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# Mental Toughness, Goal Orientation and Social Emotional Competence among Sports Players

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***Abstract:*** *Mental toughness is a key component of sports performance and success. Goal orientations are ways in which individuals perceive and pursue success and failure. Social emotional competence encompasses a set of skills including recognizing and managing our emotions, developing caring and concern for others, establishing positive relationships and making responsible decisions. The present study adopts a factorial design to determine the main and interaction effects of type of sports (individual and team) and gender on mental toughness, goal orientationsand social emotional competence and their dimensions. This study also employs a correlational design to determine whether mental toughness and goal orientations predict the social emotional competence among boys and girls involved in individual and team sports. A non-probability purposive sampling method was used to select a sample of 401 sports players, among whom 198 (102 boys and 96 girls) were involved in individual sports and 201 (102 boys and 101 girls) were involved in team sports. There was a significant influence of type of sports (individual and team) on the dimensions of mental toughness. A significant influence of gender on dimensionsof mental toughness, ego orientation and self-managementwas also observed. Predictors of social emotional competence have been discussed. Promoting mental toughness and task orientation among sports players will have a positive impact on their lives in sports and apart from sports making them more socially and emotionally competent.*

***Keywords:*** *mental toughness, goal orientations, social emotional competence, sports players.*

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## I. Introduction

Sports Psychology is a discipline that is rooted in the ideology that psychological factors have a chief responsibility in the way performance and the factors that go behind training and performance are understood. A research studyby Ilyasi&Salehian(2001) on individual and team players reported that sports players pursuing individual sports differed in terms of personality traits when compared to team players.

There exist basic differences among individual sports and team sports, the genre of sportspsychology has focused on individual differences in the personality traits and the manner in which the two types of sports are pursued by sports players involved in them. Following this understanding, a comparative study between individual and team sports concluded that individual sports players scored significantly higher on conscientiousness and autonomy than team sports players, whereas, team sports players scored significantly higher on agreeableness and better interpersonal relationships than individual sports players. No significant difference was found between the two groups on neuroticism, extraversion, and openness. It can be concluded that individual and team sports players, in some aspects differ in terms of personality characteristics (Nia &Besharat, 2010).

Research among individual and team sports players has yielded significant differences with respect to motivation, coaching, and training. However, the overall enjoyment and the sense of an optimal psychological state, does not appear to have an effect on the type of sports (Parnell, 2014). In other words, type of sports has an effect on motivation coaching and training but not on the overall enjoyment and an optimal psychological state.

Mental toughness is an important ingredient of athletic success, whether sportsplayers are in the pool, on the field, or on the court. Mental toughness is a term that people use that allows anindividual to become a better sportsplayer (such as difficult training and difficult competitive situations in games) and emerge without losing confidence. Mental toughness comprises of having the natural or developed psychological edge that enables a sportsplayer to cope better than their opponents with the many demands (competition, training,

lifestyle) that thesport places on a performer and be more consistent and better than ones' opponents in remaining determined, focused, confident, and in control of oneself under pressure (Jones, 2002).

High level of mental toughness provides the performer a psychological advantage over his/her opponents. This advantage, either innate or developed over years of experience, enables the former to have comparably enhanced self-regulatory skills. This definition characterizes mental toughness as a quality that allows sportsplayers to cope better than her/his opponent with the demands of competition, which specifically relates to the notions of resiliency and competitive desire(Jones, 2002).

The scientific study of mental toughness has occurred principally within sports contexts (Gucciardi& Gordon, 2011), and developed fundamentally as a result of mental toughness being one of the most commonly applied but least understood terms used by individuals involved in the sports such as coaches and sportsplayers (Jones, Hanton, & Connaughton, 2002). According to sporting culture, mental toughness is a key component of athletic performance and success. Announcers and coaches describe sports players as mentally tough consistently to the media, especially after a difficult game or match (Soloman, 2016).Along with the prevalence of mental toughness in the parlance of these individuals, increased scholarly attention to this concept in sports corresponded with the rise of positive psychology in which the focus of research as well as practice shifted from human malfunctioning toward that which also considers optimal functioning and strengths (Lopez & Snyder, 2009). Mental toughness is considered as a personal resource that is important for rising above adversity and sustaining high levels of performance and functioning in the sports (Gucciardi, et al., 2015). Mental toughness embodies a contemporary appliance of the science of positive psychology in the framework of a sport (Rusk & Waters, 2013). Conceptualized as one of the most imperative individually differentnotions for attaining and maintaining performance brilliance across a multiplicity of achievement contexts (e.g., sports, school, college), it is not new that mental toughness has consequently become an important area of focus in business (Jones &Moorhouse, 2007), law enforcement (Miller, 2008), and surgery as well (Colbert, Scott, Dale, & Brennan, 2012).

Mental toughness is a positive construct, a study(Meggs, Ditzfield&Golby, 2013) found that *global* mental toughness was allied with the concept of being positive about oneself, which was particularly high in persons with positive-integrative self-organization (persons who distribute positive and negative self-attributes evenly across multiple selves). Specifically, positive integration was connected with *constancy* (commitment to achieving goals in spite of obstacles and the potential for failure), Higher the positive integration, higher the commitment of achieving goals, which extends presumably from positive integrative, emotional stability and the drive to sort negative self-beliefs.

A study on mental toughness explored the gender difference in sports players. Males had significantly higher mental toughness when compared to females. Males had significantly higher self-belief and visualization compared to females (Andrews & Chen, 2014). Another study by Nicholls, Polman, Levy and Backhouse (2009) explored the differences in mental toughness among sports players of different achievement levels, gender, age, sporting experience, and sports type (team vs. individual and contact vs. non-contact sports). The results showed a significant relationship between mental toughness and gender, age, and sporting experience. Consistent with the results of the previous study, males scored significantly higher than females on mental toughness.

Previous research has emphasized that there is a significant effect of mental toughness and goal orientations on performance of sports players (Kuan& Roy, 2007). Hence, the present study takes into account goal orientations.Perception of success is a term used to measure goal orientations of the sports players (Roberts &Balague, 1989).Perception of success has been looked upon as an achievement goal perspective and has recognized that more than one conception of ability exists. Nicholls (1989) explored the relationship between two implicit goal orientations, which are task orientation and ego orientation- and consequent beliefs of achievement and behaviors. The two orientations are conceived to reflect two different ways in which success and failure are individually perceived; also, means in which one distinguishestheir own competence.

