

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE SPORTS COMPETITION ANXIETY BETWEEN BOXING AND TAEKWONDO PLAYERS

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Abstract

The relation between sport performance and competition anxiety is generally considered negative. When competition anxiety level increases the athletic performance tends to decrease by impairing focus, decision-making and overall execution skills.

The present study aims at comparing the level of competition anxiety between the state level boxing and taekwondo players of Manipur. In order to conduct the study 50 players who have participated in the state boxing and taekwondo championship were selected. 25 state level boxers and 25 state level taekwondo players aged between 19 to 23 years were selected. To collect the data from the players Sports Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) by Mertens (1917) questionnaire which consist of 15 questions was employed. The questionnaire was in statements that describes themselves. Data collected from the players were analyzed using descriptive analysis and independent sample t-test in SPSS v21.0 software and level of significance was set at 0.05 to find the significant difference between the Boxing players and Taekwondo players.

The results of the study indicates that there is a statistically significant difference among the Boxing players and Taekwondo players ($p < 0.05$).

The finding of the study suggests that the competition anxiety among the players of different game. Taekwondo players showed higher level of competition anxiety as compared to the boxing counterparts as measured by the Sports competition anxiety test (SCAT).

Introduction

Anxiety is a crucial psychological factor that significantly influences an athlete's performance, particularly in competitive sports. It can manifest in various ways, including cognitive and physiological responses, affecting concentration, confidence, and overall mental preparedness. Pre-competition anxiety tests, conducted either a few hours or a day before an event, help assess an athlete's mental state and readiness for performance. While moderate anxiety can enhance focus and concentration, excessive anxiety may impair decision-making and execution under pressure.

The fear of performance can sometimes act as a motivator, helping athletes channel their energy toward achieving peak concentration. However, factors such as perfectionism, fear of failure, and lack of confidence contribute to heightened anxiety levels (Moran, 2004, as cited in Cox, 2002). Emotional responses, including nervousness, tension, and increased heart rate, are common among athletes before competitions (Hackfort & Spielberger, 1989). Athletes

competing at national or international levels are particularly vulnerable to these psychological stressors, which can affect their ability to perform optimally.

The success or failure of an athlete is not solely dependent on physical conditioning but also on mental preparation and the ability to perform under pressure. A well-balanced integration of these factors, along with cooperation among team members, plays a vital role in achieving excellence in sports. Anxiety often stems from an individual's perception of events and their cognitive appraisal of situations. Unrealistic and exaggerated thoughts can heighten anxiety, making it difficult for an athlete to maintain focus and control.

Sports thrive on competition, which drives individuals and teams to excel within established rules. Rivalry exists in various forms, from team battles to individual challenges. Competition is a shared experience where rewards depend on performance comparisons. Research shows individual athletes tend to be more anxious than team players. Competition anxiety triggers physical symptoms like sweating, rapid heartbeat, and negative thoughts, often hindering performance despite rigorous training. As a key factor in sports psychology, anxiety remains a widely studied barrier to success.

Understanding the relationship between anxiety and performance is essential for athletes, coaches, and sports psychologists. Effective management strategies can help athletes regulate their anxiety levels and enhance their overall performance.

Boxing and Taekwondo are well-known martial arts with distinct focuses—Boxing emphasizes hand strikes, footwork, and knockouts, while Taekwondo prioritizes kicking techniques and point fighting. Martial arts are structured combat systems practiced for self-defence, competition, military use, fitness, and cultural preservation. As combat sports, they involve one-on-one competition where victory is achieved through points, submission, knockout, or designated techniques.

The degree of anxiety experienced by players of taekwondo Anxiety is a crucial psychological factor that significantly impacts the performance of Taekwondo athletes. As a combat sport, Taekwondo demands a high level of physical skill, strategic thinking, and mental resilience. However, excessive anxiety can negatively affect an athlete's ability to perform optimally, influencing their reaction time, decision-making, and overall execution of techniques.

The level of anxiety in Taekwondo players can vary depending on experience, competition pressure, and individual psychological conditioning. Beginners often experience higher anxiety due to a lack of exposure to competitive environments, whereas skilled practitioners may develop coping mechanisms to manage stress more effectively. Despite this, even experienced athletes can encounter performance anxiety, particularly in high-stakes competitions.

Anxiety can lead to physiological and psychological effects such as muscle tension, reduced focus, impaired coordination, and diminished confidence. This, in turn, affects critical performance aspects, including speed, accuracy, endurance, and strategic adaptability. Understanding the relationship between anxiety and Taekwondo performance is essential for athletes, coaches, and sports psychologists to develop effective strategies to mitigate anxiety and enhance competitive performance.

