

Study and Comparison of Interpersonal Skills and Psychological Well Being of Athletes and Non-Athletes Female

Taybeh Sharifi¹ and Rahman Akbari^{2*}

¹ PhD student in Educational Psychology, Department of Educational Psychology, Sharekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sharekord, Iran

² Department of Educational Psychology, Sharekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sharekord, Iran

Received: February 26, 2015

Accepted: April 30, 2015

ABSTRACT

Women are significant population so that their mental health plays an important role in the perpetuation of family and community health. The aim of this research is to study and compare psychological skills (interpersonal relationship and psychological wellbeing) in athletes and non-athletes female. This research is causal comparative in which sport is considered as independent variable and the interpersonal relationship and psychological welfare as dependent variables. Research society included all women in Kohkilouyeh and Boyerahmad province and sample included 140 women (70 athletes and 70 non-athletes) in Yasooj city, that were selected by targeted cluster sampling method, and they were identical in age, gender and education characteristics. For collecting information, the psychological well-being comparison (RSPWB) in 1989 has been used that evaluates the main 6 components (positive relationship with others, autonomy, dominance on environment, targeted life and individual growth) also the interpersonal relationships questionnaire of Monjizadeh has been used. To analyze the data, they used multivariable variance analysis and Differential analysis post hoc test and results indicated that women athletes have better interpersonal relationships and psychological well-being.

KEYWORDS: Women, Sport, Well Being, Skill, Psychological

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, pathological approach to human health study had been criticized. Unlike this view that defines health as not being sick, new approaches emphasize on “being well” instead of “being bad or sick” [1, 2]. From this perspective, absence of mental illnesses signs is not health indicator. But, compatibility, happiness, self-confidence and positive characteristics like them, demonstrate health and the main goal of a person in life is flourishing his capabilities. Theories like MASLOW` self-actualization, Rajers` full function, all port`s adult or mature, in formation of psychological and mental health concept, have accepted this fundamental assumption and have benefitted from it. Following the rise of these theories and positive psychology movement, that in mental health, they emphasized on persons` positive characteristics and abilities development, some of psychologists used psychological wellbeing instead of mental health expression. Because they believed that this term calls to mind more the positive aspects [3]. In this regard, models like Jahooda model, Dyer`s mental welfare model, and Ryff`s, 6 factor psychological well-being model were developed, that in defining and explaining mental health, are focused on abilities and capabilities of a person instead of his weakness and sickness [4]. Ryff model is one of the most important models in psychological well-being which has been used in this research. Ryff [5] has conceptualized psychological well-being based on the ideal life and that means flourishing human capabilities, and pointed out that, this view contains the same criteria and positive psychological health supplements. In this view, well-being means quest for transcendence and promotion which appears in realization of person` abilities and talents.

Ryff [6] tried to determine and categorize the criteria of desired life, so called “good life” based on philosophical foundations of persons like Aristotle and Russell. Based on it, they determined the six factors of self-acceptance (ability of seeing and accepting one`s weaknesses and strength), purpose driven life [means having purposes and objectives that gives meaning and direction to person`s life], personal growth (feeling that one`s potential abilities and capabilities, will become actual over time and during his life), having positive relationship with others (means to have close and valuable relationship with important persons in life), dominance in environment (ability of managing life affairs specially routine life issues) and autonomy (ability and power of following desires and act based on personality principles even if they are against society customs and demands), as constitutive components of psychological well-being.

One of the important components in psychological well-being is positive relationship with others. On one hand human spends most of his life in relationship and communication with others or thinks to have effective relationships, on the other hand, he is a social creature and needs interpersonal relationships. Our mental health

*Corresponding Author: Rahman Akbari, Department of Educational Psychology, Sharekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sharekord, Iran, E-mail: rkarate51@yahoo.com

also has full dependency on the quality of our relationship with others. Many scientists mention one of the health indicators as establishing and maintaining relationships and collaboration with others. People, who have trouble in these relationships, are often anxious and frustrated and are growing isolation. For this reason, we have to establish effective and useful human relationships in order to stay away from suffering and loneliness, and interpersonal relationship is necessary for our prosperity in social growth and development and making positive identity [7].

