

PRECOMPETITION MOTIVATION AND OTHER PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES DETERMINANTS OF SPORT OUTCOME

RESULTS OF A PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE WITH SEMI-PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY ATHELETES

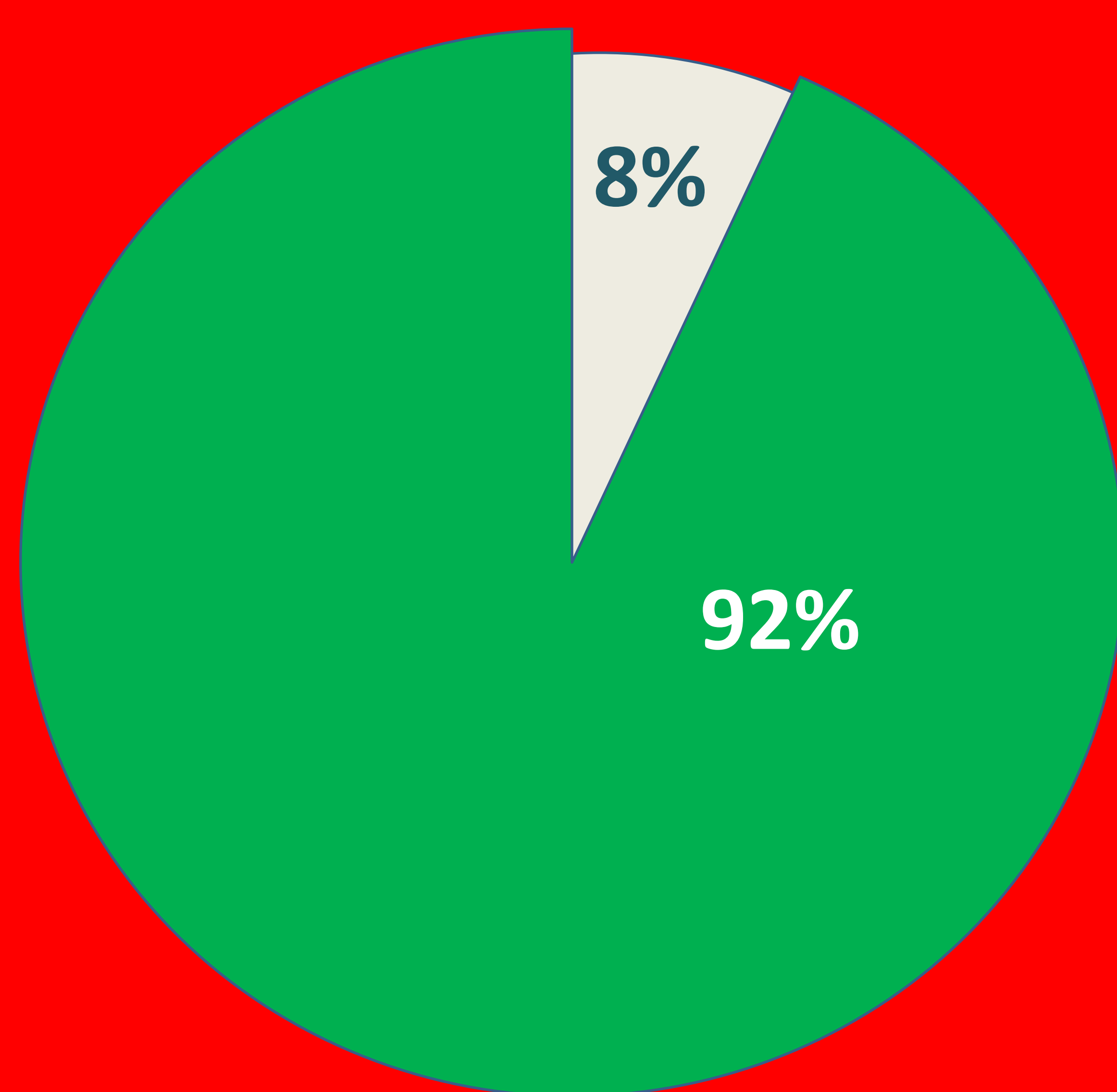
ANDRES LÓPEZ-LLAVE, M. CARMEN PÉREZ-LLANTADA, JOSÉ M. BUCETA & PATRICIA DÍAZ-TENDERO

