

# Perceived effect of emotional stability on semi-elite basketball players' countenance in a selected higher institution in Nigeria

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## Abstract

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The purpose of the study was to ascertain the perceived effect of emotional stability on semi-elite basketball players' countenance at a university in Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of basketball athletes in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. The sample size comprised 300 basketball athletes selected across departments in the selected higher institution. 20 basketball athletes were selected from 15 departments using simple random sampling techniques. A self-designed research instrument titled "Depression and Emotional Stability Questionnaire" (DESQ) was used to collect data from athletes. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics of percentages, mean and standard deviation, and regression at a 0.05 level of significance. The result indicated that there exists a strong effect of emotional stability on athletes' countenance ( $r = 0.453$   $p < 0.05$ ). It also showed how significant the variables are statistically at  $p < 0.05$ . The study concluded that emotional stability significantly affects athletes' countenance, and consequently their performance in sports.

**Keywords:** Basketball, emotion control, emotional stability, sports performance, university athletes.

## Introduction

Quality of life is defined as the perception of individuals, of their position in life in the context of culture and value systems accepted by the society in which they live and in relation to their life goals, expectations, or interests (Rokicka, 2014). This definition emphasizes the subjective dimension of quality of life, considering that the individual is a being who is able to determine the quality of his/her own life referring to his/her own assessments. Quality of life is a state of wellbeing which is a composite of two components: first, the ability to perform everyday activities which reflects physical, psychological, and social well-being and second, patient satisfaction with levels of functioning and the control of disease and/or treatment related symptoms (Marcel, 2014).

Honestus (2018) reported that much of the quality-of-life debate remains over what domains influence quality of life. The World Health Organization, WHO (1998) defined quality of life as "individuals' perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in the relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns" and includes physical, psychological, and social wellbeing as the minimum dimensions. The concept was further defined by broad indicators, to include the natural and social environment, opportunities, and services available to people living in a particular area.

The display of emotions and feelings are key factors in the social environment. Although it seems obvious that emotions influence our behaviour and actions in every aspect of our life, including sport, it was neglected for a long time in psychological research. Today, we are

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still living in the "cognitive age in psychology": Cognitive processes play the main role, and emotions are seen as something negative that should be banished in order to act logically. But we cannot make our emotions disappear; they are a part of our life and because they influence our behaviour and actions in every aspect of our lives.

Emotionally stable persons tolerate minor stresses and strains of day-to-day living without becoming emotionally upset, anxious, nervous, tense, or angry. They are able to maintain composure under minor emotional stress. They are fairly constant in their basic mood, and they generally revert quickly to that state following those occasions when they have experienced considerable stress or have been exceptionally provoked. The unstable person, on the other hand, is subject to fairly wide, frequent, and often unpredictable mood shifts that may swing from pole to pole (Adeleye, 2011). There are external factors that also play an important role as emotions can spread from spectators to athletes and one athlete can transmit his or her emotions to others. Coaches or significant others can also influence the emotions of athletes. Non-social cues can also play a role.

The emotions important for our motivation to exercise depend on the behavioral stage. Negative emotions like dissatisfaction have a great influence on individuals while practicing sports. Poor emotions make an individual weak and unwilling to actively participate in any sporting activity though different sports have different emotional requirements but at best it is good for an individual to have a stable emotion as to be able to genuinely and actively participate in sports (Darko, 2016).

Competitive sport arouses a wide array of feelings and emotions which may include but not limited to anxiety, frustration, disappointment, happiness, hope, and anger. Every good athlete therefore, knows it takes more than physical stamina to succeed. Along with the development of muscles, reflexes and physical capabilities, an athlete need to be able to cultivate the appropriate mindset for competitions and games and learn how mood affects performance. A bad mood can throw off your whole performance, while some days you may feel like you're flying through the field with ease.

