



## CONSCIOUS RECOGNITION OF INTENSITY OF MOOD AND THE ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THAT MOOD ON BEHAVIOR

**Dr. Amitabh Tiwari**

Asstt. Professor of Physical, Education  
V.S.S.D. College Kanpur

Throughout our daily life, we experience a series of different moods. We feel saddened by the death of a friend, whilst feel joyful and happy on the birth of a child or at the wedding. Similarly, in almost every task from flying a plane to performing an operation or programming a real time system, one would expect to feel a wide range of positive and negative feelings. These feelings and moods may cause disruptions in our daily task. These disruptions along with interference in energy, sleep, and thinking are common, painful, and often-fatal. The mood affect various different activities of people like creativity, memory task reasoning, behavior, cognitive processing, information processing, learning, decision making and sports performance (Khan, Hierons and Brinkman,2007) .

Athletic careers are filled with fluctuations of fortune that allow athletes to experience both the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat within their own career. For example, we can reflect on the career of American swimmer Pablo Morales, who won three medals in the 1984 Olympic Games, but Four years later, in 1988, failed to make in the U.S. team. However, he did not quit there, and after a brief retirement from the sports, returned in 1992 to make it in the U.S. Olympic team and went on to capture a gold medal in the 100m butterfly event. On the other hand, Kathy, after falling to

fourth place during the 10000m championship race, dropped out of the competition and attempted suicide by jumping off the bridge. This is not a desired behavioral response of an athlete at any level of competition.

These stories are two extreme, but heralded examples of individual response to poor athletic performance. Given the uncertainty of outcome, that is nature of any sporting events. All athletes experience failure at one time or another. Indeed, this experience is endemic within sport. Yet, some people possess the ability to bounce back from adversity, while others simply give up or drop out. It is clear that the consequences of failure can be either motivating or disruptive depending on how one explains and subsequently deals with that failure (Mummery and Schofield, 2004).

The best of the best athletes can choke, slump, underachieve and fail, if they focus on the wrong things, i.e. unable to let rise from setbacks, errors, mental mistakes, lack of self-confidence, and have difficulty handling performance pressure, fear of failure, have unrealistic expectations and experience competitive anxiety. Leave the mental side of sports performance, chance to makes more susceptible to performance problems of athletes such as psych-outs, choking, slumps, and mental blocks.



Taylor (1988) delineates slumps from occasional drops in performance. Performance slumps are behavioral manifestations of extended poor performance. Although the source of the extended period of poor performance can be caused by physical or technical changes to the individual, efforts have been made from the psychological perspective to identify the ways that individuals adaptively cope with extended periods of poor performance. Grove and Heard (1997) showed that dispositional optimism and trait sport confidence were positively related to the adaptive use of problem-focused strategies and negatively related to the maladaptive use of emotion-focused strategies. Underlying the study of psychology of slumps is the desire to rectify extended poor performance by the correct use of psychological skills or by inoculating the individual participant against the negative consequences of the initial poor performance (Mummery and Schofield, 2004).

The sportsmen have to be highly vigilant, alert and in control of their nerves, to perform as they wish in the competition. Therefore, the sport training gives greater emphasis on preparing the athletes psychologically along with physically for optimum performance. It is believed that the sportsman's success mainly depends on his psychological makeup and different psychic abilities (Khan 1986).

Somehow the misconception persists that if one practices and trains hard enough physically for the competition, every thing else will magically come together. In fact, during

a given competition or between two competitions, that closely follow each other, there is usually no marked change in an athlete's skill level, physiological capacity, or biomechanical efficiency. The fluctuation in performance is generally caused by the fluctuation in the athlete's mental control. Each of us has control over his own behavior and activation that allows athletes to learn and develop skills and strategies necessary to consciously regulate our responses in order to maintain an optimal level of performance (Jean and Willium 1994)

Green (1977) concluded that every change in the mental- emotional state is consciously or unconsciously accompanied by an appropriate change in the bodily state. By accepting, this fact, we can learn to exercise with greater mastery and control over our functions and responses. Our body tends to do what they are told to do; the trick is to learn how to communicate with our bodies. This is the principle of learning how to self- regulate arousal and relaxation. Once an athlete has learned to identify which mental- emotional and bodily state and feeling accompany superior sports performance, he or she can learn to program these responses voluntarily to set the state for another superior performance.

