CHAPTER I

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Sport is a highly specialized motor activity. The participation in sports warrants a fundamental desire to reach the targeted goal by surpassing others. Every sport activity helps to assess the level of performance of an individual who participates in it. The generally accepted skills and techniques in training and coaching in specialized events determine the quality of performance displayed by the athlete in a competitive sport.

Performances in sports competitions are heavily influenced not only by the genetic endowment of the individual and by training but also by body size, motivation, opportunities for practice, availability of infrastructure, social condition and immediate environmental conditions. So the sports performance is also based on the collective influence of many factors and not a single factor.

Technological advancement has lead to a greater sedentary life style when compared to the past, where a fair amount of physical activity was common. Walking and cycling activities are surpassed, when people are opting to travel in cars and buses. Microwave ovens and mixers have replaced manual cooking and grinding. People are addicted to the television and Internet rather than socializing themselves. They now meet friends, over the telephone or through e-mail. Hence one should make an effort to find ways to move one’s body. Anything that moves one’s limb is not only a fitness tool, it is also a great stress blaster.
The World Health Organization (1998)\(^1\) has published in its committee report argues, “Health not as the mere absence of disease, but rather as a state of complete mental physical and social well-being.” Sport is as old as human society and it has achieved a universal status in the modern world. Sport now enjoys popularity, which outstrips the other identified forms of social activity, and has become an integral part of the educational process.

The relationship between sport and society is not one sided. Sport inculcates in us the spirit of cooperation, courage, sportsmanship, honesty, self-discipline and a respect for the rules and fairness. Sport is a social phenomenon because it is a playful, competitive, skilful and institutionalized activity. On one side society provides goals, facilities, infrastructure, competitions and awards. On the other hand, competitive sport provides concern for participation, acquiring fame in society, physical and mental wellness, character building, glory, money and recognition, which have special significance for the development of national integration. Sport indeed has been a mirror of the society. Throughout the world, sport has a popular appeal among sports persons of all ages in building social harmony.

In the modern competitive world, sport is becoming a highly specialized competitive area of human activity; every nation is trying hard to produce sportspersons who could bring laurels in various competitions at National and International levels. Such honours in sport have already acquired a certain prestige-value for representing their respective nation. It is natural that improving the standards in the field of sport has become a focal point of attention, study and

effort on the part of physical educators, coaches, trainers and research workers almost in all the countries of the world. In this effort, various disciplines like psychology, education, medicine, physical sciences, etc., are getting more and more involved. The result is that achievement levels of athletes are improving year by year and in every Olympic/international competition, many records are broken and the standard of sport is improved.

According to Sachdev (1994)² “think big and aim high for you are sure to win. Let your ambition be higher. Be true to your own self. Your aspiration may seem a mere daydream and wild castles in the air at the start, never mind and never fear. What, appears impossible today will become a reality tomorrow with your determination, dedication and application.”

Modern Concept on Management of Stress

The most of our 21st-century life is in increasing stress. Just as animals evolve and adapt to new environment, survivors of our generation will be the individuals who have to learn to adjust to and enjoy the “future shocks” of our changing world. We cannot change all the future source of stress that we will probably have to face, but we can change our responses to them.

Broadly speaking, the term ‘stress’ refers to a typical condition of mental and emotional disquiet. It is a non-specific response of a body to any demand made on it.

Stress is the tension and pressures that result when an individual views a situation presenting a demand as a threat to his capacity or resources.

Stress is a familiar word in today’s modern living. People from all walks of life complain about stress practically from everything i.e. from work, from school, from parents, from friends, from an illness and even from simply doing routine work! For this reason, stress management is gaining importance as we realize the need to deal with the “wear and tear” that our bodies are experiencing under the effect of stress.

