IMPACT OF IDENTITY ON ANXIETY IN ATHLETES

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Abstract:

The aim of this study was to research into the interconnection of an athlete's identity and his/her state and trait anxiety. There were 410 athletes included. 67.4% of them were male athletes and 30% were female athletes. The sample included athletes of different quality classes (world class, international class, national class, perspective class, youngster class and non-categorized athletes). The Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS) (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993) and STAI-X1 and STAI-X2 (Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1970) were applied. It was found that there is a similar interconnection between athletic identity and both types of anxiety. The highest relative impact on both the state and trait anxiety had a negative affectivity as a factor of sport identity, followed by world class categorization (in comparison to other classes). Those athletes with a higher negative affectivity and world-class athletes have a higher level of both trait and state anxiety than the other categories of athletes. Male athletes had a lower state and trait anxiety. An increase of self-identity decreases the level of trait anxiety.

Key words: athletic identity, state anxiety, trait anxiety

Introduction

There have been many studies done in the field of sport anxiety and its factors. There have also been many investigations which referred to the relationship between state and trait anxiety in athletes and different aspects of self-concept. Investigations which stress the interrelations between specific types of identity and different types of anxiety are rare.

The multidimensional approach to the study of anxiety considers the subcomponents of anxiety, specifically cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and self-confidence. The relationship among cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, self-confidence, and performance appeared weak. Self-confidence displayed the strongest and most consistent relationship with performance (Craft, Magyar, Becker, & Feltz, 2003).

Although it was supposed at the beginning that cognitive and somatic anxiety are conceptually unrelated, these two concepts are related and interdependant in conditions of stress (Martens, Vealey, & Burton, 1990). This may be so because the stressful situations include elements which are related to cognitive and also somatic arousal. We can see that self-confidence could be understood even as a part of anxiety. However, it can also be a part of the self-related constructs. Different aspects of self-concept should be emphasized first to make some definitions more clear.

Identity or different aspects of it are the constituent elements of an individual's self-concept. The concept of identity is a subjective concept of oneself as an individual, an individual's image of himself/herself. In the scope of self-concept there are four components which are: self-image, self-esteem, ideal-self and self-efficacy. Identity is mostly related to self-image which is essentially descriptive. Given that some investigations found (Kobal, 2000; Faganel, 2003) that there is a high correlation between identity and self-image, we can presume that self-image and identity are the same concepts.

If identity is the most related to self-image which is essentially descriptive, self-confidence is more related to self-esteem which is essentially evaluative.

However, what is self-esteem in relation to self-confidence? Self-confidence refers to our beliefs about our abilities and attributes. Generally, it is much more specific than self-esteem. One may have a high self-esteem, a high self-confidence to perform well in a certain area and a low self-confidence to perform in another area. It can be said that self-confidence is self-esteem "in action". A high self-esteem in a certain area could be the basis to perform confidently in this particular area; for instance a high self-esteem in communication skills can give to the a person the self-confidence to talk in public.

Athletic identity is the domain for a specific self-concept measure. According to Brewer, Van Raalte and Linder (1993) athletic identity is the degree to which an individual identifies herself/himself within an athlete's role. Athletic identity was believed to be a "cognitive structure that guides and organizes the processing of self-related information" (Brewer, et al., 1993). Even though athletic identity was initially studied by Brewer and associates in the belief that it was one-dimensional and trait-like, they also reinforced the argument that results would tend to vary due to situational and social influences (Brewer, et al., 1993).

There are some investigations which refer to the factors of athletic identity. According to Anderson (2004) there are four factors of athletic identity: athletic appearance, importance of exercise/sports/physical activity, competence and encouragement from others. Brewer and associates (1993) suggested the following factors of athletic identity: self-identity, social identity, exclusivity and the negative affectivity.

Alltogether, self-concept is a system in which every single component of it characterizes the performance potential of this system. Given that identity is the central function of the ego and that identity is the most important factor of psychical well-being (Petzold, 1991), we can assume that athletic identity could be an important factor of performance in sport.

Self-concept is viewed as a key indicator of emotional stability and adjustments to the daily demands of life and it is closely allied to subjective well-being and happiness (Barzeghari, Costantini, Pendleton, & Warning, 2005). Low self-concept often accompanies mental illness and disorders such as depression, anxiety and phobias, while a high self-perceived concept is associated with a range of positive characteristics such as resilience to stress, adaptability and independence.