Task orientation is when the sports players' actions are principally motivated and driven by improvement, mastery and achievement of higher perceived ability. Success and failure are instinctively characterized by the individual's self-referenced perception of his or her performance. Ego orientation is characterized by actions that are principally motivated and driven to display ones' normative capability. Success and failure are most generally judged by comparing ones performance with another competitor. Nicholls et al. (1985) also found a constant relationship between goal orientations and beliefs about academic context. Ego orientation was associated to beliefs that success is the artifact of superior ability and of outperforming others andtask orientation was associated to beliefs that success is the artifact of endeavors, cooperation with classmates, and trying to understand classroom resources.

Recently, these theoretical arguments of goal orientations have been applied to sports contexts, and research has confirmed the significance and pertinence of achievement goal orientations to purposes of sports and viewpoints about the causes of success in sports (Duda, 1992). Duda (1992) demonstrated that an ego

orientation towards the sport was related to the perception that the sports player must enhance one's self-esteem whilestatus orientation was aligned to the perception that the sports must teach one to try one's best and to be a good human being.

Roberts, Hall, Jackson, Kimiecik and Tonymon (1990) also found that taskoriented sportsplayersauthorized in prosocial purposes of sports, while ego-oriented sportsplayersauthorized achieving a status through sports. To date, however, few studies have examinedbeliefs about the sources of success in sports contexts. Understanding of factors believed to contribute to success in sports helps us understand the success strategies of the individual. Duda, Fox, Biddle, and Armstrong (1992) evidenced that in sports task-oriented subjects believed success in sports was linked to working hard and to doing one's best. Egooriented individuals, on the other hand, supposed that success was the ownership of greater ability. Therefore, it was theorized that egooriented sportsplayers are likely endorse external criteria of success, while taskoriented sportsplayersare likely to endorse more internal and individually controllable factors. Ego oriented sportsplayerssuppose that ability is the prime determinant of success, sanction normative standards of achievement, and wish to exhibit ability. Hence, ego oriented sportsplayers would not be expected to portrayendeavor and persistence in practice.

Another possible influential source contributing to asportsplayer's achievement strategy is satisfaction derived from participation. For instance, if asports player derives satisfaction from mastery (i.e., learning and doing one's best), then the sportsplayer should endorse effort and persistence as achievement strategies. If asports player derives satisfaction from demonstrating superior performance to others (i.e., to normative comparisons), then the sports player should focus on outcome and normative comparisons and exert less effort in practice.It is the opposite for a task oriented sportsplayer asthey exert more effort in practice and derive satisfaction from their performance. Goal orientations to a large extent depend on how an individual perceives oneself to be.Task orientation was positively associated with the beliefs that achievement is a result of hard work, superior ability, and selecting activities that one can perform productively and effectively, and ego orientation was associated to the beliefs that taking illegal advantage, of possessing high ability, selecting tasks that one can accomplish, and external factors are responsible for achievement (Duda& White, 1992). There was a significant difference between the two goal orientations with regard to enjoying the sports. Task oriented hockey players were found to have enjoyed, participating and playing more when compared to a player who was ego orientated. On the contrary, ego oriented hockey players played or participated in hockey for shorter periods and enjoyed the sports less (Harringon, 2015). A study by Leondari and Gialamas(2002) suggests that perceived competence is a key moderator of goal orientations and a study by Crust (2008) recommends exploring the relationship between mental toughness and competence (Wade &Tavris, 1996; Crust, 2008). Hence, the present study takes into consideration, social emotional competence.Social emotional competence encompasses a set of skills including recognizing and managing our emotions, developing caring and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2008). Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the progression through which children and adults acquire and efficiently apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills essential to understand and manage emotions, set and accomplish positive goals, feel and illustrate empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make accountable decisions. SEL training is based on the understanding that the best learning surfaces in the context of supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful. Social and emotional skills are significant to being a good student, citizen, and worker. Number of risky behaviors (like, drug use, violence, bullying, and dropping out) can be prevented or reduced when integrated efforts are used to develop students' social and emotional skills. This is best done through valuable classroom instruction, student engagement in positive activities in and out of the classroom, and broad parent and community involvement in program planning, implementation, and evaluation. The CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning) organization views social emotional skills at two levels: the intrapersonal and interpersonal level. The former involves one's understanding and regulation of own emotions, whereas the latter involves understanding of others' emotions, relationship with others as well as responsible decision making skills. There are five domains in this framework: self-awareness; social awareness; self-management;relationship management; and responsible decision-making(CASEL, 2008).Self-awarenessincludes skillfulness in recognizing and identifying one's own strengths and weaknesses, feelings and emotions and understanding how they may affect one's performance (Beland, 2007; Zins & Elias, 2006). It is a cognitive capability that marks a specific step in one's self-development (Asendorpf&Baudonnière, 1993). Social awarenessis the ability to read other players' prompts and to understand, and appropriately respond to their feelings (Frey, Hirschstein, &Guzzo, 2000). This is closely linked to empathy, the competence to share the emotional state of another player and thus relate better with them (Eisenberg, 1986). Self-managementrelates to the ability to manage one's own whims and emotions. Self-regulation of one's emotions is central for developing close relationships, succeeding at work and maintaining physical health. Relationship management: several outlines of research suggest that peers play an essential role in children's school engagement at school (Ladd, 1999). Ryan, Sttiller and Lynch (1994) found that seventh and

