IOSR Journal of Sports and Physical Education (IOSR-JSPE)
e-ISSN: 2347-6737, p-ISSN: 2347-6745, Volume 12, Issue 1, Series 1, (Jan. – Feb. 2025), PP 07-12
www.iosrjournals.org

Goal Orientation And Participation Motives In Student-Athletes In Sri Lanka

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Abstract:
Background: *The goal orientation and participation motives are important for the players' experience, performance and general well-being. Therefore, the levels of goal orientation and participation motives were investigated in this study among the student-athletes of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJ) who became the overall champions in the 14th Sri Lanka University Games (SLUG) in 2023. This study aimed to discover the goal orientation and participation motive levels of the student-athletes for their successful performance during games. The specific objctives were compare the levels of goal orientation and participation motive of between the medalists and non-medalists, and to identify the effect of sex on goal orientation and participation motives. And also, goal orientation and participation motives of the type of the sport (individual/ team) were also assessed.*
Materials and Methods: *The study population was players who participated in the 2023 SLUG representing USJ (n=550). Following the purposive sampling technique the sample consisted of 306 players (172men/ 134women). Data was collected through Google Forms using a cross-sectional survey research design. Demographic data, Goal Orientation and Participation Motives data were collected. Task and Ego Goal Orientation in Sports Questionnaire and Participation Motivation Questionnaire were used as the data collection tool..*
Results*: In terms of mean scores, female athletes had a lower mean task goal orientation score of 4.31/5.00 compared to 4.40/5.00 for men, and ego-goal orientation scores of 3.3/5.00 and 3.38/5.00 respectively. Participation intentions for sports were slightly higher for females 2.53/5.00 than males 2.49/5.00.USJ Athletes showed higher task-goal orientation compared to ego-goal orientation and overall had lower participation motives. Significant differences were found between task and ego-goal orientation in individual and team sports. There was a significant difference in goal orientation between medallists and participating athletes, but no significant differences were noted in participation intentions between individual and team sports as well as between achievements.(add p value)*
Conclusion *Sample showed higher task goal orientation than ego orientation and lower participation motives. Sex differences revealed slightly higher task and ego scores in men, while women had higher participation intentions. Medallists differed in goal orientation but not in participation motives. Team and individual sports showed not significant differences in participation intentions but . Significant differences were found between task and ego-goal orientation in individual and team sports.*
Key Word: *Ego Goal Orientation, Goal Orientation, Sports Participation Motives, Task Goal Orientation, Student Athletes*

Date of Submission: 10-01-2025 Date of Acceptance: 20-01-2025

I. Introduction

Sri Lanka University Games (SLUG) can be described as one of the most prominent sporting event among the state universities of Sri Lanka. It was introduced in 1980 by Leslie Handunge, a former Olympian and Director of Physical Education at the University of Peradeniya. Aimed at promoting athletic excellence and goodwill, the SLUG Games were initially held with the participation of six universities, and by 2023 it has spreaded across 16 universities. The event consists of a wide range of sports, and in 2023, 40 events, including 24 sports, were played by both men and women. Held every three years, the Sri Lanka University Games continue to be a platform for student-athletes to compete across different disciplines and showcase their talents (The Eastern University, Sri Lanka, 2023). The University of Sri Jayewardenepura achieved a great victory in the 14th Sri Lanka University Games in 2023 with a historic record of winning the men's championship, women's championship, and overall championship. Most of the players who participated in the competitions were able to win medals by showing high performance. Motivation and goal orientation are important factors in influencing an athlete's experience, performance, and general well-being in the realm of student athletics. These athletes' success is influenced by both their physical and mental qualities. Mental aspect should be an integral

