



ISSN: 2319-6505

Available Online at <http://www.resealert.com>

*International Journal of Current Advanced Research*  
Vol.2, Issue, 1, pp.51 - 52, August, 2013

*International Journal  
of Current Advanced  
Research*

ISSN: 2319 - 6475

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Investigation of Selected Psychological Variables as Predictors of Pole Vault Performance

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Received 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2013  
Received in revised form 25<sup>th</sup>, July, 2013  
Accepted 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2013  
Published online 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2013

#### Key words:

Pole Vault, Anxiety, Aggression, Achievement motivation, Inter university players

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate selected psychological variables as predictors in pole vault performance. To achieve the purpose thirty male pole vaulters representing different universities, participated in all India Inter-varsity Athletic Championships were selected. The pole vault performance was selected as dependent variable and independent variables were, selected psychological variables such as: anxiety, aggression, and achievement motivation. To measure sports competition anxiety the Rainer Martens (SCAT) questionnaire, for measuring aggression, sports aggression Inventory developed by Anand Kumar and Prem Shankar, and to measure achievement motivation, Sports Achievement Motivation Test constructed by M L Kamalesh were used to measure anxiety, aggression, and achievement motivation. Pole vault performance was determined by taking actual height cleared at the time of competition. The data were analysed by using Pearson product moment correlation ( $r$ ) for assessing the relationship of the pole vault performance to each of the psychological variables. Partial correlation performed to assess the effect of each of the variables on pole vault performance. Multiple correlation (Wherry-Dolittle Method) to assess combined contribution and Regression equation for predicting the pole vault performance from psychological variables. Analysis of data revealed that none of the above three psychological variables were not found to be significantly related to pole vault performance

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### INTRODUCTION

The pole vault, like the running broad jump can be treated to the days of primitive man. No doubt, it was employed by early man as a means for gaining distance in jumping obstacles of horizontal distance in the beginning and later evolved in to an event for height clearance. Pole vaulting is frequently described and discussed as the track and field sport which more than other, calls for the complete mental capability. Sport psychology as an applied psychology, is the greatest blessing of the modern day science in this age. Within a short span of time, sport psychology has taken giant strides. The knowledge in all fields of human endeavor, especially of behaviour, has expanded to the greater extent. Singer, states that "Sport psychology explores one's behavior in athletics". Psychological readiness plays a decisive role as to determine whether or not an athlete in competitions and in training responds to his optimum potentials.

Psychological variables such as Anxiety, Motivation, Aggression, Mental toughness etc. have been observed and tested to measure their significance to improve athletic performance. In a study it was found out that mental toughness and aggression appeared to be the most significant while ranking for selection of women intercollegiate basketball team members. Anxiety is one of the most determinants to good performance. Laboratory field and clinical evidence demonstrate that athlete motor performance can suffer if anxiety becomes too high. Many youngster reports that various worries prevent them from playing their best when they compete.

In the sport of track and field motivation is a key factor in developing a successful athletic programme. Motivation appears to be the key to accomplishment, whether it be in sports, in teaching, in research or in some other challenging pursuit. The purpose of the study was to investigate selected psychological variable as predictors in pole vault performance.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### Subjects

To execute the study thirty (30) male pole vaulters representing different universities, participated in All India Inter-university Athletics championship were selected as subjects. The dependent variable was pole vault performance and independent variable was selected psychological variables. Pole vault performance was determined by taking actual height cleared at the time of competition. Psychological variables included - Anxiety, Aggression and Achievement Motivation, which were measured by using Rainer Marten's sports competitive Anxiety Test (SCAT), Mark Thompson's sports Aggression Questionnaire and Sports Achievement Motivation Test by M L Kamalesh respectively.

#### Statistical technique

The data were analysed by using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation ( $r$ ) for assessing the relationship of the pole vault performance to each of the psychological variables; Partial correlation was performed to assess the effect of each psychological variables to pole vault performance. Multiple

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correlation (Wherry-Dolittle Method) for assessing combined contribution of the psychological variables to pole vault performance; Regression equation for predicting the pole vault performance from psychological variables. Level of significance for testing the hypothesis was set at 0.05.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Table 1 indicated that pole vault performance is not significantly related to the values of anxiety, aggression and achievement motivation. Since the obtained  $r$  value are 0.184, 0.027 and 0.023 is less than the required table value of 0.361 at  $\alpha = 0.05$  for the degrees of freedom 28. Therefore these variables did not seem to have contribution to performance in pole vault.

**Table 1** Relationship of psychological variables to pole vault performance

Variables Correlated	Correlation Co-Efficient (r)
Anxiety	-0.184
Aggression	-0.027
Achievement Motivation	-0.023

## DISCUSSION

The statistical analysis of data revealed that there was no significant relation between selected psychological variables and pole vault performance. It seems that the size in sample was not sufficient enough to yield any significant relation between psychological variables and pole vault performance. It may also attribute to the competition tight schedule faced by the athletes and who could not spare much time to think and fill up the questionnaire.

## CONCLUSION

Within the limitations of this study, it is concluded that the psychological variables anxiety, aggression, achievement motivation seemed to have no significant relation to pole vault performance. This study may performed by selecting subjects belonging to different age groups and level of achievement other than those employed in this study.

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