

To Assess the Stress Sources and Coping Behaviour among the Football Players

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the sources of stress and use of coping behaviour among football players. Fifty football players from a BHEL sports club state level competition participated in this study and completed a survey to examine their stress sources and associated coping behaviour. The results indicated that the most common sources of stress were evaluative expectation and threat pressures of competition. Sports persons mostly use 05 coping strategies to manage stress. Results suggest designed to reduce stress should seek to increase the use of active and positive reframing styles to cope with stress.

Keywords: *Stress, Coping; Football Players, BHEL Sports Club.*

Many researchers believe that stress is a major factor affecting people's, is closely tied with mental health, and is quite possibly linked with many problems of physical health (Brennan, 2001). Stress has also become a recurring theme with sport settings and athletic community. Studies in the exercise and sport sciences have identified stress as an important issue related to athletes' well-being, and performance (DiBartolo & Shaffer, 2002; Humphrey, Yow, & Bowden; 2000).

Hans Selye (1956) was the first person who introduced the concept of stress in life sciences. 'Stress like relativity is a scientific concept which has suffered from the mixed blessing of being too well known and too little understood'. A variety of perspectives have been used to understand and account for differences in individual behaviour to stressors (Symonds 1947). He persisted that 'it should be understood once and for all that man, not that which happens in him, it is a set of causes and not a set of symptoms' (Selye 1936) wrote 'Stress is the non-specific (Physiological) response of the body to demand made up on it.' (Morse & Furst 1979) defined stress as a mental or emotional disruptive or disquieting influence of distress.' The definition and most people's concept is that stress is a negative or disruptive outcome. Stress

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is considered a response to a situation which demands that the individual adapt to a change physically or psychologically.

The term stress is defined in different ways by Jones (1990) defined stress as a state in which some demand is placed on the individual, who is then required to react in some way to be able to cope with the situation. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stress as a function of highly demanding situation coupled with that individuals limited emotional resources for effectively coping with these demands. Stein and Cutler (2002) define stress as a total response to one's environmental demands and pressures and theorize that stress is an unavoidable part of life that everyone has to deal with. Regardless of the way stress is identified, the common ideology is that an individual who is experiencing stress will cope with that stress in a certain way, based on how that particular individual interprets the stressor (White, 2008). Martens, Vealey & Burton (1990) 'stress has been defined as stimulus, intervening and response to variables by different researchers. As a stimulus variable stress is a precipitator; as an intervening variable, a mediator; and as a response variable, a behaviour.'

Coping

Coping techniques is the most crucial element in balancing stress levels so that they optimize instead of inhibit performance level. Relaxation, visualization/ imagery, self-talk, goal setting, motivation and video review are all examples of systems that can be used by sports persons.

Self regulation training cultivate one's self confidence and attention control levels. Goal setting is another important system as making realistic short-term goal prevents one from getting overwhelmed, which can result in loss of focus. Having these realistic expectations is the only way one can eventually reach one's long term goals.

Researchers have examined coping widely, defining it as 'constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific internal and/ or external demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person' (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141). Coping is the process of dealing with situations that create stress (white, 2008). Athletes must develop a range of cognitive and behavioural coping skills to manage the competitive stressors they face (Scanlan, Stein, & Ravizza 1991).

Coping theorists have also distinguished between acute and chronic stressors. Acute stressors are major live events, such as sickness or loss of a loved one, whereas chronic demands refer to recurring daily stressors (Compas, 1987). Sport coping research has been concerned with elite amateur athlete's perceptions of stress and coping responses at major competitions (e.g., Dale, 2000; Dugdale, Eklund, & Gordon, 2002; Gould, Eklund & Jackson, 1993; Holt & Hogg, 2002; Pensgaard & Ursin, 1998).

Recently, Anshel and Sutarsob (2007) examined sources of acute stress, stress intensity level, and coping styles in competitive sport. They found that the athletes coping styles were

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positively related to their respective acute stressors category. The athletes who experienced intense coach-related acute stress were more likely to use primarily an approach-behaviour coping styles followed by the other coping styles.