Mood has a measurable effect on athletic performance as mood and athletic ability are integrally connected. Whether activities on the field improve athletes' mood or whether emotions negatively or

positively impact athletes' reaction time and focus; athletes emotional state has a strong and noticeable impact on their athletic skills. During a competition, we have a lot of thoughts coming into our mind and we tend to get lost in them. When emotions are running high our thoughts tend to speed up and we get distracted from what we are doing. Therefore, we lose control over the situation. For athletes without experience in mindfulness, one simple exercise to overcome this is to observe your breathing for some time. This seems very simple but it is challenging to maintain concentration. However, mindfulness, like sport, is a skill which can be improved by regular practice. From a simple glance at the sports pages of daily newspapers or highlights on television, we see a display of positive emotions, from contentment and happiness to joy and ecstasy. These images range from smiling faces, vocal expressions and warm embraces. These images reflect how emotions are communicated through facial expression, vocal communication and touch. (Sauter, 2010). Negative mood, anger, frustration, stress and fear are also on display and can all have a profoundly harmful effect on athletes' ability to run, to coordinate, to concentrate their energy and to work in sync with other teammates.

It is well proven that positive thoughts and emotions have a positive effect on recovery. If you imagine a situation where you feel well and healthy, the body has the impulse to achieve this state and start the recovery process. Our emotions and thoughts are closely correlated with one another. Negative emotions trigger negative thoughts, and this creates a vicious circle from which it is difficult to escape from. Consequently, it can also influence recovery and regeneration. Furthermore, effectively dealing with emotions is highly dependent on the athlete's personality. Therefore, each athlete should find his or her own way to deal with emotions.

Kessler (2015) opined that emotional stability enables the person to develop an integrated and balanced way of perceiving the problems of life. This organizational ability and structured perception help one to develop reality-oriented thinking, judgment and evaluation ability. One develops feelings, perceptions and attitudes that help in understanding the realities of life and conditions and circumstances that create miserable situations in life. Such understanding helps one promote high ego strength.

Emotional Stability has been examined and recognized as a personality representation in human mind that enables a person develop an integrated and balanced way of perceiving the problems of life. This

organizational ability and structured perception help one to develop reality-oriented thinking, judgment and evaluation ability. One develops feelings, perceptions and attitudes that help in understanding the realities of life and conditions and circumstances that create miserable situations in life. Such understanding helps one promote high ego strength (McAuley & Morris, 2007).

Emotional stability remains the central theme in personality studies, to this while Chaturvedi & Chandler (2010) developed emotional stability scale. The concept of stable emotional behaviour at any level is that which reflects the fruits of normal emotional development. Base on available literature, the components of emotional stability were identified and 250 items were developed, covering each component. Two-stage elimination of items was carried out, that is through judge's opinions and items analysis. Fifty aggression vs tolerance, dependence vs autonomy, apathy vs empathy was retained in the final skills. Based on the psychometric principles a 50 item, self-administer 5-point Likert type rating skill was developed for measurement of emotional stability.

According to Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001), certain discrete positive emotions including joy, interest, contentment, pride and love can broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoires and build enduring personal resources (physical, intellectual, social and psychological). These emotions increased our tendency to play, explore and imagine future achievements and through this process our personal resources grew to guarantee our continued existence. Similar to negative emotions, the capacity to experience positive emotions is genetically programmed, which through natural selection became part of our human nature (Fredrickson, 2001). Play, for instance, assembles physical abilities that are necessary later in life and that positive emotions build psychological resiliency and trigger upward spirals toward improved emotional well-being (Fredrickson, 2001).

Li & Ahistrom (2016) developed a construct of emotional stability based on self-organizational theory. Under the paradigm of Self-Organization Theory, emotional stability is defined as a property to label whether or not a complex emotion system can automatically maintain its equilibrium efficiently. And it was proposed to hold two dimensions, -threshold of emotional respond and emotional recover. Threshold represents the sensitivity of emotion response, such as

upset, anxiety and panic while recovery time describes whether person can recover from various negative emotions quickly (Li & Ahistrom, 2016). The time required for emotion recovery is related to psychological resilience that is characterized "by flexible adaptation to the changing demands of stressful experience". Recovery time as an indicator can demonstrate the effectiveness of the emotion system. If the subcomponents of emotional system including appraisal, motivate to coping on the emotional event it can collaborate effectively, the recovery time from negative emotions can be fast (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004).