Interpersonal relationship is a process in which a person sends his feelings and information to a person or other persons through verbal and non-verbal messages. This capability results in enhancing the warm and intimate relationships with others, maintaining and promoting mental health, cutting the unhealthy relations, solving problems with others and resolves conflict. Also In these relations, the role of receiver and the sender is constantly changing and replacing. Interpersonal relationships is a unique and thriving selective and systematic interaction that results in creation of shared meanings among them [8]. Verdi [9] concluded that life skills education leads to their interpersonal relationships improvement with others and with parents. Individuals with low avoidant insecure interests, join more to social groups to control anxiety and distress, comparing to the persons with high insecure interests, it seems that nostalgia is social communication tank [10]. The difference between people's loneliness and their relationship to social networks still is not fully known. But in summary the researches results showed, sometimes loneliness may happen in a group for example the improper presence of individuals in social networks; also loneliness for friends is more than family members and for women is more than men [11]. In this regard, different researches have examined the role of sport and physical education in developing individuals' interpersonal positive communications and also transcending their psychological welfare. Sport and physical education in general sense of the word, is a social phenomenon that by its transcending, people relationship in society and their physical and mental health strengthens.

Therefore, social relationships and physical education & sport, have interaction on each other and are effective on providing mental health also society desirable orientation. Of course in sport and mental health , public imagination previously was that sports activities are only fruitful for physical health but today it is considered that sport in addition to physical health, can be effective in mental health promotion [12]. In this regard, Tabesh [13] in research named "emotional intelligence among athletes and non-athletes women" they concluded that there is a significant difference in average emotional intelligence between athletes and non-athletes .Since participating in physical activities, results in positive changes in mood and self-concept, increasing self-confidence , positive perception of health and physical competence, adjusting the tension, excitement, anxiety and depression, positive progress in tolerating problems, individual and social compatibilities [15-14]. Regarding the psychological impacts of exercise, Barnett [16] reported in his study that both men and women groups who are interested in physical activity, experience lower levels of stress. Also Akbari and Jokar [17] reported in their research that athlete women have more self-efficacy and self-concept than non-athlete women. Also in their research Karter and Toman concluded that athletes including group and individual fields have higher social development comparing to non-athletes [18]. Therefore, the majority of studies indicate a significant and positive relationship between doing physical activity and mental health [19-22].

On the other hand, studies showed that physical activities and regular exercise in different ages, play important role in decreasing mental disorders and problems and increasing mental health and psychological welfare [23,24]. In this respect, Greenlof et al. [25] in a study that examined girls in high school sport schools, concluded that sport and physical activities , by influencing on physical competences and self-physical concept, lead to increasing psychological well-being and its components in athletic girls in middle school. In addition, researches and different studies results in different societies and cultures , indicate that sport and physical activity relate to perceived health increase [26], self-confidence strengthening [27] increasing hope and sense of humor [28] and social growth [29]. On the other side, several studies in recent years, have emphasized on positive influence of sport and physical activities on psychological well-being and life quality in connection with health [30-32]. Research results showed that well-being promotion may be due to the fact that well-being dimensions are experienced during health-enhancing physical activity and pointed out that there is a strong association between health-enhancing physical activity and psychological well-being [32, 33].

Questa and Duda [32] have studied the understanding of motivation conditions on the well being and non wellbeing indicators of hip hop athletes and indicated that ruling motivation conditions in Hip hop classes denotes the underlying which leads to the welfare of individuals and maintenance of this state. Findings results showed that hip hop exercises had a positive and permanent effect on the psychological well being of female [girls] students [34-37].

In total it can be said that sport and dynamic activities are among the factors that have important roles in reducing psychological problems and increasing positive psychological components, although research evidence represents the fundamental role of sport in positive psychological components development, but researchers didn't investigate the role of sports and physical activities in increasing psychological well being and interpersonal relationships of women. This is despite the fact that women make up a large part of the country population and different researches emphasize on their effective role on family system and paying attention to their mental health is important. However, it seems that the considerable importance of physical fitness and sport on growth and psychological well being in our country women has not been well highlighted. Therefore, with respect to the importance of studying women's psychological welfare also their interpersonal relationship, and the

positive effect that sport can have on mental status improvement, in this research, communication skills and psychological well being of female athletes and non-athletes were examined to determine that what differences the female athletes and non-athletes have in the psychological components.

