Psychology of Sport and Exercise 12 (2011) 525–532

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Psychology of Sport and Exercise

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/psychsport

Achievement goals and emotions in golf: The mediating and moderating role of perceived performance

Andrew J. Dewar*, Maria Kavussanu

School of Sport and Exercise Sciences, University of Birmingham, Birmingham B15 2TT, UK

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 19 November 2010
Received in revised form
22 March 2011
Accepted 14 May 2011
Available online 23 May 2011

Keywords:
Achievement goals
Performance
Emotions
Golf

ABSTRACT

Objectives: This study sought to examine whether achievement goals predict positive and negative emotions in golf and whether perceived performance mediates and moderates this relationship.
Design: A retrospective cross-sectional design was employed in this study.
Method: Two hundred male golfers completed a multi-section questionnaire measuring achievement goals, perceived performance, and a range of emotions, after playing a competitive round of golf.
Results: Task involvement positively predicted happiness ($\beta = .29$, $p < .001$) and excitement ($\beta = .18$, $p = .023$), and negatively predicted dejection ($\beta = -.21$, $p = .007$). Perceived performance partially mediated the relationship between task involvement and happiness ($z = 3.18$, $p = .001$), excitement ($z = 3.12$, $p = .002$), and dejection ($z = -2.71$, $p = .028$); that is, task involvement positively predicted perceived performance, which in turn positively predicted happiness and excitement and negatively predicted dejection. Perceived performance moderated the relationship between ego involvement and happiness, dejection, and anxiety: ego involvement predicted happiness negatively and dejection and anxiety positively when athletes perceived that they performed poorly, but was unrelated to these emotions when they thought that they performed well.
Conclusions: Perceived performance should be examined when trying to understand the relationship between achievement goals and emotions in golf.

© 2011 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Over the last two decades, Achievement Goal Theory (Ames, 1992; Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1989) has become one of the major theoretical frameworks used to understand achievement motivation in sport. The theory proposes that individuals engage in achievement situations in order to develop or demonstrate competence (Nicholls, 1989). However, individuals can construe competence or ability in two different ways, thus, two conceptions of ability exist. In the first conception, levels of ability are judged relative to one's own perceived mastery and learning. The more individuals improve, or learn, the more competent they feel. In the second conception, ability is construed as capacity and is judged with reference to the ability of others: individuals feel competent when they outperform others or perform as well as others with less effort (Nicholls, 1984). The two conceptions of ability are embedded within two achievement goals namely task and ego involvement (Nicholls, 1984, 1989). Individuals differ in their propensity to adopt the one goal versus the other known as task and ego orientation, respectively (Nicholls, 1989).

Achievement goals and affective outcomes

The two achievement goals reflect differences in the subjective experience of the task (Nicholls, 1984). Specifically, in task involvement, the goal is to improve or master skills. A sense of competence is achieved when individuals accomplish or learn; thus, learning or mastery is an end in itself, and the activity is more intrinsically satisfying (Nicholls, 1989). In contrast, in ego involvement, the goal is to demonstrate superior ability relative to others; thus, task mastery or learning is a means to an end (Nicholls, 1984). In ego involvement, individuals with low perceived ability are predicted to experience negative affect due to the aversive expectation of demonstrating a lack of personal capacity (Nicholls, 1984). Based on this prediction it is likely that those with high perceived ability may expect to demonstrate high capacity, so may experience positive affect. Thus, perceived ability – or competence – appears to play an important role in affect when one is ego involved.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +44 0121 414 8748.
E-mail addresses: ajd899@bham.ac.uk (A.J. Dewar), m.kavussanu@bham.ac.uk (M. Kavussanu).

1469-0292/$ – see front matter © 2011 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2011.05.005

Many sport studies have examined the relationship between goal orientations and positive affective outcomes, such as enjoyment and satisfaction. In two comprehensive reviews of the sport literature, task orientation had a moderate-to-large positive correlation with positive affective outcomes, whereas ego orientation was unrelated to these outcomes (Biddle, Wang, Kavussanu, & Spray, 2003; Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999). Similar results have been reported in recent research with adolescents participating in individual and team sports (Bortoli, Bertollo, & Robazza, 2009). Finally, task orientation was positively related and ego orientation was negatively related to enjoyment in Masters athletes (Hodge, Allen, & Smellie, 2008). With regard to the proposed moderating role of perceived ability on the relationship between ego involvement and enjoyment (Nicholls, 1984), research which has examined ego orientation and affective outcomes has not supported this moderation (Hodge et al., 2008), while other studies investigating these variables have not examined perceived ability as a moderator (Biddle et al., 2003; Bortoli et al., 2009; Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999).

