

Enhancement of Self-Efficacy as a Function of Participations and Success in Sport Competitions

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Abstract

The present study is directed towards empirically establishing the augmentation of self-efficacy belief among individual sport players as a function of number of participations and success experiences. Individual sport players playing at the University level have faced numerous higher level competitions than the players participating at College level. Thus, it was hypothesized that the self-efficacy of males playing at University level in individual sports will be significantly higher than males playing at College level. Hindi adapted version of Generalise self-efficacy scale by Sud, et al. (1998) was administered to 76 individual male sport competitive event players. This includes 38 male players playing at University level and 38 playing at College level. t-test showed significant higher scores of University individual sport players which suggests that exposure to greater number of sport competitions and success enhances the self- efficacy of individual sport players. The finding suggests the need for greater focus of sport psychologists on the enhancement of self-efficacy beliefs of players through training programs for successful individual sport performance.

Keywords: Competition, individual sports, performance, self – efficacy.

Introduction

Individual sports which are based on one to one direct confrontation may need certain different sets of individual traits for winning than playing in team games. Concentration, Confidence, Control and Commitment (4 C's) are the main mental qualities for successful performance. Popular mental training strategies used by sport psychologists for enhancing the performance in individual sports, through increasing the 4 C's, are imagery, goal setting, performance profiling, emotional control, positive cognitive restructuring, all directly or indirectly involves the use of self- efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as people's belief about their capabilities to produce a desired outcome in different situations, it determines how people feel,

think, behave and motivate themselves in all performance situations (Bandura, 1997).

Athletes, coaches and sport psychologists all acknowledge the power of self-efficacy in sport performance. Efficacy expectations are proposed to influence initiative behaviour, amount of effort input to attain an outcome and level of persistence during competitions, all associated with successful sport performance. Individual sport players playing at the University level have faced numerous higher level competitions and success experiences than the players participating at College level. Thus their belief about self-efficacy may have been developed through four main sources as proposed by (Bandura, 1997; Feltz, Short & Sullivan, 2008). Firstly winning sport competitions builds robust belief in one's personal efficacy through mastery experiences. Secondly, numerous exposures through competitions also provide them opportunity to strengthen their self belief through vicarious experiences provided by watching other successful players. Thirdly, social appreciation after winning acts as social persuasion for strengthening their beliefs that they have what it takes to succeed. Fourthly, positive moods following success in sport competitions helps in reducing people's stress reactions and negative emotions through modifying self-beliefs in future participations.

The dismal performance of Indian players and athletes in the international meets such as Olympics, Commonwealth games and Asian games has been largely attributed to lack of will to win, which western psychologists call it as an interplay of psychological determinants (Sidhu & Singh, 2006). There is a dire need to understand the mental states of individual players who have been able to win successively in various sport competitions which may give helpful clues to mental trainers of sport persons to plan adequate and relevant mental or psychological programs to enhance excellence in sport performance at National and International level.

Vancouver, et al. (2001) using self-efficacy theory by Bandura predicted the past performance's influence on self-efficacy on 185 undergraduates and found that self-efficacy positively predicted performance in the difficult-goal condition.

Beauchamp, et al. (2001) hypothesised that self-efficacy would be positively related to motivational general-mastery imagery and the results found that pre-competition motivational general-mastery imagery accounted for significant variance in both self-efficacy and performance. The results also indicated that self-efficacy was predictive of golf performance and that

motivational general-mastery imagery use mediated the relationship between self-efficacy and performance.

Kjormo & Halvari (2002) studies on 136 Norwegian Olympic-level athletes found the interaction of self-confidence and competitive anxiety as related to performance among individual sport athletes.

Yeo & Neal (2006) examined the dynamic relationships between self-efficacy and task performance and the results show that self-efficacy effects change overtime, but it depends on the level of analysis and specificity at which self-efficacy is conceptualized. These novel findings emphasize the importance of conceptualizing self-efficacy within a multilevel and multi-specificity framework and make a significant contribution to understanding the way this construct relates to sport performance.

Aim

The present study is directed towards empirically establishing whether there is augmentation of self-efficacy beliefs among individual sport players as a function of number of participations and success experiences of the University players than the players at the College level.

Methodology

Hypothesis:

It was hypothesized that the self-efficacy of males playing at University level in individual sports will be significantly higher than males playing at College level.

Sample:

A sample consisting of 76 males between 18-25 years of age was taken. Out of this sample 38 male players played at various University level competitions and same number of players played at the College level competitions. Subjects were selected using purposive sampling technique. The players had participated in individual sports viz Badminton, Boxing, Chess, Table Tennis, Athletics, Swimming, Lawn Tennis, and Wrestling.

Tools:

Hindi adapted version of Generalise self-efficacy scale by Sud, et al. (1998) was used to access a general sense of perceived self-efficacy. This test aims to predict coping with hassles, as well as adaptation to stressful events. The

reliability ranges from 0.75 to 0.90 in samples from 23 nations. Validity of the test is 0.80.

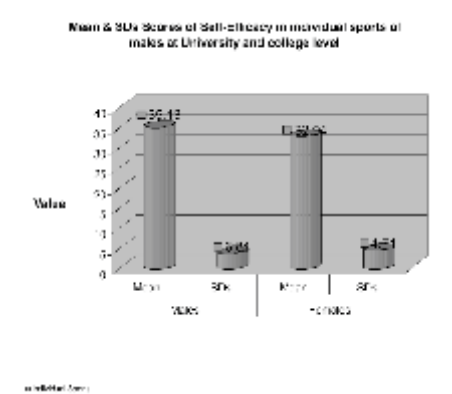
Statistical analysis

Keeping in view the hypothesis of the study descriptive statistics consisting of mean and standard deviation was calculated. t-test was computed to identify the significant differences between the means of self-efficacy of individual sport players of University and College level.

Result and Discussion

Table Showing Mean & Standard Deviations Scores of Self-Efficacy in Individual sports of males at University and College level

Level	Sample size	University		College		t-value	Level of significance
		Mean	SDs	Mean	SDs		
Males	38	35.13	3.84	32.94	4.71	2.2215	0.05



As per table and figure shown, it is clearly indicated that there is significant difference (means and t value) among male individual sport players at University level and players at College level. The hypothesis of the study that claimed that the self-efficacy of males playing at University level in individual sports will be significantly higher than males playing at College level is retained.

The results imply that individual University sport players who have played greater number of competitions at College, State and National level acquire more confidence. Concentration can display more emotional control and think positively during sport competitions. Success in sport performance seems to influence initiative behaviour, amount of effort input

to attain an outcome and level of persistence during competitions, all associated with beliefs in self-efficacy. The above results are in line with various surveys and researches conducted in western countries.

It can be concluded that the present empirical findings gives a clear direction to sport psychologists and mental trainers that high 'evaluation of self' during major sport competitions play a significant role in cultivating the 'will to win' among individual sport players. Thus to maximise future winning performances at International Levels physical fitness and training along with augmentation of 'self-efficacy beliefs' among individual sport participants should be a major consideration.

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