

A Study of Effects of Competitive Anxiety, Concentration Reaction Time and Decision Making on the Performance of Hockey Players of Indian Universities

Author

Gurdeep Singh

Supervisor

Prof. M. Mian

Department of Educational
Studies

Faculty of Education, JMI

It is an established fact that sports play important role in the development of integrated human personality, fostering peace and understanding among different people, nations races and religions etc. while participating at national and international events/competitions.

India's poor performance in international sporting events is a cause of serious concern for all concerned. Several reasons, in our sports structure, affecting the performance of Indian athletes have been discussed threadbare. One of the major reasons, is the lack of sports culture and scientific approach in the process of promoting sports at the grass root level in this regard.

The training (Physical, Mental and Technical) of talented athletes for excellent performance in competitive situations is a science as well as art. It is a science because without drawing upon the scientific facts and principles, training efforts might become a sheer wastage of energy and resources, and it is an art because the athletes are human beings and dealing with human beings is an art not a science. The sample and rationale of the present study alongwith four psychological tests/tools have been discussed at length with a view to relate them with practice.

For a clear conceptualization of the investigation an indepth review of related literature has been done. Four psychological variables taken for the present study: competitive anxiety, concentration, reaction time and decision making have been studied in multiple combinations by various scholars in their respective studies. The present chapter is devoted to reviewing researches conducted related to the objectives of the study.

The most harrowing experience of human life is anxiety. Anxiety is a common phenomenon of modern civilization and all of us are the victims of anxiety in one way or the other. The ability of an athlete to direct his/her senses and thought processes to particular objects or thoughts seem to play an important role. Accordingly, particular situations put specific demands for attention/concentration that are likely to vary greatly in dissimilar situations/conditions. For example, if our tendency to consider/attend too many thoughts at the same time does not match attentional demands of a situation, the performance is likely to suffer.

The athletic performance is heavily dependent on the quality and appropriateness of the

decision making of the performer(s) individually as well as a team while participating in highly crucial moments of the competitions. It is observed that positive interpersonal relationship of the athletes/players played a significant role in achieving successful performance in sporting events.

The present study was based on clinico-ex-post-facto design of research and did not involve any experimentation. It was basically an exploratory investigation which involved a lot of description of the facts as they come by. The following psychological variables were taken up for the investigation:

- (a) Competitive Anxiety
- (b) Concentration
- (c) Reaction Time
- (d) Decision Making

The following tools/tests were used for the conduct of the present study:

- (1) Sport Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT)
- (2) Knox Cube Imitation Test
- (3) Electronic Digital Chronoscope
- (4) Myers-Briggs Type Indicator & Scale

The standard procedures for scoring of points, as suggested by respective authors in their test manuals, were used and no deviation was made. Successful hockey players were found to be capable of making appropriate/effective decisions during highly competitive matches at every stage of the tournament.

The group of hockey players with Moderate Anxiety Levels proved to be most successful performers during the entire championship.

The following main conclusions were drawn on the basis of scientific analysis and their results:

1. Successful hockey players were found to be capable of handling/managing their high anxiety levels more effectively than the unsuccessful players during the entire competition.
2. The reaction time of the unsuccessful players was found to be faster/quicker than the unsuccessful players at every stage of the competition.
3. The successful players exhibited strong sensation and intuition while making effective decisions during tough matches in comparison to unsuccessful players.
4. Unsuccessful players were found to be slower in their reaction time and experienced disturbed concentration-span during various competitive situations.
5. As the degree of difficulty of competition increased or the matches reached higher stages, the successful hockey players were found to be capable of containing their anxiety levels within manageable limits, maintaining quicker reaction time, making appropriate/effective decisions in highly contested moments at every stage of the tournament! championship while gaining challenging experience of practical participation.
6. High anxiety group of players exhibited poor concentration level whereas moderate anxiety group of players proved to maintain better concentration levels

leading/facilitating successful performance in crucial matches.

7. Low Anxiety group of players reflected faster reaction time in comparison to high anxiety group of players, but their performance during the tough matches was not found to be consistently low.
8. Moderate anxiety group of players were found to be capable of making appropriate/effective decisions in all the matches and emerged most successful players as a team of the championship.