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Aditya Anand
Research Scholar, Department of
Physical Education & Sports,
Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar
University, Agra, Uttar Pradesh,
India

Dr. Kulvinder Singh Bagga
Principal, Department of
Physical Education & Sports
Kishori Raman Teachers
Training College, Mathura,
Uttar Pradesh, India

Role of pre competition relaxation techniques on aggression levels in hand ball players

Aditya Anand and Kulvinder Singh Bagga

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Abstract

Athletes compete to achieve a set of goals like other athletes. They put a lot of hard work, dedication, focus and energy to win which is referred to as competitiveness. Competition in athletes is important to motivate them for better performance which in turn is focused on gaining superiority over an opponent. Competition is good among athletes because it has an impact on self-discipline, and attitude toward other fellow athletes. Competitive aggressiveness is a pattern of behaviour that is encountered in a sports environment. It is sometimes defined as a negative personality feature. Anger is characterised by active hostility towards someone or something. Anxiety is a feeling most of us experience at some point it's that sense of unease, worry, or nervousness that creeps in when we're facing something uncertain or stressful. It often comes with racing thoughts, a tight chest, a faster heartbeat, or even sweating. It's your body's way of saying, "Something might be wrong," even if there's no immediate danger. Everyone feels anxiety differently, but it usually involves a mix of mental tension and physical symptoms. Confidence is the ability of an individual to deal and face the situation. It helps an individual to develop self and abilities. Achievement motivation is the strive to increase one's own capabilities to achieve goals. It's about how driven someone feels to go after their goals or succeed at something basically, how motivated they are to try, improve, and achieve. The research aims to study the relationship of competitive aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, achievement motivation, and confidence among athletes. Standardised tools are used to measure competitive aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, achievement motivation and confidence among athletes. The study included 100 participants between the ages of 18 and 25. The findings showed a strong link between aggressiveness and anger as one increased, so did the other. A similar pattern was found between anxiety and anger, meaning those who felt more anxious also tended to feel angrier. On the flip side, the study found that higher levels of confidence were linked to lower levels of anger, aggressiveness, and anxiety. Likewise, people who were more motivated to achieve their goals tended to feel less angry and less anxious. Regression analysis indicated that aggressiveness and anxiety are significant predictors of anger. It is suggested for athletes to practise positive self-talk, deep breathing exercise to get themselves back from negative thoughts and channelize all the energy in an effective way.

Keywords: Aggressiveness, anxiety, achievement, confidence, athletes

Introduction

Today's athletes face serious and unique challenges. The standards are excessively high, the competition is tough and so are the stakes. Among the best, the physical preparation is more complete and the psychological component more important than ever. An athlete's performance in sports competition is determined by a combination of many factors. These factors may include player's technical ability, tactics used, and the player's state of mind. All these are important for best performance. Today, sports performance requires not only physical, physiological variables, and systematic training but it also takes proper training and an understanding of a person's mind-set and mental traits to truly succeed in this field. A lot of strains and stressors come while being an athlete. Athletes receive extensive physical training and support but emotional and mental support is lacking. Sports culture rewards toughness and is not a space where mental health is easy to talk about. Athletes are expected to have strong mental health in order to improve their performance.

Corresponding Author:
Aditya Anand
Research Scholar, Department of
Physical Education & Sports,
Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar
University, Agra, Uttar Pradesh,
India

Athletes are known to have high standards for themselves, which makes it difficult to accept defeat and lead to suboptimal mental health.

According to Seligman *et al.* (2001) anxiety is “a psychological and physiological state characterised by cognitive, somatic, emotional, and behavioural components.” It is a natural response to stress. Anxiety is one of the mental factors that can shape an athlete’s motivation and overall mind-set. Many athletes feel nervous or tense before a game or while competing that’s competitive anxiety. And when it kicks in, it can really affect how well they perform. When an athlete experiences symptoms of anxiety when participating in high stakes competition, this condition is known as competitive anxiety. In moments like these, people might show signs of anxiety like sweaty hands, quick or shallow breathing, a racing heartbeat, and a stream of negative thoughts running through their minds. According to Spielberger (1966) “Anxiety is considered to reflect uncertainty regarding goal attainment and coping and is typified by feelings of apprehension and tension along with activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system”. Anxiety can be a positive motivator or a hindrance to athletic performance. As a positive motivator, it helps motivate athletes to work hard in order to improve performance and find new and better ways to set goals which helps increase athleticism and confidence. As a negative motivator, fear can hinder both productive and constructive thinking. Sometimes, athletes try to cope with their anxiety by avoiding hard work or holding themselves back. But this can create bad habits and slow down the development of their physical skills which can lead to poor performance, low self-confidence, and even more anxiety. One type of anxiety is called trait anxiety. This isn’t just tied to a specific moment or event it’s more of a long-term tendency to feel anxious across different areas of life. Humara (1999) defined it as “trait anxiety can be thought of as a worldview that an individual uses when coping with situations in his or her environment.” State anxiety refers to performance anxiety. It is specific to a situation. Individuals who participate in a group sport are less expected to experience competitive state-anxiety in general (Craft *et al.*, 2003) ^[31]. The others identified anxiety as cognitive anxiety which occurs when a person may think about worrying of underachieving from displeasing thoughts and experiencing problems with concentration. Finally, somatic anxiety occurs as a result of a performer's negative perception of the body's physiological reactions to stress, due to the reaction of the body the individual worries more.

