The Role of Spiritual Transcendence on Predictive of Competitive Anxiety and Self-Confidence in Athletes

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was the role of spiritual transcendence on predictive of competitive anxiety and self-confidence in athletes. For this field, 200 individual and team athletes in Kermanshah city by clustered sampling were selected and completed the spiritual transcendence and competitive anxiety scales. Results of Pierson correlation indicated that was positive correlation between connectedness, prayer fulfillment and universality with sportive self-confidence and negative correlation between prayer fulfillment and universality with somatic and cognitive anxiety. Results of multivariate correlation by inter method showed that connectedness, prayer fulfillment and universality were predicted the competitive anxiety (cognitive-somatic) and prayer fulfillment and universality were predicted the sportive self-confidence (p<0/05).

Key words: Spiritual transcendence - Competitive Anxiety - Self-confidence - Athletes

INTRODUCTION

Spirituality and religiosity have recently emerged in psychological literature as theorists are beginning to understand their importance and impact on subjective well-being. This interest is evident in the proliferation of measures currently available to assess these variables [1] and the number of studies devoted to their exploration[2]. Spirituality has been defined as “the personal quest for understanding life’s ultimate questions and the meaning and purpose of living” [3-4]. It has proven to be a difficult entity to measure[5-6] and ultimately people themselves must define what spirituality means to them [7]. While acknowledging the absence of agreement in defining religiosity and spirituality, Mattis and Jaggers (2001) maintain that they are related but distinct domains [8]. Pate and Bondi (1992) described spirituality as the sense of one's place in the universe [9] and Gilchrist (1992) identified spirituality as that which individuals deem sacred and central in their lives [10]. One of variables that related to spirituality is spiritual transcendence. Spiritual transcendence refers to the ability of individuals to view life from a larger, more objective perspective and find a deeper sense of meaning. Furthermore, transcendence is a fundamental, intrinsic motivation that involves suppressing an individual's own need for those of the larger group. The spiritual transcendence consists of three dimensions: connectedness (sense of personal responsibility to others), prayer fulfillment (joy and contentment from prayer/meditation) and universality (sense of unity and purpose in life) [11]. Aldridge (1991) suggests that spirituality is a potential and in his perspective, essential coping mechanism in dealing with the specific stressors of significant illness[12]. Many investigations referred to positive effect of spirituality on self-esteem, belonging sensation, ability to coping with stress, responding and adjustment to trauma, ability to escape of danger, life satisfaction and some physiological signs such as low of blood pressure, increasing in performance of immune system, decreasing in depression signs, increasing in psychological, physical and well-being health [13-17]. However, studies designed to statistically control for such factors also report positive associations between spirituality and health in individuals with unhealthy behaviors. But the impact of spirituality on health and healing is a topic that has been virtually ignored in the disciplines of athletic training and sports medicine [18]. But this problem can be interpretable in existential psychology. Existential psychology is the clearest example of an approach that welcomes meaning, spirituality and religion as central to human being. In sport psychology there have been a number of researchers and writers who have drawn on existential-phenomenological psychology in their work in exercise...
Spirituality has often been seen in terms of energy and power [25-26]. This be might in terms of a transcendent model, with external power being given to the sports person [27]. Or it may be seen as energy that comes from holism and from positive relationships [28]. Either way this is relevant to the spirituality of sport, bringing us back for a moment to that painful experience of the last marathon mile and that search for ‘something extra’ and to the way in hich the marathon, in all its relationships, empowered the participants [29]. Competitive anxiety is seen here as related to spiritual strength and growth of a person. The link to performance should be clear from this in that the greater the level of self-knowledge and the stronger the person, the more likely he or she will be able to successfully confront the stresses, challenges and demands of sport. Anxiety then is seen here as related to spiritual strength and growth of a person. The link to performance should be clear from this in that the greater the level of self-knowledge and the stronger the person, the more likely he or she will be able to fully utilise his or her physical and mental attributes. This is one of the reasons why experienced applied sport psychologists like Salter [36] Ravizza [34] and Nesti [22] advocate the enhancement of performance through encouraging spiritual growth in the athletes they work with. The spiritually aware athlete possesses a framework of meaning that allows him or her to at least see that sport does not make complete sense when it is conceived in material and physical terms only. This spirituality may or may not be grounded in formal religious belief. What is becoming clear is that for an increasing number of sport performers and sport psychologists [22, 37] there is a recognition that sport and spiritual awareness are intimately related. Flowing from this it follows that courage, character and personality formation can be enhanced through repeated encounters with the anxiety, mental trials and sacrifices woven into the fabric of sport[29]. Therefore, the purpose of this study was The role of spiritual transcendence on predictive of competitive anxiety and self-confidence in athletes and because of not investigation about role of spirituality on sport, specially Competitive Anxiety, in sport psychology, performing of this study is necessary and will supported the literature of sport psychology.

MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

Participants: Participants of this study were 200 athletes that they were selected by categorical sampling method in individual (100 athletes) and group athletes in Kermanshah city of Iran. These Participants were selected in Karate(8/0), wrestle(25/0), Taekwondo (7/0), Box (10/0), football (25/0), footstall (10/0), volleyball (10/0) and basketball (5/0). Mean and standard deviation of age and history of sport activity orderly were (M= 35/10, SD= 7/18) and (M= 5/375, SD= 1/51).

Instrument

Spiritual Transcendence Scale (STS; [38]): This is a 24-item measure that regards spirituality as a potential sixth factor of personality. Spiritual transcendence refers to the ability of individuals to view life from a larger, more objective perspective and find a deeper sense of meaning. Furthermore, transcendence is a fundamental, intrinsic motivation that involves suppressing an individual’s own need for those of the larger group. The STS consists of three subscales: connectedness (sense of personal responsibility to others), prayer fulfillment (joy and contentment from prayer/meditation) and universality (sense of unity and purpose in life). Cronbach’s alpha for the subscales are. 83,. 87 and . 64, respectively. For the purpose of this study, the connectedness subscale was not used because the focus was not on one’s relationship to other people. The prayer fulfillment subscale shows good validity with another measure of spirituality, the Faith Maturity Scale (FMS; [39]). In addition, prayer fulfillment and universality are moderately correlated (r =. 64,. 49, respectively) with the subscale of the FMS that measures closeness to God [37].
Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2; [32]):
The CSAI-2 is a multidimensional inventory which measures somatic state anxiety, cognitive state anxiety and state self-confidence. Each subscale contains nine items adding to a total of 27 items for the entire scale. The self-confidence subscale was disregarded as it did not pertain to the present study. Athletes respond to items on a 4-point likert scale. Participants indicate how they feel at the current moment using the following descriptors: 1 (Not at all), 2 (Somewhat), 3 (Moderately so) and 4 (Very Much So). With the exception of one reversed item in the somatic subscale, the score of each subscale is determined by the summation of each subscale response set. Scores range from 9-36 for each subscale. The CSAI-2 shows high internal consistency, with coefficients ranging from .79-.90. Support for construct validity is available in a study conducted on collegiate intramural sport athletes which indicated that the CSAI-2 outcomes were related to Anxiety Rating Scale-2 scores [40]. Furthermore, concurrent validity was demonstrated by showing correlations in the hypothesized direction between the CSAI-2 and the Sport Competitive Anxiety Test, general state and trait anxiety scales, Rotter’s Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and the Zuckerman Affect Adjective Checklist [32].

RESULTS

Table 1 described the descriptive statistical data of variables in this research. Results of correlation indicated that it was negative correlation between connectedness and self-confidence, prayer fulfillment and universality with Cognitive anxiety, Somatic anxiety and Self-confidence in athletes (Table 1).

Results of multivariate regression (Inter) table indicated that the two dimensions of spiritual transcendence (prayer fulfillment and universality) were positively predictive of self-confidence in athletes (p<0.001) (Table 2).

| Variables         | N   | Mean | S.D  | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   |
|-------------------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1.connectedness   | 200 | 17.95| 3.12993| 1   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   |
| 2.prayer fulfillment| 200 | 18.30| 3.47424|.713**| 1   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   |
| 3.universality    | 200 | 19.50| 3.45102|.351**|.469**| 1   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   |
| 4.spiritual transcendence | 200 | 55.75| 8.25398|.826**|.888**|.749**| 1   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   |
| 5.Cognitive anxiety| 200 | 14.45| 3.14595| -.110| -.435**| -.410**| -.396**| 1   | -   | -   | -   | -   |
| 6.Somatic anxiety | 200 | 15.40| 3.78306|.040| -.262**| -.300**| -.220**| .762**| 1   | -   | -   | -   |
| 7.Self-confidence | 200 | 23.45| 4.30583|.319**| .405**|.150*| .220**| -.111| -.159*| 1   | -   | -   |
| 8.Somatic-cognitive anxiety | 200 | 29.85| 6.50686| -.030| -.363**| -.373**| -.320**| .926**| .950**| -.039| 1   |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 and *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05

