

# Athletes' Stress and Anxiety Before The Match

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### Abstract

**Studi purpose.** Stress and anxiety are every day for athletes, but they need severe treatment. Pre-match anxiety is often present and quite disruptive to an athlete's performance. Anxiety is inherent in sports and may be experienced at all levels. This study examines the effects of stress and anxiety before the match. **Materials and methods.** This study used the article review method by collecting qualitative and quantitative data through reputable journal articles. This article reviewed the literature on athlete stress and anxiety leading to a match. Research with this article review method used relevant and accurate data to be used as material for readers.

**Results.** The results of the review concluded that athletes who experienced high levels of stress have the effect of a 70% higher risk of injury, and increased anxiety could harm athlete performance during matches. The causes of anxiety in athletes before competing included competitive anxiety, cognitive anxiety, and somatic anxiety.

**Conclusions.** In conclusion, athletes will experience symptoms of anxiety and stress in the match due to various things, such as the presence of thousands of spectators who can threaten the athlete's self-esteem and the negative judgment of the community towards losing athletes.

**Keywords:** Stress, Anxiety, Athletes, Match.

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### Introduction

Exercise is essential for maintaining fitness. Everyone should exercise regularly and be structured (Widiastuti, 2019). Based on frequency, intensity, duration, and type of

activity, *physical activity* is defined as the body's movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires burning calories into energy (Yuliawan & Bekti, 2021).

Athletes are individuals with unique characteristics, talents, behavior patterns, personalities, and backgrounds that influence them (Zufri & Tyoso, 2018)(FA'OT & Mukarromah, 2021). Body mass index values can be influenced by intensity, routine, and exercise frequency (Arini & Wijana, 2020).

Stress occurs when a person sees an event as threatening or harmful. They respond at the physiological, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral levels (Sukmana et al., 2020) If a person is aware of their stress levels, they will more easily find new ways to deal with stress, change it, and find a more appropriate response (Arbi & Ambarini, 2018) it results in decreased performance of athletes with disabilities and degradation (Sukmana et al., 2020) Stress is unique and inherently dangerous if not able to balance a person's mental endurance with the level of stress they experience (Elzas et al., 2021).

On different scales, the anxiety faced by athletes can affect their performance. There are three levels of anxiety: mild, moderate, and severe (Purnamasari & Novian, 2021). In this situation, the level of the opponent tends to affect the psychological and psychobiological processes associated with stress or anxiety (Ayuso-Moreno et al., 2020). Extrinsic factors that cause stress or anxiety include opponents, spectators, friends, administrators, venue, equipment, and the demands of coaches and family. On the other hand, intrinsic factors include performing poorly due to fear of failure, anxious personality, and lack of competition experience (Ratih et al., 2022). Women's anxiety levels are higher than men's (Nurdiansyah & Jannah, 2021).

The research of Ewendi M Mangolo et al. discusses differences in anxiety in elite athletes in terms of sport and gender using comparative research methods (Mangolo et al., 2021). The difference between previous and current research is that previous research used comparative methods to examine elite athletes' anxiety. In contrast, current research uses the article review method to examine athletes' stress and anxiety before the match.

In Donie et al.'s research, the problem will be carried out is the psychological development of athletes before and during the match, especially concerning the mental health of a soccer athlete to become an outstanding athlete (Donie et al., 2023). The difference between this research and the current research lies in the main problem that will be carried out in the research, whereas for previous research, the focus of the problem lies in the sentence "before the match and during the match". In contrast, in the current research, the focus of the problem lies in the sentence "before the match".

In Widha Srianto's research, the level of anxiety in athletes who will face Porda is influenced by internal factors consisting of morale, negative feelings, and competitive experience. Besides that, external factors from the referee also influence the coach's role, weather, audience, family, and facilities (Srianto, 2020). In Widha Srianto's research, the level of anxiety in athletes who will face Porda is influenced by internal factors consisting of morale, negative feelings, and competitive experience. Besides that, external factors from the referee also influence the coach's role, including weather, audience, family, and facilities

This study examines the effects of stress and anxiety before the match.

