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An analytical study of contribution of sports psychologists for sportsperson

Dr. Rajat Kumar Banerjee

Abstract

The increased stress of competitions can cause athletes to react both physically and mentally in a manner that can negatively affect their performance abilities. This makes the coaches to take an increasing interest in the field of sport psychology and in particular in the area of competitive anxiety. The importance of a sports psychologist as an integral member of the coaching and health care teams is widely recognized. Sports psychologists can teach skills to help athletes enhance their learning process and motor skills, cope with competitive pressures.

Method: The aim of the present study is to find out the contribution of sports psychologist for the athletes performance. For the present study 100 athletes were selected from RTM Nagpur University. The effective sample consisted of 100 athletes 50 athletes given the sports counseling and 50 athletes not given the sports counseling and the age range between the 18-22 years. Singh Personal Stress Source Inventory were used for the study.

Result: The athletes not given the Sports Counseling have significantly high stress than the athletes given the sports counseling.

Conclusion: It is an essentially need of sports psychologist for athletes performance. Now a days all the teams are using the services of sports psychologist to enhance the performance.

Keywords: Stress, sports counseling etc.

Introduction

A psychologist is an individual who has completed graduate training in the field of psychology and is licensed by a specific state. In some states, individuals with a master's degree can become licensed psychologists while in others a doctoral degree is required. A sports psychologist is a psychologist with expertise in the following areas:

- Performance enhancement through the use of psychological skills training, and performance improvement, imagery, and athlete's self-talk.
- Issues that are specific to the psychological well-being of athletes
- Working with the organizations and systems that are present in sport settings
- Social and developmental factors that influence sport participation

Sports performance is determined by a combination of physiological factors, technical skill, tactical insight and state of mind. All four factors are critical to peak performance. One could argue however that the last of these is the executive function, as it is the mind which determines whether or not what you have trained in over the past few years, is brought out on the day at that moment when it matters most. Yet it is this aspect of sports performance which has traditionally been paid the least attention in preparation for competition. Hence, in a world where many athletes are physically, technically and tactically increasingly similar, it is the mind which offers perhaps the greatest scope for a competitive advantage.

The role of mind has become even more important with the rapidly increasing commercialization of sport, which has presented new pressures for athletes across many levels and ages. Fortunately, like the other three factors, the mind can be improved through training. The more the mental skills are learned and practiced, the better and the more consistent the performances become. There is little doubt that in future, proper mental preparation will become as routinely integrated into training and competition as the other factors already are.

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The specialized field of sports psychology has developed rapidly in recent years. The importance of a sports psychologist as an integral member of the coaching and health care teams is widely recognized. Sports psychologists can teach skills to help athletes enhance their learning process and motor skills, cope with competitive pressures, fine-tune the level of awareness needed for optimal performance, and stay focused amid the many distractions of team travel and in the competitive environment. Psychological training should be an integral part of an athlete's holistic training process, carried out in conjunction with other training elements. This is best accomplished by a collaborative effort among the coach, the sport psychologist, and the athlete; however, a knowledgeable and interested coach can learn basic psychological skills and impart them to the athlete, especially during actual practice.

Psychosomatic Disorders

The health professional often plays a major role in supporting the emotional health of athletes. An athlete's psychological stresses may be manifested as somatic complaints, such as sleep disturbances, irritability, fatigue, gastrointestinal disturbances, muscle tension, or even injury. Athletes often turn to a therapist or physician for relief, either because they do not recognize the psychological basis of the physical complaint, or because they fear the services of a mental health practitioner due to the perceived stigma, or because no psychologist is available.

Preparing for Competition

Simple psychological skills to help the athlete manage the competitive performance environment include:

1. Learning relaxation skills (e.g. progressive relaxation; slow, controlled, deep abdominal breathing; or autogenic training).
2. Mastering all of the attentional styles (types of concentration).
3. Imagery (both visualization and kinesthetic).
4. Appropriate self-talk.
5. Developing a pre competition.

Mental routine to be employed immediately prior to competition on game day (these routines are short 1-2 minutes and use all of the mental skills just presented).

The Injured Athlete

Athletes have a strong sense of body awareness, and take great pride in the capabilities of their bodies. Thus, injuries can be psychologically as well as physically devastating. The ability to train and compete well involves enormous ego. Athletes often identify themselves by who they are as an athlete. Thus, an injury places considerable stress on this self-identification. The more severe the injury and the longer the recovery-rehabilitation period, the more prolonged and profound the mood disturbance may be. Injured athletes commonly experience at least three emotional responses: isolation, frustration, and disturbances of mood:

1. The injury forces the athlete to become separated from teammates and coaches. Other team members may provide little support, and in fact they may shun their injured teammate to avoid reminders of their own potential frailty.
2. The athlete becomes frustrated because he or she perceives the loss of months of training and skills mastery, although there are many instances where athletes have used the recovery period to master mental

and other physical skills to return successfully to competition.

3. Mood disturbances are common. The athlete may be temporarily depressed, or become upset by minor annoyances. An injury can provide the athlete with an opportunity to work with a caring professional to re-assess his or her reasons for being in sport, and for redefining goals in sports participation.

