

SATISFACTION AND COMPETITIVE STATE ANXIETY OF THE SAN JOSE FOOTBALL ACADEMY ATHLETES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety among football athletes at the San Jose Football Academy in Occidental Mindoro. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 50 athletes using the Athlete's Satisfaction Scale and the Competitive State Anxiety Scale. The findings indicate high levels of satisfaction among athletes, particularly with coaching and team performance, yet varying levels of competitive state anxiety, with moderate cognitive anxiety and low somatic anxiety observed. Notably, no significant correlation was found between overall athlete satisfaction and competitive state anxiety. However, a significant negative correlation was found between satisfaction with coaching and somatic anxiety ($r = -0.35, p < 0.05$), indicating that athletes who were more satisfied with their coaching experienced lower levels of physical anxiety symptoms. The study highlights the complexity of anxiety in sports, emphasizing the need for comprehensive interventions that go beyond enhancing satisfaction to effectively manage competitive state anxiety among athletes. These findings provide valuable insights for coaches and sports psychologists aiming to optimize both athlete satisfaction and performance under competitive conditions.

Keywords: competitive state anxiety, football players, cognitive anxiety, satisfaction of athletes

INTRODUCTION

Recent research has increasingly focused on the complex relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety. Athletes' performance in competitive sports is influenced by various factors, including physical ability, technical skills, and psychological aspects. Among these psychological factors, athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety are recognized as critical determinants of athletic performance and overall well-being (Weinberg & Gould, 2015).

Athletes' satisfaction is defined as the degree to which athletes find their sporting experiences fulfilling, enjoyable, and aligned with their needs (Riemer & Chelladurai, 1998). Research indicates a positive correlation between higher levels of satisfaction and increased motivation, commitment, and performance (Curran et al., 2015). Satisfaction also enhances team loyalty, support, and interpersonal relationships, which are crucial for team cohesion. Therefore, ensuring athletes' satisfaction with their roles and responsibilities is vital for maintaining their commitment and engagement.

Competitive state anxiety, on the other hand, refers to the temporary emotional state characterized by apprehension, nervousness, and tension experienced before or during competition (Ford et al., 2017). This anxiety often begins as cognitive state anxiety, involving pre-competition worries and mental strain, and can escalate to somatic state anxiety, characterized by physiological arousal, if not managed effectively. Excessive competitive state anxiety can impair athletic performance by affecting concentration and decision-making abilities (Woodman & Hardy, 2003). This anxiety is prevalent among athletes and can negatively impact their performance when they perceive the demands of the sport as exceeding their perceived capabilities.

The San Jose Football Academy, located in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, is a relatively new organization. Consequently, there is a lack of research on the relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety within this context. The primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety among football athletes at the San Jose Football Academy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research methodology with a descriptive-correlational design. Correlation studies are used to analyze the statistical relationships between two variables with minimal consideration of confounding factors. This design is well-suited for identifying connections between variables and determining whether changes in one variable are associated with changes in another. The study aimed to investigate the significant relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety among athletes at the San Jose Football Academy.

Study Site

The research was conducted at the Occidental Mindoro Sports Complex, Bagong Sikat, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, where the San Jose Football Academy holds its games and practices during the school year 2023-2024.

Respondents of the Study

The study sample consisted of 50 athletes from the San Jose Football Academy. Purposive sampling was employed to select respondents based on their affiliation with the academy, allowing for the investigation of the relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety among these athletes.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using questionnaires consisting of two main components: the Athlete's Satisfaction Scale and the Competitive State Anxiety Scale. The Athlete's Satisfaction Scale, developed by Caliskan et al. (2016), is a 16-item questionnaire designed to assess satisfaction with performance. The Competitive State Anxiety Scale, developed by Martens et al. (1990), is an 18-item questionnaire used to measure competitive state anxiety. Respondents rated their experiences on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1.00 ("Very low") to 5.00 ("Very high").

Data Collection

Approval for the study was secured from the President of the San Jose Football Academy. Following this, the researchers personally administered survey questionnaires to the football athletes. To ensure a smooth and effective data collection process, the researchers coordinated with the academy to schedule convenient times for questionnaire distribution and collection, aiming to minimize disruption to the athletes' training and competition schedules. Questionnaires were distributed during practice sessions and other designated times, with clear instructions provided to the participants to facilitate accurate and complete responses. To achieve a high response rate, the researchers implemented a tracking system to monitor completed questionnaires and followed up with participants as necessary. After data collection, the completed questionnaires were securely stored, with each assigned a unique identification number to ensure anonymity and accurate data management. The collected data were then prepared for analysis to explore the relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety.

Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Mean values were calculated to describe levels of competitive state anxiety and sports performance among athletes. Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to examine the relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety. Statistical analyses were conducted using specialized software to ensure accuracy and precision.

RESULTS

The data reveals that athletes exhibit high satisfaction with coaching aspects (mean = 4.72) and team performance (mean = 4.52), while satisfaction with teammates is somewhat lower (mean = 4.27). The overall grand mean indicates positive feedback across all areas (mean = 4.58) [Table 1].

Table 1. Level of athlete's satisfaction.

INDICATORS	MEAN
Coach	
1. The manner in which my skills are (were) employed.	4.84
2. The coach's choice of plays during competitions.	4.92
3. The level of considering athlete's idea about the game strategies.	4.46
4. The style used during games	4.62
5. How the coach reads the game and makes (made) adjustments during the competitions.	4.88
6. The level to which my skills are (were) employed.	4.46
7. The degree to which my role on the team matches (matched) my preferred role.	4.68
8. Relationship between the coach and the captain.	4.88
Composite Mean	4.72
Team Performance	
1. The team's win/lose record in the year.	4.34
2. The extent to which the team is meeting (has met) its goals for the year.	4.58
3. Eliminating the failures that can affect the team performance.	4.22
4. The level of taking precautions to reach the team to the highest performance.	4.68
5. The level of giving opportunity to the athlete to show complex performance in games	4.80
Composite Mean	4.52
Teammates	
1. The level of the athlete's cooperation with each other and commitment to each other.	4.60
2. The helping level of the athlete to ease the adaptation of the new joining athlete.	4.34
3. The level of all athletes to hide teammates' weakness or mistakes.	3.88
Composite Mean	4.27
Grand Mean	4.58

Legend: 1.00-1.50 - Very Low; 1.51-2.50 - Low; 2.51-3.50 - Moderate; 3.51-4.50 - High; 4.51-5.00 - Very High

The data reveals that respondents exhibit a moderate level of cognitive anxiety (mean = 3.72) and a low level of somatic anxiety (mean = 2.65). The overall grand mean indicates a moderate level of competitive state anxiety (mean = 3.19) [Table 2].

Table 2. Level of competitive state anxiety of the respondents.

INDICATORS	MEAN
Cognitive Anxiety	
1. I am concerned about this performance.	4.28
2. I have self-doubts	3.62
3. I am concerned that I may not do as well in this competition as I could do.	3.84
4. I am concerned about losing or doing poorly.	4.12
5. I am worried about performing well.	3.34
6. I'm concerned about performing poorly.	3.82
7. I'm worried about reaching my goal.	3.38
8. I'm concerned that others will be disappointed with my performance.	3.68
9. I'm concerned I won't be able to focus.	3.44
Composite mean	3.72
Somatic Anxiety	
1. I feel nervous.	3.38
2. I feel scared.	2.48
3. My body feels tense.	3.18
4. I feel tense in my stomach.	2.26
5. My body feels light.	2.98
6. My heart racing	2.82
7. I feel my stomach sinking.	2.00
8. My hands are clammy.	2.50
9. My body feels tight.	2.26
Composite Mean	2.65
Grand Mean	3.19

Legend: 1.00-1.50 - Very Low; 1.51-2.50 - Low; 2.51-3.50 - Moderate; 3.51-4.50 - High; 4.51-5.00 - Very High

Table 3 revealed that there is no significant association between the level of athletes' satisfaction and the level of overall competitive state anxiety ($r = -0.096, p = 0.505$). However, a significant negative correlation was found between coach satisfaction and somatic anxiety ($r = -0.342, p = 0.015$). The correlation between coach satisfaction and cognitive anxiety was not significant ($r = 0.141, p = 0.329$), nor were the correlations between team performance satisfaction and cognitive anxiety ($r = -0.162, p = 0.262$) and teammates satisfaction and cognitive anxiety ($r = -0.149, p = 0.301$). Similarly, the correlations between team performance satisfaction and somatic anxiety ($r = 0.027, p = 0.851$) and teammates satisfaction and somatic anxiety ($r = 0.272, p = 0.056$) were not significant. While no significant relationship was found between athletes' overall satisfaction and competitive state anxiety, the significant association observed between coach satisfaction and somatic anxiety suggests that satisfaction with the coach plays a key role in reducing somatic anxiety among athletes (Table 3).

Table 3. Correlation between the level of athlete’s satisfaction, and competitive state anxiety of the respondents.

