

Study of self-handicapping among sports personnel in relation to self esteem

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Abstract- Self-handicapping is most likely to occur in situations that are public, are important to the individual's self-concept and in which the individual is evaluated against high standards or relative to another person's performance (Berglas & Jones, 1978). These conditions are inherent in sport competition where an athlete's self-concept can be strongly influenced by self-evaluations and public evaluations of the athlete's physical abilities. Self-esteem reflects a person's overall emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude towards the self. The main objective of the research was to study the self-handicapping among sports personnel in relation to their self-esteem. 50 players aged 18-24 years (both males & females) from different games were selected with purposely sampling technique. The 25 males and 25 females were selected from Khalsa Institutes, Amritsar who were playing handball, basketball, volleyball, football, and hockey. Self-Handicapping Scale by Jones and Rhodewalt (1982) was used to measure self-handicapping and Self-Esteem Scale by Rosenberg (1965) was used to measure self-esteem was administered on the sample. Descriptive statistics, t-test and correlation were used for the testing differences between mean scores and relationship between variables. Result shows that there were significant gender differences on self handicapping group. The t-value comes out to be 1.82, $p < 0.05$. Correlational value also shows negative relationship among the measured variables.

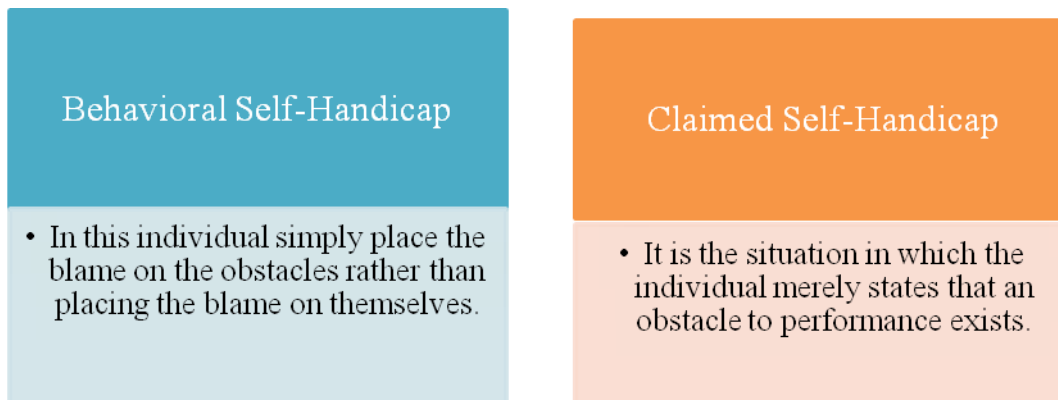
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I. INTRODUCTION

Self-handicapping has been defined in a variety of ways by researchers but most of them agree that it involves creating impediments to successful performance on tasks that the individual considers important (Covington, 1992; Rhodewalt, 1990 & Tice, 1991). Such impediments to performance can be the result of action (e.g. getting drunk the night before an exam) or inaction (e.g. failing to study for the exam). Self-handicapping involves behavior that occurs prior to or simultaneously with the achievement activity, not after the activity has occurred.

Self-handicapping is defined as actions or statements we make that allow us to avoid effort or responsibility for potential failures that could damage our self-esteem. Self-handicapping is a cognitive strategy by which people avoid effort in the hopes of keeping potential from hurting self-esteem.

Berglas and Jones (1978), defines self-handicap as "obstacles created or claimed by the individual in anticipation of failing performance". Self-handicapping can be seen as a method of preserving self-esteem but it can also be used for self enhancement and to manage the impressions of others. There are two methods that people use to self-handicap: Behavioral self-handicap and claimed self-handicap.



People withdraw effort or create obstacles to success so that they can maintain public and private self-images of competence. Self-handicapping is a widespread behavior amongst humans that has been observed in a variety of cultures and geographic areas. For instance, students frequently participate in self-handicapping behavior to avoid feeling bad about them, if they do not perform well in class. The first method people use to self-handicap is when they make a task harder for themselves in fear of not successfully completing that task. Self-handicapping behavior

is associated with lower achievement. It is not surprising that self-handicapping is associated with lower performance on these tasks. But there may also be some benefits of occasional and moderate use of self-handicapping that it protects and enhance self esteem. Suitable self handicapping strategy can help a person to work without anxiety on a task and thus have a positive impact on the performance and on the self-esteem.

