



## EVALUATION OF INSTANT ANXIETY LEVEL BEFORE AND AFTER COMPETITION IN ELITE WRESTLERS

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### **Abstract:**

This research aims to determine anxiety levels of elite wrestlers during the competition period. The system of the study was created by the Turkey Wrestling Federation in 2019-2020 National Teams. The sample of the study consists in selected athletes for these years and includes 45 wrestlers. They were selected from the National Teams. The survey was filled on an instant anxiety scale (20 items) which was developed by Le Compte and Öner (1976). There was no difference in elite wrestlers according the age and achievement levels in the anxiety total and anxiety overall totals ( $p>0.05$ ). When anxiety values are analyzed according to these data, it is seen that the state of anxiety levels before the competition are lower than the state anxiety levels during the competition and the state anxiety levels after the competition. When analyzed according to the national and international ratings of the participants, there is no significant difference between anxiety levels ( $p>0.05$ ). As a result, no significant difference was observed in the general anxiety of elite wrestlers in terms of age groups or success levels.

**Keywords:** wrestler, state anxiety, athlete, competition

### **1. Introduction**

Recently, international successes in sports have become very important for the daily life and moral level of the society. The records in sports are renewed with the help of developing science and technology day by day. Technical, technological, educational and economic standards of the countries represented by athletes or teams competing in the sports fields, have become competitive. In this regard, the affirmation "*Sports is a mirror of a society*" is not a statement that has been used improperly. Therefore, a country's success in sports is not only about the economic development of that society, but also depends on its technological development in the field of education (Açıkada and Ergen, 1990).

It is thought that the choice of talent in sports with low-value criteria at very early ages is risky, and also this will lead to the child's aptitudes being spent in a mistaken way

if his talent cannot be determined exactly. Recent researches reveal that the best motivation in sports will be realized with a good organization of sports activities for young people. Training quality is also a decisive factor for that. All in all, scientific studies clarified the use of training steps, working styles and new motivation criteria in training programs (Doğan and Koç, 2017).

The results of all sports researches around the world aim to provide the trainer with a higher level of knowledge and enforce it to the athlete. In these researches, it is aimed to determine what is necessary to get the highest efficiency in today's conditions of wrestling training and training. Coaches give their students the concepts of accuracy, kindness, patience, love, and respect, as well as sporting performance (Tavacıoğlu, 1999). It encourages feelings of intelligence and morality. Thus, feelings of self-confidence, desire and concentration can develop. In sport, body and soul development are handled together. Nowadays in sports, physical capacity perfection is not seen enough alone in increasing sports performance. The athlete also has a psychological capacity and it should be considered as much as his physical power. That is why athletes who experience emotional changes do not achieve the expected success despite being physically ready (Tavacıoğlu, 1999; Erkan, 1998; Akarçeşme, 2004).

Considering that they have excellent skills in motivating, managing anxiety, concentrating and determining goals (Koç, 2004), the psychological dimension should not be neglected in increasing the sports performance besides the physical and physiological capacities of many high-level athletes.

Many psychological facts affect performance in sports. One of the most important of these is anxiety. Anxiety can be defined as *"a state of excitement with a sense of insecurity, a state of waiting and boring people who are upset and anxious about the future"* (Öncül, 2000; Coşkun and Günbey, 2009) or *"the possibility of a danger arising from the outside world or a feeling of any situation perceived and interpreted as dangerous by the person"* (Alisınanoğlu and Ulutaş, 2000). In case of anxiety, the person feels himself in an alarm situation and as if something is going to happen, he feels uneasy. One of the most important reasons is the state of anxiety, the subconscious moment of a frightening warning (Morgan, 2000). It indicates a picture with physical symptoms such as tremors, sweating, palpitations and high pulse (Beck and Emery, 2005).

Anxiety is divided into two parts as instant anxiety and constant anxiety. Instant anxiety can be defined as *"a form of anxiety that arises due to stress due to environmental conditions, mostly due to logical reasons, can be understood by others, and usually depends on the temporary situation experienced by each individual"* (Öner and Le Compte, 1998; Selya, 1998; Kuru, 2000). Instant anxiety is an important criterion in trying to understand the athlete. It is an important concern for athletes in ongoing competitions, before and after competitions. It is about the personality of the athlete (İkizler, 1993). Constant anxiety can be defined as *"perceiving the stressful situation as dangerous or threatening and increasing the frequency and intensity of the instant emotional reactions against these threats and gaining continuity"* (Özgüven, 2000). The intensity and duration of this type of anxiety depending on the personality structure. Effectively, personality structure is prone to constant anxiety (İkizler, 1993). Constant anxiety cannot be directly observed in an individual's behavior.

