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Dimensions in Appraising Fatigue in Relation to Performance

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ABSTRACT

Studies on the relation between fatigue and performance often fail to find a strong and direct link, implying that multiple factors may be involved. A literature search on the fatigue-performance relationship suggests that two different conceptual frameworks are employed concerning the appraisal of fatigue in relation to performance: an adaptation-oriented framework and an emotion-related framework. In this study we investigated whether adaptation-oriented appraisal and emotion-related appraisal exist as separate dimensions in a healthy population. A list of statements derived from these frameworks was presented to 127 healthy individuals. A principal component analysis revealed a six-factor solution and a three-factor solution of fatigue appraisal, closely related to the conceptual frameworks. These findings are in line with our impressions from the literature that fatigue can be appraised in an adaptation-oriented way and in an emotion-related way. In addition, we found a third factor: "social rejection because of fatigue". We investigated whether the different appraisal dimensions were related to general level of fatigue, anxiety and depression. Only emotion-related appraisal and general level of fatigue were related. Worrying and focusing on fatigue is apparently related to the experience of fatigue whereas attributing fatigue to the unrewarding properties of a task is not. Knowledge about the appraisal-dimensions underlying the fatigue-performance relationship may contribute to a better understanding of individual differences in fatigue effects on performance.

KEYWORDS

Fatigue, Performance, Appraisal, Perception, Cognition

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