



THE INVESTIGATION OF STATE ANXIETY LEVEL OF WRESTLING NATIONAL TEAM ATHLETES IN NATIONAL TEAM AND CLUB COMPETITIONS

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Abstract

Objective: The aim of this research is to determine the levels of state anxiety of those athletes who take place in international competitions for national teams and those who take place in the national league competitions for clubs.

Methods: 50 national team athletes, whose sport ages are from 1 to 8, participated voluntarily in the study. In order to collect data, personal information forms and Spielberger State Anxiety Inventory were used. Inventory was applied on athletes 20-30 minutes before the competition.

Results: According to the results of this study; there obtained significance in sport age state anxiety and, international matches / national league matches state anxiety. On the other hand, there obtained no significance between those athletes who whether won a medal before or not.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the national team athletes can administrate their levels of state anxiety better and easier in international matches than league matches.

Key words: Wrestling, national team, club, state anxiety.

Introduction

In today's sport, the excellence of physical capacity is not sufficient alone to extract athletic performance to higher levels. An athlete has got also a psychological capacity which is at least as important as his/her physical capacity. Athletes, whom emotional states change, although their physical preparation is well, cannot be successful as expected him/her and it's described as a reason of psychological capacity (U. Erkan, 1998, L. Tavacioglu, 1999).

Besides the physical and physiological capacities of many top level athletes, they should also have excellent psychological skills such as to be motivated, to manage their anxieties, to be concentrated and to have purpose (H. KOÇ, 2004). In order to enhance athletic performance, psychological dimension should not be neglected.

There are many psychological phenomenons that affect performance in sport. One of the most important psychological phenomenons is anxiety. Anxiety can be identified as "a waiting state in which people are sad and troubling about the future and the state of excitement mixed with a sense of insecurity" (Premise, 2000; Y. Coskun and A. Duct, 2009). Likewise anxiety can be identified as a sense of a person who faces a possibility of a threat from the outside world or any state perceived as dangerous by the person (F. Alisinanoğlu and I. Ulutaş, 2000).

The state anxiety is defined as "a form of

anxiety which is depended on environmental conditions caused by a stress, and also depended on logical reasons, and generally understood by others. It's a form of anxiety that each individual experiences it temporarily." (N. Oner, A. Le Compte, 1998, H. Selya, 1998, E. Kuru, 2000). According to Spielberger, state anxiety; involves a sense of acute anxiety and tension characterized with fear, apprehension and tension. It's detected as a threat for some certain environmental situations and trends to respond to these situations with the growing of state anxiety (RH. Cox, 1994).

State anxiety is an important criterion to understand athlete in a sportive activity. In ongoing contests it's an important apprehension for athletes both before and after the competitions and it's also related to athlete's personality (C. İkizler, 1993).

According to the level of anxiety, an athlete would move away from making right decision and exhibiting his/her abilities. It means the effect of anxiety level is so important for athletes to obtain the desired or expected performance. Anxiety level affects the outcome of competition and athlete's performance negatively (E. Baser, 1998). On the other hand, athletes, who are under extreme pressure, may do some wrong actions. By the effect of excessive anxiety, athletes may forget the movements they knew very well and did for times in training period (M. Gümüş, 2002).

In each competition the athletes have to exhibit their performance under an anxiety

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condition while they enter to the field of competition. The most powerful reasons that cause anxiety are concerned to fear of failure, loss of prestige and conceit (A.M. Bird, BK. Cripe, 1986), (C. Akarçeşme, 2004).

Each competition carries a great importance for the athlete, both socially and economically. In such an environment it doesn't matter how excellent is Athlete's physical properties and how perfect is his /her training process, to achieve success, the ability to cope with anxiety is an extremely important criterion. Psychological preparation must be suitable with the nature of sport types and different from each others. It is considered that intensity of anxiety in athletes who perform individually is much more than those who do team sports (E. Konter, 1998).

In the case of athletes' accomplishment -to actualize their capacity with all the potentialities and to achieve maximal performance values- in general their ability to cope with stress and in special their skills to manage the anxiety of the competition, play an important role (E. Konter, 2002). In addition, sport psychologists agree that to achieve high performance, a certain level of anxiety is necessary for athletes. (E. Başer 1998).

In the light of these knowledges the aim of our study is to determine the state anxiety levels of Turkish youth national team wrestlers, in national and international competitions at the same season.

Method

Population and Sample

The population of this research consists of Turkish wrestling junior national team athletes, and the sample consists of 50 national athletes who participated in the International Republican Tournament from 16 countries as national team athletes. 46 athletes of the same sportsmen participated also in Turkey wrestling league competitions on behalf of their clubs.

Measuring Tools

Personal information form was used in order to collect information about the participants and Spielberger State Anxiety Inventory was used to determine the levels of anxiety.

