

Comparison of Sports Spiritual Well-Being Among Male and Female

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ABSTRACT

Despite the growing interest in sports spirituality and the recognition of gender as a significant social and cultural factor, research specifically examining gender differences in sports spirituality is limited. Existing studies often lack a comprehensive framework for understanding these differences and fail to adequately address the complex interplay between gender. This study aimed to investigate the differences in spirituality in sports between male and female participants. 30 Participants were selected in which 15 male and 15 female age between 20 to 20 years. The participants were sports persons and represented the all-India intervarsity in different sports. The participants were studying in B.P.Ed., at the Department of Physical Education Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh. The participants were of both genders male and female. Spirituality in sports was assessed using the 'Shahida-Sharif Sports Spiritual Well-Being Scale'. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores on the spirituality measure between male and female participants. There is a statistically significant difference between the group means. The mean of the female group was more comparison to males. This study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between gender and sports spirituality. By investigating the differences in sports spiritual well-being between male and female athletes, this research will provide valuable insights into the unique experiences and perspectives of athletes from different genders. The findings of this study will have significant implications for athletes, coaches, sports psychologists, and researchers interested in promoting holistic well-being in the sporting context.

KEYWORDS: Spiritual, Spiritual in Sports, Sports Persons, Well-Being

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of spirituality has gained increasing attention in recent decades, transcending religious and theological boundaries to encompass a broader understanding of human experience. Spirituality can be defined as a personal search for meaning, purpose, and connection beyond the material realm. It encompasses a wide range of experiences and beliefs, including a connection to nature, a sense of transcendence, and a search for meaning and purpose in life. In the realm of sports, spirituality can manifest in various ways, such as finding meaning and purpose in athletic pursuits, experiencing a sense of transcendence through athletic performance, and cultivating a sense of connection with teammates, opponents, and the broader sporting community.

The gender role in the connection between spirituality and psychological health is the main topic of this study. Spirituality is considered a basic aspect of people's inner lives all over the world (Mack, 2006) and has become a significant factor in the quality of life and well-being (Aranda, 2008; Carmody, Reed, Kristeller & Merriam, 2008; Fiorito & Ryan, 2007). There is substantial evidence linking spirituality to psychological (Davis, 2005; Kim & Seidlitz, 2002; Levenson, Aldwin & Yancura, 2006; Snoep, 2008; Temane & Wissing, 2006), physical (Litwinczuk & Groh, 2007), and overall (Haber, Jacob, & Spangler, 2007; Maselko & Kubzansky, 2006) well-being.

The exploration of sports spirituality draws upon various theoretical frameworks, including:

Transpersonal Psychology: This perspective emphasizes the exploration of human potential and the development of higher states of consciousness. It suggests that spiritual experiences can be cultivated through various practices, including mindfulness, meditation, and engagement in activities that promote a sense of connection and transcendence. Sports can provide a unique context for cultivating these experiences, as it often requires dedication, discipline, and a focus on the present moment.

Existentialism: This philosophical framework emphasizes the importance of individual meaning and purpose in life. It suggests that individuals actively create meaning in their lives through their choices and actions. For athletes, this can involve finding meaning and purpose in their athletic pursuits, overcoming challenges, and striving for excellence.

Humanistic Psychology: This perspective emphasizes the importance of personal growth, self-actualization, and one's full potential development. It suggests that sports can provide a valuable context for personal growth and self-discovery, allowing individuals to develop resilience, cultivate self-awareness, and realize their potential.

Along with advances in a variety of critical life and professional abilities, spiritual intelligence leads to a sense of greater meaning and purpose. (Zohar D., 2001; Griffiths R., 2020). Spiritual strength can only be unleashed when one is aware of who and what they are and uses that strength appropriately, at the appropriate time, and in the appropriate location (Amramt Y, 2007; Draper B, 2010).

Understanding and making use of this link requires research. The ways in which spirituality benefits people and the many situations and circumstances in which it may be beneficial require further research (Walach, 2017). Higher levels of spirituality have been linked to good health and wellbeing outcomes in older adults and cancer patients, according to research (Lee et al., 2012; Lifshitz, Nimrod, & Bachner, 2018).

Both psychological factors like anxiety, depression, control, and evaluation, as well as situations like post-injury emotional problems, adaptation and interpersonal conflict, anxiety, grief, trauma, and depression, are influenced by athletes' religious and spiritual identity, beliefs, and practices (Koenig 2012; Wiese-Bjornstal 2019). Sports spirituality is a crucial component of coaching and healthcare for teams and players, as demonstrated by all of these empirical findings (Jules et al. 2018; Rooney et al. 2021; Hagan and Schack 2017).

