CHAPTER - I

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Sports psychology has emerged as a front runners discipline in shaping athletes in world beaters. It has many aspects which assist an athlete for better performance in every sport. The psychological preparation is planned and carried out with the aim of enabling the sportsperson to be in an optimum psychological state at the time of competition so that the athlete can achieve the maximum possible performance.

Inter-university sports competition in India is not as competitive as other national tournament or championships because of many reasons. Still performance of players depends upon many psychological factors. Players who participate in various inter-university competitions come from a training background where psychological training hardly exist. Whatever psychological factors the players of this level posses are mostly acquired or inherited by the players themselves.

It is very important to measure performance factors of players so as to enhance the players claim levels. The three important factors of contributing to performance in any sport are skill, fitness and psychology. All the aspects of skill, fitness and psychology of players can be measured very objectively by different tools and procedures to prepare a profile. Sports psychology has different aspects which are inter-related to one another for the success of sportsmen in any competition. The important psychological elements are personality, motivation, arousal, aspiration, anxiety, concentration, self-concept, confidence, etc.

For the present study, three psychological factors are studied i.e. anxiety, self-concept and team cohesion. All these three factors play a vital
role in the performance of sportspersons in any level of competition.

In order to perform better as per the potential of players, optimum anxiety is must. Highly anxious players before and during competition may not be able to perform to one's potential, which has been documented well in lots of research results.

Self-concept of players play a major role in learning skills as well as during competition. Believing in oneself is the most vital part while performing in the actual competition. Players may have devoted considerable time in training to enhance the performance but may find it difficult to display if players do not believe in oneself. Therefore, players of every category has to believe in the abilities one posses. These abilities are constantly improved through training and competitions by various means and methods.

One of the most satisfying experience for a player or a coach is to be a member of a team that gets well and works as a cohesive unit. Good communication, respect for one another, a feeling of closeness, a friendly atmosphere, mutual receptance and encouragement. All these makes the team highly a cohesive unit, which is fundamental factor for better performance.

Anxiety, self-concept and cohesion, included in the study as psychological parameters may reveal their relationship with performance. Most significant aspects of these psychological factors are discussed in the pages to follow.

ANXIETY

Anxiety plays a significant role in competitive sports. It is the challenge in sports participation which produces anxiety. How an athlete handles the anxiety determines how successful he would be. Anxiety may be a positive
motivating force or it may interfere with successful performance in sports events. Anxiety is a physiological response to a real or imagined threat. It is a complete emotional state characterized by a general fear or forbidding usually accompanied by tension.

The degree of perceived anxiety is an important variable to be considered in the performance of an individual. Research has shown that anxiety is present in all of us, including athletes, in varying degrees. But in the field of sports, certain competitive situations naturally produce more anxiety than others. Sometimes, anxiety may be helpful in tasks that require strength or power. But in some other events, a high level of anxiety may be detrimental. It is usually assumed that individuals falling at the extremes of an anxiety scale will not perform well.

According to Endler and Hunt (1973) there has been a great deal of confusion about the nature of anxiety. "It (anxiety) has been viewed sometimes as a reaction to situations in which the person has encountered upon. It has been also viewed as a chronic characteristic of persons which is relatively constant across both situations and occasions and this view has been implicit for most of those who have constructed instruments for assessing individual differences in anxiousness as a trait."

Singer (1980) examined the relationship between anxiety and learning. He described this relationship as an inverted U hypothesis which states that performance improves with the increasing level of anxiety to an optimum point, where upon further increase in anxiety causes performance loss.

Martens (1977) summarized this area of research and stated, “It is clear that reliable differences in A-Trait among athletes when compared to other athletes or non-athletes have not been offended using the inventory
approach. This is not only true for the personality disposition of A-trait but often personality traits as well. It is also clear that researchers have not been able to find a reliable relationship between A-trait and the athletes skill level.

Spielberger and his colleagues (Spielberger 1966. Spielberger et al. 1970) drew attention to the distinction between State Anxiety and Trait Anxiety. State Anxiety is considered to be a changing emotional state which is characterized by feelings of tension and apprehension and increased activity in the autonomous nervous system. On the other hand Trait Anxiety is considered to be a personality trait.

