

## ANALYSIS OF BAD MOOD REGULATION STRATEGIES TO PERFORMANCE SATISFACTION AMONG MALE AND FEMALE COLLEGE ATHLETES

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the present study was to investigate the strategies that athletes use to regulate mood. Knowledge of the strategies that athletes use to regulate mood can help sport psychologists develop interventions designed to improve performance through controlling mood. The present study comprised of 310 athletes representing a range of different sports (e.g., badminton, hockey, karate, cricket, gymnastic, wrestling, basketball etc.). These participants were selected from different local colleges, universities and other institutions of higher education. All participants who have competed at national or state levels were included in the sample. The study investigated the strategies that college athletes use to regulate the mood dimensions of anger, confusion, depression, fatigue, tension, and vigor. Thus, the purpose of the present study was to investigate whether athletes use strategies common to all mood dimensions. In view of the above it is proposed to study the "Analysis of Bad Mood regulation strategies to performance satisfaction among male and female college athletes."*

**Keywords:** *Bad Mood Regulation and Strategies.*

### INTRODUCTION:

A quest for sport psychologists working with individuals and teams is to identify constructs that relate with performance and manipulate these constructs to improve performance. Sports psychologists are faced with a plethora of possible constructs that could relate with performance, and thus, selection of ones to work with is difficult (Murphy & Tammen, 1998). One variable that has been found to predict performance is mood. There is a vast amount of anecdotal evidence suggesting that poor performance is associated with a failure to get into an appropriate

mood. Thus, investigations of relationships between mood and performance have been a major focus of research in sports psychology (LeUnes & Burger, 1998; LeUnes, 2000).

A focus of mood research in sports psychology is the relationship between scores on The Profile of Mood States (POMS; McNair, Lorr, & Droppleman, 1971) and performance (Beedie, Terry, & Lane, 2000; Renger, 1993; Rowley, Landers, Kyllö, & Etnier, 1995; Terry, 1995). By contrast, there has been very little research investigating the antecedents of mood and how athletes deal with intense mood states that might impair performance. The results of mood-performance research would suggest a need for researchers to direct their efforts to understanding how athletes control mood. Meta-analysis results show that mood predicts performance when certain conditions are met (Beedie et al., 2000). Mood is proposed to be a more effective predictor of performance in sports of a short duration, when the sport involves open skills, and when performance is assessed through a self-reference criterion (Beedie et al., 2000).

One method of mood-management is self-regulation. It is suggested that individuals tend to actively monitor their mood and develop self-regulating strategies to reduce negative mood and increase positive mood (Thayer, Newman, & McClain, 1994). Rusting and Nolen-Hoeksema (1998) defined self-regulating strategies as “thoughts and behaviours intended to eliminate, maintain, or change emotional states” (p. 790). Conscious recognition of the intensity of mood and the anticipated impact of that mood on behaviour is proposed to underlie the self-regulatory process (Mandler, 1984). An important aspect of mood regulation is the notion that it does not necessarily involve mood changes. Regulation is concerned with the cognitive evaluation of the mood and its anticipated impact on behavior. Thus, if the individual is in the appropriate mood, regulation strategies might involve mood maintenance.

#### PROCEDURE:

The Self-Regulating Strategies of Mood Questionnaire will be administered on the participants of the present study. They were asked to read the strategies, nominate strategies they use to change each mood dimension, and to rate the effectiveness of the method(s). They were also

asked to describe any strategies that are not listed, but they use, by writing on space provided to them in the questionnaire. This procedure was conducted for strategies to regulate anger, confusion, depression, fatigue, tension, and vigor. Owing to the nature of some of the strategies, participants were assured about the confidentiality of their responses which ensured the honest responses.

Data were collected by the researcher. The researcher informed the participants about the purpose of the study and explained that the long-term aim of the present study was to develop individually tailored interventions designed to improve psychological states and performance. Participants were encouraged to give information honestly. The participation was entirely voluntary and the participants were free to withdraw at any part or point of time in the study.

#### Statistical Analysis

Differences in strategy use between male and female participants were analyzed with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, and Chi-square.

