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THE ROLE OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL RECOVERY PROCESS IN ATHLETES AFTER TRAINING AND DURING THE COMPETITION PERIOD

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: This article highlights the scientific and practical significance of the psychological recovery process in athletes after training sessions and during the competition period. The study was conducted with the participation of qualified belt wrestlers at the training stage. During the research, the athletes' motivational state and anxiety level were assessed using the methods of Charles D. Spielberger and V.F. Sopov. The athletes in the experimental group were provided with a psychological recovery exercise program consisting of breathing exercises, autogenic training, visualization, sensory recovery, and cognitive reappraisal methods. At the end of the experiment, an increase in emotional stability, a decrease in anxiety levels, and an improvement in intrinsic motivation were observed among the athletes.

Introduction. In the modern sports system, achieving high performance is directly associated not only with athletes' physical and technical-tactical preparedness, but also with the stability of their psychological state. Recent scientific studies in the field of sports psychology indicate that intensive training sessions and high-level competitive activities cause significant psycho-emotional stress in athletes. These conditions are manifested through stress,

mental fatigue, emotional instability, decreased self-confidence, and reduced motivation. As a result, athletes' concentration ability decreases, the accuracy of technical-tactical actions is impaired, and overall sports performance may decline. In particular, in sports characterized by high emotional and physical demands, such as belt wrestling, the issue of psychological preparation and recovery has become especially relevant. Therefore, monitoring, restoring, and stabilizing athletes' psycho-emotional condition is considered one of the essential components of modern sports training.

Psychological recovery contributes to the normalization of the central nervous system, reduction of excessive emotional tension, improvement of stress resistance, and enhancement of readiness for subsequent training sessions and competitions. Currently, psychoregulatory methods such as relaxation exercises, autogenic training, visualization, breathing exercises, sensory recovery (mindfulness), and cognitive reappraisal are widely used in sports practice. These methods play an important role in developing psychological stability, strengthening intrinsic motivation, and improving self-regulation skills in athletes. In particular, these approaches are considered effective tools for reducing anxiety, internal tension, and psychological stress arising before and during competitions. From this perspective, the scientific investigation of the effectiveness of psychological recovery methods during post-training and competitive periods among qualified belt wrestlers at the training stage has significant scientific and practical importance for sports psychology and the theory of sports training.

Materials and Methods. The study was organized with the participation of qualified belt wrestlers at the training stage. A total of 20 athletes from the experimental group participated in the research. The participants were selected from athletes who regularly attended training sessions and had competitive experience. The main purpose of the study was to determine the influence of psychological recovery methods used after training sessions and during the competition period on the psycho-emotional state of athletes. For this purpose, the athletes' psychological condition, motivational level, emotional stability, and anxiety indicators were comparatively analyzed at the beginning and at the end of the experiment.

To assess the psychological condition of the athletes, psychodiagnostic methods widely used in sports psychology were applied. In particular, Charles D. Spielberger's "State Anxiety Self-Assessment Scale" was used to determine situational anxiety, internal tension, emotional stress, and psychological strain among the athletes. This methodology made it possible to evaluate the athletes' current psychological condition and identify pre-competition stress. In addition, V.F. Sopov's "Motivational State Scale" was applied to evaluate the athletes' intrinsic

motivation toward training and competition, goal orientation, interest in activity, and self-confidence levels. All obtained results were analyzed taking into account the individual psychological characteristics of the athletes.

During the experiment, the athletes were provided with a specially designed psychological recovery exercise program. The program was based on the principles of modern sports psychology and psychoregulation and was aimed at accelerating the athletes' psychophysiological recovery. The program included breathing control exercises, visualization, progressive muscle relaxation, autogenic training, sensory recovery (body scan mindfulness), affective reappraisal, and positive self-talk techniques. Breathing exercises were aimed at balancing the activity of the autonomic nervous system and normalizing heart rhythm, while progressive muscle relaxation was used to reduce excessive muscular tension. Visualization exercises contributed to increasing athletes' self-confidence by creating mental images of successful technical-tactical actions.