Overall, sport coping research has been concerned with responses employed by elite amateur athletes to deal with major competition stressors. The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of professional players in relation to the daily hassles stressors and associated coping strategies he employed during a competitive season.

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the stress sources among football players.
2. To assess the coping behaviour among football players.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants in this study were 50 football players from BHEL sports club selected on random basis they ranged in age from 20-25 years, an average age of 22.5 years.

Instruments

This study employed two separate test developed by Akbar Husain of Aligarh university (1996) that measured Sources of stress and coping behaviour in players. The stress sources scale is a 30 items measure sources of stress and stress-related symptoms in football players using 4-point scale ranging from 0 (not at all intense) to 4 (extremely intense). The survey items were derived from previous research related to sport. The 30 items represented five sources of stress. They were stress of relational, evaluative expectations, personal, threat, and maintaining optimum arousal level.

Coping behaviour were assessed with the Coping Behaviour Scale (Akbar Husain 1996). The coping behaviour scale is a 20 items measures the styles of coping with stress on sport in football players using 4-point scale ranging from 0 (not at all intense) to 4 (extremely intense). The 20 dimensions represented five coping styles are active coping, diversive coping, positive reframing, maladaptive coping and unproductive responses.

The next step in developing the instruments for this study was to translate the items from English into Hindi language. Standard three-step protocol was used when translating the questionnaires. First the instruments were translated from English into Hindi language by a professional scholar who is fluent in both English and Hindi language. Second, the instruments were translated back from Hindi into English language by second scholar who is also competent in both English and Hindi language. In the final step a third professional scholar evaluated the original English and the translated-back copies in order to verify the accuracy and validity of translation. The scholars were in full agreement on the use of proper terms in the Hindi version.

Procedure

Before distributing the questionnaires telephone calls were made to the coaches to obtain the permission to conduct the study. Coaches who agreed to allow their teams to participate in

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the study with the researchers to meet with their players at the meeting. The football players were given a verbal explanation of the study being conducted. Players who agreed to participate were given a questionnaires and assured that their answers would remain confidential. To further ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the players did not put their names on the forms and returned them directly to the researchers. After the administration of the questionnaires subjects were thanked for these co-operations.

RESULTS

1 Stress Sources Scale

Means and standard deviations of sources of stress by state level football players at BHEL sports club are reported in table 1, where it can be seen that stress of evaluative expectation was the most perceived source of stress ($M = 7.96$), followed by personal sources ($M = 6.28$), maintaining optimum arousal level ($M = 5.28$), and stress of relational ($M = 4.5$). The threat were the least perceived source of stress with a mean of ($M = 2.92$).

Table -1. Mean and standard deviations of sources of stress (N = 50)

Stress Source

S. No.	Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Evaluative Expectation	50	7.96	3.21
2	Personal	50	6.28	2.84
3	Maintaining optimum arousal level	50	5.28	2.79
4	Relational	50	4.5	3.18
5	Threat	50	2.92	2.33

After the statistical analysis of all five factors of the stress sources scale were F- Value (Table 2) was 14.26 which indicate that stress sources scale is very significant scale and each factor individually affects the performance of players.

Table 2. Summary of analysis of variance

Source of variation	Std. deviation	df	MS	F
Between Treatment	715.11	4	178.77	14.26**
Within Treatment (Error)	564.26	45	12.53	
Total	1279.37	49		

$$**F_{.99}(4,45) = 3.76$$

$$f = 178.77 / 12.53 = 14.26$$

2 Coping Behaviour Scale

Mean and standard deviations were reported for all items of the coping survey. All 20 items of the coping survey have been represented five coping styles are active coping, diversive coping, positive reframing, maladaptive coping and unproductive responses (Table 3). Where it can be seen that active coping ($M = 7.56$) was often used to manage stress by the football players, they reduce the stress The Positive reframing coping ($M = 6.34$) also mostly used to manage stress by the players, maladaptive coping ($M = 5.16$), and diversive coping ($M =$

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1.68). The unproductive responses coping were the least to manage stress with a mean of 1.7 and a standard deviation 1.23.

