A comparative study of athletic coping skills of medal winner male fencers

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Abstract

The athletic coping skill is a major area of research in sports psychology. This study was carried out to assess coping skills of medal winner national male fencers of India. To conduct the study 25 medal winner national male fencers (Average age 22.92 years) were selected. For comparative purpose, another set of 25 non-medal winner national fencers (Average age 23.11 years) were also selected. The athletic coping skills inventory of Smith et al. (1995) was used to collect data in this study. Results reveal significant difference in coping skills of medal winner national male fencers and non medal winner national male fencers. It was concluded that medal winner national male fencers possess a superior capacity in the form of coping skills as compared to non-medal winner national male fencers.

Keywords: Fencers, coping skills

Introduction

Fencing is sometimes described in the form of playing chess with feet aided by a weapon. It requires excellent coordination between mind and body. To excel in competitive fencing a player need to have confidence in own skills and abilities while factors such as proper self talk, not worrying about outcome of match, peaking under pressure and cope with adverse situation during a match also plays a part. All these factors can be considered coping skills.

In sports coping is widely used psychological terms which refers to cognitive or behavioural efforts made by an athlete to overcome the resistance of a stressor. A number of researchers have scientifically documented the usefulness of coping skills in terms of sports performance. The use of athletic coping skill in predicting performance of a players is not uncommon. Among others Smith and Christensen (1995) [13] used athletic coping skills for prediction of sports performance. Dolbier et al. (2001) [6] opined that person becomes anxious if he do not possess good coping skills. They also reported that coping skills allow a person to manage stress and adverse situation with relative ease. Cresswell and Hodge (2004) [3] also reported a meaningful relationship of coping skills with anxiety and self confidence. It was also reported that coping skills are related with positive mood states in sportsperson (Newton and Duda, 1993) [4].

Although a popular Olympic sport the coping skills of medal winner national male Indian fencers has not been assessed. It is worthwhile to note that researchers such as Borysiuk et al. (2008) [1], Williams and Waskiewica (2008) [15], Gillet, N. (2009) [7], Hagemann et al. (2010) [8], Dintica and Paunesca (2014) [5], Masrur et al. (2014) [10] and Chen et al. (2017) [2] conducted studies on fencers and evaluated their sports performance in the light of biomechanical, physical and some psychological parameters. Hence the present study was planned to expand the existing knowledge in sports psychology regarding coping skills of medal winner national male fencers.

Objective

The objective of the present study is to comparatively assess the coping skills of medal winner national male fencers.
Hypothesis
It was hypothesized that national male medal winner fencers will show superior athletic coping skills as compared to national male non-medal winner fencers.

Method and materials
To test the abovementioned hypothesis, following methodological steps were taken.

Sample
To conduct the study 25 medal winner national male fencers (Average age 22.92 years) were selected. For comparative purpose, another set of non-medal winner 25 national fencers (Average age 23.11 years) were also selected. Purposive sampling was used for selection of male fencers

References