

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SPORTSMAN SPIRIT BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE OTHERWISE ABLED SPORTSPERSONS

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DOI No. – 08.2020-25662434

Abstract

Sportsman spirit is also known as sportsmanship in the sports setting. It has several annotations like fair play; sportsman spirit and displaying ethical character in sports so on and so forth. The term fair play means every player gets equal opportunity to display her skills and to win besides that a player should be truthful, firm and follow a code of conduct or set of pre-determined behavior despite being instigated to divulge from those moral values. Some of the practical manifestations of sportsman spirit encompasses virtues such as acknowledging one's mistakes, respecting the rules of the games/society, to be assertive but not angry etc., that can make sports a true source of inspiration to others, appreciating the exceptional performance of opponent, respect for senior players, coaches and officials, not taking advantage of opponent in injured condition. In general, sportsmanship refers to virtues like fairness, self-control, courage and persistence and has been associated with interpersonal concepts of treating others fairly, maintaining self-control in dealing with others, and respect for both authority and opponents. The aim of the present survey study was to compare sportsman spirit between male and female otherwise abled sportspersons of India. To conduct the study, 70 physically disabled male (36) female (34) table-tennis players of mean age 20.54 ± 1.21 were studied as sample. The criterion for selection of subjects was minimum state level participation in any table-tennis (para-sports) up to national level. Sportsman spirit of selected subjects was assessed by Sportsmen Spirit Questionnaire prepared by L.N. Dubey (1988). Inferential statistics was used with SPSS-25 version. Independent t-test was applied to get the results. Findings showed statistically non-significant ($p > .05$) difference in sportsman spirit of male and female table-tennis players. Both males and females displayed above average sportsmen spirit as per classification table. It was concluded that participation in competitive sports is equally useful for development of human virtues such as sportsman spirit irrespective of gender.

Keywords: Fair Play, Table-tennis players, Independent t-test

INTRODUCTION

Sportsman spirit or sportsmanship has been used commonly in sports setting, which signifies morality. The definition of the spirit of sportsmen is somewhat overlapping with the words like fair play, character in sports being used interchangeably and paraphrased by the researchers. The term fair play implies that every player has the same chance of winning when playing a game.

Even if the opponent does not do the same things, the player needs to be honest, firm and behave properly. The Character, habits and values are described as pertinent deciding factors,

how an individual reacts to challenges, failures and progress or conducts himself or herself when in a sports competitive situation. The spirit of being a good sportsperson comprises values such as recognizing one's faults, respecting and adhering to the laws of the game, not being temperamental, not showing off, and understanding the sports environment etc. how does one reacts to exceptional performance by the opponents, respect for officials, not taking to take advantage of opponents in injured conditions are some rubrics that indicate true sportsmanship. In today's world of cut throat competition in sports, when a lot of money, name and fame, reputation in front of home crowd is at stake, it has become very difficult to practice sportsmanship because it has no marks as many sportspersons view that it doesn't add to your triumph for a win. High expectations alter the general perception to "winning at all cost" is everything. Sportsmanship can be conceptualized as a permanent and relatively constant attribute or temperament that has genetic as well as acquired traits at display. Individuals vary in the way they are normally supposed to act in sports situations. Generally, sportsmanship is synonymous with qualities such as honesty, self-control, bravery, and persistence. Interpersonal principles of treating and being treated equally by others, preserving self-control in communicating with others and respect for both influence and rivals.

Researchers^{5,6} have worked comprehensively for the development of the concept of sportsmanship in the sports competitive situations. They used the basis of the theories of social psychology etc. to study this. Research studies on sportsmanship of athletes has been restricted to physically competent athletes, but with the increasing popularity and promising results of Indian sportsperson at the national and international level, it is pertinent to study the participants in professional sports who have physical, cognitive behavioral, visual, emotional or mixed deficiencies. Physical deficiencies include muscle weakness, limb loss, range of motion and several other medical conditions. People suffering from these disabilities participate in sports that are particularly organized for physically disabled persons (para-sports). A close review of research literature, however, suggests that no study has yet been carried out in which comparison of sportsman spirit amongst males and females who are physically disabled (lower body or one upper limb disability). Present study, therefore has been planned in order to fill up this gap.