According to Bandura (1997, p3) ^[15] self-efficacy is defined as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments.” According to Vealey (1986; 2001) sports confidence is defined as “an athlete’s belief or the degree of certainty that he or she has the abilities to perform successfully in sports.” According to Martens *et al.* (1990) Self-confidence is “belief that one can perform successfully in competition.” Thomas, Lane and Kingstone (2011) robust self-confidence is “a set of enduring, yet malleable positive beliefs that protect against the ongoing psychological and environmental challenges associated with competitive sport”.

According to Weinberg and Gould (2011, p.324) sports confidence is “the belief or degree of certainty that individuals possess about their ability to be successful in sport.” According to Baumeister (1999) ^[26] self-esteem can be defined as “the person’s evaluation of self”. According to Dedmond and Laqunda (2009, 2011) self-esteem can be

defined as “the problem about the way one feels or sees one’s elves, which influences our behaviour, affects our attitude and pushes our motivation”.

Methodology

This helps explain how the research was carried out in order to properly test the hypothesis and gather clear, structured information. The main goal of the study was to explore how competitive aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, confidence, and achievement motivation are all connected. The study also explored the impact of anxiety on anger and aggressiveness on anger. For this purpose, athletes (67 males & 33 females) between the ages of 18 and 25 were chosen to take part in the study.

Procedure

With the study’s goals and ethical guidelines in mind, the researcher followed this procedure that the informed consent was obtained from the participants. Interested participants were then administered self-report measures. It was assured that the data and the results were to be used only for research purposes and to be kept confidential. Participants were asked to respond honestly, following the instructions given to them. Proper standardization instructions were given as specified in the manuals. They were thanked for their active participation in the study. All the tests were scored according to the guidelines provided in their respective manuals. The raw scores were then organized and analyzed using different statistical methods with the help of the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) software. To investigate the effect of competitive aggressiveness, anger and anxiety, the research was initiated. Various research was studied and literature review was collected. To begin with, the tools needed to gather information on all the variables were prepared. The researcher then developed a clear hypothesis and outlined the expected results. Athletes were identified and personally approached to take part in the study, including both males and females. The purpose of the research was clearly explained to them, and any questions or concerns they had were addressed. Data was collected using online Google Forms, making it easier and more accessible for participants to respond. The element formed part of the data collection process a) informed consent b) demographic information c) Competitive Aggressiveness and Anger Scale (CAAS), Trait Robustness of Sports-Confidence Inventory (TROSCI), Sports Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT), Sports Achievement Motivation Test (SAMT). Before starting the survey, participants were asked to read and give their consent to take part. The consent form explained everything clearly the purpose of the study, that taking part was completely voluntary, that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential, and that they could choose to leave the study at any time without any consequences. Participants were also asked to share some basic personal details like their name, age, gender, and the sport they play. The rest of the survey consisted of questionnaires related to the main areas of the study. Once participants completed the survey, they were thanked for their time and valuable input. All the responses were carefully compiled into Excel sheets, organized by participant and variable. To analyze the data, SPSS software was used. Before running any calculations, the data was checked for any entry errors using frequency analysis, and any mistakes or inconsistencies were corrected to ensure accuracy. The average scores and variation (mean and standard deviation) for competitive aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, confidence,

and achievement motivation were calculated. Then, using SPSS, the researcher looked at how these factors were related by running Pearson correlation and linear regression analyses. After organizing the results into tables, they were carefully interpreted and analyzed. Finally, the study's limitations were acknowledged, the implications were discussed, and suggestions for future research in this area were made.

Scoring and Statistical Analysis

All the tests were scored following the instructions in their manuals. The scores were then organized into tables and analyzed using SPSS, a statistical software. To meet the goals of the study, the researcher ran several analyses, including calculating averages (means), measuring variation (standard deviations), exploring relationships between variables (correlation analysis), and examining how multiple factors predict outcomes (multiple regression). Correlation analysis was done to see how two variables are related to each other. Multiple regression was used to identify which factors are the most important predictors for the main outcomes. Before running these tests, the data was checked to make sure it met certain conditions, like being normally distributed and having similar levels of variation. The responses gathered through semi-structured qualitative methods were then organized and presented using tables, bar graphs, and pie charts to make the results easy to understand.

Summary

The research aimed to study the relationship of competitive aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, achievement motivation, and confidence among athletes. Standardised tools were used to measure competitive aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, achievement motivation and confidence among athletes. A total sample of 100 in the age group of 18-25 years was collected. The results showed that aggressiveness and anger were strongly linked when one was higher, so was the other. Similarly, anxiety and anger were also closely connected. However, there wasn't a meaningful connection between anxiety and aggressiveness. The same was true for achievement motivation it didn't show a significant relationship with either aggressiveness or confidence. The results showed that confidence and anger are connected in a way that when confidence goes up, anger tends to go down. The same kind of negative link was found between achievement motivation and anger, as well as between confidence and aggressiveness, and between confidence and anxiety. There was also a negative connection between achievement motivation and anxiety. The regression analysis revealed that both aggressiveness and anxiety play a key role in predicting how angry someone might feel.

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