INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER – I
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Preparation of mind of athletes is as important as the preparation of their body, because under the stress of competition athlete react physically as well as mentally in such a way that can adversely affect their performance. Athletes become highly tensed; they worry about their performance and also about the outcome of the competition and find it difficult to concentrate on the given task. In other words, their concentration goes down which leads to poor performance in sports.

Many a time, it is being noticed that athletes attribute their performances to losing concentration or being under pressure, mainly the mental side of the game. It is now well understood that achieving optimum level of performance in sports is not only the outcome of physical training program but other factors such as climatic condition, training means and methods, diet and the psychological factors (fear of competition, anxiety about the performances, lack of confidence, emotional immaturity, mental instability etc) also influence the performance level.

There are numerous psychological variables which can enhance sports performance and even improve consistency of the performance of the players during training as well as competition. These variables can minimize or sometime even eliminate undesirable mental states such as arousal, frustration, anxiety, stress etc. Although most athletes are aware of the fact that their psychological states influence their performance negatively as well as positively, yet very few are able to use psychological skills necessary to help them. Therefore psychological factors remain unrecognized most of the times and athletes blame other aspects like diet, training, and climate etc.

Sports psychology is a branch of psychology which not only studies the behavior of sportsman but also reveals the impact of all the psychological variables which are directly or indirectly, positively or negatively related to sports performance. Many studies have been done to see the impact of psychological variables on sports performance.
Mental aspect of training is very important as far as high performance in sports is concerned. In order to attain high level of performance, mental aspect of performance should be given due importance. In this study an effort has been made to assess three very important psychological dimensions namely emotional intelligence, self-confidence and mental skills and their contribution in performance of soccer players.

‘Association Football’ commonly known as ‘Football’ or ‘Soccer’ is a team sports played between two teams of 11 players each. It is most popular sports in the world. It is a ball game played on a rectangular grassy or artificial turf/field with a goal post at each end of the short ends. The objective of the game is to score by maneuvering the ball into the opposing goal. The goalkeeper is the only player who is allowed to use his hands or arms to collect the ball. Rest of the team usually use their feet to kick the ball into the position, occasionally using their torso or head to intercept it in the mid air. The team, which scores more goals by the end of the game, wins. If there is a tie at the end of the game, either the draw is declared or the game goes into the extra time or penalty shootout, depending on the format of the competition.

In 1863, the four British associations, i.e., England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland formed the rule of the game entitled “Association Football Games” and became the custodians of the laws of the game.

Football is governed internationally by the Federation International De Football Association, commonly known as FIFA. FIFA was founded in Paris in 1904 by the association of France, Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. It’s headquarter has been based out of Zurich since 1927. The most prestigious international football competition is the world cup held every four years. These events are most widely viewed in the world.

Although, Soccer is a high intensity game and needs high level of physical fitness but, as far as high performance is concerned, it demands both components of performance equally, i.e., physical components (explosive strength, speed and speed endurance,) as well as psychological components (concentration, motivation, and confidence etc.).

Now the biggest problem which athletes, coaches and sports psychologists face today is to know what variables of sports psychology should have more emphasis and what kind of training should be given to improve the psychological aspect of performance. Studies have shown that there is a relationship between emotions and thoughts. Many
people believe that emotions affect our thinking process and some also believe that it is not emotions which create problem but it is an inappropriateness of understanding and expression of emotions which influences thinking and makes our decision making capacity poor. In the present study, an attempt is made to understand and explore the nature, effect and relationship of emotional intelligence with regard to performance.

When we talk about the performance in Soccer, it is the unity of execution and result of sports action or sequence of actions which are evaluated or measured by the norms or criteria made by the society. High performance in Soccer can only be achieved by the product of physical and psychological aspects. That is why, it is very important for the coaches, trainers and physical educators that both the aspects of performance should be given due importance.

Most of the times, it is being noticed that when we feel good, we perform better. At the same time when we feel bad, our performance goes down. Emotions are considered as precedence of our behavior. Our behavior is the outcome of interpretation of different impulses which we receive from our surroundings in a particular situation or event. These impulses stimulate amygdale, (an almond shaped structure is the emotional control center situated in limbic system) which originates emotional impulses that trigger physiological responses associated with emotion.