However, the severity and frequency of instantaneous anxiety reactions detected at different times and conditions can be used (Öner and Le Compte, 1998).

The level of anxiety a has great importance for the athlete in order to be able to provide the wanted or expected performance. Anxiety level can negatively affect competition results and performance (Başer, 1998). As the level of anxiety increases, the athlete moves away from making the right decision and exhibiting his abilities. Athletes who are under extreme pressure can make some wrong moves. High anxiety can cause athletes to forget some of the movements although they know very well or perform many times during training, as well as causing confusion in their emotions and also some negative movements. Each competition has great social and economic importance for the athlete. In this circumstance, no matter how perfect the physical characteristics of the athlete and how perfect his training process is, the ability to deal with anxiety is an extremely important criterion. Psychological preparation should be different in accordance with the nature of the sports. Team sports have a different nature than individual sports. Anxiety intensity is considered higher in athletes who do individual sports than those who do team sports (Konter, 1998).

## **2. Material Method**

### **2.1 The System of the Study**

The system of the study was created by the Turkey Wrestling Federation in 2019-2020 years National Teams. The sample of the study consists of selected athletes for the 2019-2020 wrestling National Teams.

### **2.2 The Research Group**

The research group includes 45 wrestlers who selected for the 2019-2020 wrestling National Teams. The athletes selected for the Wrestling National Teams of 2019-2020 were reached and the survey was filled. The surveys were delivered to the athletes directly or through the athlete managers and then collected in the same way. It took about 6 months to complete and collect questionnaire forms.

### **2.3 The Method of Research**

The data were collected using the survey method. The purpose of the research is explained at the top of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared by taking the opinions of the experts and by paying attention to the questions about the anxiety levels of the athletes' calmness, safeness, peacefulness, regret, distress, anxiety, and apprehension. Instant anxiety scale (20 items) developed by Le Compte and Öner (1976) was used to measure the level of instantaneous anxiety.

The emotions or behaviors expressed in the Instant Anxiety Scale items are answered by choosing one of the items such as (1) no, (2) a little, (3) a lot, (4) completely according to the severity of such experiences. There are two types of expression in the scale. We can call them direct (direct) and reverse (reverse) expressions. Direct expressions; negative feelings and reversed statements; expresses positive emotions.

While scoring the second type, those with a weight of 1 become 4, and those with a weight of 4 become 1. There are ten reversed expressions in the instant Anxiety Scale.

## 2.4 Statistical Analysis

After calculating the instantaneous anxiety score for the data compiled nominally after the reliability test, T-Test, and one-way ANOVA test was applied in SPSS as appropriate statistical tests. T-test for success factor and one-way test for age factors were evaluated and interpreted after the anxiety score was obtained.  $p < 0.05$  was considered as statistically significant.

## 3. Findings

In this section, it is tested whether there is a difference in the instant anxiety levels of national athletes participating in the research according to their age and success status.

**Table 1:** Examination of the instant anxiety level before the competition by age

Age	n	Mean $\pm$ S.D.	p
19	21	15.82 $\pm$ 3.34	0.061
20	13	18.22 $\pm$ 2.95	
21	11	20.25 $\pm$ 5.20	
Total	45	17.86 $\pm$ 4.14	

As a result of the analysis (Table 1), when we look at the age of the athlete and the instant anxiety assessment, there was no significant difference between the instant anxiety level before the competition ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Considering this table, although there is no significant difference, it is seen that the anxiety level before the competition increases with age.

**Table 2:** Examination of the instant anxiety level during the competition by age

Age	n	Mean $\pm$ S.D.	p
19	21	44.36 $\pm$ 3.01	0.095
20	13	43.89 $\pm$ 11.75	
21	11	43.00 $\pm$ 11.66	
Total	45	43.82 $\pm$ 8.94	

As a result of the analysis (Table 2), when we look at the age of the athlete and the instant anxiety evaluation, there was no significant difference between the instant anxiety level during the competition ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 3:** Examination of instant anxiety level after the competition by age

Age	n	Mean $\pm$ S.D.	p
19	21	42.00 $\pm$ 9.82	0.444
20	13	43.67 $\pm$ 10.09	
21	11	37.00 $\pm$ 13.30	
Total	45	41.11 $\pm$ 10.92	

