



Personality Traits in Team vs. Individual Athletes

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study explores the complex dynamics on personality traits among athletes of team sports and individual sports. Personality traits like sociability, dominance, extraversion, conventionality, self-concept, mental toughness, and emotional stability significantly influence an athlete's performance and mental well-being. **Objective:** The aim of the study was to explore various personality traits, including sociability, dominance, extraversion, conventionality, self-concept, mental toughness, and emotional stability. **Method:** To fulfil the study's objective, 200 athletes (100 from team sports and 100 from individual sports) were chosen from various training centres in the Delhi region. Handball and Football were selected as team sports, while Gymnastics and Swimming represented individual sports. The participants' ages ranged from 16 to 25 years. The Sports Specific Personality Test (Cheema and Singh, 2005) were utilized to assess the personality traits of the athletes in team and individual sports. **Result** Using descriptive analysis and independent t-tests with SPSS, the results revealed a significant difference in personality traits of athletes only in sociability, extraversion, and conventionality. It was revealed that between different types of sports there was a significant difference observed in Sociability ($p < .05$), Extraversion ($p < .05$) and Conventionality ($p < .05$). **Conclusion:** Sociability, Extraversion and Conventionality of players involved in team sports is higher as compared to players involved in individual sports.

KEYWORDS

Conventionality, Dominance, Emotional Stability, Extraversion, Mental Toughness, Personality, Self-Concept, Sociability.

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INTRODUCTION

Personality is the unique way individuals react to situations, highlighting their differences (Guilford 1959). Understanding personality involves comparing these differences among people. It is considered a stable and enduring organization of a person's character (moral code), temperament (emotional nature and biological disposition), intellect, and physique, which determines how they adapt to their environment (Eysenck 1960). Personality helps predict how a person will behave in various situations (Cattell 1965). It is a consistent organization of one's character, temperament, intellect, and physique, explaining the physiological differences between introverts and extroverts through weak and strong nervous systems (Eysenck 1968).

Personality integrates all aspects of an individual's psychological life, including thoughts, feelings, actions, and behaviours. There are two aspects: one involving feeling and thinking, and the other involving behaving and acting (Alderman 1974). Genetic factors shape personality, but environmental experiences also influence it, meaning that personality can affect activity preferences and be modified by those activities. While personality foundations are established early in life, later experiences can modify them. Individuals have both innate personality traits and an external personality, which determines how others perceive them. This is especially relevant for athletes in the public eye. External traits do not always reflect deeper characteristics, but they are what coaches notice and influence (Singer 1972).

Personality is a stable set of traits and tendencies that determine commonalities and differences in people's psychological behaviour (thoughts, feelings, and actions) over time, which may or may not be easily explained by social and biological factors. These similarities and differences can be observed by people's actions and behaviour under specific conditions (Maddi 1976). Personality is based on three conditions: behaviour influenced by traits defining significant aspects of an individual's identity (needs, motives, cognition), behaviour influenced by internal control or not easily explained by external circumstances, and an organized structure where various human behaviours form significant patterns (Levy 1970).

Methodology

Selection of the Subject: To achieve the study's objective, 200 athletes were selected, with 100 competing at the state level and 100 at the national level. The sample aimed to include an equal number of players from individual sports and team sports. Gymnastics and Swimming represented individual sports, while Handball and Football represented team sports. The athletes were chosen from various training facilities across Delhi region and colleges, resulting in a diverse group across the four sports. The demographic details of subjects are given in table 1.

Table1 Demographic details of the subjects

Type of Sports		No of Subjects
Team Sports	Handball	50
	Football	50
Individual Sports	Gymnastics	50
	Swimming	50
Total		200

Selection of the Variables

To identify the most relevant factors for the current study, the researcher examined previous research, referenced relevant literature, and consulted with experts in sports and physical education. The selected psychological factor was Personality.