Following two objectives were formulated for the purpose of the study:

- a. To characterize PH category male and female table tennis players on their sportsmen spirit.
- b. Second objective was to compare sportsmen spirit of PH male and female table tennis players.

METHODS

2.1. Subjects from different academies of India were randomly selected after written permission and consent for the present survey study that took place from July 2020 to August 2020.

2.2. Test for sportsman spirit: Questionnaire named "Sportsmen Spirit" developed by L. N. Dubey (1988)² was adopted for measuring and to collect data for sportsmen spirit. among the subjects selected for the present investigation. This test is in Hindi and standardized for college/university students. It consists of 40 situational items, with each item having 3 probable answers out of which only one answer is to be selected by the subject, depending up one's choice. Its split-half reliability

is .89 and its validity against the ratings of teachers, physical instructors and captain of teams is .78.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

1. IBM SPSS-25 version, USA was being used to test whether the basic assumptions of data normality were being violated or not, to compute descriptive statistics, and independent samples t-test.
2. IBM SPSS-25 version, USA was being used to compare sportsman spirit of PH male and female table tennis players. Level of significance was set at .05.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

1. H_0 = There will not be significant difference between males and females on sportsman spirit
2. H_a = There will be significant difference between males and females on sportsman spirit.

RESULTS

Seventy (36 male and 34 female) physically challenged table tennis players in the age ranged from 18 to 23 years (Mean $abe- 20.54 \pm 1.21$) with a minimum of state level participation were studied.

Table-1: Classification of the Sportspersons according the level of Sportsmen Spirit- L. N. Dubey (1988)

Level of Sportsmen Spirit	Range of score
High Sportsmen Spirit	68 & above
Above average Sportsmen Spirit	56 - 67
Average Sportsmen Spirit	44 - 55
Below average Sportsmen Spirit	32 - 43
Low Sportsmen Spirit	31 & below

**Table-2: Demographic variables of the participants
Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age (in years)	70	18.00	23.00	20.54	1.21
Number of years of education completed	70	12.00	16.00	14.22	1.11
Valid N (listwise)	70				

Table-2 shows the age, number of years of education completed for all the 70 participants. Mean age was 20.54 ± 1.21 and mean number of years of education completed was 14.22 ± 1.11 . All the valid cases were total 70 with no missing cases.

Table-3: Gender wise break up of samples

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	36	51.4	51.4	51.4
	Female	34	48.6	48.6	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	

Table-3 shows that there were 36 males (51.4%) and 34 females (48.6%) out of total 70 sample size.

Fig-1: Pie chart showing the number of males and females

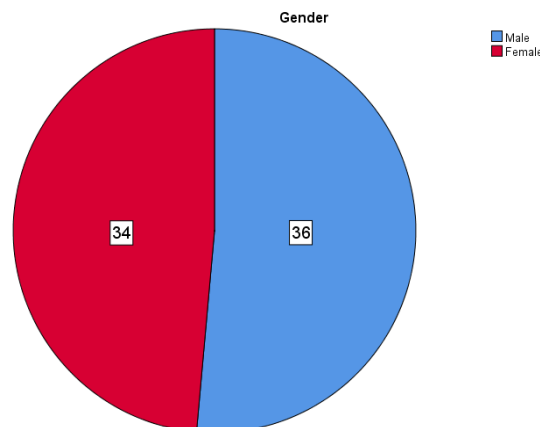


Table-4: Normality test for the dependent variable sportsman spirit of males and females

Tests of Normality							
	Gender	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Sportsman spirit score	Male	.112	36	.200*	.960	36	.208
	Female	.145	34	.066	.962	34	.286

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table-4 shows the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Shapiro-Wilk test output shows the normality of "sportsmen spirit" on the data of individuals that are classified as both "male" in the independent variable. As the **Sig.** value under the Shapiro-Wilk column is greater than 0.05, we can conclude that "sportsman spirit" for this particular subset of individuals is normally distributed.

