

Analysis of Selected Psychological Variables of National and State Level Soccer Referees

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to analysis the Psychological variables of National and state level soccer referees in Kerala state. To achieve the purpose 25 national and 50 state level soccer referees randomly selected from different districts of Kerala State and their age ranged from 25-45 years. The subjects had past officiating and coaching experience of at least three years in Football and only those who participated and represented their respective tournament were taken as subjects. The present study mainly focuses on trait anxiety, state anxiety and stress selected psychological variables. As far as the performance of Football game is concerned above said variables are vital. The standardized State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, developed by Spielberg, et al (1970) and Cohen's Perceived stress Scale (Cohen 1983) was used to collect the data. The collected data were statistically analysed by using independent 't' test. The results reveal that there was a significant differences among National and State level soccer referees on Kerala state. The findings also indicate that State level soccer referees had high level of Trait anxiety and stress, when compare to the National level soccer referees.

KEYWORDS: Trait anxiety, stress, National level soccer referees.

INTRODUCTION

A crowd of over seventy thousand fans combined with the largest television audience in sport history can produce intense pressures, anxieties, and stressors for the teams involved. Psychological pressures emerge from low confidence in decision making abilities as well as how the referee is able to cope with the anxieties associated with officiating. Lane, Nevill, Ahmad, and Balmer (2006) outline thirteen themes associated with stresses and pressures that referees experienced over the course of a typical match. Scoppa (2008) indicated that external factors exist and contribute to subconscious referee biases. Wolfson and Neave (2003) investigated a series of stressors and the psychological effects noticed by individual referees.

A referee is an official who supervises a game or match to ensure that the rules are adhered to. According to Anshel, Hamill, Haywood, Horvat and Plowman (1991), a referee is the person who enforces the rules of participation in sports competition and administers sanctions in case of rule violations, i.e. being in overall control of the game. He is helped by two other officials on the field of play called assistants referees and the fourth official called the administrative referee (Cox, 1999). Although there is no clear definition regarding the referee in the "Laws of the Game", the International Board specifies that, the referee has full authority to enforce the laws of the Game in connection with the match to which he has been appointed. So the four officials have the power to decide everything regarding a football game, but the only one who is

directly responsible is the referee because he has the final decision regarding the game. The assistants and the fourth official “assist the referee to control the match in accordance with the Laws of the game” (FIFA, 2012/2013:24).

Football, which is also known as Soccer, is probably world’s most popular sport, played in practically every nation at varying levels of competence. Football may be played competitively or for fun, as a career, a means of keeping fit or simply a recreational pursuit (Reilly, 1993). Soccer is the most popular sport in the world because it is performed by men and women, children and adults with different levels of expertise. The popularity of the game is reflected in the millions who participate in Soccer in lower levels of play. Soccer is now being played in more than 210 countries throughout the world. Soccer is popular because of the fact it is a simple game requiring very minimum infrastructure and equipment. Success in soccer is dependent upon a variety of factors including the physical characteristics and physiological capacities of the players, their level of skill, their degree of motivation, and tactics employed by them against the opposition. Some of these factors are not easily measured objectively, but others can be tested using standardized methods and can provide useful information for coaches (Mosher, 1985).

Statement of the problem

The purpose of the study was to analysis the Psychological variables of National and state level soccer referees in Kerala state.

Methodology

To achieve the purpose 25 national and 50 state level soccer referees randomly selected from different districts of Kerala State and their age ranged from 25-45 years. The subjects had past officiating and coaching experience of at least three years in Football and only those who participated and represented their respective tournament were taken as subjects. The present study mainly focuses on trait anxiety, state anxiety and stress selected psychological variables. As far as the performance of Football game is concerned above said variables are vital. The standardized State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, developed by Spielberg, et al (1970) and Cohen’s Perceived stress Scale (Cohen 1983) was used to collect the data. The collected data were statistically analysed by using independent ‘t’ test.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Table 1 - Descriptive Statistics of National Level Soccer Referees of Selected Psychological Variables at Different Times (N=25)

Psychological variables					
Variables	Different time	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trait anxiety	6 hours before the match	26.00	56.00	40.44	6.60
	15 minutes before the match	41.00	68.00	52.08	8.65
State anxiety	6 hours before the match	18.00	56.00	38.68	9.93
	15 minutes before the match	20.00	68.00	46.84	13.90
Stress	6 hours before the match	14.00	27.00	19.68	4.13
	15 minutes before the match	18.00	39.00	30.44	5.47

Table – 1 presents the descriptive statistics, minimum, maximum, means and standard deviations obtained values of National level soccer referees of selected psychological variables at different times namely 6 hours before the match, 15 minutes before the match, 15 minutes after the match and 6 hours after the match.