Goal orientations have also been hypothesised to be related to anxiety. Specifically, Roberts (1986) proposed that because task-oriented individuals focus on improving performance, they are less likely to experience state anxiety. In contrast, ego-oriented individuals, who are concerned with displaying ability relative to others, are likely to experience high state anxiety when they display incompetence and low state anxiety when they display competence (Roberts, 1986). A negative relationship has been observed between task orientation and state anxiety (Vealey & Campbell, 1988) and state somatic anxiety, but not state cognitive anxiety (Hall & Kerr, 1997), 30 min before competition; ego orientation was unrelated to anxiety in these studies. In other research, task orientation had a small-to-moderate negative correlation with negative affective outcomes, such as anxiety and feelings of pressure, whereas ego orientation was unrelated to these outcomes (Biddle et al., 2003; Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999).

Research which showed that ego orientation was unrelated to anxiety (Hall & Kerr, 1997; Vealey & Campbell, 1988) and affective outcomes (Biddle et al., 2003; Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999) did not examine perceived competence as a moderator of these relationships. Also, no evidence for moderation was found in research which examined whether perceived competence moderates the relationship between ego orientation and worry (e.g., Morris & Kavussanu, 2009). Overall, the extant literature indicates a consistent relationship between task orientation and affective outcomes. In contrast, the relationship between ego orientation and affective outcomes is less clear (Biddle et al., 2003; Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999) and the moderating role of perceived competence on this relationship has not been supported (Hodge et al., 2008; Morris & Kavussanu, 2009).

Perceived performance as a moderator

A potential moderating variable that could help clarify the relationship between ego involvement and emotions is perceived performance, which refers to one's own evaluations of how he or she has performed and is informed by actual performance. Two individuals may have identical objective performance but differ on their perceived performance. Thus, perceived performance is related but not equivalent to objective performance (see Graham, Kowalski, & Crocker, 2002; McAuley & Tammen, 1989). Although it differs from perceived competence which is a perception of one's *ability* to perform a task, perceived performance should inform one's perceptions of competence. That is, when individuals believe that they perform well on a task they should also feel competent.

There is evidence to suggest that perceived performance may moderate the relationship between ego involvement and emotions. In one study (Sansone, 1986), participants in an ego-involving condition, who thought they performed well in a trivia game, experienced higher enjoyment than participants who thought they performed poorly. In contrast, in a neutral context, high perceived performance did not influence enjoyment. These findings suggest that when one is ego involved, perceptions of performance are critical for one's enjoyment. This may be because in ego involvement the goal is to demonstrate superior ability to others (Nicholls, 1984) and when ego-involved individuals perceive that they have performed well, they are more likely to think that they have achieved this goal. Conversely, when athletes perform poorly, they have failed to accomplish their goal of demonstrating superior ability. Thus, ego involvement may lead to negative emotions when individuals have perceptions of low performance as they will feel unsuccessful.

Examining whether perceived performance moderates the link between ego involvement and emotions is important to fully understand this relationship, which may vary at different levels of perceived performance. If we do not consider a potential moderator, we may reach the wrong conclusions about the relationship between ego involvement and emotions.

Perceived performance as a mediator

Although the relationship between task orientation and affective outcomes in sport is well established, to date no study has investigated the mechanism through which task involvement affects emotions. This relationship may, at least in part, be mediated by perceived performance, which may be affected by task involvement, in two ways. First, task-involved individuals may be more likely to *perceive* that they have performed well because of the criteria of success they employ. Evaluating success using self-referenced criteria means that they are more likely to be sensitive to improvements in their own performance and perceive even small improvements as an accomplishment; this in turn should lead to higher levels of perceived performance. Second, a focus on the task and trying hard to improve skills may lead to higher actual performance; indeed, players with high task orientation performed better in golf than those with low task orientation (see Kingston & Swain, 1999). Higher actual performance may in turn result in higher perceived performance.

Previous research has supported the link between task involvement and perceived performance. Specifically, a meta-analysis of experimental research examining performance on tests of intellectual ability showed that task involvement resulted in superior performance compared to ego involvement, and this result was stronger in complex tasks and older participants (Utman, 1997). In sport research, tennis players' task orientation, measured one week before a match was positively associated with their assessment of performance, measured after the match (Cervello, Rosa, Calvo, Jimenez, & Iglesias, 2007). In another study, tennis players who reported high task orientation in competition were more likely to report higher evaluations of their performance in competition over the previous year (van de Pol & Kavussanu, 2011). Finally, football players' task orientation corresponded to an increase in skilled performance over the season, as appraised by the coach (Van Yperen & Duda, 1999). Ego orientation was unrelated to performance in these studies.

Perceived performance has been consistently linked to emotions experienced during and after sport competition. Twelve international athletes indicated that they felt that perceptions of successful performance and making progress towards a goal made them feel happy, whereas perceptions of unsuccessful performance made them feel angry and sad (Uphill & Jones, 2007). In adolescent swimmers and track and field athletes, subjective outcome

Download English Version:

https://daneshyari.com/en/article/894641

Download Persian Version:

https://daneshyari.com/article/894641

Daneshyari.com