An internal condition known as "sports motivation" propels and maintains people to participate in sports and work toward their objectives (Shang and Yang 2021). Athletes' passion for practice and competition, as well as their performance, are strongly impacted by sports motivation (Zhang 2015). In general, an individual's internal demands and external circumstances are the sources of the elements that affect the level and direction of motivation (Demir 2022). According to Freeman et al. (2011), the intrinsic dimension of sports motivation includes elements like self-worth, a strong feeling of identity and belonging, vigor, excitement, self-assurance, and a resolute commitment to sports. According to research, spirituality is essential to each of these areas (Smith 2019).

The importance of Gender in Sports Spirituality has grown in recent years, and the role of gender in shaping these experiences remains under-explored. Existing research suggests that men and women may have different approaches to spirituality and experience it differently. For example, women may be more likely to emphasize connection and relationships in their spiritual experiences, while men may be more likely to focus on achievement and transcendence.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Despite the growing interest in sports spirituality and the recognition of gender as a significant social and cultural factor, research specifically examining gender differences in sports spirituality is limited. Existing studies often lack a comprehensive framework for understanding these differences and fail to adequately address the complex interplay between gender.

So the research is entitled "Comparison of sports spiritual well-being among male and female".

1.2 Hypothesis 1

H₀ There will be no significant differences in overall sports spiritual well-being between male and female athletes.

H₁ There will be significant differences in overall sports spiritual well-being between male and female athletes.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will have several significant implications:

- **Theoretical Contribution:** It will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on sports spirituality by providing empirical evidence on gender differences in this domain.
- **Practical Implications:** The findings can inform the development of interventions and programs aimed at enhancing the spiritual well-being of athletes, taking into account the unique needs and experiences of male and female athletes.
- **Social Implications:** The study will shed light on the role of gender in shaping individual experiences of meaning, purpose, and connection in the context of sport, which has broader social and cultural implications.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to investigate the differences in spirituality in sports between male and female participants. Spirituality is a complex and multifaceted construct, encompassing various dimensions such as meaning, purpose, connection, and transcendence. Exploring the potential gender differences in spiritual experiences and beliefs can contribute to a deeper understanding of this important aspect of human experience.

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design using a between-subjects approach. The between-subjects design allowed for the comparison of two independent groups (male and female) on the variable of interest (sports spirituality well-being).

2.2 Participants

Participants were selected through a simple random sampling process. The participant's age ranged between 20 to 25 years. The participants were sports persons and represented the all-India intervarsity in different sports. The participants were studying in B.P.Ed., at the Department of Physical Education Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh. The participants were of both genders male and female.

2.3 Sample

A total of 30 participants were recruited for the study. The sample consisted of 15 males and 15 females.

2.4 Measures

Spirituality was assessed using the 'Shahida-Sharif Sports Spiritual Well-Being Scale'. The 'Shahida-Sharif Sports Spiritual Well-Being SCALE' is a validated instrument with 42 items measuring 14 dimensions measured by the scale. Each item is typically rated on a Likert scale. The scale has demonstrated good reliability and validity in previous research. The test was published in the form of a thesis form in the year 2011. (Sharique, 2011)

2.5 Procedure

Informed Consent: Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation in the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, their rights, and the confidentiality of their data. **Data Collection:** Data was collected through a survey using distributing the questionnaire in the physical form. Participants completed the survey at their own pace.

Data Entry and Cleaning: Data was entered into a secure database and checked for accuracy and completeness. Data cleaning procedures were implemented to identify and correct any errors.

2.6 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were calculated for each group on the spirituality measure and demographic variables. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores on the spirituality measure between male and female participants.

3. RESULT

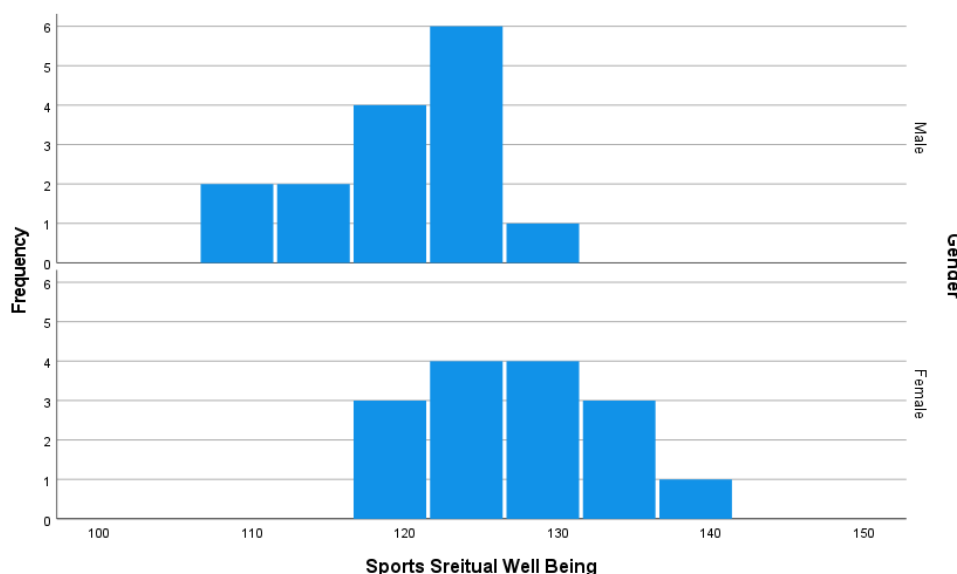


Figure 3.1 Frequency Distribution of Sports Spiritual Well-Being by Gender.

