

Relationship between Coping Strategies and Sport Performance among Uitm Seremban 3 Athletes

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Abstract

Coping strategies are essential for athletes that have stress problems. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the athletes cannot go out to training, so some of them will feel stressed, which can decrease their performance. Coping strategies can help them cope with their stress, which can help them improve their performance. The link between coping strategies and sports performance in UiTM Seremban 3 athletes was examined using a quantitative method. A total of 210 athletes' data were recorded and gathered at UiTM Seremban 3, including 112 males and 98 females representing three faculties. Descriptive Analysis and Pearson Correlation Analysis have been used in determining the relationship between coping strategies and sports performance variables. The questionnaire consists of three sections: section A is the demographic profile, section B is athlete coping skill inventory (ACSI-28), and section C is the psychological performance inventory. The result shows a significant relationship between coping strategies and sports performance. An online survey was doing this research. It is hoped that future research will be done physically so that the researcher can get accurate data from the respondents since they will be able to explain things to them physically. Furthermore, the next researcher could conduct a similar study on gender differences in coping strategies and sports performance.

Keywords: Coping Strategies, Sports Performance, Athletes

Introduction

Coping strategies are activities that assist athletes in adapting to a difficult situation, maintaining psychological balance and increasing psychological reliability (Rogaleva et al., 2019). There are three types of coping strategies which is appraisal focused (adaptive cognitive), problem focused (adaptive behavioural) and emotion focused. People usually will use two from these three methods to help them to cope with stress which are problem focused and emotion focused. Coping strategies can help people to find the best method on managing their stress.

Sport performance is influenced by a variety of elements, some of which are intimately linked to the athlete, hereditary and acquired, while others act in concert on the athlete and the team, impacting the training and competition process (D'Isanto et al., 2019). When assessing activity and performance in a team athletic population, athletes' performance can be measured by their speed, time, weight lifted, length, height, acceleration, distances covered, heart rate responses, and heart rate recovery. When they feel stress, their result will be different from the usual they do because they not focus on what they do. During the competition, their performance can be measured based on their last performance on the competition before. If their result is decrease because of the stress, they need to use a method to handle it better.

According to the researcher from Russia, Liudmila Rogaleva, coping strategies are activities that assist athletes in adapting to a difficult situation, maintaining psychological balance, and increasing psychological reliability. The development of adaptive coping 2 strategies for entering sports activities will help to form more flexible behavioural skills, such as increasing mental reliability in stressful competitive situations, thereby increasing resistance to stressful competitive situations and, as a result, increasing performance success (Rogaleva et al., 2019). People can control their stress based on the right situation or based on surrounding too. Athletes need to avoid from negative thinking because it can lead to worse performance so they need to always relaxes their mind and it can help to be better. For Malaysia, there is no research about coping strategy in managing stress towards athlete performance.

The currently problem that happen in all around the world, the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus infectious disease COVID-19 pandemic that began on 17 November 2017 in Wuhan city, central China and on 11 March 2020 was designated a pandemic by World Health Organization (WHO) (World Health Organization, 2020;Szczypińska et al., 2021). This cases were effecting all over the world and a lot of people dies because of this virus. Other than that, all of the sectors need to be close including sports sector to avoid any contact and from the virus spreading more

Because of the pandemic and the need to close the sports industry, most athletes will set new goals during the season when they begin training. For athletes at the end of their competition stage, it can mean putting an early and abrupt closure to their careers, which can increase unpleasant emotions during confinement (Leguizamo et al., 2021). However, the athletes can think the situation happened similar to the injuries that they have and need to rest without do any sports activities.

That issue can make the athletes feels stress because they cannot be training as usual and some of them will feel more frustrated because the Olympic game need to cancel because of the pandemic. The athletes must be able to manage their stress well. Coping with stress is a set of techniques that include cognitive and behavioural efforts targeted at conquering certain 3 external and internal needs that an individual considers to be overburdening or surpassing their resources, and that are carried out in a single transaction. (Wrzesniewski, 2000; Szczypińska et al., 2021). Athletes should know the best way to managing their stress, it can help them to get a positive thought and effect on them. They will feel less of worry and always feels excited when do sports activities later.

For all the athletes, managing stress is very important for sports performance and also for mental health. The athletes that can handle their stress even on this pandemic situation, they can maintain their performance when they can perform again. As for that, this research will focus on to understand the effectiveness of coping strategies to managing stress and to improving athlete performance.

