



## Comparison of mental skills between medalist and non-medalist football players

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### Abstract

The purpose of present study was to compare the mental skills level between medalist and non-medalist football players of schools, colleges and clubs. The sample of three hundred (N=300) football players were taken to compare the mental skills between medalist and non-medalist school, college and club level football players. Hardy and Nelson stated that mental Skills questionnaire was used to record the response of subjects. The t-test was applied to see the mean difference between medalist and non-medalist school, college and club level football players. Further ANOVA was applied to see the mean difference among school, college level medalist and club players through SPSS Significant level was set at 0.05. The results of study show that t-values, 13.72, 11.57 and 8.45 between medalist and non-medalist school, college and club level football players clearly indicated that medalist players having significant better mental skills as compare to their counterparts non-medalist football players. Further results of high performing groups conclude that club level football players are significantly better in comparison to school football players. The results clearly supported that mental skills played very crucial role to win a medal in football game. Mental skills training need to be introduced from school level players for better results in football.

**Keywords:** mental skills, medalist, non-medalist, football players

### Introduction

Football is very popular game throughout the world and played by more than 200 nations for competitive purposes. Football competitions are full of challenges and counter challenges between contesting players and teams. The most important factor of football match is influenced by the stress of competitiveness in each conflicting situation (Saha, 1996) [9]. Such factors as physical conditioning, skill efficiency and match experience are fundamentally important in determining the level of success in football game. There are many psychological factors which equally important for player to achieve his or her potential (Sanderson and Reilly, 1996) [11]. The psychological parameters such as personality, motivation, emotions, stress and self-confidence have paramount importance in competitive sports. Chaudhary (2012) [2] pointed out that, "psychological skill training intervention must be tailored to each individual, be practiced over time and used different technique like arousal regulation, imagery and mental preparation, self-confidence, self talk, coping and mental plans". The development of psychological and mental skills is emerging area in psychology and practiced by leading nations from development stages (Morris and Summers, 2004; Weinberg and Gould, 2011) [8, 16]. Mental skills are internal capabilities which help athlete's to control their minds efficiency and consistently as they executed sports related goals. Mental practice used in complementary fashion with physical practice often field the best results (Feltz and Landers, 1983; Grouios, 1992; Hinshaw, 1991) [4, 5, 7]. Research with mental practice has also revealed several principles that enhance the effectiveness of mental practice (Cox, 2002) [3]. The football players must have knowledge to use their mental capabilities for better performance in equally

contesting matches. Hardy and Nelson stated that Imagery ability, mental preparation, self-confidence, anxiety and worry management, relaxation ability and concentration ability are key area for top level performance in competitions. The athlete develops self motivational strategies and focus on relevant learning and performance cues. Facilitative self-talk, imagery and performance routines are other mental skills (Veally, 19X8; Anderson, 2005) [1]. Above given reviews shows that mental skills are very essential psychological parameters for top level and match winning performance. The investigators of this study aims to compare the mental skills between medalist and non-medalist football players at different levels of competitions. The results may also help to establish the difference of mental skills between medalist and non-medalist football players of schools, colleges and clubs.

### Methodology

#### Sample

The sample of three hundred (N=300) football players were taken to compare the mental skills between medalist and non-medalist school, college and club level football players. Out of total sample, one hundred (N=100) selected from school state football (U=19) championship during 2012-13. One hundred (N=100) selected from colleges of Punjab during 2011-12 and 2012-13 and one hundred (N=100) from Punjab state super league championship during 20 12-13. Further fifty (N=50) each from school, college and club level were divided into medalist and non-medalist groups. Medalist and non-medalist groups are divided as per their competition performance. Those who record first three positions from said championships are considered as medalist players and those who only participate or did not secure any position from said

championships are considered as non-medalist players.

**Questionnaire**

Hardy and Nelson (1996) [6] Mental Skills questionnaire was used to record the responses of school, college and club level football players. The questionnaire comprised of 24 questions and focused on Imagery ability, mental preparation, self-confidence, anxiety and worry management, relaxation ability and concentration ability.

**Statistical Technique**

The required statistical techniques are applied to find out the Mean and S.D. of medalist and non-medalist groups through SPSS. The t-test was applied to see the significant difference between medalist and non-medalist school, college and club level football players. Further ANOVA was applied to see the mean difference among school, college and clubs level medalist football players. Significant level was set at 0.05.

**Results and Discussion**

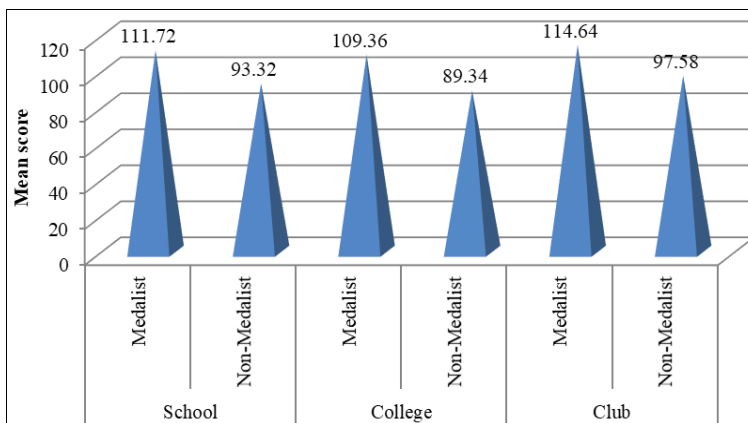
The Mean, S.D., M.D., t-values, ANOVA and Sheffe’s test values are presented in tables. Graphical representation is also given for mean comparison of school, college and club level football players.