Psychological states of athletes before and during competition are mostly emotional reflex reactions to complicated and existing situations in the player's consciousness, before the match. Their intensity is usually proportional to the importance of the match. There is a pre-start state, which



may appear as early as several hours before the match or as late as seconds before the match. The waiting state can influence the player's adaptation because of changes in the activation level of the central nervous system. Subjectively it can often be compared to 'stage fright', and is easily transferred to the whole team and the coach. Much depends upon the athlete's temperament and his previous experience in competition, as well as his inner feeling of being prepared or not prepared, for the match.

The psychological stresses that athletes have to contend today, are tremendous and the vast majority of athletes who consistently perform well are those that have their "head together". They are the ones who are psychologically mature, have stable personalities, and whose personal growth and development have not been neglected. They are the ones who keep things in perspective and cope well with difficult situation because they are "cool" adaptable, independent, self-confident and self disciplined as well as committed.

Success in sports greatly depends upon one's level of aspiration. Every individual has goals, which he aspires to achieve. In any performance, he has his expectations. The standard he expects to achieve in any task is described by psychologists as his level of aspiration. One of the most common desires of a sportsman is to excel, either over others or over the level of his own previous best performance. If the coach and the athlete properly manipulate the level of aspiration, it can be used as a motivational device to improve performance (Benjamin 1977).

The potential athletes must first be motivated to participate in sports. Once the player has begun to participate, the sport itself can become a motivation. Motivation builds up confidence, which leads to the control of their movements. Self-control, coupled with concentration, assists each sportsman to become an active and creative force in society (Chattopadhyay 1986).

Self-confidence can also be considered from a sports-specific perspective in terms of the relationship it has with performance. Athletes who have high self-confidence consistently outperform athletes who have low self-confidence. To have successful performance, there is a need of high self-confidence and concentration.

It is believed that effective concentration is a vital pre requisite of athletes achieving optimal performance (Moran, 2004). Mallet et.al. (2000) have found favorable performance outcomes as a result of manipulating athletes' attentional focus in competitive situations. Based on the principle that different sport situations require different attentional demands, athletes must realize that different types of concentration are required during a game. Given that this is a complex element, it must continually be practiced in order to achieve consistency in performance. Concentration is closely related to the arousal, anxiety, anger etc (Gelines, R. and Chandler, K.M. 2001).

Arousal is a general physiological and psychological activation, varying from deep sleep to intense excitement (Weinberg & Gould, 2003). All athletes have an optimal level



of arousal. Too little or too much arousal can negatively affect performance. Some athletes may need to “psych” themselves up, while others may need to relax in order to reach their peak performance level. Given that athletes require different levels of arousal for optimal performance, it is important that athletes learn to identify which mental and emotional states are necessary for success. Once athletes have identified their optimal level of arousal, they can learn to voluntarily program these responses.

Conversely, anxiety is a negative emotional state in which feelings of nervousness, worry, and apprehension are associated with activation or arousal of the body (Weinberg and Gould, 2003). Anxiety is a multidimensional construct comprised of mental, physical, and behavioral components. In a competition, athletes usually experience stress or anxiety due to the increased psychological demand of the sports competition situation. Anxiety is a psychological response to a real or imagined threat. A certain amount of anxiety is needed for peak performance. But higher level of anxiety inhibits performance by causing mental, muscular tension, disturbing coordination of the movements. Therefore, it is a very important aspect to be handled in a highly competitive situation (Singh, 1990). Controlling anxiety, especially cognitive anxiety, is an important mental skill for athletes (Cashmore, 2002). Dunn (1999) found that college ice hockey players worried about fear of failure, negative social evaluation, injury or physical danger, and the unknown. As such, athletes need to learn to regulate anxiety levels.

Regulating anxiety means the athlete must become aware of his feelings during practice and competition, and learn to control or adjust those feelings accordingly (Hanin, 2000).

Anger too can cause poor play by an individual or a team, this may quickly lead to a let-down in play. Anger can be a two-edged sword: It is a motivating force when acknowledged and channeled skillfully. But if you lose control, anger can really throw you off your game, and not just in sports. The Hockey players, who are aggressive, score more goals than those who are not, and that men who win karate matches score higher on anger, vigor, and self-confidence scales than those who lose (Gelines, R and Chandler, K.M., 2001).

