

REVIEW OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANXIETY, STAMINA AND PERFORMANCE IN THE GAME OF KHO-KHO

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Abstract

Anxiety is an unpleasant feeling of worry, nervousness, discomfort, and unease. Though it may be normal to experience anxiety once in a while, too much of it can definitely affect one's behaviour and productivity. People who are always having anxiety attacks worry too much that it affects the outcome of their whole day activity. Athletes are not spared of anxiety and just like any anxiety attack; it greatly affects physical and sports performance. Sports and anxiety is always related. The competition in sport gives an athlete the adrenalin to push himself to the win. However, it is also very likely that negative thoughts find its way to the brain which affects the athlete's activity and performance.

Key words: Anxiety, stamina, motivation, kho-kho, stress,

Introduction

Kho-Kho ranks as one of the most popular traditional sports in India. The origin of Kho-Kho is difficult to trace, but many historians believe, that it is a modified form of 'Run Chase', which in its simplest form involves chasing and touching a person. With its origins in Maharashtra, Kho-Kho in ancient times, was played on 'raths' or chariots, and was known as RATHERA.

Physical exercise is any bodily activity that enhances or maintains physical fitness and overall health or wellness. It is performed for various reasons. These include strengthening muscles and the cardiovascular system, honing athletic skills, weight loss or maintenance and for enjoyment. Frequent and regular physical exercise boosts the immune system, and helps prevent the diseases of affluence such as heart disease, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and obesity [2]. Childhood obesity is a growing global concern and physical exercise may help decrease the effects of childhood obesity in developed countries.

Anxiety Affects Sports Performance

A very good physical performance is vital in any sport. It is due to the pressure to perform best in the sport, athletes often experience anxiety attack. Though anxiety is expected in any sport, too much of its attack will certainly not be beneficial to the sports performance. As an athlete, anxiety attack before a sport competition is definitely a bad timing specially in kho-kho[3]. When the mind is under anxiety attack, all the movements of the body is affected. The body will find it hard to perform with tensed muscles and a worried mind. It is healthy to think every once in a while the result of the competition, but thinking of it too much leads the athlete to feel worried and nervous that will certainly affect his overall sport performance. Despite the great practice and preparation before the competition, once the anxiety attack sets in, there is a lesser guarantee that the sport performance will bring-in satisfying results.

The Factors that Contribute to Sport Anxiety Attack are

- **Experience:** The lack of experience in the sport will surely result to nervousness and worry. Example, an amateur athlete competing with a seasoned athlete will surely make the amateur nervous of his moves, think of the results too often, and will have a hard time concentrating on his performance.

- **Competing Solo:** An athlete competing solo has a tendency to have anxiety attack more than an athlete that belongs to a group or team. This is because being part of a team or group does not put too much pressure on just one person alone. Besides, belonging to a group or team means the performance is evaluated and scored as a team and not as an individual.
- **Venue:** Being in a field at national level away from home field to compete in sports also bring anxiety because it is never easy to compete away from one's own home, family, friends, and supporters.

How Can Stress Affect Sports Performance?

Stress is a feeling that's created when we react to particular events. It's the body's way of rising to a challenge and preparing to meet a tough situation with focus, strength, stamina, and heightened alertness. A little stress or the right kind of positive stress can help keep you on your toes, ready to rise to a challenge. The events that provoke stress are called **stressors**, and they cover a whole range of situations — everything from outright danger to stepping up to take the foul shot that could win the game. Stress can also be a response to change or anticipation of something that's about to happen — good or bad. People can feel stress over positive challenges, like making the varsity team, as well as negative ones[5].

Distress is a bad type of stress that arises when you must adapt to too many negative demands. Suppose you had a fight with a close friend last night, you forgot your homework this morning, and you're playing in a tennis match this afternoon. You try to get psyched for the game but can't. You've hit stress overload! Continuous struggling with too much stress can exhaust your energy and drive.

Eustress is the good type of stress that stems from the challenge of taking part in something that you enjoy but have to work hard for. Eustress pumps you up, providing a healthy spark for any task you undertake.

Performance anxiety in sports, sometimes referred to as 'choking,' is described as a decrease in athletic performance due to too much perceived stress. Perceived stress often increases in athletes on game day because (1) they have an audience and (2) they have extremely high expectations of their success. This type of stress is often based upon the way the athletes interpret the situation. It is rarely the external situation that causes stress, but rather the way the athlete's self talk describes the situation that creates feelings of stress, anxiety and fear. For athletes who choke during competition it is important to understand that the thoughts you have regarding the event can be modified, adjusted or controlled with appropriate sports psychology and mental practice[6].