#### RESULTS:

Table 1

| Strategies                               | Total | Male | Female | X <sup>2</sup> | P    |
|------------------------------------------|-------|------|--------|----------------|------|
| Call, talk to, or be with someone        | 37    | 20   | 17     | 0.10           | 0.75 |
| Try to be alone                          | 25    | 15   | 10     | 0.64           | 0.42 |
| Control thoughts                         | 21    | 13   | 8      | 0.76           | 0.38 |
| Evaluate or analyze the situation        | 15    | 12   | 3      | 4.26           | 0.04 |
| Exercise and walking                     | 6     | 4    | 2      | 0.16           | 0.69 |
| Listen to music                          | 89    | 52   | 37     | 2.20           | 0.14 |
| Rest, take a nap, close eyes, or sleep   | 20    | 14   | 6      | 2.46           | 0.12 |
| Engage in religious/ spiritual activity  | 11    | 4    | 7      | 0.36           | 0.55 |
| Engage in hobby                          | 13    | 11   | 2      | 4.92           | 0.03 |
| Watch TV (movie)                         | 21    | 11   | 10     | 0.00           | 1.00 |
| Use humor                                | 6     | 4    | 2      | 0.16           | 0.69 |
| Eat something                            | 7     | 4    | 3      | 0.00           | 1.00 |
| Take shower/bath or splash water on face | 6     | 5    | 1      | 1.50           | 0.22 |

Table 1: Usual Ways to Change a Bad Mood by Male and Female Athletes.

Table 1 shows number of athletes who use different strategies to change their bad moods. Chi square values were calculated to show whether male and female athletes differ significantly in the use of different strategies to change their bad moods.

Table 1 clearly indicate that largest number of athletes (89) listen to music to change their bad moods. To change their bad moods, a large number of athletes call, talk to, or be with someone (21), try to be alone (25), try to control thoughts by different methods (21), watch TV or movie (21), take rest, take a nap, close eyes, or sleep (20), evaluate or analyze the situation to determine mood cause (15) and engage in hobby (13) to change their bad moods. While a small number of athletes use strategies such as engaging in religious /spiritual activities (11), eating something (7), exercise and walk (6), use humor (6), and take shower/bath or splash water on face (6) to change their bad moods.

In regard to the differences between male and female athletes' use of strategies to change their bad moods, results revealed that significantly larger number of male athletes (12) than female athletes (3) try to evaluate or analyze the situation to determine mood cause as a strategy to change their mood ( $\chi^2 = 4.26$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .04$ ). Male athletes more frequently engage in hobby (11) than female athletes (2) to change their bad mood ( $\chi^2 = 4.92$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .03$ ). However, for the use of other strategies differences between male and female athletes were not found statistically significant.