The stress web (2006) justifies, “as opposed to what most people thought, stress is not exactly all bad. Most of the so-called stress that we experience is self-generated. How we perceive life, whether an event makes us feel threatened or stimulated, encouraged or discouraged, happy or sad is dependent to a large extent on how we perceive ourselves. Stress has both physical and emotional effects on us and it can create both positive and negative feelings in us. As a positive influence, stress can help compel us to action; it can result in a new awareness and an exciting new perspective. On the flip side, stress can also result in feelings of distrust, rejection, anger, and depression, which in turn can lead to more chronic problems later on. Simply put, stress can either help or hinder us depending on how we react to it.”

Peiffer (2001)\(^4\) justifies that, "stress cannot be defined in objective terms. It can be described totally at a subjective level. It can change and cause discomfort, physically or emotionally." This definition allows for individual differences in attitude and perception towards situational sources of stress.

A subjective definition of Peiffer (2001)\(^5\) tries to makes it clear that "stress is not the same thing as a great work load, a lot of responsibility or having demands made. If these scenarios were automatically synonymous with stress, then nobody could be expected to experience them free of stress. There are people who have a lot to do and yet stay unstressed by it; there are people who carry great responsibility and who cope with it very well." Stress is partly a result of the situation itself; it is also to some extent, caused by our attitude towards that situation.

Lazarus (2003)\(^6\) goes even further and argues that, "stress, emotions and coping belong together as one conceptual unit and that separating than was only justified for the convenience of data analysis."

According to Aillen (1983),\(^7\) "As a source of motivation, stress can spur us on to creative work and it can enrich our pleasurable activities, as Han's Selye makes it clear in his book *Stress without Distress*. There is an important

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\(^5\) Ibid, p. 254


difference between life's stimulating thrills and its overwhelming anxieties." This is why it is best to manage stress responses rather than try to remove them.

The process of stress management is one of the keys to a happy and successful life in modern society. The treadmill of pressures of existing and performing in contemporary society is quick to dislodge the inner peace necessary for optimum physical and mental health and the ability to be at our highest level of performance and achievement. Bacci (2000) is of the opinion that "the most intense period of learning in a child's life is between the ages of birth and approximately eight years old. It is during that period of time in which Alpha waves predominate in the child's brain. Alpha waves have been related to periods of deep meditation and inner quietness." She further states that, "it is in that quietness that we can be fully aware and present. Inner quietness is synonymous with the mind functioning at a higher level. Yet as adults we sacrifice awareness and presence in the name of performance, and then we fail to perform at our best because we lack focus. It is time to recognize that, how much effortful, anxious, performance-based approach to life systematically undermines our potential." Techniques for stress management have been developed to calm down the inner storm of stress of the sportspersons.

Learning to become more aware of one's own stress symptoms is the first major step in stress management and the healing process. It is often helpful to monitor your daily symptoms in a stress dairy where you match the stressful events with the symptoms experienced. For example; you may find that if you are

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stuck in the tournament, which was not finished at the right time, you may experience irritability and headaches. In this case it will be important to use these symptoms as a clue that you have to begin managing that stress more effectively when it happens.

The study and practice of the managerial skill can be traced to earliest times. The constructions of the Great Wall of China, Pyramids in Egypt are good paradigms of management. Although we can see the study and practice of management since the earliest times, the intense and thorough investigation, and propagation of the art and science of management began in the early part of twentieth century. Today almost every university in India offers programmes in business administration, and other such specialization. It is also common for many schools/faculty of physical education to offer one or more courses in administration/management. Still, we can say that sports management is in infancy, but now, even in our country, sports have become a dominant feature in our society, and in organizations, where the major domain of operation is sport it needs very good managerial skills to manage sports persons to enrich of our country in the field of sport and games.

Adams (1989) believes that, “the key for any corporate stress management program is the support of top management. If the corporate culture of the organization is the cause of the stress and cannot be addressed by top management, the objective of the stress management program will be reduced in protecting sports persons from their sport and games.”

