

Analysis of Self- Perception among Female College Students

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Abstract

Evaluation of self perception among athletes can be very effectively utilized in the process of their performance enhancement. The present study was conducted for exploring the same among 185 female college students of Chandigarh (95 sportspersons and 90 non-sportspersons). The subjects were administered Semantic Differential Scale and obtained data was statistically analyzed for all 10 components of the variable self perception as well as for overall self perception. The results indicated that sportspersons were significantly better than non-sportspersons on overall self perception and its three components.

Key Words: Self-Perception, Athletes, Semantic Differential Scale

Introduction

Concept of self has always fascinated sports psychologists and although extensive research has been carried out in relation to different sports settings but still this phenomenon of “self” is attracting more and more research as the same serves as a prime predictor of dynamic behavior of an athlete. His mood, motivational patterns and his state of well being are all influenced by this “self”. In fact, self perception is a process in which an individual decides about his own attitudes and feelings from watching himself behaving in different situations. This is particularly true when internal cues are so weak or confusing that they effectively put the person in the same position as an external observer. Self exploration stems from the experiences consciously and might be viewed as a person’s overall estimation of his self competence and self worth based on reality. Understanding of self can help the athlete in correctly evaluating his own self attributes which can then be exploited to expand his sport performance. According to *Allport (1961)*

self is “a warm central private region of our life and as such, it plays a crucial part in our consciousness, in our personality, and in our organism; it is indeed considered as a core of our being”.

There are varieties of ways to view the self; and self-concept, self-esteem, self-estimation, self-awareness, self-image, self-perception etc. are few of the commonly employed terms. Studies have been carried out to substantiate sportspersons’ higher levels of self-esteem as compared to non-sportspersons (*Higgins, 1980; Mahoney, 1989*); overall higher level of self esteem among athletes (*Riordan et al, 1983; Davies, 1989; Bowker et al, 2003*); positive relationship between sports participation and self concept (*Olszewska, 1982; Lynn, 1991*) but there seems to be lack of research with regard to self perception in relation to sports participation. This study was therefore, undertaken to explore self perception among sports and non-sportspersons.

Material and Methods

For the purpose of this study, 195 female students within the age group of 19 to 24 years and studying in various colleges of Chandigarh during session 2006-2007 were selected as subjects. Out of these 95 were those who had participated in one or more sporting events at intercollegiate or above level, and 90 were those who had never participated in any such organized sporting event. To obtain data for the present study, all the subjects were administered the Semantic Differential Scale developed by *Osgood et al (1967)*. This scale had been found to have a coefficient of reliability of 0.85. The scale consisted of two parts; first part contained items related with “myself as I am...” whereas the second part contained items relating to “myself as I would like to be...” The difference between the scores of these two parts indicated the level of self perception among the subjects. The lower the difference; the higher the self-

perception. The subjects were asked to rate themselves, using an 8-point scale, on ten pairs of opposite adjectives that were based on *Rosenbeg’s (1965)* self-esteem measure. The ten pairs of adjectives were: Good-bad; Optimistic-Pessimistic; Confident-Non-confident; Strong-Weak; Attractive-Unattractive; Sociable-Unsociable; Independent-Dependent; Aggressive-Non-aggressive; Successful-Failure; and Cooperative-Uncooperative.

Results

The results of the mean difference between the scores of two parts of the scale, SD and F-values with regard to the two groups of subjects i.e. sports-persons and non-sportspersons on the five components of self perception i.e. Good-Bad; Optimistic-Pessimistic; Confident-Non-confident; Strong-Weak; and Attractive-Unattractive have been presented in Table-1.

Table-1: Statistical derivatives of sportspersons and non-sportspersons on components of self perception

| Component | Sportspersons | | Non-Sportspersons | | F-Value |
|---------------------------|---------------|------|-------------------|------|---------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | |
| Good-Bad | 0.55 | 0.66 | 1.04 | 1.13 | 13.45** |
| Optimistic- Pessimistic | 0.52 | 0.68 | 1.10 | 1.11 | 18.10** |
| Confident- Non-Confident | 0.92 | 0.94 | 1.19 | 1.15 | 2.88 |
| Strong-Weak | 0.86 | 0.80 | 1.12 | 0.94 | 4.03 |
| Attractive- Unattractive | 0.74 | 0.79 | 1.34 | 1.29 | 14.48** |
| Sociable-Unsociable | 0.90 | 0.91 | 1.26 | 1.05 | 5.92 |
| Independent-Dependent | 0.72 | 0.84 | 1.04 | 1.17 | 4.53 |
| Aggressive-Nonaggressive | 0.73 | 0.81 | 1.10 | 1.17 | 6.04 |
| Successful-Failure | 1.02 | 0.99 | 1.50 | 1.26 | 7.88 |
| Cooperative-Uncooperative | 0.68 | 0.99 | 0.87 | 1.11 | 1.56 |
| Overall Self Perception | 0.76 | 0.84 | 1.16 | 1.14 | 14.55** |

