

## A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MENTAL SKILLS ON NATIONAL LEVEL MALE AND FEMALE BOXERS

Vinod Kumar<sup>1</sup>, Prof. Anil K. Vanaik<sup>2</sup>, Prof. Sarita Tyagi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of physical education and Sports Sciences, University of Delhi, Delhi, INDIA

<sup>2</sup>Professor in IGIPSS, University of Delhi, Delhi, INDIA

<sup>3</sup>Professor in IGIPSS, University of Delhi, Delhi, INDIA

### ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this research was to compare mental skills of male and female Boxers by Ottawa (OMSAT-3) Questionnaire. The research study was a descriptive-applied one. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire based on Ottawa questionnaire that measured some mental skills factors. The subject was 50 male and 50 female National Level Boxing players. T independent test was applied in order to analyze the related data to compare the results at  $p < 0.05$  level. The results indicated that the rate of Confidence, Relaxation, Imagery skills is higher in male Boxers in compare to female. However, the rate of Stress Control, Focusing and Competition Planning skills is higher in Female Boxers as compared to Male Players.

### INTRODUCTION

A professional athlete may enhance their performance by developing mental abilities, which are internal qualities that enable them to maintain constant and effective mental control while executing manageable tasks. Mental skill development is the process that offers the strategies and tactics to enhance performance through goal-setting, positive self-talk, visualization, imagery, self-efficiency, and the development of self-confidence and a positive mindset.

According to Singh, Valsaraj, and Mohammad (2013), mental skills are recognized as both a foundational and highly important metric for achieving optimal performance during competition. Along with training-related factors, sports psychologists believe that a wide range of other variables can also affect an athlete's performance and even help players perform at a higher level both during practice and during competition. Not only does physical training result in peak performance during contests, but other elements including weather, training techniques, nutrition, and psychological aspects also have a role (Murphy, 1987; Khan, Ali, & Ahmed, 2015).

Sport psychologists provided evidence that psychological training can assist in achieving desired outcomes when combined with physical training. A person with mental skills is better able to regulate their negative emotions, which might obstruct or hinder their route to success. According to Weinberg and Gould (2003), most

tournaments, however, are determined by the performance of the players (or their opponents) on any given day.

The mental component of training is crucial for achieving high performance in sports, as demonstrated by Cox & Yoo (1995). The mental component of performance needs to be given the attention it deserves in order to reach high levels of performance. Beswick (2010) has said that mental talents are intended to give athletes psychological moods and abilities that would enhance their performance. According to Williams and Krane (2001), it emphasizes on the mental abilities that players must acquire in order to enhance their performance beyond what can be accomplished by technical and physical training. In general, three preparation factors—physical, skill-based, and mental—are needed to obtain athletic skills. In addition, some research has shown that athletes with good mental preparation are more successful in tournaments, completing specific tasks in the framework of individual and team sports; these better mental skills let them to have high potential performance, particularly at their self-confidence when they compete in tournaments. It appears that the difference between the champions' performances is largely dependent on their mental preparation. In addition, these athletes are more capable of making positive decisions and thinking positively than other athletes; as a result, their mental preparedness might enhance their physical abilities. According to Cox (2016), mental skills are generally a set of approaches and strategies that may be used to improve an athlete's athletic performance, focus, and self-confidence, especially in academic settings.

According to Suinn (1977), psychological skills are the capacity to give one's whole attention to performance in circumstances when physical prowess ultimately decides the outcome. In the team sport of basketball, the mental and physical health of the team members determines whether the team succeeds or fails. Beswick (2010) confirmed that the nature of this activity necessitates both physical and mental reactions from the participant. In the stressful circumstances of a match, uncertainty about one's choice manifests itself in one's posture or can lead to mistakes or errors that could be the difference between winning and losing.

## **METHODS**

### **Selection of Subjects**

For the purpose of the study a total number of 100 subjects (50male & 50female) are selected from Boxing. The age of the subjects was between 17 to 28 years. The selected athletes are represented at different National Level competitions. The selected subjects are represented to different academies.

### **Selection of variables**

The mental skills are measured using the OMSAT-3. The 48 items in the OMSAT-3 are divided into 12 mental skills, with four items in each skill. These groups are arranged into three primary basic categories: cognitive, psychosomatic, and foundational skills. Goal-setting, self-confidence, commitment, stress reactions, fear

control, activation, relaxation, imagery, mental practice, focusing, refocusing, and competition planning are the mental skills. The 7-point Likert scale goes from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Demographic data, such as age, gender, sport discipline, highest achievement, and training time, is also included in the OMSAT-3. There were several uses for this information.