The after-start or competition state lasts from the beginning of the match until the end. It is an emotional reaction to the source or presumed result of the match similar to the pre-start as far as extremes of passivity and aggressiveness are concerned. Good results can evoke euphoric states of despair, irritation, or even rage. Therefore, the athletes should be trained to be psychologically sound and emotionally stable before, during and after the competition. The basic human emotions of excitement, anxiety, anger, aggression, self-confidence, fear, tension, fatigue are qualities, which can affect the mood state of the athlete's. These qualities are often inherent. The tempo of the players and team play is largely depended upon psychological factors for both beginner and experienced players.

Regular assessment of mood may also facilitate systematic



evaluation of adaptation to training demands, potential risk of staleness and burnout (Morgan, 1987), recovery from overtraining syndrome, effectiveness of the pre-competition taper period (Hall, and Terry, 1997), and adaptation to travel fatigue. Mood profiling may also have a role to play in screening for pathogenic behavior (Terry 2000).

The analyses of the self-regulation of mood in particular seem to be gaining increasing momentum within the past couple of years. This is perhaps because mood is now recognized as a central element of human behavior, and mood management is basic to many of our common daily activities. People do not self regulate mood. They in addition to sensing their mood levels also make judgments about that mood as they monitor the significance of it; evaluate the mood; and make certain rudimentary changes in decision. The management of the mood experience as it is occurring apparently is an integral psychological process (Thayer, Newman, and McClain 1994).

Self-regulation skills such as imagery, mental rehearsal, self-talk, etc. may assist athletes when setting and meeting championship level performance goals that have been accomplished outside of the competitive situation. Therefore, self-regulation skills are deemed predictive of generalization of performance for elite athletes who have demonstrated the ability of and motivation for sports achievement in situations of lower immediate demand and threat of punishment or failure to the situation of sports competition. Self-regulation skills may involve controlling

performance enhancement factors, such as arousal level, performance expectancy, and attentional focus (Barkhoff, 2002) when there is a great demand for performance goal and the threat of failure, if they are not met. These performance enhancement factors have also been shown to be predictors of future sports performance (Barkhoff, 2000).

Conscious recognition of intensity of mood and the anticipated impact of that mood on behavior is proposed to underlie the self-regulatory process. An important aspect of mood regulation is the notion that it does not necessarily involve mood changes. Regulation is concerned with the cognitive evaluation of the mood and its anticipated impact on behavior. Thus if individual is in the appropriate mood, regulation strategies might involve mood maintenance (Thayer 1994).

Research by Morgan(1979) on mood state among athletes has shown that elite athlete exhibit a mood profile that is higher in vigor and lower in the negative mood state of tension, depression, anger, fatigue, and confusion, than the average individual. Elite athletes displayed a healthier mood state profile than less successful athletes. He further added that successful performance is associated with above vigor coupled with below average anger, confusion, depression, fatigue, and tension. Where as McGowan, and Miller (1989) while as comparing karate semifinalists in fighting and forms with those placed lower using the profile of mood state (POMS) found no significant differences in any of the mood subscale of tension,





depression, anger, vigor, fatigue, and confusion.

Rowley et al. (1995) found limited use of the POMS in differentiating between successful and unsuccessful athletes whereas Terry (1995) indicated that the POMS were capable of differentiating between successful and unsuccessful top level athletes. Beedie, (2000) noted that POMS was not useful for predicting level of achievement and determine the standard of a performer. It displayed moderate (vigor, confusion, depression), small (anger, tension), and very small (fatigue) relationships with performance outcome. Reed, (2001) argued that the POMS was unable to predict athletic success but did differentiate between athletic and non-athletic populations. Morgan and Pollock (1977) stated that the POMS did successfully differentiate athletes from the non-athletes norms, but were unable to differentiate athletes of differing levels of ability. While some results are mixed, overall, there is strong prospective evidence for mood state model (Cockerill et al., 1991). Many correlated studies have been observed between sport performances and different states of mood in general population (Brehm, 1997; Frazier, 1988; Gomer, 1995 and Thayer, 1996).