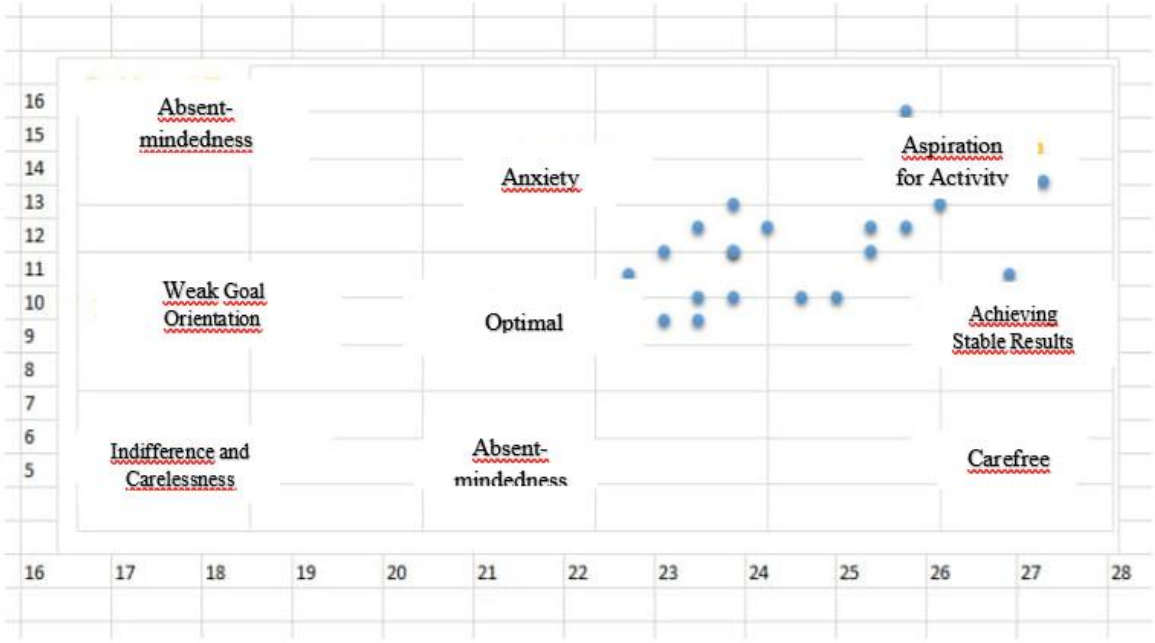
Results and Discussion. At the beginning of the study, the motivational state of the athletes in the experimental group was found to be at an average level, while some athletes demonstrated insufficient intrinsic motivation. At the same time, anxiety indicators were relatively high among several athletes, and pre-competition psycho-emotional tension was observed. According to the initial results, the athletes' motivational state scores ranged from 16 to 28 points, whereas anxiety indicators varied between 9 and 18 points.

Table 1

Assessment Indicators of Motivational State Scale and Anxiety Level of Belt Wrestlers in the Experimental Group Before the Study at the Training Stage (n = 20)

(according to Charles D. Spielberger and V.F. Sopov)

№	Full Name	Motivational State	Self-Assessment of Anxiety
1.	Axadjonov H	20	13
2.	Ergashaliyev N	23	12
3.	Komilov X	27	11
4.	Ashurov H	19	10
5.	Alijonov A	24	13
6.	Xaydarov A	21	10
7.	Jaloldinov O	18	9
8.	Yodgorov B	17	12
9.	Kubayev F	28	15
10.	Xamrayev M	19	14
11.	Isakov I	23	13
12.	Jo'rayev Z	18	13
13.	Abdimurodov J	22	10
14.	Axmedov A	24	18
15.	Ro'ziyev M	16	11
16.	Yoqubov T	25	14
17.	Ravshanov M	19	12
18.	Sharipov B	17	9
19.	Sarimsoqov S	18	10
20.	Pardayev Sh	19	12



Analysis Ordinates of the Psychological State of Belt Wrestlers in the Experimental Group Before the Study at the Training Stage. Figure 1.

An analysis of the psychological state ordinates of belt wrestlers in the control and experimental groups was conducted before the study at the training stage. During the process, the athletes' emotional stability, motivational orientation, and anxiety levels were comprehensively assessed. The obtained results demonstrated that the psychological indicators between the two groups were relatively balanced, confirming the equality of the initial conditions. This provided a methodological basis for an accurate and reliable evaluation of the effectiveness of the subsequent experimental intervention.

Table 2

Exercise Program for Overcoming Anxiety States on Competition Day

№	Exercise Name	Description (How It Is Performed)	Duration	Time of Application	Athlete's Condition
1.	Breathing Control (4-4-6 Method)	Inhale through the nose for 4 seconds → hold the breath for 4 seconds → exhale through the mouth for 6 seconds. Repeated 5–7 times.	3–5 minutes	Before competition or during breaks	Heart rate normalizes, anxiety decreases

2.	Visualization (Mental Imagery)	The athlete closes their eyes and imagines themselves successfully performing actions and achieving victory.	5 minutes	Before competition	Confidence increases, fear decreases
3.	Muscle relaxation	Different body parts are sequentially tensed (for 5 seconds) and then relaxed (for 10 seconds).	5–7 minutes	Before the start or during breaks	Muscle tension decreases, relaxation occurs
4.	Positive Self-Talk	Repeating phrases such as "I am ready," "I am strong," and "Everything is under my control" silently or aloud.	2–3 minutes	Before the match	Confidence and motivation increase
5.	Attention Focusing (Concentration on One Point)	Ignoring distracting factors and focusing attention on a single point (opponent, belt, signal).	2–4 minutes	During competition	Concentration improves, unnecessary thoughts disappear

Anxiety states observed in athletes on competition day, including psycho-emotional stress, anxiety, and excessive excitement, are mainly associated with the activation of the sympathetic nervous system. These conditions are manifested through increased heart rate, excessive muscular tension, and decreased concentration. Therefore, the psychoregulatory exercise program applied on competition day serves to optimize the athlete's functional condition and establish an "optimal combat readiness state." On competition day, this exercise program is implemented gradually and in a purpose-oriented manner.

