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SUPERSTITIOUS BEHAVIOR: THE INVINCIBLE AND INVISIBLE PHENOMENON IN BASKETBALL SPORTS

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Abstract:
The present study was aimed to identify the role of superstitious behavior in performance of basketball players. For this purpose, sixty female basketball players of 19 to 25 years of age were selected. All the subjects, after having been informed about the objective and protocol of the study, gave their consent and volunteered to participate in this study. They were divided into three groups; (i.e., N_1=20; District, N_2=20; State and N_3=20 National). To measure the level of superstitions behaviors of the subjects, the superstitions beliefs and behaviour scale constructed by Bleak and Frederick (1998) was administered. One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to compare the three groups of basketball. Where F values were found significant, LSD (Least Significant Difference) Post-hoc test was applied to find out the direction and degree of difference. For testing the hypotheses, the level of significance was set at 0.05. Summarizing from the above findings we can say that insignificant differences were found in basketball players on the sub-variables of Clothing and Appearance, Fetish, Preparation, Game/Competition, Team Ritual, Prayer, Coach and superstitions behavior.

Keywords: superstitious behaviour, basketball players

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1. Introduction

Sport is an integral part of popular culture. A country great sports help shape its heritage and sense of national identity. In the United States some believe that baseball is the premier American Sport. Many Writers including several of our finest novelists have described the game with religious reverence. Others contended that football or basketball is the true American sport. But most would agree that sport is truly American. The popularity of sport combined with the fact that its participants are a traditionally superstitious group make athlete, particularly professional athletes, and the most famous of all superstitious people. Superstitious beliefs are an outcome of ignorance and lack of rational thinking, but then they are beliefs after all. Beliefs become notions, then it became opinions, and then they begin to prevail in society as well as sports world. Some top class athletes believe that their superstitions enhance their performance and alter the outcome of the competition, but in fact, practice and confidence is the key to success in athletics [1].

Many sport psychologists view superstitions as nothing more than reactions that begin with conditioning and boosting a placebo effect [2]. Wann et al. [3] describe superstitious behavior as an action or series of actions believed to lead to or cause a specified, generally desirable, outcome. Brooks [4] explains that people engage in superstitious behaviours when they feel as if they are losing control over their own lives and their brains are searching for order and structure. Cultural and environmental factors also play a role. Many present day superstitions, having their origins in primitive religious beliefs, have now materialized into popular saleable commodities. For example, horseshoes, once believed lucky for scaring witches away from residences, can now be purchased at variety stores as good luck charms [5]. The use of superstitious thought and behaviour is a common and persistent occurrence. Regularly, people 'keep their fingers crossed' [6], avoid walking under ladders [7] or knock on wood [8]. One such category is that of the athlete. Superstitious acts, or 'rituals' as they are better known, are part of a 'widely accepted' practice used by athletes across many different cultures [9], as cited by Bleak & Frederick, [10]. In light of this, most athletes approach these opportunities as well prepared as possible, however there are still many factors that are outside the control of any athlete. Weather conditions, opposition, variable location and referees are examples of external uncontrollable factors that can leave even the most prepared of athletes lacking confidence in their performance abilities. It appears that often, somewhere in this gap between internal factors (such as preparation), and external factors, the use of superstitious ritual develops. This present

study was conducted to determine the significant difference among role of superstitious behaviour in performance of basketball players.

2. Material & Methods

2.1 Participants

For this purpose, sixty female basketball players of 19 to 25 years of age were selected. All the subjects, after having been informed about the objective and protocol of the study, gave their consent and volunteered to participate in this study. They were divided into three groups; (i.e., N_1=20; District, N_2=20; State and N_3=20 National).

2.2 Tools

To measure the level of Superstitions Behaviors of the subjects, the superstitions beliefs and behaviour scale constructed by Bleak and Frederick [10] was administered.

3. Statistical Analysis

One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to compare the three groups of basketball. Where F values were found significant, LSD (Least Significant Difference) Post-hoc test was applied to find out the direction and degree of difference. For testing the hypotheses, the level of significance was set at 0.05.

4. Results

Table 1: Significant differences in the results among Female Basketball Players with regard to superstitions behavior on the sub-variable Clothing and Appearance

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F-value	P-value (Sig.)
Between Groups	45.73	2	22.86	1.33	.271
Within Groups	976.20	57	17.12		
Total	1021.93	59			

*Significant at 0.05

It can be seen from table 1 that insignificant differences were found with regard to the sub-parameter Clothing and Appearance among Female Basketball Players as the P-value (Sig.) .271 was found higher than the 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05). Since F-value was found insignificant, therefore, there is no need to apply Post-hoc test.

Table 2: Significant differences in the results among Female Basketball Players with regard to superstitions behavior on the sub-variable Fetish

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F-value	P-value (Sig.)
Between Groups	55.83	2	27.91	2.63	.081
Within Groups	604.50	57	10.60		
Total	660.33	59			

*Significant at 0.05

It can be seen from table 2 that insignificant differences were found with regard to the sub-parameter Fetish among Female Basketball Players as the P-value (Sig.) .081 was found higher than the 0.05 level of significance ($p>0.05$). Since F-value was found insignificant, therefore, there is no need to apply Post-hoc test.