## **Materials and methods**

### **Study participants.**

In general the relationship with stress and anxiety of athletes before the match by completing an online questionnaire package that assesses stress minds, irrational beliefs, assessment of challenges and threats, depressive symptoms, and vitality. This study aimed to address this issue by collecting quantitative and qualitative data from elite athletes and, in doing

so, provide the first insight into how exposure to lifetime stress relates to mental health and well-being.

### Study organization.

The method used in this research was the relevant article review method, which takes from precise and accurate article sources. The expected results of this study can be used as material for athletes, coaches, students or students involved in sports science. The strategy used in the reference material was from Google Scholar, Scimago JR and other sources. The hypothesized models tested using path analysis showed an excellent fit with the data. The stages followed in the literature review method were formulating research questions, determining inclusion and exclusion criteria, literature search, article identification, and data analysis.

### Statistical analysis.

The data in this study were secondary data obtained from previous research results published in reputable journals. The inclusion criteria in this study were eligible for selection if there are the following criteria, namely the data used was only related to the stress and anxiety of athletes before competing, searching through online reputable databases, articles or journals in Indonesian and English, the data used in the 2018-2023 timeframe, and the data was an original article. In contrast, the exclusion criteria were data unrelated to athletes' stress and anxiety before competing.

Researchers used biographical annotation analysis, a simple conclusion from an article, journal, or other written source. Several things that need to be considered in the analysis of an annotated bibliography, namely the identity of the reference source, the conclusion of the content of the writing, and the importance of the source referred to in answering the problems that have been formulated.

## Results

Table 1. Article Reduction

Author/Indeks (Sinta 1,2,3/Scopus/Scimago JR)	Result
(Herdiansyah et al., 2022)/Sinta 3 Mental Imagery: Competitive Anxiety Control in Karate Kumite Athlete	Imagery training could improve athletes' ability to control competition anxiety and it is known that there was a significant difference in effectiveness in the application of imagery training with conventional training.
(Mallaena et al., 2022)/Sinta 3 Volleyball Athlete's Anxiety: The Role of Religiosity and Peer Support	Religiosity and peer support had a positive and significant effect on volleyball athletes' anxiety when competing. Thus the attention of athletes and coaches was not only on physical exercise and skill but should also be supported by religious behavior in the form of prayer, worship, and other instruments to overcome athletes' anxiety.
(Nugroho et al., 2022)/Sinta 3 Competition Pressure in Adolescent Athletes in the Pencak Silat Tanding Category: A Review of the Important Role of Parents and Coaches	The demands of competition cause a decrease in performance ability and an increase in emotional distress so that it needs environmental support, especially from parents and coaches, and special strategies based on experience to encourage athletes during competition, support from parents and coaches increases protective factors such as optimism, can help athletes overcome psychological pressure during

(Yuliastrid et al., 2021)/Sinta 3 The Relationship between Depression, Anxiety, and Stress with Achievement Motivation of Female Athletes During the Covid Pandemic 19	17mpetition. The higher the level of depression, anxiety, and stress, the lower the athlete's achievement motivation, the relationship between anxiety and stress to achievement motivation lies in the category.
(Afiq et al., 2020)/Sinta 3 Stress Levels in Unnes Football Association Players Before a Match.	It was found that stress in soccer players before facing the match was in the moderate category so it is recommended that the coach should be able to know the psychology of players who are ready to face the match and players who will compete must know their psychological condition to get maximum results and increase self-confidence to be able to overcome stress when facing the match.
(Fuentes-García et al., 2022)/Scimago Jr (Q1) Pre and Post-Competitive Anxiety and Match Outcome in Elite International Junior Tennis Players	Cognitive and somatic anxiety were slightly higher before the match than after the match and no significant differences were found between pre- and post-match measurements.
(Gan et al., 2023)/Scimago Jr (Q1) Who benefits more from mindfulness? A preliminary study exploring the moderating effect of personality traits on competition anxiety in athletes	Self-mastery training helps to reduce athletes' anxiety and has a positive effect on confidence levels such that high-activity athletes show more improvement in cognitive or somatic awareness and anxiety levels while athletes with low neuroticism show greater improvement in confidence.
(Barrett et al., 2023)/Scimago Jr (Q1) Sports-specific metacognitions and competitive state anxiety in athletes: A comparison between different sporting types	Somatic states were positively associated with metacognitive beliefs. These findings highlight that metacognition is partly responsible for the occurrence of anxiety and confidence during competition.
(Van Biesen et al., 2021)/Scimago Jr (Q1) Comparison of Sport Competitive Anxiety Levels of Flemish athletes with and without intellectual disability	Athletes with intellectual disabilities had high concentration disorders but worried less and felt less somatic anxiety compared to athletes without intellectual disabilities.
(Tomé-Lourido et al., 2023) Pandemic Impacts on Athlete Competitive Anxiety and Its Relationship with Sex, Competitive Level and Emotional Self-Control: A Cohort Study before and after COVID-19	While the pandemic has led to higher levels of anxiety elite athletes compared to amateur athletes, emotional self-control remains a significant predictor of low levels of competitive anxiety.
(Souza et al., 2019) Heart rate variability, salivary cortisol, and competitive state anxiety responses during pre-	Emotional and psychophysiological stress indices were higher before competition than before training, these findings reinforce the importance of psychological monitoring of athletes in sportive training programs as

