



POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE AFFECT AS PREDICTORS OF COMPETITIVE ANXIETY

Graham Jones, Austin Swain and Chris Harwood

Sport Psychology Research Group, Department of Physical Education, Sports Science and Recreation Management, Loughborough University, Loughborough LE11 3TU, England

(Received 17 November 1994; received for publication 10 August 1995)

Summary—This study investigated relationships between the intensity (i.e. level) and direction (i.e. interpretation of anxiety as either debilitating or facilitative) dimensions of multidimensional competitive trait anxiety and the two mood structures of Positive (PA) and Negative Affect (NA). The Competitive Trait Anxiety Inventory—2, minus the self-confidence subscale and modified to include a directional subscale, and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule were administered to a sample of sports performers ($n = 309$). Correlation analyses revealed that NA was more related to anxiety intensity than was PA. In contrast, levels of PA were more strongly related than NA to the directional interpretations that individuals tended to attach to their cognitive and somatic anxiety symptoms. PA and NA scores were then dichotomized as individual difference variables into high and low categories via the median split technique. Two two-way MANOVA's were carried out using the CTAI-2 intensity and direction subscales respectively as dependent variables. Both MANOVA's were significant ($P < 0.01$) and follow-up means comparison tests showed the importance of NA alone in mediating the intensity of cognitive and somatic anxiety, whilst PA played a more significant role than NA in the interpretation of both cognitive and somatic anxiety. These results support the need to distinguish between the intensity and direction dimensions of competitive anxiety, whilst providing information on dispositional antecedents of these subscales.

INTRODUCTION

The measurement of anxiety in the sport psychology literature has traditionally been limited to the assessment of the 'intensity' or level of certain cognitive and perceived physiological symptoms which are deemed to reflect anxiety (Martens, Burton, Vealey Bump & Smith, 1982, 1990). This work has largely been based upon the assumption that anxiety is negative and detrimental to performance. However, following on from the work in test anxiety which has distinguished between debilitating and facilitating dimensions of the anxiety response (e.g. Alpert & Haber, 1960; Couch, Garber & Turner, 1983; Munz, Costello & Korabek, 1975), the notion of 'direction' of anxiety has recently been introduced into the competitive anxiety literature (Jones, 1991, 1995). This refers to assessing how sports performers label the 'intensity' of cognitive and perceived physiological symptoms they experience on a debilitating-facilitative continuum. Thus, this approach recognizes that anxiety can have both negative and positive consequences. For example, one performer might be 'very concerned' about an upcoming event, to the extent that s/he is worried and in a near-panic, debilitating state. Another performer who is also 'very concerned' might view such a state as very necessary since it signals the importance of the event and means that s/he will invest effort in it, thus constituting a motivated, facilitative state. Similarly, two performers experiencing almost identical symptoms of physiological arousal prior to competition might label those symptoms at completely opposite ends of the debilitating-facilitative continuum.

Support for the distinction between 'intensity' and 'direction' of anxiety symptoms has been provided in several recent empirical investigations. For example, Jones, Swain and Hardy's (1993) study of female gymnasts found no differences in cognitive anxiety and somatic anxiety intensity, or in somatic anxiety direction, between a 'good performance' and a 'poor performance' group. However, the 'good performance' group reported their cognitive anxiety intensity as more facilitating and less debilitating than the 'poor performance' group. Recently, Jones, Hanton and Swain (1994) found no differences in the intensity of state cognitive and somatic anxiety intensity between elite and non-elite swimmers, but the elite performers interpreted both anxiety states as being more facilitative to performance than the non-elite performers. Such differences between elite and non-

elite performers in the interpretation of anxiety symptoms have been replicated in the context of trait cognitive and somatic anxiety (Jones & Swain, 1995). Finally, Swain and Jones' (1995) study of the relative contributions of intensity and direction dimensions of competitive anxiety to predicting sports performance showed direction to be the better predictor in the cases of both cognitive and somatic anxiety.

There exists, therefore, a growing body of research evidence which corroborates the need to distinguish between intensity and direction of competitive anxiety symptoms. In posing questions to be addressed in future research in this area, Jones *et al.* (1994) proposed that individuals may have a predisposition to report anxiety symptoms as being either facilitative or debilitating. They suggested that an important individual difference variable in predicting directional responses may be Positive and Negative Affect (Watson & Clarke, 1984; Watson & Tellegen, 1985). In the 1980's, Positive Affect (PA) and Negative Affect (NA) emerged as two dominant and relatively independent dimensions in social psychological studies of affective structure (e.g. Tellegen, 1985; Watson & Clark, 1984; Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988). These two mood factors characterize an individual's tendency to display adaptive or aversive mood states. PA reflects the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic, active or alert, with high PA being characterized by full concentration, eagerness and pleasurable engagement; low PA, on the other hand, corresponds to sadness and lethargy (Watson *et al.*, 1988). NA is a general dimension of subjective distress with high NA being reflected by unpleasurable mood states, including anger, contempt, guilt, fear and nervousness; low NA, on the other hand, would be a state of calmness and serenity (Watson *et al.*, 1988). Recently, Watson *et al.* (1988) developed the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) as a reliable, valid and efficient means of measuring these two important dimensions of mood at state and trait levels.

Several studies have linked PA and NA to an individual's intensity of anxiety (Tellegen, 1985; Watson & Clark, 1984; Watson *et al.*, 1988). These studies demonstrate how NA tends to correlate with anxiety to a much greater extent than PA. The independence of the two dimensions and the role played by NA are emphasized by Watson (1988) who stated, "It is important to emphasize . . . that perceptions of stress correlate only with Negative Affect and remain independent of variations on Positive Affect" (p. 1029). In applying this work to competitive anxiety, Jones *et al.* (1994) recognized that whilst PA may not be important in predicting the intensity of the response, it may predict the direction of the response in addition to NA. Specifically, they proposed that performers high on trait NA and low on trait PA will perceive their symptoms, irrespective of intensity, as debilitating; conversely performers high on PA and low on NA will interpret them as more facilitative. To date, relationships between PA and NA and competitive anxiety have not been examined in the sport psychology literature. This study examined, therefore, Jones *et al.*'s (1994) proposals in a sample of sports performers who completed trait PANAS and competitive anxiety scales.

METHOD

Subjects

The Ss ($n = 309$) were male ($n = 172$) and female ($n = 137$) undergraduate university students (mean age = 20.2; SD = 2.54) drawn from a variety of sports.

Measures

Positive And Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). The PANAS (trait version) consists of two 10-item scales. Items on the PA scale include 'interested', 'excited' and 'alert'; while items on the NA scale include 'distressed', 'nervous' and 'afraid'. The S is required to indicate to what extent s/he generally experiences that 'feeling' or 'emotion' on a five-point scale ranging from 1 ("very slightly/not at all") to 5 ("extremely"). Thus, possible scores on both scales range from 10 to 50. Watson *et al.* (1988) have shown the scales to be high on internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.86$ to 0.90 for PA; 0.84 to 0.87 for NA), largely uncorrelated (intercorrelations ranging from -0.12 to -0.23) and stable over a two month period (test-retest reliability = 0.68 for PA, 0.71 for NA).

Modified Competitive Trait Anxiety Inventory—2. The Competitive State Anxiety Inventory—2 (Martens *et al.*, 1982, 1990) was developed as the first sport-specific multidimensional competitive state anxiety scale. Albrecht and Feltz (1987) modified the scale to form a trait measure of mul-

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات