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Comparative study of pre-competitive anxiety between individual sports and team game players

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to find out pre-competition anxiety between players of individual sports and team games. During competition, athlete's mental state greatly affects their neuromuscular coordination, which finally influences the outcome of final competition. Anxiety in sports is considered as an important issue for many athletes. It refers to nervousness and fear emotion formed by frustration of self-esteem and self-confidence, or increasing of the sense of failure and guilty, which is resulted by the threat from being unable to achieve goals or to overcome obstacles at the right time. For the purpose of the study, the investigator selected the subjects from inter-college competition held at Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra. To measure the pre-competition anxiety, Sports Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT Martens *et al.*, 1990) developed by Rainer Marten was applied. Thirty (n=30) players of individual sports and thirty (n=30) players of team games were selected. Students T-test was used to find the difference between both groups. The study was significant at 0.05 significance level.

Keywords: Pre-competitive anxiety, individual sport, team game player

Introduction

By nature human beings are competitive and ambitious for the excellence in all athletic performances. Not only every man but every nation wants to show their supremacy by challenging other Individual, state, group or nation. This challenge stimulates, inspires and motivates the entire nation to strive for faster, higher, and further. It compels to exaggerate, strength, endurance and skills in the present competitive sports world. A highly competitive sport environment leads to anxiety among players. Competitive anxiety is one of the factors to decrease athlete's performance (Esfahani & Soflu., 2010).

Anxiety is among the many adverse effects of stress. It is the process during which a person become scared and apprehensive of what lays ahead and often manifesto itself in physical anxiety labeled as a "distrusted State" of body and mind or state of "nervousness" anxiety is apprehension of danger accompanied by restlessness and oppression in the digestive tract and viscera. Feelings of tension, thinking of upcoming events in their mind, nervousness, and worry and involved in physiological changes such as increase in heart rate response are common response for the athletes prior to the competition (Hackfort & Spielberger, 1989). Trait anxiety, an athlete disposition to interpreting a situation as threatening and responding than with lower trait anxiety and so respond with a high state anxiety, this is known as competitive trait anxiety. Anxiety has both psychological and physiological implications in sport performance. For example, once arouse level of the player to such an extent that he finds it hard to concentrate on his game due to constant bombardment on his nervous system. The ability of the player to monitor and judge situations correctly is reduced. His information-processing mechanism gets over-stressed resulting either in wrong or slow response even to emergent situations. He loses control over his body and mind. Douglas *et al.* (2006) stated that the major sources of pre-competitive anxiety include: fear of failure, thinking too much on what people may say about the performance, and lack of confidence.

The ability to cope with pressure and anxiety is an integral part of sports, particularly among elite athletes. It is also seen that most of experience athletes and team players having better coping skills.

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Some coping skill such as mental imagery goal setting and positive self-talk are important to deal with stress and competitive anxiety both in individual and team games.

Methodology

For the purpose of present study, total sixty (60) players were selected. In the category of individual sports there were 30 players i.e. (15) Athletics players, fifteen (15) Boxing players; and for teams games there were 30 players i.e. (15) Hockey players and fifteen (15) Kabaddi players were randomly selected to serve as subjects of the study. The subjects were selected from inter-college competition held at Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra. Age of the subjects ranged between 20-28 years. For data collection, Sports Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT Martens *et al.*, 1990) was used to measure Sports Competition Anxiety.

Results

Table-1 shows that the mean and standard deviation of individual sports players was 22.20 ±2.01 and the mean and standard deviation of team game players was 18.57± 2.45. The t-value was 6.29*. After analyzing data, significant difference was found between individual and team games players.

Table 1: Significance of Differences of Mean, Standard deviation and 't' test on pre-competition anxiety between individual sports and team

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-test
Individual sports	30	22.20	2.01	6.29*
Team games	30	18.57	2.45	

Level of significance at 0.05, Degree of freedom (58) = 2.001

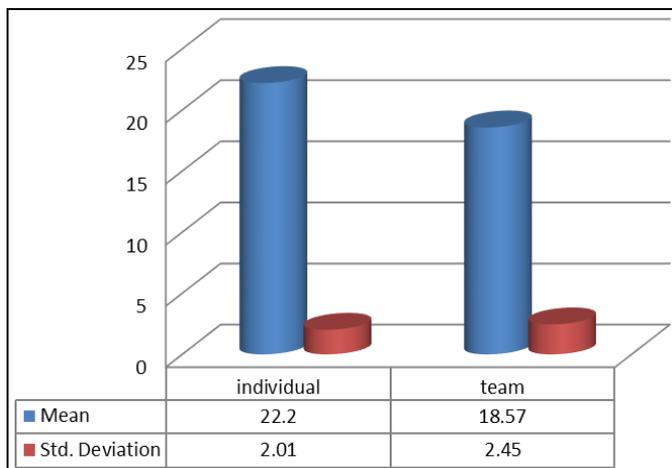


Fig 1: Graphical representation of mean and standard deviation (N=30) between individual sports and team games

Discussion of finding

Anxiety play important role in sports performance. The present study revealed that individual sports players have more pre competitive anxiety than team game players. The success of athlete depends upon how he is able to control his anxiety during competition and keep it at optimum level. Psychological training should aim at mental stability, a coach should expose the athlete to competition situation repeatedly so that the athlete could accustomed with new situations and circumstances arises during competition as new situations arises anxiety. In team sports the accountability of a player is less than an individual sports because spectators will evaluate the performance of a team not a single player and consequently individual athletes as well as their coaches are much more worried about their mistakes than team athletes.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the present study, it is concluded that individual sports players are more prone to pre-competitive anxiety due to fear of failure, thinking too much on what people may say about the performance, and lack of confidence, if there is defeat than a single player is responsible. Team games players are subjected to less pre-competitive anxiety due to share of responsibility, diffusion of accountability and adjustable ability with the environment spectators will evaluate the performance of a team not a single player.

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