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According to Edward and Ronald (1989)\textsuperscript{10} "Learning to enjoy the challenge of stress will take practice. It can also be fun, as you see yourself becoming more and more able to cope with and enjoy life. With daily use, you will fully benefit from this program of stress management. The skills are much like other physical skills in that they take some time to learn. Home practice will be helpful when learning these exercises, but soon you will be able to relax and take action calmly without written or spoken instructions."

Personal success in adapting to environmental challenges, though remarkable, does have its limits to social, technological and economic challenges. Present move/challenges at times exceed the adaptive capacities of most of the people. However, constant attention to the aspects of daily life style is very essential in order to overcome such challenges.

**Modern Concept of Socio-Economic Status in Sport**

Most of the opinions for socialization into primary and secondary level of sport, indicates that the family of origin is an influential social system. Socio-economic status is recognized as a significant variable by social scientists. Every individual wants live and to live he must earn a livelihood. While earning for a living he has to possess a certain status in the society. According to scientific and economic development of a country, individuals get different vocations, varying degrees of wealth and possess different levels of economic power. The strata of society denote categories of people in terms of economic and social groups. These groups are held together on the basis of occupation, income, standard of

living, education and other criteria. Stratification is based on economic system obtained from society.

According to Psechtreatment web (2005),
11 “socio-economic factors will influence consciousness and achievement of the individuals. Fitness consciousness may be due to different expected benefits on the part of both individuals and the society. Individuals are motivated by seeking the feeling of well-being, an antidote to tension and for general vigor and vitality.” Social objectives may vary from society to society and individual-to-individual sometimes that may be based on their economic standard

Taylor (1992)12 says that, “Socio-economic status includes financial resources, occupational prestige, educational and occupational opportunities and the power that such resources give to influence others. People are usually classified by their occupations into upper class, which had inherited wealth, and hold jobs and great prestige, the middle class which includes mostly professional, managerial and sales people and lower class which includes blue collar, unskilled and semi-skilled workers.”

The socio-economic condition of a family obviously refers to the social and economic status of its members. It has been observed in democratic societies that families differ from one another not only in terms of income. According to Savithri (1979),
13 “families differ according to the occupation, education, type of

dwelling, lifestyle and culture, while the core socio-economic factors appears to be the same. The relative importances of those factors appear to be the same. The relative importance of those factors differs from country to country and from society to society depending upon local conditions.”

Dorcas and David (1992) say that, “the social class is often divided into upper, middle and lower class, based on a family income, occupational level, educational level, or location of residence. It could be inferred form the results of the study that the social class is important, because class difference influences the socialization of children.”

Sharma (2004) argues that, “the socio-economic status of the group and the status of an individual in his group influence the competition and co-operation behaviour. An individual from lower class competes for different reasons and for different things from those motivating people in the middle and upper economic groups. Socio-economic factors will influence fitness consciousness and achievement of the individuals. Fitness consciousness may be due to different expected benefits on the part of both individuals and the society. Individuals may be motivated by seeking the feeling of well being as an antidote to tension and for general vigor and vitality.” Social objectives may vary in higher society and from individual to individual and sometimes that would be based on their economic standard.

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Frost (1971)\textsuperscript{16} justifies that; “an individual’s socio-economic status may influence his opportunity for participation, his desire to excel, his choice of activity and his success. A student’s athletic power may enhance his social perspective. The home environment often influences his motivation to succeed in sport and the degree to which successes in their endeavour leads to inner satisfaction.”

Sharma (2004)\textsuperscript{17} argues that, “Social stressors involve difficulties that arise due to interactions of others. Moreover, social stress may originate within and outside of the team or club. Within the team stressors may come from the athletes or the coaching staff. Though there is no literature within sports examining the contributions that athletes make due to stress in coaching, analogous research in education indicates that students are a significant source of stress for teachers. Based on these findings, it seems reasonable to conclude that, in a singular manner, athletes may be causes of stress for coaches. For example difficulties associated with athletes may include handling conflict between athletes, managing athlete egos, dealing with individual athlete problem and satisfying athlete needs.”

Stress has many meanings, but most people think of stress as the demands of life. Technically, these demands are called “Stressors,” and the actual wear and tear on our bodies is the stress.