Literature Review

Coping strategies

Coping skills in athletes are essential performers, and they should be developed, taught, and improved because they have a direct impact on athletes' personal and professional lives. Other than that, when it comes to developing personal development programmes for athletes, coping skills are important. The goal is to increase motivation, involvement, resilience to failures, and, indirectly, sports performance and a healthy balance between personal and professional lives (Cosma et al., 2020). Athletes always confronted with many stressful situations. They will experience anxiety, lack of confidence, fear of failure, and fear with their coach when they lose a game during any competition. They'll be under a lot of pressure leading up to the games because they don't want to lose. Their incapacity to deal with these pressures is a major contributor to failure and poor performance.

Coping with Adversity

Coping with adversity is a method for testing if an athlete can maintain positive and enthusiastic even when things aren't going well, stay cool and in control, and bounce back swiftly from mistakes and setbacks (Kaplánová, 2019b). Many athletes will confront a variety of hard conditions in their daily lives, but how they react to those challenges is up to them. In order to accomplish excellent outcomes in sports, athletes must be able to manage stress and hardship. Athletes experience a variety of stressful situations throughout their careers that can affect their performance, including physical, tactical, and psychological demands, injuries, anxiety, mood swings, and excessive training loads (Belem et al., 2017). Some athletes will experience fatigue as a result of their training and competition, but they should relax and stay calm in order to focus on their training and competition.

Coachability

Coachability is a term that can be defined in a variety of ways. Coachability is defined as working with high-performing individuals and their high-performing teams to help them achieve a much higher level of personal and team performance; helping them contribute more to their organization's performance and, ultimately, their success (Kognisi et al., 2021). Coachability can be applied to people ability to learn something and grow without the absence of the coach.

Concentration

When faced with adversity or an unexpected event, an athlete's concentration reveals whether they are easily distracted or able to stay focused on the task (Kaplánová, 2019b). All the athletes need to be concentrate for whatever they do either training or in the competition. This is because they need to remain concentrated in order to avoid any unpleasant outcomes and to plan their strategy for the bouts, as well as improve their training method, because when they concentrate, they can better regulate their emotions and perform well (Belem et al., 2017).

Confidence and Achievement Motivation

Confidence and achievement motivation assesses whether an athlete is self-assured and motivated, constantly delivers 110% during practise and contests, and works hard to enhance 10 his or her abilities (Kaplánová, 2019b). Every athlete needs confidence to believe that they can give it their all, especially when the going gets tough, and that this will help them achieve greater results. This method can be utilised to reduce anxiety and improve performance during training and competitions since the athlete will have more mental power if they are motivated to achieve their objectives.

Goal Setting and Mental Preparation

Goal setting and mental preparation determines whether an athlete establishes and works toward particular performance targets, plans and mentally prepares for competitions, and has a clear plan for future success (Kaplánová, 2019b). In each sport, each athlete will set their own goals. Athletes will set their goals and psychologically prepare to perform at their best throughout the competition before it begins. They will improve their plans or strategy in order to improve their performance.

Goal planning and mental preparation are also part of a set of characteristics that enable a person to improve as an athlete and cope with challenging training and situations (Kaplánová, 2019a). Athletes should constantly be prepared for challenging training since it might assist them deal with unexpectedly tough circumstances during competition. When it comes to fighting well in competition, the athlete's strategy is crucial. Athletes who set goals, prepared themselves for the competition, and followed their coaches' directions had the best results (Kaplánová, 2019a).

Peaking Under Pressure

Peaking under pressure is a variable that determines whether or not an athlete is encouraged instead of threatened by stressful situations and performs well under pressure (Kaplánová, 2019b). It affects all athletes, their heart rate rises, they breathe faster, and depending on how well prepared and confident they are, pressure can improve or degrade their performance. Since some athletes will feel pushed in a stressful environment, and this can affect their performance, the athlete should know how to maintain calm throughout that situation.

Freedom from Worry

Whether an athlete puts pressure on himself or herself by worrying about performing poorly or making mistakes, or worrying about what others will think if he or she performs poorly, is measured by freedom from worry (Kaplánová, 2019b). They are suddenly not performing well in tournaments; most athletes will feel pressured or worried. They will believe that they are not qualified for the competition due to their bad performance, but they should ignore what others think and focus on completing the competition with the best performance possible. During the competition, they must empty their minds of all negative thoughts in order to concentrate on the competition.