ATHLETE'S SATISFACTION	COMPETITIVE STATE ANXIETY					
	Cognitive Anxiety		Somatic Anxiety		Overall State Anxiety	Competitive
	r	p-value	r	p-value	r	p-value
Coach	0.141	0.329	-0.342	0.015		
Team performance	-0.162	0.262	0.027	0.851	-0.096	0.505
Teammates	-0.149	0.301	0.272	0.056		

Legend: p-value <0.05 – Significant

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between athletes’ satisfaction and competitive state anxiety. The data indicate that athletes at the San Jose Football Academy generally express high levels of satisfaction across various domains, including their coaches, team performance, and relationships with teammates. This overall satisfaction reflects positive perceptions of the coaching staff’s guidance, confidence in the team’s abilities, and a strong sense of camaraderie and cooperation within the team. Such high satisfaction levels highlight the academy’s dedication to promoting both individual and team excellence.

However, the study also reveals varying levels of competitive state anxiety among athletes, particularly in the cognitive and somatic dimensions. Athletes report elevated cognitive state anxiety, characterized by significant concerns about their performance, which suggests a high degree of mental stress and investment in competition. Additionally, there is moderate apprehension regarding their ability to perform well, potentially indicating some lack of confidence. Overall, athletes experience considerable cognitive anxiety during competitions (Gabrys & Wontorczyk, 2023). In terms of somatic anxiety, athletes report moderate levels of physiological symptoms, such as tension, though sensations like a “sinking feeling” in the stomach are less frequently reported. This indicates a moderate level of competitive state anxiety, with athletes experiencing noticeable but not overwhelming physical and mental anxiety during competitions (Panza et al., 2020).

The most critical finding of the study is the lack of a significant correlation between athletes’ satisfaction levels and their experience of competitive state anxiety. This suggests that even though athletes may report high satisfaction with their coaches, team, and overall experience, this does not necessarily result in reduced anxiety levels during competition. These findings are consistent with the work of Mottaghi et al. (2013), which similarly found that satisfaction with coaching did not significantly impact overall anxiety levels among athletes. This underscores the complexity of anxiety in sports, which can be influenced by multiple factors beyond satisfaction, such as individual differences, performance expectations, and situational pressures.

Practically, these findings suggest that interventions aimed solely at enhancing athlete satisfaction may not be sufficient to reduce anxiety levels during competition. Coaches,

trainers, and sports psychologists should consider adopting a more comprehensive approach that addresses the multifaceted nature of anxiety in sports (Martín-Rodríguez et al., 2024). Techniques such as cognitive-behavioral strategies, relaxation training, and performance visualization may be more effective in helping athletes manage anxiety (Rowland et al., 2021; Tossici et al., 2024).

While this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between athletes' satisfaction and competitive state anxiety, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. First, the study's sample size was relatively small, consisting of only 50 athletes from a single football academy, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other sports or larger populations. Additionally, the use of self-reported questionnaires introduces the potential for response bias, as athletes may have answered in socially desirable ways rather than providing completely honest responses. The cross-sectional nature of the study also limits the ability to draw conclusions about causality; the observed relationships between variables are correlational and do not establish direct cause-and-effect dynamics. Finally, the study did not account for potential confounding variables, such as individual differences in personality, prior experience with anxiety, or varying levels of competition intensity, which could have influenced the results. Future research should consider addressing these limitations by incorporating larger, more diverse samples, longitudinal designs, and controlling for additional factors that may impact the relationship between satisfaction and competitive state anxiety.

CONCLUSION

This study has highlighted that athletes at the San Jose Football Academy generally experience high levels of satisfaction in various aspects, including coaching, team performance, and relationships with teammates. However, this satisfaction does not appear to significantly reduce competitive state anxiety, which remains prevalent among the athletes, particularly in cognitive and somatic forms. These findings suggest that while satisfaction is an important factor for overall well-being and team cohesion, it may not be sufficient on its own to address the complex issue of competitive state anxiety.

Given these insights, it is recommended that the San Jose Football Academy and similar organizations adopt a more holistic approach to athlete development. This approach should include not only efforts to maintain high levels of satisfaction, but also targeted interventions aimed at managing anxiety. Techniques such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness training, and relaxation exercises could be integrated into the training programs to help athletes better cope with the psychological pressures of competition. Additionally, individualized support should be offered to athletes who exhibit higher levels of anxiety, addressing their specific needs and helping them build confidence in their abilities. Future research should also explore other potential factors influencing competitive state anxiety, such as personality traits and external pressures, to develop more comprehensive strategies for enhancing both mental and physical performance in sports.

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