** p<0.01

The results depicted in Table-1 have revealed significant differences between sportspersons and non-sportspersons on the three components of

self-perception i.e. good-bad, optimistic-pessimistic and attractive-unattractive (p<0.01 in all the three cases, F-values being 13.45, 18.10 and 14.48

respectively). With regard to the other components i.e. confident-non confident, strong-weak; Attractive – Unattractive; Sociable - Unsociable; Independent - Dependent; Aggressive - Non-aggressive; Successful - Failure; Cooperative – Uncooperative, the differences among the two studied groups were not found to be

significant, although sportspersons had demonstrated better self-perception on these two components as well. However, with regard to overall self-perception, the difference between the two studied groups have been found to be significant ($p < 0.01$).

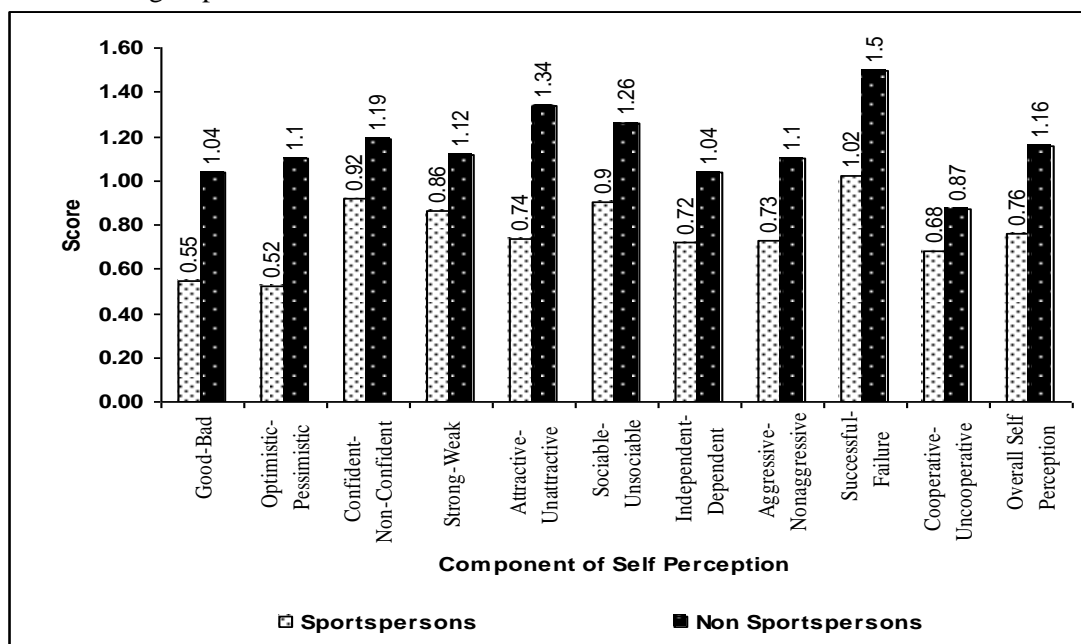


Figure 2: Comparison of mean scores of various components of self perception in sports and non sportspersons

Discussion

From the results in Table-1, it is evident that the sportspersons were found to be having significantly higher level of positive self-perception on the component Good-Bad as compared to the non-sportspersons (F-value being 13.45, $p < 0.01$). This can, perhaps be attributed to the fact that sports participation inculcates the quality of fair play, adherence of codes of conduct, and obedience of rules & laws (Kumar et al, 2003).

On the component Optimist - Pessimist also, the sportspersons have demonstrated significantly better level of

optimism as compared to the non-sports participants ($F = 18.10$, $p < 0.01$). In sports, as the participants always strive hard to excel and do better than other participants, it cultivates among them the quality of persistence and will to fight for win in all situations, as without optimistic approach one cannot expect to win. Salokun & Torila (1985) had found athletes to be having positive outlook and more self assured than non-athletes.

With regard to construct Attractive - Unattractive, once again the sportspersons have exhibited significantly higher and better level of perceiving themselves as compared to the non-

sportspersons. This may be due to the reason that one tends to attain physical fitness as well as feeling of physical well being through participation in sports, which in turn promotes positive feeling among them on this component of self perception. This “feel good factor” further engenders in the athletes the greater perception of better body image and feeling of greater competence (Robinson and Shaver, 1969).

Finally, as depicted in the figure, the sportspersons have revealed their superiority over the non-sportspersons on the overall self-perception as they have been found to be significantly better on the variable overall self perception. Baize and Sheila (1991) had also found that students who participated in high school athletics had higher self-esteem. Gupta (2006) had also reported higher levels of personally perceived as well as socially perceived self esteem among the players of experimental group who had participated in the mental simulation training programme of basketball skills as compared to the control group. The results of the present study have also undoubtedly brought about the fact that participation in sports provides certain amount of self satisfaction which indeed helps in developing better self perception among athletes.

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