Fig-2: Normal probability curves showing data normality and mean and SD values for male and female TT players

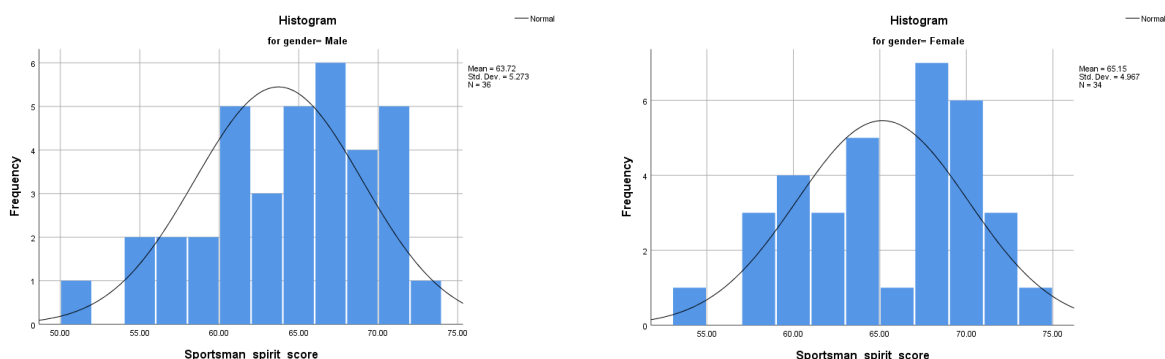


Table-5: Independent samples t-test showing Characteristics of males and females sportsmen spirit compared

Group Statistics				N	Mean	Std. D.	Level of Sportsmen Spirit	F	Sig.	df
Gender										
Sportsman spirit score	Male	36	63.72	5.27	Above average Sportsmen Spirit	0.000	0.985	68		
	Female	34	65.15	4.97	Above average Sportsmen Spirit					

As shown in table-5, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare male and female physically challenged Table-tennis players on level of sportsmen spirit. There was no significant difference in the scores for males (M=63.72, SD=5.27) and females (M=65.15, SD=4.97); $t(68)=2.89$, $p = 0.985$. These results suggest that though females have shown higher sportsmen spirit scores in comparison to males, but males and females really do differ statistically on sportsmen spirit. Both males and females fall in the category of “above average sportsmen spirit” as per the classification by LN Dubey (1988).

A study entitled “Assessment and comparison of Sportsmen Spirit between University level male and female Table Tennis players” (non para athlete) in the age group of 18 to 24 years also found male and female Table Tennis players⁴ lie in the category of “Above average Sportsmen Spirit” (Male mean = 58.87 & Female mean = 65.53). Insignificant ($t = 1.97$, $p > .05$) difference was found between male and female table tennis university players in relation to sportsmen sprit. Similar to the present study Female Table Tennis players possessed higher in Sportsmen Sprit in comparison to male TT players.

In yet another study¹ on “A Comparative Study of Sportsman Spirit between Physically Able and Disabled Male Sportsperson conducted on 50 physically disabled male sportspersons and 50 non disabled having mean age 21.40 yrs from sporting event at national level showed statistically Non-significant difference in sportsman spirit of physically able and physically disabled male sportsperson.

Though very less physically challenged sportspersons participate in sports, the results show that female physically challenged table tennis players were equally good in terms of moral and ethical values associated with sports competition participation at par with their male counterparts. The attribute of fair play and sportsman ship plays a very important role in the present scenario when some sports persons tend to use all kinds of unethical measures to win medals. The character building outcomes and life skills can only be manifested through sports if all inclusive approach is followed.

CONCLUSION

H_0 = There will not be significant difference between males and females on sportsman spirit

- Null hypothesis is accepted

H_a = There will be significant difference between males and females on sportsman spirit.

- Alternate hypothesis is rejected. No gender differences amongst the physically challenged male and female table –tennis players as far as sportsman spirit is concerned.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was undertaken online using the standardized Hindi language version of the tool which was uploaded in the google forms format and link shared with the masses. The authors

thank Dr. Bharti: Associated Professor, NCERT, New Delhi, who gave us leads regarding PH category table-tennis players and their parents and coaches. We thank the players and their mentors for their assistance and contribution to the development and achievement of this research.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Dr. Parmod Kumar Sethi participated in the design of the study, contributed to data collection and data reduction/analysis. Both the authors contributed to the manuscript writing, reading and approving the final version of the manuscript, and agree with the order of presentation of the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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