Table 2: multiple regression (Inter) for predictive of self-confidence by dimensions of spiritual transcendence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Regression</td>
<td>1166.525</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>388.842</td>
<td>30.208</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>2522.975</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>12.872</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3689.500</td>
<td>199</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>27.286</td>
<td>1.783</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.306</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.connectedness</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>.116</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.896</td>
<td>.371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.prayer fulfillment</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.558</td>
<td>6.239</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.universality</td>
<td>.547</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.439</td>
<td>6.556</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

dependent variable= self-confidence and R=. 562, RS=. 316 and Adj.R=. 306
Results of multivariate regression (Inter) table indicated that the three dimensions of spiritual transcendence (connectedness, prayer fulfillment and universality) were negatively predictive of somatic-cognitive anxiety in athletes (p<0.001) (Table 3).

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The results indicated that there was a negative correlation between connectedness and self-confidence, prayer fulfillment and universality with Cognitive anxiety. Somatic anxiety and these factors were positively correlated to self-confidence in athletes. This finding confirms the results of studies by Watson and Nesti [23] and Czech et al. [24]. Existential psychology in which spirituality or religion is one of key concept and some researches such as Dale [20-21] and Fahlberg et al. [19] on the positive role of spirituality in sports support the athletes. This means that by an increase in spiritual transcendence the amount of competitive anxiety decreases. Since the studies have disregarded to the role of spirituality transcendence and anxiety, this results cannot be confirmed, however, it can be said that this finding can confirm the findings of studies by Watson and Nesti [23] and Czech et al. [24]. The findings of both researches confirm the role and significance of spirituality in sports and sportive performance. To justify this finding it may be said that spirituality, prayer fulfillment and having meaning in life results in having a positive thinking about their performance in different environments. This affects positively their self-confidence. Athletes therefore are not exceptions to this principle and prayer fulfillment, accountability and following a goal in life increases their self-confidence in athletic competitions.

Also, results of multiple regression indicated that the three dimensions of spiritual transcendence (connectedness, prayer fulfillment and universality) were negatively predictive of somatic-cognitive anxiety in athletes. This means that an increase in spiritual transcendence leads to a positive reduction in the athletes’ competitive anxiety. This finding is in line with the findings of studies by Watson and Nesti [23] and Czech et al. [24]. They unanimously refer to the role and significance of spirituality in sports and sportive performance. To justify this finding it may be said that spirituality, prayer fulfillment and having meaning in life results in having a positive thinking about their performance in different environments. This affects positively their self-confidence. Athletes therefore are not exceptions to this principle and prayer fulfillment, accountability and following a goal in life increases their self-confidence in athletic competitions.

Results of multiple regression indicated that the two dimensions of spiritual transcendence (prayer fulfillment and universality) were positively predictive of self-confidence in athletes. But another dimension (connectedness) did not predict the self-confidence in athletes. This means that an increase in these variables results in an increase in the athlete’s self-confidence. This finding in line with the findings of studies by Watson and Nesti [23] and Czech et al. [24]. They unanimously refer to the role and significance of spirituality in sports and sportive performance. To justify this finding it may be said that spirituality, prayer fulfillment and having meaning in life results in having a positive thinking about their performance in different environments. This affects positively their self-confidence. Athletes therefore are not exceptions to this principle and prayer fulfillment, accountability and following a goal in life increases their self-confidence in athletic competitions.

Results of multiple regression indicated that the two dimensions of spiritual transcendence (prayer fulfillment and universality) were positively predictive of self-confidence in athletes. But another dimension (connectedness) did not predict the self-confidence in athletes. This means that an increase in these dimensions of spiritual transcendence leads to a positive reduction in the athletes’ competitive anxiety. This finding is in line with the findings of studies by Watson and Nesti [23] and Czech et al. [24]. They unanimously refer to the role and significance of spirituality in sports and sportive performance. To justify this finding it may be said that spirituality, prayer fulfillment and having meaning in life results in having a positive thinking about their performance in different environments. This affects positively their self-confidence. Athletes therefore are not exceptions to this principle and prayer fulfillment, accountability and following a goal in life increases their self-confidence in athletic competitions.
Based on the findings of the present research it is suggested that spirituality and spiritual transcendence as an effective preventive strategy to be considered by athletes so that they would achieve better performance in athletes competitions. It is also suggested that in sport environment possibilities for spiritual learning be provided so that the athletes would have fruitful performance in dealing with anxiety provoking atmospheres.

REFERENCES