The health care team must be aware and include psychological support as an integral part of the treatment and rehabilitation processes. At the outset, the athlete must be fully informed about the nature and severity of the injury, the prognosis for recovery, recommended course of therapy and rehabilitation, and an estimate of the time needed before training can be resumed. The athlete must be made a full partner in the treatment and recovery process, and given responsibility for therapeutic activities that can be carried out at home. The medical team must discuss openly the psychological changes that accompany an injury, and reassure the athlete that this is to be expected. Reassurance and supportive measures are generally adequate, but a visit from an athlete who has recovered from a similar injury may be of great value.

This entire process can be facilitated by a supportive and understanding medical staff. The formula: Genuine Caring + Skills + Courage = Positive Outcome for the Injured Athlete must be kept in mind by the staff and the athlete, even though progress may be slow and uneven throughout the treatment and recovery process. Referral to a sports psychologist may be necessary if the athlete is deeply disturbed, or if the injury is severe and a prolonged recovery is anticipated. All injuries involve a certain degree of fear and uncertainty, and the sports psychologist may be great value in helping to deal with this emotion.

From common to clinical responses: gauging referrals to therapy.

The increased stress of competitions can cause athletes to react both physically and mentally in a manner that can negatively affect their performance abilities. They may become tense, their heart rates race, they break into a cold sweat, they worry about the outcome of the competition, they find it hard to concentrate on the task in hand. This has led coaches to take an increasing interest in the field of sport psychology and in particular in the area of competitive anxiety. That interest has focused on techniques that athletes can use in the competitive situation to maintain control and optimize their performance. Once learned, these techniques allow the athlete to relax and to focus his/her attention in a positive manner on the task of preparing for and participating in competition. Psychology is another weapon in the athlete's armory in gaining the winning edge. The specialized field of sports psychology has developed rapidly in recent years. The importance of a sports psychologist as an integral member of the coaching and health care teams is widely recognized. Sports psychologists can teach skills to help athletes enhance their learning process and motor skills, cope with competitive pressures, fine-tune the level of awareness needed for optimal performance, and stay focused amid the many distractions of team travel and in the competitive environment. Psychological training should be an integral part of an athlete's holistic training process, carried out in conjunction with other training elements. This is best accomplished by a collaborative effort among the coach, the sport psychologist, and the athlete; however, a knowledgeable and interested

coach can learn basic psychological skills and impart them to the athlete, especially during actual practice.

Preparing for Competition

Simple psychological skills to help the athlete manage the competitive performance environment include: 1) learning relaxation skills (e.g. progressive relaxation; slow, controlled, deep abdominal breathing; or autogenic training; 2) mastering all of the attention styles (types of concentration); 3) imagery (both visualization and kinesthetic); 4) appropriate self-talk; and 5) developing a pre-competition mental routine to be employed immediately prior to competition on game day (these routines are short [1–2 minutes] and use all of the mental skills just presented).

Psychology Skills Training

Psychology for the athlete should aim to improve their mental skills, such as self-confidence, motivation, the ability to relax under great pressure, and the ability to concentrate and usually has three phases:

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study to find out the role of sports psychologist in improving the athletes performance. This study will be significant regarding the role of sports psychologist in the improvement of performance in sports.

Hypothesis

Not given the Sports Counseling players have significantly high stress than the given the sports counseling.

Methodology

The purpose of the study to find out the role of sports psychologist in athletes performance. For the present study 100 athletes were selected from RTM Nagpur University. The effective sample consisted of 100 athletes 50 athletes given the sports counseling and 50 athletes not given the sports counseling and the age range between the 18-22 years. Singh personal stress source inventory were used for the study.

Procedures of data collection

The data was collected through questionnaire of two groups i.e., sports counseling group and non sports counseling group.

Results

The athletes not given the Sports Counseling have significantly high stress than the athletes given the sports counseling.

Discussion

It is an essentially need of sports psychologist in Athletes Performance.

Table 1: Showing the Test Scores of Stress among Athletes Counseling Group and Non Counseling Group

Test	Group	Mean	SD	S.E	N	df	't'
Stress	Athletes with Counseling	24.69	7.19	1.01	50	98	6.90**
	Athletes without counseling	36.12	9.28	1.31	50		

The results related to the hypothesis have been recorded. Mean of stress score of the Athetes Sports Counseling is 24.69 and that of the Athletes non counseling group Mean is 36.12 The difference between the two mean is highly significant ($t' = 6.90$, $df = 98$, $P < 0.01$) It is clear that Athletes Sports Counseling Group have less stress compare to

athletes non counseling group. It is an essentially need of sports psychologist in team sports performance Personality profiling, Assessing strengths and weaknesses in current mental approaches of individuals in the goal of refinement for optimal performance, Helping key stakeholders such as managers and coaches promote an optimal environment for maximum team enjoyment, Stress management, Weight and health management, Assisting with life management strategies, Teaching mental skills such as imagery and competition planning, Offering individual consultations, as well as facilitating interactive workshops, and General counseling.

Conclusion

It is an essentially need of sports psychologist in team sports performance Personality profiling, Assessing strengths and weaknesses. Not given the Sports Counseling players have significantly high stress than the given the sports counseling. Not given the Sports Counseling players have significantly high anxiety than the given sports counseling. Sports performance is determined by a combination of physiological factors, technical skill, tactical insight and state of mind. The performance.

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