Goran et al. (2012) investigated personality characteristics of male professional basketball players and wheelchair basketball players. For the purposes professional basketball players (n=29) and wheelchair basketball players (n=25) had completed a Cartel 16PF questionnaire which estimated personality characteristics. Result demonstrated the existence of differences in the expression of certain forms of behaviour within certain dimensions of personality between these two groups. Wheelchair basketball players had lower scores, emotional stability. The authors concluded that wheelchair basketball players are less emotionally stable when compared with their male professional basketball players.

Javeed & Nasreen (2014) evaluated the effect of sports training on endurance, self-control and emotional stability. Forty respondents were selected from Cricket, Badminton, and Hockey Kabaddi and football players from Aurangabad. After the intervention, result indicated that inter-university players showed significantly high endurance than the before sport training of inter-university players, they showed significantly high self-control and demonstrated significantly high emotional stability than they did before training.

Tracy & Matsumoto (2008) examined non-verbal expressions of pride among athletes following a win in Olympic judo matches. Winners exhibited behaviours associated with pride such as smiling, tilting their head back, raising their arms and expanding their chest. Even congenitally blind Olympic athletes exhibited similar displays after winning matches. Research has yielded a fertile understanding about a few discrete emotions such as anxiety and enjoyment) and how they influence sport performance at youth, recreational, collegiate and professional levels (Scanlan et al., 2003). In another comparative study on emotional stability and academic anxiety of athletes and non-athletes between the age

range of 14-16 carried out by Pant (2015) the results revealed that there was no significant difference between athletes and non-athletes in relations to emotional stability. Freixanet (1991) investigated the relationship between some personality traits and participation in high physical risk sports. While calculating the mean values, it was observed that national players demonstrated significantly better emotional stability as compared to their counterpart inter-school players and non-players. The specific objective of this study was to ascertain the perceived effect of emotional stability on the performance outcome (countenance) of semi-elite basketball athletes in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

## Methods

This study employed the descriptive research design. The study examined the management of depression and emotional stability among athletes of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. The population comprised 300 basketball athletes of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, who play the game in the amateur category and represent their departments in intra-basketball competitions organized by private concerns and the university sports council. The Sample size comprised 300 male basketball athletes selected from 15 departments in the selected higher institution. The departments were selected using a simple random sampling technique. From the selected departments 20 male athletes were selected using a simple random technique. The respondents were selected during the annual intra- varsity basketball championship while representing their departments.

The research was cleared by the Ethics and Research Committee (ERC) of the Department of Kinesiology, Health Education and Recreation of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria with protocol number ERC /2018/02/20. Consent of the participants was sought. They were adequately briefed on the test protocols and they gave their consent via an informed consent form. The study was carried out in accordance with the Code of Ethics of the World Medical Association also known as the declaration of Helsinki.

## Study Instrument

A self-designed research instrument titled “Depression and Emotional Questionnaire” (DESQ) was used to collect data from athletes. The questionnaire has three sections in all. Section A focused on depression information of participants, section B dealt with emotional stability and section C dealt with athletes’ countenance. A pilot study was conducted to test if the designed instruments is appropriate to provide answers to the set objective and hypothesis. A test- re-test with a 28 days interval was carried out with the administering of the questionnaire to 20 selected basketball athletes from another university who were not part of the final respondents used for the study. The Person Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analysed the data collected and it returned a 0.77 coefficient alpha. The Depression and Emotional Questionnaire” (DESQ) was adjoined effective to measured what it was designed to measure.

## Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics of percentages, regression and Pearson correlation coefficients at 0.05 level of significant.

**Table 1**

Percentile distribution of emotional stability factors affecting athletes’ performance.

Variables	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%
I often develop relationships, engage in conversation and socializes with others teammate	279	93.0	21	7.0
I sometimes display self-confidence and bounce back from setbacks quickly	165	88.3	35	11.6
The underlying motives for the actions of other people worry me a lot	184	61.4	116	38.7
I often miss training due to injury for a period of time longer than most people	154	51.3	145	48.3
I feel proud after every difficult accomplishment of mine each day	254	84.7	46	15.3
Most times I like games to be firmly under my control	254	84.7	46	15.3
I enjoy spending long periods of time on personal training	229	76.3	70	23.3
I often use instincts and intuition in making performance decision	273	91.0	26	9.0
I handle anxiety and tension before important events effectively	273	91.0	26	9.0
Most times I adopt an aggressive attitude that tends to intimidate my opponent	207	69.0	93	31.0

**Table 2**

Percentile distribution of factors affecting athlete's countenance.

