

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL FACTORS ON PERFORMANCE OF PAKISTANI HOCKEY PLAYERS

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ABSTRACT

This research paper represents the findings of a larger study which highlights the lack of socio-interactional (team cohesion) and psycho-sociological (motivational intensity) factors and their influence on the performance of field hockey players in Pakistani context. Field hockey is a national sport of Pakistan having four World Cup titles and three Olympic gold medals on its credit but no effort has been made to find out the factors which have turned Pakistan (as team) from the status of a giant into a pygmy from the last two decades. The foremost objective of existing paper was to scrutinize the performance of national field hockey players in relation to team cohesiveness and motivational intensity. The population of this research were all active field hockey players of Pakistan. A sample of 68 field hockey players belonging to four national departments affiliated with Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) was chosen as respondents. The convenient sampling was employed for the section of the respondents. The findings highlighted that current performance of national field hockey players did not compete to the factual requirements of international level and proposed certain alterations in team cohesiveness and intensity of motivation in players. Particularly, the team cohesiveness and motivational intensity is to be developed and expanded regarding performance of field hockey players to fulfil the sport requirements of players. Recommendations have been made to raise the excellence, relevance, and legitimacy in team regarding cohesion and motivation with players' performance.

Keywords: Motivational intensity, team cohesion, performance, national players, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

Modern Olympic Games have been started since 1896, are organized after every four years regularly, except, I and II (1940 & 1944) World War. Field Hockey included for the first time in IV Olympic Games 1908 London and Great Britain (England) won the first title of Field Hockey. Field hockey is one of the popular well known sports not only in Asia but also played in all continents of the world. It is a team sport in which players struggle in the same field of battle while playing on Astroturf. Field hockey is a game of competitiveness in which players' contest against their rivals at the similar turf of action (Asghar, 2011). The physical demands of the field hockey have enlarged greater than before due to both amendments in the rules and playing surface (Elferink-Gemser, Visscher, Lemmink, & Mulder, 2007). Field hockey has become superb and fastest sport of the world due to the latest changes in its academic and practical structure.

According to the first constitution of 1947, field hockey is declared Pakistan's national sport. After the emergence of Pakistan, both the teams (Pakistan & India) have performed terrifically and have been healthy challengers in the final of any international hockey event till 1984. Pakistan dominated World Field Hockey during the 1980s, when they were the Asian, Olympic, and World champions. However, there has been a sharp decline in the performance of Team Pakistan since the time of mid 1990s and the Pakistani team has not won any significant event at an international level. Particularly, field hockey players have trouble during techniques training and therefore, they have not the victory experience required to raise the value of the training (Meulmana, Berger, Zande, Kok, Ottevanger, & Crucq, 2012). The game demands the expertise of ball control, stick rapidity, striking power and dribbling quickness (Thiel, Tremayne, & James, 2012).

Pakistani nationals have had tremendous performance since 1994 and achieved Olympic Games (Gold Medal in 1960, 1968, 1984), World Cup (Champion 1971, 1978, 1982, 1994), Champions Trophy (Winner 1978, 1980, 1994), Asian Games (Gold Medal in 1958, 1962, 1970, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1990, 2010), and Sultan Azlan Shah (Winner 1999, 2000, 2003) in Field Hockey. At the moment, field hockey could not win any mega title since 1994. This is the worst ever time with Pakistan hockey that, even, the four times World Cup Winner and three times Olympic Gold Medallist team could not qualify for the 13th world cup held in Netherlands 2014 (Bhatti, 2013; Sherwani, 2013; Yaqoob, 2013; Zaman, 2013) and for the REO Olympic Games 2016 held in Brazil (Zuberi, 2015). However, players have been playing under severe criticism due to not winning any significant title for the last two decades.

The literature has shown that socio-interactional factor as team cohesion among players and psycho-sociological factor as players' motivational intensity occurred for the decline of Pakistani national sport. Performance is associated with team exertion and well mixture of the team and all the players of Pakistani hockey need to require solid cohesiveness among them to perform well (Asghar, 2011). Team cohesion is really a powerful procedure in which the team has a tendency to stay with each other as well as combined to chase the objectives for the satisfaction with the touching requirements associated with team players (Kanchan, Singh, & Tarandeep, 2012). On the other hand, sport psychologist can provide assistance for the national team with

mental and psychological reintegration and promotion to manage with the current hockey downfall in Pakistan (Bhatti, 2013). As the drive is stronger as the targets will be easier to achieve (Asghar, 2011). A young player's motivation is improved by generating an optimistic atmosphere (Webb, 2008). These are the factors which reveal why Pakistani field hockey players are not performing well as compared to the past performance.