eighth graders who felt more secure with their mates, reported higher identity incorporation and general self-esteem. Responsible decision-makingrefers to the ability to deem ethical, safety, and societal factors while making decisions, such that individuals can deal reliably with daily academic and social situations and contribute to the well-being of one's school and community (CASEL, 2003). The reflected appraisals of parents and coachespredicted self-perceptions of competence. Further, follow-up analyses determined that the reflected appraisal of coaches was a significantly stronger predictor of perceived competence (Amorose, 2002). Ability and Coaches feedback were significantly connected to perceived competence. Higher ability, good feedback and information after good performance were related to greater satisfaction with coach and team satisfaction. Positive feedback was found to improve competence (Allen & Howe, 1998). An increase in perceived competence over a 6-week intervention program saw a significant change in Fear of Failure among swimmers (Conroy, Coatsworth& Fifer, 2005). A cross-cultural study across 4 countries evaluated the differences in gender with respect to social emotional competence. Girls scored higher than boys on social emotional competence, indicating more problem behaviors on reflecting internalizing behaviors; and boys scored higher on items measuring externalizing problem behaviors (Chen &Squires, 2015). Mental toughness has been an area of enormous research among sports players in the past decade. Mental toughness is a key component of athletic performance and success. (Soloman,2016). Nicholls (1989) explored the link between two goal orientations that are intrinsic; they are task and ego orientations, and consequent beliefs about achievement and behaviors. The two orientations to reflect two different ways in which success and failure are individually perceived; also, means in which one judges one's own demonstrated competence. Social emotional competence includes possession of skills that recognize and manage ones' emotions, develop care and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations constructively and ethically (CASEL, 2008). A study by Ilyasi and Salebian (2011) has shown a noteworthy difference among the personality traits (degree of extraversion, openness and conscientious) of individual and team sports players'. Past research has shown significant effect of mental toughness and goal orientations on performance of sports players. A study by Crust (2008) recommends exploring the relationship between mental toughness and competence (Wade &Tavris, 1996; Crust, 2008). In light of the literature reviewed on differences among sports players in terms of type of sports they are involved in (individual and team), mental toughness, goal orientations and social emotional competence in sports players along with related populations,the objectives of the current study are outlined below.

**Objectives**

1. To determine whether there is aninfluence of type of sports (individual and team) and gender (boys and girls) the dimensions of mental toughness (viz., competitive desire, focus, resiliency and self-confidence), dimensions ofgoal orientations (viz., ego orientation and task orientation) and dimensions of social emotional competence (viz., self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management and responsible decision making) in sports players?
2. To determine whether there is an interaction effect of type of sports and gender on the dimensions of mental toughness (viz., competitive desire, focus, resiliency and self-confidence), dimensions ofgoal orientations (viz., ego orientation and task orientation) and dimensions of social emotional competence (viz., self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management and responsible decision making) in sports players?
3. To determine whether the dimensions of mental toughness (viz., competitive desire, focus, resiliency and self confidence) and the dimensions of goal orientations (viz., ego orientation and task orientation) predict the dimensions of social emotional competence (viz., self awareness, social awareness, self management, relationship management and responsible decision making) among boys and girls involved in individual and team sports.

## II. Method

**Research Design**

The current study adopts a factorial design to determine the main and interaction effects of type of sports (individual and team) and gender on mental toughness, goal orientations and social emotional competence and their dimensions. This study also employs a correlational design to determine whether the dimensions of mental toughness and goal orientations predict the dimensions of social emotional competence among boys and girls involved in individual and team sports players.

**Sample**

A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 401 sports players aged between 16 – 21 years. Among them 198 (102 boys and 96 girls) were involved in individual sports (swimming, badminton and athletics) and 203 (102 boys and 101 girls) were involved in team sports (basketball, hockey and cricket). Sports players practicing their sport for minimum 1 year were included in the sample.

**Instruments**

Four questionnaires were used in the present study, namely, the information schedule, mental toughness questionnaire (MTQ-18), perception of success questionnaire (measuring goal orientations) (PQSQ) and the social emotional competence questionnaire (SECQ).

- **The Information Schedule**

Sports players were asked to provide information regarding their age, gender, type of sport involved in, name of the sport playing, educational status and the like on the Information Schedule.

- **Mental Toughness Questionnaire (MTQ-18)**

The Mental Toughness Questionnaire was devised by Jones (2002). The MTQ is an 18-item questionnaire designed to evaluate an individual's competitive desire, focus, self-confidence, and resiliency. A five-point Likert scale was the response pattern with "5" indicating 'strongly agrees' (more mentally tough) and "1" indicating 'strongly disagrees' (less mentally tough). This mental toughness scale has a coefficient alpha of 0.83. The alpha coefficients for three of the four components (competitive desire, focus, and self-confidence) approached or exceeded 0.80.

- **The Perception of success Questionnaire (POSQ)**

The Perception of Success Questionnaire (POSQ) (Roberts &Balague, 1989) was used to measure goal orientations. The POSQ has been developed as a sport specific questionnaire to measure goal orientations. It is a 12-item scale consisting of two subscales measuring ego orientation and task orientation.Participants responded to a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The two subscales were found to be internally reliable with alpha coefficients of 0.80 and 0.86 for the task and ego subscales, respectively.

- **Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ)**

The Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (Zhou &Ee, 2012) is a pool of 25 items that was generated on the basis of the theoretical model developed by CASEL (2008). The instrument ranges on a 6 point Likert scale from 1 (not at all true of me) to 6 (very true of me). The reliability was found to be 0.77 and the questionnaire was found to have good construct validity (Zhou &Ee, 2012).

**Procedure**

After selecting the measures, a few arrangements were made for data collection. The questionnaires and the Information Schedule were prepared and organized. The authorities of the sports academies that gave permission for data collection were contacted. The researcher visited the sports academies on the scheduled dates. Rapport was established with the sports players and they were made aware that their participation in the study was purely voluntary. They were assured of maintaining confidentiality through-out the study. The sports players who agreed to participate in the study were requested to sign an 'Informed Consent Form'. Next, the Information Schedule was administered. The sports players who met the sampling criteria were screened. On the next appointment the instructions for the questionnaires (namely, the MTQ, POSQ and SECQ) were given first and the sports players were requested to respond to the items. There was no fixed time limit for any of the questionnaires. However, the respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire in 20 minutes.

