

Analysis of Attitude towards Soccer Officiating and Socio-Economic Status of Indian Soccer Referees

Vijay Bahadur Singh Bisht

Assistant Professor (Physical Education) Rajendra Prasad Degree College, Meeranaj (Bareilly) U.P, India

Abstract

A study was conducted to analyze and compare attitude towards soccer officiating and socio-economic status of Indian soccer referees. Total 200 Indian male, active and retired, FIFA/National Referees (known elite group) and State Football referees, divided into two groups of 100 referees in one group, were taken as subjects. Socio economic status scale (SESS) developed by Rajbir Singh et al. and Attitude Towards Soccer Officiating Questionnaire, developed by researcher himself with the help of various experts of the field concerned, were used to ascertain the desired variables of the subjects.

Results of the study revealed that there was no significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitude towards soccer officiating of Indian soccer referees. Both variables were found to be mutually independent. Most of the, (95%), elite soccer referees had strong attitude towards soccer officiating whereas majority (77%) of state referees were found to be having neutral attitude towards soccer officiating. Majority (92% of elite referees and 95% of state referees) of the Indian soccer referees belonged to middle socio economic status.

Introduction :

Sports' officiating has been recognized as a potentially stressful activity. Sports officials are placed in a competitive environment and they are in a highly evaluative position, in which their integrity is often questioned. Reports of verbal and instances of physical abuse of soccer officials are on the increase. This can be threatening if they anticipate failure or negative appraisal from other¹.

Soccer is a game of constant action and requires continuous adaptation to changing situations by the players as well as by the officials so the game of soccer requires that an official is physically fit possesses technical knowledge concerning the rules and has the necessary psychological attributes to deal with a broad range of situations and experiences.

Refereeing is one of the most difficult professions in the world. To be an effective referee one must possess extraordinary abilities, skills and knowledge. After coaches and managers, referees are the third dimension of athletic contest; yet they perform one of the sport's thankless tasks. The

¹ A.H. Taylor and J.V. Danial, (1988), "Sources of Stress in Soccer Officiating", cited in T.Reilly et. al, **Science and Football**, Great Britain: St. Edmundsbry Press, pp.538-44.

primary job of referee is to ensure that a contest progresses according to the rules while interfering as little as possible².

Being an official can be challenging, exciting and rewarding, on the other hand, officials can also feel frustrated, abused and unappreciated. Whether an official experiences the positive or the negative rests on his mental approach.

Investigation shows that soccer refereeing is not a lucrative venture for which one will aspire. Though officials at top level are reasonably well paid besides other allowances payable but very few reaches to the highest level and very few of them stay there for a fair length of time and by the time they start enjoying their stay there, they run out of time and they have to retire at the age of 45. Leaving some exceptions after retiring at young age most of these hard working mercenaries are lost into oblivion.

Keeping in mind such a demanding, grueling, strenuous and non lucrative nature of soccer referee's job why anyone should wish to become a referee under such testing circumstances is a puzzling question for an outsider.

By carefully visualizing conditions, situation and circumstances under which a referee has to perform which demands lot of physical and psychological attributes, the present study was under taken to investigate 'Attitude towards Soccer Officiating' and socio-economic status of Indian soccer referees.

PROCEDURE:

Selection of Subject

Total 200 Indian male, active and retired, FIFA, National and State Football referees were taken as subjects, divided into two groups of 100 referees in one group. Group one consisted of India's 100 FIFA and national referees combined together (elite referees) and group two consisted of India's 100 state level referees (state class Ist, IInd and IIIrd referees combined together), registered with different Indian states/districts football associations.

Administration of Questionnaires and Scoring

1. Socio economic status scale (SESS) developed by Rajbir Singh, Radhe Shyam and Satish Kumar³ was used to measure the socio economic status of the subjects. Reliability of the scale was computed by test-retest method and was found to be 0.791.

² Robert S. Weinberg and Peggy A. Richardson, (1990), **Psychology of Officiating**, Illinois: Leisure Press: p.4.

³ Rajbir Singh, Radhe Shyam and Satish Kumar, (2009), **Socio Economic Status Scale**, National Psychological Corporation, Agra.

The following interpretations of the score denote the different categories of socio-economic status (SES) of the subject.

SES categories	Scores
Low SES	41 and below
Middle SES	42 – 56 (Lower Middle SES)
	57 – 76 (Average Middle SES)
	77 – 100 (Upper Middle SES)
High SES	101 and above

2. To measure the attitude of the soccer officials towards the soccer officiating (refereeing) no standard, suitable and critical questionnaire was available. So with the help of psychology experts, many experienced soccer referees, soccer players and coaches, a questionnaire was developed to measure the attitude towards the soccer refereeing of the subjects. Reliability of the questionnaire was computed by test-retest method and was found to be 0.88.

