

**MENTAL TOUGHNESS AND POSITIVITY AS PREDICTORS OF PERFORMANCE
STRATEGIES USED AMONG COMPETING ATHLETES**

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(Received February 27, 2018, accepted April 02, 2018)

ABSTRACT

In the recent past, sports scientists believe that both mental and physical skills are necessary to reach peak performance in sports. Since then several studies have been done to understand the various psychological attributes determining the athletes' success. This study focus on identifying different psychological strategies that the athletes use during both competition and practice and also to evaluate the effects of mental toughness and positivity in using these psychological strategies. There were 68 (33 males and 35 females, mean age = 18.8, SD= 2.07), after removing the outliers, who took part in this study and are currently completing at various levels from international to the collegiate level in either individual and team sports. The participants completed scales measuring sports mental toughness (SMTQ), positivity (P scale) and various performance strategies used during competition and practice (TOPS). Results were statistically analyzed using person correlation and linear regression, and it revealed that mental toughness and positivity correlates to 8 performance strategies including self-talk, goal setting, imagery, activation, negative thinking, relaxation, attention control and automaticity. And it was also found that athletes in individual sports scored high on mental toughness, positivity and are more likely to use automaticity and imagery to enhance their performance compared to athletes engaged in team sports. Practical implications of this study can include incorporating mental skills for sports performance such as mental toughness and orienting the athletes about various psychological strategies related to peak performance.