Sachdev (1994)\textsuperscript{18} suggests that, "one of our goals is to present better ways not only to help you learn to live with stressful situations but also to help you find more enjoyment in meeting and mastering the challenges of our changing world in the field of sports."

The demands or challenges in the field of sports can come from the sports persons and events around us, as well as from our inner thoughts and struggles. When these demands increase, people often feel that they are under excessive stress.

**Social status**

The researcher wishes to argue that society is the structural composition of a community of people. It is a national identity in which a large group of people forms a unique organization, which is also linked with culture, recreation and traditions etc., Culture is an important part of society, which explains the ways this society functions. It describes the unique patterns of society summarized in terms of life style. It reflects the customs, attitudes and values of the people and can be analyzed at ethical, socio-economic artistic levels. Societies have institutions and organizations within their structure and these normally have some degree of autonomy with their own unique cultural interpretation.

In our society sport fulfils important functions and is indeed indispensable. It offers opportunities for physical activity in a world where physical activity is

\textsuperscript{18} Surendra Kumar Sachdev, Op. Cit., p.11.
increasingly diminishing; it promotes good health and well-being and it provides a means of social contact and ample opportunity for intensive experiences.

Sharma (2004)\textsuperscript{19} defines that, “to look at the history of sports is to look at the social history of a society. Sport reflects the society in which it is found. Therefore, the sports and society are interlinked and they cannot be separated. The terms “socio-economic factors” is broadly defined to include the social, educational, professional or occupational and economic status of the parents and the individual. The environmental facilities are also taken into account.” In our country educational status goes with the professional status and both go a great deal to count the social as well as economical status.

Sport is a sociological activity. It has both psychological and physiological dimensions besides physical, mental and technical aspects. Most of the Nation shares a common interest in sport competition especially at certain times during the Olympic Games where peoples from all nations focus their attention on that competition. Both the quality of the participation of the athletes and sportsmen is determined by their sociological factors.

The application of sociological principles to the improvement of performance in sport has received greater attention during these days. There are certain accepted psychological and physiological principles that have to be applied, so that the athletes and players are able to show their performance. Coaches, physical educationists and sport scientists have always expressed a great

\textsuperscript{19} Santhosh Sharma, Op. Cit., p. 28.
need to know more about those sociological principles, which are helpful in improving the performance of the players.

**Economical Status**

Economic activity has become free from traditional restrictions and criterion of skill; wealth and success have replaced hereditary status leading to social mobility as a result of achievement and success through competition. Thus in modern society the division is based on socio-economic status. It has resulted in the enlargement of the middle class in numerical strength and enhancement of its social importance. The division of society into status group has important consequences for both the individuals and the society. The life chances, the life style, aspirations, self image, and in many cases the achievements of an individual are determined by his socio-economic status.

Researcher believes that research work in stress should not be limited to a single genetic source of stress, but it may be possible to identify specific stress dimensions or stress factors unique to certain economic factors related to sport profession.

Koch, Tung, Melch and Swent (1983)\(^20\) found that, “while instruments used in stress research were sufficient to examine general stress, they were inadequate for investigating the multidimensional nature of occupational stress.”

Rasch and Tollefson (1988) agree and suggest that, "stress is an integral part of the work environment and is most likely multidimensional in nature." They also supported the development of appropriate instruments to investigate occupational stress multidimensionality.

Kim, Adrian and Robert (2003) opine that, "18-25 years old are exploring multiple roles, have more varied living situations, and more changes in their worldviews than during any other period including adolescence." They earlier (1998) argued that, "young adulthood is distinct from emerging adulthood, because individuals in young adulthood show more stability in many aspects of identity development including work, family and personal relationships than individuals in emerging adulthood."

**Educational status**

Education plays an important role in understanding the nuances of sport activity. It must be directed towards developing competence in understanding and practice of sport activity in the pupils. Sport events are designed in the educational institutions based on the factors of social status and changing attitudes of the government administrators as well as the managements.