Criterion Measure: For this study, each subject in the study was given the English version of the Cheema and Singh (2005) Specific Sports Personality Test to assess their personality traits. This test measures seven traits: dominance, sociability, extraversion, conventionality, self-concept, mental toughness, and emotional stability, using 100 items. The test is both valid and reliable, with reliability scores of ($r = 0.90$), ($r = 0.84$), ($r = 0.69$), ($r = 0.93$), ($r = 0.82$), ($r = 0.87$), ($r = 0.58$), and ($r = 0.86$) for dominance, sociability, conventionality, extraversion, self-concept, mental toughness, emotional stability, and the overall test, respectively. Validity scores are ($v = 0.66$), ($v = 0.63$), ($v = 0.62$), ($v = 0.56$), ($v = 0.61$), ($v = 0.53$), ($v = 0.62$), and ($v = 0.64$) for the same traits and the overall test, respectively.

Procedure

The in-charge of each selected training centre was contacted, either in person or by phone, to obtain permission to approach their athletes and schedule appointments for data collection. The researcher, in consultation with the in-charge, arranged the data collection times to ensure athletes were available outside of their regular classes or practice sessions.

Statistical Analysis

SPSS was used to calculate the mean, standard deviation, and comparison of mean scores of the obtained data.

Table 2 Descriptive Analysis of Personality traits across Team and Individual Sports

Group Statistics						
Variable		Type of Sports	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Personality Trait	Sociability	Team Sports	100	39.66	5.82	.58
		Individual Sports	100	37.44	6.43	.64
	Dominance	Team Sports	100	33.92	7.76	.77
		Individual Sports	100	32.50	6.44	.64
	Extraversion	Team Sports	100	39.58	5.26	.52
		Individual Sports	100	36.97	6.32	.63
	Conventionality	Team Sports	100	35.18	7.16	.71
		Individual Sports	100	32.70	7.46	.74
	Self-Concept	Team Sports	100	35.37	6.02	.60
		Individual Sports	100	36.48	6.48	.64
	Mental Toughness	Team Sports	100	38.69	7.57	.75
		Individual Sports	100	40.29	7.32	.73
	Emotional Stability	Team Sports	100	40.28	8.13	.81
		Individual Sports	100	38.78	8.79	.87

Table 2 shows mean scores and SDs for different traits of personality across different types of sports. The results indicate that the mean and SD of different personality traits for team sports were 39.66 ± 5.82 , 39.92 ± 7.76 , 39.58 ± 5.26 , 35.18 ± 7.16 , 35.37 ± 6.02 , 38.69 ± 7.57 and 40.28 ± 8.13 for the traits Sociability, Dominance, Extraversion, Conventionality, Self-Concept, Mental Toughness and Emotional Stability, respectively. However, the mean and SD of different personality traits for individual sports were 37.44 ± 6.43 , 32.50 ± 6.44 , 36.97 ± 6.32 , 32.70 ± 7.46 , 36.48 ± 6.48 , 40.29 ± 7.32 and 38.8 ± 8.79 for the traits Sociability, Dominance, Extraversion, Conventionality, Self-Concept, Mental Toughness and Emotional Stability, respectively.