Table – 2 Descriptive Statistics of State Level Soccer Referees of Selected Variables at Different Times (N=50)

Psychological variables					
Variables	Different time	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trait anxiety	6 hours before the match	26.00	58.00	45.58	6.84
	15 minutes before the match	40.00	69.00	57.6	8.38
State anxiety	6 hours before the match	19.00	55.00	43.24	9.17
	15 minutes before the match	12.00	68.00	54.1	12.73
Stress	6 hours before the match	14.00	29.00	22.2	4.28
	15 minutes before the match	21.00	39.00	33.26	4.78

Table – 2 presents the descriptive statistics, minimum, maximum, means and standard deviations obtained values of State level soccer referees of selected psychological variables at different times namely 6 hours before the match, 15 minutes before the match, 15 minutes after the match and 6 hours after the match

Table – 3 Computation of Independent ‘t’ ratio of selected variables between 6 hours before the match and 15 minutes before the match of State and National Level soccer referees

Variables	Level of Referees	6 hours before the match	15 minutes before the match	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	‘t’ ratio
		Mean (±SD)	Mean (±SD)			
Trait anxiety	State	45.58 ±(6.84)	57.6 (8.38)	12.02	1.53	7.86*
	National	40.44 ±(6.60)	52.08 (8.65)	11.64	2.17	5.35*
State anxiety	State	43.24 ±(9.17)	54.1 (12.73)	10.86	2.22	4.89*
	National	38.68 ±(9.93)	46.84 (13.90)	8.16	3.42	2.39*
Stress	State	22.2 (4.28)	33.26 (4.78)	11.06	0.91	12.18*
	National	19.68 (4.13)	30.44 (5.47)	10.76	1.37	7.85*

* Level of significant at 0.05

In order to examine differences in trait anxiety, state anxiety and stress between 6 hours before the match and 15 minutes before the match of State and National Level soccer referees, an independent *t*-test was calculated.

State level soccer referees obtained ‘t’ ratio on trait anxiety, state anxiety and stress are 7.86, 4.89 and 12.18 which was greater than the table value of 2.01 for df 48 required for significance at 0.05 level of confidence. The results of the study indicated that there is a significant difference between 6 hours before the match and 15 minutes

before match of the state level referees.

National level soccer referees obtained 't' ratio on trait anxiety, state anxiety and stress are 5.35, 2.39 and 7.85 which was greater than the table value of 2.06 for df 23 required for significance at 0.05 level of confidence. The results of the study indicated that there is a significant difference between 6 hours before the match and 15 minutes before match of the National level referees. It concluded that state and National level soccer referees of 15 minutes before match of trait anxiety higher when compared with 6 hours before the match on trait anxiety, state anxiety and stress.