Martens (1977) Stated: “one of the factors that mediates a subjective competitive situation is the individual’s personality - the personality disposition of sport competition anxiety.”

Cognitive evaluation of the seriousness of depending threatening competition can be a major cause of the anxiety of the athlete.

A study conducted by Gould et al. (1983) has confirmed this fact.

The cognitive evaluation can be based on the objective nature of the competition itself and the conditions within the athlete. Feelings of inadequacy are often listed as causes of anxiety in athletes. Statements of this kind are based on Bandura’s (1977) model of self efficacy. It has been the simple notion that there is a direct, linear relationship between how well an individual thinks in a given task and the level of anxiety surrounding that task.

Weinberg and Hunt (1976) found that highly anxious subjects performed with an excess of muscular tension compared to less purporting the “measure of general athletic ability”
The findings of several studies confirm that perceived threat and corresponding state anxiety levels decrease with success experiences and increase with failure experiences (Gaudry and Poole, 1972; Hodges and Wunham, 1972; Mc Ado, 1970). Further, some findings showed that greater threat and higher state anxiety is evidenced by high trait-anxious people (Hodges, 1968; Mc Ado, 1970).

Recent investigations indicated that competitive trait anxiety is an important intrapersonal determinant of perceived threat when people are anticipating participation in a competitive experience showed that high competitive trait-anxious adults and children exhibit higher elevations in state anxiety than do low competitive-trait-anxious persons when facing competition (Martens, 1973; Martens and Gill, 1976; Marten and Simon, 1976; Scanlan, 1975).

Anxiety represents a broaden reaction to a greater range of stimuli than those that induce fear. In contrast to fear, anxiety often occurs on the absence of an obvious external stimulus and is generated in association with substantial cognitive processes. Not only is anxiety characterized by unpleasant feelings of apprehension, but it is typically combined with alterations of autonomic nervous system function such as a change in heart rate. Thus anxiety involves both persistent subjective feelings, which can be inferred from self reports and objective signs which can be measured directly.

Several related, yet distinct concepts have been employed in attempts to describe and understand anxiety. The most well established of these is the dysfunction between trait and state anxiety. Trait anxiety is personality characteristic describing how prone an individual is to experiencing episodes of anxiety. State anxiety refers to moment-to-moment variations on the intensity of individual's thoughts and feelings of apprehension. State and trait anxiety
interact in a predictable way. In general individuals characterized by high trait, anxiety perceive a greater number of situations as threatening more frequently, exhibit periods of elevated state anxiety and have a more potent anxiety reaction in given situation compared to people characterized by average or low trait anxiety (Spielberger, Gorsuch, Cushene, Vagg and Jacobs, 1983).

**SELF-CONCEPT**

Self-concept is one of the most important components of a child’s psychological make-up and refers to one’s perceptions and evaluations of the self. Judgments, relative to the self may include personal evaluation about behaviors or an assumption related to how others perceive those characteristics. An individual’s self-concept of success at the mastery attempts give rise to feelings of positive or negative effect.

In the context of physical education and the all-round development of man, self-concept acquires a position of considerable importance as it forms the basis of his behaviors. The child tries to become what it perceives of itself in terms of its physique and physical performance. All the sport activities would be directed towards self-actualization of the self-concept.

Self-concept means what and individual thinks about himself, it is his own conception of his health and physique, intellectual abilities, academic status, behavior temperamental qualities, mental health, emotional tendencies and socio-economic status. Cayenne and Greenee (1969) put forth a comprehensive definition wherein they say that self-concept is the person’s total appraisal of his appearance, background and origins, abilities and resources, attitudes and feelings which culminate as a directing force in behavior. This implies that an individual’s conscious awareness, his thinking and feeling are the guiding forces of his actions.
Self-concept has been referred to by Lowe (1961) as one's attitude towards self, and by Paderson (1965) as an organized configurations of perceptions, beliefs, feelings, attitudes and values which the individual views as a part of characteristics of himself. Rogers (1951) defined self-concept as "an organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are advisable to awareness." It is compared of such elements as the perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities. The percepts amend concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment, the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects and the goals and ideas which are perceived as having positive or negative valence.

