

The Role of Coping Responses and Social Resources in Attenuating the Stress of Wrestling

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I INTRODUCTION

Stress is considered by some to be an inherent feature of competitive youth sport. Stress refers to the process by which individuals perceive and respond to particular events, termed stressors, which they appraise as challenging or threatening. In addition to stressors relating directly to the sport organization (e.g. selection pressures, personal performance), athletes may concurrently be experience academic, employment or social stressors.

Stressful appraisals are further categorized as harm/ loss, threat, or challenge. Harm/loss appraisals refer to physical psychological damage already sustained, including an incapacitating injury or illness, loss of valued loved person, or recognitions of a damage to self-social esteem. Threat appraisals refer to the person's expectations of future harm or losses, while challenge appraisal reflects the opportunity for growth or mastery in an encounter, and the potential for benefit. Challenge appraisals are characterized by pleasurable emotions, including excitement, exhilaration; and eagerness, while threat appraisals focus on the potential for harm, and are characterized by negative emotions, such as fear, anxiety, and anger.

A cross section of professional Australian footballers identified sources of stress that went beyond those associated with the competitive event (such as poor performances) and included a lack of feedback, difficulty balancing football, study commitments, and job insecurity

. The influence of both competition and non-competition source of stress parallels previous research involving non-professional athletes and indicates that

the entire sporting experience needs to be taken in to account when developing stress management strategies.

Athletes have identified several sources of acute stress in team activities: receiving unpleasant input from peers, fans, coaches, experiencing pain or injury, making a physical or mental error, receiving a "bad" call from an official, and receiving negative feedback from the coach.

A wide range of sources of stress have been identified that extend well beyond the competitive event. For example, the source of stress identified by Scanlon et. al.(1991) included worries about performing poorly, interpersonal conflict .Balancing skating and study commitments, limited financial resources, and family disturbances.

Sport is an arena of achievement in which ability is publicly tested, scrutinized and evaluated. Because of debilitating effects that stress can have on performance athlete must learn to cope with the demand and pressures of competition if they are to enjoy and succeed in sports.

Anyone, who has been a sport participant or observer has certainly observed creation athletes who tend to "Peak" during competition and, at the same time, other athletes who tend to falter or "choke" in the same competitive situations research on how athletes cope with sport related stress has been recognized for both its practical and its theoretical impotence because of the debilitating effects that stress may have on athletic performance. Stress can affect in ways other than their sport performance. Some drop out of sport because they find athletic competition to be threatening rather than enjoyable.

Sports medicine practitioners and athletic trainers have found that athletes who find competitive situations stressful or anxiety producing appear injury prone and/or seem to take longer to return to activity following injury.

The importance of acknowledging the athlete's appraisals is their direct impact on the individual's emotional response to the stressful event, to the type of coping strategy the athlete selects, and to the effectiveness of that strategy.

An athlete's appraisal of an event may be closely linked to his or her subsequent use of coping strategies- or, if the event is not perceived as stressful to not having to cope all. For example, if an athlete interprets and event as not stressful or only slightly stressful, a coping strategy may not be required. If, however, the event is appraised as highly stressful, then the content of the appraisal will partially determine the athlete's selection of a coping strategy or set of strategies.

Athletes who are involved in competitive sport can expect to be placed regularly under intense physical and psychological demands. These demands require athletics to use not only the technical and tactical skills that they have developed but also cognitive and behavioral coping skills in order to achieve performance success and Coping represents an individual's Cognitive, affective, and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands cognitive appraisal is particularly relevant in the coping process in competitive sport. The manner in which an athlete interprets a stressful event influences the level of perceived stress intensity and influences the athlete's coping responses.

The coping can be viewed as a process that begins with situational appraisal. Primary appraisal refers to how an individual evaluates the personal significance of a situation with regard to his/her values, personal beliefs, situational intentions, and goal commitments. If the individual appraises that his/her goals are at stake, an emotional response occurs and the outcomes are perceived in terms of harm/loss (i.e., damage has already occurred), threat (i.e., the possibility that damage may occur), or challenge (i.e., where people enthusiastically pit themselves against obstacles). Secondary appraisal refers to a cognitive

evaluative process that focuses on what can be done about a stressful person environment.

The Transactional perspective assumes there to be coping responses that serve one of two important functions. Problem focused coping refers to strategies used to manage or alter a stressor through behaviors such as information gathering, goal. Setting, time management skills, and problem solving. Emotion focused coping refers to attempts at regulating emotional responses resulting from a stressor through action to like meditation, relaxation and cognitive efforts to change the meaning an in individual attaches to a situation.