Table-1 reveals that significant differences found with regard to the mental skills between medalist and non-medalist school level football players in favor of medalists as the P-value (Sig.) 0.00 was found lower than 0.05 level of significance (p<0.05).The significant difference was also found between medalist and non- medalist college level football players in favor of medalists as the P-value (Sig.) 0.00 was found lower than 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05). Again significant difference was found with regard to mental skills between medalist and non-medalist club level football players in favor of medalists as the P-value (Sig.) 0.00 was found lower than 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05).

**Table 1:** Mean, S.D., M.D., and t-values of Mental Skills between Medalist and Non-Medalists Football Players of Schools, Colleges and Clubs

Level	Performing Groups	Mean	SD	MD	t-value	p-value
School	Medalist (N=50)	111.72	5.91	18.40	13.72*	0.00
	Non-Medalist (N=50)	93.32	7.41			
College	Medalist (N=50)	109.36	8.30	19.92	11.57*	0.00
	Non-Medalist (N=50)	89.34	9.14			
Club	Medalist (N=50)	114.64	10.24	17.06	8.45*	0.00
	Non-Medalist (N=50)	97.58	9.93			

\* Significant at 0.05 level.



**Fig 1:** Comparison of Mean Scores of Mental Skills between Medalist and Non-Medalist Football Players of Schools, Colleges and Clubs

**Table 2:** Analysis of Variance of Mental Skills among Medalist School, College and Club Level Football Players

Groups	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	725.373	2	362.687	5.323	.006
Within Groups	10015.220	147	68.131		
Total	10740.593	149			

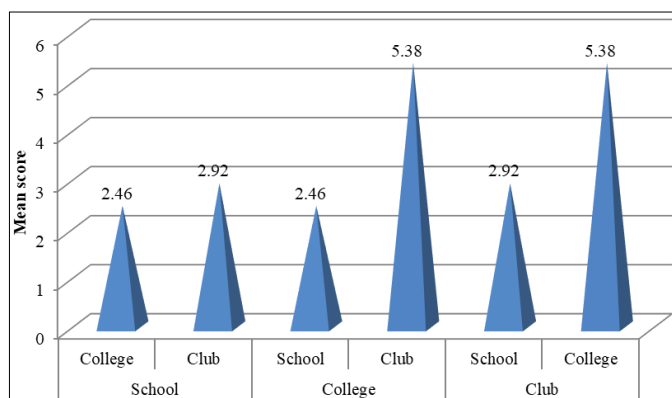
It can be seen from table-2 that significant difference was found with regard to the mental skills among school, college

and club level medalist football players as the P-value (Sig.) 0.006 was found lower than 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05).

**Table 3:** Least Significant Differences (LSD) of Mental Skills among Medalist School, College and Club level Football players

Levels	Levels	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
School	College	2.46000	1.65083	.138
	Club	2.92000	1.65083	.079
College	School	2.46000	1.65083	.138
	Club	5.38000*	1.65083	.001
Club	School	2.92000	1.65083	.079
	College	5.38000*	1.65083	.001

It can be observed from the table-3 that mean difference between school and college players was found 2.46. The P-value (Sig.) 0.138 showed that school level medalist football players had demonstrated insignificantly mental skills than their counterpart college level medalist football players. The mean difference between school and club level players was found 2.92. The P-value (Sig.) 0.079 revealed that the school level medalist players had exhibited insignificantly than their counterpart club level medalist football players. The mean difference between college and club level football players was found 5.38. The P-value (Sig.) 0.001 showed that the club level players had demonstrated significantly better mental skills than their counterpart college level medalist football players.



**Fig 2:** Graphical of Mean Scores of Mental Skills among School, College and Clubs level Medalist Football Players

### Discussion

The results of study revealed that t-values 13.72, 11.57 and 8.45 between medalist and non-medalist school, college and club level football players clearly indicated that medalist players having significant better mental skills as compare to their counterparts non-medalist football players. The significant difference between medalist and non-medal football players exist and predict that mental skills played very instrumental role while producing the medalist players in football game. The results of previous studies conducted on mental skills also showed that high performing players having high mental skills level as compare to low performing players. Thapa (2009) <sup>[13]</sup> found significant differences exist among university level and college level football players with regard to mental skills. Singh and Dureja (2011) <sup>[12]</sup> also found that open skill players are significant better in mental skills as compare to close skill players. Samela *et al.* (2009) <sup>[10]</sup> observed that selected Iranian athletes for Asian games have higher mental skills scores as compare to non-selected athletes. Thelwel & Greenless (2003) <sup>[14]</sup> indicated that mental skills package is effective in enhancing all participants' competitive performance and usage of mental skills from baseline to intervention phases. The findings of medalist players revealed that club level football players having significant difference as compare to college level football players. Finally results supported that medalist and senior football players have more mental skill values as compare to non-medalist football players which indicates that high performance can be inter related with mental skills.

### Conclusion

It is concluded that medalist football players are significantly better as compare to their counterpart non-medalist football players. Further results of high performing groups conclude that club level football players are significantly better in comparison to college level football players. The findings clearly supported that mental skills played very crucial role to win a medal in football game. Mental skills training need to be introduced horn school or base level players for better results in football.

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