Self-concept which directly relates to self-esteem and self-awareness is considered to be a direct source of courage and confidence to an individual to perform one's personal best on a sports competition. As the success is considered to be the prime source that develops the positive self-concept, its bearing on sports performance is an issue to be probed further.

In 1976 Shavelson, Habuer and Stanton re-endowed empirical research on self-concept and proposed a theoretical model that indicates self-concept as a multifaceted hierarchically ordered construction (Shavelson et al., 1976). In the Shavelson Ethel., (1976) model, general self-concept was differentiated into academic and non-academic components, with each component subdivided into smaller, more sub-specific sub-strata. Non-academic self-concept entails social self-concept and emotional self-concept and physical self-concept. Academic self-concept was defined as the behavior to which one indicates to himself (publicly or privately) his ability to achieve in academic tasks as compared with others engaged in the same task. It was sub-divided into specific subject areas e.g. Mathematics self-concept, English self-concept etc.
According to Kane (1968), it should be noted that it is the success that develops the positive self-concept and in physical education especially in developing or improving physical fitness, there is a large repetition of activities for experiencing success and thus enhancing self-concept.

Riley (1983) has conducted a research on the outer-relationship between self-concept and physical performance from the perspective of symbolic interaction theory and the results show a significant positive relationship between self-concept and physical performance.

Schultz (1973) has conducted a research on self-concept by using Resenterg’s self-esteem scale. He has not found any significant difference between the positive and the negative self-concept group on their performance of a gross task. However, there was an observable trend for the positive self-concept group to achieve higher scores during the performance of the motor task.

Bunnel (1978) stated that the basketball players had a significant higher positive self-concept than non-players.

Saraswat and Gaur (1981) described self-concept as the individual’s way of looking at himself. It also signifies his way of thinking, feeling and behaving.

Ibrahim and Morrison (1976) have given a concise definition of self-concept as a composite of numerous self perceptions encompassing the values, attitudes and beliefs towards one-self in relation to environment.

According to Hall and Lindzay (1957) self-concept has two different meanings. It is used frequently to refer to a person’s attitude and feelings about himself.
Symanda (1951) defines the self as the ways in which the individual reacts to himself. This self consists of four aspects:

a) How a person perceives himself?

b) What he thinks of himself?

c) How he values himself?

d) How he attempts through various actions to enhance or defend himself?

ASPECTS OF SELF
1. Perceived self
2. Real self
3. Social self
4. The ideal self

1. PERCEIVED SELF

This is an individual concept of the kind of person he is. It is influenced by his physical self. The physical appearance, dress and grooming, by his abilities and dispositions, his values, by the perceived self is meant the aspects of one's nature which has been detected and integrated into a pattern. It constitutes the concept an idea one entertains about one self.

2. THE REAL SELF

By the real self is meant one's nature with all its potentialities. A person is aware of some aspects but unaware of others of his own self. The real self includes what he is aware of and what he is not aware of it is the perceived self plus unconscious self.

3. THE SOCIAL SELF

This is the self as the person thinks others see it. This concept
may not correspond with other people’s perceptions of him; nevertheless it has an important effect on his behavior.

4. THE IDEAL SELF

Ideal self means what we would like to be. According to Smith (1961) “The ideal self is regarded as the highest level of self and provides a standard against which the rest of the self is Judged.”

As the self-concept regulates the behavior of person. So one must have higher self-concept. Top class performers are generally those who perform in a superior manner. It is the superior thinking which results in superior action. From all the above definitions it is clear now that self-concept and excellence are positively related to each other. Self concept encompasses individual’s way of thinking, feelings values, attitudes and beliefs. It is the higher self-concept which generates the feelings of confidence and courage as a results leading to success or failure. So every coach and physical educator must keep in mind the importance of self-concept as significant determinant of performance.

COHESION

Cohesion is a very important factor in team as well as in individual sports. All the coaches try to develop cohesiveness in their teams because they believe cohesive teams are one assets to win more games. There is great popularity about the unity, team work and cohesiveness of successful teams especially when the teams win without individual superstars. Lack of cohesion generally leads to the failure of a team of talented individuals.

