

## Mental Well-Being Among Athlete-Players and Non-Athlete Players

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### ABSTRACT

Mental well-being refers to an individual's ability to maintain balance in their life. It represents the capacity to face and adapt to life's realities. Mental well-being is a complex phenomenon influenced by various personal, psychological, and social factors. It is as important as physical health in ensuring that a person maintains mental resilience and balance, which enables them to cope with life productively. Good mental well-being is reliant on the health of both the mind and body.

**Keywords:** Mental well-being Athletes, Non-athletes, Psychological health, Sports psychology, Mental resilience, Physical activity, Emotional balance, Mental health comparison, Sports participation

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Mental well-being is a crucial component of an individual's overall health, influencing both personal and social functioning. It encompasses a range of mental states and emotional conditions, reflecting how individuals manage stress, relate to others, and make choices. Out of the four primary components of total health—physical, mental, emotional, and social—mental well-being stands out as vitally important because it affects how we think, feel, and behave[1].

Mental well-being plays a pivotal role in shaping our cognitive processes, including our thoughts, ideas, and decision-making abilities. It influences our daily communication, conduct, and behavior, directly impacting personal and social adjustments. Importantly, mental well-being is not a fixed state but rather a dynamic process, influenced by both internal and external factors. It fluctuates over time, moving along a continuum between optimism and minimalism, depending on various life events and experiences[2].

For athletes, mental well-being is often considered just as important as physical fitness. In competitive sports, the ability to maintain psychological balance under pressure is critical for success. The demands of sports can test mental resilience, which can, in turn, influence performance. Similarly, non-athletes face their own mental challenges in everyday life, which may be less focused on competitive goals but no less significant[3]. Therefore, understanding the differences in mental well-being between athletes and non-athletes can provide valuable insights into how mental health is shaped by different life experiences and activities[4].

This study aims to measure and compare the mental well-being levels of athletes and non-athletes to explore whether regular participation in sports is associated with better mental health outcomes.

### 2. METHODOLOGY

#### Statement of the problem :

This study aims to measure and compare the mental well-being levels of athletes and non-athletes.

#### Relevance of the study:

- Understanding the psychological strengths and weaknesses of athletes in relation to their participation in various sports.
- Offering insights to physical education teachers and coaches to help select and prepare athletes by understanding their psychological makeup.

#### Objectives of the study:

- To assess the mental well-being levels of athletes and non-athletes.
- To explore differences in mental well-being between these two groups.

#### Hypothesis :

- There is a significant difference in the mental well-being levels of athletes and non-athletes

#### Selection of subject :

The study sample includes athletes and non-athletes from Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad. Fifty male subjects, aged 18 to 21, were selected for this study. Athletes were chosen from the university's sports teams, while non-athletes were selected from the same institution.

**Tools :**

**Personal Data Schedule:** This tool was designed to collect demographic and personal information from the subjects.

**Mental Well-Being Scale:** Developed by Dr. Jagadish and Dr. A.K. Srivastava, this scale includes 54 questions to assess mental well-being. Responses were scored based on the provided manual.