The poor performance of the team players not only brought about the bad name but put the national sport under severe criticism also. The emerging scenario of the present has made it an obligation for the students of sport sciences to explore the realities on ground. The goal of the present study is to examine the factors related to the decline in players' performance in Pakistani Field Hockey at the national and international arena.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The survey design was chosen due to having purely qualitative approach for the existing research.

Population and Sample Size

Active field hockey players of sport institutions who have been participated in National Games or National Championship were only eligible to participate in the current study. Based on this specific purpose, purposive and convenient sampling was used. Number of sixty-eight (68) national field hockey players responded and willingly took part in filling the survey questionnaires while 100 questionnaires were distributed. All the national field hockey players were belonging to the sport institutions named Pakistan Steel Mill, Port Qasim Authority, Higher Education Commission, and Khyber Pakhtoon Khawah Province. These four hockey departments were a part of those national sport institutions which were affiliated with Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF).

Tool for Data Collection

The survey questionnaire was adopted of different authors (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980; Carron, 1982; Pelletier, Tuson, Fortier, Vallerand, Brikre, & Blais, 1995; Prieto and Santana, 2012) and used for data collection. The adopted survey questionnaire is comprised on four sections A, B, C, D. Section A was comprised of demographic information having six (6) questions. Section B has 21 items that tested the professional skills of field hockey players regarding performance. Section C consisted of nine (9) questions to highlight the personal factors, and team factors of team cohesion construct while section D comprised of 18 items focus the goals for practice, practice resources, and reinforcement for achievements of motivational intensity construct. Whole questionnaire consisted of 54 items overall. Coded answers were statistically calculated and analysed. The basic statistical tool "Mean Score" has been used in analysing the collected data. Section B comprised 21 questions and was targeted to collect information about the performance of the national field hockey players of Pakistan. Five sub skills were distributed into two portions such as tactical skills (4 items), interpersonal skills (4 items), and communicational skills (4 items) calculated through questionnaire while technical skills (5 items) and fitness capabilities (4 items) were tested by three hockey experts (ex-Olympians). Answers were noted down in a Likert Scale under five levels of rank. Mean values indicated following answers for the questions in survey questionnaire as strongly disagree, disagree, average, agree, and strongly agree. Section C contained nine (9) questions in which participants found out the influence of team cohesion within team players. These qualities were tested by various question items. Respondents were inquired to find the best standing of every item. It comprised two portions as personal factors (5 items) and team factors (4 items). Answers were collected for coded questions in a Likert Scale. Mean values represented following answers for the questions in survey questionnaire as strongly disagree, disagree, average, agree, and strongly agree. Section D enclosed 18 questions in which participants found out the influence of motivational intensity in connection to players. These potentials were confirmed by various question items. Participants were asked to find the best options of the items. It contained three parts as goals for practice (1-9 items), practice resources (10-13 items), and reinforcement for achievements (14-18 items). Answers were collected for coded questions in a Likert Scale. Mean values represented following answers for the questions in survey questionnaire as strongly disagree, disagree, average, agree, and strongly agree.

Validity and Reliability

The applicable questionnaire was established using prior questionnaires. Content validity and reliability of the questionnaire has been guaranteed by gaining consent and remarks from the experts of two disciplines. Content subject lecturer from the department of sports science, GC University Lahore Pakistan, provided valuable comments about the content validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Similarly, the remarks and consent of field hockey experts (ex-Olympians) were also obtained in organizing the questionnaire given to respondents. Both subject and field experts have essential credentials and vast experience in their respective disciplines.

Data Analysis Technique

Descriptive statistical technique was employed through "Mean Scores" for the analysis of the collected data.

RESULTS

Mean age of the respondents was 26 years while standard deviation was noted 1.574.

Questions 1-5 represent technical skills that come under performance of hockey players were supposed as initial practically skilful and learning items. Generally, players liked to learn dribbling the ball in field of play (question 1, Mean value 3.00). Furthermore, maximum mean values showed that they adequately involved in learning of dribbling the ball in practice or game.

But a least mean value proposed that players were weak in hitting the ball. Findings showed that less consideration was given to hitting the ball by players (Mean value 2.60, question 4).

Questions 6-9 stood for tactical skills, the outcomes showed that every player pay attention to correcting technically and tactically mistakes (Mean score 3.01, question 6). Least mean score purposed less importance to be specified to (Mean value 2.82, question 7) play according to the tactics of the game by the players.

