



AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WRESTLERS' COMPETITIVE ANXIETY LEVELS AND THEIR TECHNICAL- TACTICAL ACTIONS IN COMPETITION

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Abstract

This study highlights the relationship between wrestlers' levels of competitive anxiety and their technical-tactical actions during sport competitions.

Keywords: Wrestling, sport, competitive anxiety, fear state, technical–tactical efficiency, correlation, sports organizations, researcher.

Introduction

Wrestling is an ancient sport; however, it was officially recognized as a modern sport only in 1998, the same year in which the International Kurash Association was established. In 2018, kurash was included for the first time in the program of the Asian Games (Jakarta 2018). Uzbek national wrestling has also been included in the program of the Islamic Solidarity Games scheduled to be held in 2025 in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (originally planned in Tirana, Albania). At a meeting of one of the world's most prestigious sports organizations, the ISSA, the President of the International Kurash Association, Haydar Farmon, participated and held negotiations with ISSA President Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al-Faisal and Secretary General Nasser Majali. The decision to host the 2025 Islamic Solidarity Games in Saudi Arabia represents a significant achievement for the global kurash community. Wrestling is classified as a combat sport, in which athletes perform a wide range of complex technical and tactical actions during competitions. However, the specific characteristics of this sport



particularly its psychological, technical, and tactical foundations within competitive activity have not yet been sufficiently studied from a scientific perspective. The states of anxiety and fear experienced by wrestlers during competitions have been the subject of investigation by numerous scholars. The growing academic interest in this topic highlights its relevance and importance within the theory of sport. Nevertheless, a review of the existing literature indicates that, to date, there has been insufficient research specifically focused on wrestling. This study emphasizes that psychological states such as competitive anxiety and self-regulation arise in athletes due to various factors and may have both positive and negative effects on athletic performance. According to other researchers, the type of sport is directly related to the level of anxiety experienced by athletes, with differences observed between team sports (such as futsal, volleyball, and basketball) and individual sports (such as wrestling, karate, and taekwondo). However, the limited number of studies addressing this issue in wrestling further underscores the relevance and timeliness of the present research.

Based on the above considerations, the following research questions are proposed:



Is there a difference between winning and losing wrestlers in terms of their level of competition anxiety and their technical-tactical skills?



Is there a relationship between wrestlers' pre-competition anxiety levels and their technical-tactical skills?

Based on the research findings, the following hypotheses are proposed:

The level of competition anxiety and technical-tactical skill differs between winning and losing wrestlers.

there is a positive relationship between competition anxiety and technical-tactical performance among winning wrestlers.



Research Objective:

The aim of this study was to compare the competitive anxiety levels and technical–tactical proficiency of winning and losing wrestlers, as well as to determine the relationship between competitive anxiety and technical–tactical actions. A total of 84 wrestlers participated in the study (losers: $n = 42$, winners: $n = 42$). The participants' mean age was 18 ± 2.4 years, mean body weight 73 ± 7.3 kg, mean height 175 ± 8.4 cm, and mean training experience 8 ± 2.8 years. No medications were administered during the study, and no health issues were reported among the participants. The participants took part in tests conducted within the framework of competitions. Local tournaments were held at least three weeks prior to the national championship. Athletes competing in local tournaments participated in an average of 3–4 bouts, while those in the national championship participated in 5–6 bouts. Prior to the study, the purpose of the research was verbally explained to all wrestlers, and confidentiality of personal information was guaranteed. The study was conducted in accordance with local ethical guidelines. To assess pre-competition anxiety, a specialized questionnaire developed by Martens was administered. Athletes completed the questionnaire two hours before the start of their first bout. The questionnaire consisted of 15 items, with response options: “never,” “sometimes,” and “often.” Scores ranged from 10 to 30, with lower scores indicating lower anxiety levels and higher scores indicating higher anxiety levels.

During the first bout of the competition, the technical and tactical actions of winning and losing wrestlers were evaluated, and their relationship with the level of anxiety experienced during the competition was analyzed. To date, there are no established standards for evaluating technical–tactical actions in wrestling. Therefore, this study proposed two indices as evaluation criteria:

1. **Total Technical–Tactical Actions Index (TTA):** The ratio of all offensive, counter-offensive, and defensive actions performed by wrestlers during the competition.
2. **Effective Technical–Tactical Actions Index (EA):** The ratio of scoring offensive and counter-offensive actions to the total number of offensive and counter-offensive actions.



