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A comparative study of stress among different levels of softball players

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to compare stress of different level of softball players. Actors, athletes and students all have something in common. They all perform their tasks with varying stress levels. What is this stress that we all talk about? Stress can be defined as a physical, mental or emotional demand, which tends to disturb the homeostasis of the body. Used rather loosely, the term may relate to any kind of pressure, be it due to one's job, schoolwork, marriage, illness or death of a loved one. The common denominator in all of these is change. Loss of familiarity breeds this anxiety with any change being viewed as a "threat".

Total 60 players of softball game were selected randomly as subjects for the study. The subjects were divided into three categories i.e., University level, college level, and state level. The psychological characteristics (stress) were selected for the study. To collect data, stress assessment questionnaire developed by Don Ardell was used to compare stress among different level of softball players. The one way analysis of variance was used and level of significance was set at 0.05. No significant difference was found among the subject belonging to different level of softball players in relation to stress.

Keywords: softball players, body, university level

Introduction

The issue of anxiety is an important aspect of performance. Whether it is during the tense moments of a championship game or amidst that dreaded History exam, anxiety affects our performance via changes in the body, which can be identified by certain indicators. One misconception though with performing under pressure is that stress always has a negative connotation. Many times, "the stress of competition may cause a negative anxiety in one performer but positive excitement in another". That is why one frequently hears how elite players' thrive under pressure, when most others would crumble. Sports performance is not simply a product of physiological (for example stress and fitness) and biomechanical (for example technique factors) but psychological factors also play a crucial role in determining performance". However, every athlete has a certain stress level that is needed to optimize his or her game. That bar depends on factors such as past experiences, coping responses and genetics. Although psychological preparation is a component that has been often neglected by athletes and coaches alike, studies have shown that mental readiness was felt to be the most significant statistical link with Olympic ranking. Athletes have frequently been quoted to state how the mental aspect is the most important part of one's performance.

Material and Methods

A total of 60 male softball players were selected randomly for the study. Subjects were selected from different colleges and training centre of Punjab. The age of the players ranged between 17-25 years. The variable selected for the study was stress. 20 players of each level were selected for the assessment of the stress; stress assessment questionnaire developed by Don Ardell was used among different level of softball players. To compare stress among players, one way analysis of variance (Annova) was employed at T-Value 0.05 level of significance.

Don Ardell developed a stress assessment that is unique in its holistic approach to stress. The Ardell Wellness Stress Test incorporates physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social

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aspects of health for a balanced assessment. When you complete the stress test look back and identify which items relate to physical, intellectual health, emotional health, spiritual health, or social health. Is there a pattern? Are more areas of disappointment related to physical health than to social health?

Rate your satisfaction with each of the following items by using this scale: 0 = Indifferent + 3 = Ecstatic -1 = Mildly disappointed + 2 = Very happy - 2 = Very disappointed + 1 = Mildly happy - 3 = Completely dismayed

Prior to the collection of data, the subjects were clearly informed about the purpose and they were also motivated

sufficiently. They were encouraged to give proper and realistic answers.

Results and discussion of findings

For comparing the group of different level of softball players stress, one way analysis of variance (Anova) and 't' test were computed. The findings are presented below in the table. The one way analysis of variance along with the significance of difference by way of 't' test has been presented on the trait of stress in sports psychology.

Analysis of variance of stress among different levels of softball players

Source of variance	Degree of freedom(df)	Sum of square(s.s)	Mean square(m.s)	T ratio
Between the group	2	27.795	138.479	0.0484
Within the group	57	46247.82	314.563	

Tabulated T-0.05(3.57) = 3.14

This table revealed that there was no significant difference in the different level of softball players in relation to stress as obtained 't' value was 0.484 which was lower value than tabulated value 3.14 required for t ratio to be significant at 0.05 level with (2.057) degree of freedom.

Conclusion

On the basis of these data analysis, there was no significant found among different level of softball players in relation to stress in sports psychology. Coaches and trainers should conduct this test among his players and trainees to evaluate their mental strength and motivation to achieve their best possible performance in their respected playfields. This study also enhances the mental performance level of softball players at various forthcoming situations in competition. Not all stress is bad for your performance. Stress can affect your performance in two different ways. Stress can help you when it makes you more alert; more motivated to practice, and gain a competitive edge. In the right amount, stress helps you prepare, focus, and perform at your optimal level. Conversely, too much stress, or bad stress, can cause performance anxiety, which hurts your health and does not allow you to play relaxed, confident, and focused in competition.

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