The Figure 3.1 graph shape represents the male and female spiritual well-being in the sports context the Male graph shows the distribution for the male group appears to be roughly symmetrical, with a slight skew to the right. This suggests that most male participants scored around the middle range of the "Sports Spiritual Well-being" scale, with a few scoring higher.

The female graph shows the distribution for the female group also appears to be roughly symmetrical but with a slight skew to the left. This suggests that most female participants scored in the higher range of the "Sports Spiritual Well-being" scale, with a few scoring lower.

Gender Differences in the graph suggest a potential difference in "Sports Spiritual Well-being" between males and females in this sample. Females appear to have scored, on average, higher than males. However, the overlap between the distributions indicates that there is considerable individual variability within each group. The interpretation of these findings depends heavily on the specific definition and measurement of "Sports Spiritual Well-being." It's crucial to understand how this construct was defined and measured in the study.

Table 3.1 Descriptive result of sports spiritual well-being in male and female

Group Statistics				
Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male	15	119.87	6.174	1.594
Female	15	127.53	5.527	1.427

The table 3.1 presents the group statistics for two groups, "Male" and "Female," with the following variables:

- N: Sample size
- Mean: Average value of the variable
- Std. Deviation: Standard deviation, measuring the spread of data around the mean
- Std. Error Mean: Standard error of the mean, estimating the precision of the sample mean

Observations in Table 3.1 show the sample size of both groups has an equal sample size of 15 participants. In Mean Differences, the mean value for the "Male" group is 119.87 and the mean value for the "Female" group is 127.53. This suggests that, on average, the variable being measured is higher in the "Female" group compared to the "Male" group.

In variability the standard deviation for the "Male" group is 6.174, indicating a moderate level of variability within the group. The standard deviation for the "Female" group is 5.527, suggesting slightly less variability compared to the "Male" group.

In Precision of the Mean, the standard error of the mean for the "Male" group is 1.594. The standard error of the mean for the "Female" group is 1.427. A smaller standard error indicates a more precise estimate of the population mean. In this case, the "Female" group's mean is estimated with slightly more precision.

Table 3.2 Comparative result of sports spiritual well-being in male and female

Independent Samples Test			
t-test for Equality of Means			
t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
-3.583	28	.001	-7.667
-3.583	27.664	.001	-7.667

The table 3.2 presents the results of an independent samples t-test, a statistical procedure used to compare the means of two independent groups. The table provides the following information:

- t: The calculated t-value, which represents the difference between the group means in standard error units.
- df: Degrees of freedom, which determine the shape of the t-distribution and are used to calculate the p-value.
- Sig. (2-tailed): The p-value associated with the t-value, indicating the probability of observing a t-value as extreme or more extreme than the one obtained, assuming there is no true difference between the group means.
- Mean Difference: The difference between the means of the two groups.

In Observations the t-value: The t-value is -3.583. The negative sign indicates that the mean of the first group is lower than the mean of the second group. The degrees of freedom are 28 and 27.664. These values are likely slightly different due to the calculation method used (equal variances not assumed vs. assumed). The p-value is 0.001 (or less than 0.001). This indicates that the probability of observing a t-value as extreme as -3.583 or more extreme, if there were truly no difference between the group means, is very low (less than 0.1%). The mean difference between the two groups is -7.667. This means that the mean of the first group is 7.667 units lower than the mean of the second group.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on these results, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. The p-value is less than the conventional alpha level of 0.05, indicating that we can reject the null hypothesis (that there is no difference between the group means) and accept the alternative hypothesis (that there is a statistically significant difference between the group means).

The negative t-value and mean difference indicate that the mean of the first group is significantly lower than the mean of the second group. The magnitude of the mean difference (7.667 units) suggests a substantial difference between the groups.

5. SUMMARY:

The table presents the results of an independent samples t-test, indicating a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. The mean of the first group is significantly lower than the mean of the second group. However, it's important to consider the assumptions of the t-test and the context of the study when interpreting these findings. Further analysis, such as calculating effect size and examining potential confounding variables, may be necessary to draw more robust conclusions.

This study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between gender and sports spirituality. By investigating the differences in sports spiritual well-being between male and female athletes, this research will provide valuable insights into the unique experiences and perspectives of athletes from different genders. The findings of this study will have significant implications for athletes, coaches, sports psychologists, and researchers interested in promoting holistic well-being in the sporting context.

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