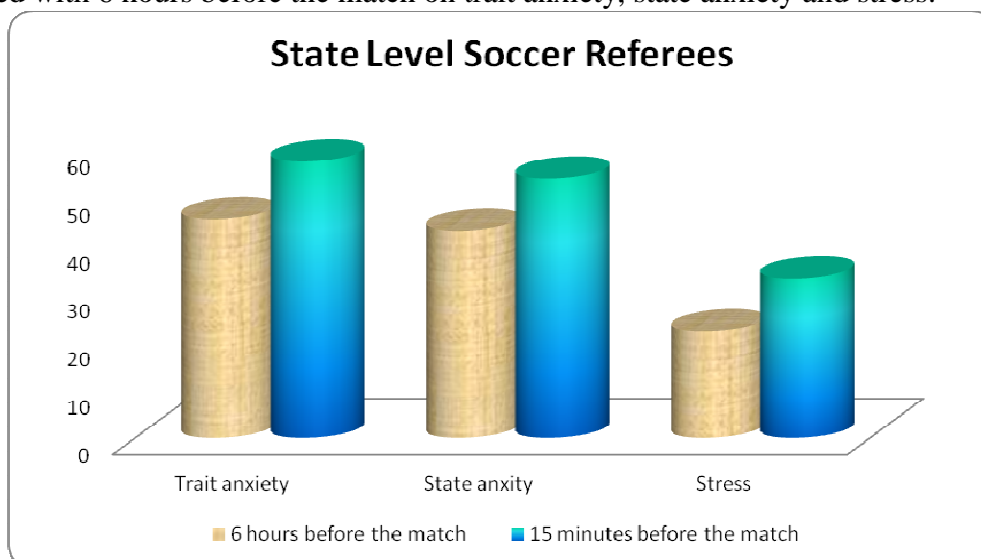


Figure – I Bar diagram showing the mean values of selected psychological variables of state level soccer referees

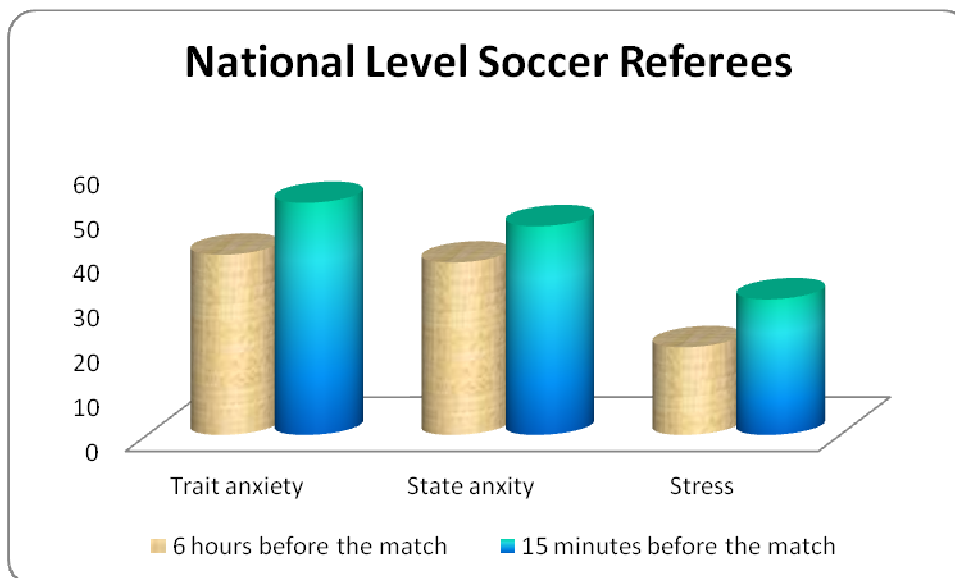


Figure – II Bar diagram showing the mean values of selected psychological variables of National level soccer referees

Discussion on findings

With in the limitation of the study as well as on the basis of the obtained result from the observation the following findings had been drawn. it was proved that there is a significant difference between 6 hours before the match and 15 minutes before

match of the state level referees. And also there is a significant difference between 6 hours before the match and 15 minutes before match of the National level referees. The findings of this study is in line with the observation of Wolfson & Neave, 2007 Stress and pressures are more easily alleviated by elite referees due to their mastery of utilizing individual coping mechanisms.

Rainey and Hardy, 1997 stated that mental stability and performance is a second, important attribute of any sport referee. It is very important that the referee is able to overcome and master several demands of the game by honing their decision-making skills and overcoming anxieties. Officiating sports like soccer, basketball, and American football is highly subjective in nature and the result is ultimately can be influenced by the opinions of the referee crew. A referee needs to know the psychological demands of each match and develop a set of strategies to help them meet these demands, continuing to learn and adapt throughout their career.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis of data, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The results reveals that there was a significant different between 6 hours before the match to 15 minutes before the match on selected psychological variables of state level and National level soccer referees of Kerala state.
2. The results reveals that there was a significant different between 6 hours before the match to 15 minutes before the match on trait anxiety, state anxiety and stress of state level soccer referees of Kerala state.
3. The results reveals that there was a significant different between 6 hours before the match to 15 minutes before the match on trait anxiety, state anxiety and stress of National level soccer referees of Kerala state.

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