part of competitive sportsmen and an appropriate level of mental health should be maintained so that a sportsman can perform at the optimum level according to his potential (Majzub & Muhammad, 2011). The athlete's mentality must be well controlled as it has various psychological influences such as goal orientation in achieving their goals. Since great mental health is required to control the intensity of the competition, the differences in the motor skills of the athletes today are very extreme compared to each other. Therefore, the mentality of the athletes must be prepared before, during and after the competition (Perera, 2020). There are two main paths of goal orientation, namely task orientation and ego orientation. Task orientation is when success is based on learning, improving, and mastering a task. The ego is involved when success is based on comparing oneself to others and feeling superior. A person's focus on tasks or ego goals depends on their personal preferences and situation, while goal orientation refers to how people respond to achievement and how they view success. Affects how task and ego orientations help shape how individuals perceive and approach various achievement activities (Duda & White, 2016). Motivation can be defined as the process that initiates, directs, and maintains goal-directed behaviours and is recognized as a key driving force behind athletes' actions. In sports, motivation plays an important role in encouraging active participation and sustained effort. Motivation can arise from both intrinsic and extrinsic sources, and athletes can experience both motivation and demotivation depending on the variety(Furkan et al., 2024). This study aimed to discover the goal orientation and participation motive levels of the student-athletes for their successful performance during games. The specific objctives were compare the levels of goal orientation and participation motive of between the medalists and non-medalists, and to identify the effect of sex on goal orientation and participation motives. And also, goal orientation and participation motives of the type of the sport (individual/ team) were also assessed.

II. Material And Methods

Study design: Cross-sectional study design was in this study.

Study duration: October 2023 to March 2024.

Sample size: In this particular study, the population (n=550) was the student athletes who represented the University of Sri Jayewardenepura for SLUG 2023. The sample was 306 athletes **(**172 male and 134 female). Also, the non-probability sample method of purposive sampling has been used..

Procedure methodology

The Task and Ego Goal Orientation in Sports Questionnaire (TEOSQ) (Duda, 2016) and Participation Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ) (Zahariadis & Biddle, 2000) were used to gather data on levels of goal orientation and participation motives. The Ego Goal Orientation Questionnaire was used to measure goal orientation, and the Participation Motivation Questionnaire was used to measure participation motives. To measure goal orientation, the Task and Ego Goal Orientation Questionnaire had 13 questions, of which 7 were task questions and 6 were ego questions. There were 30 questions in the Participation Motivation Questionnaire to measure participation motives. A Google Form was used to collect data. Apart from that, socio-demographic characteristics such as academic year, faculty, sex, sport, medal winner, or participation data were also collected. The major objective of the study was to discover the goal orientation and participation motive levels of the athletes of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura who participated in the Sri Lanka University Games 2023. Specific objectives were to identify the effects of goal orientation and participation motives on team sports and individual sports men and women, comparison between the levels of goal orientation and participation motive levels of athletes who participated in the game but with no medals and medalists, and find the effects of gender on goal orientation and participation motives.

Statistical analysis

Data were analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 22.

III. Result

According to the reliability test, the goal orientation measure has a high level of reliability, with a coefficient of 0.86. Similarly; the participation motivation measure showed even higher reliability, with a value of 0.92. The normality test for task goal orientation yielded a statistically significant result ($p = 0.000$), indicating that the distribution of scores for task goal orientation deviates significantly from a normal distribution. The normality test for ego goal orientation also produced a statistically significant result ($p = 0.001$), indicating a departure from a normal distribution, Similar to task goal orientation.The normality test conducted on participation motives revealed a statistically significant result ($p = 0.00$), indicating a departure from normality in the distribution of scores.

The T-test comparing task goal orientation between male (M = 4.32) and female (M = 4.41) student-athletes revealed no statistically significant difference (p= 0.20).

Table no 1: Task Score T-Test

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Task Score	Female	133	4.32	.53	.05
	Male	172	4.41	.50	.05

The t-test conducted for ego goal orientation indicated no significant difference between male (M = 3.39) and female (M = 3.32) student-athletes (p= 0.93).

Table no 2: Ego Score T-Test

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Ego Score	Female	134	3.32	.77	.07
	Male	172	3.39	.81	.06

The t-test comparing participation motivation between male (M = 2.50) and female (M = 2.53) student-athletes showed no statistically significant difference (p= 0.11).

Table no 3: Participation Score T-Test

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Participation Score	Female	134	2.53	.29	.03
	Male	172	2.50	.32	.02

This suggests that gender did not significantly influence participation motivation and goal orientation among participants.

The ANOVA conducted for task goal orientation revealed a statistically significant difference between sports (F = 2.19, p = 0.003). This indicates that there are significant differences in task goal orientation scores among different sports participated in by student-athletes (Table 4).