While performing any task, emotional states experienced by athletes during performance such as lack of concentration due to nervousness, negative thoughts and feeling emotionally drained lead to poor performance.

The relationship between thought and emotion should not be misguided. Majority of us subscribe an idea that thoughts are most appropriate when not clouded by emotions and think that strong emotions make it difficult to think straight. Rationalists even have made elimination of emotions from thoughts.

It is also believed that thoughts devoid of emotions render satisfactorily decision making impossible. Actually, problem is not with emotions as such but with the appropriateness of emotions and its expressions. The task is not so much to suppress emotions because every feeling has its value and significance but to strike a balance between rational thoughts and emotions. One of the keys to sound decision making is a greater awareness of our emotions and those of others.

Emotions carry information. The emotional information is all around us. Emotional information is thus understood and discern by a branch of intelligence known as
emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to feel good about doing whatever we are told, ordered, forced, convinced or expected to do. It is the ability to keep doing a given task regardless of the level of stress or pressure we are under. Therefore, it is the ability to find ways to cope with stress.

In other words, emotional intelligence is the ability to keep doing something despite all our negative feelings which may come from our conscience. It is, therefore, the ability to go against our feelings without experiencing emotional pain or discomfort. It is the capability to ignore our inner voice and to listen to the external voices which tell us to achieve, perform, run, play, shoot or kill. Mayer and Salovy (1990) define emotional intelligence as the “ability to monitor one’s own and other’s feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action.” He further says, “Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions to assess and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.” (1997)

Emotional intelligence comprises of the following:

**Self-awareness:** - to know our own emotions, recognize feeling as they occur and discriminating between them.

**Mood management:** - to handle feelings so that they are relevant to the current situation in order to react appropriately.

**Self-motivation:** - to “gather up” our feelings and direct ourselves towards our own goal, despite self doubt, inertia, and impulsiveness.

**Empathy:** - to recognize feelings in others and tuning them into verbal and non verbal cues.

**Managing relationship:** - handling interpersonal interaction, conflict resolution and negotiations.

Four branch model of emotional intelligence describes four areas of capacities or skills that collectively describe many of the areas of emotional intelligence (Mayor and Salovy, 1997). More specifically, this model defines emotional intelligence as involving the abilities to:-
1. PERCEIVING EMOTION: The term ‘perceiving emotion’ refers to the initial and basic nonverbal reception and expression of emotion. Facial expressions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and fear, were universally recognizable in human beings. The capacity to accurately perceive emotions in the face or voice of others provides a crucial starting point for more advanced understanding of emotions.

2. USING EMOTIONS TO FACILITATE THOUGHT: It is the capacity of the emotions to enter into and guide the cognitive system and promote thinking. In other words: something we respond to emotionally, is something that grabs our attention. Having a good system of emotional input, therefore, should help direct thinking toward matters that are truly important. As an example, a number of researchers have suggested that emotions are important for certain kinds of creativity to emerge. For example, both mood swings, and positive moods, have been implicated in the capacity to carry out creative thought.

3. UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS: Emotions convey information. Happiness usually indicates a desire to join with other people; anger indicates a desire to attack or harm others; fear indicates a desire to escape, and so forth. Each emotion conveys its own pattern of possible messages, and actions associated with those messages. A message of anger, for example, may mean that the individual feels treated unfairly. The anger, in turn, might be associated with specific sets of possible actions: peacemaking, attacking, retribution and revenge-seeking, or withdrawal to seek calmness. Understanding emotional messages and the actions associated with them is one important aspect of this area of skill.

