

The Relationship between Competition Anxiety with Performance of Young Wrestlers

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Abstract: *Competition anxiety is a common emotional state experienced by athletes at all levels of performance. Most of the athletes have competition anxiety and this does affect their performance overall. The purpose of the present research was to study the relationship between Competition Anxiety with performance of young wrestlers. Sport Competition Anxiety Test was administered on a total of 123 young wrestlers who participated in the “7th All India Chandgiram gold cup wrestling tournaments in March 17-18, 2018”. Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analysis were used to measure the significance relationship. The results revealed that competition anxiety have a negative significant relationship with the performance.*

Keywords: Competition anxiety, Performance, Wrestlers

1. Introduction

In humans, an important attribute that strongly affects competitive decisions is the degree of confidence in one's abilities. Biases in self-confidence (i.e. over- and under confidence) can greatly affect individuals' well-being and position in society as well as eventually impacting society at different levels (Taylor et al. 1998). Anxiety is the feelings of nervousness and tension caused by the environment or surrounding expectation that is related to 'arousal'. Those demands are usually stressful and thus may cause an imbalance between the demands and the athlete's ability to fulfill the expectations. These sorts of conditions place high stress loads on the individuals who are competing. All these years, an increase in performance has been the foundation need of what dreamed by all athletes to stand out in their respective sports. The stress presented in competition usually elicits anxiety in athletes, supplying an additional element for them to manage. When anxiety is not directed or construed correctly, athletes lose control and performance levels (Aufenanger, S.J., 2005).

Competition anxiety can be typically defined as “an unpleasant psychological state in reaction to perceived stress concerning the performance of a task under pressure” (Cheng WKN et al., 2009). It is a common emotional state experienced by athletes at all levels of performance. In a sport context, anxiety is often regarded as a typical response to a situation where an athlete's skills are being evaluated (Smith RE, Smoll FL., 1990). Patel et al. (2010) defined sport-related competition anxiety as being a trait and/or state-like response to a stressful sport-related situation, which the individual perceives as potentially stressful, resulting in a range of cognitive appraisals, behavioral responses, and/or physiological arousals. It has often been found that anxiety impairs performance, especially when the task being performed is complex and attentionally demanding. Many athletes who perform well during training or practice can suffer from performance anxiety on game day. Hanton et al. (2004) showed that the intensity of the anxiety is increased by reaching to the tournament date and reduces the self-confidence and there is a negative significant relationship between the competitive anxiety and

sport performance. The highest degree of the anxiety often leads to the weak performance of all athletes; for the reason, all athletes require to special attention in this pavement. The athletes being fluent on the sport atmosphere receive the highest internal motivation having positive attitude towards the sport and applying the most fluent purposes and information for evaluating their own performance. As a result, they can also raise their self- efficacy beliefs feeling that the sport location is very positive for challenging and overcoming all about these sport events potentially.

Practicing and employing a range of psychological strategies to combat potential negative emotional states such as sport-related anxiety has become an integral part of a competitive athlete's performance preparation (Hanton S, 2015). If feelings of nervousness, anxiety or fear interfere with the sports performance, learning to use a few tips from sports psychology may help them get their anxiety under control and reduce game day nerves. Hence, a sport coach or sport psychologist's task is to assist an athlete to tolerate all anxiety conditions in order to reach to better performance because this reduces the anxiety levels of all athletes in this regard.

Wrestling is one of the oldest sports of the world dating back to the pre-history era that has been constructed by the change of the face-to-face challenges and wars during the history. This combat sport is based on a weight class system which aims to balance out the physical characteristics between wrestlers and therefore increase the percentage of performance that depends on technical and psychological skills. With the continuous development of wrestling sports and the gradual improvement of wrestler's technical level, it is more and more obvious that psychological sport skills and coping style could influence on the result of competition. Following a great number of changes in regulation have promoted less passive wrestling, prioritizing scoring strategies, and winning on points, instead of decisive actions or falls (Hubner- Wozniak et al. 2004). These changes also forced several modifications in the fitness requirements of successful wrestlers, which as a result caused an evolution in the training methods (Yoon 2002). Wrestling has been described as an intermittent physical

event which produces great strength and muscle power demands of both the upper and lower body, with a high anaerobic energy metabolism demand (Hu'bnér-Woz'niak et al. 2004). The relationship between gender and competition anxiety has also been addressed in the different literatures; specifically the anxiety experienced by females competing in feminine roles. Wong et.al. (1993) also found that competitive trait anxiety was higher in females participating in individual sports. Also, females who participated in individual sports reported less confidence than females playing on teams. The researchers concluded that individual performance evokes a considerably high trait anxiety reaction compared to a team performance.

1.1. Need of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between the Competition Anxiety with performance of young Wrestlers. Wrestlers themselves, as well as coaches and sport psychology consultants would benefit from such inquiry in that efforts to prepare performers for competition and counselling wrestlers whose performances have been disappointing would be enhanced.

