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A Critical Study Of Impact Of Psychological Factors On Sports Performance With Specific Reference To Anxiety And Stress

Dr. Jaswinder Singh[1] , Parghat Singh[2]

[1]Associate Professor, Department of Physical Education, Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabo, Bhatinda

[2]Research Scholar, Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabo, Bhatinda

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ABSTRACT

People's daily functioning is impacted by how they deal with stress. College athletes' and students' academic and athletic success depends on their capacity to manage the vast range of daily stressors in addition to general life stressors. The primary focus of this study was to compare college players to non-athletes in terms of stress levels and coping mechanisms. The present study also investigated gender variations in coping techniques between the two groups. According to the COPE questionnaire, college players did not indicate more effective coping mechanisms or greater perceived stress levels than non-athletes. Gender variations in coping were considerable, with females reporting utilising more depressive coping mechanisms. The findings of this study provide a critical foundation for further investigation into the variations and overlaps between the stress levels and coping mechanisms of these two groups.

Keywords: college students, athletes, stress management, and gender

INTRODUCTION

The global sport industry is well established in the new millennium and has successfully transcended nearly all international borders to impact the lives of almost everyone on the planet. Sport is an institution that has such a significant influence on modern life that there aren't many safe havens. through the expansion of commerce, the expansion of the global economy, the growth of Western culture's influence on media, technology, and the intersection of entertainment. Sports and culture are virtually universally popular. It might not have ever existed. Neither anticipated that it would grow to be such a significant financial undertaking or that brilliant performers might persuade billions of dollars in emotional and monetary commitment.

The International Society for the Study of Psychology's (ISSP) goal is to advance research and instruction through information exchange. Procedures in our sector have seen a dramatic increase in the popularity of exercise for health. since the early and late eighteenth centuries. This development can be attributed to the creation of sports psychology in 1965, the formation of the national and international societies of sports psychology (ISSP), and the presence of

departments of sports science and kinesiology in colleges all over the world (as well as psychology departments adopting sports psychology as a subdiscipline).

By creating body hormones quickly, and a lack of human main hormones makes the body unfit for exercise and unwell. Because these hormones make your muscles absolutely rigid and your brain more alert, the human body becomes restless. Your breathing rate—both in and out—increases. This situation is partially pleasant since it is under your control, but the human boy is not, therefore the human body feels bad and anxious. Blood pressure and psychological stress levels increase when the human body is under stress.

Sports performance and social interaction are both impacted by stress, which has been proven to be a significant contributor. An inability to control stress in sports has been associated with increased anxiety, burnout, low self-esteem, and performance-related worries. The athlete experience has received the majority of research attention as the study of stress in sports has advanced. Even if emphasising the athlete may be appropriate, it may be claimed that other people, like the coach, must also perform. Recently, it has been recognised that coaches must take on more tasks, and there is no doubt that the additional demands will cause stress for the coach. Any professional athlete could claim that they feel the most pressure from within. On the other hand, the top athletes are those who can control this pressure and direct it into their performance. This leads to a crucial finding for effective performance: isolate the athlete's controllable factors. "Don't overthink things; it's important to recognise and have confidence in your own ability" (Button, 2012). Through training, they start to build on their earlier successes, reinforce their strengths, and address their weaknesses. This helps them establish mental dominance and performance control.

Although many people believe that pressure is an illusion, there is little doubt that players will experience pressure throughout their sporting careers. The pressure will eventually increase, even if they convince themselves that it isn't there. Therefore, it is crucial to assist the athlete in developing effective coping mechanisms. The world is the athlete's oyster if they can employ these strategies successfully. Create a strategy, follow it, keep your thoughts optimistic and in perspective, and then push yourself.