4. MANAGING EMOTIONS: Emotions often can be managed to the extent that it is under voluntary control. A person may want to remain open to emotional signals so long as they are not too painful, and block out those that are overwhelming. In between, within the person’s emotional comfort zone, it becomes possible to regulate and manage one’s own and others’ emotions so as to promote one’s own and others' personal and social goals.
Figure 1 Description of different abilities and characteristics of emotional intelligence:

- Self-awareness
- Mood management
- Self-motivation
- Empathy
- Managing relationship

- Perceiving emotions.
- Using emotions to facilitate thoughts.
- Understanding emotions
- Managing emotions.
Self-confidence is another one of the most important characteristics a player must possess during a match, even the most successful professionals experience fluctuations in their level of self-confidence. Self-confidence is a person's inner belief or conviction in his ability to perform well regardless of the external environment. Self-confidence in sports signifies an athlete's expectation for success. The expectation varies from person to person. These expectations mainly depend upon the sources of self-confidence. The sources of self-confidence are divided into two, i.e., sources in the control of sportsman and the sources outside the control of sportsman. Whereas some sources like climatic conditions, opponent's performance, ground condition etc. may be outside the control of the sportsman, others like their own performance level, fitness level, hard work etc. may be within the control of the sportsman. As a coach it is very important to emphasize on the source of self-confidence which are within the control of sportsman.

Self-confidence is an attitude which allows individuals to have positive yet realistic view of themselves and their situations. Self-confident people trust their own abilities, have a general sense of control on their lives, and believe that they will be able to do what they wish, plan, and expect. Having self-confidence does not mean that individuals will be able to do everything. Self-confident people have expectations that are realistic. Even when some of their expectations are not met, they continue to be optimistic and accept the reality. People, who are not self-confident, depend excessively upon the approval of others in order to feel good about them. They tend to avoid taking risks because they fear failure. They generally do not expect themselves to be successful. They often put themselves down and tend to discount or ignore compliments paid to them. By contrast, self-confident people are willing to risk the disapproval of others because they generally trust their own abilities. They tend to accept themselves; they don't feel they have to conform in order to be accepted. Self-confidence is not necessarily a general characteristic which pervades all aspects of a person's life. Typically, individuals will have some areas of their lives where they feel quite confident, e.g., academics, athletics, while at the same time they do not feel at all confident in other areas, e.g., personal appearance, social relationships etc (Krueger, 2002)

Vaeley (1986) views self-confidence as both a trait and a state. Self-confidence as a trait is defined as a belief or degree of certainty individual usually possess about his abilities to be successful. On the other hand, self-confidence as a sports state is the
belief of certainty that the individual possesses at a particular moment about his ability to be successful in his sports.

Based on the recent literature on sports psychology, today, athletes are being taught to have an optimistic mindset in order to achieve high performance in sports. They are always advised to think positively to win the game because when they think like losers, they face failures. But athletes must be able to differentiate between self-confidence and lack of confidence on one hand and self-confidence and over confidence on the other.

If an athlete is less confident about his capabilities, he lacks confidence, on the other hand if he over estimates his capabilities, he is over confident. Both of these states would affect his performance. To perform better in sports, athlete requires an optimum level of self-confidence. Both over confidence or lack of confidence also called ‘diffident’ leads to poor performance.

True, self-confidence is an athlete’s realistic expectation about achieving success. Self-confidence is an accumulation of the athlete’s unique experiences in achieving many different things, which results in the specific expectations he or she has about achieving success in future activities. It’s not pride in what they have done, but their considered judgment of what they will be able to do. (Martens 1942)

**The relationship between self-confidence and performance**
Martens (1942), has given the continuum of self-confidence to explain the relationship of self-confidence and performance. This continuum of self-confidence is from diffident to overconfidence with optimum self-confidence somewhere in between. As self-confidence increases up to some optimum level, performance improves, but when self-confidence increases beyond an optimal level, performance begins to deteriorate. The performance deteriorates because overconfidence deludes athletes into believing that they are so gifted that they need not prepare diligently and they would not put as much effort as may be required.

Confident athletes believe in themselves. Most importantly, they believe in their ability to acquire the necessary skills and competencies, both physical and mental, to reach their potential. Less confident players doubt whether they have the capabilities needed to be successful. When athletes doubt their ability to succeed or expect something to go wrong, they are creating a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ which means expecting something to happen actually cause it to happen. Negative self-fulfilling prophecies are a psychological barrier that leads to a vicious cycle. The expectation of failure leads to actual failure, which lowers self image and increases expectations of future failure. (Weinberg and Gould 1999)

Self doubt and negative expectations of athletes decrease their performance by creating anxiety, loss of concentration and uncertainty of purpose. Athletes with low self-confidence mostly focus on their faults or weaknesses which distract them from concentrating on those aspects which are essential for good performance. They also believe that they will not be able to do better in spite of working hard. Self-fulfilling prophecies should always be positive because positive expectations act as psychological fuel which gives energy to athletes.

