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Article

A Study On The Relationship Between Mindfulness, Mental Imagery And Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction

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Keywords

Mental Imagery, Mindfulness, Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction.

Abstract

This study aims to understand the relationship between Mindfulness, Mental Imagery and Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction. This study was done on athletes between age of 18 to 30 years who play competitive team sports in State and National Level such Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Cricket with an experience of at least 1 year. The tools used to measure the variables were The Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) by Brown & Ryan (2003), Sport Imagery Ability Questionnaire by Williams & Cumming (2015) and Athlete's Subjective Performance Scale (ASPS) by Ohad Nahum (2016). The results of the study show that there is a positive correlation between Mental Imagery and Subjective Sport Performance Satisfaction among the athletes. It was further revealed that there is a positive correlation between Mindfulness and Mental Imagery among the athletes. No correlation was found between Mindfulness and Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction.

Introduction

Mindfulness is the psychological process of bringing one's attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment, and can be developed through the practice of meditation and other training. In simple terms mindfulness is nothing but the moment-by-moment awareness of one's own thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations as well as the surrounding environment.

In sports, mindfulness allows athletes to become aware of personal thoughts, feelings, and other internal stimuli and encourages athletes to focus on personal values or processes of sport related skills and game strategies instead of focusing on performance outcomes (Pineau, Glass, & Kaufman, 2014). Awareness and acceptance of the present moment may allow athletes to focus less on negative thoughts, which may provide athletes with more energy and focus for the athletic tasks at hand (Pineau et al., 2014). Mindful athletes may be better equipped to allow the focus of their attention to be directed toward task-relevant external stimuli, such as opponents, and behavioural choices, such as implementation of skills and strategies that may lead to improved athletic performance (Moore, 2009).

Mental imagery in simple terms can be described as the pictures in our mind or any visual representation in the absence of the environmental input. Mental Imagery is also referred as visualization or mental rehearsal. This process of mental imagery involves recalling from the memory the pieces of information stored from our experience and shaping these pieces into meaningful images.

In sports, athletes use mental imagery in order to improve both physical and psychological skills. Mental imagery is used to improve concentration, enhance motivation, build confidence, control emotional responses, acquire and practice sports related skills and strategies, prepare for the competition, coping with injury and pain, and in problem solving. Athletes mostly use mental imagery during the practice as well as in competition. But it is reported that athletes use mental imagery more often in competition than during the practice (Munroe et al., 2000; Salmon, Hall, & Haslam, 1994).

Interestingly, most of the research centred around sports mental imagery focuses on practice situations, but in reality, the athletes appear to be using mental imagery more for the performance enhancement in sports prior to the event. It has also been noted that athletes also use mental imagery while they are hurt or injured.

Sports Performance is determined by an athlete's technical, tactical, physiological, psychological as well as social characteristics. Satisfaction is the psychological state that is obtainable in sports. Satisfaction in sports is essential for an athlete's sports performance and enjoyment. It is a fundamental part of enjoying the sport as well as in improving the athletes' performance and the degree to which he or she achieves his or her anticipated goal. Athlete satisfaction is considered to be an important aspect in building an affective success and efficacy in sports.

Methodology

Participants

This study was done on athletes between age of 18 to 30 years who play competitive team sports in State and National Level such Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Cricket with an experience of at least 1 year.

Research Design

Correlational Research Design. It investigates the relationships between variables without the researcher controlling or manipulating any of them.

Research Instruments

Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) by Brown & Ryan (2003) was used to the mindfulness among the athletes. The 15-item MAAS measures the core characteristic of mindfulness, namely, a receptive state of mind in which attention, informed by a sensitive awareness of what is occurring in the present, simply observes what is taking place.

Sport Imagery Ability Questionnaire by (SIAQ) by Williams & Cumming (2015) was used to measure the mental imagery ability of the athletes. The 15-item SIAQ is designed to measure the ability to image different content athletes frequently use in their sport (such as skills, strategies, goals, feelings and emotions, and mastering difficult situations). It can be used to assess an athlete's imagery ability of this sport specific content as a one-off assessment or monitor how imagery ability may change over time.

Athlete's Subjective Performance Satisfaction Scale (ASPS) by Ohad Nahum (2016) was used to measure the subjective sports performance satisfaction of the athletes. The 6-items Athlete's Subjective Performance Scale (ASPS) measures the most important aspects of performance, with two items referring to three aspects of performance: general performance, team contribution, and personal ability.

Sampling technique

Snowball sampling was used to collect the data. It is a recruitment technique in which the research participants are asked to assist the researcher in identifying other potential subjects for the study.

Hypothesis

H1

There is no significant relationship between Mindfulness and Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction.

H2

There is no significant relationship between Mental Imagery and Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction.

H3

There is no effect of Mindfulness and Mental Imagery in Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction

Method of analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 29th version was used to perform the data analysis. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to investigate the relationship between Mindfulness, Mental Imagery and Sport Performance Satisfaction.

Result

Table 1

Shows the descriptive statistics of the gender of the athletes

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	52	86%
Female	8	13%
Total	60	100%

Table 2

Shows the descriptive statistics of the competitive team sports played by the athletes

Sport	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Basketball	4	6.70%
Cricket	30	50.0%
Football	22	36.70%
Volleyball	4	6.70%
Total	60	100%

Table 3

Shows the inferential statistics of Pearson's correlation between Mindfulness, Mental Imagery and Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3
1.Mindfulness	2.583	0.497	-	0.268*	0.169
2.Mental Imagery	2.016	0.676	0.268*	-	0.281*
3.Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction	1.900	0.302	0.169	0.281*	-

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to understand the relationship between Mindfulness, Mental Imagery and Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction. This study was done on athletes between age of 18 to 30 years who play competitive team sports such Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Cricket with an experience of at least 1 year.

The results show there is no relationship Mindfulness and Subjective Sports Performance Satisfaction. In sports, mindfulness allows athletes to become aware of personal thoughts, feelings, and other internal stimuli and encourages athletes to focus on personal values or processes of sport related skills and game strategies instead of focusing on performance outcomes (Pineau, Glass, & Kaufman, 2014). Subjective Sports Satisfaction is the degree to which the athletes achieve his or her desired or anticipated goal or the game outcome. But according to the results depicted, there is no relationship between being mindful and the subjective satisfaction in the sports performance.

The results also depict that there is a positive correlation between Mindfulness and Mental Imagery among the athletes. Athletes make use of mental imagery in sports so as to improve both physical and psychological skills. It can be concluded on the basis of the results that being mindful can also improve the athlete's mental imagery skills which can significantly enhance their strengths and help them eliminate their weaknesses.

The findings of the study can help identify whether or not the athlete's mindfulness and their mental imagery abilities help athletes to maintain a vision of what they would like to achieve in their sport. The results of the study can examine and understand the importance of mindfulness and mental rehearsal in sports and game. The findings of the study can help the Sports and Exercise Psychologist to assist players in developing mental imagery skills, improve/practice mindfulness to enhance their performance in sports.

The sample size taken for the study is 60 which is less. This might have influenced the results of the study. Response bias might have affected the responses given by the participants. Question order bias might have affected the responses given by the participants. Lack of qualitative approach in the study might have limited the deeper understanding of the relationship between the variables.

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