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Perceived multidimensional social support and gender differences among the shuttlers

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Abstract

Social support is vital to athletes' performance and well-being. Social support has a strong influence on youth sports. The athletes' ability to rely on social support in sports help them to overcome the obstacles like environmental stressors and others in the sports arena. The study aimed to explore the Multidimensional Perceived Social Support between National level Male and Female shuttlers of Assam. A total of 30 (thirty) subjects, male 15 (fifteen) and female 15 (fifteen) National level Badminton players from Assam were selected to collect data. The age of the subjects ranged from 13-19 years. The purposive sampling technique was applied to select the subjects. The Multidimensional Perceived Social Support questionnaire developed by Zimet, Dahlem NW, Zimet SG, and Farley Gk 1988 was used to collect data. Mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics, and a t-test was used to compare social support between genders. The level of significance was kept at 0.05 level. Male and Female Badminton players statistically no significant difference was observed between the groups on perceived social support ($t = 0.051 < t_{.05(28)} = 2.048$), support from significant others ($t = .535 < t_{.05(28)} = 2.048$), support from family ($t = 0.168 < t_{.05(28)} = 2.048$) and support from friends ($t = 0.053 < t_{.05(28)} = 2.048$).

Keywords: Perceived social support, gender, national level, shuttlers

Introduction

Athletic participation incorporates a range of human mental experiences which impact competitive athletes' mental & emotional health and well-being. Both competitive athletes' psychological health and well-being correlate to social support^[1]. Individuals who have supportive relationships have far more favorable benefits, including enhanced mental health and well-being. Cobb (1976) defined social support as information that encourages a person to think that they are cared for and loved, regarded and cherished, and belong to a network of cooperation and understanding responsibilities^[2]. Social support is a multidimensional phenomenon generally defined as any social contract involving the exchange of resources and the aim of assisting the recipient in achieving a desirable outcome^[3]. More incredible social support presents better self-rated health and greater life satisfaction^[4]. Most importantly, individuals who receive words of encouragement from sources of support seem to be more likely to participate in active problem-solving and decision-making^[5]. Social support is strongly connected to relationships with family, friends, neighbors, and others significant who mean a lot to the individual, and it involves empathy, concern, care, love, and trust^[6]. In addition to experiences and quality training, an athlete's performance is determined by their natural talent and the outcomes of their interactions with social sources^[7]. Athlete motivation levels and involvement in elite sports are both positively and negatively (dropout rates) influenced by coach, parent, and peer support^[8, 9]. Many of the core areas have a considerable influence on athletes' performance, for example, team cohesiveness, coping with competitive stress, the plateau in performance, athlete burnout, injury rehabilitation, personality development, and achievement, and they are associated with social support^[10]. Besides, in the context of social support, one of the significant contents that must consider is the gender issue. Examining the effects of the socially considerable concept of gender equality is crucial in the field of sports sciences^[11].

Males and females experience social support differently^[12]. In India, girls participate in sports and other physical activities at a lower rate than men due to a non-supportive sports/physical education environment^[13]. Male players indicated greater social support sources than female athletes, although female athletes seemed pleased with their support^[14]. Studies have reported that male students had a higher level of Physical Activity self-efficacy and social support from friends. They perceived more benefits from practicing and very few barriers and enjoyed physical activity more^[15]. Research also revealed that males with depression had greater levels of perceived social support and stressful life events than females^[16]. Considering the above the scholar was interested to undertake the present project and stated "Perceived Multidimensional Social Support and Gender Differences among the Shuttlers".

It was hypothesized that there would be significant differences in perceived Social Support and its sub-factors between the National level male and female shuttlers of Assam. Considering the crucial role of social support in sports the current study aimed to analyze and differentiate the social support between the male and female National level Shuttlers of Assam.

Materials and Methods

Participants: A total number of 30 (15 Male and 15 Female) National level Badminton Players from Assam were the study subjects. The shuttlers ranged in age from 13 to 19 years.

Sampling: Purposive Sampling Technique was adopted to select subjects.

Tools: The Multidimensional Perceived Social Support questionnaire developed by Zimet, Dahlem NW, Zimet SG, Farley Gk 1988^[17] was used to collect the data.

