

Impact of Sports Motivation & Locus of Control on Athlete's Competitive Anxiety

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ABSTRACT

In the sports, psychological and physiological factors play an important role in determining the performance level. Present paper intends to study the impact of sports motivation & locus of control on athlete's competitive anxiety. For the purpose of this study, a specific sample of 191 athletes from individual games (watersports, athletics, wushu, judo, taekwondo, boxing) was selected from sports authority India, central region center, Bhopal. Random sampling is used for selecting the participants. Sport Competition Anxiety Test (Martens 1977), Sport Motivation Scale (SMS) and Rotter's Locus of Control Scale were administered for data collection. The statistical analysis of data was done via linear correlation using Pearson's method and Multivariate stepwise regression. Result shows that the external locus of control was positively significantly predicting highly competitive anxiety in athletes. No significant relationship found between the construct internal locus of control and competitive anxiety, and also no significant relationship found between intrinsic motivation and competitive anxiety.

Keywords: *Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, Internal Locus of Control, External Locus of Control*

Anxiety is defined as a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease resulting from an imminent event that the athlete faces (Boniecki, Phillips, Schlenker & Schlenker, 1995). Observations of athletes who displayed good sport techniques at practice, but were poor "game performers" who was not used explicitly, concepts such as "crowd shyness", and "fear responses" among athletes can be interpreted as early expressions of what we today label as sport performance anxiety or competitive anxiety. Not wanting to disappoint their teammates, coaches, family members and fans, it is very understandable why some athletes are likely to experience elevated anxiety levels (Boniecki, Phillips, Schlenker & Schlenker, 1995). Sports psychologists Males and Kerr (1996) state that as an athlete approaches a game, referred to as the precompetitive period, they are at their highest stress level and that in this time, and an athlete will experience a wide span of emotions which produces a precompetitive affect. This affect is known in laymen terms as anxiety. Martens et al. (1990) found that when applied to sports, the multidimensional anxiety theory predicts that the cognitive and somatic anxiety will differently influence athletic

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performance. They argued that somatic anxiety is a conditioned response to performance, so it should disperse once performance begins. In addition to this, since cognitive anxiety reflects negative concerns about the consequences of failure, it should only change when the subjective probability of success changes. Based on these two proposals Martens et al. (1990) predicted that cognitive anxiety should remain high and fairly stable during the time prior to competition, while somatic anxiety peaks later. Cognitive anxiety, to note, should be the principal influence upon performance. While it is thought that high levels of anxiety can hinder athletic performance, less is known about the factors which cause athletes to experience performance compromising anxiety levels (Silva, 2002). In general, anxiety has been viewed negatively because it is believed that all types of anxiety will impair an athlete's performance.

A multitude of research has been conducted regarding Rotter's aspect of locus of control. Kormanik & Rocco (2009) referenced a study that looked at the relationship between locus of control and life stress, as measured by depression and anxiety. It was found that the less internal locus of control an individual perceives, the greater the likelihood for stress and depression (Kormanik & Rocco, 2009). In addition, Bemardi (2001) explained that when an individual perceives that he or she has control over a situation, he or she will be less likely to perceive the situation as stress-inducing. Also, internal-locus-of-control individuals tend to experience lower anxiety than others; therefore, externality may act as a stress buffer. Externality was found to be positively correlated with general stress (Bemardi, 2001). With regard to locus of control and task performance, studies have found that internals tend to perform better than externals. McKelvie S J, & Husband D E. (1980) Selected 92 athletes (members of university and college teams) and 93 non-athletes (a representative sample of the university population) completed the Illinois Competition Questionnaire measuring trait anxiety in competitive sports situations and the Rotter I-E scale measuring locus of control. No differences between the groups were found on either test, and scores on the tests did not correlate for either group. Further research on sports participation, locus of control, and anxiety is suggested.

Deci and Ryan divided motivation into three major parts and conceptualized it as a continuum moving from high to low self-determination as one proceeds from intrinsic motivation, to extrinsic motivation and then amotivation. In the context of sport participation, the intrinsic motivation shows that the athlete participating to a specific sport finds this sport interesting and enjoyable, and also is satisfied with what he learns and does. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation, contrary to intrinsic motivation, attributes to a variety of behaviors where the goals of the action extend beyond those inherent in the activity itself. Thus, the athlete participating to a specific sport to show off, to gain prestige in society, to recover from pressure, or to earn a specific award is extrinsically motivated. The divisional conceptualization of motivation as intrinsic – extrinsic has been proven to be valid in different life domains, including physical education and sport domain. Sport. Ames, 1984, 1992; Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1989. Found in their respective studies that Athletes cannot perform at their best like they usually do because of anxiety. Literature review revealed that there is evidence of relationships that may exist between the constructs internal locus of control, external locus of control, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and competitive sports anxiety on the basis of various inherent relationships that have been found between the related variables within each of these constructs. This study intends to empirically explore the strength and direction of relationships between these constructs in order to explicate the impact of these relationships on athlete's competitive anxiety.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

For the purpose of this study, a specific sample of 191 athletes from individual games (watersports, athletics, wushu, judo, taekwondo, boxing) was selected from sports authority India, central region center, Bhopal. Random sampling is used for selecting the participants

Research design

A non-experimental hypothesis-testing research design was used for the purpose of this study. The approach was concerned with testing hypothesis by examining the relationship among various variables (internal locus of control, external locus of control, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation & competitive sports anxiety,) without manipulation or control of any one of the variables. The data was analyzed using Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation analysis and regression.

