindappa and Bujurke (2019) conducted a study to compare the occupational stress with respect to self-esteem of sports and non-sports workers. They collected a sample of 60 workers who worked in Karnataka Railways who suffer from occupational stress, 30 of them were sports person and 30 of them were non-sports person. The results indicated self-esteem was greater among Railway workers who engage in sports as compared to Railway workers who don't engage in sports.

According to Kochar and Rahmat Kaur (2018) there is significant literature of youth sports that focuses on the different positive outcomes of indulging in sports. The intent behind the comparative study done by the is to discover significant differences between Life satisfaction Self-esteem, Positive and Negative Affect among sports person and non-sports person. The sample size selected by them for their study was of 60 subjects and age of subjects is 18-25 years. Results suggested no significant consequences of indulging in sports.

According to Balk et.al (2013) if a sports player is performing under extreme pressure that can be defined as an emotional experience therefore emotional regulation strategies can be helpful in dealing with the pressure. Their study explored the role of arousal on decreasing sports performance when players are under pressure and along with that, they wanted to understand the importance of emotional regulation techniques in preventing choking under the pressure. The results of the study suggested that the decline in the sports performance was slightly mediated by expanded arousal and the results also displayed that emotional regulation technique can be helpful in coping while being under pressure and the individuals would choke less under pressure if they have effective emotional regulation strategies.

Aim

The aim is to investigate and compare levels of self-esteem, resilience, and emotional regulation among male adolescent sports persons and male adolescent non-sports persons from different schools in Delhi, India.

Objective

- To study the difference in the mean scores of self-esteem among male adolescent sports persons and male adolescent non-sports persons.

- To study the difference in the mean scores of resilience among male adolescent sports persons and male adolescent non-sports persons.
- To study the difference in the mean scores of emotional regulation among male adolescent sports persons and male adolescent non-sports persons.

Hypothesis

- There will be differences among self-esteem scores of male sports person and male non-sports person
- There will be differences among resilience scores of male sports persons and male non-sports persons.
- There will be differences among emotional regulation scores of male sports persons and male non-sports persons.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

For this quantitative study, an independent group design is applied to compare the differences in self-esteem, resilience, and emotional regulation among male adolescent sports persons and male adolescent non-sports persons.

This design was selected for the study because every participant will experience only one variable at a time, and we will compare the group differences among participants in various variables (Bhandari, 2023).

Participants

The survey collected data from 160 male adolescents from different schools in New Delhi, India who were between the ages of 13-18 years old. Among these 160 males, 80 were sports persons and 80 were non-sports persons. Only zonal level sports players were considered to be sports person, individuals who engage in sports for leisure purposes were not included under the category sports person. CWSN sports players were also not included under the category of sports person.

Tools used

Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Questionnaire (RSEQ)

To assess self-esteem, researchers employed Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale, devised by Morris Rosenberg in 1965. Comprising 10 statements, this scale is applicable across all age groups (Jones, 2022). Demonstrating robust psychometric properties, the scale exhibits good predictive validity, internal consistency, and test-retest reliability (Schmitt & Allik, 2005; Torrey, Mueser, McHugo, & Drake, 2000). With a high Cronbach's coefficient (M=0.81), indicating internal coherence, and a Guttman Scale coefficient of reproducibility of .92, denoting high internal consistency, the scale ensures reliability (Buchanan, 2024).

Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire (NMRQ)

To measure resilience, Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire was used. This scale is type of self-report measure and it measures the psychological resilience of an individual. This questionnaire is open for all groups (Nicholson McBride Resilience Questionnaire, n.d.).

This scale has displayed 80% validity (Cronbach's alpha = .800) and it has maintained a good item consistency (Pilafas et al., 2020) and the reliability of the scale is estimated by Cronbach's Alpha = .76 (Ahuja et al., 2020).

Difficulty in Emotional Regulation Scale-Short Form (DERS-SF)

To assess emotional regulation, researchers utilized the Difficulty in Emotion Regulation Scale Short Form (DERS-SF), developed by Kaufman et al. in 2015. This instrument is designed to identify and evaluate emotion regulation difficulties in both adolescents and adults. The scale comprises six subscales: non-acceptance of emotional responses, difficulty in engaging in goal-directed behavior, impulse control difficulties, lack of emotional awareness, lack of emotional regulation strategies, and lack of emotional clarity (Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale-SF (DERS-SF), 2024).

The DERS-SF demonstrates satisfactory reliability, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .79 to .91, and concurrent validity has been established in samples of adults and adolescents aged 12-18 years from the United States of America. Correlations among the subscales range from .91 to .98 (Danasasmita et al., 2024).