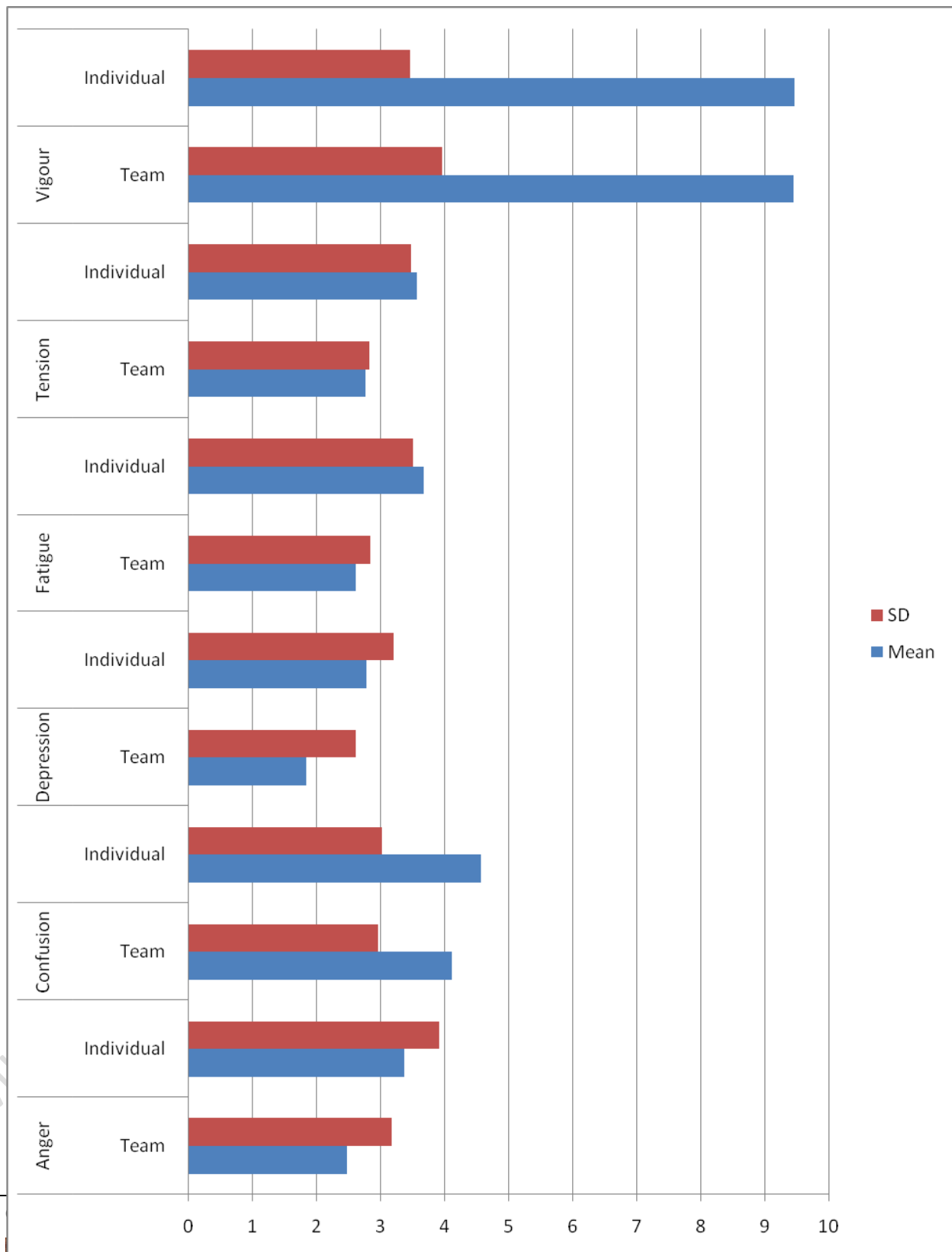


Table 2

Mean satisfaction scores of male and female athletes with strategies to change bad mood.

| Strategies              | Sex    | N   | Mean | SD   | t-value | P    |
|-------------------------|--------|-----|------|------|---------|------|
| Most Common Strategy    | Male   | 194 | 7.65 | 1.05 | 0.58    | 0.56 |
|                         | Female | 117 | 7.73 | 1.05 |         |      |
| Other Common Strategies | Male   | 194 | 4.87 | 1.40 | 0.79    | 0.43 |
|                         | Female | 117 | 5.00 | 1.54 |         |      |

Table 2: Mean satisfaction scores of male and female athletes with strategies to change bad mood.

Table 2 shows mean scores of male and female athletes for satisfaction with most common strategy and other strategies they use for changing their bad mood. It was found that when athletes use their most preferred strategy to change their bad mood, the satisfaction was higher among both male ( $M = 7.65$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ) and female ( $M = 7.73$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ) athletes in comparison to the other common strategies used by male ( $M = 4.87$ ,  $SD = 1.40$ ) and female ( $M = 5.00$ ,  $SD = 1.54$ ) athletes. However, differences between mean satisfaction scores of male and female athletes were not found significant.