Many sports psychologists have tried to clarify the term cohesiveness and its relationship with team performance. Cannon (1982) defines cohesion
as "a dynamic process which is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives."

The essence of cohesiveness is inherent in its definition. It is a dynamic process which is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives. Thus, by its very definition cohesiveness contributes directly to group maintenance and therefore indirectly to group locomotion. That is why Golembieski (1962) and Tott and Tott (1965), social scientists have considered cohesion to be the most important small group variable.

The importance of assessing group cohesion stems from the importance of groups, Shaw (1981) noted that "throughout history people have joined together in groups to accomplish a wide range of purposes." Cohesion is concerned with the development and maintenance of the group.

Escovar and sons (1974) point out that in the operational measure cohesion is not interpersonal attraction only as it foils to account for negative cohesiveness such as dissatisfaction, dissension and hostility. Investigations in group cohesion according to Miklachki task cohesion occurs when the group coheres around the task organize to perform. In some situations cohesion is an important part. Therefore, this study is important to determine that group cohesion is necessary for success in a game.

Strawssand and Sayles (1960) have suggested that cohesion enhances performance only if the group is motivated towards performance. A team may be highly cohesive but may not perform successfully or to an optimal level if individual members participating without a task oriented motive.

Research of Zander (1974) indicates that there exists a linear relationship between cohesiveness and performance success. The teams with
greatest cohesion are the most successful.

According to Festinger (1968) cohesion is the total field of forces causing members to remain in the group. One significant aspect of this definition is that it focuses on the individual and forces that attract individuals and causes them to remain with the group. Another significant aspect is the suggestion that cohesion is the result of numerous factors.

Martens and Petersons (1971) found the teams that were more cohesive were more successful and in turn the more successful teams express greater satisfaction with participation. It was proposed that a consequence of this satisfaction increased cohesiveness.

Shaw (1974) has listed five reasons why individuals join group: interpersonal attraction, interest in the group goal, social interaction, interest in the group activities and the instrumental effect which might acquire from group membership.

Sports such as basketball (Arnold and straub, 1972; Cannon and Chelladurai, 1982; Gosset and Widmeyer, 1981), field hockey (Hacker and Williams, 1981) and baseball (Landers and Crown, 1971) have produced data substantiating positive relationship between successful performance and scores from tests of cohesion, by using the sports-cohesiveness questionnaire (Cannon and Chelladurai, 1981).

Arnold (1972) and Petley (1973) studied the cohesiveness of high school basketball and wrestling teams. Arnold’s investigation of high school basketball team showed that winning teams at post-season were significantly more cohesive than losing teams. Arnold found that members of successful teams were more closely knit, more task motivated and exhibited more leadership
or power than members of less-successful teams. The researcher concluded that cohesiveness appeared to be a prerequisite for success on 'varsity high school' basketball competition. Petley (1973) found the same thing to be true for 'high school varsity' wrestling team. Arnold’s and Petley's findings were supported by the results of Peterson and Marten's investigation of intramural basketball teams at the University of Illinois. They found that cohesiveness was an important determinant of team success. Landers and Crow concluded, following their study of high school basketball teams, that team cohesiveness was a necessary factor for team success. The study of Martens and Peterson (1971), one of the most carefully conducted and extensive investigations, involving over 1200 male intramural basketball players on 144 teams, provide perhaps the strongest support for a positive cohesiveness performance relationship. This study examined pre-season cohesiveness as a determinant of team success. High cohesive teams (identified by ratings of value of team membership, team work, closeness) won significantly more games than low cohesive teams.

Schutz (1958) proposed FIRO theory to represent the needs of individuals in groups. Essentially, Fundamental Inter-personal Relations Orientations (FIRO) is the theoretical model proposed to describe the need for compatible relationship by which humans are driven. In groups or sport teams, individuals seek recognition, affection and the means which they may exert control or be controlled by others. Obviously sport teams represents an important outlet for this basic human need and compatibility on group relations in a function of the mutual satisfaction of the needs of all members. Discordance or lack of cohesion may occur when or other of the stated needs are not met by the group or team.

