Meditation for Performance-Related Stress

Mayara Swillens, Darius Floyd, Joseph Morrison
Faculty Mentor: Logan Moore, Ph.D.
EXS 2304: Data Collection, Human Performance Laboratory
Texas Wesleyan University

Introduction

Anxiety is a very common issue among student-athletes: around 30% of female and 25% of male student-athletes report experiencing anxiety, while other common issues include mental exhaustion and sleep difficulties, particularly related to performance. The pressures of balancing academics, practices, and competition can lead to high levels of stress, which can affect both athletic performance and overall well-being.
Meditation in particular has been shown to help reduce anxiety, but we don't know enough about how it helps student-athletes, who face more specific pressures.
Purpose: This study investigated whether meditation techniques can lower anxiety symptoms in student-athletes experiencing performance-related stress.

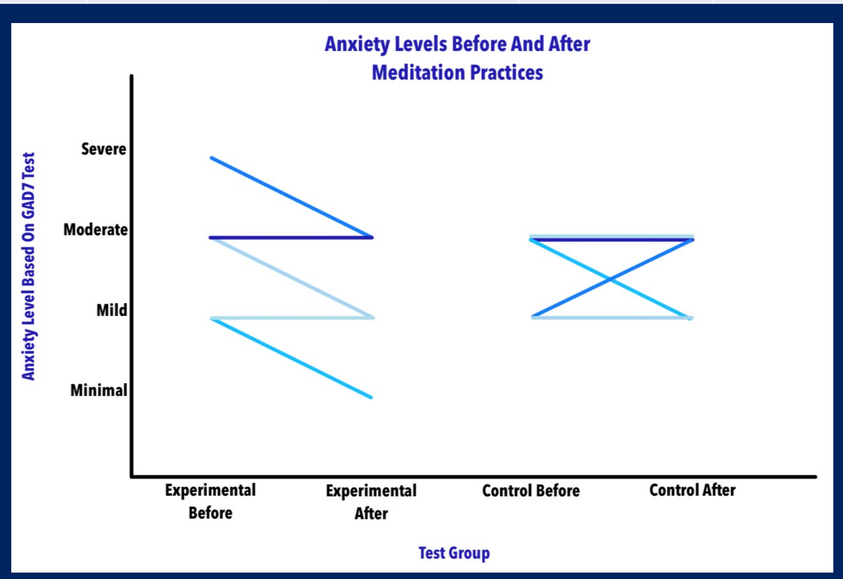
Methodology

- 10 student athletes (5 male, 5 female) volunteered from TXWES
- Randomly divided into two groups, control and meditation (RCT)
- Control group did not participate in meditation sessions while meditation group did a 2-week meditation program with three 20-minute sessions each week through videos.
- To measure anxiety levels, participants completed the Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) survey before the study started and at the end of the two weeks.

Results

Before the experiment, the meditation group had 2 participants with mild, 2 with moderate, and 1 with severe anxiety. The control group had 3 participants with moderate and 2 with mild anxiety.
After two weeks of meditation sessions, the experimental group had 2 participants with moderate, 2 with mild, and 1 with minimal anxiety. The control group had no change, with 3 participants still experiencing moderate and 2 with mild anxiety.
On average, the meditation group saw a 0.6-point decrease in anxiety levels, suggesting that the meditation exercises contributed to a slight reduction in anxiety for those experiencing performance-related stress.

	Experimental Before	Experimental After	Control Before	Control After
Minimal	0	1	0	0
Mild	2	2	2	2
Moderate	2	2	3	3
Severe	1	0	0	0



Conclusion

The findings from this study suggest that meditation may be a helpful tool in reducing anxiety symptoms in college athletes who experience performance-related stress.

Over the two-week intervention, participants in the meditation group showed a small but positive decrease in anxiety levels, while those in the control group showed no change. Future studies should try using a larger group of athletes and a longer meditation program to get a better understanding of how well meditation can reduce anxiety in student-athletes.

References

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