Instruments

Three measures were used in this study,

- 1. The Sport Competition Anxiety Test (Martens 1977)**, commonly known as the SCAT test, is a self-reporting questionnaire which is used for assessing the anxiety level of athletes. This test measures the tendency of an athlete to experience anxiety prior, during, and after a competition in a sport.
- 2. The sports motivation scale (SMS-28) Developed by Luc G. Pelletier, Michelle Fortier, Robert J. Vallerand, Nathalie M. Brière, Kim M. Tuson and Marc R. Blais, 1995.** it has 28 statements in it, which measures the intrinsic motivation ,extrinsic motivation ,amotivation
- 3. Rotter's Locus of Control Scale developed by Julian rotter** is administered for measuring the control of beliefs

RESULTS

Table no 1 shows the correlation among variables

		Mean	Std.dev	Competitive anxiety	Intrinsic Motivation	Extrinsic Motivation	Internal locus of control
Competitive anxiety	Pearson Correlation	29.0700	3.59364	1	.167	.300**	.381**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.097	.002	.000
Intrinsic Motivation	Pearson Correlation	50.4600	3.14119	.167	1	.505**	.390**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.097		.000	.000
Extrinsic Motivation	Pearson Correlation	46.9300	4.89538	.300**	.505**	1	.449**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.002	.000		.000
Internal locus of control	Pearson Correlation	37.1500	4.26016	.122	.390**	.449**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.094	.000	.000	
External locus of control	Pearson Correlation	70.6400	8.64393	.463**	.436**	.240*	.672**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.016	.000

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Correlation results

Table no 1 shows the correlation among the external locus of control and competitive anxiety. The table clearly depicts that the Pearson's correlation for external locus of control and competitive anxiety is, $r = 0.463$, $p < .000$. Thus, it shows that the external locus of control was positively significantly predicting high competitive anxiety in athletes. The Pearson's correlation value for extrinsic motivation and competitive anxiety is $r = 0.300$, $p < .002$ which is significant at a level of 0.05. which shows that there is a highly significant positive correlation exist between them but no significant relationship found between the construct internal locus of control and competitive anxiety, and also no significant relationship found between intrinsic motivation and competitive anxiety.

Table no 2 shows the step wise regression for predictors of competitive anxiety

	B	β	95% Confidence Interval for B	
			Lower Bound	Lower Bound
External locus of control	.173	.415	.119	.266
Extrinsic motivation	.147	.201	.015	.279
constant	9.968			
R	.502			
R ²	.252			
ΔR^2	.237			
F	16.382			
ΔF	4.920			

Regression analysis

Table no 2 shows the step wise multiple regression for predictors of absorption and it was found that among four variables only two variables external locus of control and extrinsic motivation was predicting high competitive anxiety in athlete's and values are $F(2.97) = 16.382$, $P < 0.01$. The multiple correlation coefficient was .502 indicating approximately 25.2% of the variance. It was found that the high competitive anxiety is significantly predicted by external locus of control ($\beta = .415$, $P < 0.000$) as did extrinsic motivation ($\beta = .201$, $P < 0.000$).

DISCUSSION

Anxiety plays a paramount role in sports. It is the challenge in sports participation which produces anxiety. How an athlete handles the anxiety determines how successful he would be. Anxiety may be a positive motivating force or it may interfere with successful performance in sports events. The degree of anxiety also varies with a number of different conditions. Anxiety is likely to be greater in higher competitive sports than in relatively non-competitive sports, because in the competitive sports, participants are expected to win great demands are made up on them to succeed.

From the above result it has been found that the athletes who have external locus of control and extrinsic motivation would have high level of competitive anxiety. Competitive anxiety is one of the factors to decrease athletes' performance (Esfahani & Soflu., 2010). Feelings of tension, thinking of upcoming events in their mind, nervousness, worry and involved in physiological changes such as increased in heart rate response are common response for the athletes prior to the competition (Hackfort & Spielberger, 1989). Some athletes also

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involved with the feelings of fear, unhappiness, guilt, discouragement, and focus distraction (Cerin, 2003; Kais & Raudsepp, 2005). Athletes who have external locus of control may have low self-esteem, low self-confidence, have a lack of control on their life and they believed that what happened to them is a result of external factors such as chance, fate, other people and like them. In other words, they don't have any active role in their life, all this indirectly lower the confidence and self-belief of the athletes which directly increase the level of anxiety in athletes. Naditch et al.(1975)in a study found that external belief were positively related to self-reported depression and anxiety. Similarly Lower et al. found external being more anxious than internals that external locus of control has significant correlation with both death-anxiety and general anxiety. Athletes will have a better participation and performance in sport activities if they believe that they are responsible for their own actions and their success and failure is as a result of their performance not luck and other individuals' power. Individuals with internal locus of control have better compatibility and lower anxiety than individuals with external locus of control.

Generally, those who rely on extrinsic motivation are less successful and often are performing the task for reward rather than those who are driven by their own motivation.

A possible reason for the lack of association between the variables internal locus of control, intrinsic motivation and competitive anxiety can be attributed to measurement methods and instruments. Questions may Rotter source for participants are vague. Another possible reason can be attributed to the samples. Athletes may be more ideal when responding to questions; Rotter focused his mind to source control.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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