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Gurmeet Singh

Professor, Department of
Physical Education, Panjab
University, Chandigarh, India

Anisha Negi

Research Scholar, Department of
Physical Education, Panjab
University, Chandigarh, India

Dr. Sunil Kumar

HOD, Physical Education,
DAV School, Chandigarh, India

A study of passion and flow among international handball players

Gurmeet Singh, Anisha Negi and Dr. Sunil Kumar

Abstract

Background: Flow is an optimal psychological state that occurs when there is a balance perceived challenge and skills in activity. So, the present study was based on the Passion and Flow among international Handball Players.

Methods: The study was survey type in which questionnaire were used as tools. The random sampling method was applied for the selection of the subjects. To find out the relationship among the variables of flow and passion, partial correlation would be formulated.

Results: Correlation based on dispositional flow scale and its items: Player showed significant and positive correlation between DFS and its items. Total dispositional flow scale of player increases with increases of items.

Conclusion: Player showed significant and positive correlation with passion. Total flow state flow scale scores and its items of player increases with increases of passion scale score of player.

Keywords: Harmonious and obsessive passion, flow and handball

Introduction

Athletes from all over the world in all the sports seek moment like flow. The feelings involved are among the most intense and most memorable experience one can get in this life. The state which has been described by most of the performers is what we called flow or optimal experience. Once flow attained its experiences remain impressed in the memory and provide the plan for returning to this optimal state. When everything goes in your way, whatever you think it happens. Yet exercising flow is not an easy to attain. The experience of flow is still one of the least understood phenomena in the world of sport. And yet it is one of the amusing and most unforgettable experiences an athlete will ever know. Some people call it as a naturally high. Others refer to it as being in a zone. Whatever it's called, flow is an intangible and very sought after psychological state that athlete, coaches, and sport psychologists have tried to understand, harness, and engage to their advantage since Mihaly, first coined the term in the early 1970s. Flow is defined as a person's total absorption into an activity. While it is always a peak, satisfying experience, it is not necessarily associated with peak performance on every occasion. So flow is a state of consciousness where one becomes totally absorbed in what one is doing, to the exclusion of all other thoughts and emotion. It is about focus, more than just focus, however, flow is a harmonious experience where mind and body are working together effortlessly, leaving the person feeling that something special has just occurred. So, flow is also about enjoyment. The sport setting is rife with opportunities to experience flow-be it in pick-up games or the Olympics. But until now, flow has been an occasional, accidental, and even mysterious phenomenon to most athletes. With Flow in Sports, this optimal experience becomes both more familiar and more achievable.

Passion and performance

Nothing great in the universal has ever been accomplished without passion (Hegel, 1770–1831). From this quote from Hegel, we suggest that the concept of passion signifies a key source of motivational energy underlying such persistent involvement that may be conducive to performance attainment. Indeed, being passionate for one's sport leads individuals to dedicate themselves fully to their sport, thereby allowing them to persist, even in the face of

Corresponding Author:

Gurmeet Singh

Professor, Department of
Physical Education, Panjab
University, Chandigarh, India

obstacles, and to eventually reach excellence. We believe that the concept of passion represents the energy underlying such persistent involvement. Indeed, being passionate for an activity leads individuals to dedicate themselves fully to their activity, thereby allowing them to persist, even in the face of obstacles, and to eventually reach excellence. However, while passion may ensure dedication toward the activity and, eventually, performance, it may also be associated with positive or negative subjective well-being. Furthermore, when such an internalization of an enjoyable activity takes place within one's identity, it then leads to a passion toward that specific activity. Sports commonly involve highly structured, goal engaged, and rule-bound activities, competition with oneself and/or others, and require a high level of commitment (Kent 2006) [6].

Passion leads athletes to engage in vigilant practice which is a specific form of practice that focuses on improving one's ability or actually person enjoying and love an activity deeply and have the desire to keep on enthusiastic about their training, if one is to engage in the activity for long hours over several years. Therefore, both forms of passion lead sports persons to engage enthusiastic about their training which actually leads to improved sports performance. Research in this regard revealed that achievement goals (i.e., competence-based aims that an individual seeks to accomplish in an achievement setting) serves as mediator in the relationship between both types of passion and performance. Specifically, people with a harmonious passion pursue mastery goals (Such as, a focus on the development of personal competence and task mastery) that lead to deliberate practice that actually leads to sports performance. In contrary, people with an

obsessive passion also follow towards mastery of goals (that lead to performance through deliberate practice), but they mostly pursue performance approach goals (Such as a focus on the attainment of personal competence relative to others) and especially performance-avoidance goals (Such as a focus on avoiding incompetence relative to others) that negatively and directly influences performance. In this way both types of passion may facilitate sports performance. However, it appears possible that the highest levels of performance can be reached through a painless, even happy, passionate engagement in the sport to the extent that it is harmonious in nature.