Spielberger's Continual-State Anxiety Inventory

The scale, which was developed by Spielberger and colleagues in 1964 to measure the state and continual anxiety levels of normal and abnormal individuals, adapted in Turkish by (N. Oner, A. Le Compte 1983). State Anxiety Scale, measures people's anxiety at a specific time, which is described as what they feel in their inside. Trait Anxiety Inventory, according to the feelings of people how often they define themselves in daily anxiety measures. State Anxiety subscale of the inventory was used in this study. This scale is a kind of self evaluating scales that consists of short statements. SAI is a Likert-type scale which

consists of 20 items and grades from 1 to 4. State Anxiety Inventory consists of 10 positive and 10 negative questions (inverted expression). These are: 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 19 and 20th items. Total scores of direct and reverse expressions are calculated.

A predetermined constant number is added to this value. This value for State Anxiety Inventory is 50. The most recent value obtained from the score is the point of individual's anxiety. The total point values vary between 20 and 80. Great points indicate higher level of anxiety and small points indicate lower level of anxiety. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is between 0.83 and 0.92 and it is expressed that this result is counted as an indication with high validity of the scale (N. Oner 1977). In addition, the scale results obtained from normal and patient samples in studies have reported the reliability coefficient between .87 and .83 (Ö. Aydemir, E. Köroğlu, 2000), (N.H.Şahin, A.D. Batıgün, S. Uğurtaş, 2002).

Personal Information Form

This form is developed by the researcher to gather personal information about athletes. There are three questions in personal information form; athletes age, athletes' sport age, and whether they have a degree if they participated to any tournament on behalf of the national team or not.

Application

State Anxiety Scale was applied on 50 Turkish national team athletes, who participated in an international tournament in Turkey, in which other athletes from 16 countries participated. The scale was applied on match day while the athletes were competing on behalf of national team. The Scale was applied on athletes in training hall, immediately before warming, 20-30 minutes prior to competitions. Under the same conditions and at the same season the scale was applied on 46 of 50 national team athletes, who were competing also on behalf of the clubs in the national league competitions. The athletes participated voluntary in this application.

Data Analysis

The following statistical procedures were done for data analysis. The data obtained in this study were transferred to SPSS 17.0 package program. According to sport category, before the analyzing of state anxiety levels, sport age, and whether or not to have a medal, the athletes have been checked whether they provide parametric tests pre-conditions or not. If parametric tests pre-conditions weren't provided, Mann-Whitney U-test was used. If parametric tests pre-conditions were provided, the analysis method -independent group t-test- was used.

Results

Table 1 gives information about a comparison of state anxiety levels, according to the variable of sport age, before competition. The state



anxiety levels of national team athletes, who participated in the study, were examined before international competitions and according to the sport age differences and statistically significant difference was obtained ($p < 0.05$). Athletes whose sport age is 1-4 years have a lower level of state anxiety before competition than those whose sport age is 5-8 years.

In Table 2, before competition in international tournaments, the state anxiety levels of athletes who have a medal were compared with those who don't have and no statistically significant difference was obtained ($p > 0.05$). State anxiety levels of medalist wrestlers before competition were similar with those wrestlers who don't have medal.

Table 3: A Comparison of Athletes' Pre-Competition Anxiety Levels in National Team Competitions and Club League Competitions

Before the analyzing of Pre-sport competition state anxiety levels, according to sport category, Levene test was applied on study group and homogeneity of variances was examined. Since the result of Levene Test was found as $p < 0.05$, it is understood that parametric tests pre-conditions were not fulfilled. For this reason, Mann-Whitney U-test was used.

In this study national team athletes' state anxiety levels before international competitions were compared with their state anxiety levels before league competition (Table 3), and statistically significant difference was obtained ($p < 0.05$). The state anxiety levels of athletes, who compete with foreign athletes on behalf of national team, before completion were significantly lower than those who compete with domestic athletes in club league.

Discussion and Conclusion

The pre-competition state anxiety level of athletes, who were selected for wrestling national team and want to compete in an international competition on behalf of national team with athletes from a foreign country, was examined and according to their sport ages statistically significant differences were obtained. The pre-competition state anxiety level of athletes whose sport age is 1-4 years has been found lower than athletes whose sport age is 5-8 years.

Low state anxiety level on athletes with lower sport age and higher state anxiety level on athletes with higher sport age obtained from the study, may be due to a sense of responsibility and expectations and also because of being an athlete who compete on behalf of national team. As (M. Engur, 2002) transferred from Simon and Martens, personal assessments and high level of expectation increase the state anxiety level. It is known that national team athletes with lower sport age have less experience than others. Therefore, athletes with low national team experience could not access sufficient maturity to represent a country. On the

other hand, they do not know what material and spiritual gains have to be a national team athlete as well. So, it can be said that for these reasons their state anxiety level before competitions is low. Higher state anxiety level of athletes with higher sport age can be explained by their more experience to be national team athletes. National team athletes' awareness of being national team athletes and feeling responsibility for this, to be aware of what positive and negative gains would have when they compete on behalf of national team, and difficulty to accept defeat psychology, can be considered as some of the factors to the high level of state anxiety.

