## Project Title

**Differences in Personality between Non-Athletes and Athletes and between Athletes Participating in Selected Sports**

## Objectives/Goals

The purpose of this experiment was to determine if there was a significant difference in measures of ambition, perseverance, self-esteem, and power motive between non-athletes and athletes, and also between different sports such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, baseball, football, track/cross country, and cheerleading.

## Methods/Materials

118 high school students were tested using a 40-question personality test composed of four different tests published in The Big Book of Personality Tests (Salvatore V. Didato, 2003). The personality traits measured were ambition, perseverance, self-esteem, and power motive. 32 subjects were non-athletes (they did not play any of these sports: soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, baseball, football, track/cross country, and cheerleading) and 86 subjects played one or more of the sports.

## Results

On average the athletes scored 9.25% higher than the non-athletes on the personality test as a whole. According to the data, the athletes' ambition scored 6% higher than the non-athletes' level of ambition. Athletes scored 7% higher in perseverance than non-athletes. The athletes' healthy self-esteem was 17% higher than the non-athletes'. The need for power in the athletes was only 7% higher than the need for power in the non-athletes. Of the eight selected sports, cheerleading has the highest level of ambition: 27% of the cheerleaders were 'intensely ambitious' (they scored 8-10 points on questions 1-10). Soccer had the highest level of perseverance with 20% of the participants who are 'very tenacious and work hard to achieve their goals (a score of 8-10 points on questions 11-20). Soccer had 87% of their participants with a 'healthy and robust' self-esteem (a score of 6-10 points on questions 21-30). Baseball had the highest power motive: 29% of the participants are motivated by a compulsive drive for power (they scored 23-30 points on questions 31-40).

## Conclusions/Discussion

The data support the hypothesis: the athletes have a higher ambition, more perseverance, higher self-esteem, and a higher power motive than non-athletes. The results of the experiment can be applied to children: if parents encourage sports participation at an early age, the kids will have a better chance of having more ambition and self-esteem later on in life. This could enable children to be more successful in school and personal goals.

## Summary Statement

The purpose of this experiment is to see if athletes are more ambitious, persevering, have a higher self-esteem and higher power-motive than non-athletes.

## Help Received

None