## III. Results

***Table 1 -*** *Indicates the results of Two-Way ANOVA with the dimensions of mental toughness, goal orientations and social emotional competence as the Dependent Variables and type of sports (Individual and Team Sports) and gender as Independent variables (n=401).*

| **Variables** | **Type of Sport** | | | **Gender** | | | **Interaction Effect** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Individual** | **Team** | | **Boys** | **Girls** | | **Type of Sports*Gender** |
| | ***M (SD)*** | ***M (SD)*** | ***F*** | ***M (SD)*** | ***M (SD)*** | ***F*** | ***F*** |
| Competitive Desire | 17.87 (1.94) | 17.06 (2.05) | **16.66**** | 17.68 (2.13) | 17.24 (2.04) | **18.06*** | 1.16 |
| Focus | 20.56 (2.70) | 19.59 (2.69) | **13.63**** | 19.54 (2.78) | 20.63 (2.57) | **17.82**** | 0.768 |
| Resiliency | 20.10 (2.95) | 19.08 (3.79) | **9.08**** | 19.19 (3.02) | 19.99 (3.78) | **5.74*** | 2.96 |
| Self-Confidence | 17.24 (2.05) | 16.35 (2.01) | **19.25**** | 16.70 (2.13) | 16.88 (2.03) | 0.96 | 0.23 |
| Task Orientation | 25.36 (3.01) | 25.21 (3.42) | 0.21 | 25.39 (3.51) | 25.18 (2.88) | 0.48 | 1.64 |
| Ego Orientation | 20.74 (4.33) | 20.25 (4.15) | 1.31 | 21.17 (4.13) | 19.79 (4.26) | **10.57**** | 2.10 |
| Self Awareness | 22.76 (4.98) | 22.73 (4.96) | 0.06 | 22.36 (5.31) | 23.14 (4.56) | 2.45 | 3.08 |
| Social Awareness | 17.99 (5.67) | 18.28 (5.07) | 0.29 | 17.81 (5.60) | 18.48 (5.10) | 1.58 | 0.01 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self Management | 18.84 (5.80) | 19.54 (5.95) | 1.51 | 19.86 (5.86) | 18.51 (5.82) | **5.46*** | 0.04 |
| Relationship Management | 22.69 (5.73) | 22.11 (5.00) | 1.17 | 22.04 (4.97) | 22.76 (5.76) | 1.77 | 0.67 |
| Responsible Decision Making | 22.44 (6.08/ | 21.20 (4.72) | 5.22 | 21.55 (6.30) | 22.09 (4.49) | 0.99 | 0.45 |

Note: **p<0.01; *p<0.05
df =1; *n = 401*

Table 1 revealed that there was a significant influence of type of sports (individual and team) on the competitive desire dimension of mental toughness(F=16.66, p<0.01). As is evident from the above presented table, individual players scored higher (M=17.87, SD=1.94) than the team players (M=18.07, SD=2.05) on competitive desire. Additionally, there was a significant influence of type of sport (individual and team) on the focus dimension of mental toughness (F=13.63, p<0.01). As is evident from the above presented table, individual players scored higher (M=20.56, SD=2.70) than the team players (M=19.59, SD=2.69) on the dimension of focus. Table1 also revealed that, there was a significant influence of type of sport (individual and team) on the resiliency dimension of mental toughness (F=9.08, p<0.01). As is evident from the table, individual players scored higher (M=20.10, SD=2.95) on resiliency than the team players (M=19.08, SD=3.79).It can be seen further that, there was a significant influence of type of sport (individual and team) on the self confidence dimension of mental toughness(F=19.25, p<0.01). As Table 1 indicated, individual playersscored higher (M=17.25, SD=2.05), than the team players (M=16.35, SD=2.01) on the dimension of self-confidence.On the other hand, table 1 indicated that there was no significant role of type of sports (individual and team) on the task orientation and ego orientation dimensions of goal orientations (p>0.05); and self awareness, social awareness, self management, relationship management and responsible decision making dimensions of social emotional competence (p>0.05).Table 1 revealed a significant gender difference with respect to the competitive desire dimension of mental toughness (F=18.06, p<0.05). As is evident from the above table, boys scored higher (M=17.86, SD=2.13) than girls (M=17.24, SD=2.04) on the dimension of competitive desire. Moreover, a significant gender difference was found with respect to the focus dimension of mental toughness (F=17.82, p<0.01). As is evident from the mean scores, girls scored higher (M=20.63, SD=2.78) on the dimension of focus than the boys (M=19.54, SD=2.57). Table 1 also showed a significant gender difference with respect to the resiliency dimension of mental toughness (F=5.74, p<0.05). The mean scores indicated that girls scored higher (M=19.99, SD=3.78) on the resiliency dimension than the boys (M=19.19, SD=3.02). In other words, boys and girls differed in terms of competitive desire, focus and resiliency dimensions of mental toughness. Furthermore, the findings of the present study revealed that there was a significant gender difference with respect to the ego orientation dimension of goal orientations (F=10.57, p<0.01). The mean scores in the table 1 indicated that boys scored higher (M=21.17, SD=4.13) on ego orientation when compared to girls (M=19.79, SD=4.26). Moreover, Table 1 indicated that there was a significant gender difference with respect to the self management dimension of social emotional competence (F=5.46, p<0.05). As is clear from Table 1, boys scored higher (M=19.86, SD=5.86) on self management than girls (M=18.51, SD=5.82).No significant gender differences either were found among sports players with respect to self confidence dimension of mental toughness, task orientation dimension of goal orientations and self awareness, social awareness, relationship management and responsible decision making dimensions of social emotional competence (p>0.05).Lastly, the results disclosed no significant interaction effect of type of sport (individual and team) and gender on competitive desire, focus, resiliency and self-confidence dimensions of mental toughness; task orientation and ego orientation dimensions of goal orientations and;self awareness, social awareness, self management, relationship management and responsible decision making dimensions of social emotional competence (p>0.05).