<p>competition and pre-training moments (Tilindiené et al., 2018) Relationship between self-esteem, self-confidence, and anxiety for adolescent athletes and non-athletes of Kaunas city</p>	<p>14 a complementary resource to improve both competition performance and training routines. Self-esteem and self-confidence of adolescent athletes were higher compared to non-athlete adolescents, the results showed that comparing differences in anxiety factors of adolescent athletes and non-athletes found no significant differences except anxiety related to social stress experiences, and lower in athlete respondents.</p>
<p>7 7 luhar et al., 2019) Team Sport Athletes May Be Less Likely to Suffer Anxiety or Depression than Individual Sport Athletes</p>	<p>7 Among young athletes, anxiety and depression are more common among those who play individual sports than those who play team sports. Moreover, adolescent individual sport athletes are more likely to play their sport for goal-oriented reasons, rather than for fun when compared to their counterparts who participate in team sports.</p>
<p>(Güler &amp; Kaya, 2023) The Relationship of Burnout with Perceived Expressed Emotion, Anxiety, and Depression Levels in Professional Adolescent Volleyball Players</p>	<p>Lack of emotional support has a positive relationship with levels of depression and anxiety disorders, with research showing that anxiety contributes significantly to athletes' reduced sense of achievement.</p>
<p>(Garinger et al., 2018)/Scimago Jr 19 The effect of perceived stress and specialization on the relationship between perfectionism and burnout in collegiate athletes</p>	<p>Perfectionist endeavors have a direct negative effect on athlete fatigue, leading to greater perceived stress.</p>
<p>(Krys et al., 2020)/Scimago Jr (Q1) Academic performance: A longitudinal study on the role of goal-directed rumination and psychological distress</p>	<p>Psychological pressure with contemplation can reduce the effects of perceived stress so that it can be favorable to academic performance goals.</p>
<p>(Stone et al., 2023) The Psychology of Athletic Tapering in Sport: A Scoping Review</p>	<p>The taper is an important performance indicator because if done poorly it can be a stressor, so coaches need to psychologically manage athletes approaching competition.</p>

## Discussion Stress

Athletes who experience high stress levels have a 70% higher risk of injury. High levels of self-confidence can help athletes avoid anxiety. Youth athletes are more prone to problems than senior athletes because they fear being perceived as weak, losing practice time, or losing the respect of coaches and peers. Although physical activity has been shown to impact mental health positively, the fact that adolescent athletes who exercise at high intensity for long periods feel stressed can harm their mental health. Athletes experience reduced performance and appearance due to psychological pressure and emotional stress caused by intense training and competition (Nugroho et al., 2022).

Athletes experience adverse reactions to stress, which causes their psychological and physical conditions to decline. As a result, athletes cannot play their best game. When facing

conflict, a person who feels emotionally exhausted will feel fear and eventually become apathetic, care less about the people around him, or even affect his physical condition (Sin, 2019).

(Glandorf et al., 2022) Athletes who experience physical and psychological stress during competition and training can hinder performance and increase the negative impact on well-being if they do not have appropriate coping mechanisms. In addition, athletes practicing at the amateur level know little about coping with stress and how it impacts their well-being (Rose et al., 2023).