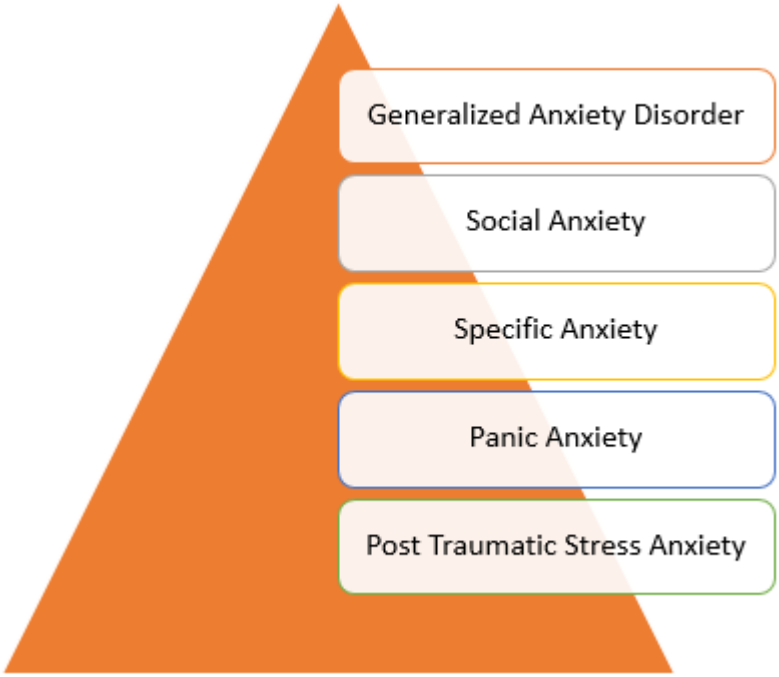

Figure 1 – Types of stress

Among the physical signs of sports anxiety include trembling, Perhaps when holding a tennis racket or when you need to remain motionless, your foot trembles. My breath quickens, Hormones like cortisol and adrenaline can make your heart beat faster. One may experience hyperventilation and experience choking or difficulty breathing. the muscles are tense. You might have unpleasant physical tightness in addition to mental tension and discomfort. In a fight-or-flight situation, your body may bypass digestion in order to focus all of its resources on surviving, which can lead to bathroom problems. You might feel cramps coming on and have a sudden, strong urge to go to the bathroom.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to discover and comprehend the association between stress and anxiety and the occurrence of sports injury in athletes, this review has synthesised data from the body of available research. Despite the limits of the current research, data synthesis can yield a number of significant findings. The importance of stress and coping mechanisms in injury onset was highlighted by a previous injury prediction model. The body's increased physiological responses to stress and anxiety, such as increased muscle tension during play and increased muscle weariness afterwards, heighten the association between psychological stress and injury. The current study demonstrated the importance of psychological factors (stress and anxiety) in the prediction of the development of sports injuries, providing significant support for the Williams and Andersen's stress injury model. Additionally, personality traits and state-level stress play a significant effect in the likelihood of injuries. Numerous earlier research found that the risk of injury in athletes was significantly influenced by trait anxiety, stressful life events, and everyday trouble.

Stressful life events raised the likelihood of injury among athletes, which was one of the study's key findings. One of the predictors of injury is stress from life events. Stressful life events rank among the most important psychosocial variables in the domain of injury risk. When compared to athletes that experience less stress, high stress athletes are reported to have a higher risk of injury. Similar findings have been made by Steffen K et al., who found that high levels of life stress can considerably predict the likelihood of new injuries in football players. This result was at odds with another study's finding that stressful life events raise the likelihood of damage. Mood and increased stress levels worked well together to predict damage features.

A prior study also discovered four personality factors that substantially predicted injury in soccer players and might account for 14.6% of injury occurrence: stress susceptibility, somatic trait anxiety, psychic trait anxiety, and trait irritability. In relation to this, a different study discovered four important predictors of injury: stress from life events, somatic trait anxiety, mistrust, and poor coping. Elite athletes perceive themselves to have behavioural control when performing at high technical levels, which helps them cope with afraid and tense competition situations. A different study that similarly used the Anderson and William model to explain the association between an athlete's Type A Behaviour Pattern (TABP) and a sports injury was conducted. When Nigorikawa T et al. looked into the connections between TABP tendencies and sports injuries, they found that Type A people had higher rates of sports injuries. TABP has been identified as a significant risk factor for Coronary Heart Disease (CHD). According to a prior study, Type A people have a higher risk of having CHD than Type B people do. Similarly, Gunnoe AJ et al. found no relationship between life event ratings and injury severity, only with the likelihood of becoming wounded and enduring many injuries.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Three main factors make up this study. One of these studies looks at the negative consequences of stress and anxiety on athletes. Additionally, trait anxiety intensity and directional aspects, state anxiety, and athletic performance: a thorough investigation of the processes involved has mentioned association using various factors affecting which helps as a framework and based on results of this investigation, evaluation of the efficacy of a customised REBT therapy to decrease harmful characteristic anxiety directed interpretations, resulting in state-level alterations, and, ultimately, performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

470 female students and 91 male students from the University of Panjab participated in the study. There were 507 non-athletes and 54 athletes among the students. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 26, with 68.8% of the students being between the ages of 18 and 20. The majority of the participants were drawn from psychology classes, and they received extra credit for taking part. Participation was entirely optional.