In Marsh's study (1995) it was proven that elite athletes portrayed a higher perceived physical self-concept which is accepted as one of the main components of global self-esteem.

Different self-esteem strategies are related to different anxiety rates in athletes.

Sport-related anxiety is more common in individuals with self-esteem strategies based more on competence aspects than on a respect and love for themselves (Koivula, Hassmen, & Fallby, 2002). Higher levels of cognitive anxiety were found in athletes with lower levels of self-esteem (Koivula, 2002).

Many investigations have investigated the role of the different aspects of self-concept in relation to coping behaviour. One of the most frequently stressed aspects of self-concept was self-confidence.

It was found, that self-confidence represents a mediator variable which decreases the threatening interpretations of symptoms in top athletes (Hardy, Jones, & Gould, 1996). The intensity of anxiety is not the most important question in anticipating an athlete's performance. A low anxiety level is not the essential characteristic of top athletes, but rather the way how they are able to cope with it.

It was found that there are no differences in cognitive and somatic anxiety between elite and non-elite athletes, but the elite performers interpreted both anxiety states as being more facilitative to performance than the non-elite performers (Jones & Hanton, 1996).

Self-confidence is an essential quality for elite athletes to possess in order to protect against any potentially debilitating thoughts and feelings experienced in competitive situations. Those athletes with high self-confidence increases in symptoms were reported to lead to positive perceptions of control and facilitative interpretations (Hanton, Mellalieu, & Hall, 2003). In the absence of self-confidence, increases in competitive anxiety intensity were perceived as beyond the performers' control and debilitating to the performance. Self-confidence increases the possibility of more anxious athletes to cope with intense arousal and to reduce the negative effect of anxiety to permormance (Hardy, 1990).

All influences which are under the control of an athlete have an alleviativing effect on performance, and conversely, factors which are not under the control of an athlete have an aggravating impact on an athlete's performance (Tušak & Faganel, 2004). It seems that self-confidence represents the possibility to control one's own reactions.

Self-confidence affects the relations between the intensity of symptoms before a performance and the direction of interpretations of performance (Hanton, et al., 2003). However, different self-concept aspects are related to different types of anxiety. For instance, a negative affectivity (which is one of the factors of sport identity) mediates the intensity of cognitive and somatic anxiety, whilst a positive affectivity play a more significant role than a negative affectivity in the interpretation of both cognitive and somatic anxiety (Jones & Hanton, 1996). So, we need to distinguish between the intensity and direction dimensions of competitive anxiety whilst providing information on the dispositional antecedents of these subscales.

We can conclude that the interrelations between different aspects of anxiety and different components of self-concept are rather complex.

Quite often both systems of variables (self-concept and anxiety) are considered as independent variables in relation to the different challenges of an athlete, which are not only performance-related. For instance, athletic identity and affect responses (depression and anxiety) play quite a role in the coping responses of injured athletes (Deiters, 2003). Social support, sport anxiety, coping, and athletic identity

are found to moderate the negative life stress-injury relationship (Falkstein, 2000). Self-confidence and anxiety may influence the coping processes of athletes (Cresswell & Hodge, 2004).

Self-concept clarity refers to the structural aspect of self-concept: the extent to which self-beliefs are clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent, and stable. Low self-concept clarity is associated with higher neuroticism, low self-esteem, low self-conscientiousness, chronic self-analyses (Campbell, 1990). Self-esteem is lower if the gap between identity and ideal-self is greater. The self-concepts of people with low self-esteem are characterized by less clarity or certainty than those of high self-esteem.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship of athletic identity with state and trait anxiety in athletes of different categories and different types of sport. Our hypothesis is that an increase of athletic identity will decrease the levels of both types of anxiety.

Methods

Participants

Four hundred and ten Slovene athletes (N = 410) of different quality levels were recruited for the research. Some categories represent almost a whole population of a certain category, the world category athletes for instance. Athletes completed different psychological assessment instruments, some of them individually and some of them collectively. 70% of the participants were male athletes (N = 285) and 30% of them were female athletes (N = 125).

Measures

The Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS) (Brewer, et al., 1993) was applied and both state/trait anxiety questionnaires: STAI-X1 and STAI-X2 were used (Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1970).

The STAI questionnaires are psychometric instruments aimed at measuring anxiety as a state (STAI-X1) and anxiety as a trait respectively (STAI-X2). Both consist of 20 items based on a 4-point scale.

The Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS) is a psychometric instrument aimed at measuring "Athletic Identity". It originally consisted of 10 items but has more recently been reduced to 9 because one of the questions does not correspond to any one of the four subscales. These questions are based on a 7-point Likert scale.

Through numerous tests and the use on a variety of populations the scale was rearranged from its original "athletic identity" to its present 4-subscale instrument form. The 4 subscales areas follows:

1. Self-identity subscale - consists of those questions that "capture self-referenced cognitions" (Martin, Eklund, & Mushett, 1997). In simpler terms it refers to how an individual views himself or herself as an athlete.
2. Social identity subscale - refers to how an individual receives perceptions of others viewing him/her as an athlete.
3. Exclusivity subscale - determines how strongly an individual relies on his/her athletic identity and how weak they can define themselves with other important roles in life.
4. Negative affectivity subscale - refers to the degree to which an individual negatively responds as a result of being unable to participate in sport (Martin, et al., 1997).

Alpha coefficients of each subscale were as follows; self-identity .72, social identity .65, exclusivity .72, negative affectivity .64.

In the study by Martin, Eklund and Mushett (1997), again measuring the athletic identity of athletes with disabilities, the internal consistencies were not as high as previous research had shown. Social identity, negative affectivity and self-identity had alpha coefficients of .51, .62 and .66, respectively, suggesting a poor to adequate reliability for each of these 2 item subscales. Exclusivity, the only 3-item subscale, revealed an alpha coefficient of .77, higher than those of the other corresponding subscales.

Data analysis

Two regression analyses (Enter Method) were performed: with state anxiety and with trait anxiety as dependent variables. The independent variables in both models were four factors of sport identity (self-identity, social identity, exclusivity, negative affectivity), gender, type of sport (individual vs. group) and categorization. The last three variables were dichotomized (because of the assumptions of regression analyses).

Results

It was found that there was a significant relation between the independent variables and state anxiety (dependant variable) ($p = .000$; $R^2 = 0.151$; $R = 0.389$). That means that the presented regression model is significant. The independent variables explained 15.1% of the variance of state anxiety in athletes.

The highest relative impact on state anxiety (dependent variable) among the predictor variables had *negative affectivity*, followed by *world-class categorization* (in comparison to other classes). If an individual is a world class athlete (the highest class) then state anxiety will be higher than if an individual belongs to any lower categorization classes. On the other hand, increased self-identity

Table 1. Regression model summary (the dependent variable: state anxiety)

Coefficients (a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	43.797	3.284		13.335	.000
	Self-identity	**-.759**	.265	**-.156**	-2.865	.004
	Social identity	-.293	.180	-.085	-1.629	.104
	Exclusivity	-.167	.124	-.081	-1.355	.176
	Negative affectivity	**.772**	.132	**.309**	5.862	.000
	Male athletes	**-2.663**	.831	**-.150**	-3.205	.001
	International class	1.278	1.336	.076	.956	.340
	World class	**5.484**	2.002	**.156**	2.739	.006
	Perspective class	.649	1.466	.032	.443	.658
	National class	2.961	1.587	.122	1.865	.063
	Youngster class	3.739	2.201	.091	1.699	.090
	Individual sport	.733	.982	.035	.747	.456

Table 2. Regression model summary (the dependent variable: trait anxiety)

Coefficients (a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	39.706	2.870		13.834	.000
	Self-identity	-.928	.232	**-.215**	-4.005	**.000**
	Social identity	.048	.157	.016	.303	.762
	Exclusivity	-.108	.108	-.059	-1.003	.317
	Negative affectivity	**.712**	.115	**.322**	6.181	**.000**
	Male athletes	**-2.910**	.726	**-.185**	-4.006	**.000**
	International class	1.809	1.168	.122	1.549	.122
	World class	**4.530**	1.750	**.145**	2.589	**.010**
	Perspective class	1.349	1.281	.074	1.053	.293
	National class	2.456	1.387	.114	1.770	.077
	Youngster class	2.571	1.923	.071	1.337	.182
	individual sport	.612	.858	.033	.713	.476

decreases an athlete's state anxiety. Men are also less anxious (as a state) in comparison to women.

Further, there was also a significant relation between the independent variables and athlete's trait anxiety (p = .000; R^2 = 0.174; R = 0.417). The independent variables explained 17.4% of the variance of state anxiety in athletes.