Self-esteem is arguably one of the most important constructs in psychology. It has been continued to be a topic of theoretical interest among psychologists since the late 19th century. In Sociology and Psychology, self-esteem reflects a person's overall emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude towards the self. Self-esteem refers to a person's evaluation of self and that people are generally motivated to maintain high levels of self-esteem and defend their self-esteem when it comes under threat. Self-esteem is how we value ourselves; it is how we perceive our value to the world and how valuable we think we are to others. Positive self esteem gives us the strength and flexibility to take charge of our lives and grow from our mistakes without the fear of rejection. Self-esteem is also known as the evaluative dimension of the self that includes feelings of worthiness, prides and discouragement. Self esteem means the simple bequest of human life. It is a global sense of self-worth. Self esteem means the positive and negative approach towards oneself.

Teachers, parents, therapists and others have focused efforts on boosting self-esteem on the assumption that high self esteem will cause many positive outcomes and benefits. Appraisal of the effects of self esteem is complicated by several factors. Because many people with high self-esteem exaggerate their successes and good traits, we emphasize objective measures of outcomes. High self-esteem is also a heterogeneous category, encompassing people who frankly accept their good qualities along with narcissistic, defensive and conceited individuals.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Avtgis, Rancer and Amato (2016) were of the view that self-handicapping is motivated by a combination of self-presentational concerns and anticipated threats to self-esteem, in particular uncertainty about one's ability. In other words, self handicapping is a strategy based on self-esteem, a self-presentation strategy to protect one's high status in the eyes of others. The literature includes a number of studies on the relationship between self-handicapping and self-esteem.

Guillaume et al. (2015) examined that self-efficacy and self-esteem are predictors of claimed and behavioral self handicapping and compared the relationship between behavioral and claimed self handicaps and athletic performance. A total of 31 basketball players participated in the study. Claimed self-handicaps were significantly negatively correlated with self-esteem. Whereas behavioral self-handicaps were significantly negatively correlated with self efficacy. Performance was negatively correlated with behavioral self-handicapping but was not correlated with claimed self-handicapping. This finding reinforce the conceptual distinction between claimed and behavioral self-handicaps by demonstrating that the two strategies are indeed related to different factors and that they have different consequences for performance.

Lupien, Seery and Almonte (2010) have argued that individuals with high self-esteem use self-handicapping strategies more than others. They hold that individuals with low self-esteem resort to self-handicapping strategies less than others because they have a less positive concept of self and are less in need of protecting their self-image. Self-Esteem is a measure of how people feel about themselves. It is used to describe a person's overall sense of self-worth or personal value as measured by Self- Esteem Scale by Rosenberg (1965).

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Self-handicapping is a need to study in today's scenario because it helps to explain and predict individual's negative, self-destructive behavior. Self-handicapping behavior allows an individual to externalize failures but internalize success, accepting credit for achievements but allowing excuses for failures. A number of characteristics have been related to self-handicapping and research suggests that those who are more prone to self handicapping may differ motivationally as compared to those who do not rely on such defensive strategies. People use the method of self-handicapping when they make a task harder for themselves in fear of not successfully completing that task, so that if they fail, they can simply place the blame on the obstacles rather than accepting the blame on themselves, in which the individual actually creates obstacles to performance. Sometimes, people use self-handicapping by coming up with justifications for their potential failures, so that if they do not succeed in the task, they can point to their excuses as the reasons for their failures, in which the individual merely states that an obstacle to performance exists. The investigator wants to find out the level of self-handicapping among sport persons of different games. It is very important to build an individual's belief that they can handle their life and handle it well because our emotional health depends on our self-esteem. People who have high self-esteem are presumed to be more successful in achieving their goals and enjoy the benefits that presumably result from it. Consequently, high self-esteem is considered one mark of successful adjustment consistent with the general view that high self-esteem characterizes

someone who is likely to succeed in life. Self-esteem comes from learning to accept who we are by seeing the insufficiencies and still choosing to like ourselves. Healthy self-esteem is important to be successful and happy throughout one's life. The investigators want to find out the level of self-esteem among sport persons of different games. The investigators hope that this study provides a base to address the importance of self-esteem among sport persons and eliminating the concept of self-handicapping.

3.1 Objectives Of The Study:

1. To study self-handicapping among athletes of team game.
2. To study self-esteem among athletes of team game.
3. To find the relationship between self-esteem and self-handicapping among athletes.
4. To identify gender differences in relation to self-esteem and self-handicapping among athletes.