## RESULT

Independent samples t-test was employed to compare male and female Boxing players with respect to their Mental Skills.

**Table- 1: Descriptive Statistic Analysis of Mental Skills between Male and Female Boxing Players**

Group Statistics					
	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
GOAL-SETTING	Male	50	23.28	3.26	.462
	Female	50	23.96	2.42	.343
CONFIDENCE	Male	50	23.72	2.73	.385
	Female	50	22.32	2.90	.411
COMMITTMENT	Male	50	23.44	2.85	.403
	Female	50	23.80	2.45	.346
STRESS CONTROL	Male	50	17.72	3.16	.446
	Female	50	20.46	3.40	.481
RELAXATION	Male	50	21.60	2.92	.413
	Female	50	14.58	3.81	.539
FEAR CONTROL	Male	50	18.56	3.25	.460
	Female	50	19.00	3.54	.501
ENERGIZING	Male	50	22.18	3.17	.449
	Female	50	21.20	3.47	.491
FOCUSING	Male	50	16.98	3.38	.478
	Female	50	24.30	2.44	.346
IMAGERY	Male	50	22.56	2.76	.391
	Female	50	19.56	3.57	.505
COMPEITION PLANNING	Male	50	21.98	3.25	.459
	Female	50	24.36	2.70	.382
MENTAL PRACTICE	Male	50	18.28	4.20	.595
	Female	50	18.26	3.71	.525
REFOCUSING	Male	50	16.68	3.78	.535
	Female	50	17.74	3.47	.491

The group statistics of 50 male and 50 female boxing players' mental skills are shown in table no. 1 above. The aforementioned table displays the mean **Goal-Setting** score

for males, which was 23.28 with a standard deviation  $\pm 3.26$ , while for females; it was 23.96 with a standard deviation  $\pm 2.42$ . With a standard deviation  $\pm 2.90$ , the mean score for females in **Confidence** was 22.32, while the mean score for males was 23.72. In terms of **Commitment**, the mean score for men was 23.80 with a standard deviation  $\pm 2.85$ , while for women it was 23.80 with a standard deviation  $\pm 2.45$ . The average score for men in the **Stress-Control** test was 17.72, with a standard deviation of  $\pm 3.16$ , whereas the average score for women in the same test was 20.46, with  $\pm 3.40$  standard deviation. Males had an average **Relaxation** score of 21.60 with a standard deviation  $\pm 2.92$ , while females scored 14.58 with a standard deviation  $\pm 3.81$ . In **Fear Control**, the mean score for men was 18.56 with a standard deviation  $\pm 3.25$ , while for women it was 19.00 with a standard deviation  $\pm 3.54$ . Male participants' mean score in **Energizing** was 22.18, with a standard deviation of 3.17; female participants' mean score was 21.20, with a standard deviation of 3.47. **Focusing** scores for men were 16.98 with a standard deviation  $\pm 3.38$  and for women, 24.30 with a standard deviation  $\pm 2.44$ . In the category of **Imagery**, the mean score for men was 22.56 with a standard deviation  $\pm 2.76$ , while the mean score for women was 19.56 with a standard deviation 3.57. Male competitors' mean scores in **Competition Planning** were 21.98 with a standard deviation  $\pm 3.25$ , while female competitors' mean scores were 24.36 with a standard deviation  $\pm 2.70$ . In **Mental Practice**, the mean score for men was 18.28 with a standard deviation 4.20, while for women it was 18.26 with a standard deviation 3.71. In the **Refocusing**, the average score for males was 16.68, with a standard deviation of  $\pm 3.78$ , while the average score for females was 17.74, with a standard deviation of 3.47.