Brandao, (1998) demonstrated that POMS variables are not stable and should not be used to reflect extended periods of effects caused by the deliberate impositions of conditions. He further adds that POMS variables should not be used to reflect psychological effects caused by repeated and relatively long exposures to POMS variables. They serve better to

reflect reactions to short-term life experiences. The effectiveness of mood in predicting performance would depend on the type and duration of the sports, the relative homogeneity of the participants' skill and the performance (Terry, 1995). Lane and Terry (2000) extended this proposition that the association between mood subscale and their relationship with performance was mediated by depression. It has been found that pre-performance depressed mood is associated with high scores on anger, confusion, fatigue, and tension with low vigor (Lane, Terry 2000, Beedie, Curry, Clark, 2001, Firth, 2002 and Lovejoy, 2001). By contrast, when individuals experience anger and tension in the absence of depressed mood, they tend to be associated with vigor and self-confidence (Lane, 2001). Depressed mood had a moderating effect on anger or tension in the sport of running. Lane and Terry (2000) stressed that tension and depression should be assessed independently rather than combining them to form a single mood state called negative mood. They further state that tension can have a motivating effect when it is experienced independently of depression. Tension can act as a warning signal, informing the individual that unless a great deal of effort is made, performance would not match expectation. On the other hand, when tension and depression are experienced simultaneously, the negative nature of depression can lead to symptoms of tension being interpreted as inability to cope, and thus tension can debilitate performance.

When examining the association between depressed mood and other



mood states. Participants were divided into depressed mood and no-depressed mood groups on the basis of responses to from depression items on Bruner Mood scale derivation of original POMS. The studies supported the hypothesis (Lane and Terry, 2000) that participants in the depressed mood group would simultaneously report higher scores for anger, confusion, fatigue, and tension but lower vigor scores.

Rohaly (1994) investigated gender differences in mood state response to training periodization. He concluded that the significant mood disturbances, fatigue score increases and vigor decrease occurred during overtraining compared to the other three stages. Vigor increased significantly during taper stage. No sex differences were found in any of the factors for any stage. Examination on gender, trait anxiety and mood state responses to overtraining indicated that college level women swimmer consistently reported higher trait anxiety than men. As training volume increased, tension and total mood scores on the POMS increased significantly. During taper, total mood scores reverted to baseline but tension scores remained elevated. Women increased in tension during taper but men remained stable. Female college swimmers differed in trait anxiety and global mood scores to male swimmers. Differences also existed during taper (Tobar, 2002).

Study on the effects of exercise and outcome feedback on the mood state showed that exercisers displayed better mood states than non-exercisers when supplied with positive and

neutral feedback, however a lower mood was found in the exercisers supplied with negative feedback when compared to the non- exercisers. They concluded that exercise followed by a negative out come resulted in the intensification of negative mood states such as anger and depression (Turnbull and Wolfson (2002). Although Puffer and McShane (1992) argued that, “for the most part, the competitive athlete is a well-adjusted individual who demonstrates considerable vigor and well-being, as well as less depression, anxiety, and fatigue than non-athletic counterparts”, they found that well-trained athletes often suffer from the phenomenon of overtraining which can express itself in the form of increased mood disturbance. Russell (2002) noted that exercise improved mood from pre- to post-test. The enjoyable characteristics of the distraction and not the distraction itself were responsible for mood enhancement.

A study by Thayer, Newman, and Mc Clain (1994), which investigated the incidence and efficacy of different categories of mood-regulating behaviors among the general population, found the most common behaviors to reduce nervousness, tension, or anxiety in the short term to be, in descending order of popularity, affiliative- communicative (e.g., call, talk to, or be with someone), exercises, relaxation techniques, rest, music, and food. Enhance the energy component of mood, Thayer et.al. (1994) found that the most effective strategies were to control thoughts through self-talk, listen to music, take a shower, exercise, take a nap, and do something to keep busy, eat something, or drink a



caffeinated beverage. Rippere (1977) asked a sample of people in London, what's the thing to do when you are feeling depressed? She found that the most frequently mentioned categories were, social, cognitive exercise (think of reason for it), direct action (rectify the situation), distraction (keep busy), and listen to music. Parker and Brown's (1982) also judged the most effective techniques to be cognitive, social, distraction, religious activities, direct action and music. The Gallup also identified religious practices as most effective strategies, followed by exercise, social, and distraction categories.

Stevens and Lane (2001) found that athletes reported exercise, listening to music, talking to or being with someone, and thought control as the most common mood regulating strategies, although their relative effectiveness was not established.

In Indian perspective at elite level, winning Hockey competitions teams is mainly directed for develop physical aspects of the game. Drills are designed to improve physical and technical skills like stick handling, passing, shooting and marking the opposition. Mental skill like attention, concentration, and emotional control are relatively neglected. When people do get around talking about the mental game, it is usually in terms of qualities like pride, character, and confidence.