Before a team become a cohesive unit, according to Tutko and Richards (1971), the players must place to welfare of the team ahead of their
own personal goals. In other words, there must be:

1. Mutual respect among players and coaches;
2. Effective communication;
3. The feeling of importance;
4. Common goals, and
5. Fair treatment

The issue here is an experimental definition of the influence of the basic groups phenomena, which are considered to be interpersonal relations, on the performances of the individuals who create a certain group and thus on the effectively of the whole group. This study is based on a long standing observance of interpersonal relation by means of various modifications of sociometric questionnaires, to the inter-personal relations in the group, ascertained in this way, the method of experimental games has been applied making possible to observe, the influence of these interpersonal relations on the cooperation in the group, on the performance of an individual in certain activity.

The importance of group closeness was expressed as early as 550 B.C. when Aesop formulated his well known phrase, "United we stand Divided we fall." The notion that this phrase is still relevant today. It is not only the individual skills which play an important role in a teams success, but it is the team environment a sincere feeling of belonging, to the sports team and having friendly relationships with one another are the cordial factors that contribute to a teams success. There is a popular perception that teams with disharmonious relationship may also succeed however, thus the importance of team inter-personal relationship in sports is equivocal.

One of the consequences of the group cohesiveness which may have been examined in its effect on performance. It may however be noted
that different sports differ in the degree to which task interdependence co-coordinative activity are required among participants.

So, to explore the phenomenon anxiety, self-concept and cohesion among individual and team athletes, the investigator has adopted the dimension of all these for this study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem is stated as:

"A STUDY OF SELECTED SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MALE ATHLETES IN RELATION TO THEIR AGE AND PERFORMANCE".

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To find out differences between individual and team athletes on the variables of sports competitive anxiety.

2. To find out differences between individual and team athletes on team cohesion.

3. To find out differences between individual and team athletes on self-concept.

4. To find out differences between college and university level athletes on sports competitive anxiety.

5. To find out differences between college and university level athletes on team cohesion.
6. To find out differences between college and university level athletes on self-concept.

7. To find out differences on sports competitive anxiety, team cohesion and self-concept among athletes participating in different sports events (Inter sports differences among athletes).

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. There will be significant differences between individual and team athletes on sports competitive anxiety variables.

2. There will be significant differences between individual and team athletes on team cohesion variables.

3. There will be significant differences between individual and team athletes on self-concept variables.

4. There will be significant differences between college and university level athletes on sports competitive anxiety variable.

5. There will be significant differences between college and university level athletes on team cohesion variable.

6. There will be significant differences between college and university level athletes on self-concept variable.

7. There will be significant inter-sports differences on the variables of sports competitive anxiety, team cohesion and self-concept.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Sports Competitive Anxiety

A tendency to perceive competitive situation as threatening and to
respond to these situations with feeling of apprehension on tension in sports competitions.

Team Cohesion

Team cohesion is considered as the degree to which the number of group (team) desire to remain in the group.

Self-Concept

It includes attitude, perceptions, traits, thoughts, feelings and other characteristics which an individual perceives to be a part of himself.

Athlete

A comprehensive term which include sportspersons, sportsmen and players as well.

LIMITATIONS

No special technique was used to motivate the subjects during the administration of tests. It was possible to control other variables such as home environment, daily routine, etc.

DELIMITATIONS

1. It was delimited to the bonafide students of Panjab University and its affiliated college.

2. It was delimited to the following sports :

   (i) Swimming
   (ii) Athletes
3. The study was delimited to the age group of 17th to 25th years.

4. It was delimited to the following variables.

   (i) Sports competitive anxiety
   (ii) Team cohesion
   (iii) Self concept

5. It was delimited to college and university level players.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Social-psychological variables have been found significant from sports performance point of view. Sports competitive anxiety plays very important role in athlete's performance in competition. To the one and same stimulus, individuals respond differently and their anxiety level also varies. All the theory of anxiety seems to agree that maximum performance is reduced by too much anxiety, feeling of affiliation to team and strength of lending support to members of the team can make a difference in the performance of the team. Compatibility among team members and to stand together for the single cause of victory of team is the essence of team cohesion. Similarly, self-concept is an other important variable which reflect an individual achievement in life. The attitude, perceptions, traits are confidence and the integral part of one's personality and leaves direct bearings on performance of an athlete in sports setting.