Before the fight, the competitors' anxiety levels are displayed in relation to the boxers. Anxiety is a fundamental psychological factor that significantly influences athletic performance, particularly in high-intensity combat sports such as boxing. As a sport that demands exceptional physical endurance, mental resilience, and strategic execution, boxing exposes athletes to immense psychological pressure before and during competition. Anxiety, if not managed effectively, can impair cognitive functions, disrupt motor coordination, and negatively impact decision-making, ultimately affecting an athlete's performance in the ring. While moderate levels of anxiety can enhance focus and competitiveness, excessive anxiety may lead to muscle tension, reduced reaction speed, and impaired strategic thinking. Understanding the role of anxiety in boxing is essential for athletes, coaches, and sports psychologists to develop effective coping mechanisms that enhance performance. This paper explores the psychological and physiological effects of anxiety on boxing athletes, the types of anxiety they experience, and strategies to manage anxiety for optimal performance. Hence from the above literature the researcher would like to study on following statement.

Statement of problem

“A comparative study on the sports competition Anxiety between boxing and taekwondo players”.

Objective of the study

The objective of this research is to determine whether boxing and taekwondo athletes experience substantially distinct levels of anxiety when competing in sports.

Hypothesis of the Study

H₁: This study hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in sports competition anxiety between taekwondo and boxing players.

Delimitations of the Study

The following delimitations will be drawing for the smooth conduct of the study:

- i) The study was determined to 50 subjects; twenty-five (25) players each from Taekwondo and boxing.
- ii) The study was limited to the players of Manipur who participated in state-level tournaments.
- iii) The age of subjects was range between 19-23 years.
- iv) The study was delimited to test the anxiety level only.

Limitation of the Study

The following points were considered the limitations of the study:

- i) The health condition and nutritional status of the players was considered the as limitations of the study.
- ii) The cross-sectional nature of the study was considered a limitation of the study.
- iii) The motivation, attitude and interest of the players and their parents were the limitations of the study.
- iv) The personality and environmental factors of the players was the limitations of the study.

- v) The educational status of the players was the limitations of the study.

The socio-economic background and living conditions of the players was **Significance of the Study**

- i) This study might be very helpful to players, coaches and sports directions to know the level of anxiety of Manipur players.
- ii) The present study might be helpful to the Manipur players to know their actual level of anxiety.
- iii) The current study may be useful to coaches and players in adapting the solution for anxiety treatment.
- iv) The study also might be helpful to know which Manipur players are more anxious before and after the competition.
- v) This Research will assist teachers, coaches and players in determining the effective anxiety level of Boxing and Taekwondo players.
- vi) This study will help to select and develop new study designs for further study.
- vi) the limitations of the study.

Source of Data and Selection of Subject

For the study we have selected about 50 male players (25 taekwondo and 25 boxing) from Manipur state. The age requirement for the test is ranged between 19 to 23 years.

The association of the data source are collected form “the National sports academy” khuman lampak sport complex, Imphal (Manipur). Random sample technique was used for the selection of the subject.

Selection of Variables

Sports competition anxiety was chosen as one of the study's dependent variables. Following extensive consultation with specialists, SCAT is chosen as the study's variable.

Collection of Data

The chosen participants were given a questionnaire to complete in order to gather the data. Subjects' scores on the anxiety questionnaire will be added independently, and score sheets will be assessed in compliance with the guidelines outlined in the test manual.

Statistical Procedure

Descriptive analysis was used to determine the characteristics of the data, the mean and standard deviation (SD) were computed, and an Independent ‘t’ test was used at a 0.05 level of significance to compare the Sports Competition Anxiety Test (SCAT) between boxing and taekwondo in Manipur. The statistical software of SPSS version 21 was used to analyse the data.

Finding

Table -1

Descriptive Analysis of Sports competition Anxiety test for Taekwondo and Boxing

Group	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Min.	Max.
Taekwondo	25	19.24	3.61	.482	16	26
Boxing	25	19.44	2.59	.650	16	26

Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to evaluate and interpret the data that was gathered to evaluate the outcomes. Even though the comments are provided on a five-point rating system, they are totalled and included in brackets in the table's description. The descriptive study of boxers and taekwondo practitioners.

For taekwondo and boxing athletes, the sports competition anxiety test mean and standard deviation were 19.24 ± 3.61 and 19.44 ± 2.59 , respectively. The skewness of both Taekwondo and Boxing were .482 and .650 respectively at the 0.05 level of significance, there was symmetrical distribution in Taekwondo and a slightly positive skewed for boxing. Based on the results of the sport competition anxiety test (SCAT), it was concluded that taekwondo practitioners experienced higher levels of anxiety than their boxing counterparts. In the image below 1.1, the mean comparisons between boxing and taekwondo players for the sports competition anxiety test were displayed graphically.