**TABLE-2: Comparative Statistical Analysis (Independent T-Test) Model of Male and Female Boxing Players**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	M D	S.E. D	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
GO	Equal variances	3.97	.049	-1.18	98	.24	-.68	.57	-1.82	.46

	assumed									
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.18	90.44	.24	-.68	.57	-1.82	.46
<b>CONFIDENCE</b>	Equal variances assumed	.028	.868	2.49	98	.015	1.40	.56	.28	2.52
	Equal variances not assumed			2.49	97.62	.015	1.40	.56	.28	2.52
<b>COMMITTMENT</b>	Equal variances assumed	1.60	.209	-.68	98	.50	-.36	.53	-1.42	.69
	Equal variances not assumed			-.68	95.82	.50	-.36	.53	-1.42	.69
<b>Stress Control</b>	Equal variances assumed	.810	.370	-4.18	98	.00	-2.74	.66	-4.04	-1.44
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.18	97.46	.00	-2.74	.66	-4.04	-1.44
<b>RELAXATION</b>	Equal variances assumed	1.03	.312	10.34	98	.00	7.02	.68	5.67	8.37
	Equal variances not assumed			10.34	91.78	.00	7.02	.68	5.67	8.37
<b>Fear Control</b>	Equal variances assumed	.599	.441	-.65	98	.52	-.44	.68	-1.79	.91
	Equal variances not assumed			-.65	97.31	.52	-.44	.68	-1.79	.91
<b>E</b>	Equal	.517	.47	1.47	98	.14	.98	.66	-.34	2.30

	variances assumed		4							
	Equal variances not assumed			1.47	97.23	.14	.98	.66	-.34	2.30
<b>FOCUSING</b>	Equal variances assumed	4.26	.042	-12.42	98	.00	-7.32	.59	-8.49	-6.15
	Equal variances not assumed			-12.42	89.26	.00	-7.32	.59	-8.49	-6.15
<b>IMAGERY</b>	Equal variances assumed	2.94	.090	4.70	98	.00	3.00	.64	1.73	4.27
	Equal variances not assumed			4.70	92.22	.00	3.00	.64	1.73	4.27
<b>Competition-Plan</b>	Equal variances assumed	.945	.333	-3.98	98	.00	-2.38	.60	-3.57	-1.19
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.98	94.85	.00	-2.38	.60	-3.57	-1.19
<b>Mental Practice</b>	Equal variances assumed	.909	.343	.025	98	.98	.02	.79	-1.55	1.59
	Equal variances not assumed			.025	96.53	.98	.02	.79	-1.55	1.59
<b>REFOCUSING</b>	Equal variances assumed	.045	.833	-1.46	98	.15	-1.06	.73	-2.50	.38
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.46	97.28	.15	-1.06	.73	-2.50	.38

Comparative statistical data can be observed in Table-2 for male and female Boxing Players, the T independent sample test shows that no significance difference goal setting ( $P = 0.24$ ,  $t(98) = 1.18$ ), commitment ( $P = 0.50$ ,  $t(98)=0.68$ ), fear control ( $P = 0.52$ ,  $t(98) = 0.65$ ), energizing ( $P = 0.14$ ,  $t(98)=1.47$ ), mental practice ( $P = 0.98$ ,  $t(98)=0.025$ ) refocusing ( $P = 0.15$ ,  $t(98)=1.46$ ). Also, confidence ( $P = 0.015$ ,  $t(98) = 2.49$ ), stress control ( $P = 0.00$ ,  $t(98)=4.18$ ), relaxation ( $P = 0.00$ ,  $t(98) = 10.34$ ), focusing ( $P = 0.00$ ,  $t(98)=12.42$ ), imagery ( $P = 0.00$ ,  $t(98)= 4.70$ ) competition planning ( $P = 0.00$ ,  $t(98)= 3.98$ ).

## DISCUSSION

The results indicated that the rate of Confidence and Relaxation skills is higher in male Boxers in compare to female. Also its been obvious in the findings of the study of **M.S. Sotoodeh et.al. (2012)**. In which he stated that the Confidence and relaxation skills were higher in elite male players. The result shows that male boxers have higher imagery skill than female. The Findings of **Fairouz Azaiez et.al.(2013)** and **Sanjay Kumar(2012)** also traces the same result that the imagery skills possess a great expertise in male as if than female. However, the rate of Focusing and Competition Planning skill is higher in Female Boxers as compared to Male Players. The findings of the study had been supported by **M.S. Sotoodeh et.al.(2012)**, Which inculcates that the mean score of female elite athletes for the focusing and competition planning skill is higher as compared to male players. The mean score of female athletes' stress control of mental skill was greater than that of male Athletes.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, psychological characteristics of female and male boxers were compared. Competence and physical condition alone may not always be enough to achieve the required results at the highest level. An athlete's psychological condition also affects their performance. Many psychological features are innate, but with psychological skill training, some may be acquired.

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