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The psychology of competition: Exploring aggression in sprinters, jumpers, and throwers

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the Aggression of Sprinters, Jumpers and Throwers of Panjab University Inter College Athletic Meet. Researcher had selected (N=100) sprinters, (N=100) jumpers and (N=100) throwers including male and female athletes. Age limit of the selected athletes ranges from 18 to 28 years. The random sampling technique was used to select the sample. T-test was employed to compare the psychological well-being on sprinters, jumpers and throwers. For testing the hypothesis, the level of significance was set at 0.05. Questionnaire developed by Buss and Perry (1992) pertaining to Aggression has been used for the study. The main objective of this research paper is to find out the multiple comparisons among sprinters, jumpers and throwers in regards to Aggression. The findings of the study revealed that there were highly significant differences between sprinters, jumpers.

Keywords: Aggression, sprinters, jumpers, throwers

Introduction

One field that has contributed to our understanding of athletes and other aspects of sports is sports psychology. Sports psychology is a field that has been intertwined with several fields of study to better comprehend an individual's performance and overall well-being (Tenenbaum & Eklund, 2020)^[9]. The goal of sports psychology is to support athletes in their everyday efforts within the sporting environment, hence augmenting their growth inside the sporting arena. In the same way, sport psychology has contributed to our understanding of the social difficulties surrounding sports environments and organisations, which in turn has encouraged participation in various sports among individuals (Grimmer & Bingham, 2013)^[4].

Aggression has long been a part of the sport domain. Indeed, Russell (1993)^[7] suggested that outside of war time, sports is perhaps the only setting in which acts of interpersonal aggression are not only tolerated but enthusiastically applauded by large segment of society.

Aggression is a term that is used extensively in sports. If coaches or the people in sports are surveyed and asked to identify the characteristics of successful athletes, Aggression would be high on the list. Aggressive has many meanings in sports. Aggression ploys are used in football, for example, when the defense executes a fierce tackle. In basketball, good rebound, good defense players and the players who consistently drive in to the basket are all described as aggressive. Aggressive tennis player rush to the net at every opportunity. The volleyball players, who dive on the floor to attempt an apparently impossible save, is playing aggressively. In these and other examples from sports, aggressive acts can be defined as those in which the athletes are highly motivated, demonstrate a great release of physical energy and not inhibited by fear of failure or injury.

Aggression can be classified into two types which are Hostile Aggression and Instrumental Aggression. In Hostile Aggression, the primary aim of the aggressor is to injure the opponent and to make him suffer. Violence is the outcome of the hostile or receives aggression. Instrumental Aggression is non-emotional aggressive behaviour that serves as a means to achieving some goal (Huesmann, 1986)^[5]

“Aggression as behaviour intended to accuse harm and pain”. The key to this definition is the word “intended”. If there is no intent to injure the opponent and the athlete is utilizing legitimate means in order to achieve his/her goals, then the athlete is not aggressive (Aronson, 1977)^[1].

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When sport psychologists discuss aggression in general, they are referring to what many people would call “bad” aggression (Sahin & Abakay, 2015) [8]. However, the most aggressive behaviors in sports and physical activity do not appear naturally as if it is conducted willingly or non-willingly, instead; the good or bad nature of the behaviour seems more to be based on interpretation. For example, in ice hockey, two people who watch a tough but excellent move may not agree on whether the shot could be categorized as good aggression or bad aggression. This is preferred to be neutral by ignoring the good-bad duality; it becomes even easier to talk about “aggression” as a type of behaviour which tries to be comprehend (Gill & Williams, 2008) [3].

Aggression has been considered as the most important aspect in sports field. Presently in sports violence both off and on the field has existed to be understood as a social issue. Aggression is referred as the imposition of a negative verbal, gestural or physical by one individual upon another. Aggression is behavior, not an attitude. It is reflected in actions consigned with the purpose to harm. This aggression definition involves a vast number of actions employed by coaches, spectators and/or athletes as hitting another verbal abuse and individual physically. There are two types in aggressive behavior. They are instrumental and hostile aggression. Hostile aggression has the major purpose or reward, is to cause upon another for its own sake. But instrumental aggression is where the primary reinforcement is the accomplishment of a consequent target. In this situation an athlete may target to harm the opponent but the most essential target to be accomplished by aggression action is to get success in the competition (Wann *et al.*, 2003) [11].

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this research paper is to find out the multiple comparison among Sprinters, Jumpers and Throwers in relation to Aggression.

Hypothesis

- Null Hypothesis: There would be no significant difference among sprinters, jumpers and throwers in relation to aggression.
- Alternate Hypothesis: There would be significant

difference among sprinters, jumpers and throwers in relation to aggression.

Method and Procedure

Random sampling technique was used to select the sample of (N=100) sprinters, (N=100) jumpers and (N=100) throwers including male and female athlete. Age limit is 18-28 years of subjects. All the subjects having been informed about the objective and protocol of the study who gave their consent and volunteered to participate in this study. Independent T-Test was employed to compare the Psychological well-being. For testing the hypothesis, the level of significance was set at 0.05. To carry out this study, Buss & Perry (1992) [2] pertaining to Aggression has been used for the study.