FACULTAD DE PSICOLOGÍA, UNED. SPAIN

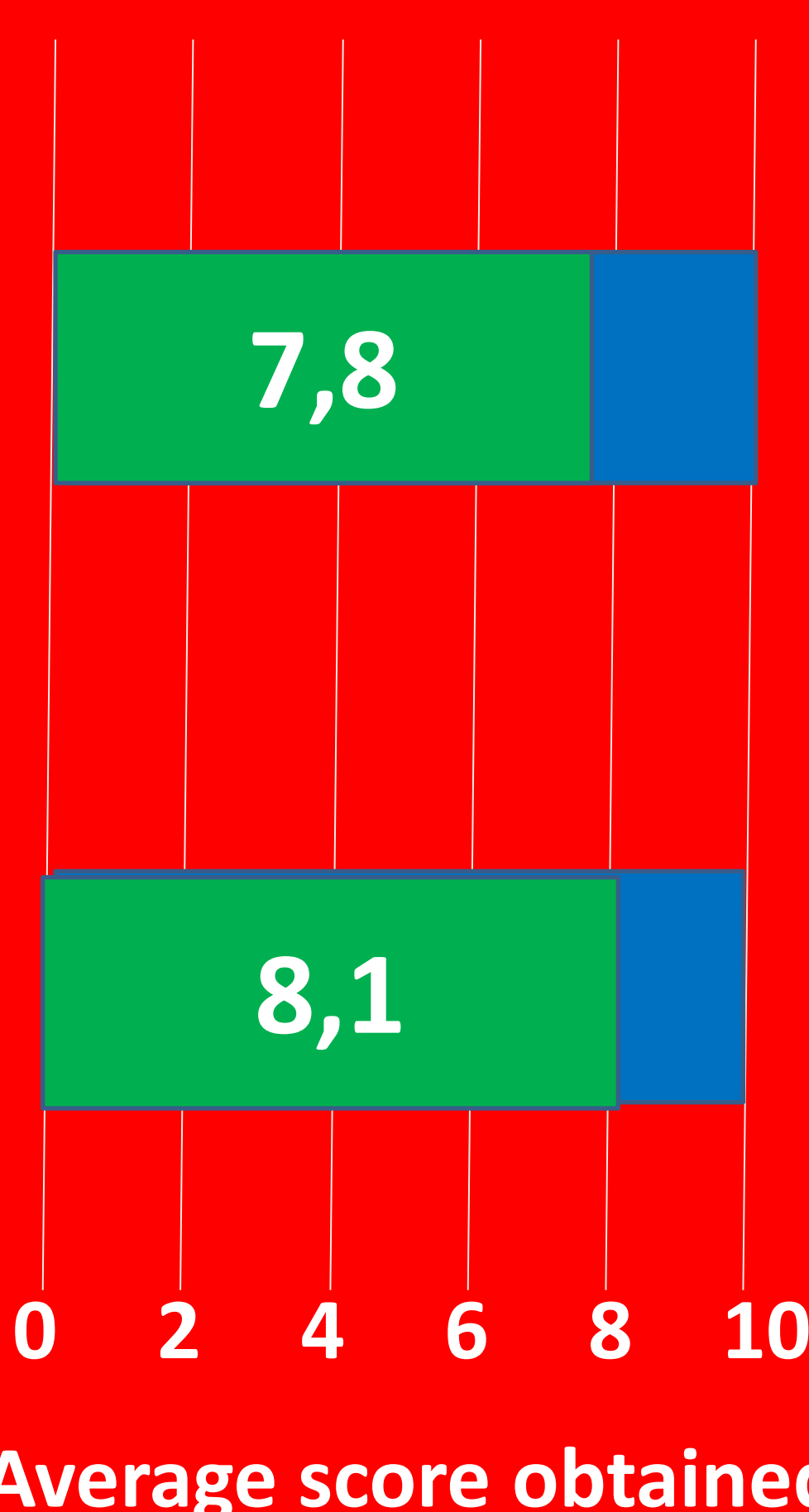


INTRODUCTION

In the interaction between coach and athlete, as in most human interactions, one seeks to influence the behavior of the other (Jowett & Felton, 2017). According to (Bandura, 1990), through verbal persuasion, coaches can be decisive in the perception of self-efficacy and team performance. Vargas-Tosing and Bartholomew (2006), studied the effect that pre-match talks had on the perception of self-efficacy of athletes. In order for the pre-match talks to have a positive effect on performance, coaches must be aware of the emotional intensity of the athletes prior to the pre-match talk, because with those athletes with a high emotional intensity prior, they must have a special attention to prevent generating over-activation states or high levels of anxiety (Vargas-Tonsing & Bartholomew, 2006). Knowing the psychological state of the teams, it is essential to be able to select strategies and adapt the communication style of the coach in order to influence their players, facilitating the most optimal psychological state to achieve the desired performance.