Martens (1942), states that overconfidence is a misnomer. Athletes cannot be overconfident if the confidence is well-founded in their abilities. When we refer to someone being overconfident, we really mean they are falsely confident. According to Martens false confidence is of two forms. Some players actually believe that they are better than they really are. Pampering from parents or coaches may have caused this overconfident attitude. The second type of false confidence is seen among athletes
who act confident on the outside, yet underneath are actually diffident and worried about failing in sport.

Mental components of sports performance is given very less attention as compared to physical skills. Yet, in the highly pressurized situation of international sport, it is accepted that, when the players are equal on technical, tactical and physical levels, the one having the strongest mental level will succeed. In this study, an attempt is made to explore some of the components that help in making soccer players “mentally strong”, particularly when under pressure.

Mental skills are internal capabilities that help athletes control their minds efficiently and consistently as they execute sport-related goals. Mental skill training provides the methods and techniques not only to develop skills such as concentration and positive body language, but also to foster personal characteristics such as self-esteem and positive competitive skills and behavior. Mental skills techniques help athletes adjust their actions, thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations in order to improve their games. (Paul Lubbers 2001)

Mental Skills Training involves several interrelated activities. Any of these activities may be used alone; however, the most successful outcomes are achieved when all are combined. Hardy and Nelson stated that following Mental Skills are successful for athletes:

1. Imagery Ability.
4. Anxiety and Worry Management.
5. Relaxation Ability.
6. Concentration Ability.

**Imagery ability**

Imagery is an experience similar to a sensory experience (seeing, feeling, and hearing), but arising in the absence of the external stimuli. We do not actually see a basketball or hear it bouncing on the floor, or feel its pimpled leather in our hand, or sense the movement of our body as we dribble it, but we do experience all these
things in our mind. These experiences are essentially a product of our memory, experienced internally by vividly recalling and perhaps reconstructing previous external events. Imagery is more than just visualizing an experience in one’s mind’s eye, although visualization is usually the dominant sense. Imagery can involve any and all of the senses. Along with the visual sense, the auditory and kinesthetic senses are most significant to athletes. (Martens, 1942)

**Mental preparation**

Mental preparation can take the form of three plans for performance, namely:

- Pre-performance
- During performance
- Coping plan

The pre-performance plan is all about your preparation for the day of competition and this may include methods such as self-talk, imagery and centering.

The performance plan assists us to focus on what is important during the event and this might be divided into different stages of the event. Coaches should set up situations in training sessions that utilize the mental skill required in performance.

The coping plan is designed to assist athletes with any hassles or distractions pre, during or post the event. Setting up and discussing potential ‘what if’ situations as part of preparation for competition will prepare athletes to cope with both the situations discussed and unexpected incidents.

**Concentration**

Concentration has been defined as "the ability to direct one's thinking in whatever direction one would intend". We all have the ability to concentrate some of the time. But at other times, our thoughts are scattered, and our minds race from one thing to another. To deal with such times, we need to learn and practice concentration skills and strategies. To concentrate, we have to learn a skill, and as with any skill this means practice repeated day after day until we achieve enough improvement to feel that we can concentrate when we need to.
Self- confidence

Sports psychologists define self-confidence as the belief that one can successfully perform a desired behavior. The desired goal may be kicking a soccer ball or recovering from a knee injury. But the common factor is that one believes that he or she can get the job done. (Weinberg & Gould 1999)

Self-confidence of an athlete does not lie in the conviction that he will always win, but that he can correct his errors by working on them. The most significant self-confidence for athletes is confidence in their ability to acquire competencies – both physical and psychological. Armed with confidence in their ability to become competent, athletes will not be intimidated by opponent’s success nor disturbed by their own temporary failure. (Martens 1942)

