



The influence of level of sports competition on anxiety behavior between national and state level women players

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to find out pre-competition anxiety between national and state level women athletes. Due to the fact that during competition athletes' mental state greatly affects their stamina and performance, which finally influence the result of final competition. Anxiety in sports is considered as an important issue for many athletes. It refers to a sort of nervous and fear emotion formed by frustration of self-esteem and self-confidence, or increasing of the sense of failure and guilty, which is resulted by the threat from being unable to achieve goals or to overcome obstacles at the right time. For the purpose of the study the subjects were selected randomly from 63rd State Athletic Championships of West Bengal to measure the pre-competition anxiety by a questionnaire Sport Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) developed by Rainer Marten. 25 national level and 25 state level women athletes selected randomly from the said Athletic Championships. To find out pre-competition anxiety between national level and state level women athletes' test was applied. The result showed that there was significant difference on pre-competition anxiety between national level and state level women athletes. The national level women athletes had less pre-competition anxiety than the state level women athletes.

Keywords: influence of level competition, anxiety, national & state level women players

Introduction

Sports is littered with broken dreams of those whose performance collapsed when they are most needed to be in control of themselves and focus on the task at hand. It is not uncommon to see athletes "freeze" in big games or moments or commit unexplainable error in the course of their performance. When athletes do not perform well in relation to their abilities, nervousness in anticipation of the sporting challenges could be the root cause of anxiety. Track and field competition has always been regarded as "mother of sports", for it is the foundation for the other sporting events (John and Paul, 1993). What's more, sprint is a fundamental event in track and field sports, with very significant meaning and role to the training of other sporting events (Mangan, 2009). Anxiety refers to a sort of nervous and fear emotion formed by frustration of self-esteem and self-confidence, or increasing of the sense of failure and guilty, which is resulted by the threat from being unable to achieve goals or to overcome obstacles (Akbar *et al.*, 2011). Anxiety can have a devastating effect on the performance of an athlete. No matter how much talent or skill one may have, he will never perform at his or her best if he or she lives in fear before every event. The problem of pre-competitive anxiety is one of the most pressing problems in modern sports psychology. It has been recognized for many years that psychological factors, in particular anxiety, play an important role in competition and in competitive sports, every athlete experience fear before, during and after events (Lizuka, 2005). Anxiety could make even the world most successful athlete feel nervous. According to Moran (2004), factors such as fear of failure and lack of confidence induce feeling of anxiety in athletes.

Anxiety is like worry; it is an unpleasant emotion that most athletes feel at sometimes when they are faced with challenges. Researcher took up this study to compare the Pre Competitive anxiety between the Players who represent the West Bengal in national level track and field competition, and the Players who represent their respective District in state level but could not qualify for the National Championship. The purpose of the study was to compare the differences on pre-competition Anxiety between women National and State level Athletes. "A Comparative Study of Sports Competition Anxiety. Between Male and Female Cricket. Players of Gujarat" He also found significant result. Using the right techniques such as visualization, goal setting, cognitive restructuring, developing self-confidence and focusing on what you can control rather than what you control cannot will help athletes free from pre-competitive anxiety. For the Coaching and teaching should provide more and more competition within the frame work of practice and training inculcate anxiety and stress free behavior.

Methodology

For the purpose of the study 25 female national level athletes, who participated at national level Athletes competition as a representative of West Bengal and 25 female state level athletes, who participated in state level Athletic competition as a representative of their districts but could not qualify for the National level Championship were selected randomly from 63rd West Bengal state Athletic Championships. The age of the subjects were ranged between 14 to 24 years. To compare the pre competition anxiety between the National and the state level players the data were collected by using

Sport Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) questionnaire, developed by Rainer Marten. Students “t” test at 0.05 level of significance was applied to calculate the significance of difference between national and State level Women Athletes.

