A Comparative Analysis of Emotional Intelligence Among University and State Level Football Players of Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh

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ABSTRACT:
Performance in sports is significantly influenced by emotional intelligence. The study involved the Eighty Rajiv Gandhi University male football players. Emotional intelligence was examined in relation to their involvement at the state and university levels. Eighty athletes completed the EISS (2005), an emotional intelligence scale for athletes created by Rajitha Menon A. and Dr. Jayshree Acharya. The method of purposeful sampling was employed in the subject selection process. The level of significance was set at 0.05 and an independent sample t test was used. A notable variation was discovered throughout the investigation.

1.   Introduction

The ability to identify, comprehend, and regulate one's own emotions as well as those of others in order to build dependable relationships with them is known as emotional intelligence(Said & Nawi, 2023). Emotional intelligence is a useful metric for evaluating a person's ability to acquire new skills and improve performance (Juditya & Rifai, 2017). Studies on emotional intelligence in sports have shown how important it is for improving players' overall health and performance (Laborde et al., 2016; Castro-Sanchez et al., 2018; Sanchez-Alvarez et al., 2015). Higher emotional intelligence in athletes has been linked to better decision-making, adaptability, and resilience, according to studies demonstrating increased self-awareness, self-regulation, and positive interpersonal interactions (Mayer et al., 2008; Laborde et al., 2016).

Studies have indicated that teams comprising individuals with greater emotional intelligence typically exhibit better communication, collaboration, and cohesion (Murmu & Neelam, 2022). Players in team sports, for instance football, need to communicate with teammates far more frequently than in other sports. It may play an important role in how well a player performs in a team environment. A team can be made or broken by it (Birwatkar, 2014).

Additionally, research has looked into the connection between athlete burnout and emotional intelligence. Studies have demonstrated that emotional intelligence can serve as a safeguard against burnout.. This is because athletes who possess higher emotional intelligence levels tend to have better coping mechanisms and are more resilient when faced with difficulties (Jung et al., 2019).

Athletes' emotions impact not just other parts of the psyche (will and reason), but also whether their performance improves or decreases. A football game requires emotional components. The capacity for doubtless appropriate thought and behavior is anxiety (Hammado et al., 2019). People who are able to control their emotions and cultivate positive emotions find it easier to deal with challenging circumstances and overcome the aftereffects of stressful events. Ayilgan et al., (2023) an athlete's strength can be maximized to showcase his best performance during competition. Certain aspects of sports experience, such as the kind of sport played, frequency of practice (days/week, years), variety of sports played, and the highest level of

competition attained, may be connected to emotional intelligence(Gabriel et al., 2021).

Methodology

Objective: This study is a survey conducted to determine the emotional intelligence differences between university level and state-level football players associated with Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh.

Sample: In the year 2023, the Purposive sampling technique was employed in order to have an 80 male (40 university level and 40 State level) football player representative sample from Rajiv Gandhi University. Participants aged between 18 and 25 years who were enrolled as students at Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh (India).

Data Collection Tool: The study utilized an Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire comprising 30 items, developed by Rajitha Menon. A and Dr. Jayashree Acharya. This questionnaire measures emotional intelligence across five sub-parameters:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self regulation
3. Motivation
4. Empathy
5. Social skills

Procedure:

Identify and contact potential participants through the university's football program and state-level affiliations.

Provide information about the study and obtain informed consent from the participants.

Distribute the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire to the selected participants.

Ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the responses.

Collect and compile the data for analysis.

Statistical Analysis:

To assess the significant difference between the two groups(university and state-level players), an independent sample t-test was employed at a significance level of 0.05. It will help in statistically examining the variations between the scores of the two groups.

Expected Outcomes:

The findings will help to understand variation in emotional intelligence at different competitive levels within the university setting. It could provide valuable knowledge for coaches, sports psychologists, and administrators in tailoring interventions to enhance emotional intelligence in football players.

Ethical Considerations:

- Participants' consent and confidentiality were prioritized.
- The study adheres to ethical guidelines and standards set by the university.
- This study design provides a clear road-map for conducting the survey and analyzing the emotional intelligence differences among university and state-level football players at Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh (India).