The collected data were analyzed using SPSS for Windows. Mean values and standard deviations were calculated. Pearson correlation coefficients were used to test the study hypotheses. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$ for all indicators.

Significant differences were found between winners and losers in terms of competitive anxiety, total technical–tactical actions, and effective technical–tactical actions. Table 1 presents the mean (M) \pm standard deviation (SD) of competitive anxiety and technical–tactical actions for both groups ($n = 84$).

1.table

Groups	SCAT (Competitive Anxiety)	TTA (Total Technical–Tactical Actions)	EA (Effective Technical–Tactical Actions)
Losers	20.71 \pm 0.86**	8 \pm 2.1	1 \pm 0.7
Winners	19.07 \pm 1.40**	11 \pm 3.5*	2 \pm 0.5**

Note: * $p < 0.05$ – statistically significant difference;

** $p < 0.01$ – highly statistically significant difference.

Results

The comparison indicates that the competitive anxiety level of losing wrestlers (20.71 \pm 0.86) was higher than that of winning wrestlers (19.07 \pm 1.40). The difference in competitive anxiety for winning wrestlers was statistically highly significant ($p < 0.01$), whereas the results for losing wrestlers did not reach statistical significance ($p > 0.05$). Furthermore, a significant difference was observed in the total number of technical–tactical actions between winners and losers. On average, losing wrestlers performed 8 \pm 2.1 actions, while winners performed 11 \pm 3.5 actions. This difference was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). A significant difference was also found in effective technical–tactical actions. Winning wrestlers performed an average of 2 \pm 0.5 effective actions, whereas losing wrestlers performed 1 \pm 0.7 effective action. This difference was highly statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). The correlations between competitive anxiety and both total and effective technical–tactical actions are presented in Table 2.



Correlations Between Competitive Anxiety and Technical–Tactical Efficiency (for Winners and Losers)

2.table

Groups	TTA (Total Technical–Tactical Actions)	EA (Effective Technical–Tactical Actions)
Lossers SCAT	0.421	0.253
Winners SCAT	0.734*	0.671*

Note: * $p < 0.05$ – statistically significant correlation.

Results and Discussion:

The analysis indicates that the correlation between competitive anxiety and technical–tactical proficiency is very low for losing wrestlers. Specifically, the correlation between competitive anxiety and total technical–tactical actions (TTA) was $r = 0.421$, and with effective technical–tactical actions (EA) $r = 0.253$; these results were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). In contrast, a positive and statistically significant correlation was observed for winning wrestlers. Competitive anxiety was strongly associated with total technical–tactical actions $r = 0.734$ and effective technical–tactical actions $r = 0.671$, both reaching significance at $p < 0.05$. These findings indicate that winners and losers differ not only in terms of technical–tactical proficiency but also in their levels of competitive anxiety.

Our results confirm that wrestlers who won their matches experienced lower anxiety levels than those who lost. Additionally, winners performed a significantly higher number of technical and tactical actions. Specifically, winners exhibited lower competitive anxiety and higher technical–tactical efficiency, supporting the study hypothesis. Conversely, losing wrestlers demonstrated higher anxiety levels, which negatively affected their technical–tactical performance.

In conclusion, the findings of this study support the proposed scientific hypothesis: there is a relationship between wrestlers’ competitive anxiety and their technical–tactical proficiency during competitions. Winners displayed lower competitive anxiety and higher technical–tactical performance, whereas losers



showed the opposite pattern. These results suggest that anxiety levels and technical–tactical skills are crucial elements in modern sport theory and can significantly influence competition outcomes. The results provide an important scientific basis for improving wrestler training systems. To date, insufficient scientific research has been conducted in wrestling. Future studies should explore the scientific and methodological foundations of wrestling more deeply to enhance athlete preparation. Additionally, future research could assess pre-competition anxiety (using SCAT and CSAI-2 tests) and technical–tactical skills across different age, weight, and gender groups.

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