Anxiety and Worry Management

These techniques fall into the following three typical clusters:

• The physical arousal that constitutes the terror of panic

• The ‘wired’ feelings of tension that are correlated with being ‘stressed out’

• The mental anguish of rumination – a brain that won’t stop thinking distressing thoughts

Cluster One: Physical Arousal

Distressing Physical Arousal – sympathetic arousal causes the heart thumping, pulse-racing, dizzy, tingly, shortness of breath are all physical symptoms that are intolerable when not understood. Even high levels of anxiety can cause physical tension in the jaw, neck and back as well as an emotional somatic feeling of doom or dread in the pit of the stomach, which will set off a mental search for what might be causing it. The following methods can be used to manage physical arousal:

Managing body

❖ Eat right

❖ Avoid alcohol, nicotine, sugar and caffeine
Exercise
On going self care
Sleep
Consider hormonal changes

Breathing

Breathing helps in slowing down or stopping the stress response. Conscious deep breathing for about one minute at a time, 10-15 times per day can help athletes in managing the stress.

Mindful awareness

Athlete can shift awareness back and forth from body to what’s going on around them while taking deep breath and their eyes closed. This would also help them manage their physical arousal

Cluster Two: Tension, Stress and Dread

Many people search frantically for the reasons behind their symptoms hoping that they can ‘solve’ whatever the problem is. But since much of their heightened tension isn’t about a real problem, they are wasting their time running around an inner maze of perpetual worry. Even if the tension stems from psychological or other causes, there are ways to eliminate the symptoms of worry. These methods are most helpful for diminishing chronic tension.

Ignoring worry calls

This feeling of dread and tension comprises a state of low grade fear, which can also cause other physical symptoms, like headache, temporomandibular joint pain and ulcers. The feeling of dread is just the emotional manifestation of physical tension. Athletes must first learn that worry is a habit with a neurobiological underpinning and then apply relaxation to counteract the tension that is building up. This ‘Don’t Listen’ method decreases the tension by combining a decision to ignore the voice of worry with a cue for the relaxation state. This is the cue to begin relaxation breathing which will stop the physical sensations of dread.
Cluster Three: The Mental Anguish of Rumination

These methods deal with the difficult problem of a brain that won’t stop thinking about distressing thoughts or where worry suffocates your mental and emotional life. These worries hum along in the background, generating tension or sick feelings, destroying concentration and diminishing the capacity to pay attention to the good things in life. Therapy does not need to focus on any specific worry, but rather on the act of worrying itself – the following methods are the most effective in eliminating rumination.

Persistent Interruption of Rumination

Ruminative worry has a life of its own, consistently interfering with every other thought in mind. The key to changing this pattern is to be persistent with the attempts to use thought stopping and thought replacement. It’s important for an athlete to attempt to interrupt the pattern every time he is ruminating, using the command “Stop” or a visual image to remind him that he is going into an old habit. The command serves as a punishment and a distracter. The athlete can further substitute a reassuring, assertive or self-accepting statement once he has managed to stop the thought. (Wenrenberg, 2005)

Relaxation technique

Relaxation is of great importance to any athlete striving for peak performance. Relaxation skills can help athletes reduce mental (self-doubts, worry, etc.) and physical anxiety (nausea, shaking, etc.), while increasing concentration and performance at the same time. Relaxation techniques can be used prior to competition or, if practiced enough, during competition. There are many techniques for keeping cool prior to and during competition. Breath controlled relaxation, mantra meditation, and blank meditation tools are used for controlling nervousness/anxiety. (Bohnstengel, 2000)

The importance of the “top two inches” is often alluded to by coaches at all levels of sport; however there is seldom any attention paid to developing an athlete’s mental skills. The first step in developing a good mental skills training program is to identify when these skills are particularly important. For many sports there will be common situations, for example pre-competition preparation, where athletes often need to deal
with worries and concerns about the outcome and their own ability. However, the importance and nature of mental skills will vary markedly across different sports.