There has been very little research investigating mood regulating strategies used by Indian athletes in general and Hockey players in particular. The scholar has chosen to understand how Indian Hockey players

deal with intense mood states that might impair their performance.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The purpose of the study was to assess the self-regulative strategies of mood used by Indian Hockey Players.

### **DELIMITATION**

The study has been delimited to the National and International level male and female Hockey players of India.

### **LIMITATIONS**

The extraneous factors (such as cultural variation, weather condition, recreational activities, pattern of growth and development etc.) influences their personality, attitude, education, profession, life style, habits and mental state that may impinge upon the responses of subjects and results of the study, and which can not be controlled, may be treated as limitation of this study.

### **DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATION OF THE TERMS MOOD**

Lane and Terry (2000) define mood as "a set of feelings, ephemeral in nature, varying in intensity and duration, and usually involving more than one emotion".

Mood is considered as conscious state of mind or predominant emotion. Mood are assumed to be effective states that tend to last a little longer and weaker state of uncertain origin and usually involve more than one emotion with varying intensity and duration. It the expression of changing emotion and outward presentation of our inner feelings. In other words, mood as diffuse or global feeling, may lead to take self-regulatory action, designed to maintain good mood or eliminate bad mood. It has profound effect on our





thought, motivation, and behavior. Moods reflect changing non-specific psychological disposition to evaluate, interpret and act on past, present and future concern in certain pattern ways and affects range of processes including perception, reasoning, memory and behavior, all of which may be involved with performance.

### **SELF-REGULATION**

Karoly (1993) defines self-regulation as: "those processes, internal and/or transactional, that enable an individual to guide his/ her goal-directed activities over time and across changing circumstances (contexts)". Regulation implies modulation of thought, affect, behavior, or attention via deliberate or automated use of specific mechanisms and supportive meta- skills. The processes of self- regulation are initiated when routinized activity is impeded or when goal- directedness is otherwise made salient (e.g. the appearance of a challenge, the failure of habitual action patterns, etc).

### **SELF- REGULATING STRATEGIES**

Rusting and Nolen-Hoeksema (1998) defined self-regulating strategies "as thoughts and behaviors intended to eliminate, maintain, or change emotional state".

Conscious recognition of the intensity of mood and the anticipated impact of that mood on behavior is proposed to underlie the self - regulatory process (Mandler, 1984). An important aspect of mood regulation is the notion that it does not necessarily involve mood changes. Regulation is concerned with the cognitive evaluation of the mood and its anticipated impact on behavior. Thus, if the individual is in

the appropriate mood, regulation strategies might involve mood maintenance.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Our mood can have an enormous impact on our physiological state, which is directly related to the performance. If a player is suffering from negative mood state than his physiological state and performance may be adversely affected.

Since mood is proposed to be a more effective precision of performance, the ability to control mood would be a useful psychological tool for any athlete. The strategies to control mood that threaten performance represents one of the compelling challenges for applied sports psychologists.

The analysis of the self-regulation of mood in particular seems to be gaining increasing momentum within the past couple of years. This is perhaps because mood is now recognized as a central element of human behavior, and mood management is basic to many of our common daily activities. There is a variety of effective techniques for mental activation. Such skills and strategies should be used to buildup appropriate activation, when athletes are not psyched up enough for practice or competition.

The knowledge of mood regulation strategies of players may be helpful for coaches and athletes in support of psychological preparation for the pre-competition through the psycho-regulatory process. It may not only help in designing suitable program for the athlete, to develop the required



psychological characteristic and to obtain maximum performance, but could also suggest ways and means to overcome the psychological situation and to motivate the athlete to put in their best during training and competition.

The findings of the present study shall contribute in the following ways:

1. The result of this study will help the coaches to understand the mood-regulating strategies used by National and International Indian level hockey Players. Thus, this will help in efficient organization of training.
2. The findings of the study are likely to provide guidelines for the psychological preparation of hockey players.
3. The findings may also suggest the ways and means for reducing negative mood and improve positive mood of hockey players through self-regulating strategies.
4. The finding of the study may help the players to enhance performance through use of mood regulative strategies.
5. Result of the study may help the hockey players learn to control, monitor, evaluate their mood, develop, and implement personal mood-regulative strategies.

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