Does Trait Anxiety Influence Gymnasts’ Performance When Evaluative Pressure Is Increased?
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Introduction

- Athletes suffer from more stress and anxiety than the rest of the population (Fullerton, 2010).
- The balance beam apparatus stimulates anxiety.
- Powerlifters with high trait anxiety had lower percentages of personal bests (Judge et al., 2016).

Trait Anxiety

The existence of stable individual differences in the tendency to respond with state anxiety in anticipation of threatening situations (Schwarzer, 1977).
- Stable
- Anxiety
- Anticipation

Aim of Study

Determine if high levels of trait anxiety have debilitating effects under high-pressure.

Methodology

Sample
- Female gymnasts between the ages of 13-15, with 3-5 years of experience.

Procedure
- Low-pressure: perform on the balance beam as they would in a normal practice with hidden cameras
- High-pressure: perform their balance beam routine with a camera in sight

Data Collection
- USA Gymnastics Balance Beam Scoresheet
- Trait Anxiety Inventory, Form Y2
- Two by two mixed groups analysis of variance
- State Anxiety Inventory, Form Y2

Anticipated Results

- High trait anxiety gymnasts in the high-pressure condition will have lower scores than the low-pressure condition.
- Low trait anxiety gymnasts will perform equally well in high- and low-pressure conditions.
- High state anxiety scores are expected to increase in the high-pressure condition for both groups of anxiety.

Discussion

Limitations
- All female sample
- Focus on a single event: balance beam

Future Research
- Male and female sample
- Observe trait anxiety in other events

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("Women’s gymnastics individual balance beam results," 2016)
("Rio Olympics Balance Beam Gymnastics," 2016)