Sport Performance

Sports performance, as a noun, refers to an isolated event in which an athlete displays the development of a specific set of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Sports performance, as a

verb, refers to the process of devising a strategy for implementing psychological and physical skills during a competition. According to (Hook et al., 2013; Howle & Eklund, 2013) as cited in (Carraça et al., 2018), sport performance is a situation of self-evaluation and external evaluation that is influenced and regulated by emotional and cognitive factors. The coaches can evaluate the athlete's sports performance based on their result in previous training or tournament to the current performance in training or the tournaments. The mission of sports performance training is to improve one's competitive performance and raise one's chances of success in a particular sport or activity.

Athletes need to have a good emotion during they perform in the competitions to avoid any mistakes that happen and avoid they thinking a lot of negatives thinking or feel fears. The intensity of an athlete's emotions, as well as their entry and maintenance of optimal zones, can have a big impact on their performance. Athletes can achieve good or excellent sport performance when their emotions are in the optimal zones (Kaplánová, 2019b). If the athletes in the dysfunctional zones, they will only feel the negative emotions and it can make their performance weaken and can cause more pressure to them.

Methodology

This research was conducted among all the athletes in UiTM Seremban 3. The participants will be chosen by a simple random selection method. The sample size must be determined in order to establish the number of samples to be used. This study's sampling is based on the table devised by (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). In UiTM Seremban 3, there are 323 athletes in the sample population. The total of the athletes represents from the different faculties. There are 3 faculties in the campus which are Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation (FSR), Faculty of Computer Science and Mathematics (FSKM) and also Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies (FSPPP). The study's sample group is related to a research on the relationship between coping methods and athletic performance.

The information was obtained from the official UiTM Sports Unit for the year 2019. Based on the table by Krejcie & Morgan, the total of sample that will answer the questionnaire will be 175 based on the entire population of the athlete in UiTM Seremban 3 that play variety of sports and level of the competitions that they involved before this. After that, the sample size of 175 will be added with another 20% to avoid from unsolved questions and the total number of the sample that answering the questionnaire are 210.

The research instrument that will be use in this research is a questionnaire. Data is collected by the researcher and in contradiction with quantitative research where instruments such as survey or result to secure data. The questionnaire that will be given will consist of 3 parts which are Part A will be the demographic profile, Part B will be the athlete coping skills inventory and Part C is psychological performance inventory. On the Part B it has 7 dimensions which are "coping with adversity", "coachability", "concentration", "confidence and achievement motivation", "goal setting and mental preparation", "peeking under pressure" and "freedom from worry". Part A for demographic profile consist of age, gender, education level, program, sports involve and latest highest level of sport competition. Part B questionnaire was taken from Athlete Coping Skills Inventory: Assessing Your Sport Psychological Skills by (Sometimes et al., n.d.) and consist of 28 questions and 7 dimension. The reliability of this questionnaire is 0.796. The sample will respond to the questionnaire via

an internet platform via a Google form that provided. A 42-item Psychological Performance Inventory will be used to determine the perception of performance (Loehr, 1986). Self-confidence, negative energy, attention management, vision and imaging, inspiration, positive energy monitoring, and attitude control are the 7 performance characteristics measured. Cronbach's alpha values is 0.835.

The data that has been collected and analysed by using specific software which is the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) which it can help in producing the exact calculation needed in this study. Since this survey involves a questionnaire, respondents should complete the data entry. After collecting all of the data, all of the information were gathered in SPSS to calculate the data. The data was selecting manually before running any test. The invalid samples, such as those in which the respondent skipped a question, be removed entirely from the questionnaire. The data were analysed based on the objective and this research study uses the Descriptive Analysis and Pearson Correlation Analysis because the data is normal.

Findings

This study was to find the relationship between coping strategies and sport performance among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes. The objectives of this study are to identify the most influencing coping strategies among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes. To examine the most prevailed of sport performance among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes. To investigate the relationship between coping strategies and sport performance among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes.

Table 1

Most Influencing Coping Strategies

	n	M	SD
Goal setting and mental preparation	210	3.50	0.55
Coping with adversity	210	3.41	0.46
Concentration	210	3.39	0.48
Confidence and achievement	210	3.37	0.44
Peaking under pressure	210	3.35	0.55
Peaking under pressure	210	2.66	0.66
Coachability	210	2.66	0.40

The table above show the result of most influencing coping strategies. The highest rank of most influencing coping strategies is goal setting and mental preparation which is (M=3.50, SD=0.55). The second highest most influencing coping strategies is coping with adversity which is (M=3.41, SD=0.46). Third highest most influencing coping strategies is concentration with (M=3.39, 0.48). Meanwhile confidence and achievement is forth highest most influencing 27 coping strategies with (M=3.37, 0.44). Followed by peaking under pressure is the fifth most influencing coping strategies with (M=3.35, SD=0.55). Sixth most influencing coping strategies is coachability with (M=2.66, SD=0.40) and lastly is freedom from worry with (M=2.66, SD=0.66).