Statistical technique

The data was analyzed using the latest version of SPSS software (SPSS v21) for Windows (10.00). T-test analysis was employed using SPSS to assess the differences between two groups: individuals involved in sports and those who aren't across various variables.

RESULT ANALYSIS

Table:1 Group statistics comparing Group S and Group N

Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-esteem	S	80	19.075	2.9757
	N	80	16.950	4.5504
Resilience	S	80	44.875	4.5988
	N	80	40.600	5.9056
Emotional Regulation	S	80	36.275	9.7837
	N	80	41.238	13.4825

Independent Samples T-test was conducted to compare the mean of Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person). The means of Group S and Group N for self-esteem were found to be 19.075 and 16.950 respectively and the SDs were 2.9757 for Group S and 4.5504 for Group N. The means of Group S and Group N for resilience were found to be 44.875 and 40.600 respectively and the SDs were 4.5988 and 5.9056 respectively. The means of Group S and Group N for overall emotional regulation were found to be 36.275 and 41.238 respectively and the SDs were 9.7837 and 13.4825 respectively. These findings indicate that the sports person have higher self-esteem and resilience in comparison to non-sports person, since the scores for emotional regulation are lesser than the non-sports person this means that sports-person experience lesser emotional emotional dysregulation.

Table: 2 T-test results comparing self-esteem, resilience and emotional regulation

	F	Sig.	t.	df.	Sig.(2 tailed)
Self-esteem					
Equal variances assumed	14.855	.000	3.496	158	.001
Resilience					
Equal variances assumed	2.634	.107	5.108	158	.000
Emotional Regulation					
Equal variances assumed	7.301	.008	-2.664	158	.009

The above table displays the results of an independent samples t-test comparing the levels of self-esteem among sports person and non-sports person. The test suggests F statistic of 14.855 with the significance level .000, which means that the assumption of equal variances is not met therefore it becomes crucial to interpret the t-test results cautiously. The above table shows the t-value to be 3.496 and a significance .001 this suggests the t-value is significant and there are significant differences in the mean scores of self-esteems among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

The results of an independent samples t-test comparing the levels of resilience among sports person and non-sports person. The test suggests F statistic of 2.634 with the significance level .107, which means that the assumption of equal variances is met. The above table shows the t-value to be 5.108 with a significance .000 that suggests that the t-value is significant and there are statistically significant differences in the mean scores of resilience among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

The results of an independent samples t-test comparing the levels of overall emotional regulation among sports person and non-sports person. The test suggests F statistic of 7.301 with the significance .008, this means that the assumption of equal variances is not met therefore it becomes crucial to interpret the t-test results cautiously. The above table shows the t-value to be -2.664 with a significance .009 this suggests that the t-value is significant and there is statistically significant difference in the mean scores of overall emotional regulations among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

Table: 3 T-test scores comparing subscales of emotional regulation

	F	Sig.	t.	df.	Sig.(2 tailed)
Non-acceptance of emotional responses					
Equal variances assumed	5.192	.024	-2.393	158	.018
Difficulty in enaging in goal directed behavior					
Equal variances assumed	2.896	.091	-1.501	158	.135
Impulse control difficulties					
Equal variances assumed	2.060	.153	-.911	158	.364
Lack of emotional regulation strategies					
Equal variances assumed	10.272	.002	-3.035	158	.003
Lack of emotional awareness					
Equal variances assumed	5.198	.026	-2.677	158	.016
Lack of emotional clarity					
Equal variances assumed	1.696	.195	-1.704	158	.090

The above table is comparing the subscale “non-acceptance of emotional responses” among sports person and non-sports person. It shows the t-value to be -2.393 with a significance .018 this suggests that the t-value is significant and statistically significant difference exists in scores of subscale “non-acceptance of emotional responses” among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

The subscale “difficulty in engaging in goal-directed behavior” among sports person and non-sports person shows the t-value to be -1.501 with a significance .135 this suggests that the t-value is not significant and no statistically significant difference exists in scores of subscale “difficulty in engaging in goal directed behavior” among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

The subscale “impulse control difficulties” among sports person and non-sports person shows the t-value to be -.911 with significance .364 this suggests that the t-value is not significant and no statistically significant difference exists in scores of the subscale impulse control difficulties among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

The subscale “lack of emotional regulation strategies” among sports person and non-sports person shows the t-value to be -3.035 with significance .003 this suggests that the t-value is significant and statistically significant difference exists in mean scores of the subscale “lack

of emotional regulation" strategies among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

The subscale "lack of emotional awareness" among sports person and non-sports person shows the t-value to be -2.677 significance .016 this suggests that the t-value is significant and statistically significant difference exists in the mean scores of the subscale "lack of emotional clarity" among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

The subscale "lack of emotional clarity" among sports person and non-sports person shows the t-value to be -1.704 with significance .090 this suggests that the t-value is not significant and no statistically significant difference exists in scores of the subscale "lack of emotional clarity" among Group S (sports person) and Group N (non-sports person).