Table 3

| Strategies                                                                                                                | Total | Team | Individual | X <sup>2</sup> | P    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|------------|----------------|------|
| Call, talk to, or be with someone.                                                                                        | 37    | 23   | 14         | 6.00           | 0.01 |
| Try to be alone                                                                                                           | 25    | 15   | 10         | 0.64           | 0.42 |
| Control thoughts (think positively, concentrate on something else don't let things bother me, give myself a "pep talk."). | 21    | 12   | 9          | 0.20           | 0.65 |
| Evaluate or analyze the situation to determine mood cause                                                                 | 15    | 12   | 3          | 4.26           | 0.04 |
| Exercise (This may include taking a walk)                                                                                 | 6     | 3    | 3          | 0.00           | 1.00 |
| Listen to music                                                                                                           | 89    | 62   | 27         | 12.98          | 0.00 |
| Rest, take a nap, close eyes, or sleep                                                                                    | 20    | 14   | 6          | 2.46           | 0.12 |
| Engage in religious/spiritual activity                                                                                    | 11    | 5    | 6          | 0.00           | 1.00 |
| Tend to chores (e. g. housework, schoolwork, gardening)                                                                   | 9     | 4    | 5          | 0.00           | 1.00 |

|                                                   |    |    |   |      |      |
|---------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|------|------|
| Engage in hobby                                   | 13 | 9  | 4 | 1.24 | 0.27 |
| Watch TV (movie).                                 | 21 | 13 | 8 | 0.76 | 0.38 |
| Use humor (e.g., laugh, make light of situation). | 6  | 3  | 3 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
| Eat something                                     | 15 | 7  | 8 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
| Take shower/bath or splash water on face          | 6  | 4  | 2 | 0.16 | 0.69 |

Table 3: Usual Ways to Change a Bad Mood by Team and Individual Athletes.

Numbers of team and individual athletes using different strategies to change a bad mood are given in Table 3. Results revealed that largest number of athletes listen to music for changing bad mood (89). This was followed by talking to or be with someone (37), trying to be alone (25), controlling thoughts (21), watching TV or movie (21), taking rest, taking a nap, closing eyes and sleeping (20), evaluating or analyzing the situation to determine mood cause (15), eating something (15), engaging in hobby (13), engaging in religious/spiritual activities (11), performing chores such as housework, schoolwork or gardening (9), exercising and walking (6), using humor such as laughing, making the situation light (6), and taking shower/bath or splash water on face (6).

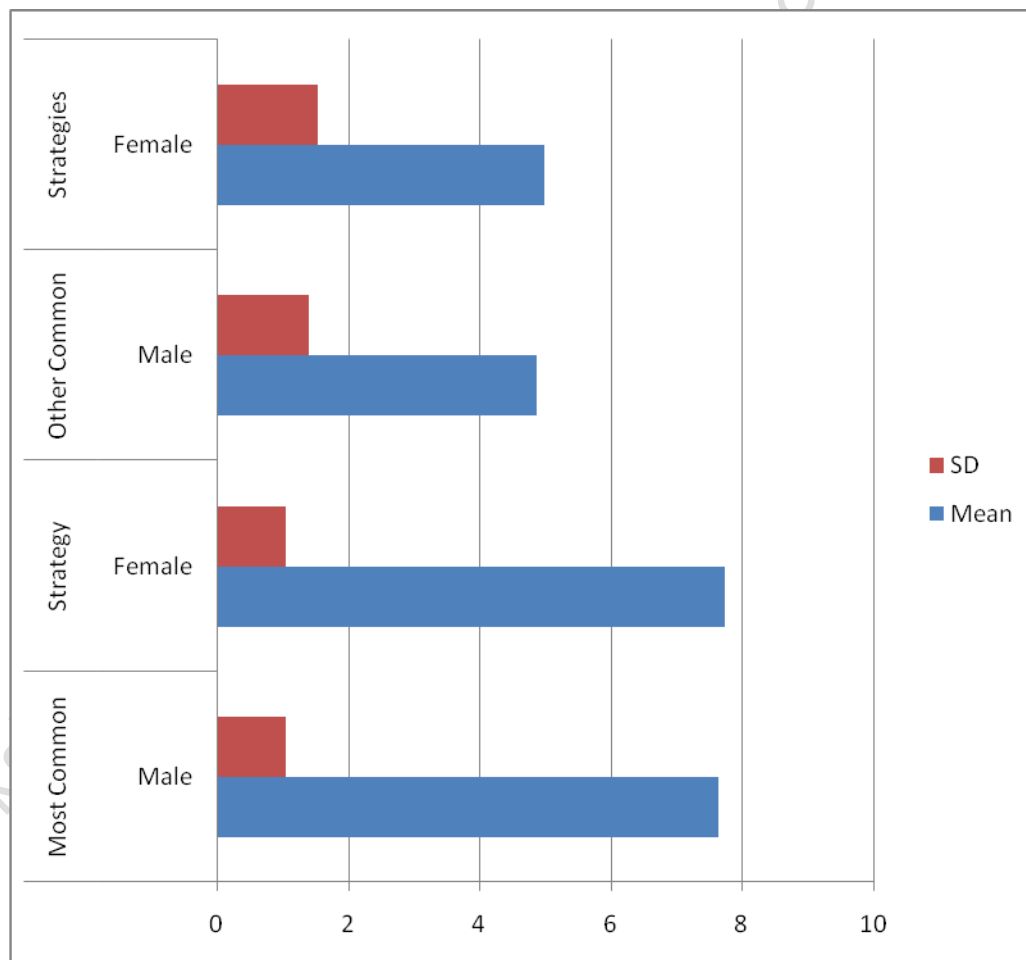
Significant differences between frequency of strategies used to change bad mood by the athletes of team and individual sports were found for talking to or be with someone ( $\chi^2 = 6.00$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .01$ ), evaluating or analyzing the situation to determine the causes of bad mood ( $\chi^2 = 4.26$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .04$ ), and listening to music ( $\chi^2 = 12.98$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .00$ ). These strategies were used more frequently by athletes of team sports than by the athletes of individual sports. Although for other strategies significant differences between frequencies of used strategies by team and individual athletes were not observed as statistically significant, athletes of team sports have consistently used all the strategies more frequently than athletes of individual sports.