In India, education as a whole is going through radical changes. Education is expected to promote educational goals of democracy, socialism and secularism in

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23 Ibid. 10:6 (June, 1998), p. 43.
our country. It also aims at the inculcation of the values of our society and develops skills and attitudes, responsibility for citizenship, productive capacity and cultural development among the youth. After independence, physical education and sport have come to be regarded as an essential part at all levels of education for human life.

The success and failure of an individual or team in the concerned sport depends upon the moulding of physical ability, training process, mental preparation, etc., of an individual. Even though the above-mentioned aspects are prepared thoroughly the sports person will be unable to exhibit his performance in the competitive situation. During the preparation stage, if we neglect the educational aspects of the athlete it may lead to stress for sportspersons. The researcher wants to identify the major stress causing factors and their management to get success in sport. Effective suggestions were interpreted on the basis of the respondents' opinions.

An endeavour has been made to present such sociological study which involves stress to review the influence of caste, residential status, number of members staying in the family, type of family, educational qualification of the family, economic status of the family and parents', brothers' and sisters' sport background etc. The study also assists them to manage their causes of stress with the assistance they get from their family for the all-round development of sport personality. Relating to community aspects, the researcher tried to diagnose the causes of stress that may be due to community discouragement; whether the peak performance may be reached without the influence of this community, and whether they achieved better position to represent their respective universities.
Finally involving the companionship aspects, the researcher tried to clarify the stress aspects created by friends, clubs or associations and the positive encouragement and support that might influence our sportspersons to reach their target of representing the university. Infrastructure facilities in the universities and institutions at the graduation and post-graduation level, viz. training programmes, availability of field, provision of regular coaches for training, finance to the participants in various tournaments, honours, incentives and also added socio-psychological factors, the stress caused and managed, which caused better performance in their respective events were studied. It may be true that when the sport facilities in the institutions and universities are better, the athletes are not under stress at this level. This level of representation may create good base for enhancing their sport performance to get opportunity to play in the state and national levels of competition. These are the factors examined in this study to eliminate the actual causes of stress for the sportspersons so as to help them exhibit their potentialities by way of performance at elite levels and to get phenomenal success in the field of competitive sport within the feasible level.

After referring to available literature, it was found that in many of the studies conducted, emphasis was laid generally on psychological, physiological, stress burn-out of coaches and players and job stress. Hence, it was decided to study the management of stress among University sportspersons regarding sociological, environmental and infrastructural aspects, which would be the stress-causing factors for the sportspersons. It was assessed through self-analyzed questionnaire and observed that their maximum level of stress, if well managed,
might lead the university sportspersons to stay for a longer period in the field of sport and achieve greater status in competitive sport.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to explore the stress causing factors and the possibility of stress management of the south Indian university male sportspersons. The survey was made to analyze the level of stress causing factors through the sociological, economic, and environmental and sports infrastructures available in the university and institutions to assess the negative and positive contribution of the aforesaid variables to the sportspersons to achieve their optimal level of performance in the field of sport.

DELIMITATIONS

1. This study was delimited to men South Indian players representing their respective universities in the south zone inter-university tournament for the year 2006-07.

2. This study was delimited to responses of the sportspersons related to stress causing factors in the form of their sociological, economic, environmental and available infrastructure facilities in the institutions and universities.

3. This study was delimited to responses of the sportspersons from a structured questionnaire.
4. This study was delimited to the age ranging from 18 to 25 years of the university sportspersons.

LIMITATIONS

1. The Study depended on the opinions and responses of the sportspersons. The authenticity of the study depended on such answers, which could have been influenced by their bias and personal experiences.

2. The physiological factors, which could also cause stress for the sportspersons to achieve better performance, are not considered for this study.

3. The influence of Hereditary, traditional and religious beliefs are not considered in this study.

4. There were no adequate documentations or previous studies in this area in the Indian context, which proved to be a limitation as far as references were concerned.