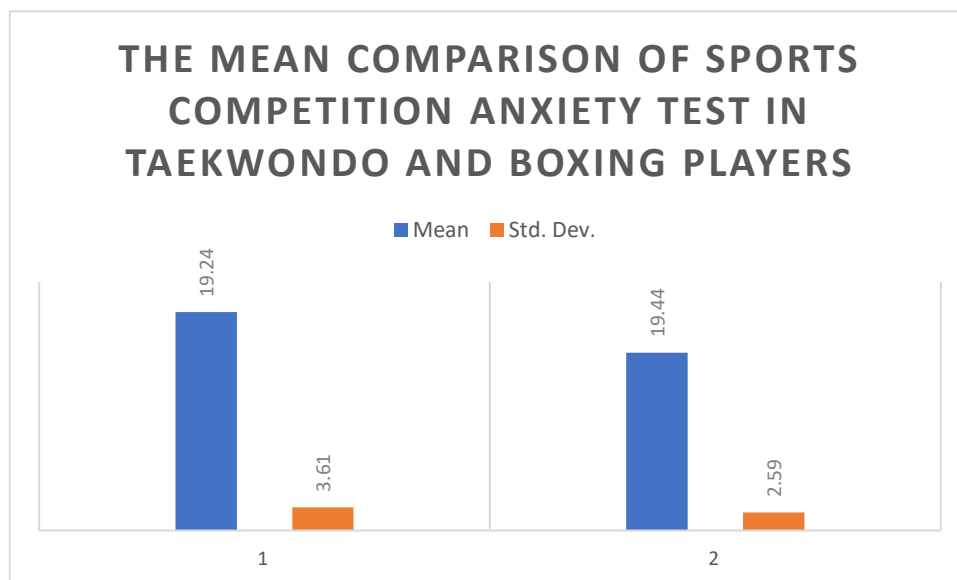


Table-2 Independent “t” test analysis on sports competition anxiety.

Variable	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	t	SD
SCAT	-.20	.89	.225	.823

From the above table revealed that there was slight difference in anxiety level between taekwondo and boxing but the p-value was higher than 0.05 level of significant. Therefore, there was no significant difference found in Sports competition anxiety between taekwondo and boxing players.

Discussion of Hypothesis

In the beginning of the study, it was hypothesised that there would be a significant difference in sports anxiety between taekwondo and boxing players. The finding of study shown that there was no significant difference between the two group. Hence the hypothesis was not accepted.

Summary

The findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study, which focused on a comparative analysis of competition anxiety between taekwondo and boxing players. Anxiety plays a crucial role in combat sports, often influencing performance and participation. While anxiety can sometimes enhance alertness and readiness, excessive levels may hinder performance.

The study highlights that anxiety levels vary based on different conditions and individual coping mechanisms. Combat sports, due to their highly competitive nature, tend to induce greater anxiety compared to non-combative sports, as athletes face immense pressure to succeed. The findings reveal significant differences in competition anxiety between taekwondo and boxing players, emphasizing the need for tailored psychological strategies to manage anxiety effectively.

Based on these conclusions, the study recommends incorporating mental training techniques, stress management programs, and psychological support to help athletes optimize their performance under competitive pressure.

Conclusion

This study conducted a comparative analysis of sports competition anxiety between taekwondo and boxing players. The findings reveal that taekwondo players experience significantly higher levels of anxiety than their boxing counterparts. This difference can be attributed to the distinct nature of these combat sports, where taekwondo emphasizes point-based scoring and strategic execution, while boxing focuses on endurance and knockout-based victories.

Anxiety, a crucial psychological factor, plays a dual role in competitive sports—enhancing performance when managed effectively but impairing execution when excessive. The study highlights that anxiety levels are influenced by individual coping mechanisms, competition pressure, and prior experience. The results underscore the importance of mental resilience in athletic performance, reinforcing that psychological preparedness is just as critical as physical conditioning in combat sports.

Although this study provides valuable insights into sports anxiety, certain limitations should be acknowledged. Factors such as training schedules, personal background, and external stressors were beyond the scope of control. Additionally, the sample size was limited, restricting the generalizability of the findings to a broader population.

Recommendations

The discussion highlighted above with regard to the purpose of a comparative study on the sport competition anxiety test between taekwondo and boxing players. Therefore, continued research work is needed on psychological factors such as aggression, stress, and personality variables to provide all the taekwondo and boxing players with the competence to participate in overall performance. Further, the following recommendations are enumerated below:

1. A similar study may be conducted by employing the strategy and tensive samples to cover other age groups and levels of players.
2. A similar study may be conducted on female players.
3. This research would provide valuable information for practitioners (e.g., players, coaches, physical educationists) when promoting psychological parameters with players.
4. Future research should look into the benefits of actively facilitating such psychological parameters throughout an individual's development across different performances.
5. Researchers support the value of this approach for the promotion of competition anxiety with different players.
6. This is beneficial to combative sports coaches to emphasize the rent of sports competitive anxiety levels due to them to identify psychological parameters levels that are highly required for future success.

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