***Table 2*** *– Showing the summary of regression analysis for predictors of social emotional competence in boys involved in individual sports (n=102).*

| | **Predictors** | **Competitive Desire** | **Focus** | **Resiliency** | **Self Confidence** | **Ego Orientation** | **Task Orientation** | **Total Adjusted $R^2$** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Criterion Variables | | | | | | | |
| | Self Awareness | NS | **0.293**** | NS | **0.201*** | NS | NS | **0.201*** |
| | Social Awareness | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.217*** | **0.038*** |
| | Self Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS |
| □ | Relationship Management | NS | **0.215*** | NS | NS | NS | **0.211*** | **0.071*** |
| | Relationship Decision Making | NS | **0.291**** | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.075**** |
| | Self Awareness | NS | **0.086**** | NS | **0.037*** | NS | NS | **0.201*** |
| | Social | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.047*** | **0.038*** |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| □ $R^2$ | Awareness | | | | | | | |
| | Self Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS |
| | Relationship Management | NS | **0.046*** | NS | NS | NS | **0.043*** | **0.071*** |
| | Responsible Decision Making | NS | **0.085**** | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.075**** |

Note: **p<0.01; *p<0.05, N=102

Table 2 specifies the regression analyses of predictors of social emotional competence among boys involved in individual sports. The table revealed that self awareness was predicted by focus and resiliency dimensions of mental toughness, social awareness was predicted by task orientation dimension of goal orientations, relationship management was predicted by the focus dimension of mental toughness and the task orientation dimension of goal orientations; and responsible decision making was predicted by the focus dimension of mental toughness. Table 3 features these dimensions in detail.

***Table 3*** *-Results of stepwise regression analyses showing various models predicting the dimensions of social emotional competence in boys involved in individual sports(N=102)*

| **Predictors** | □ $R^2$ | □ |
|---|---|---|
| | Criterion: self awareness | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Focus | 0.086** | 0.293** |
| | Criterion: social awareness | |
| Model 2 | | |
| 1.Focus | 0.037* | 0.234 |
| 2.Self Confidence | | 0.201* |
| Total Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.105* | |
| | Criterion: self management | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation | 0.047* | 0.217* |
| Total Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.038* | |
| | Criterion: relationship management | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1. Focus | 0.046* | 0.215* |
| Model 2 | | |
| 1.Focus | 0.043* | 0.254* |
| 2.Task Orientation | | 0.211* |
| Total Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.071* | |
| | Criterion: responsible decision making | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Focus | 0.085** | 0.291** |
| Total Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.075** | |

**p<0.01, *p<0.05, $\Delta R^2$-Change in R squared, β-Standardized Beta Coefficient, N=102

Table 3 revealed that the self awareness dimension of social emotional competence among boys involved in individual sports was significantly predicted by focus and self confidence dimensions of mental toughness as shown in Model 1 and Model 2. The contribution of focus in predicting self awareness was observed to be 8.6%. The contribution of self confidence in predicting self awareness was found to be 3.7%. The table further revealed that focus was positively related self awareness (β=0.293) and self confidence, as well, was positively related to self awareness (β=0.201). Focus and self confidence together contribute to 10.5% of the overall variance in self awareness in boys involved in individual sports. Further, the social awareness dimension of social emotional competence in boys involved in individual sports was significantly predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations. As presented in Table 3, Model 1 disclosed that the contribution of task orientation in predicting social awareness was observed to be 4.7%. Task orientation had a significant positive relationship with social awareness (β=0.217). Moreover, the relationship management dimension of social emotional competence in boys involved in individual sports was significantly predicted by the focus dimension of mental toughness and task orientation dimension of goal orientations as shown in Model 1 and Model 2. The contribution of focus in predicting relationship management was observed to be 4.6% and

the contribution of task orientation in predicting relationship management was observed to be 4.3%. Focus was positively related to relationship management (β=0.215) and task orientation was negatively related to relationship management (β=0.211). Focus and task orientation together contribute to 7.1% of the overall variance in relationship management in boys involved in individual sports. Finally, the responsible decision dimension of social emotional competence making among boys involved in individual sports was significantly predicted by the focus dimension of mental toughness as shown in Model 1. The contribution of focus in predicting responsible decision making was observed to be 8.5%. Focus was positively related to responsible decision making (β=0.291).

***Table 4*** *– Showing the summary of regression analysis for predictors of social emotional competence in girls involved in individual sports (n=96).*

| | **Predictors** | **Competitive Desire** | **Focus** | **Resiliency** | **Self Confidence** | **Ego Orientation** | **Task Orientation** | **Total Adjusted R2** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Criterion Variables | | | | | | | |
| | Self Awareness | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.301**** | **0.081**** |
| | Social Awareness | **0.248**** | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.336**** | **0.157**** |
| | Self Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.326**** | **0.097**** |
| | Relationship Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS |
| | Responsible Decision Making | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS |
| | Self Awareness | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.091**** | **0.081**** |
| | Social Awareness | **0.061**** | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.113**** | **0.157**** |
| **R²** | Self Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.106**** | **0.097**** |
| | Relationship Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS |
| | Responsible Decision Making | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS |

Note: **p<0.01; *p<0.05, N=96

Table 4 disclosed the summary of regression analyses of predictors of social emotional competence in girls involved in individual sports. Self awareness, social awareness and self management were predicted by task orientation dimension of goal orientations. Additionally, social awareness was predicted by competitive desire dimension of mental toughness. Table 5 elaborates on these aspects in detail.

***Table 5:*** *Results of stepwise regression analyses showing various models predicting the dimensions of social emotional competence in girls involved in individual sports(N=96)*

| **Predictors** | **R²** | |
|---|---|---|
| | Criterion: self awareness | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation | 0.091** | 0.301** |
| Total Adjusted R² | 0.081** | |
| | Criterion: social awareness | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation | 0.113** | 0.336** |
| Model 2 | | |
| 1. Task Orientation | 0.061** | 0.324** |
| 2. Competitive Desire | | 0.248** |
| Total Adjusted R² | 0.157** | |
| | Criterion: self management | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation | 0.106** | 0.326** |
| Total Adjusted R² | 0.097** | |

**p<0.01, *p<0.05, ΔR²-Change in R squared, β-Standardized Beta Coefficient, N=96.

Table 5 disclosed that the self awareness dimension of social emotional competence in girls involved in individual sports was significantly predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations. Model 1 discloses that the contribution of task orientation in predicting self awareness was observed to be 9.1%. Task orientation was found to have a significant positive relationship with self awareness (β=0.301). Additionally, the social awareness dimension of social emotional competence in girls involved in individual sports was significantly predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations and the competitive desire dimension of mental toughness. As presented in Table 5, Model 1 revealed that the contribution of task orientation in predicting social awareness was observed to be 11.3% and Model 2 revealed that the contribution of competitive desire in predicting social awareness was observed 6.1%. Moreover, the table disclosed that task orientation was positively related to social awareness (β = 0.336) and competitive desire, as well, was positively correlated with social awareness (β=0.248). Task orientation and competitive desire together contributed 15.7% of the overall variance in social awareness among girls involved in individual sports. Finally, the self management dimension of social emotional competence among girls involved in individual sports was significantly predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations. As shown in Table 5, Model 1 discloses that the contribution of contribution of task orientation in predicting self management was observed to be 10.6% among girls involved in individual sports. Task orientation was positively related to self management (β=0.326).