Mental skills are considered as internal capabilities that help athletes control their minds efficiently and consistently as they execute sport-related goals. Mental skills provide the methods and techniques not only to develop skills such as concentration and positive body language, but also to foster personal characteristics such as self-confidence and competitive skills and behaviors. Mental skills techniques help athletes adjust their actions, thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations in order to improve their games. At higher level of competition, when physical skills, tactics, and techniques of players are almost equal, psychological skills become even more important. Today when everybody acknowledges the importance of psychological factors such as anxiety, confidence and concentration to successful performance, coaches and players often fail to make mental skills training part of the daily practice schedule. There are many reasons for this, including lack of knowledge about sport psychology, misconception about mental skills, lack of time etc. Mental skills should not be neglected as it is very useful for achieving high performance level. Besides physical, tactical and technical skills, mental skills should also be included in daily training program and practice on regular basis.

**Mental Skills demands of the sport**

Sports that involve teams of individuals will require different mental skills for each individual due to the different demands of their specific roles within the team. For example, goalkeeper’s needs will differ from those who take penalty, and midfielders in soccer will have separate needs. A coach should be able to identify these needs through observation and assessment. The assessment will usually take the form of some sort of mental skills profiling. There are many ways to achieve this, but a coach is usually required to help the individual become aware of the mental demands placed upon him. Once these demands have been identified, the athlete should be encouraged to examine where he is in terms of his mental strengths and weaknesses. After that processes should be put in place to improve those areas that have been identified as needing improvement.
While a coach is not a professional mental skills’ trainer, knowledge and understanding of the mental skills to achieve a better level of performance is must. Coaches can assist their athletes to apply highly effective, basic mental skills. What follows is a brief outline of some of the fundamental skills used in psychological skills training (PST).

According to Hodge, Sleivert and Mackenzie (1996) a PST skill is a “competency, capability or ability level”, while a method used to develop a skill is a “procedure, technique or drill”. These authors believe that the major mental skills are motivation (for optimal physical activation), self-awareness and self-esteem (for optimal mental activation), and self-confidence (for optimal concentration). The major methods used to encourage athletes are goal setting, mental preparation, self-talk, centering and relaxation and imagery.

Like any other skill, mental skill too these require practice and athletes should be encouraged to spend time (one hour) on developing these skills. Some excellent examples of mental skills training techniques are provided in the additional reading and web sites listed in bibliography and in the Science in Coaching Module Outline.

One useful aid to track mental skills development is to include a log of mental skills training in the athlete’s general training diary. Also, when implementing mental skills training, careful consideration should be given to the individual. For example, some individuals may not be good at mental imagery and thus will require more general imagery training. Trying to encourage stereotypical Rugby players to learn and apply relaxation techniques may not be well received. For any mental skills training to be effective, it must be accepted by the athlete (and the coach) as a useful tool and it is this acceptance which is often the most difficult to achieve.

Statement of the problem

The study is focused on the selected psychological variables, i.e., emotional intelligence, mental skills and self-confidence of the male players of the colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. Further the study attempts to find out the influence of their psychological variables on the performance of the soccer players and also tries to find out the interdependency of those psychological variables on one another.
The problem is titled as follows:

“Study of emotional intelligence, self-confidence, and mental skills on the performance of soccer players.”

**Objectives of the study**

1. To compare the college and university soccer players in selected psychological variables, i.e, Emotional Intelligence, Mental skills, and Self-confidence.

2. To find out the differences among the various groups in selected psychological variables.

3. To ascertain whether there are significant differences in emotional intelligence among the soccer players of colleges and universities.

4. To ascertain whether there are significant differences in self-confidence among the soccer players of colleges and universities.

5. To ascertain whether there are significant differences in mental skills among the soccer players of colleges and universities.

**Hypothesis**

On the basis of the literature gone through, research finding and the scholar’s understanding of the problem, following hypothesis were formulated:

1. There will be significant differences in the emotional intelligence of the soccer players of colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

2. There will be significant differences in the self-confidence of the soccer players of colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

3. There will be significant differences in the mental skills of the soccer players of colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

4. There will be significant differences in the psychological variables, i.e., emotional intelligence, self-confidence and mental skills of the soccer players of colleges and universities.

