

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

**Analysis of Pre-competition Sports Anxiety among Handball and Volleyball Players**

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**ABSTRACT**

Anxiety is a reaction by an individual to a stressful situation and in competitive sports; a great amount of stress can be placed on an athlete's performance. Anxiety, particularly pre- competition anxiety has been an important focus of research in sport and performance. The aim of this present study was to analyze pre-competition sports anxiety among Handball and Volleyball players. Sample was collected from thirty players. Selected participants included both Handball (n= 15) and Volleyball (n= 15) players, between the ages of 17 to 19 years. Players were selected from St. Johns College, Jaffna. We measured player's sports anxiety before the competition by the standardized sports competition anxiety test (SCAT). The collected data were analyzed by the statistical treatments "t" test. The result showed that there was a significant difference between Handball and Volleyball players on pre-competitive sports anxiety.

**Key words:** Sports anxiety, Handball and Volleyball Players.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Anxiety is considered to be a normal reaction to a stressor. It may help someone to deal with a difficult situation by promoting them to cope with it. When anxiety becomes excessive, it may fall under the classification of an anxiety disorder. Physical effects of anxiety may include heart palpitations, muscle weakness and tension, fatigue, nausea, chest pain, shortness of breath, stomach aches, or headaches. The body prepares to deal with a threat: blood pressure and heart rate are increased, sweating is increased, blood flow to the major muscle groups is increased and immune and digestive system functions are inhibited. External signs of anxiety may include pale skin, sweating, trembling and papillary dilation. Someone who has anxiety might also experience it as a sense of dread or panic. Anxiety is a psychological and physiological state characterized by somatic, emotional, cognitive and behavioral components. The root meaning of the word 'anxiety' is to vex or trouble; in either presence or absence of psychological stress, anxiety can create feelings of fear, worry, uneasiness, and dread [1]. One of the most important issues which has attracted the attention of sport specialists and psychologists is to identify effective factors influencing anxiety and tension control before a competition so that athletes'

performance can be facilitated [2]. In sports psychology, anxiety refers to an unpleasant emotion which was characterized by vague but persistent feelings of apprehension and dread [3]. An inherent aspect of competitive athletics is the need for players to meet the demands of competition and to perform well under pressure [4]. "The perception of a substantial imbalance between environmental demand and response capabilities under conditions which a failure to meet demands is perceived as having importance consequences will respond to increase levels of cognitive and somatic state anxiety" [5].

**2. METHODS**

This study implicated the analysis of pre-competition sports anxiety among Handball and Volleyball players. Sample was collected from thirty players from St. Johns College, Jaffna Selected participants included both Handball (n= 15) and Volleyball (n= 15) players, between the ages of 17 to 19 years. The collected data were analyzed with the statistical treatments "t" to test the significance differences of pre competition sports anxiety between Handball and Volleyball players. We measured participant's sport anxiety before the competition by the standardized sports competition anxiety test (SCAT). The test

consisted of fifteen statements. It is based on Likert's methods and each statement considered of three responses such as rarely, sometimes and often. Points for the positive statements, one point was given to the response "rarely". 2 points for "sometimes" and 3 points for "often", and for the negative statements 3 were given to the response "rarely", 2 for "sometimes", 1 for "often".

### 3. RESULTS

**Table 1: Analysis of 'T' Test on Pre - Competition Sports Anxiety among Handball and Volleyball Players**

	N	Mean	SD	DM	't' Ratio
Handball	15	21.46	1.55	1.40	3.40*
Volleyball	15	20.07	1.38		

\*Significant

(The required table value for significance at 0.05 level of confidence 2.14)

(Table 1) presents the mean and standard deviation (SD) values of pre - competition sports anxiety are  $21.46 \pm 1.55$  and  $20.07 \pm 1.38$  for handball and volleyball players respectively. Also mean difference and 't' values are 1.40 and 3.40 respectively presented in the table. Since, the obtained 't' value 3.40 is higher than the required table value of 2.14 at 0.05 the level of confidence. It was concluded that their significance difference exists on pre - competition sports anxiety between Handball and Volleyball player.

### 4. DISCUSSION

Pre - competitive sports anxiety may depend on the level and rank at which the competitions are held. Most psychologists believe that the highest level of competitive anxiety will deteriorate athlete's performance in sports [5]. On the contrary, a lower level of anxiety was found to have enhanced the performance of athletes [5]. In sports, higher levels of anxiety before any competition can deteriorate performance. In male inter college Handball players, the pre competitive level of anxiety was higher than post competitive anxiety. Elite athletes by controlling their competitive anxiety through mental skills such as imagination, feeling control have higher motivation and self - confidence, but amateur ones experience weak performance through an increase in anxiety during competition [6]. Competitive sports can make even the world's most successful athlete feel nervous. Many factors such as expectation, perfectionism, fear of failure, lack of confidence induce feelings of anxiety in athletes [7]. Volleyball players had an average level of competitive anxiety [8].

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the results showed that there was a significant difference between Handball and Volleyball players on pre-competitive sports anxiety. Particularly, Handball players got higher sports anxiety than the Handball players. Hence, it was suggested that there is a need for attention to psychological preparation for handball and volleyball players and athletes. Winning feels to help create an optimum competition mindset through consciously reproducing the desired elements, through-stopping can be used to block an unwanted thought before it escalates or disturbed. Inhale slowly, deeply and evenly through nose and exhale gently through mouth. Pre - planning playing technique is required for competition. Code of signals can be used to share the information among players and coach to get the coordination.

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