1.2. Aims and Research Hypothesis

This aims of this study was to obtain some useful information being assisted for all officials and coaches regarding to the performance and the degree of the wrestling athletes' anxiety. The hypothesis of this study was there will be a correlation between Competition Anxiety with performance of young wrestlers.

1.3. Benefits of the study

If the results indicate that there is any relationship between the Competition Anxiety with performance of young Wrestlers, then this study will obtains some useful information being assisted for all officials and coaches regarding to the degree of the wrestling athletes' anxiety.

2. Material & Methodology

A convenient, descriptive-correlation type of study design was carried out to evaluate the relationship of competition anxiety with the performance of young wrestlers. The statistical population of the present study was subjected to the whole young wrestlers participated in the "7th All India Chandgiram gold cup wrestling tournaments in March 17-18, 2018". More than 800 wrestlers participated in this event. A total of 123 subjects were selected by simple convenient sampling for study after signing the informed consent according to the inclusion and exclusion criterion. Healthy male/female wrestlers of ages 18 to 25 year having BMI under normal range of WHO 18.5-24.9 kg/m² were included in the study. All the participants were at the same level of activity. Wrestlers with recent history of any musculoskeletal or neurological impairment as reported by participants were excluded from the study.

2.1. Procedure

The related questionnaires were held in Chandgiram

wrestling arena after the related coordination with the province wrestling board and tournaments officials' permission in order to gather the related data. These questionnaires have been also distributed among the participated wrestlers and then gathered completely. The necessary explanations have been completely achieved before distributing the questions because this makes all participants aware of the purposes and targets of the related questionnaires. Each participants were required to sign a consent form, prior to filling out the survey packet, which was completed and immediately returned to the researcher, indicating that they understood the purpose of the study and their rights as a participant. The competitive anxiety (SCAT) questionnaire is subjected to half or one hour before the beginning of the tournaments and all participants are let respond the questions. In the end of the tournaments, by the coordination of the wrestling officials' agreement, the results of the tournaments and the records are also registered in this case. The independent variable was SCAT score. Dependent variable was Performance during tournament (win or Loss).

2.2. Sport Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT)

Martens (1977). The Sport Competition Anxiety Test is a 15-item trait anxiety instrument designed to measure a predisposition to respond with varying levels of state anxiety in competitive sport situations. It is composed of 10 statements referring to feelings of anxiety spawned by competition (e.g., "Before I compete I feel uneasy") and 5 spurious statements that are added to reduce response bias (e.g., "I am a good sport when I compete."). The SCAT is self-administered with subjects responding to the items on a 3-point Likert-type scale. Scoring SCAT involves assigning values to the possible responses: (a) Hardly ever, (b) Sometimes, (c) Often. The 10 test items are scored by adding the items together with one point for "Hardly ever," two points for "Sometimes," and three points for "Often." The 5 spurious items are not scored. Items 6 and 11 require reverse scoring. The total scores for the SCAT range from 10 to 30, with high scores indicating a high predisposition to respond to competitive situations with state anxiety. The test-retest reliability coefficient of the SCAT ranged from .57 to .93 producing a mean of .77 (Martens, 1977).

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive data

123 wrestlers (18 females, and 105 males) were recruited for the study. Mean and standard deviation of age, height, weight, BMI, and SCAT Score was 22.30±2.03, 177.42±5.90, 72.73±4.15, 23.13±1.30, 16.54±3.633 respectively. (Table 1)

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the Variables in this Study		
	Mean	SD
Age	22.30	2.03
Height	177.42	5.90
Weight	72.73	4.15
BMI	23.13	1.30
SCAT Score	16.54	3.63

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for SCAT Score And Performance by the Male and Female Wrestlers.				
	SCAT Score		Performance	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Female (18)	16.06	2.92	0.67	0.48
Male (105)	16.62	3.74	0.64	0.48
Total (123)	16.54	3.63	0.64	0.48

The overall mean and SD of SCAT Score and performance statistics shows that both male and female wrestlers have almost the same score.

3.2. Correlations for Performance with SCAT score of Wrestlers

123 young wrestlers were surveyed about their Level of SCAT score ($M= 16.54, SD= 3.63$) and their performance during the tournament ($M= 0.64, SD= 0.48$). The relationship was positive, moderate in strength and statistically significant ($r(123) = -.49, p < .001$). A complete list of correlations is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Correlations for Performance with SCAT (N= 123)	
	Performance
Performance	1
SCAT Score	-.49**

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.3. Regression analysis for Performance with SCAT score of Wrestlers

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict wrestler’s performance based on their Competition anxiety (SCAT Score). A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,121)= 39.059, p < .001$), with an R^2 of .244. Participants’ predicted performance is equal to $1.724 - .065$ (competition anxiety) when competition anxiety is measured with SCAT score. Participants’ average performance decreased .065 times for each SCAT score.