Table no 4: ANOVA Between Sports Levels on Ego Orientation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.04	20	.65	2.19	.003
Within Groups	84.69	284	.30		
Total	97.73	304			

The ANOVA for ego goal orientation indicated a significant difference between sports (F = 2.49, p = 0.001). This suggests that there are notable variations in ego goal orientation scores across different sports engaged in by student athletes (Table 5).

Table no 5: ANOVA Between Sports Levels on Participation Motives

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	28.37	20	1.419	2.487	.001
Within Groups	162.60	285	.571		
Total	190.96	305			

The ANOVA results for participation motives did not yield a significant difference between sports (F= 1.36, p = 0.14). This implies that there are no significant variations in participation motive scores among different sports participated in by student-athletes.

Table no 6: ANOVABetween Sports Levels on Task Orientation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.54	20	.13	1.36	.142
Within Groups	26.59	285	.09		
Total	29.12	305			

The ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference in task orientation scores among participants with different levels of sports achievement (F = 2.19, p = 0.003). This suggests that there is a

significant relationship between sports achievement and task orientation, indicating that individuals with varying levels of sports achievement may exhibit different tendencies towards task-oriented goals.

Table no 7: ANOVA between Achievements Level on Task Orientation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.04	20	.65	2.19	.003
Within Groups	84.69	284	.30		
Total	97.73	304			

The ANOVA showed a significant difference in ego orientation scores based on sports achievement (F= 2.49, p = 0.001). This indicates that there is a relationship between sports achievement and ego orientation, suggesting that individuals' ego-related goals may vary depending on their level of sports achievement.

Table no 8: ANOVA between Achievements Level on Ego Orientation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	28.37	20	1.42	2.49	.001
Within Groups	162.60	285	.57		
Total	190.98	305			

The ANOVA results for participation motives did not reach statistical significance (F= 1.36, p = 0.142). This suggests that there is no significant relationship between sports achievement and participation motives among the participants.

Table no 9: ANOVA between Achievements Level on Participation Motives

Participation Score					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.54	20	.13	1.36	.142
Within Groups	26.59	285	.09		
Total	29.12	305			

IV. Discussion

Overall, mean goal orientation score for the overall task goal orientation for female players was 4.31/5.00, and the mean score for male players was 4.40/5.00. Overall ego-goal orientation was 3.31/5.00 for female players and 3.38/5.00 for male players. The mean of participation motives was 2.53/5.00 for female players and 2.49/5.00 for male players. Generally, the athletes scored higher score for task goal orientation compared to mean ego goal orientation scores (4.35>3.39). Participation motives also appear to be lower (M=2.53/ F=2.50). The study reveals that the participation motives of female players are slightly higher than those of male players (2.53<2.50). According to Perera (2020), it was found that all the participants in the research had a higher level of ego goal orientation than task goal orientation (3.81>3.41). It is notable that female athletes scored higher than male athletes when assessing the gender of athletes. Task orientation (3.48>3.32) further indicated that male athletes were more ego-oriented as compared to female athletes (4.02>3.67) (Perera, 2020). Previous study, ego orientation showed a significant difference in their tests (p = 0.01). And the athletes in that study who competed in individual sports showed a higher level of ego orientation than the athletes who competed in team sports. When gender was concerned, there were main effects of gender in that study. That was, female athlete participants (M = 4.22; S.D. = 0.45) had higher task orientation than male athletes (M = 4.04; S.D. = 0.43). Participation or interaction did not have significant effects in that research (Hanrahan & Cerin, 2009). When the effects of goal orientation and participation motives were examined in USJ both team and individual sports, it was discovered that there was significant difference between task and ego goal orientation, but there were no significant differences in participation motives between team and individual sports. Compared with another, a university-level study conducted by Jimma University examined the task and ego orientation of male athletes participating in the sports of football, basketball, table tennis, athletics, and gymnastics, and found that male athletes had a moderate level of ego orientation. It has been shown that then, the results can show that male athletes are close to a high level of task orientation, while basketball and gymnastics were stated to be a medium level of task orientation. Overall, there was a high correlation of task and ego orientation among the teams of Jimma University players and further examining the relationship, the teams of Jimma University players in different sports such as basketball with gymnastics, table tennis with athletics and table tennis with gymnastics. Of task and ego orientation There was a correlation (Sorate & Khan, 2016). Although there was no significant difference in task and ego goal orientations comparing female and male athletes in our study, a difference between female and male athletes was achieved in a survey (Kumari, 2019). Similar to these experiments, a finding with elite athletes revealed that elite sports