This research has been done to study the comparison of interpersonal relationship and psychological well being. The purpose of this research was that, in form of differential analysis design, the predictive power of sports be determined to distinguish the status of interpersonal relationship and psychological well being of female athletes and non-athletes. This research was causal comparative kind in which sport is independent variable and interpersonal relationship and psychological welfare are dependent variables.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Society and sample: Statistical society of the research included all women in Kohkilooyeh and boyer ahmad province and research sample included 140 person (70 athletes from the clubs (Gym) that participated in country championships and 70 non-athletes) that non-athletes women were identical to athletes groups in terms of age and education characteristics and were selected with targeted cluster sampling.

Measuring tools: 2 questionnaires were used in collecting information.

1- Ryff's [6] psychological well being scale research tool (RSPWB), this questionnaire have 84 items and evaluates the 6 major components of psychological well being pattern (positive relationship with others, autonomy, dominance on environment, target driven life and individual life) and every subscale includes 14 expressions. Ryff have designed psychological well being scales like 20 question, 14 question, 9 question and 3 question questionnaires for measuring these structures, after primary studies the original version of psychological well being scales has been prepared that includes 84 questions. This questionnaire is prepared for adults and in a 6 point likert spectrum including (1-strongly disagree 2 = somewhat disagree - 3 = slightly disagree - 4 = slightly agree - 5 = somewhat agree and 6 = strongly agree) the subject should makes it clear that how he/she agrees or disagrees with each expressions. For normalization, Ryff performed this test on a sample of 321 individuals. He has reported the consistency coefficient as follow: autonomy 0.76, dominance on environment =0.9, individual growth=0.87, positive relationship with others =0.91, target driven life= 0.9 and self-acceptance =0.93. Stability from subscales retest method, also in a sample of 117 individuals and within 6 week was between 0.81 to 0.85. Jackson [38] has reported the subscale internal consistency coefficient of autonomy= 0.78, dominance on environment: 0.77, individual growth=0.74, positive relationship with others=0.83, target driven life=0.76, self-acceptance =0.79. Stability from retesting these subscales, have been between 0.74 to 0.84 within 8 weeks. Bayani et al. [36] have performed it on a sample of 145 students from Islamic Azad University –Azadshahr branch to normalize psychological well being scale in Iran. Stability coefficient has been obtained by scale retest method 0.82 and subscale self-acceptance 0.71, positive relationship with others 0.77, autonomy 0.78, dominance on environment 0.70, target driven life 0.77 and personal growth 0.78.

2- Interpersonal relationship questionnaire: This questionnaire was made by Monajemi zadeh [37] that includes 19 questions, and its goal is evaluating interpersonal communication skills in different people. Its responding spectrum was likert which was scored from low [1] to very good [5]. To obtain questionnaire total score add total scores of all questions. This score will have a domain form 19 to 95. Higher scores indicate higher interpersonal communication skills in respondent and vice-versa. Monajemi zadeh [37] calculated the concurrent validity of the questionnaire and a strong correlation between it and the questionnaire of the ability of effective communication was obtained [$r=0.698$] hence its concurrent validity has been confirmed.

3- Also, the stability or reliability of questionnaire has been calculated by Cronbach's Alpha measuring method. Cronbach's Alpha has been obtained 0.73 for the questionnaire of interpersonal communications skills which indicates good reliability of this questionnaire.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data relating to subjects were analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics with SPSS software. Demographic information was evaluated using descriptive statistics which results are mentioned in Table 1 below.

To analyze the data, by using multivariate analysis of variance [MANOVA], the two groups of athletes and non-athletes scores in the psychological well-being and interpersonal relationships were compared with the results below. Finding results of Table 2 and 3 indicate that there is a difference between interpersonal relationship and psychological well being of athletes and non-athletes female. In following the results of multivariate analysis of variance for data is presented.