Description of the tool: The Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Instrument consists of 12 measures that assess an individual's perceived level of social support. It is intended to examine views of the sufficiency of social support from specific sources, such as family, friends, and significant

others. Respondents were asked to score their perceived amount of social support on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, a key indicator of internal reliability, revealed that the findings for the sub-scale of social support, support from others, and support from family and friends were .91, .87, and .85, respectively. Furthermore, the absolute reliability of the scale was reported to be .88, suggesting internal reliability of the scale as a whole and for the three sub-scales (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1998)^[18].

Scoring: The current scale is a multiple-choice response with responses ranging from Very Strongly Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Mildly Disagree, Neutral, Mildly Agree, Strongly Agree, and Very Strongly Agree. The responses on this seven-point scale are weighted from 1 to 7. MSPSS scores can be obtained in at least two ways. In this study, low support defined mean scale score of 1 to 2.9, moderate support as a score of 3 to 5, and high support as a score of 5.1 to 7^[19].

Result and Discussion: To analyze and interpret collected data Independent t-test was used to identify the significant differences in the variables Social Support and its sub-factors between Male and Female National level Badminton players. The significance level to test the hypothesis was assigned at $p = 0.05$ for all statistical tests, which was deemed sufficient. IBM SPSS Statistics 20 was used to complete the statistical treatment.

The findings pertaining to the statistical analysis have given below in the following table, and the results are interpreted accordingly.

The findings of Table -1 reveal that there is no significant difference in the variable Multidimensional Perceived Social Support and its sub-factors *viz* social support from significant others, social support from family, and social support from friends between the National level Male and Female Badminton Players of Assam because all the calculated t values are quite lower than the tabulated t value of 2.048 needed to be significant at 0.05 level for the 28 degrees of freedom.

Table 1: Comparison of social support between National level Male and Female Shuttlers of Assam

Variables	National-level Male shuttlers		National level Female Shuttlers		t- ratio	p- value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Support from significant others	4.8500	1.41674	5.1000	1.12520	-.535	.597 [@]
Support from family	5.8667	1.06849	5.933	1.10787	-.168	.868 [@]
Ssocial from Friends	5.0500	1.37646	5.0721	.83621	-.053	.958 [@]
Social Support (Total)	5.2909	.83459	5.2756	.78964	.051	.959 [@]

[@]Indicates $p > 0.05$

Any interaction between an individual and groups constitutes social support. The present study reported no significant differences between the National-level Badminton players concerning social support. The mean values of total social support for both men and women led to a high range of social support. The availability of support from various sources is a powerful motivator for the shuttlers and therefore they are able to compete at the National level tournaments. There is good accordance between the finding of this study and the findings reported by Singh & Singh, 2017^[20] implying that social support is equally significant for all athletes in all sports. Sheridan, Coffee, & Lavallee, 2014^[21] also emphasized the positive impacts of social support on youth sports and interpersonal connections in sports in more recent

decades. Physical exercise is connected with social support from family or friends among male and female teenagers^[22]. It is favorable for a person to encounter challenges, pressure, and difficulties. Individuals might gain confidence to do a specific activity with the help of social support, which typically comes from family members, teammates, and others who have particular importance to the individual^[23]. The findings of Nunomura & Oliveira, 2013^[24] also revealed that Parents play a crucial role from the moment their children begin participating in a sporting activity until they achieve the highest achievement with full potentiality in a sporting career. Therefore, insignificant differences might have occurred between male and female National-level shuttlers of Assam. The result of this study is in consonance with the findings of

Chakraborty and Sill, 2016 [25].

On the basis of statistical findings, the formulated hypotheses are rejected.

Conclusion

Assam is a state where all players, regardless of gender or age, have received societal assistance to better their skills and advance to the highest levels of their sporting careers.

The coaches, the players' parents, and their friends and significant others make every effort to provide a well-planned supportive atmosphere with good social support for all players, regardless of gender, that encourages full participation in various sports and physical activities.

Sport is a platform for gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment (United Nations, 2007) [26].

No gender differences have been found between the National level Male and Female Badminton Players of Assam on perceived social support.

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