Table 2

The Most Prevalled Sport Performance

	n	M	SD
Visualization and Imagery Control	210	4.28	.588
Positive Energy	210	4.12	.503
Motivation	210	3.92	.395
Attitude Control	210	3.92	.362
Self -confidence	210	3.60	.356
Self -confidence	210	3.15	.537
Negative Energy Control	210	3.08	.506

According to the table above, it shows the result of most prevailed sport performance. The highest prevailed sport performance is visualization and imagery control with (M=4.28, SD=0.588). The lowest prevailed sport performance is negative energy control with (M=3.08, SD=0.506).

Table 3

Relationship between Coping Strategies and Sport Performance

		Sport Performance
Coping Strategies	Pearson correlation	.578**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	210

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According from table above, the both variable is normal and can continue to perform Pearson correlation. It can be seen from the coping strategies and sport performance, $r = 0.578$ (moderate correlation) and p -value > 0.05 (significant). There is significant relationship between coping strategies and sport performance. In conclusion, the hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between coping strategies and sport performance among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes. There are 3 objectives of this study. The first one is to identify the most influencing coping strategies among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes. Next is to examine the most prevailed sport performance among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes. Third is to investigate the relationship between coping strategies and sport performance among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes. From the demographic research findings, it showed that the total of respondent for this research are 210 which consist 112 males and 98 females from 18 to 40 years' old who studied in UiTM Seremban 3 in Degree and Diploma level of education.

Based on the research finding, it shows that the most influencing coping strategies among UiTM Seremban 3. Coping methods are a way that athletes can implement to help them adjust to a challenging situation, maintain psychological balance, and increase psychological reliability. Goal setting and mental preparation are part of a set of characteristics that enable a person to improve as an athlete and cope with difficult training and competing settings (Kaplánová, 2019a).

This goal setting and mental preparation can help the athletes to always being prepared before the competitions. From the result, it shows that goal setting and preparation is the most influencing coping strategies to the athletes in UiTM Seremban 3 with ($M=3.50$, $SD=0.55$) while the lowest influencing coping strategies to the athletes in UiTM Seremban 3 is coachability with ($M=2.66$, $SD=0.40$). According to the past research, the most influencing coping strategies is freedom from worry with ($M=11.17$, $SD=2.81$) based on the table provided (Freire et al., 2020).

Furthermore, findings in table 2 it shows the most prevailed sport performance. It is essential to empower athletes with a diverse set of psychological skills that will allow them to perform at their best in other areas during competition, as well as influence other critical parameters for their athletic development, such as resting capacity, self-confidence, and adherence to a healthy lifestyle (Benítez-Sillero et al., 2021).

From the result, it shows that visualization and imagery control is the most prevailed sport performance among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes with ($M=4.28$, $SD=0.588$) while the lowest is negative energy control with ($M=3.08$, $SD=0.506$). According to the past research, visualization and imagery control is the most prevailed for the U19 football player with ($M=25.06$, $SD=2.93$) based on the table that has been provided (Benítez-Sillero et al., 2021). Previous research has shown that improving visual-spatial control capacity in a game can be a deciding element in a game's competitive outcome, particularly in high-performance sports (Benítez-Sillero et al., 2021).

Research findings in table 3 indicates the relationship between coping strategies and sport performance. Coping strategies method can help the athletes manage their stress well and that can help them to improve their sport performance. From the tables, it shows that there is moderate correlation according to the Rule of Thumb. The correlation between coping strategies and sport performance is significant because the p value is <0.01 . Due that, the hypothesis is accepted. This result is similar with past the previous study that to identify the link between athletes coping strategies and sport performance (Cosma et al., 2020).

From the past research that conducted by previous researcher (Cosma et al., 2020), managed to discover that there are links between athletes coping strategies and sport performance. The most athletes apply coping strategies method, the higher their sport performance. For the athletes to achieve performance in competition, it is essential that he/she remain calm in stressful situations (Cosma et al., 2020).

Conclusion

Research result and finding shows that coping strategies can give a positive effect towards the sport performance among UiTM Seremban 3 athletes. The more the athlete can handle their stress with the proper coping method and strategies, it can help them to feel more calm during the training session or in the competition and can improve their sport performance. In order to help their athletes, focus during training or tournaments, sport managers and coaches must also play a role. In actuality, these coping strategies may assist them improve their performance by aligning their individual needs with the team's requirements and objectives. It has been discussed in the discussion.

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