‘Attitude towards Soccer Officiating’ Questionnaire contains total 30 questions. There are three possible responses ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ for each question. There is no “right” or “wrong” answers, as everyone may have his own view for a particular statement. The subject scores either 3 or 2 or 1 for ticking the first, second or third response respectively. The sum of scores of questions 1 to 30 serve as subject’s total score for attitude towards soccer officiating. The following interpretations of the score denote the level of attitude towards soccer officiating of the subject.

Sr. no.	Score	Level of attitude towards soccer officiating
1	36 and below	Negative / weak attitude
2	37 to 66	Neutral / moderate attitude
3	67 and above	Positive / strong attitude

Before giving the scale/questionnaire to the respondents, the purpose of the testing was explained to the respondents and they were ensured about the secrecy of the information provided by them. They were encouraged to respond the statements sincerely and authentically without spending much time over any question.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND RESULTS OF THE STUDY :

In order to assess the effect of ‘Attitude towards Soccer Officiating’ on Socio-Economic-Status, the Chi-square (χ^2) method was used.

In order to assess the relationship of ‘Attitude towards Soccer Officiating’ and Socio-Economic-Status, the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation method was used.

In order to compare the ‘Attitude towards Soccer Officiating’ and Socio-Economic-Status of India’s elite soccer referees and state soccer referees, t-test was used. The level of significance was 0.05.

Table 1.1**Frequency distribution of Attitude v/s Socio-Economic Status (SES) of Elite Soccer Referees**

Attitude	Socio-Economic Status (SES)			Total
	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	
Neutral attitude	0	5	0	5
Strong attitude	4	87	4	95
Total	4	92	4	100

Table 1.2**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.458	2	.795

Table 1.3**Correlation**

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error(a)	Approx. T(b)	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.000	.023	.000	1.000

Interpretation:

The scores of table 1.1 indicate that out of 95 elite soccer referees having strong attitude, 87 fall under the category of middle Socio Economic Status. Only 5 elite soccer referees having neutral attitude, fall under the category of middle Socio Economic Status, which is 5%, and is not up to the remarkable level. Remarkably none of the elite soccer referees exhibited weak attitude.

The table 1.2 indicates the Chi Square (X^2) statistics value of the attitude of the elite class soccer referees which is not affected by SES i.e. X^2 is not significant.

The table 1.3 indicates that the Pearson's correlation value (.000) which also favour the result of X^2 test of the independence.

Table 2.1**Frequency distribution of Attitude v/s Socio-Economic Status (SES) of State Level Soccer Referees**

Attitude	Socio-Economic Status (SES)			Total
	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	
Neutral attitude	3	73	1	77

Strong attitude	1	22	0	23
Total	4	95	1	100

Table 2.2
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.458	2	.795

Table 2.3
Correlation

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error(a)	Approx. T(b)	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.000	.023	.000	1.000

Interpretation:-

The scores of table 2.1 indicate that out of 77 state soccer referees having neutral attitude 73 fall under the category of middle SES. Out of 23 elite soccer referees having strong attitude, 22 fall under the category of middle Socio Economic Status, which is 22%, which is not up to the remarkable level.

Remarkably none of the state soccer referees exhibited weak attitude.

The table 2.2 indicates the Chi Square (X^2) statistics value of the attitude of the State Level soccer referees which is not affected by SES i.e. X^2 is not significant.

Table 2.3 indicates that the Pearson's correlation value (.000) which also favour the result of X^2 test of the independence.

Descriptive Analysis of the Data Pertaining to Study has been presented in the Following Tables:

Table-3.1

Descriptive Analysis of Elite Soccer Referees and State Referees on Attitude

Variables	Groups	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Attitude	Elite Referees	80.37	8.712	.871
	State Referees	61.92	6.705	.670

Table-3.1 clearly indicates the mean, standard deviation and standard error of Elite Soccer Referees and State Referees on the basis of their attitude. The observed mean and standard deviation on attitude of Elite Referees were 80.37 and 8.712 respectively while standard error was 0.871; and for State Referees it is 61.92 and 6.705 with standard error .670 respectively. Elite Referees had higher mean score as compared to state referees.