Table – 3 Mean and standard deviations of coping behaviour scale (N =50)

Coping behaviour

S. No.	Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Active coping	50	7.56	2.92
2	Positive reframing	50	6.34	2.42
3	Maladaptive coping	50	5.16	2.16
4	Diversive coping	50	1.68	1.50
5	Unproductive responses	50	1.7	1.23

Statistical analysis of all five factors of the coping behaviour scale were F- value (Table 4) was 15.19 which indicates the scale is very significant scale and each f variable individually reduce the stress of players.

Table- 4, Summary of analysis of variance

Source of variation	Std. deviation	df	MS	F
Between Treatment	1448.83	4	362.20	15.19**
Within Treatment (Error)	1072.61	45	23.83	
Total	2521.44	49		

$$**F.99 (4,45) = 3.76$$

$$f = 362.20 / 23.83 = 15.19$$

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to assess the stress sources and coping behaviour among the football players from the B.H.E.L sports club.

To source of stress, the findings revealed that stress of evaluative expectations, personal, maintaining optimum arousal level, relational, and threat were the sources of stress reported by football players. The all five variables are capable of producing stress for players, stress of evaluative expectations shows that players expect positive feeling, attitudes or reinforcement to increase performance. If the others do not satisfy the player's needs, crowd noise it becomes the source of stress.

The next most frequent source of stress was personal factor. This includes concerns with new environment conditions too much aspirations arguments with umpires, making repeated mistakes, lack of competitive experience, fear of injury, physical, technical preparation and not performing well. Maintaining optimum arousal level this includes with unfair treatment by the referee, poor performance of referee, and making bad calls. This finding is consistent with previous studies in which referees performance and treatment were intense sources of stress (Anshel & Si, 2008).

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Relational stressor includes that result from interaction with others. For most players relationship signifies a special type of goodwill relationship with the audience, positive affective bonds with teammates, family problems or their opposite.

The fifth source of stress threat which included being threatened by a coach, being criticized by the coach, negative behaviour of coach, conflict with coach, and lack of support from coach, did not feature prominently in this study. This is due to the positive group atmosphere and good relationships between the players and their coach.

As with sources of stress, the football players reported a vast number of coping strategies (see Table 3). Coping styles or strategies play a key role in the process of coping with stress. It is useful for the football players to examine the strategies that they are using to cope with stress.

Football players more emphasis on active coping in the form of sharing feelings with their spouse, family members or friends, using of relaxation techniques, prefer to listen music and exercise. These styles of coping seem to require some physical efforts.

The second coping style positive reframing consists of football players taking some action to solve the problem themselves by attendant parties/ functions involved in hobby and in performing religious rituals, and prefer to see movies. Those players who have experienced the defeat or stress, they usually cope by opting positive modes.

Maladaptive coping refer to dysfunctional styles of coping with stressful situations. This category refer that the football players take some passive or avoidance strategies. Where the source of stress is unknown, and when outcome measures are short-term.

The next coping styles was diversive coping is preferred to that some football players are constantly accepting unpleasant mode of changing and threatening situations, smoking, taking drugs or taking interest in sex helps the football players is not doing anything in relation to coping with stress.

The fifth coping style was unproductive responses refer to that players adopt strategies such as overeat drive around and skip meal of dealing with stressful situations. Players perceived that these are useful strategies in helping or maintaining their sense of well being.

The study raises several applied implications. Given that footballers had successfully managed an extensive professional sport career and reached the top level of his profession, it is likely that the coping strategies he possessed were relatively effective. As such, these strategies offer a potential foundation for teaching coping skills to young players. The sport-specific nature of the coping skills identified will be particularly useful for developing talent in the sport of football.

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