HYPOTHESIS

1. It is hypothesized that the educational, economic, sport background of the family, community, sport clubs/associations, institutional and universities' infrastructure and socio-psychological factors are the stress causing factors for the sportspersons.
2. It is hypothesized that the non-availability of qualified coaches would cause the development of stress to the sportsperson.

3. It is hypothesized that the financial assistance in the institution, universities, community and clubs/associations would be a constraint, which is a stress-causing factor to the sportspersons.

4. It is hypothesized that despite the environmental and situational factors related to family, socio-economic status and infrastructure available in the institution and universities are which may not be ideal for sports promotion, there is an obvious attempt on the part of the society and institutions to encourage sportsmen to some extent and thereby help them in managing stress, which would result in good performance.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study would be significant for the following reasons:

1. This study would help to identify the level of stress during the competition through the sociological factors like, community, class, caste and family, and environmental factors namely, clubs/associations, and finally effective management of sports infrastructure in the college and university.

2. The result of this study would explore the actual cause of such stress which could lead to better management of stress to overcome and to modify the situation for better achievement of the players.
3. This study would be an attempt to identify the performance of the individual; they can reach their target by eliminating the stress causing factors.

4. The result of this study could provide suggestions to effectively manage stress and this would contribute to good performance from the sportspersons.

5. The result of this study may throw new light in the field of sport towards stress management of sportspersons, in addition to the existing knowledge.

6. This study would prove that the university level of representation will be the basic standardized level of achievement for the male category of sportspersons. Hence, this research work would help in bringing about positive development through the elimination of stress, it may be a beneficial aspect for the sportspersons.

**DEFINITION AND EXPLANATION OF TERMS**

**Management**

Earle and Zeiglef (1976)\(^{24}\) define the task of management as, “steadily becoming more complex and demanding and for several reasons. It is getting increasingly difficult to retain the service of managers through out the area of higher education. Nevertheless, in the profession of sports and physical education

there are many with above average personal qualifications that are willing to assume management responsibilities."

**Stress**

Fontana (1989)\(^{25}\) defines stress in terms of its origins like this: "stress has to do with constriction or oppression of some kind, and “Distress” the state of being under this constriction or oppression. But modern English seems to need a word that lies partway between “pressure” and “emphasis” carrying something of the potentiality painful connotations of the former and something of the more neutral connotations of the later, and with the course of time “stress” has become that word.”

**University Sportspersons**

Association of Indian University (2000)\(^{26}\) defines university sportspersons like this: “University is a unique Institution engaged in exploring, generating, conserving and improving of skills for the players. It consists of coach, physical education teachers and trainers, who come together with the menu.”

University has a great and constructive role to play in shaping the future sports personality of our country. University is a forum for better efforts, for


\(^{26}\) *University News Weekly Magazines,* *Association of Indian University,* 38 (May, 2000), p.18.
joyous creative efforts with a view to shaping the younger generation in the field of sports and games. It stands for the onward march of the players towards ever-higher objective.

**Institution**

Sharma (1995)\(^\text{27}\) opines that, "institution is an organized form of more, folkways and rituals having a symbol and some definite aims, based upon collective activities of human beings and which is a more stable, though abstract means to control them."

**Community**

Sharma (1995)\(^\text{28}\) defines that, "a community is a social group of individuals living in a given area and having a degree of common feelings."

**Family**

Yobu (2003)\(^\text{29}\) says that, "A family is a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption constituting a single household, interacting and inter-communicating with each other's respective social role of husband and wife, mother and father, brother and sister, creating and maintaining a common culture."


Environment

Sengupta (1984)\textsuperscript{30} defines environment thus: "from the smallest organization to the highly developed system that is man, every living being reacts to its environment, from mountains to plains, from hot countries to cold ones and even from urban to rural settings. Environment conditions human life and that of human society. Not that environment alone moulds life; man moulds his environment according to his need as far as practicable and today in the age of science, the degree of practicability has increased more than considerably."