Methods and Procedure

The survey design has been formulated for the present study. The study was psychological in nature and to determine the relationship among international handball players on the variables of flow and passion. To measure flow-two scales DFS-2 & FSS-2 were used. D.F.S -2 was used to access the experience flow in general, in relation to a specific activity. FSS-2 was used to assess flow experiences within a particular match. Obsessive and harmonious passion scale questionnaire was used to measure the two types of passion among the handball players. Relevant data was collected from 64 players of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal who participated in SAF handball Championship held at India in 2014 through purposive sampling technique. The subjects voluntarily and unanimously took part in the study with the consult of coach and team managers.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Correlation between passion and dimensions of flow among handball teams player

	Total flow state scale	Challenge skill balance	Merging of action and awareness	Clear goal	Unambiguous feedback	Concentration on the task at head	Sense of control	Loss of self consciousness	Transformation of time	Autotelic experience	Passion scale
Total Flow state scale	1	0.71**	0.53**	0.54**	0.73*0*	0.59**	0.46**	0.71**	0.53**	0.50**	0.52**
Challenge skill Balance	0.71**	1	0.42**	0.45**	0.52**	0.20	0.24	0.36**	0.37**	0.23	0.36**
Merging of action and awareness	0.53**	0.42**	1	0.17	0.34**	0.13	-0.03	0.36**	0.16	0.21	0.26*
Clear Goal	0.54**	0.45**	0.17	1	0.38**	0.25	0.27*	0.33**	0.18	-0.01	0.35**
Unambiguous Feedback	0.73**	0.52**	0.34**	0.38**	1	0.46**	0.14	0.40**	0.25*	0.31*	0.26*
Concentration on the task at Head	0.59**	0.20	0.128	0.25	0.46**	1	0.38**	0.33**	0.23	0.15	0.41**
Sense of control	0.46**	0.24	-0.03	0.274*	0.14	0.38**	1	0.22	0.21	0.13	0.25*
Loss of self-consciousness	0.71**	0.36**	0.36**	0.33**	0.40**	0.33**	0.22	1	0.35**	0.34**	0.36**
Transformation of Time	0.53**	0.37**	0.16	0.18	0.25*	0.23	0.21	0.35**	1	0.15	0.23
Autotelic Experience	0.50**	0.23	0.21	-0.01	0.31*	0.15	0.13	0.34**	0.15	1	0.32*
Passion scale	0.523**	0.36**	0.26*	0.35**	0.26*	0.41**	0.25*	0.36**	0.23	0.32*	1

**Significant at 0.01 and *significant at 0.05 levels

Above table represents the correlation between passion and dimensions of Flow among handball teams player. When Flow and its dimensions correlated with passion, significant and positive correlation was obtained among all the dimensions of flow (0.01, level of significance), except the transformation of time which was found to be insignificant. Handball Players showed significant and positive correlation between DFS and its items as total dispositional flow scale of player increases with increases of items. Further it showed significant and positive correlation between FSS and its items

as total flow state scale of player increases with increases of items. The results related to Correlation based on Passion scale and its items revealed significant and positive correlation between Passion and its items as total passion of player increases with increases of items. The results related to Correlation based on dispositional flow scale & its items with passion showed non-significant and positive correlation with passion as total dispositional flow scale scores of player remain same with increases of passion scale score of player. Further findings related to Correlation based on Flow state

scale & its items with passion revealed significant and positive correlation with passion as total flow state flow scale scores and its items of player increases with increases of passion scale score of player.

Past research on the progress of passion (Mageau *et al.* 2009) [7, 8, 11] has shown that providing autonomy support regarding which activity to choose as well as when and how to involve in it should be conducive to a harmonious passion for an activity to the extent that the latter is valued by the person and is consonant with aspects of the person's identity.

Harmonious passion for a given activity will generally lead to the experience of positive emotions during activity engagement. Such emotions will foster increases in psychological well-being. Therefore harmonious passion is expected to facilitate sustainable increases in psychological well-being and prevent against ill-being. Whereas Obsessive passion ensuring regular activity engagement and does not produce such psychological gains and may even facilitate some harmful effects. Evidently, not all intentional activities produce positive effects on psychological well-being. In this regard harmonious passion would deserve much attention as a major contributor of sustainable psychological well-being.

Subsequent research with young adults and teenagers has yielded similar findings. Specifically with the harmonious passion toward activities such as sports, dramatic arts, work and specialized areas of education was found to be positively related to life satisfaction and vitality (Houlfort *et al.* 2011, and Vallerand *et al.* 2008) [5, 7-11], whereas obsessive passion for the same activities was either negatively related (Houlfort *et al.* 2011; Vallerand *et al.* 2007,) [5, 7-11] or unrelated (Vallerand *et al.* 2007, Vallerand *et al.* 2008,) [7, 11] to these indices. Hence it seems that harmonious (but not obsessive passion) contributes to psychological well-being in both younger and older populations using a number of measures, providing some support for the major hypothesis regarding the promotion of psychological well-being and the prevention of ill-being.

Conclusion

Sport is a rich environment for individuals to experience flow, and for researchers to build understanding of these optimal states. While good progress has been made since the early 1990s, a number of issues remain in the study of flow in sport. The challenge for researchers in this field is to find ways of addressing them in order to help individuals flourish in sport and experience flow on a regular basis. However Harmonious passion for a given activity will generally lead to the experience of positive emotions during activity engagement. Such emotions, in turn, will foster increases in psychological well-being. In the present study the Handball Players showed significant and positive correlation between DFS and its items as total dispositional flow scale of player increases with increases of items.

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