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## A comparative study on mindfulness among different sports persons

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### Abstract

**Aim:** The aim of the study was to find out and compare the mindfulness status among different sports persons belonging to different individual and team sports.

**Materials & Methods:** The Mindfulness status of forty seven (Individual Sports – 22 and Team Sports - 25) sports persons of Visva-Bharati University has been assessed through modified Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) (Brown and Ryan, 2003). 't' test has been used to compare the mindfulness status of the sports persons belonging to individual and team sports.

**Result:** No significant differences found between the sports persons belonging to individual and team sports.

**Conclusion:** Irrespective of individual or team sports every sports persons have similar kind of mindfulness status, because to participate and excel at the highest level of sports competition every sports persons has to undergo physical as well as mental training programme.

**Keywords:** mindfulness, sports persons, mindful attention awareness scale (MAAS)

### Introduction

Kabat-Zinn one of the pioneers of mindfulness explained it as a mental states of an individual to stay at the present moment none judgmentally<sup>[1]</sup>. Mindfulness can be viewed as mental state or a developmental skill<sup>[2]</sup> and it can be attained by someone who possesses some special quality or by those people who practice the mindfulness through yoga, meditation etc.<sup>[3]</sup>. So mindfulness can be inheriting<sup>[4,5]</sup> or can be acquired through regular practices<sup>[6]</sup>.

Regular mindfulness practice can develop cognitive function<sup>[7]</sup> attention<sup>[8]</sup>, concentration ability<sup>9</sup> etc. of an individual. So he/she would be able to analyze the present situations and happenings properly<sup>[10]</sup>, and remain relaxed and focused<sup>[11]</sup>. Mindfulness technique like meditation practices helps the individuals to control over their emotion<sup>[12]</sup> and make him calm and cool, which helps him to deal with various negative emotions like fear, sorrow, anger etc. intelligently<sup>[13]</sup>.

The researches have proved the fact that in spite of proper physical and skill training the athletes failed to perform their best at the highest level of sports competition due to the lack of focus, confidence, emotional control, stress control<sup>[14]</sup>. In this situation the 3A's of mindfulness i.e. acceptance, awareness and action according to the situation (Hathaway) proved to be helpful<sup>[14]</sup>.

Researches have proved the fact that the mindful athletes will have better self-realization and self-awareness<sup>[15]</sup> and they will be confident enough in decision making during the difficult situations in competitions and practice too<sup>[16]</sup>. Specific Mental training programme has been proved to be very much effective in eliminating specific problems related to sports performance<sup>[17]</sup> and mindfulness practices enhance the psychological wellbeing of the sports persons<sup>[18]</sup>.

By this understanding the present researchers wanted to find out the mindfulness status of different sports persons belonging to different individual and team sports represented Visva-Bharati University sports teams at University level sports competitions.

**Aim & Objectives:** The aim of the study was to find out and compare the mindfulness status among different sports persons belonging to different individual and team sports.

## Materials & Methods

**Selection of Subjects:** Total forty seven (Individual Sports – 22 and Team Sports - 25) sports persons of Visva-Bharati University has been selected through purposive random sampling who have represented Visva-Bharati at least at various University level sports competitions during the past 05 years.

**Instrumentation and Study Design:** The Mindfulness status of the sports persons has been assessed through modified Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) <sup>[19]</sup> consisting of 14 item questions. The scoring has been done through five-point Likert scale. A respondent indicates the relative strength of agreement or disagreement on each item using the following scoring system: 1 – Almost always; 2 – Very frequently; 3 – Somewhat frequently; 4 – Very frequently; and 5 – Almost never. Negatively worded items are scored in reverse from five to one. Total score has been calculated by adding all the 14 responses for a single individual. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation the data has been collected through Google form Link.

**Statistical Tools Used:** Descriptive statistics has been used in order to find out the mindfulness status of the sports person's belonging to Individual and team sports. The t-test for independent samples was used to determine the differences in

mindfulness status of both the group. Level of significant has been kept at 0.05 level of confidence. Graphical representation has been given of both the group to show the spread of the distribution of the score.

## Result

**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics of Mindfulness

S. No.	Group	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	SD
1	Individual Sports N = 22	58	31	45.91	8.70
2	Team Sports N = 25	59	27	46.12	8.27

Table – 1 is showing the descriptive statistics of mindfulness status of the selected sports persons belonging to various individual and team sports. The maximum points scored by a sports person belonging to individual sports and team sports is 58 and 59 respectively, whereas the minimum points scored is 31 and 27 respectively.

As per as the mean and standard deviation score is concerned the sports persons belonging to individual sports have scored 45.91 and 8.70 respectively, whereas the mean and standard deviation score of team sports is 46.12 and 8.27 respectively.

**Table 2:** Results of t-Test of Mindfulness between Individual and Team Sports

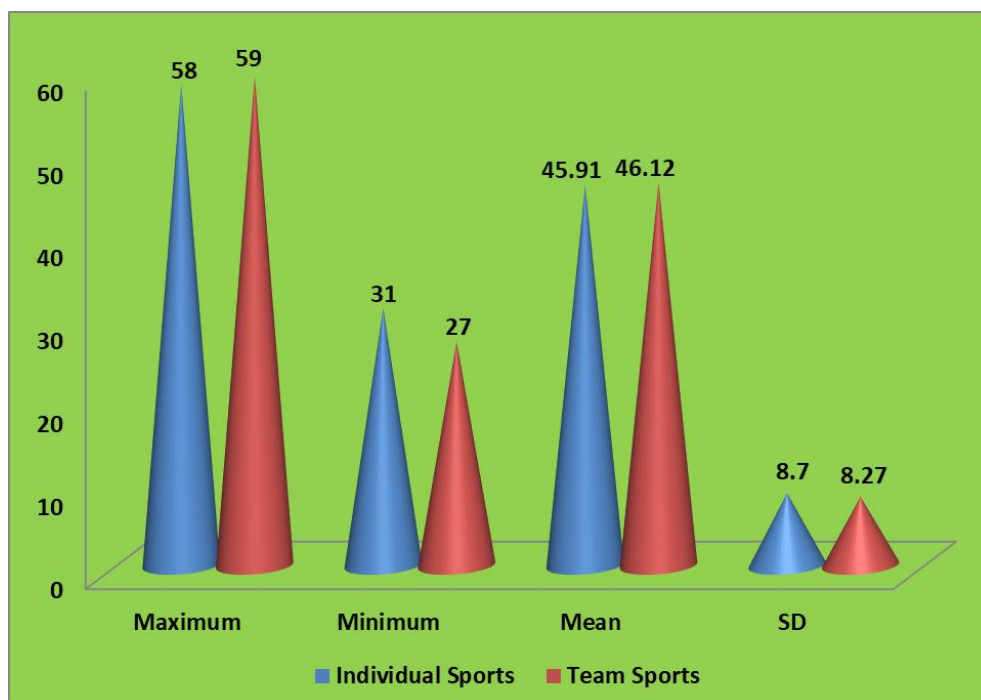
Group	N	Mean	MD	df	Cal 't'	Tab 't' (.05)
Individual Sports	22	45.91	0.21	47-2 = 45	0.09*	1.67
Team Sports	25	46.12				

\*Not Significant at .05 levels

Table – 2 is showing the mean difference and 't' test result between the sports persons belongs to individual and team sports. The mean score on mindfulness status of Team sports i.e. 46.12 is greater than the mean score of individual sports i.e. 45.91 with a mean difference value of 0.21.

The difference of mean between the individual and team sports is not significant because the calculated 't' value i.e. 0.09 is lesser than the tabulated 't' value (.05) i.e. 1.67.

The differences of mindfulness status between the individual and team sports persons are shown in Figure 1.



**Fig 1:** Differences of Mindfulness Status between Individual & Team Sports persons

## Discussion

According to the responses gathered from the respondents and after the statistical analysis it has been found that there is very little difference between the sports persons of individual and team sports and there is no significant difference between the individual and team sports as per as mindfulness status is concerned.

So it is clear that irrespective of individual and team sports the mindfulness is an important thing which every sports person possesses. For the better performance at the highest level of sports competition to be mindful is one of the prerequisite for the sports persons <sup>[14]</sup>.

Research scholar would like to attribute above observations and findings to number of reasons and facts.

Sports performance at the highest level of sports competition, irrespective of individual and team sports, needs proper physical development as well as mental development, which includes focus, attention, awareness, motivation etc. which can be developed through mindfulness practice <sup>[20]</sup>. In spite of the specificity of the different sports different kind and forms of mindfulness practice is required <sup>[21]</sup>, which will help the sports persons to develop their focus to their sports specific tasks <sup>[22]</sup>.

Different research articles based on mindfulness and sports performance provides the evidence that the mindfulness practice actually helps to enhance the specific skill as well as perception of the sports persons <sup>[23-26]</sup>, does not matter the sports person is involved in individual or team sports <sup>[21]</sup>.

The sports persons participated in the present study have represented their specific sports team of the University at the highest level of sports competition i.e. inter university level (Zonal/All India). So they must have received proper physical, mental and skill related training. The mental training might have developed various aspects of mindfulness of the sports persons. This may be the reason that the sports persons either involved in individual sports or team sports have not significantly differ each other on the basis of their mindfulness status. The thinking of the present researchers have been supported by the investigation conducted by Mamassis & Doganis <sup>[17]</sup>, who concluded that the mental training programme helps to develop psychological well-being of the sports persons and is very much effective in eliminating in sports specific problems. Rivera, Quintana & Rincon <sup>[18]</sup> also concluded in a similar manner in their review study.

## Conclusions

on the basis of the findings and above discussion it can be concluded that irrespective of individual or team sports every sports persons have similar kind of mindfulness status, because to participate and excel at the highest level of sports competition every sports persons has to undergo physical as well as mental training programme.

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