athletes perceive goals, that is, they engage in sports training in accordance with their achievement goals and appear to exhibit a high task orientation (Roberts & Ommundsen, 1996). One study of youth athletes examined differences in motivational application priorities, where there was a difference in participation motivations among youth athletes ($p = .001$). Moreover, participants in combat sports (individual athletes) were shown to be more motivated by the desire for status or recognition relative to basketball players (team sports). Therefore, there was a difference in motivation between these two groups. On the other hand, there was a significant difference in goal orientation ($p < 0.001$). Considering this difference, the players who play football and combat had a high level of ego orientation. In addition, basketball players had a slightly lower value compared to these sports (Benar & Loghmani, 2012). Another study that gave results similar to this study, that is, a study on young tennis players, found that the motivation level of young tennis players was at a low level. Also, players were more task-orientated (mean = 4.34) than ego-orientated (mean = 2.97). The value of task orientation as well as ego orientation was $p < 0.01$. Male players showed higher ego orientation than female players (Garyfallos et al., 2013). Another research study that explored this study also showed high task orientation in athletes. But they showed slightly higher task orientation (mean = 3.97) and slightly higher ego orientation (mean = 3.71) than our study. They found that task-orientated athletes focus on improving their skills and achieving personal goals. On the other hand. It was shown that athletes with ego orientation aim to achieve social recognition by outdoing others. The same study further revealed that no significant gender differences were found in task or ego orientation (Mohd Sofian Omar-Fauzee et al., 2012). Although there was no significant difference in the gender of this study sample, another finding on gender showed that gender significantly affects task and ego goal orientation in sports, and according to their test, girls are more likely to focus on their tasks than boys. Boys are more self-motivated in sports than girls of the same age, and boys are more likely than girls to show and display their athletic abilities. It was also found that more care is taken to But among this study sample, male players showed slightly higher task orientation ($4.32<4.41$) than female players (Cecić Erpič et al., 2002). Kubra Ozdemir's study investigated the levels of participation motives in individual sports and team sports, in which male players participated slightly more than female players, similar to our test. And the aim of the study was to analyse the participation motivation of students teaching physical education and sports. According to their results, there was no significant difference between genders, same as us (Özdemir, 2021). Regarding participation motives, an analysis done by the Faculty of Sports Science of the University of Aydin Adnan Menderes in their results revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in any variable as a result of the t-test between the motivation of the participants and the gender variable (Taze et al., 2024). One study of team sports and individual sports showed that the average sports participation motivation of individual athletes is higher than that of team athletes. Therefore, it was further pointed out that there is a significant difference between these two. Gender effect, they had shown that the average of sports participation of female athletes was higher than that of male athletes. Not only that, those tests also analyzed that there is a significant difference between the dimensions of motivation in sports participation of male and female athletes. A study investigating the work and ego goal orientations of gold medal-winning track and field athletes from Sri Lanka at the 13th South Asian Games in 2019 found no significant difference in achievement-based goal orientations between male and female athletes in terms of their goal orientations. No significant difference was observed ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, it appeared that achievement-based differences (ego orientation) between genders were not statistically significant in this study (Perera, 2020).

V. Conclusion

This study provided an understanding of the goal orientation and participation intentions of the athletes of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura who participated in the Sri Lanka University Games 2023. Overall, the findings indicated that athletes tended to be more task goal-oriented than ego goals with lower participation intentions in both genders. Female athletes had slightly higher participation intentions than male athletes. The study found Significant differences between task and ego-goal orientation in individual and team sports. There was a significant difference in goal orientation between medallists and participating athletes, but no significant differences were noted in participation intentions between individual and team sports as well as between achievements. In order to achieve high sports performance in the future, it is necessary to shape the participation motivation of athletes for university sports. A wide range of motivational factors including internal and external motivations as well as social and psychological effects should be explored in the future. Moreover, the environment such as academic stress, competition levels and existing athletic support that can affect the motivation of University of Sri Jayawardenepura players can be investigated. And interventions or strategies can be designed that can increase motivation. Finally, in the future by revealing the goal orientation and participation motivation level University of Sri Jayewardenepura players can prepare for more performance physically and mentally and achieve unique achievements.

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