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to compare levels of self-esteem, resilience, and emotional regulation among male adolescent sports person and non-sports person from different schools of Delhi, India. The study also compared the 6 subscales of emotional regulation among both the groups of male sports person and non-sports person.

The primary objective of this research is to examine the variations in average self-esteem scores between male adolescent players and male adolescent non-sports players. The analysis using T-test indicates a notable contrast in self-esteem levels between the two groups. Specifically, the T-test demonstrates a significant t-value of 3.496 with a significance level of .001, indicating statistical significance. The mean self-esteem scores for the sports group and the non-sports group were found to be 19.075 and 16.950, respectively, suggesting that the sports group exhibits higher levels of self-esteem compared to the non-sports group.

The second aim of this research is to examine the disparities in average resilience scores between male adolescent sports players and male adolescent non-sports players. The T-test analysis reveals a noteworthy distinction in resilience levels between the two groups. Specifically, the T-test indicates a significant t-value of 5.108 with a significance level of .000, indicating statistical significance. The mean resilience scores for the sports group and the non-sports group were found to be 44.875 and 40.600, respectively, suggesting that the sports group demonstrates higher resilience levels compared to the non-sports group.

The third aim of this research is to investigate the distinctions in average emotional regulation scores between male adolescent sports player and male adolescent non-sports players. The T-test analysis reveals a significant contrast in emotional regulation levels between the two groups. Specifically, the T-test indicates a significant t-value of -2.664 with a significance level of .009, suggesting statistical significance. The mean emotional regulation scores for the sports group and the non-sports group were found to be 36.275 and 41.238, respectively. This indicates that the sports group exhibits lower emotional regulation levels compared to the non-sports group. In this context, higher mean scores signify that individuals in the non-sports group experience greater dysregulation compared to those in the sports group.

Additionally, we conducted the t-test analysis for subscales of emotional regulation and the results showed –

- The subscale "non-acceptance of emotional responses" displayed a significant difference in "non-acceptance of emotional responses" between the sports person group and the non-sports person group. T-test analysis shows the t-value to be -2.393 with significance .018 this suggests t-value is significant.
- The subscale "difficulty in engaging in goal directed behaviour" displayed no significant difference in "difficulty in engaging in goal directed behaviour between the sports person group and the non-sports person group. T-test analysis shows the t-value to be -1.501 with significance .135 this suggests t-value is not significant.
- The subscale "impulse control difficulties" displayed no significant difference in "impulse control difficulties" between the sports person group and the non-sports person group. T-test analysis shows the t-value to be -.911 with significance of .364 this suggests t-value is not significant.
- The subscale "lack of emotional awareness" displayed a significant difference in "lack of emotional awareness" between the sports person group and the non-sports person group. T-test analysis shows the t-value to be -2.677 with significance .016 this suggests t-value is significant.
- The subscale "lack of emotional regulation strategies" displayed a significant difference in "lack of emotional regulation strategies" between the sports person group and the non-sports person group. T-test analysis shows the t-value to be -3.035 with significance .003 this suggests t-value is significant.
- The subscale "lack of emotional clarity" displayed no significant difference in "lack of emotional clarity" between the sports person group and the non-sports person group. T-test analysis shows the t-value to be -1.501 with significance .135 this suggests t-value is not significant.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research offer recommendations applicable to parents, educators, school administrators, and board members. Parents can understand the importance of participation in sports and encourage children to take part in them instead of discouraging them. Many times teachers in the schools don't giver permissions to students because they fear that they might loose on the important study material, however teachers can understand that with studies sports is also equally important in shaping up adolescents healthy personality. School authorities and board members should introduce mandatory sports in their curriculum for adolescents in order to make sure children are getting equal opportunities to participate in sports. If the curriculum is designed in a way that supports participation in sports it will be really helpful in fostering resilience, self-esteem and adaptive emotional regulation strategies. Overall, the results of the study provide deep insights to understand the importance of sports participants with a special focus on male adolescents.

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