As a result of the analysis (Table 3), when we look at the age of the athlete and the instant anxiety evaluation, there was no significant difference between the anxiety level after the competition ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Table 4:** Examining the level of instant anxiety according to the degree of national and international

Tests	Success	n	Mean $\pm$ S.D.	p
Pre-test	National	25	17.00 $\pm$ 3.21	<b>0.317</b>
	International	20	18.60 $\pm$ 4.79	
Intermediate test	National	25	45.10 $\pm$ 5.06	<b>0.453</b>
	International	20	42.66 $\pm$ 11.35	
Post-test	National	25	44.53 $\pm$ 8.95	<b>0.124</b>
	International	20	38.10 $\pm$ 11.86	

As a result of the analysis (Table 4), when we look at the instant anxiety assessment according to the national and international level of the athlete, there was no significant difference between the anxiety level ( $p> 0.05$ ).

#### 4. Discussion

In this section, the findings obtained within the scope of the research are compared, discussed and interpreted considering the studies in the literature.

As a result of the analysis made to test the difference of instant anxiety level according to the age variable; there was no significant difference in pre-competition anxiety level by age in the overall total ( $p>0,05$ ) (Table 1). This finding shows that Olympic athletes do not have a significant relationship between instant anxiety and age before the competition. More mental training of athletes before the competition allows them to experience less anxiety during the competition.

As a result of the analysis made to test the difference of instant anxiety level according to the age variable; There was no significant difference in during the competition anxiety level by age in the overall total ( $p>0,05$ ) (Table 2). During the competition, attention should be paid to the effect of the coach on the athlete. When the anxiety values are analyzed according to these data, it is observed that the pre-competition anxiety levels before the competition (Table 1), according to the data of the anxiety levels of the participants (Table 2), increase the instant anxiety levels during the competition.

As a result of the analysis made to test the difference of instant anxiety level according to the age variable, there was no significant difference at the end of competition anxiety level by age in the overall total ( $p>0,05$ ) (Table 3). This finding shows that Olympic athletes do not have a significant relationship between instant anxiety and age end of the competition. According to the data in (Table 2) and (Table 3), there is a decrease in anxiety levels after the competition, although not significant. When the anxiety values are examined according to the data obtained, it is seen that the pre-competition anxiety levels before the competition is lower than (Table 1), the anxiety levels during the

competition (Table 2) and the post-competition anxiety levels (Table 3). In parallel, in the study of Simon and Martens (1979) on athletes aged 9-14, it was revealed that the state anxiety level was higher in competition time compared to the training periods. Instant anxiety level was found higher in individual sports such as gymnastics and wrestling compared to team sports.

As a result of the analysis conducted to test the difference of instant anxiety level according to national and international success variables; instant anxiety level did not differ significantly from grade to overall total ( $p > 0.05$ ). (Table 4). This finding shows that there is no significant relationship between instant anxiety of the Olympic athletes and their national or international degrees.

Although the level of momentary anxiety does not differ significantly according to national and international success variables, wrestlers' success and post-anxiety levels in international competitions are lower than those with national success. (Table 4). Çelik (2010) reached similar results in his study.

Contrary to our study, Çelik (2010) found a significant difference between the age groups in judoist in terms of instant anxiety. In addition, Koç (2004) and Amen (2008) observed a significant difference between their age groups in their studies. This reveals that there may be differences in anxiety levels among the sports branches.

Yücel (2003) in his research on taekwondo players; found that there was no statistically significant difference between the biological ages of the athletes, their training ages, gender, education level of their family, their level of participation in competitions and the environment in which they were trained, and momentary anxiety and trait anxiety.

Başaran and Ark (2009) in a study on different sports branches, affirmed the fact that there is a significant difference between the sports branches in terms of instant anxiety levels also supports the anxiety level difference between sports branches. In his study, Öğüt (2004) searched the relationship between anxiety and sports branches and he realized differentiation between sports branches.

In conclusion, the values added by the national athletes of the Olympic level to our country should not be ignored. The effects of anxiety levels and degrees of athletes are also quite high. Anxious athletes fail in competitions, while athletes with low anxiety levels are more successful. Instant anxiety level should also be taken into consideration. In this study, it is not desired to find meaningless the instant anxiety level of the national athletes in the Olympic team. It may be beneficial for athletes to receive psychiatric support, and coaches to learn about these therapies to support athletes.

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