Table 1. Frequency of the subjects groups

Group	Number	Frequency percentage
Female athletes	70	%50
Female non-athletes	70	%50
Total	140	%100

Table 2. Average and standard deviation of psychological well-being in female athletes and non-athletes

Variable	Female athletes		Female non-athletes	
	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average
Self acceptance	1.9076	39.11	2.48411	32.78
Target driven life	3.90331	37.44	4.15696	30.37
Personal growth	1.64789	38.45	2.23962	29.58
Positive relationship with others	2.61529	41.97	2.66209	35/01
Dominance on environment	2.75861	39.11	4.03938	32.27
Autonomy	3.2876	41.94	2.60279	37.52
Total	8.45866	238.04	11.20555	197.82

Table 3. Average and standard deviation for interpersonal relationships between athletes and non-athletes female

Variable	Athletes female		Non-athletes female	
	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Average
Interpersonal relationship	3.09414	42.38	3.60515	33.4

Table 4. Multivariate analysis of variance [MANOVA] results on psychological well-being and interpersonal relationship scores of athletes and non - athletes female

Test name	Significance level	DF error	DF Assumption	F	Value
Pila test	0.0001	137	2	346.598	.0835
Wilks' lambda test	0.0001	137	2	346.598	0.165
Hetling effect test	0.0001	137	2	346.598	5.06
Roy's largest root	0.0001	137	2	346.598	5.06

As it can be seen from Table 4, the level of significance for all tests, authorizes the use of multivariate analysis [MANOVA]. This suggests that between interpersonal relationship and psychological well-being of athletes and non-athletes female, at least for one of the variables there is significant difference. The results of the effects among test subjects are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The results of psychological well-being and interpersonal relationships scores for athletes and non-athletes female

Variables	Significance level	F	Mean squares	Freedom degree	Sum of squares
Psychological well being	0.0001	574.305	56601.607	1	56601.607
Interpersonal relationships	0.0001	250.413	2826.007	1	2826.007

Accordingly, we can say that there is a significant difference between interpersonal relationship and psychological well-being scores of female athletes and non-athletes, (wilks' lambda.165=, $F_{[2,137]}=346.598$, $P<0.001$). Based on this, findings showed that sport influences interpersonal relationships and psychological wellbeing. In the following, by using differential analysis method, as a post hoc test for MANOV, the scores of interpersonal relationships and psychological well-being [self-acceptance, target driven life, personal growth, positive communication with others, dominance on environment and autonomy], in 2 groups for activity type, [athlete and non-athlete]have been studied to determine which variable, is stronger predictor for distinguishing female athletes and non-athletes. Results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. A summary of predictions interpretation by using differential analysis

Independent variables	univariate ratio F	Differential weight[rank]	Standardized	Non-standardized
Self-acceptance	285.793.**	0.555(2)	0.459	0.207
Target driven life	107.65**	0.341(6)	0.171	0.042
Personal growth	38.862**	0.641(1)[0.453	0.174
Positive communication with others	243.286**	0.512(4)	0.387	0.147
Dominance on environment	136.992**	0.384(5)	0.267	0.077
Autonomy	77.577.*	0.289(7)	0.074	0.025
Interpersonal Relationship	25.413**	0.519(3)	0.369	0.109
Core of female athletes groups			-2.575	
Core of female non-athletes groups			2.575	
Wilks' lambda			0.129* [*]	
[canonical correlation]			0.933*	

* $P<0.05$; ** $P<0.01$

Results have shown that although in all of psychological well being dimensions (self acceptance, target driven life, personal growth, positive communication with others, dominance on environment, autonomy) and interpersonal relationships there is a significant difference between athlete and non-athlete females, but in differential structure matrix, in addition to interpersonal relationships, among psychological well being dimensions, personal growth, self acceptance, positive relationship with others, dominance on environment, respectively were most important group predictor variables and have necessary differentiating power to detect groups.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of present research indicate that athlete women have better interpersonal relationship and sport psychological well being, this means that athlete women have warm and intimate relationship with others and can better transfer their information and feelings through verbal and non-verbal messages. Also athlete women feel a greater sense of cohesion in their life and while having emotional balance, they have total satisfaction of life. These findings indicate the confirmation of sport role in promoting individuals' mental characteristics. The results of this study are in line with findings of [14,15] that have shown regular participation in physical activities results in positive changes in positive perception of health and physical competencies and individual and social adjustments, the results of Akbar and Jokar [17] findings stating that athlete women have higher self-efficacy and self perception, Karter and Toman [18] suggested that athletes have higher social growth, findings of [19-22] stating that there is a positive and significant relationship between doing physical activities and mental health, and findings of [23, 24, 30-33] indicating that regular sport, have important in increasing psychological well being, Greenlof et al. [25] stated that sport results in increasing psychological wellbeing and its components in athlete girls at middle school, findings of Reinboth and Duda [29] that indicated sport is effective on individual' social growth, findings of [34-37] that showed hip hop exercises have positive and permanent effect on female students.