The Relationship Between Anxiety and Athletic Performance

Anxiety before or during kho-kho competitions can hinder performance as an athlete. The coordinated movement required by athletic events becomes increasingly difficult when body is in a tense state. A certain level of physical arousal is helpful and prepares us for competition. But when the physical symptoms of anxiety are too great, they may seriously interfere with ability to compete. Similarly, a certain amount of worry about how you perform can be helpful in competition, but severe cognitive symptoms of anxiety such as negative thought patterns and expectations of failure can bring about a self-fulfilling prophecy[7]. If there is a substantial difference between how athlete perform during practice and how he does during competitions, anxiety may be affecting his performance.

Symptoms of Anxiety

Anxiety can be recognised on three levels (Karageorghis 2007)^[1]:

- Cognitive - by particular thought process
- Somatic - by physical response
- Behavioural - by patterns of behaviour

Cognitive	Somatic	Behavioural
Indecision Sense of confusion Feeling heavy Negative thoughts Poor concentration Irritability Fear Forgetfulness Loss of confidence Images of failure Defeatist self- talk Feeling rushed Feeling weak Constant dissatisfaction Unable to take instructions Thoughts of avoidance	Increased blood pressure Pounding heart Increased respiration rate Sweating Clammy hands and feet Butterflies in the stomach Adrenaline surge Dry mouth Need to urinate Muscular tension Tightness in neck and shoulders Trembling Incessant talking Blushing Pacing up and down Distorted vision Twitching Yawning Voice distortion Nausea Vomiting Diarrhoea Loss of appetite Sleeplessness Loss of libido	Biting fingernails Lethargic movements Inhibited posture Playing safe Going through the motions Introversion Uncharacteristic displays of extroversion Fidgeting Avoidance of eye contact Covering face with hand

As we can see anxiety includes state and trait dimensions both of which can show themselves as cognitive and somatic symptoms. An athlete with high anxiety trait is likely to be more anxious in stressful situations. To help the athlete control competitive anxiety somatic technique and cognitive technique can be used[8].

Breath taking techniques

This exercise can be performed while we are standing up, lying down or sitting upright. You should inhale slowly, deeply and evenly through your nose, and exhale gently through your mouth as though flickering, but not extinguishing, the flame of a candle (Karageorghis 2007)^[1]:

- Take a deep breath and allow your face and neck to relax as you breathe out
- Take a second deep breath and allow your shoulders and arms to relax as you breathe out
- Take a third deep breath and allow your chest, stomach and back to relax as you breathe out
- Take a fourth deep breath and allow your legs and feet to relax as you breathe out
- Take a fifth deep breath and allow your whole body to relax as you breathe out
- Continue to breathe deeply for as long as you need to, and each time you

How can athlete control Anxiety?

breathe out say the word 'relax' in your
mind's ear

CONCLUSION

Benson's relaxation response

Benson's technique is a form of meditation that can be used to attain quite a deep sense of relaxation and can be ideal for staying calm in between rounds of a competition. It can be mastered with just a few weeks' practice and comprises of seven easy steps (Karageorghis 2007)^[1]:

1. Sit in a comfortable position and adopt a relaxed posture
2. Pick a short focus word that has significant meaning for you and that you associate with relaxation (e.g. relax, smooth, calm, easy, float, etc.)
3. Slowly close your eyes
4. Relax all the muscles in your body
5. Breathe smoothly and naturally, repeating the focus word
6. Be passive so that if other thoughts enter your mind, dismiss them with, 'Oh well' and calmly return to the focus word - do not concern yourself with how the process is going
7. Continue this for 10 to 15 minutes as required.

Moments of panic, anxiety and emotional ups and downs can interfere with the physical performance at every level. Athletes, who continue to perform with some degree of consistency despite of their feelings of anxiety, have learned to cope in one way or another. Relatively few of us, however, have been taught skills and strategies that would enable us to cope and maintain consistency in performance. Athletes have been helped with their physical skills and strategies, but few have attempted to help them with the development of the mental side of sport and sport performances like kho-kho.

Many athletes with superior physical capabilities have been systematically eliminated from competitive sports because they could not perform on the day of the competition. They might perform beautifully in practice but "choke" in competition. Coaches, parents and teachers have pulled their hair out over athletes who do things so correctly in practice for an entire week and on the day of competition just couldn't do it again. So the truth is that our muscles do not function unless directed to do so by the brain. We do not perform physical skills in isolation without mental skills. Sport performance in kho-kho must be approached from a holistic perspective to integrate the "thinking with our muscles" to produce high levels of performance.

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