Table 3: Significant differences in the results among Female Basketball Players with regard to superstitions behavior on the sub-variable Preparation

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F-value	P-value (Sig.)
Between Groups	10.30	2	5.15	.67	.515
Within Groups	437.35	57	7.67		
Total	447.65	59			

*Significant at 0.05

It can be seen from table 3 that insignificant differences were found with regard to the sub-parameter Preparation among Female Basketball Players as the P-value (Sig.) .515 was found higher than the 0.05 level of significance ($p>0.05$). Since F-value was found insignificant, therefore, there is no need to apply Post-hoc test.

Table 4: Significant differences in the results among Female Basketball Players with regard to superstitions behavior on the sub-variable Game/Competition

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F-value	P-value (Sig.)
Between Groups	8.40	2	4.20	.42	.657
Within Groups	565.25	57	9.91		
Total	573.65	59			

*Significant at 0.05

It can be seen from table 4 that insignificant differences were found with regard to the sub-parameter Game/Competition among Female Basketball Players as the P-value

(Sig.) .657 was found higher than the 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05). Since F-value was found insignificant, therefore, there is no need to apply Post-hoc test.

Table 5: Significant differences in the results among Female Basketball Players with regard to superstitions behavior on the sub-variable Team Ritual

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F-value	P-value (Sig.)
Between Groups	37.30	2	18.65	1.62	.206
Within Groups	653.70	57	11.46		
Total	691.00	59			

*Significant at 0.05

It can be seen from table 5 that insignificant differences were found with regard to the sub-parameter Team Ritual among Female Basketball Players as the P-value (Sig.) .206 was found higher than the 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05). Since F-value was found insignificant, therefore, there is no need to apply Post-hoc test.

Table 6: Significant differences in the results among Female Basketball Players with regard to superstitions behavior on the sub-variable Prayer

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F-value	P-value (Sig.)
Between Groups	6.93	2	3.46	.72	.488
Within Groups	272.00	57	4.77		
Total	278.93	59			

*Significant at 0.05

It can be seen from table 6 that insignificant differences were found with regard to the sub-parameter Prayer among Female Basketball Players as the P-value (Sig.) .488 was found higher than the 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05). Since F-value was found insignificant, therefore, there is no need to apply Post-hoc test.

Table 7: Significant differences in the results among Female Basketball Players with regard to superstitions behavior on the sub-variable Coach

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F-value	P-value (Sig.)
Between Groups	11.23	2	5.61	.58	.561
Within Groups	548.50	57	9.62		
Total	559.73	59			

*Significant at 0.05

It can be seen from table-7 that insignificant differences were found with regard to the sub-parameter Coach among Female Basketball Players as the P-value (Sig.) .561 was found higher than the 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05). Since F-value was found insignificant, therefore, there is no need to apply Post-hoc test.

Table 8: Significant differences in the results among Female Basketball Players with regard to superstitions behavior

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F-value	P-value (Sig.)
Between Groups	477.30	2	238.65	1.93	.154
Within Groups	7027.10	57	123.28		
Total	7504.40	59			

*Significant at 0.05

It can be seen from table-8 that insignificant differences were found with regard to the superstitions behaviors among Female Basketball Players as the P-value (Sig.) .154 was found higher than the 0.05 level of significance (p>0.05). Since F-value was found insignificant, therefore, there is no need to apply Post-hoc test.

5. Discussion

It has been observed from the table-1 to 8 that insignificant differences have been found among basketball players (District, State and National) on the sub-parameter Clothing and Appearance, Fetish, Preparation, Game/Competition, Team Ritual, Prayer, Coach and superstitions behaviors. After the analysis, it can safely be reviewed and contradicted that these female basketball sport group has lower superstitious behaviour as compare to their counterpart other sport. If evidence from past research is valid, then superstitious beliefs and behavior in collegiate athletes is a result of the individual's decision making. Performing more studies and exploring a variety of variables would yield a greater insight to more possible causes and reasoning behind superstition. Learning more about superstitions could assist sport psychologists, coaches, and players in understanding how individual athletes view the sport and effectively find strategies that can further enhance performance. One may wonder whether the beneficial effects of superstition on performance would also hold in real-life situations. In fact, correlational support for this possibility exists in the realm of sports. Buhrmann and Zaugg [11] found that for competitive basketball players, superstitious beliefs and performance are positively related: Superior teams, as well as superior players within a team, exhibit more superstitious behaviors. In light of the present findings, this suggests

that even in real-life performance situations, superstitious thoughts and behaviors result in performance benefits. Some athletes admit to their superstitions, and naturally enough, they are reported to the public without hesitation.

5.1 Practical Application

The study will be considerably helpful to comprehend the Superstitions Behavior in Basketball Performance. The sports psychologists and coaches working with these areas will drive benefit from the findings of the present research and they can integrate the Superstitions Behavior variables in their training schedule from the very initial stages.

6. Conclusion

Summarizing from the above findings we can say that insignificant differences were found in basketball players on the sub-variables of Clothing and Appearance, Fetish, Preparation, Game/Competition, Team Ritual, Prayer, Coach and superstitions behaviors.

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