Table 3

No	**Exercise title**	**Content (how to do it)**	**Duration**	**Application time**	**Expected result**

1.	Affective Reappraisal	The athlete consciously reinterprets a heavy workout not as "fatigue," but as a "stage of development."	3-5 minutes	After workout	Stress decreases, motivation increases
2.	Microsegmentation of the target	The larger goal is broken down into smaller, achievable stages (for example: improving 1 technical element today).	5 minutes	End of lesson	The goal becomes clear, and internal motivation increases.
3.	Sensory recovery (body scan mindfulness)	The athlete focuses their attention sequentially on body parts (leg-waist-shoulder-neck), observing sensations without evaluating them.	5-7 minutes	During cool down	The nervous system calms down, and recovery accelerates.
4.	Positive memory activation	The athlete remembers his previous successful performances and "feels" them emotionally again.	3–4 minutes	After workout	Self-confidence and motivation increase
5.	Autogenic exercise (Schultz method)	The athlete repeats to himself such formulas as "my hands have	5–8 minutes	During the break	Deep mental and physiological recovery

		become heavy, my body has relaxed, my breath is calm."			

Within the framework of this study, a комплекс of psychological recovery exercises applied after training sessions was systematically developed and implemented for belt wrestlers at the training stage. This program included modern psychoregulatory methods such as cognitive reappraisal, goal micro-segmentation, sensory recovery (body scan mindfulness), positive memory activation, and autogenic exercises.

The results of the study demonstrated that the cognitive reappraisal method reduced negative emotional reactions to intense physical loads among athletes and helped them perceive these challenges as a "factor of development." As a result, stress levels decreased and intrinsic motivation became more stable. Goal micro-segmentation strengthened athletes' self-regulation mechanisms by encouraging them to set clear and achievable tasks, which

№	Full Name	Motivational State	Self-Assessment of Anxiety
1.	Axadjonov H	21	10
2.	Ergashaliyev N	22	9
3.	Komilov X	20	9
4.	Ashurov H	23	9
5.	Alijonov A	21	10
6.	Xaydarov A	21	8
7.	Jaloldinov O	20	9
8.	Yodgorov B	22	10
9.	Kubayev F	24	7
10.	Xamrayev M	22	8
11.	Isakov I	23	10
12.	Jo'rayev Z	20	9
13.	Abdimurodov J	22	8
14.	Axmedov A	23	10
15.	Ro'ziyev M	19	8
16.	Yoqubov T	23	7
17.	Ravshanov M	21	9
18.	Sharipov B	19	9
19.	Sarimsoqov S	20	10
20.	Pardayev Sh	20	8

contributed to improving the overall effectiveness of training sessions.

Table 4

Indicators of the Motivational State Scale and Anxiety Level Assessment of Qualified Belt Wrestlers in the Experimental Group After the Study at the Training Stage (n = 20)

(according to Charles D. Spielberger and V.F. Sopov)

The results of the pedagogical experiment demonstrated that the exercise program designed to overcome anxiety states on competition day, as well as the post-training psychological recovery exercise complex applied during the training stage, had a significant positive effect on the psychological condition of belt wrestlers in the experimental group.

In particular, the level of emotional tension before and during competitions decreased in the experimental group, while athletes' self-regulation ability, self-confidence, and concentration indicators improved. An increase was observed in rapid recovery from anxiety states, adequate assessment of competitive situations, and stable execution of technical-tactical actions. Furthermore, the post-training psychological recovery exercises reduced overall mental fatigue and improved readiness for subsequent training loads by normalizing the functioning of the central nervous system.

Analysis Ordinates of the Psychological State of Belt Wrestlers in the Experimental Group After the Study at the Training Stage. Figure 2.

The results of the analysis ordinates of the psychological state of qualified belt wrestlers in the experimental group after the study at the training stage demonstrated stable positive dynamics. In particular, an increase in athletes' volitional qualities, a decrease in anxiety states, and the development of self-regulation mechanisms were observed.

The analysis results showed that the psychological recovery exercises and the program aimed at overcoming anxiety states applied during the experiment significantly reduced the athletes' psycho-emotional stress levels. One of the most important findings was that the athletes in the experimental group who regularly used this program achieved an optimal psychological condition. In other words, during training sessions and competitions, they became emotionally balanced, capable of maintaining stable concentration, and able to perform technical-tactical actions with a high level of reliability.

Conclusion. The results of the conducted study demonstrated that psychological recovery exercises applied after training sessions and during the competition period play an important role in improving the psycho-emotional condition of athletes. It was determined that athletes in the experimental group showed increased motivational state, reduced anxiety levels, and improved emotional stability. In particular, the regular application of autogenic training, visualization, breathing exercises, and cognitive reappraisal methods enhanced the athletes' resistance to stress.

Furthermore, psychological recovery methods had a positive influence on athletes' self-regulation, concentration, and effective performance of technical-tactical actions during competitive activity. On this basis, it was scientifically substantiated that organizing psychological recovery processes in harmony with physical and technical-tactical training within the sports preparation system is one of the important factors in improving sports performance.

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