Table-3.2
Significance of mean difference of Elite Soccer Referees and State Soccer Referees on Attitude

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	df	M.D.	SEd	t ratio
Attitude	Elite Referees	100	80.37	8.712	198	18.450	1.099	16.781*
	State Referees	100	61.92	6.705				

*Significant at 0.05 level

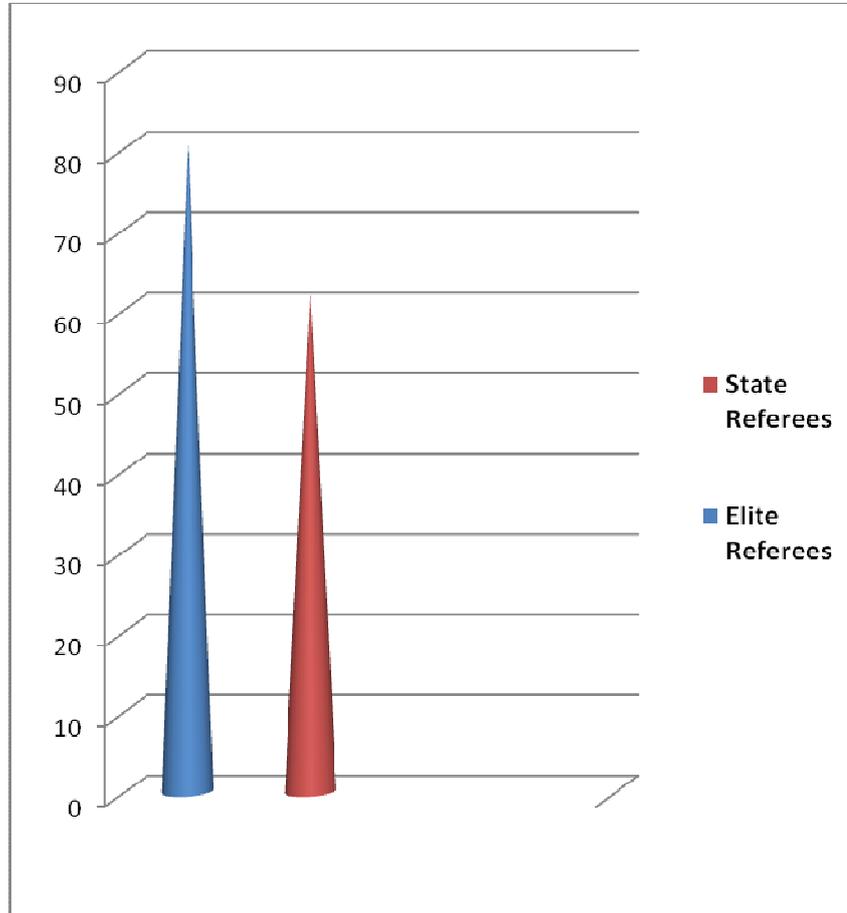
Tabulated t value= 1.960. df (198)

From table 3.2, it is evident that the obtained t statistic value 16.781 is greater than the tabulated t value 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance with df (198); therefore, there has been a significant difference between Elite Soccer Referees (FIFA & National Level) and State Referees on Attitude.

Elite Soccer Referees (FIFA & National Level) possessed better attitude than State Soccer Referees.

Fig. 1

Comparison of Mean Scores between Elite Referees (FIFA & National Level) and State Level Soccer Referees on Attitude



DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table - 1.1 reveals that most (95%) of the Elite Soccer Referees (FIFA & National Level) have strong attitude towards soccer refereeing which justifies the need of strong attitude to reach and sustain at the top of refereeing profession. Whereas majority (77%) of state referees have been found to be having neutral attitude towards soccer refereeing (Table - 2.1) which may be because of being in the beginning of their refereeing career where they might be still in the process of knowing the pros and cons of refereeing profession and taking decisive step towards making soccer refereeing final choice.

This may be the main reason for 95% elite referees possessing strong attitude. Because only those state referees who have very positive approach towards refereeing continue with refereeing and get promoted to the category of national referees. So a national or FIFA referee is very much likely to have a strong attitude towards refereeing.

Only 23% state referees have been found to be having strong attitude towards soccer refereeing but no state referee exhibited weak attitude.

It has been found that the Elite Soccer Referees (FIFA & National Level) possessed better attitude than State Soccer Referees (Table -3.2).

References :

Singh Rajbir, Shyam Radhe and Kumar Satish (2009), **Socio Economic Status Scale**, National Psychological Corporation, Agra.

Taylor, A.H. and Danial J.V., (1988), "Sources of Stress in Soccer Officiating", cited in T.Reilly et. al, **Science and Football**, Great Britain: St. Edmundsbry Press.

Weinberg Robert S. and Richardson Peggy A., (1990), **Psychology of Officiating**, Illinois: Leisure Press.