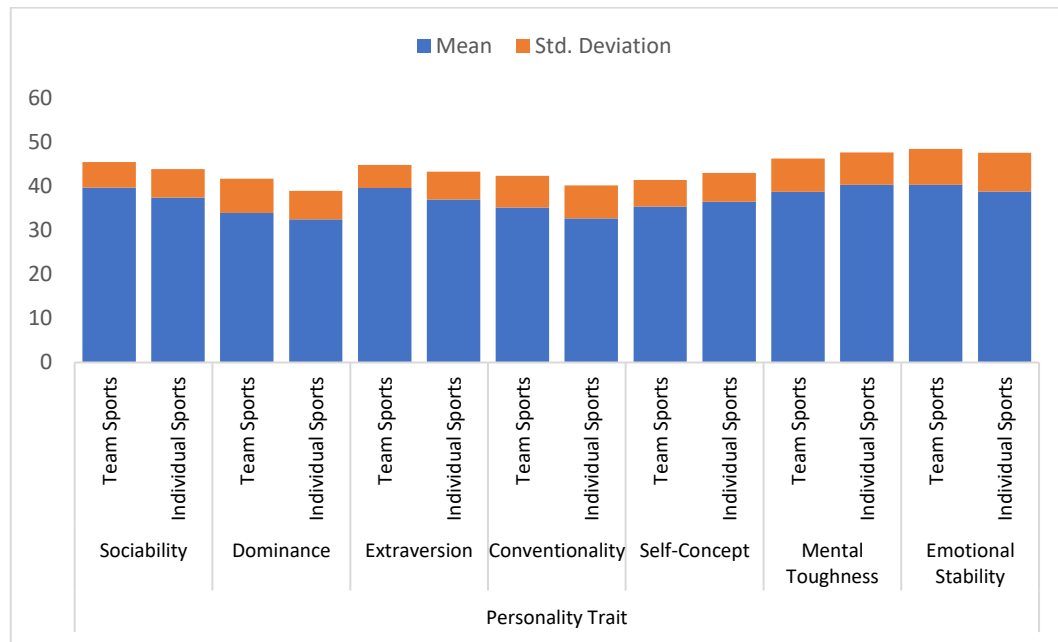


Figure 1 Descriptive statistics of Personality Traits across Team and Individual Sports

Table 3 Comparison of Mean Score of Personality traits across Team and Individual Sports

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Sociability	1.226	.270	2.559	198	.011	2.22	.86
Dominance	2.747	.099	1.407	198	.161	1.42	1.00
Extraversion	2.563	.111	3.173	198	.002	2.61	.82
Conventionality	.328	.568	2.398	198	.017	2.48	1.03
Self-Concept	.720	.397	-1.255	198	.211	-1.11	.88
Mental Toughness	.027	.869	-1.519	198	.130	-1.60	1.05
Emotional Stability	.181	.671	1.252	198	.212	1.50	1.19

Table 3 indicates the Comparison of Mean Score of Personality across different types of Sports. The results revealed that there was a significant difference observed in Sociability $t(198)=2.55$, $p=.011$, Extraversion $t(198)=3.17$, $p=.002$ and Conventionality $t(198)=2.39$, $p=.017$. However, there was no significant difference observed in Dominance, Self-Concept, Mental Toughness and Emotional Stability $p>0.05$. Which means that the mean score was significantly higher for Sociability, Extraversion and Conventionality in team sports as compared to individual sports.

Discussion

The results revealed that the Sociability of players involved in team sports is higher as compared to players involved in individual sports because team sports involve more social interactions with other teammates for teamwork, communication, conflict resolution and leadership. In a similar study the author has shown difference in personality traits of team and individual sports. The results revealed that players participating in team sports have higher level of sociability as compared to players participating in individual sports (Kuloor, 2017). Another study shows that the sociability of team sports is higher than that of individual sports (Kuravatti & Malipatil, 2017).

The Extraversion of players involved in team sports is higher as compared to players involved in individual sports because team sports require qualities like assertiveness, warmth and sociable which are described as extrovert qualities. In a similar study the author has shown difference in personality traits of team and individual sports. The results revealed that players participating in team sports have higher level of extraversion as compared to players participating in individual sports (Kuloor, 2017). Another study shows that the extraversion of team sports is higher than that of individual sports (Mollazadeh, Zandi, Rostamizadeh, & Kateb, 2020).

The Conventionality of players involved in team sports is higher as compared to players involved in individual sports because in team sports qualities like respect for authority, loyalty and reliability creating dependency are required for team cohesion which may be lacking in individual sports due to self-reliant nature of individual sports. In a similar study the author has shown difference in personality traits of team and individual sports. The results revealed that players participating in team sports have higher level of conventionality as compared to players participating in individual sports (Parmar & Desai, 2020).

Conclusion

Sociability of players involved in team sports is higher as compared to players involved in individual sports. Extraversion of players involved in team sports is higher as compared to players involved in individual sports. Conventionality of players involved in team sports is higher as compared to players involved in individual sports.

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