The independent variables have a similar kind of connection with both types of anxiety. The highest relative impact on trait anxiety (the dependent variable) among the predictor variables had *negative affectivity*, followed by *world-class categorization* (in comparison to other classes). World-class athletes have a higher level of trait anxiety than oth-

er categories of athletes. Again, male athletes have lower trait-anxiety and an increase of self-identity which decreases the level of trait-anxiety.

In both types of anxiety there is a tendency of a rising impact of being a national-class athlete in increased levels of both types of anxiety.

Discussion and conclusions

This research confirmed that two of the four factors of athletic identity have an important impact on state and trait anxiety in athletes. These factors are self-identity and negative affectivity. Self-identity captures self-referenced cognitions (Martin, et al., 1997) or how an individual views

himself or herself as an athlete, and negative affectivity refers to the degree to which an individual negatively responds as a result of being unable to participate in sport (Martin, et al., 1997). Exclusivity (how strongly an individual relies on his/her athletic identity and how weakly they can define themselves with other important roles in life) and social identity (perceptions of others viewing him/her as an athlete) do not have any important impact on the state and trait anxiety in athletes.

Identification with an athlete's role could be greater in successful individuals who receive much gratification in sport. That could represent the basis for coping with stress efficiently and lower rates of anxiety as a consequence. Clear identity and self-confidence are supposed to mediate the coping behaviour. It is assumed that high self-concept is associated with less trait anxiety, more effective coping skills and higher self-esteem. On the other hand low self-concept clarity is associated with higher neuroticism, low self-esteem, low self-conscientiousness and chronic self-analyses (Campbell, 1990).

This could explain the statement that elite athletes "can afford" to themselves higher levels of anxiety because experienced athletes have in comparison to less experienced athletes a higher self-image (Kamal, Blais, Kelly, & Ekstrand, 1995). More successful athletes are more satisfied with themselves and they accept themselves as they are (Čavničar, 2000).

On the other hand, negative affectivity is positively associated with anxiety. Identification with a less efficient coping behaviour could be associated with increased levels of anxiety.

It is not clear how self-confidence (and also identity and related concepts, e.g. self-image) is associated with anxiety (Tušak & Faganel, 2004). There are complex interacting associations between different concepts at different levels and in relation to specific situational factors, e.g. different performance situations.

We know that in general, anxiety affects performance level negatively (Tušak, & Faganel, 2004). However, for a high performance it is important that the anxiety level (arousal) is high enough. A successful performance is related to somatic anxiety in an inverse U curved line; thus, for high performance a certain (optimal) activation level is necessary. This statement is valid for somatic anxiety only. In the case of cognitive anxiety there is a negative linear association between cognitive anxiety and the level of performance (Trampuž, 2003).

For a high performance level efficient coping behaviour is more important than anxiety level and the direction of anxiety. However clear identity It was further found that the anxiety level is associated with the categorization of athletes.

Generally, athletes have lower rates of anxiety than non-athletes (Martens & Gill, 1976) but if we compare anxiety levels in different classes of athletes, we can see that the categorization of athletes is antecedent of both types of anxiety. The highest class athletes (world class) have higher rates of anxiety than athletes in lower classes.

It has been said that anxiety level (especially the cognitive anxiety) reduces performance level, but on the other hand the anxiety level does not necessarily mean that the performance level will decrease. It will be so only in the case of a less successful coping behaviour.

Beside the components of identity we have stressed the impact of gender and the categorization of athletes.

The impact of gender on anxiety rates was expected. Generally, male athletes have lower rates of anxiety than female athletes (Faganel, 2003). There have been some investigations which confirm these differences. Every individual tends to structure the social environment and preserve social reality by accepting social roles and, consequently feeling better (Bečaj, 1997). Sport, especially top-level sport, is still supposed to be a man's business. Women are supposed to find more satisfaction in recreational forms of sport participation. There probably still exists a conflict between the traditional understanding of women, who are "bashful and calm". Women still have not come near the traditional men's attributes (Cox, 1994).

Female athletes should not handicap themselves with "men's/women's attributes". For them it is important to find their own identity which should be independent of stereotypes (Kobal, 2000).

Finally, it has been found that an increase of the negative affectivity increases levels of both trait and state anxiety especially in world-class athletes, and that an increase of self-identity decreases the level of trait anxiety. These findings could be useful for coaches who are in daily contact with athletes. It is important that coaches stimulate the activities of athletes which are not directly associated with sport. If so, their identity could become more complex and less exclusive. Namely, exclusivity as a factor of identity is not significantly associated with anxiety. Also, social identity, which refers to one's perceptions of others viewing him/her as athletes, does not decrease levels of anxiety. It is more important to facilitate positive self-referenced cognitions concerning sport participation, but not to rely exclusively on this particular role and also to teach how to respond constructively to the frustration of, e.g., being unable to participate in sport.