Table 1: Significance of Differences of Mean, Standard deviation and “t” test on pre-competition Anxiety between women national and state level Athletes

Groups	Mean	Std.- deviation	t-ratio
National level athlete	17.6	4.01	2.38
State level athlete	20.08	3.16	

Table-1 shows that the mean and standard deviation and “t” test of Women national level and state level Athlete on pre-competition Anxiety. Mean and standard deviation of national level Track and Field event player has been found 17.6±4.01 and 20.08±3.16, the mean and standard deviation of state level Track and Field event player. The “t” value of pre - competition Anxiety is 2.38* this is significant.

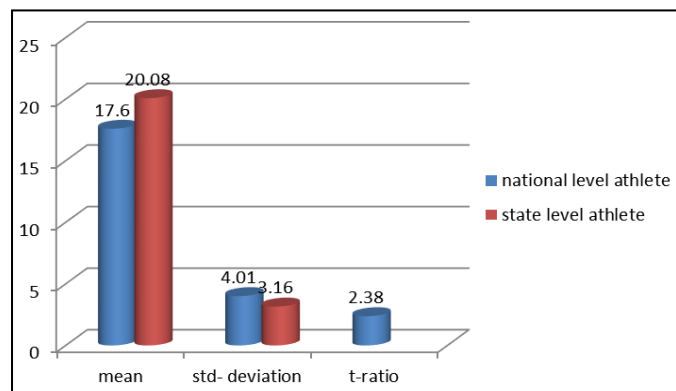


Fig 1

Figure representation of Mean & SD on Pre-Competition Anxiety between women national & State Level Athletes. The above table reveals that significant mean difference was found between women national and State level Athletes in relation to pre-competition anxiety as against the Calculated value of t= 2.38 is greater than the tabulated t05(48)= 2.00

Discussion of finding

Anxiety plays a paramount role in sports. It is the challenge in sports participation which produces anxiety. How an athlete handles the anxiety determines how successful he would be. Anxiety may be a positive motivating force or it may interfere with successful performance in sports events. The degree of anxiety also varies with a number of different conditions. Anxiety is likely to be greater in higher competitive sports than in relatively non-competitive sports, because in the competitive sports, participants are expected to win a great demands are made up on them to succeed. It is revealed from the above findings that the Women state level athletes possessed more pre-competition Anxiety than the Women national level athletes. This study highlighted the anxiety levels by utilized both psychological and physiological measures of anxiety as the competition approached among women national and state level athletes. The mean for pre-competition Anxiety scores shown higher in state level

athletes compared to national level athletes but in case of SD national level women athletes shows higher result. A comparison of national and state athletes revealed several significant differences. National track and field event athletes reported higher self-confidence intensity, win orientation, and ethnic identification scores compared to state track and field athletes. The previous literature showing increased self-confidence levels associated with higher ethnic identity among African Americans (Martinez & Dukes, 1997) may also partially explain the higher win orientation scores among this population. Competitive anxiety is one of the factors to decrease athletes performance (Esfahani & Soflu., 2010). Feelings of tension, thinking of upcoming events in their mind, nervousness, and worry and involved in physiological changes such as increased in heart rate response are common response for the athletes prior to the competition (Hackfort & Spielberger, 1989). Some athletes also involved with the feelings of fear, unhappiness, guilt, discouragement, and focus distraction (Cerin, 2003; Kais & Raudsepp, 2005) [9]. The national level players are more experienced and have adjustable ability with the environment and situation before competition. They are able to control their emotion and anxiety. Their nutritional status, blended demand with training for skill development in their training schedule and previous record in competition increase their confident level before competition. These have been reflected in the result for significant differences.

Conclusion

Women state level athletes are much more prone to pre-competitive anxiety due to fear of failure, thinking too much on what people may say about the performance, and lack of confidence, skill level, experience and general level of arousal in daily activities Women national level athletes are subjected to less pre-competitive anxiety due to more experience and adjustable ability with the environment and situation before competition, control their emotion and anxiety, their training schedule and previous record in competition and practice.

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