Table 4: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.494 ^a	.244	.238	.420	2.219

a. Predictors: (Constant), Anxiety
 b. Dependent Variable: Performance

Table 5: Anova^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.896	1	6.896	39.059	.000 ^a
	Residual	21.364	121	.177		
	Total	28.260	122			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Anxiety
 b. Dependent Variable: Performance

Table 6: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Beta	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)		.177		9.729	.000
	Anxiety	-.494	.101	-.494	-6.250	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

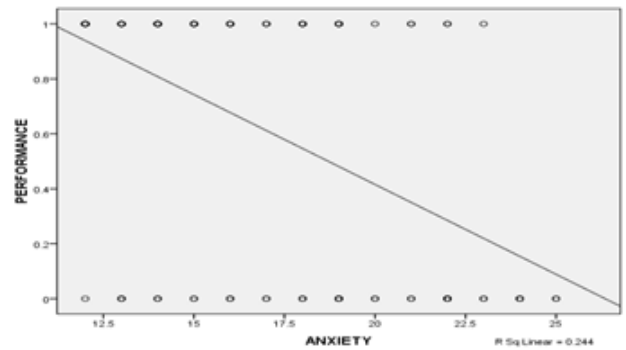


Figure 1: Simple linear Regression analysis for Performance with SCAT scores of Wrestlers

4. Discussion

This study proposed that there will be a correlation between competition anxiety and performance of young wrestlers. Results indicated a significant moderate correlation between the two variables for young wrestlers. These findings showed that more the competition anxiety of a wrestler, poor the performance during competition. It means that both competition anxiety and performance are inversely proportional to each other. It is coincident with the results of Hanton et al (2004). These researchers have shown that the highest competitive anxiety can reduce the success of all athletes during tournaments. Based on this pattern, the limitation of the optimization performance of every athlete should be exclusively established trying to raise his or her performance. In other words, every athlete has his or her own better performance in a special territory of the anxiety. On the other hand, when these athletes get out of their own territory or limitations, they will have weakened performance in this pavement.

But Jones, (1995) refers that athletes label the cognitive and somatic symptoms experienced as a function of interpreting the meaningfulness of experienced symptoms following earlier appraisal about the congruence between demands of the situation and the one’s ability to meet them. This means that two athletes who are equally concerned and physiologically aroused prior to their upcoming performance can have completely different interpretations of those symptoms based on the perceived level of control, perceived level of ability to face this situation and goal attainment. In addition, research has shown that, when performance begins, Somatic State anxiety may dissipate rapidly, whereas Cognitive State anxiety fluctuates throughout a contest as the probability for success or failure changes (Hardy &Parfitt, 1991).

The nature of the sport is also an important factor influencing the anxiety response (Martens, et al., 1990), and it is more likely that anxiety symptoms of high intensity will be interpreted as facilitative for short duration, explosive sports such as wrestling. Wrestling is a contact sports in which physical contact occurs among contestants during a competition. Contact sports have more anxiety than that of non-contact sports, which further leads to lower the performance level. This result is similar to the study of Kumar, V. et.al. (2017). They concluded that contact sports

persons have high anxiety level as compared to non-contact sports persons.

Professional as well as amateur wrestlers, highly experienced or relatively inexperienced, all feel anxious before a competition. What differs between a good performer as compared to an average performer is how they cope with such situations. A successful performer does not differ from unsuccessful ones on intensity of precompetitive anxiety, but the former typically have a more positive interpretation of these symptoms in terms of consequences for performance (Jones & Swain, 1995).

Based on the results of linear regression, we found that competitive anxiety does not play an important role in performance. It may be because the wrestlers participated in our study were national wrestlers. They have already played so many matches and have undergone to different trainings related to wrestling. They have already developed some technical skills of wrestling too. Because of which their anxiety level is less affecting the performance. It will be confirmed with the study of Burmaoglu GE (2018), which could not find any significant relationship between competitive anxiety and sport performance among tennis players. In other words, stress is inherent with competitive sports but mental training can teach an athlete how to cope with it hence decreasing its debilitating effects on performance. It is this mental training, the primary domain of sports psychologist, that can help an athlete display their full potential on the field for higher success.

5. Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

An important concern relates to the participants' honesty. Most wrestlers do not admit to feeling of anxiety related to competition. Although complete anonymity was assured to the subjects, one should question the response reliability. Also, all the wrestlers were surveyed either before or after practice, therefore the environment, or presence of teammates or coaches might influence their responses in a socially desirable manner. We have a very less number of female wrestlers in our study. In future we can increase the sample size of females to generalize the results.

6. Conclusions

The present study provided that a wrestler's performance decreases with the increase of Competition anxiety. Despite the absence of a comparison group, the findings of this study contributed to our understanding of patterns of Competition Anxiety in male and female wrestlers. This study suggested that both male and female wrestler's performance are affected by their Competition Anxiety. This study provided a foundation from which to gain an improved understanding of the relationship of Competition Anxiety with the performance. Such information will assist wrestlers themselves, as well as coaches and sport psychology consultants. They will get benefit from such inquiry in that efforts to prepare performers for competition, and counselling wrestlers whose performances have been disappointing can be enhanced.

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