Therefore, based on this research findings results, sport can be effective in increasing interpersonal relationship skills and psychological well being and its components.

REFERENCES

1. Ryff CD, Singer BH, Love GD. 2004. Positive health: Connecting well-being with biology. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*; 359: 1383-1394.
2. Ryan RM, Deci EL. 2001. On happiness and human potentials: a review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Ann Rev Psych*; 52: 141-166.
3. Ryff CD, Singer B. 1998. The contours of positive human health. *Psych Inqu*; 9: 1-28.
4. Compton WC. 2001. Towards a tripartite factor structure of mental health: subjective well-being, personal growth, and religiosity. *J Psych*; 135: 486-500.
5. Ryff CD. 1995. Psychological well-being in adult life. *Cur Dir Psych Sci*; 4: 99-104.
6. Ryff, C. D. 1989. Happiness is everything, or it is explorations on the meaning of psychological wellbeing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57, 1069-1081
7. Shamloo. S. 1979. Mental health, Tehran, ROSHD publication
8. Karbalaee Esmaeeli, H., Anvari Ghodsi Najoorabi N. and Khajeh Hossein, H. 2006. Study the effectiveness of life skills instruction in changing disable teenagers' attitude, Isfahan. *Welfare*.
9. Verdi, M. 2004. study on the effects of life skills education on self expression, self-esteem and interpersonal relationship in female students of district 1 -Ahvaz, Research council of education organization in Khuzestan province
10. Wildschut, T; Sedikides, C; Routledge, C; Arndt, J & Jamie, C. F. 2010. Nostalgia as a repository of connectedness: The role of attachment-related avoidance. *Journal of personality and social psychology*. Vol 98(4), 573-586.
11. Cacioppo, J. T; Fowler, J. H & Christakis, N. A. 2009. Alone in the crowd: The structure and spread of loneliness in a large social network. *Journal of personality and social psychology*. Vol 97(6), 977-991.
12. Landers, D. M 2005. The influence of exercise on mental health. *Sport medicine*.21 (4).
13. Tabesh,S. 2006. Comparison of emotional intelligence among women athletes (with skill open and close)and non- athletes, Tehran ,thesis MA of Physical Education, Sport Science and Physical Education Faculty .Mazandaran university.
14. Ferron C., Narring F., Cauderay M. and Michaud P.A. 1999. Sport activity in adolescence: associations with health perceptions and experimental behaviours. *Health Education Research*, Vol.14 no.2, Pages 225-233.
15. Kirkcaldy B.D, Shephard R. J., Siefen R.G. 2002. The relationship between physical activity and self-image and problem behaviour among adolescents. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol* 37: 544-550. DOI 10.1007.s00127-002-0554-7.
16. Barnett LM, Morgan PJ, Van Burden. 2008. Perceived sports competence meditates the relationship between childhood motor skill proficiency and adolescent physical activity and fitness: a longitudinal assessment. *The Int J of behavioral nutrition and physical activity*. 5; 40.