Table 4

| Strategies   | Athletes   | N   | Mean | SD   | t-value | P   |
|--------------|------------|-----|------|------|---------|-----|
| Most Common  | Team       | 206 | 7.70 | 1.07 | 0.52    | .60 |
| Strategy     | Individual | 105 | 7.64 | 1.01 |         |     |
| Other Common | Team       | 206 | 4.95 | 1.47 | 0.60    | .55 |
| Strategies   | Individual | 105 | 4.85 | 1.42 |         |     |

Table 4: Mean Satisfaction Scores of Team and Individual Athletes with Strategies to Change a Bad Mood.

Table 4 shows mean scores of team and individual athletes for satisfaction with most common strategy and other strategies they use for changing their bad mood. It was found that when athletes use their most preferred strategy to change their bad mood, the satisfaction was higher among both team ( $M = 7.70$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ) and individual ( $M = 7.64$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ) athletes in comparison to the other common strategies used by team ( $M = 4.95$ ,  $SD = 1.47$ ) and individual ( $M = 4.85$ ,  $SD = 1.42$ ) athletes. However, differences between mean satisfaction scores of team and individual athletes were not found significant.



**CONCLUSION:**

Findings of the present study clearly indicated that college athletes use a number of different strategies to change mood. Findings also revealed differences in mood change strategies of male and female athletes as well as athletes of team and individual sports. Further, it was also found that satisfaction of athletes with mood change strategies differ across situations. Also, mood states of the participants were found related to their choice of mood change strategies; and use of mood change strategies were related to the athlete satisfaction in sports and related activities. These findings lend support to the proposal that negative mood should be conceptualized through a number of different constructs, and therefore, for example, strategies used to regulate different mood states might not be same for all mood states. Although there are certain limitations of the present study such as sample, design, selection of participants, tools used and analysis of data, findings suggest a number of implication which could be beneficial to the college athletes. Further research into the effects of different types of mood regulation mechanism is needed. Specifically future research should identify the effects that different types of strategies have on different mood dimensions. It is suggested that further studies should explore the mood regulating strategies in a broader context using sample of different groups of athletes. Finally there is need of future research that should test the effectiveness of applied interventions designed to improve mood change strategies of college athletes which in turn improve their performance satisfaction and outcomes in sports and related activities.

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