Technical team. Valuation on the usefulness of information



Degree of adjustment between the profile and the perception estimated by the players

METHOD

Participants

The study was carried out for six months, with a male semi-professional team of grass hockey. The age range of the players ranged from 19 to 31 years. The coach had extensive experience working with sports psychologists and, therefore, with a high knowledge of the psychological variables associated with sports performance.

Instruments

The TEP consists of nine analogous visual scales and is composed of two opposite adjectives. Each of the scales refers to a psychological variable related to sports performance (discouragement, general fatigue, positive activation, motivation, self-confidence, concentration, negative activation, anxiety and hostility). The athlete must indicate by marking a cross on the line of ten centimeters that separates both adjectives, how it is with respect to each of them.

Process

Format 1:

For the initial procedure, a TEP format was developed that could be answered through a laptop. In this way, on the same day of the game when the players arrived at the concentration, each player individually was filling in the TEP through the computer. The Psychologist analyzed the profile and gave feedback on the group's tendency to the coach prior to the pre-match talk. In such a way that the coach could take advantage of the information provided to adapt the psychological state of the team to the specific situation.

However, we have a limitation. The application of the TEP before the matches can alter the self-regulation process of the players and even create doubts and insecurity about the state in which they are (Buceta, 2010). The limitations in self-observation are mainly explained by the role of somatic anxiety in the moments before the competition, reaching its highest level in the hours and minutes before the start of the test (Buceta J., Lopez de the Key, Perez-Llantada, Vallejo, & Pino, 2003).

Format 2:

The following procedure sought to resolve the limitations of self-observation in the moments immediately prior to the competition, from the previous procedure. For this mobile messaging (SMS) was used. In such a way that the adjectives were individualized, becoming 14 adjectives. To avoid the effect of the routine on the motivation and interest of the players, several synonyms of each adjective were used. The night before the game, the players received an SMS from the psychologist with a list of adjectives that should be evaluated from 0 to 10. Once the psychologist received the ratings of all players, analyzed the data and generated a profile of the team that sends coach the night before the game and thus determine the tools to use to adjust the psychological state of the team. Every Wednesday the players received the feedback with the profile of the psychological state of the previous weekend, with the aim of validating the results of the team's profile with their perceptions.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study has been to adapt the TEP to a "remote" application version. The first format of the study gave rise to the possibility of evaluating in situ, in a fast and automated way the psychological state of the equipment through a computer. The second format used the use of instant messaging (SMS) through mobile phones. In this way, the players filled the test the night before the game, when the levels of somatic anxiety were not at their highest levels (hours and minutes before the start).

The results obtained show the usefulness of the information provided to the coach so that he could use it to help adapt the psychological state of the team. The positive assessment by the technical team of the information received shows that the information on the psychological state is of interest for the work of the rest of the professionals. In relation to the validation of the evaluation procedure, an adjustment is observed between the profile determined by the TEP in remote format and the perception of the players.

Today we have clear advances in mobile technology that could determine a more appropriate procedure through the use of mobile Apps. The development of a mobile app for the evaluation of the psychological state of the teams, would facilitate the player's access to the TEP as well as the immediacy of the reception of results by the coach. Another of the future projections of this study would be to expand the representativeness of the sample. In this sense, it would be interesting to cover different team sports disciplines.

RESULTS

The results showed that the coach used the information provided by the psychologist on the psychological state of the team for the preparation of matches 92% of the time. The assessment by the technical team that accompanied the coach in relation to the usefulness of the information provided, was 7.8 points on average (maximum 10). The average score obtained in terms of the degree of adjustment between the profiles contributed and the perception estimated by the players was 8.1 points out of a maximum of 10. (see figure 1)

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