17. Akbari, R and Jokar B. 2014. Study of sport effect on self efficacy and self perception , third international congress on womens health, June 1393, Shiraz
18. Carter A.S. and Thomann C.R. 2008. Social and Emotional Development Theories. Social and Emotional Milestones. 44-57.
19. Hemayat Talab, R, Bazazan, S, Lehmi R. 2003. Comparing well being and mental health of athlete and non athlete female students , Tehran & Payame Noor university", HAREKAT publication, (serial 18).
20. Moosavi Gilani, SR, Kian poor, M. Sadeghi Khrashad, M. 2002. Comparing mental health pf male athlete and non-athlete students, Journal Tabib Shargh, No. 4 (SERIAL 1), 42.
21. Besharat , MA. 2005. Relationship of hard working with s success in sports and mental health of student athletes' Olympic Quarterly, 13 (2): 28-37
22. Esfahani, N. 2002. The effect of physical exercise on mental health in physical dimension, anxiety and insomnia, social function and depression in students of AL ZAHRA University, Journal of HAREKAT , (row 12), 20-13
23. Opendacker J, Boen F, Bourdeaudhuij D, Auweele Y. 2008. Explaining the psychological effects of sustainable lifestyle physical activity intervention among rural women. *Men Heal Phy Acti*, 1(2): 74-81.
24. Krawczynski M, Olszewski H. 2000. Psychological wellbeing associated with a physical activity programmed for persons over 60 years old. *Psychol Sport Exer*; 1(1): 57-63.
25. Greenleaf C, Boyer E, Petrie T. 2009. High School Sport Participation and Subsequent Psychological Well-Being and Physical Activity: The Mediating Influences of Body Image, Physical Competence, and Instrumentality. *J Sex Rol*; 61(3): 714-26.
26. Klavestrand J, Vingard E. 2009. The relationship between physical activity and health-related quality of life: A systematic review of current evidence. *J Med Sci Sports*; 19(3): 300-12.
26. Blanchard CM, Fortier M, Sweet S, Sullivan T, Hogg W, Reid RW. 2007. Explaining physical activity levels from a self-efficacy perspective: The physical activity counseling trial. *Ann Behav Med*; 34(3): 323-8.
27. Zahed A, Ghasempour A, Hasanzadeh SH. 2009. A comparison of hope and humor in athlete and no athlete students. *J Human Sci*; 26(11): 117-28.
28. Amirtash A, Sobhaninejad M, Abedi A. 2006. Comparison social growth in athletic and nonathletic boy students. *J Olympic*; 14(2): 53-61.
29. Reinboth, M., & Duda, J. L. 2006. Perceived motivational climate, need satisfaction and indices of well-being in teamsports: a longitudinal perspective. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 7(3):269-86.
30. Hui, E. Chui, B. T. & Woo, J. 2009. Effects of dance on physical and psychological well-being in older persons. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*. 49, 1, e45-e50.
31. Leah, J. B. 2009. Health Enhancing Physical Activity and Eudemonic Well-being. Dean of the College of Kinesiology. *University of Saskatchewan*. S7N 5B2.
32. Quested, E., & Duda, J. L. 2009. Perceptions of the Motivational Climate, Need Satisfaction, and Indices of Well- and Ill-Being Among Hip Hop Dancers. *Journal of Dance Medicine ef Science*, 13, 1, 10 -19.
33. Huta, V., & Ryan, R. M. 2009. Pursuing pleasure versus virtue: The differential and overlapping well-being benefits of hedonic and eudemonic motives. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, DOI:10.1007.s10902-009-9171-4 Online First™. Manuscript submitted for publication
34. Beaulac, J. 2008. A promising community-based hip-hop dance intervention for the promotion of psychosocial and physical well-being among youth living in a disadvantaged neighborhood. *University OF Ottawa*, NR48649.
35. Behzadnia, B., Amiri, H., & Aghazade, A. 2010. Effect of Hip-Hop dancing on the Hedonic Well- being of Girls Students. *11th National Conference of Sport Psychology, Trikala*, Article in Press.
36. Bayani, AA., Koochaki, Ashoor M. and Bayani, A. 1998. reliability and validity of Reef psychological well being 146-151, Iran Journal of Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology, Vol. XIV, No. 2.
37. Monajemi Zadeh, A. 2012. Study of relationship between interpersonal skills or relationships and social acceptance of students in PAYAME NOOR University, Khorasgan branch, BA thesis, social sciences group.
38. Jackson. C. 2003. Transitions into higher education Gendered implications for academic self-concept", *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 29.