Emotional factors of resistance, such as stress and anxiety, affect athletes' ability to resist stress (Millman et al., 2021), nervousness, and worry, which can negatively affect athletes' performance during matches. This means that the psychological status of athletes is essential for regulating emotions and coping with stress. Psychological state training takes time because athletes' stress levels may come from outside sources, such as matches and team obligations, but also from athletes' innate sensitivity to outside stressors. Psychological state training helps athletes cope with stress better. More thoroughly (Yu et al., 2022) Despite its importance, little research has been done on the relationship between lifetime stress and athletes' mental health (McLoughlin et al., 2021). Athletes can determine their psychological well-being by knowing how they experience stress and how they cognitively appraise stress (Mansell, 2021).

Patients can return to work gradually after pain and swelling disappear, and radiographs show signs of healing (Shi et al., 2023). High-level athletes do not experience many recurrent stressors (Poulus et al., 2022). Mental fortitude is essential to deal with challenges and challenging situations (Jun Ming Benjamin & Chee Keng John, 2021). In competitive sports, anxiety and stress are often associated. They can impair athlete performance, as excessive physical activation and anxiety tend to cause muscle tension, fatigue, coordination difficulties, and decreased concentration (Battaglini et al., 2022).

Athletes may react with positive or negative emotions, weakening or facilitating high-intensity muscular performance. These emotions affect effort, attention, decision making, and physical functioning. Challenge and threat theory in athletes stems from the idea that stress can be adaptive or maladaptive for skilled performers. The theory draws from prominent appraisal models to describe the physiological and emotional aspects of challenge and threat states and the potential consequences for performance (Campbell et al., 2020).

The following factors cause stress for athletes: negative thoughts, essential events, uncertainty, pre-match preparation, and excessive burden of responsibility (Srianto, 2020). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to evaluate how well the fit between Coaches' Estimates of Athletes' Self-Efficacy (CEASE) and athletes' self-efficacy indicates the quality of the coach-athlete relationship and athletes' anxiety (Stephen et al., 2022).

### **Anxiety**

There are many ways to tell if an athlete is anxious when facing a match situation or before a match. Some of the causes of athletes' pre-match anxiety are described as follows: (1) competitive anxiety, characterized by symptoms such as fear of not succeeding or failing in the field, (2) cognitive anxiety, characterized by symptoms such as the emergence of negative expectations and fear of being evaluated, and (3) somatic anxiety, characterized by physical symptoms such as stomach spasms, sweating, and palpitations (Kumbara et al., 2018) (Marsha & Wijaya, 2021).

Within normal limits, anxiety acts as an alarm system and provides red flags to make you more prepared for upcoming situations (Apriyanto & Wardoyo, 2018). Fear, concern, and anxiety often describe anxiety conditions (Selviana & Dwi, 2022).

Individual athletes have a higher risk of anxiety than team athletes because their motivation to participate in team sports increases at a younger age (Reardon et al., 2021).

Anxiety is more common in people with lower emotional distress tolerance (French et al., 2022). Anxiety and harmful thinking errors increase stress, which is a high risk in adolescents (Harrison et al., 2023). Listening to music before, during, and after exercise can reduce negative emotions and treat anxiety, depression, and pain caused by exercise (Kuan, 2023).

The disadvantage of this study is that researchers cannot directly see the level of stress and anxiety in athletes because this study uses an article review method that looks at data from various accredited journal articles as a reference.

### Conclusions

Stress is a form of response that comes from the emotional and physical condition of an athlete that comes from inside and outside of the athlete himself because of a challenge or problem he faces that he cannot solve. Anxiety arises from the fear of being negatively assessed by various things, including; thousands of spectators who threaten athletes' self-esteem, as seen from the tendency of people who give positive assessments to athletes who win matches tend to give negative assessments to athletes who lose. Athlete is a designation of someone who is generally associated with using the sports field. In general, athletes will experience symptoms of anxiety and stress in the competition, such as anxiety, worry, tension, confusion, lack or loss of concentration, and decreased self-confidence.

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### Conflict of interest

No conflicts of interest to declare.

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