

Abstract

In our research we looked at how one's expectations are related to performance. What we found was that people initially put forth realistic expectations and that higher initial expectations were positively associated with higher performance. Nevertheless experimentally induced lower expectancies showed marginally higher performance.

Introduction

Expectations about one's future performance could be defined as self-efficacy magnitude measurements (Bandura, 1986). There is evidence that for most people expectations about future events exhibit optimism bias (Peterson, 2000, Weinstein, 1980). Research finds the higher the self-efficacy the higher the performance (Feltz & Magyar, 2006).

As well for optimism bias it has been proposed that it is adaptable, since it makes one feel good about oneself (Armor, Massey, & Sackett, 2008). But at the same time there is other line of argumentation and research evidence, that shows that higher expectations and higher confidence can backfire and produce worse performance, because of decreased concentration, risky behavior, and overconfidence in one's abilities (Campbell, Goodie, & Foster, 2004).

Hypothesis

The hypothesis we tested were:

- 1) Initial expectations will be higher than the actual score;
- 2) Negative feedback will result in lower expectations;
- 3) Negative feedback will result in higher performance.

Method

Sample

- N = 80 (41 men; 39 women)
- Mean age 25,6
- Randomized Positive/Negative feedback groups, both n=40

Measurements

- Specially designed questions for measuring expectations about performance.
- Puck game for performance assessment.



Procedure

1. Two-minute practice with the game.
2. Expectation measurement Nr.1.– “How do you think out of a 100 shots how many would you shoot in the point area?”
3. Score Nr.1. - Puck game 20 shots.
4. False feedback (randomly assigned)
 1. Positive – “Your score was higher than 75% of the previous participants.”
 2. Negative – “Your score was lower than 75% of the previous participants.”
5. Expectation measurement Nr.2.
6. Score Nr.2. - Puck game 20 shots.

Results

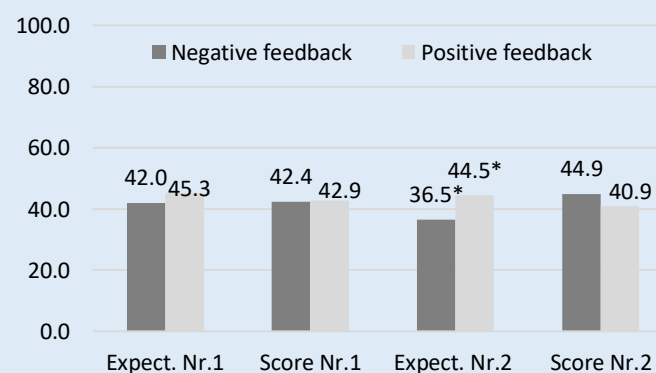


Figure.1. Mean % Expected and Actual Scores.

*T test, $t(78) = -2.1485$, $p = .035$.

Table.1. Spearman Correlation Coefficients for Scores and Expectations. (N=80).

	Feed-back	Expect. Nr.1	Score Nr.1	Expect. Nr.2
Expect.Nr.1	0,05	1		
Score Nr.1	-0,03	0,35**	1	
Expect. Nr.2	0,23*	0,83***	0,46***	1
Score Nr.2	-0,13	0,32**	0,49***	0,3**

Table. 2. Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Score Nr.2. (N = 80).

Variable	B	SE B	β
Feedback	-5,35	3,01	-.18
Score Nr.1	0,43	0,11	.31***
Expectations. Nr.2.	0,13	0,10	.16
R2	.29		
F	21,34***		

Discussion

- People put forth realistic forecasts when imminent feedback is expected. This is consistent with other research which points out that in the case of imminent feedback people tend to lower their expectations (e.g. Sweeny & Krizan, 2013).
- When the actual performance is equal it could be argued that having lower expectations results in marginally higher performance.
- Performance seems to influence expectations and not the other way around.

References

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