STRESS

The experience of stress seems to be as much a part of being human as anything else. Stressors can be both positive and negative, inherent and exogenous. Extrinsic stressors are those that originate from outside of a person, whereas intrinsic stressors are those that originate from

within (such as anxiety, overthinking, and exhaustion). Stress is most frequently described as a bad thing by people. Stressors can attack someone from all directions, which is typically what makes someone feel "stressed out." Additionally, these pressures differ from person to person. What one individual considers to be a stressor in his or her life may not be regarded as a stressor by another. Positive stressors, also known as eustress, are those that do not negatively impact a person's health and maintain a person's ability to function at a high level. For instance, a looming deadline may inspire one person to work hard and do his or her best while it may make another person feel depressed or unmotivated. A person's total wellness, including their relationships, emotions, psychological health, and physical health, can be impacted by a pile of stressors.

COPING

Acute stress can result in more negative or avoidant coping mechanisms (such as substance use, mental disengagement, emotion-focused conduct, denial, and behavioural disengagement), which tend to impair both physical and mental function. The positive and approach coping styles (such as positive reinterpretation and growth, use of instrumental social support, active coping, religious coping, humour, restraint, use of emotional social support, acceptance, suppression of competing activities, and planning) involve dealing with problems as they arise, whereas the negative and avoidant coping styles (such as ignoring the problem entirely or doing nothing to actively fix the issue) involve avoiding the problem altogether (s). Performance and coping effectiveness are influenced by how well a person manages a particular stressor.

STRESS AND COPING IN ATHLETES

Depending on the stressor, different coping mechanisms and techniques are used. These stresses may appear to be internal or external, and the coping mechanisms range from avoidance to frustration. Self-report measures have been used in prior stress studies to gather data on stress in both collegiate players and non-athletes. Few authors have devoted their research to investigating the coping methods used by athletes of all levels when they are under stress. The success of an athlete's choice of coping mechanisms depends on a variety of factors, including perceived stress, perceived controllability of the stressor, burnout, degree of physical activity, and mindset.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Because the mean of agree, undecided, and disagree is 29, 16, 5, and 5, respectively, while the null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of anxiety upon behavioural performance, there is a substantial effect of anxiety upon behavioural performance as perceived by the players. (Table 1 & 2).

Table 1: Mean demonstrating how anxiety affects behavioural performance

S. No	Behavioral Effects of Anxiety	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1	Social isolation may cause of anxiety	26	5	9
2	Anxiety hurt relationships with friends, family and colleagues	32	5	3
3	Anxiety makes a person Angry	36	2	2
4	An anxious athlete performs Aggressively	27	8	5
5	Conflict takes place due to anxiety	28	3	9
6	Lose of performance is the result of anxiety	26	8	6
Mean:		29.16	5.16	5.66

Table 2: Mean demonstrating how anxiety affects athletic performance.

S. No	Variables	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1	Physiological effect of anxiety	29.25	4.75	6
2	Psychological effect of anxiety	30.25	4.25	5.5
3	Behavioral effect of anxiety	29.16	5.16	5.66
Mean:		29.55	4.72	5.72

CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that the precise stresses were not assessed, the study's findings showed that both college students and college athletes reported having significant levels of stress. Athletes and non-athletes both reported having the similar number of effective coping mechanisms, while non-athletes said they used emotional and social support more frequently. Naturally, athletes reported being more physically active than non-athletes, but this study's findings cannot prove that athletes use physical activity as a coping mechanism; additional research is required in that area. Both groups reported comparable amounts of both good and negative coping mechanisms. However, compared to athletes, non-athletes reported using greater substance misuse, mental disengagement, and emotional venting. In terms of felt stress, women reported higher amounts than men. Additionally, they admitted to employing less positive coping mechanisms than men, such as denial, mental detachment, and focusing on and expressing their feelings. Three positive coping strategies—instrumental social support,

emotional and social support, and religious coping—were used more frequently by women than by men. Men reported using humour as their only effective coping strategy. Males reported engaging in more intense physical activity than females in terms of level of physical activity. The results of this study may inspire more investigation into the relationship between stress, coping mechanisms, and gender differences among college sports.

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