Variables	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%
I sometimes feel that I don't care what happens to me	133	44.3	162	54.0
I feel unattractive whenever I lose a game	195	65.0	108	32.6
I hate to be the center of attention after a loss in a game	255	85.0	39	13.0
In emergencies, during game I usually react with calmness and efficiency	258	86.0	37	12.3
I worry about my performance after every game	242	80.7	53	17.7

**Table 3**

Pearson moment correlation for emotional stability and athletes countenance (sport performance).

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.464	.045	8.852	.000*** <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Corr.	.453	.051	8.589	.000*** <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Case		288			

a: Not assuming the null hypothesis; b: Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis; c: Based on normal approximation. \*\*\* $p < 0.05$ : Symbol: Significant

## Results

As shown in Table 1, engaging in conversation and socializing with other teammates was been observed by 93% of respondents, and 88.3% of respondents learned to quickly get back their confidence when facing certain setbacks, the unexpected or expected actions of others driven by their motives worry most respondents at 61.4%, most of them 51.3% do miss training when injured and could take longer than others, 84.7% respondents feel proud after of themselves after accomplishing each day task. Most respondents 84.7% would love to always have their games firmly under their control, personal training was also recorded to be practiced by 76.3% of the respondents, instincts, and intuition for making performance decision was practiced by 91% of respondents, tension, and anxiety was well handled before events effectively by 91% respondents and most times aggressive attitude that intimidate opponents is been adopted by 69% of the respondents. To a large extent, the respondents have been able to balance their emotions with their everyday sports activities and this emotion does not in any way affect their performance level.

The commitment of respondents to be mindful of things happening to them was maintained at a level of 54%, and most of the respondents 65% feel bad about themselves when on the losing side and avoid being more pronounced towards defeat at 85%. During emergencies 86% of respondents react with calmness and efficiency and 80.7% of respondents review their level of performance after every game (Table 2).

The finding of emotional stability on athletes' countenance was also collaborated by the assertion of Fredrickson (1998, 2001), in the Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. The author opined that certain discrete positive emotions including joy, interest, contentment, pride and love can broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoires and build enduring personal resources (physical, intellectual, social and psychological). These emotions increased individual tendency to play, explore and imagine future achievements and through this process our personal resources grew to guarantee our continued existence. Furthermore, Javeed & Nasreen (2013) evaluated the effect of sports training on endurance, self-control and emotional stability. Forty respondents were selected from cricket, badminton, hockey and football players from Aurangabad. After the intervention, result indicated that inter-university players showed significantly high endurance than the before sport training of inter- university players, they showed significantly high self-control and demonstrated significantly high emotional stability than they did before training.

## Conclusion

The study concluded that there is a strong association between emotional stability and sport performance (countenance) of athletes based on the social environment where sporting events takes place and the attitudes and behaviour of other involved in sports. their perception of performance output and the impression of significant others. With the findings of this study, the display of emotions and feelings are

normal in sports arena. it is also clear that it is important that athletes should cultivate positive emotions during training and competitions in other to promote spirit of sportsmanship and reduce antics of winning at all cost.

### Recommendations

Based on the previous conclusions the following recommendations emanating from this research are as follows: 1) Hence, emotional control skill programs should be added to the athletes screening exercise on a regular bases at least each new semester. 2) Team cohesion should be promoted among teammates and coaching crew. 3) Players should be encouraged to cultivate positive emotions, in their approach to competitions. 4) Therapy sessions should be organised periodically where athletes can bear their minds on issues. 5) Mental stability skills should be enhanced for players, as these will prove to be a way out of depression. 6) Players should be encouraged to embrace positive mind-set towards rather than the negative ones which will affect performance negatively.

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