2. Results

Table 1:

Descriptive Statistic Analysis of Emotional Intelligence Capacity of Both Participating Levels.

variables	Student football playing level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Self Awareness	University level	40	24.23	2.787	.441
	State	40	22.30	2.662	.4

Variable	Level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	level				21
Self Regulation	University level	40	20.90	2.772	.438
	State level	40	18.50	2.996	.474
Motivation	University level	40	22.73	3.105	.491
	State level	40	18.28	3.313	.524
Empathy	University level	40	24.83	2.735	.432
	State level	40	23.90	2.808	.444
Social Skills	University level	40	21.30	2.691	.425
	State level	40	19.35	2.617	.414
Emotional Intelligence	University level	40	113.98	8.192	1.295
	State level	40	102.33	9.579	1.515

The data collected was entered into SPSS (version 22) and an independent sample t-test was employed for the analysis of data. The results of the test are displayed in two tables (descriptive statistics and independent sample t-test with Levene test). The test was applied to all five sub-variables separately and displayed in merged format in a single table. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistical means and standard deviations of the variables and Table 2 shows the Levene test for the assumption of equal variance with F value and significant values and T-test columns for T-test values, difference of freedom (df), sig.2-tailed (p-value), mean difference, standard error difference, confidence interval of the difference (lower and upper value).

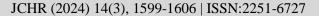**Figure 1:** Histogram of Emotional intelligence variables

Table 2: Merged Independent Sample T-test Analysis for Different Variables

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Self Awareness	Equal variances assumed	0.011	0.916	3.159	78	0.002	1.925	0.609	0.712	3.138
	Equal variances not assumed			3.159	77.836	0.002	1.925	0.609	0.712	3.138
Self Regulation	Equal variances assumed	0.411	0.524	3.719	78	0	2.4	0.645	1.115	3.685
	Equal variances not assumed			3.719	77.533	0	2.4	0.645	1.115	3.685
Motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.445	0.507	6.199	78	0	4.45	0.718	3.021	5.879
	Equal variances not assumed			6.199	77.675	0	4.45	0.718	3.021	5.879
Empathy	Equal variances assumed	0.004	0.95	1.492	78	0.14	0.925	0.62	-0.309	2.159
	Equal variances not assumed			1.492	77.946	0.14	0.925	0.62	-0.309	2.159
Social Skills	Equal variances assumed	0.354	0.554	3.286	78	0.002	1.95	0.594	0.768	3.132
	Equal variances not assumed			3.286	77.94	0.002	1.95	0.594	0.768	3.132
Emotional intelligence score	Equal variances assumed	1.318	0.254	5.846	78	0	11.65	1.993	7.682	15.618
	Equal variances not assumed			5.846	76.165	0	11.65	1.993	7.681	15.619

The "Descriptive Statistical Analysis" table only describes the mean and standard deviation comparison values of all different sub-variables in the emotional intelligence questionnaire, and the independent sample t test shows statistical values of the differences between both groups (university and state level players). In Table 2, the values in Levene's test columns are not significant (p > 0.05), so the result values from the Assumed Equal Variance row can be used. The test result shows that the players at the university level (M = 24.23 ± 2.787) have higher self-confidence (t = 3.159, df = 78, p = 0.002) than players at the state level (M = 22.30 ± 2.662) with a difference of 1.93. It can be seen that players at the university level (M = 23.97 ± 2.61) have stronger self-regulation (t = 3.73, df = 78, p = .00) than players at the state level (M = 18.50 ± 2.996) with

a mean difference of 2.41. Players at university level (M = 22.73 ± 3.11) also performed better in motivation (t = 6.19, df = 78, p = 0.00) than players at the state level (M = 18.28 ± 3.32), with a mean difference of 4.46 and more Social skills: University level players score with (M = 21.30 ± 2.70), (t = 3.29, df = 78, p = .00) higher scores than state-level players (M = 19.35 ± 2.62), with a mean difference of 1.96. University level players (M = 24.83 ± 2.74) have higher empathy than state level players (M = 23.90 ± 2.81), with a mean difference of 0.93, but with (t = 1 .49, df = 78, p = .14). The result shows an insignificant difference in empathy score between the two groups.

The test results show that there is a significant difference between the groups, as university level players scored higher in emotional intelligence (M = 113.98 ± 8.19, t = 5.85, df = 78, p = 0.00) as a football player at the state level (M = 102.33 ± 9.58) and mean difference 11.65. The difference may be caused by playing experiences and level of participation against players from different states and players in different practice environments.