3.2 Hypotheses Of The Study:

Based on the above mentioned objectives, following hypotheses are framed:

1. Self-handicapped individuals will be low in self-esteem than those with high self esteem.
2. Males feel more self-handicapping in the individual games than in the group games as compared to females.
3. Males have high self-esteem in individual game and low in group game as compared to females.

IV. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Sample

50 players ranging in the age of 18-25 years (both males & females) from different games were selected by the investigators with the help of purposely sampling technique. The data comprised of 25 males and 25 females from Khalsa Institutes, Amritsar.

4.2 Tools used

Self-Handicapping Scale by Jones & Rhodewalt (1982): Self-handicapping scale was used to measure the Self-handicapping of the subjects. The Self handicapping Scale consists of 25-items and each item was rated on a 6-point scale (0=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). Items number 3, 5, 6, 10, 13, 20, 22, and 23 being reversely scored. Higher score indicating greater self handicapping.

Self-Esteem Scale by Rosenberg (1965): Self-esteem scale consists of 10 items that refer to self-respect and self-acceptance rated on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 4. Items 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9 are reversely scored. Higher score indicates higher self-esteem.

4.3 Procedure

Self-Handicapping Scale by Rhodewalt and Jones was used to measure self-handicapping and Self-Esteem Scale by Rosenberg was used to measure self-esteem and were administered with the selected sample. Each subject was seated comfortably and individual instructions were given to them. Both of these scales were administered with each individual and scored by following the instructions given in the respective manuals.

Statistical Techniques

Descriptive statistics, t test and correlation were used for the analysis of the scores.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table -1 Descriptive statistics and t-ratio of the athletes (males and females) in self handicapping and self esteem

S.No	Variable	Gender	Mean	SD	t-ratio	p-value
1	Self Handicapping	Male	62.40	9.35	1.828	0.030
		Female	66.44	5.88		
2	Self Esteem	Male	26.76	2.84	0.098	0.942
		Female	26.84	2.91		

Table-1 depicts the t-value of the males and females of both the measured variables. Mean values show that there was a significant gender difference in the self handicapping as the t-value comes out to be 1.82, $p < 0.05$. Mean value also depicts that female were high on self handicapping as compared to males. In case of self esteem mean score of males found to be 26.76 and females mean scores found to be 26.84 which shows almost negligible difference. The findings were similar to the results obtained by other researcher's (Bem 1972, Tice 1991, Covington 2009) who have found that males and females who were high in self handicapping have low self-esteem and they use self-handicapping as a defensive strategy.

Table -2 Correlation between self handicapping and self esteem (Females)

Variable	Self handicapping	Self Esteem
Self Handicapping	1	-0.163
Self Esteem		1

Table -3 Correlation between self handicapping and self esteem (Males)

Variable	Self handicapping	Self Esteem
Self Handicapping	1	-0.07
Self Esteem		1

The correlation analysis depicts the relationship between the measured variables. Table-2 revealed that self-handicapping among females (Table-2) was negatively insignificant related to self-esteem as the value of r found to be -0.16 which was insignificant. In case of males (Table-3) the value of r found to be 0.07 which again found almost negligible and insignificant. It means there was weak relationship between self handicapping and self esteem especially in case of males.

Thus, the present research indicates that there was negative relationship between self handicapping and self esteem. Males and females who were high in self handicapping have low self-esteem and they may use self-handicapping as a defensive strategy. Snyder and Higgins (1988) found that self-esteem plays an important role in self handicapping process. They suggested that low self-esteem individuals are likely to self handicap more frequently than high self-esteem individuals because they encounter more situations where they are uncertain about their ability to produce a desired outcome. Our findings support this proposition.

VI. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Self-handicapping has a deep effect on the self-esteem among sport persons. Sport person's interventions in the form of casework enhance them to deal with the issues of low self-esteem and enhance good social relationships. Sport person could apply the group family based intervention and this helps the group may enabled parents to identify the psychosocial problems generated in the family because of self-handicapping. The emotional aspects in the family can be effectively dealt with. A reward system should be developed at the institution level, which will motivate and reinforce self-confidence and build more positive behavior with others and eliminate self handicapping. The effectiveness of various interventions like casework, group work, individual, group or family counselling or therapy; community organizations; crisis interventions; staff training can be studied in depth.

VII. REFERENCES

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