**3. INTERPRETATION OF DATA :**

Table – 1

**Mental wellbeing levels of athletes and non-athletes**

Players	Mean	SD	t-value
Athletes	39.94	02.52	0.61
Non-Athletes	38.30	2.56	

\*significant at 0.05 level

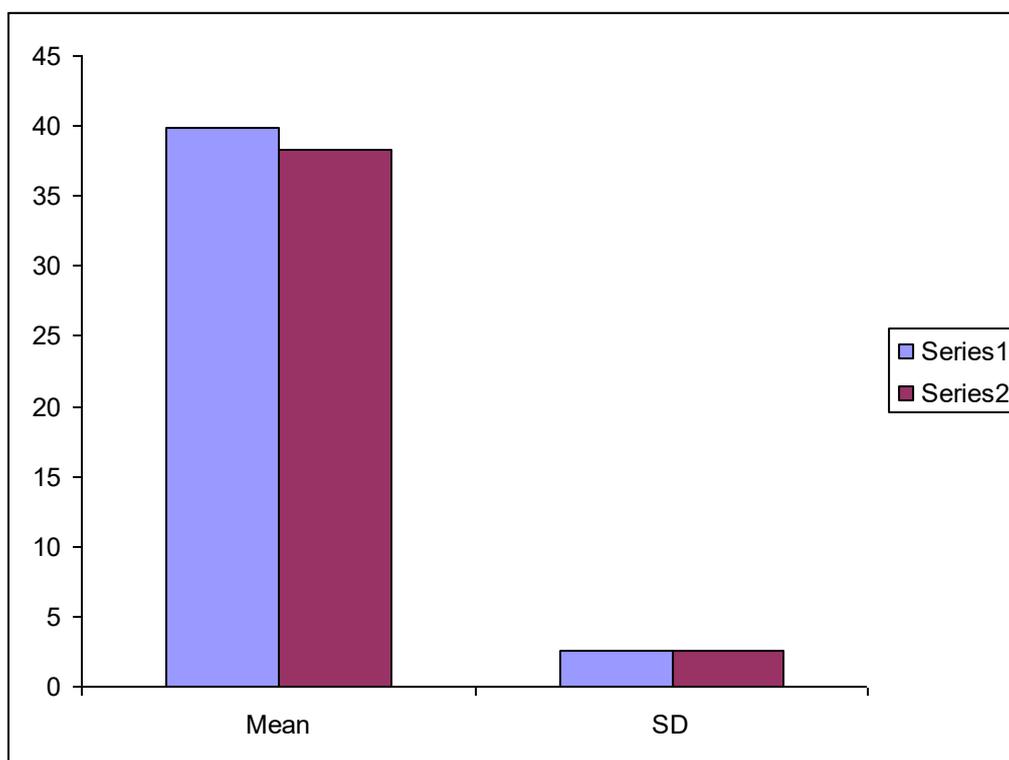
The mean score for athletes was higher than for non-athletes, indicating that athletes have higher mental well-being compared to non-athletes.

Findings from Table 1:

- i. Higher Mental Well-Being in Athletes: The mean mental well-being score of athletes (39.94) is higher than that of non-athletes (38.30). This suggests that athletes tend to have better mental well-being compared to non-athletes.
- ii. Small Variation in Scores: The standard deviations (SD) for both groups are relatively similar, with athletes having an SD of 2.52 and non-athletes an SD of 2.56. This indicates that the range of mental well-being scores within each group is fairly consistent.
- iii. Statistical Significance: The t-value of 0.61 indicates a comparison between the two groups. However, this value does not reach statistical significance at the 0.05 level, implying that while athletes tend to have higher mental well-being, the difference between athletes and non-athletes is not statistically significant in this study.

**4. DISCUSSION**

The results of this study reveal interesting insights into the mental well-being of athletes compared to non-athletes. Although athletes demonstrated a higher mean score in mental well-being (39.94) than non-athletes (38.30), the difference was not statistically significant (t-value = 0.61). These findings suggest that while athletes may generally exhibit slightly better mental well-being, this difference is not large enough to conclude definitively that athletic participation alone leads to higher mental well-being.



**Figure 1: Comparison of Mean and Standard Deviation of Mental Well-Being Between Athletes and Non-Athletes".**

Several factors may contribute to the observed differences between athletes and non-athletes:

- i. **Physical Activity and Mental Well-Being:** Previous studies suggest that physical activity has a positive impact on mental health, reducing symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress **[5†source]** . Athletes, by virtue of their regular physical activity and training, may experience these psychological benefits more than non-athletes. This could explain the slightly higher mental well-being observed in the athlete group.
- ii. **Goal Orientation and Psychological Resilience:** Athletes are typically more goal-oriented and accustomed to handling pressure in competitive environments. This goal-driven mindset may contribute to their overall mental well-being by fostering a sense of purpose and achievement, both of which are important for mental health. Moreover, sports participation often builds psychological resilience through dealing with wins, losses, and performance pressures, which can further improve mental well-being.
- iii. **Social Support:** Athletes often benefit from being part of a team or a community, which can provide a strong support network. Social interactions and belonging to a group can have a positive impact on an individual's mental health, as feelings of connection and mutual support are known to promote emotional well-being **[5†source]** . Non-athletes may lack such structured social support systems, which could contribute to lower mental well-being scores.

However, the fact that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant should be interpreted carefully.

## 5. CONCLUSION

- Mental well-being is a crucial factor in sports and games, and mental fitness is essential for achieving success in these areas. Athletes who are mentally fit tend to perform better.
- Athletes generally demonstrate higher levels of mental well-being compared to non-athletes. Athletes are more driven toward their goals and are more confident in their ability to succeed. In contrast, non-athletes tend to have lower levels of motivation and goal orientation, gradually working towards their objectives rather than with intense drive.

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