Analysis of data

Table 1: Significance of aggression scores among sprinters, jumpers and throwers

	Group	N	Mean	S.D	F-value	p-value
Aggression	Sprinters	100	81.83	15.59	93.7	0.00**
	Jumpers	100	89.49	13.11		
	Throwers	100	63.55	12.39		
	Total	300	78.29	17.52		

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 1 showed the Mean, S.D, f value and p value of sprinters, jumpers and throwers of Panjab University Inter College Athletic Competition. The table clearly indicated that the mean and S.D value of sprinters were 81.83 and 15.59 whereas the mean and S.D value of jumpers were 89.49 and 13.11 and the Mean and S.D value of throwers were 63.55 and 12.39 in relation to aggression. It was also evident from the above table that the obtained p value of 0.00 was found ($p < 0.01$) at level of significance. Therefore, the result revealed that there were highly significant differences among sprinters, jumpers and throwers in aggression.

The graphical exemplification of the responses has been presented in figure 1 below

Figure 1

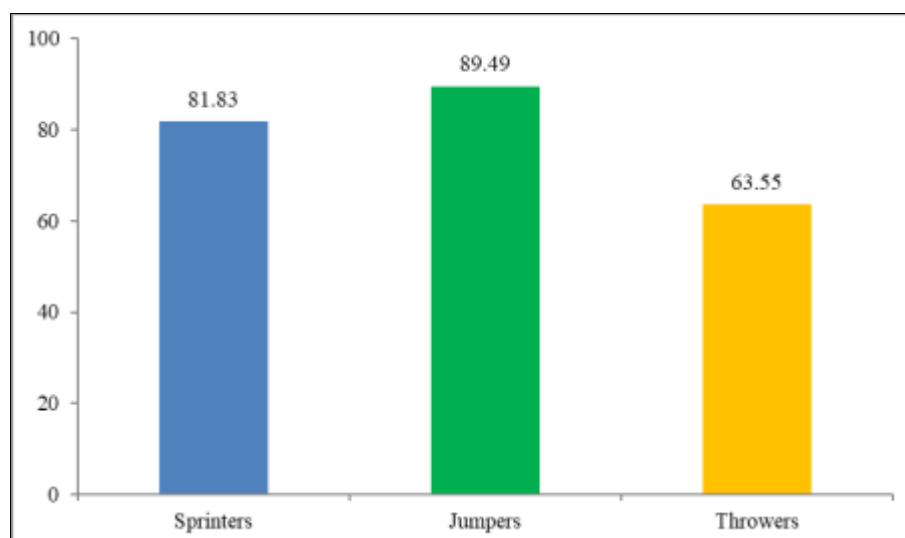


Fig 1: Mean scores of Aggression among Sprinters, Jumpers and Throwers

Table 2: Multiple comparison of aggression using scheffe Post hoc test among sprinters, jumpers and throwers

Dependent Variable	Groups		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p-value	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Aggression	Sprinters	Jumpers	-7.7*	1.95	0.00	-12.4	-2.9
		Throwers	18.3*	1.95	0.00	13.5	23.1
	Jumpers	Sprinters	7.7*	1.95	0.00	2.9	12.4
		Throwers	25.9*	1.95	0.00	21.2	30.7
	Throwers	Sprinters	-18.3*	1.95	0.00	-23.1	-13.5
		Jumpers	-25.9*	1.95	0.00	-30.7	-21.2

*Significant at 0.05 level

As per the table 2, Multiple Comparisons showed that there were highly significant differences as the obtained p values were found ($p < 0.05$) level of significance between sprinters, jumpers and throwers groups for aggression.

The figure 1 also showed the jumpers group having the highest mean value and throwers having the least mean value.

Discussion

Three categories of athletes namely sprinters, jumpers and throwers of Panjab University showed different level of aggression ($F = 93.7$, $p < 0.01$) indicating, more aggression in jumpers than sprinters and throwers. Throwers were having lesser aggression than jumpers and sprinters. The present study results supported to the findings of Tiwari (2011) ^[10] reporting higher levels of aggression in throwers than jumpers. The present study further supported by another study of Kirkbir (2020) ^[6] revealed significant differences among athlete students of experimental and control groups in terms of aggression ($p < 0.01$) and psychological well-being ($p < 0.01$). Also concluded that emotional intelligence education had a significant impact on the psychological well-being and aggression of athlete students and it causes the increasing of psychological well-being and decreasing of aggression among athlete students.

Conclusions

1. Male and female sprinters, jumpers and throwers (athletes) showed same level of aggression.
2. Aggression level among sprinters, jumpers and throwers was varied. However, jumpers were more aggressive among them.

Recommendations for further research

1. The results of the study would help to motivate female athletes for more participation in athletic events.
2. Similar study may be conducted on medium and long distance runners as a subject.
3. To help athletes better control their emotions during competition, offer workshops or sessions on anger management strategies. These can include deep breathing exercises, visualization, and cognitive restructuring.
4. Instruct athletes in stress-reduction methods like mindfulness, deep breathing, and time management to help them handle pressure and lessen the chance of acting aggressively.
5. Encourage athletes to practice self-analysis and self-awareness in order to better understand what makes them aggressive and to create coping mechanisms for difficult circumstances.
6. Acknowledge that every athlete will react to aggressive situations in a unique way. Offer tailored assistance and therapy to athletes who might have trouble appropriately controlling their emotions.

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