We should be aware of the fact that self-concept components, anxiety (intensity and direction), coping (with anxiety and with stress) and the performance level are in complex and multilevel relations. Performance is also affected with many other factors like, e.g., gender, categorization, etc.

Identity could be viewed as a central connecting concept which is related to different aspects of anxiety and which is the basis for coping efficiently with enviromental challenges (e.g. sport performance) and on the other hand it is positively related to different aspects of self-concept. It has been found in a recent study that some aspects of athletic identity are especially related to anxiety levels. Self-identity decreases and negative affectivity increases the levels of anxiety in athletes and, on the other hand, social identity and exclusivity are not significantly related to anxiety levels. It is certain that some aspects of athletic identity, adequate self-esteem, self-confidence and self--efficacy are favourable integrating factors in athletes.

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UTJECAJ IDENTITETA NA ANKSIOZNOST SPORTAŠA

Sažetak

Uvod

Tema ovog istraživanja bila je povezanost između sportskog identiteta i anksioznosti, koja je operacionalizirana kao osobina ličnosti i kao stanje u sportaša različitih kategorija i različitih sportskih disciplina.

Pojam identiteta je subjektivni koncept koji se može definirati kao individualnost, pojam o sebi. U području četiri komponente poimanja sebe (slika o sebi, samopoštovanje, idealno ja i samopouzdanje) najviše je povezan sa slikom o sebi koja je u suštini deskriptivna. Sportski identitet je specifična mjera pojma o sebi (Grove i sur., 2004). Prema Brewer i suradnici (1993) sportski identitet jest stupanj do kojeg se pojedinac identificira s ulogom sportaša. Sportski identitet se smatra 'kognitivnom shemom koja vodi i organizira procesiranje informacija o pojmu o sebi' (Brewer, Van Raalte i Linder, 1993). Iako su sportski identitet inicijalno proučavali Brewer i njegovi suradnici koji su pošli od pretpostavke da se radi o jednodimenzionalnom konstruktu i osobini ličnosti, neka su se istraživanja ipak bavila faktorima sportskog identiteta. Brewer, Van Raalte i Linder (1993) ukazuju na sljedeće faktore koji čine sportski identitet: samopoimanje, socijalni identitet, isključivost i negativni afekt.

Kako se identitet smatra centralnom funkcijom ega i kako je identitet najvažniji faktor psihološke dobrobiti (Petzold, 1991), moguće je pretpostaviti da bi sportski identitet mogao biti važan faktor koji utječe i na sportsku izvedbu.

Metode rada

Ispitanici. Četiristo deset slovenskih sportaša sudjelovalo je u istraživanju; 70% ispitanika u ukupnom uzorku činili su sportaši (N=285), a 30% bile su sportašice (N=125).

Instrumenti. Primijenjen je Upitnik sportskog identiteta (The Athletic Identity Measurement Scale – AIMS; Brewer, Van Raalte i Linder, 1993) te upitnici anksioznosti koji mjere anksioznost kao osobinu ličnosti (STAIX1) i anksioznost kao stanje (STAIX2) (Spielberger, Gorsuch i Lushene, 1970).

Metode za obradu podataka. Provedene su dvije regresijske analize (Enter Method) s varijablama anksioznosti (kao osobinom ličnosti i kao stanjem) kao kriterijskim varijablama. Nezavisne varijable u oba modela bila su četiri faktora sportskog identiteta (samopoimanje, socijalni identitet, isključivost i negativni afekt), spol, vrsta sporta (individualni ili timski) i kategorizacija. Posljednje su tri varijable bile dihotomizirane zbog pretpostavki koje je nužno zadovoljiti za provedbu regresijske analize.

Rezultati

Na temelju dobivenih rezultata utvrđena je statistički značajna povezanost nezavisnih varijabli i anksioznosti kao stanja (p=.000). Odabrane nezavisne varijable objasnile su 15,1% varijance anksioznosti kao stanja kod ispitivanih sportaša.