***Table 6*** *– Showing the summary of regression analysis for predictors of social emotional competence in boys involved in team sports (n=102).*

| | **Predictors** | **Competitive Desire** | **Focus** | **Resiliency** | **Self Confidence** | **Ego Orientation** | **Task Orientation** | **Total Adjusted R2** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Criterion Variables | | | | | | | |
| | Self Awareness | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS |
| | Social Awareness | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.268**** | **0.062**** |
| | Self Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.273**** | **0.065**** |
| | Relationship Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.283**** | **0.070**** |
| | Responsible Decision Making | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.249**** | **0.052*** |
| | Self Awareness | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS |
| | Social Awareness | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.072**** | **0.062**** |
| **$R^2$** | Self Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.075**** | **0.065**** |
| | Relationship Management | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.080**** | **0.070**** |
| | Responsible Decision Making | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.062*** | **0.052*** |

Note: **p<0.01; *p<0.05, N=102

Table 6 revealed the regression analyses of predictors of social emotional competence among boys involved in team sports. Social awareness, self management, relationship management and responsible decision making were predicted by task orientation dimension of goal orientations. These results are presented in detail in table 7.

***Table 7:*** *Results of stepwise regression analyses showing various models predicting the dimensions of social emotional competence in boys involved in team sports(N=102)*

| Predictors | $\Delta R^2$ | β |
|---|---|---|
| | Criterion: social awareness | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation | 0.072** | 0.268** |
| Total Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.062** | |
| | Criterion: self management | |
| Model 1<br>1.Task Orientation<br>Total Adjusted $R^2$ | <br>0.075**<br>0.065** | <br>0.273** |
| | Criterion: relationship management | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation<br>Total Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.080**<br>0.070** | 0.283** |
| | Criterion: responsible decision making | |
| Model 1<br>1.Task Orientation<br>Total Adjusted $R^2$ | <br>0.062**<br>0.052** | <br>0.249* |

**p<0.01, *p<0.05, $\Delta R^2$-Change in R squared, β-Standardized Beta Coefficient, N=102

Table 7 revealed that the self awareness dimension of social emotional competence among boys involved in team sports was significantly predicted by task orientation dimension of task orientation. According to Model 1, the contribution of task orientation in predicting self awareness was observed to be 7.2%. Task orientation was positively related to self awareness (β=0.268).

Moreover, the self management dimension of social emotional competence was significantly predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations. Model 1 revealed that the contribution of task orientation in predicting self managementwas observed to be 7.5% among boys involved in team sports. Task orientation was positively related to self management (β=0.273).

Furthermore, the relationship managementdimension of social emotional competence among boys involved in team sports was significantly predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations. As shown in Model 1 revealed that the contribution of task orientation in predicting relationship management was observed to be 8.0%. Task orientation was positively related to relationship management (β=0.283).

Lastly, the responsible decision dimension of social emotional competence makingamong boys involved in team sports was significantly predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations. As seen in Table 7, Model 1 revealed that the contribution of task orientation in predicting responsible decision making was observed to be 6.2%. Task orientation was positively related to responsible decision making (β=0.249).

***Table 8*** *– Showing the summary of regression analysis for predictors of social emotional competence in girls involved in team sports (n=101).*

| | Predictors | Competitive Desire | Focus | Resiliency | Self Confidence | Ego Orientation | Task Orientation | Total Adjusted R2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Criterion Variables | | | | | | | |
| | Self Awareness | NS | **0.325**** | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.096**** |
| | Social Awareness | **0.288**** | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.213*** | **0.107*** |
| | Self Management | **0.202*** | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.031*** |
| | Relationship Management | NS | NS | NS | **0.308**** | NS | NS | **0.086**** |
| | Responsible Decision Making | NS | NS | **-0.259**** | **0.265**** | NS | **0.329**** | **0.215**** |
| | Self Awareness | NS | **0.105**** | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.096**** |
| | Social Awareness | **0.083**** | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.042*** | **0.107*** |
| **$R^2$** | Self Management | **0.041*** | NS | NS | NS | NS | NS | **0.031*** |
| | Relationship Management | NS | NS | NS | **0.095**** | NS | NS | **0.086**** |
| | Responsible Decision Making | NS | NS | **0.108**** | **0.069**** | NS | **0.061**** | **0.215**** |

Note: **p<0.01; *p<0.05, N=101

Table8 indicated the regression analyses of predictors of social emotional competence in girls involved in team sports. The self awareness dimension of social emotional competence was predicted by the focus dimension of mental toughness. The social awareness and self management dimensions of social emotional

competence were predicted by competitive desire dimensions of mental toughness, the social awareness dimension of social emotional competence was also predicted by task orientationdimension of goal orientations. The relationship management and responsible decision making dimensions of social emotional competence were predicted by self confidence and resiliency dimensions of mental toughness. Additionally, the responsible decision making dimension of social emotional competence was predicted by task orientationdimension of goal orientations. Table 9 represents these dimensions in detail.