5. There will be positive relationships between performances and the psychological make up.
6. There will be significant differences in the imagery ability of the soccer players of different colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

7. There will be significant differences in the mental preparation of the soccer players of different colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

8. There will be significant differences in the self-confidence of the soccer players of different colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

9. There will be significant differences in the anxiety and worry management of the soccer players of different colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

10. There will be significant differences in the concentration ability of the soccer players of different colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

11. There will be significant differences in the relaxation ability of the soccer players of different colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

12. There will be positive relationship between emotional intelligence and self-confidence.

13. There will be positive relationship between emotional intelligence and mental skills.

14. There will be positive relationship between self-confidence and mental skills.

**Delimitation**

The study will be delimited by the investigator on:

1. The study will be delimited to the selected psychological variables.
   - Emotional intelligence.
   - Self-confidence.
   - Mental skills.

2. The study will be delimited to the male soccer players of colleges and universities of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi.

3. The study will be delimited to the players in the age group of 18-25 years at intercollegiate and interuniversity levels.

**Limitation**

1. Questionnaire research has its own limitations. As such, any bias that may enter into the subject response on this account may be considered as the limitation of the study.

2. The investigator will not be able to control the performance of the players.
3. The investigator will not be able to control the other variables such as home environment, daily routine, diet etc which is again a limitation of the study.

4. Since the subjects belong to a cross section of the society representing various socio-economic religious and cultural backgrounds besides heredity and these factors may influence the data these are also limitations of the study.

**Definitions of the important operational terms**

**Emotional intelligence**

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action. (Mayore and Salovey, 1993)

**Self-confidence**

Self-confidence refers to an individual’s perceived ability to act affectively in a situation to overcome obstacles and to get things go all right. (Basavanna, 1975)

**Mental skills**

Mental skills are designed to produce psychological states and skills in athletes that will lead to performance enhancement. It focuses on the mental skills that need to be developed to further propel athletic performances beyond which can be achieved through physical and technical training. (Zajac, 1993)

**Performance**

Performance is the behavior in which an organism engages in response to a task or activity, which leads to result, especially to a result, which modifies the environment in some way (Wolman, 1973)

**Soccer**

Soccer is a game played by two teams of eleven players on each side using a round football. The designation soccer is derived from association football, rugby, and Canadian football along with other sports in the historical development of the game. It is now played under the rules of FIFA (Hickok, 1977)
Significance of the study

Sports have been considered as a physical endeavor. However in the present competitive scenario, every competitor wants to win, rather than just participate. Sports scientists, sports psychologists and physical educationist have begun to explore this field seriously. Performance in sports is not the outcome of skills and physical fitness alone, but psychological parameters also play a vital role in improving and refining the performance of athletes. This study is focused on psychological variables from pedagogical point of view. In this study a multidimensional approach has been adopted to understand the psychological make-up of the athletes.

An attempt has been made in the present study to explore the area of emotional intelligence among the soccer players. Emotional intelligence is the type of social intelligence which helps players to know themselves and their team mates, helps managing and improving relationship. It also plays a very crucial role in the psychological make-up of soccer players.

Self-confidence is very much related to the performance of soccer players. If the athlete is trained to achieve an optimum level of self-confidence, he may lose self worth which is harmful not only for the psychological well being of athlete but also his performance in sports gets affected.

Advanced soccer players use many mental skills to cope with stress of competitions which may lead to emotional disturbance and cause fear or anxiety. They also use it to stay confident about their performance in sports. The role of mental skills in improving the performance in team games has been well established by several researchers. The study with its focus on college and university soccer players of the three states shall enable the teachers of physical education, coaches and players themselves to design and formulate mental skills training schedule for still better performance. Therefore, the finding of the present study will contribute a great deal to the existing literature regarding emotional intelligence, self-confidence and mental skills and their role in enhancement of athletic performance.

The study has revealed significant findings which can be helpful in understanding the importance of psychological variables in relation to the performance of soccer players. This study may play an important role in promoting mental health, self-confidence, enhancing skills for emotional stability, achieving optimum level of performance by soccer players. Further, this study may lead to the facilitation of techniques to develop those characteristics which have some bearing on success.