Najviši relativni utjecaj na anksioznost kao stanje od ovih prediktora imala je varijabla negativnog afekta, zatim kategorizacija (i to vrhunski sportaši svjetskog ranga). Ako je pojedinac vrhunski sportaš svjetskog ranga (najviša kategorija), tada će očitovati simptome anksioznosti kao stanja u većoj mjeri nego ako je sportaš iz neke niže kategorije. Također, viši pojam o sebi djeluje na slabije očitovanje simptoma anksioznosti kao stanja. Osim toga, sportaši su manje anksiozni (stanje) od sportašica. Nadalje, utvrđena je statistički značajna povezanost između nezavisnih varijabli anksioznosti kao osobine ličnosti (p=0.00). Odabrane nezavisne varijable objasnile su 17,4% varijance anksioznosti kao osobine ličnosti kod ovih sportaša.

Moguće je utvrditi da su nezavisne varijable na sličan način povezane s oba tipa anksioznosti. Najviši relativni utjecaj na anksioznost kao osobinu ličnosti od ovih prediktora ima negativni afekt, zatim slijedi kategorizacija. Kod vrhunskih sportaša svjetskog ranga anksioznost kao osobina ličnosti zastupljena je u većoj mjeri nego što je to slučaj sa sportašima nižih kategorija. Ponovno se zamjećuje niža anksioznost kod muškaraca, a viši pojam o sebi povezan je s nižom razinom anksioznosti.

U oba tipa anksioznosti postoji povezanost između višeg ranga nacionalne sportske kategorizacije i više razine oba tipa anksioznosti.

Rasprava

Ovo istraživanje potvrdilo je da dva od četiri faktora sportskog identiteta imaju značajan utjecaj na anksioznost kao stanje i kao osobinu ličnosti kod sportaša – to su pojam o sebi i negativni afekt. Isključivost i socijalni identitet nisu pridonijeli objašnjavanju anksioznosti kod sportaša. Ovakav nalaz sukladan je rezultatima nekih dosadašnjih istraživanja koja naglašavaju važnost sportskog identiteta. Smatra se da jasan sportski identitet i samopouzdanje mogu posredovati u procesima suočavanja sa stresom kod sportaša. Smatra se da se snažan pojam o sebi povezuje s nižom anksioznošću, učinkovitijim vještinama suočavanja sa stresom i višim samopouzdanjem. S druge strane, slab i nejasan pojam o sebi povezuje se s višim neuroticizmom, sniženim samopouzdanjem, nižom savjesnošću i manjom sklonošću samoanalizi (Campbell, 1990).

Navedeno može objasniti činjenicu da vrhunski sportaš 'može dozvoliti' višu razinu anksioznosti zato što iskusniji sportaši u pravilu imaju i jači pojam o sebi u usporedbi s manje iskusnima (Kamal, Blais, Kelly i Ekstrand, 1995). Utvrđeno je da je kategorizacija značajan antecedent oba tipa anksioznosti. Sportaši višeg ranga (svjetska klasa) imaju višu razinu anksioznosti od onih nižeg ranga.

S druge strane negativni afekt u pozitivnoj je vezi s anksioznošću. Identifikacija s manje učinko-

vitim obrascima suočavanja može biti povezana s povećanom razinom anksioznosti.

Osim toga, naglašava se i utjecaj spola i kategorizacije sportaša.Općenito, sportaši pokazuju nižu razinu anksioznosti od sportašica (Faganel, 2003b). Sport, osobito vrhunski sport, još uvijek se smatra dominantno 'muškim svijetom'. Moguće je da još uvijek postoji sukob između tradicionalnog poimanja žena, koje su 'stidljive i mirne' te se još uvijek nisu približile tradicionalno muškim atributima (Cox, 1994).

Zaključak

Trebali bismo biti svjesni činjenice da komponente pojma o sebi, anksioznosti (intenzitet i smjer), suočavanje sa stresom i izvedba čine složen sklop te da se radi o višestruko i na više razina povezanim konceptima. Sportska uspješnost također je pod utjecajem i brojnih drugih faktora kao što su spol, kategorizacija itd. Identitet se može smatrati centralnim faktorom koji povezuje navedene koncepte i povezan je s različitim aspektima anksioznosti, a koji je i temelj učinkovitog suočavanja s izazovima iz okoline (tj. sa sportskom izvedbom i uspješnošću), a s druge je strane u pozitivnoj vezi s različitim aspektima pojma o sebi. Zasigurno se može smatrati točnim da su jasan identitet, uredno samopouzdanje, samopoštovanje poželjni integrativni faktori.