***Table 9:*** *Results of stepwise regression analyses showing various models predicting the dimensions of social emotional competence in girls involved in team sports(N=101)*

| **Predictors** | □ **R²** | □ |
|---|---|---|
| | Criterion: self awareness | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1. Focus | 0.105** | 0.325** |
| Total Adjusted R² | 0.096** | |
| | Criterion: social awareness | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Competitive Desire | 0.083** | 0.288** |
| Model 2 | | |
| 1.Competitive Desire | 0.042* | 0.232* |
| 2.Task Orientation | | 0.213* |
| Total Adjusted R² | 0.107* | |
| | Criterion: self management | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Competitive Desire | 0.041* | 0.202* |
| Total Adjusted R² | 0.031* | |
| | Criterion: relationship management | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1. Self Confidence | 0.095** | 0.308** |
| Total Adjusted R² | 0.081** | |
| | Criterion: responsible decision making | |
| Model 1 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation | 0.085** | 0.291** |
| Model 2 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation | 0.069** | 0.290** |
| 2.Self Confidence | | 0.265** |
| Model 3 | | |
| 1.Task Orientation | 0.061** | 0.298** |
| 2. Self Confidence | | 0.343** |
| 3. Resiliency | | 0.259** |
| Total Adjusted R² | 0.215** | |

*p<0.01, *p<0.05, ΔR²-Change in R squared, β-Standardized Beta Coefficient, N=101

Results in Table 9 show that the self awarenessdimension of social emotional competence among girls involved in team sports was significantly predicted by the focus dimension of mental toughness. Model 1 revealed that the contribution of focus in predicting self awareness was observed to be 10.5%. Focus was positively correlated with self awareness (β=0.325).

In addition, the social awareness dimension of social emotional competence among girls involved in team sports was significantly predicted by the competitive desire dimension of mental toughness and the task orientation dimension of goal orientations. As presented in Table 9, Model 1 revealed that the contribution of competitive desire in predicting social awareness was observed to be 8.3% and Model 2 disclosed that the contribution of task orientation in predicting social awareness was observed to be 4.2%. Competitive desire was positively related to social awareness (β=0.288) and task orientation, as well, was positively correlated with social awareness (β=0.213). Together, competitive desire and task orientation contribute 10.7% of the overall variance in social awareness among girls involved in team sports.

Moreover, self management among girls involved in team sports was significantly predicted by competitive desire. As presented in Table 9, Model 1 revealed that the contribution of competitive desire in predicting self management was observed to be 4.1% competitive desire was positively correlated with self management (β= 0.202).

Furthermore, the relationship management dimension of social emotional competence among girls involved in team sports was significantly predicted by the self confidence dimension of mental toughness. Model 1 revealed that the contribution of self confidence in predicting relationship management was observed to be 9.5%. Self confidence was positively correlated to relationship management (β=0.308).

Lastly, the responsible decision making dimension of social emotional competence among girls involved in team sports was significantly predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations and; the self confidence and resiliency dimensions of mental toughness. As seen in Table 9, Model 1 revealed that the contribution of task orientation in predicting responsible decision making was observed to be 8.5%; Model 2 disclosed that the contribution of self confidence in predicting responsible decision making was observed to be 6.9% and Model 3 showed that the contribution of resiliency in predicting responsible decision making was observed to be 6.1%. task orientation was positively correlated with responsible decision making ($\beta = 0.291$); self confidence, too, was positively correlated with responsible decision making ($\beta=0.265$) and resiliency was negatively correlated with responsible decision making ($\beta = -0.259$). Mutually, task orientation, self confidence and resiliency contribute 21.5% of the overall variance in responsible decision making among girls involved in team sports.

## IV. Discussion

Mental toughness is an important constituent of persistence and success among sports players (Jones, 2002), goal orientations is an approach towards success or failure, social emotional competence comprises of possessing skills that make an individual socially and emotionally sound. The objective of the current study was to investigate if there is an influence of type of sports (individual and team) and gender (boys and girls) the dimensions of mental toughness (viz., competitive desire, focus, resiliency and self-confidence), dimensions of goal orientations (viz., task orientation and ego orientation) and dimensions of social emotional competence (viz., self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management and responsible decision making).The results of the present study indicated that there was a significant difference between individual and team sports players with respect to the four dimensions of mental toughness. In other words, individual sports players were found to be higher in terms of competitive desire, focus, resiliency and self confidence when compared to team players. The desire and will to compete against others, blocking the crowd and focusing on specific and performance-relevant tasks, the ability of bouncing back from stressful circumstances and believing in ones abilities was observed to be higher in individual players than team players. These results can be supported by a study done by Thumar (2015) on 120 boys (60 involved in individual and 60 involved in team sports) which concluded that boys involved in individual sports had a higher ability to handle pressure, concentrate and confidence in themselves when compared to team players.

The analysis of the present study further disclosed that sports players involved in individual and team sports did not differ with respect to two dimensions of goal orientations (viz., ego orientation and task orientation). These results were in contrary to the findings of a study done on272 Australian sports players (Hanrahan &Cerin, 2007). According to the study, sports players involved in individual sports were more ego oriented when compared to team sports players. This study was conducted almost a decade ago, and hence in the current context, there may be no difference among individual and team sports players with respect to goal orientations.

Similarly, no difference was observed among the two types of sports players with respect to the five dimensions of social emotional competence (viz., self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management and responsible decision making). Results also indicated that no significant gender differences were found with respect to task orientation, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management and responsible decision making. Nicholls (1989), proposed that individuals can evoke at least two different ways of construing their competence; namely, they can employ a task-involved and/or an ego-involved outset of competence. When task-involved, an individual's main purpose revolves around mastering the task, acquiring the skill or knowledge, wielding maximal effort and performing their best. In this case, perceptions of ability are self-referenced. When ego-involved, individuals are alarmed with the adequacy of their ability and the demonstration of advanced and superior competence. Ego-involved sports players perceived a successful event when they thought they performed better than the others or in the same way with less effort. The above explanation is an evidence for there being no difference among sports players with respect to social emotional competence as the concepts of competence and goal orientations are related (c. f. Balaguer et al., 2002).

The results also reported significant gender differences with respect to competitive desire, focus and resiliency dimensions of mental toughness, ego orientation dimension of goal orientations and self management dimension of social emotional competence. Boys were found to have a higher desire to compete; on similar lines, a study found to have a higher competitive orientation when compared to girls (Flood &Hellsted, 1991); they tended to display normative capability, beliefs of superiority and viewed success as an object. Supporting this finding, a study by White and Duda (1994) established that boys were found to be more ego oriented than girls. Boys were seen to manage their impulses and emotions better than girls. They were observed to be more capable of thinking clearly and performing well. It is an established fact that boys and girls are poles apart in the way they deal with themselves.

