

# The effects of mood status and competitive anxiety in elite basketball players

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## Introduction

Interest has developed in studying the relationship between pre-competitive mood and anxiety with athletic performance (eg. Beedie, Terry & Lane, 2000; Morgan, Ellickson, O'Connor & Bradley, 1992). The most commonly used instrument for measuring mood states in sport psychology is the Profile of Mood States (POMS). A weak to moderate relationship exists between pre-competitive mood and the performance of similarly skilled athletes (Cox, 2002). The current study examined the relationship between pre-game mood status (POMS), competitive-anxiety (SCAT), task-ego orientation (TEOSQ) and game statistics during the season of an elite basketball competition.

## Methods

19 elite female basketball players playing in the Australian Women's National Basketball League (WNBL) participated in this research. Participants completed a pre-screening health questionnaire, the Task-Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) and the Sport Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) questionnaires prior to commencement of the season competition. The Profile of Mood States (POMS) was completed prior to each game played. The relationship between pre-game mood status, competitive anxiety and physical variables was explored.

## Results

Significant correlations were identified between psychological indicators and performance. These results indicated that depression ( $\rho=0.94$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), vigour ( $\rho= -0.65$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and tension ( $\rho=0.78$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) were significantly correlated with overall mood disturbance. Basketballers who reported higher levels of fatigue and anger prior to a game attempted and made less free throws ( $\rho= -0.66$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), scored fewer points ( $\rho= -0.70$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and had more turnovers ( $\rho=0.68$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Analysis of team performances indicated a significant relationship between game location and tension. Participants indicated a higher level of anxiety when competing at home than when away ( $F_{1, 48} = 6.27$ ,  $p = .016$ ). However this did not translate to performance outcome as there was no home advantage demonstrated  $\chi^2(1, N = 14) = 2.43$ ,  $p=.12$ .

## Discussion/Conclusion

This research identifies a relationship between pre-competitive mood and anxiety with game performance in elite basketball. We suggest that further research is needed to identify how factors such as mood, anxiety and task-ego orientation explain performance in basketball competition.

## References

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