Likewise, questions 10-13 showed interpersonal skills among players, highest mean value (Mean value 3.03) was assumed to (question 11) players' try their own way to coordinate during game. Results showed that most items have below than average representing interpersonal skills of players not sufficient. Lowest mean score (Mean values 2.81) was assumed to (question 10) players correlate among themselves during total part of the game was set smallest preference.

Questions 14-17 stood for communicational skills, players' verbally and signally communicate among them during game counted highest value (Mean value 2.91, question 15). Least value was assumed to (Mean score 2.69, question 16) for describing quantity of communication during playing among the players.

Questions 18-21 represented the fitness capabilities of players, linear peed test was calculated highest value (Mean score 2.87, question 19) shows that players' reported ability is below than average means they are weaker in fitness. While lowest score was assumed (Mean value 2.62, question 21) representing lessen endurance capacity in players.

Overall view of the players is that team cohesion plays most important or central part in a team. They preferred to personal factors that I am happy with my team's level of desire to win (question 2, Mean value 4.32) and Least weight has been assumed to (questions 3 & 5, Mean value 4.24). Players commented about team factors illustrated that as a team, we are united (question 8, Mean value 4.04). However, minimum weight was assumed to as a team, we like the way we work together (question 9, Mean value 3.74).

Field hockey players' views on goals for practice demonstrated from questions 1 to 9. It was found that because I feel a lot of personal satisfaction while learning certain difficult training techniques (question 5, Mean value 3.54). Minimum value was noted for I enrich my strengths and reduce my weaknesses during practice (Mean value 3.43, question 9). Players remarked about practice resources showed that the players normally participate in on-going sport training programs (question 10, Mean value 3.34). Minimum weight was assumed to the coach initiates and provides various kinds of training and development to their players (question 12, Mean value 3.28). Field hockey players' opinions on reinforcement for achievements confirmed within questions 14 to 18. It was originated that the department gives promotion as a reward to the players upon a good performance (question 18, Mean value 3.62). Minimum value was found for the department gives credit to players where it is due (Mean value 3.46, question 17).

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

Visible leanings of the influence of team cohesion and motivational intensity on performance of field hockey players were described after analysing the collected data. A clear distance between results and real practice of the influence of team cohesion and motivational intensity can be identified. These results confirm the findings in the light of former studies on team cohesion to performance of players (Eys et al., 2015; Alemu & Babu, 2012; Kanchan et al., 2012; Mohd Zainal & Rosli, 2012; Manning, 2007; Chang, Duck, & Bordia, 2006; Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003; Carron et al., 2002a, 2002b; Bray & Whaley, 2001) as well as motivational intensity and performance of players (Dragos, 2014; Gillet, Vallerand, Amoura, & Baldes, 2010; Mouratidis, Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Sideridis, 2008; Amorose & Horn, 2000; Pelletier et al., 1995). Foremost objective was attained as the actual influences of team cohesion and motivational intensity were identified in relations to field hockey players' performance. Results proposed that there is a huge gap between motivational intensity and performance of field hockey players but players had better understanding of team cohesion. Therefore, the subsequent suggestion and recommendation can be made based on the results. The existing level of motivational intensity could be advanced to meet the actual performance requirements of hockey players and produced more reliable outcomes. The current level does not cover extraordinary performance to impart the supposed items. Additional, it proposes that motivational intensity need to be added more through goals for practice, practice resources, and reinforcement for achievements to improve technical skills and tactical skills, and utilize them to develop fitness capabilities so that the performance of the players could be enhanced. Available level of motivational intensity is not sufficient to meet the supposed performance needs.

SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This research paper has purely quantitative in nature. The data was collected from the high profile (national hockey) players of Pakistan. The existing research acknowledged those elite hockey players and coaches who cooperated and supported during the course of data collection. This research will boost not only the knowledge of the existing players but also enhance the new horizons for the novel field hockey players. The existing research will also helpful for the Pakistani hockey coaches and they may get benefits developing the motivation of elite players.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The current practice of technical skills does not adequate to meet required international standards of field hockey in order to increase the technical skills of the players. Therefore, more practices to be developed for improving technical skills of the

players. Different theoretically activities to be planned to develop tactical skills of players on paper through meeting room lectures as well as in the fields of play by the experts. Players liked to improve their tactical skills by asking and answering informal questions during interchanges. It was found that available structure does not pay any attention to interpersonal and communicational skills of players. Players should be exposed to more chances of practice to learn how to make the performance well. It is supposed to develop the level of motivational intensity through the association of suggested mixture of players needs in terms of performance skills.

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