The present study also revealed that girls were found to be more focused, resilient and confident. On the Contrary, most studies have found that boys are more confident when compared to girls. However, there is evidence that girls were found to have higher levels of mental toughness but the difference was not significant as noted by Cowden and Meyer-Weitz (2016); and Buhrow, Digmann and Waldron (2017).

Furthermore, the present paper also aimed to study whether the dimensions of mental toughness (viz., competitive desire, focus, resiliency and self confidence) and dimensions of goal orientations (viz., task orientation and ego orientation) predict the dimensions of social emotional competence (viz., self awareness, social awareness, self management, relationship management and responsible decision making) among boys and girls involved in individual and team sports.

The findings of this study bring to light that among boys involved in individual sports, the focus and self confidence dimensions of mental toughness predicted the self awareness dimension of social emotional competence in boys involved in individual sports. In other words, when an individual believes in oneself and is able to block out the crowd, is able to sustain his concentration to particular, specific and performance-relevant tasks, is able to identify strengths and weaknesses, feelings and emotions and understand how they may affect performance. Also, among girls involved in team sports, the focus dimension of mental toughness predicted the self awareness dimension of social emotional competence. In other words, being able to block out the crowd, being able to maintain concentration to particular, specific and performance-relevant tasks is what leads the girls to identify strengths and weaknesses, feelings and emotions and understand how they may affect performance. An experimental study supports the findings of the present study. The experiment that was based on attention span of students concluded that higher the focus on the procedure of the experiment, higher was the participants self esteem, which further made the participant more self aware of oneself (Ickes, Wicklund& Ferris, 1973).

The current results indicated that among girls involved in individual sports, the task orientation dimension of goal orientations predicted the self awareness dimension of social emotional competence. In other words, a sports player who aims for mastery of particular skills, enjoys feeling of self-efficacy and confidence is aware of one's own thoughts, beliefs, strengths, and weaknesses and is aware of how these affect performance. The concept that is termed as a performance goal represents a sharp awareness to self—as when a set of circumstances (and the awareness of them) focus attention on who the individual is and what he/she can be or do. Conversely, a qualitatively different goal orientation (mastery goals) is adopted when self-awareness is minimal (Nicholls, 1992; c. f. Kaplan &Maehr, 2006).

Additionally, in the present study the task orientation dimension of goal orientationsemerged as a predictor of the social awareness dimension of social emotional competence among all four groups, in boys and girls involved in individual sports as well as boys and girls involved in team sports. In other words, a sports player whose actions are principally motivated and driven by improvement, mastery and achievement of higher personal perceived skill has the ability to read other persons' prompts and to understand, and appropriately respond to their feelings (Frey, Hirschstein, &Guzzo, 2000). This is closely linked to empathy, the competence to share the emotional state of another person and thus relate better with them (Eisenberg, 1986). Empathy is to do with the ability to understand another person's standpoint in interpreting thoughts and feelings, representing an awareness of sensitivity to complex issues, and attempting to clarify uncertainty that leads to harmonious functioning between individuals. In girls involved in individual and team sports, competitive desire also predicts social awareness. This means, social awareness is also accompanied by a strong desire to compete against others.

Among boys involved in individual and team sports, and girls involved in individual sports, the self management dimension of social emotional competencewas predicted by the task orientation dimension of goal orientations in the present study. This underlines that a sports player whose actions are principally motivated and driven by improvement, mastery and achievement of higher personal perceived skill has the capability to be aware of and manage one's own impulses and emotions and to be acquainted with how to handle oneself in times of diverse situations. Among girls involved in team sports, managing oneself was also predicted by competitive desire. Having quality control over oneself is followed by a strong desire to compete. On the same lines, goal orientation was found to predict emotional control and social competence among employees (Porath& Bateman, 2006). Identical conclusions have been observed amongst sports players in this study.

The results furthermore revealed that among boys involved in individual and team sport, task orientation predicted relationship management. This highlights that a sports player whose actions are principally motivated and driven by improvement, mastery and achievement of higher personal perceived skill has better relationships with family, friends, teachers and others. Task orientation reported better athletic identity, educational, social, professional, and behavioral competence (Ryska, 2002).

The predictors of responsible decision making have varied among the four groups in the current study. In boys involved in individual sports, focus predicted responsible decision making. Concentrating on specific and relevant tasks helped sports players to deem ethical, safety, and societal factors while making decisions, such that individuals can deal reliably with daily academic and social situations and contribute to the well-being

of one's school and community. Among boys and girls involved in team sports, task orientation predicted responsible decision making. In other words, a sports player whose actions are principally motivated and driven by improvement, mastery and achievement of higher personal perceived skill tend to make responsible decisions. A study investigated the 'Impact of Conceptions of Ability on Self-Regulatory Mechanisms and Complex Decision Making' and disclosed that employees who supervised the organization under an acquirable skill outset of ability sustained their perceived self-efficacy, set challenging organizational goals, and used analytic strategies effectively. In other words, when employees were oriented to their tasks and focused on the process of attaining goals, they made responsible decisions (Wood & Bandura, 1989).

Additionally, among girls involved in team sports, self confidence and resiliency predicted responsible decision making. In other words, sports players believing in oneself and bouncing back from hardships tend to make responsible decisions. The more the girls believe in themselves and bounce back from hardships, the more responsible decisions they make. A study disclosed that mentally tough sports players are more inclined to making responsible decisions (Bull, Shambrook, James & Brooks, 2005).

**Implications**

Sports players who are involved in individual and team sports (pursuing their sport professionally) have been a major focal point in this study. The study has shown that both individual and team sports players are above average on mental toughness. Being task oriented towards the sport has revealed higher social and emotional competence. If coaches and parents together create an environment of tuning the sports players towards mastering skills and enhancing themselves to get better at the sport instead of making the sports players aim for achieving success at just competitions, these sports players will not only do well in their sports career but also in their personal and professional lives as this will make them more socially and emotionally competent (Amorose, 2002). A combination being mentally tough (focused, resilient and confident), having the right attitude towards success and handling oneself and ones' relationships well is bound to make an individual strive for growth and betterment in every sphere.

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