3.   Discussion

The main objective of the study was to evaluate the emotional intelligence aspect of football players and compare it with the playing experience of football players at university and state levels in Arunachal Pradesh. Consistent with our hypothesis, there were significant differences in self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills between university and state-level football players. The mean difference had been found in the empathy variable of emotional intelligence, but the result/difference was not significant. Players with experience at the university level had the upper hand in the general aspect of emotional intelligence.

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Studies that were comparable to this one were carried out to compare emotional intelligence between males and females (Ahmad et al., 2009) between various combat sports(Devi et al., 2017), athletes & non-athletes(Zamanian et al., 2011), individual, dual, and team sports (Singh & Mili, 2015). In a related study, Soylu (2021) examined the age and skill level of football players.   Significant differences were discovered, and   the findings   indicated   that midfielders   and lower   age categories   had higher emotional intelligence than their counterparts.

In terms   of   emotional intelligence,   female football players likewise exhibit favorable relationships with their male counterparts. As the research, Hooda & Sharma   (2019)   also   shows   a   noteworthy variation among female football players in accordance with the   varying   playing   positions   and   levels of experience (Yazici et al., 2021). In addition to a player's   background and   position on the field, women's football demonstrates that   androgynous football players possess greater emotional intelligence than their counterparts (Rutkowska, 2015).

In team sports, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in assisting athletes in managing their emotions better and overcoming negative emotions like stress, anger, and anxiety (Ros-Martinez et al., 2013). Athletes may experience both happy and negative feelings during practice and games in the context of sports (Hanin, 1997; Jones, 2002). Because players with higher emotional intelligence perceive happiness more accurately and have better mental health, a football team should use emotional intelligence development strategies because this could have an impact on a player's performance (Sezen-Balcikanli & Seven, 2018).

As stated by Muttaqin and Khoirul (2020), players in a football game must constantly focus and concentrate during   the game. Players lacking emotional intelligence are more likely   to   commit   errors   like needless fouls, inaccurate   passes,   off-target shots, and poor teamwork, which have a detrimental

effect on the team as a whole in addition to the individual player.

Training, player aging (Moradi et al., 2012), as well as stressful, prolonged, varied, and highly interactive environments (Bazvand et al., 2020) are associated with increased emotional intelligence. The player benefits from peer support activities and coping strategies based on acceptance (Berastigui-Martinez & Lopez-Ubis, 2022). It assists in preventing the bad feelings that are brought on by sports (Messanga et al., 2021), which results in the right player's strength being properly optimized to bring out his best performance (Hammado et al., 2019). To guarantee the best possible performance from the players at the competitive level, emotional intelligence training and improved management become crucial (Ong & Griva, 2017; Totterdell & Leach, 2001).

Therefore, in addition to its effects on individuals, emotional intelligence is crucial in fostering team cohesion and achievement, which enhances team effectiveness (Said & Nawi, 2023). According to research by Ayilgan et al., (2023), emotional intelligence has been identified as one of the performance determinants, and those who succeed in competitions requiring high-level performance athletes have higher levels of emotional intelligence. Hence, in order to help players develop their emotional intelligence, coaches, trainers, and sports psychologists must foster a task-oriented environment among them (Castro-Sanchez et al., 2019).

This study also makes the following strong point: no prior research on tribal football players in India is known to have been conducted, aside from the comparison of football players between state-level and university players. It is going to open the eyes of the state's and the country's sports enthusiasts. The study demonstrates the actual emotional intelligence level of the Arunachal Pradesh football players. University players exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence than their peers, as evidenced by the results. This highlights the necessity for the State Football Association and other relevant authorities to step in and begin addressing the players' psychological needs in order to improve their performance. Because emotional

intelligence can be raised through intentional practice and instruction, this study's finding is significant (Ranasinghe et al., 2017).

Conclusion

The main conclusion is that players at the university level have higher emotional intelligence than players at the state level. The study will provide an insight into the emotional intelligence of football players in Arunachal Pradesh. Further research on emotional intelligence can be conducted to profile the state of football players. Emotional intelligence training should go hand in hand with other technical and tactical training.

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