The stressors' can be acute stressors major life events, such as sickness or loss of a loved one, whereas chronic demands refer to recurring daily stressors. In sport, participation in major championship (i.e., Olympics, world cup finals) could be considered major life events, whereas chronic stressors are recurring day to day events associated with sport participation.

Coping strategies deployed by cricketers to deal with stressors were evaluation and planning (learning about opponents, reading (new) opponents, and understanding conditions), proactive psychological skills.

In a study on U.S. Olympic wrestlers for scoul Olympics (Cold, Eklund and Jackson1988) it was observed that wrestlers employed a variety of coping strategies including:

(a) Thought control strategies (blocking distractions, perspective taking, Positive thinking, coping thoughts, and prayer), (b) task focus strategies (narrow, more immediate focus, concentrating on goals), (c) behavioral based strategies (changing orcontrolling the environment, following a set routine) and (d) emotional control strategies (arousal control, visualization). The coping efforts of the Olympic wrestlers reflected a dynamic complex process involving a number of strategies, often in combination.

II REVIEW OF LITERATURE IN THIS RESEARCH PAPER

Holt (2011) examined the coping responses employed by an athlete to manage the daily hassles he experienced in professional sport. He adopted a phenomenological orientation, and gathered data via

four in-depth interviews with an experienced professional cricketers. His findings indicated that stress appraisals were related to endangerment of personal performance goals. Coping strategies deployed to deal with these stressors were evaluation and planning (learning about opponents, reading (new) opponents, and understanding conditions), proactive psychological skills (confidence building and maintaining concentration) and reactive psychological (resilience and self-talk).

Dias, cruz and Fonseca (2010) examined the levels of anxiety, threat perception, and the coping strategies used by Portuguese athletes, and tried to assess differences between athletes of different sexes, ages and sports. The subject 550 male and female participating athletes, aged between 15 and 35 years, representing several individuals and team sports, filled out the Portuguese versions of the sport Anxiety scale the Brief COPE as well as the Cognitive Appraisal Scale in Sport Competition – Threat Perception. The result dictate showed that all athletes experienced anxiety and threat perception, and used varied coping strategies, with a preference for adaptive strategies. Female athletes displayed higher levels of anxiety and threat perception, in addition to a greater use of diverse emotion- and problem-focused coping strategies; male athletes reported a greater substance abuse. Younger athletes seemed to use less efficacious coping strategies, and athletes from individual sports reported higher levels of anxiety, threat perception and venting of emotions; athletes from team sports reported a greater use of humor and substances.

Gauld, Eulund and Jaekson (1988) in twenty members of the U.S. Olympic wrestling team regarding their efforts to cope with stress experienced during the Seoul Olympics Qualitative analyses revealed that the wrestlers employed a variety of coping strategies including : (a) thought control strategies (blocking distractions, perspective taking , Positive thinking, coping thoughts, and prayer), (b) task focus strategies (narrow, more immediate focus, concentrating on goals), (c) behavioral based strategies (changing or visualization). The coping efforts of the Olympic wrestlers were not limited to particular strategies not to single approaches to dealing with a particular stressor but, rather, reflected a dynamic complex process involving a number of strategies, often in combination.

They also suggested that the degree to which coping strategies are well learned or automat zed is related to the perceived effectiveness.

III COLLECTION OF DATA

In order to ensure full co-operation from subject, the scholar had a meeting with them in presence of their respective coaches and managers. The purpose of the study was explained to them and doubts if any were classified in order to ascertain that there was no ambiguity among the subjects regarding the efforts, which they had to put in, for the successful completion of the investigation.

All subjects voluntarily extend their full co-operation and the coaches of respective teams ensured that the subjects were made available for the collection of data as and when required.

Wrestlers were assessed during wrestling meets and one week training period following each meet. The first assessment familiarized the participant with the testing protocol. The last assessment was used for the primary analysis to determine coping consistency.

During the competition, each subject was assessed separately. Each subject was asked to identify most important bout for each meet. Within an hour period following the identified meet, coping was evaluated. Each subject was guided through the coping questionnaire and provided with clarification if requested. Participant were asked to indicate how much they had used each of the coping strategies in the period immediately leading up to and including the meet. For competition only the following eight coping scales were assessed: active coping, planning, suppression of competition activities, positive reinterpretation, venting of feelings, humor, wishful thinking, and self-blame.

IV CONCLUSION

The result of the study support the process view of coping by Inter-university level male wrestlers preferred problem focused coping (planning, active coping, and positive affective state to manage their competitive situations.