In all available sources, there was not found such a study in which the aim was to determine the state anxiety level of athletes, who all are national team athletes. However, there are some studies in different age groups and in different branches. (N.F. Başaran, O. Tasgin, A. Sanioglu, A.K. Taskin, 2009), examined athletes' (basketball, volleyball, soccer, taekwondo, wrestling) state anxiety point according to their sport age. After examining, the state anxiety point of athletes with lower sport age found significantly higher than those with higher sport age. Similarly, (A. Gacar, Z. Coskuner, 2010), in their study, have found that anxiety point of wrestlers decreased with increasing their sport age. (M.K Erbas, 2005), studied on the effects of state anxiety levels in the performance of senior male basketball athletes and according to age of training, divided them into two groups. There was no a significant difference between two groups.

Wrestling national team athletes' state anxiety before an international tournament was examined according to whether they have an international medal or not, and statistically no significant difference have revealed. The state anxiety levels of athletes who did not receive any medals with those who had, have found similar.

Research findings are supported by the findings of some research about the area. (M. Engur 2002) in his study, he examined the relationship between state anxiety of 279 athletes from different sport branches with their sport experiences, and did not find significance.

To be an international medalist or not, does not have any effect on national team athletes' state anxiety level, so it can be thought that the process of training and the period of camp may affect their state anxiety level. Whether to get medals before or not, all athletes pass a similar process. All training types, camp fields, and other applications are at the same properties for all athletes. The similarity of expectations from all athletes without considering at to be a medalist or not, is another factor. National team athletes compete on behalf of their nation and asked to show the best representation. All these reasons were found effective to have similar state anxiety before competition.

The pre-competition state anxiety levels of Athletes, who participated in this study, were examined in both national and international competitions and statistically significant differences obtained. National team athletes' pre-competition state anxiety levels were found significantly lower than those who compete on behalf of their clubs in national league.

The results obtained from the research have shown that the low pre-competition state anxiety level of national team athletes, and higher pre-competition state anxiety level of athletes, who compete on behalf of their clubs can be related to several different reasons. National team athletes, who are struggling at a high-level, should be equipped with highest qualifications. In addition they should have a limited and manageable level of anxiety. As (H. Koc, 2004) determined, many top level athletes' skills are related not only to their physical and physiological capacities, but also related to their psychological characteristics. These athletes have excellent skills to prepare themselves for competition psychologically, to be motivated, to manage their concerns, to be concentrated, and for detection goals. They can show such qualifications

at the highest level when they compete on behalf of National team.

High state anxiety level of the same athletes, when they compete On behalf of clubs in national league competitions, can be related to different reasons. In national league competitions they compete on behalf of their team and their clubs not on behalf of themselves. Therefore, the gaining of victory or defeat affects directly their teams not only themselves. One case of defeat, may affect their revenues they get from the club, adversely. On the other hand, whether or not to be selected for national team depends on their performance in league competitions. All these reasons can be evaluated as causes of having high state anxiety level in league competitions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the state anxiety level of athletes, who compete on behalf of clubs, is higher than national team athletes' state anxiety level, and it imposes some responsibilities to club coaches and managers. Related units should learn the ways to cope with the athletes' anxieties. Preparing athletes for competitions as well and providing necessary psychological support will make them more successful.

Table 1: Comparison of Athletes' Pre-Competition State Anxiety Levels According to Sport Age Variable

Dimensions	Wrestling age	N	X	SS	t testi		
					t	sd	P
Pre-Competition	1-4 yıl	24	32.33	3.29			
Average of State Anxiety	5-8 yıl	26	35.42	4.77	-2.46	48	0.01

*p<0,05

Table 2: Comparison of Athletes' Pre-Competition State Anxiety Levels According to Variable of Being an International Medalist or Not

Dimensions	Medal Status	N	X	SS	t testi		
					t	sd	P
Pre-Competition	Yes	30	34.87	4.53			
Average of State Anxiety	No	20	32.55	3.83	1.88	48	0.06

P>0.05

Table 3: Comparison of Athletes' Pre-Competition Anxiety Levels According to National Team and Club Competitions Variable

Size	Sport Category	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann Whitney U	P
Pre-Competition	International Competition	50	39.23	1911.50		
Average of State Anxiety	club league competition	46	59.66	2744.50	636.500	0.00

*p<0,05



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