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RESEARCH ARTICLE / ARAŞTIRMA YAZISI

Comparison of State Anxiety Levels of Strong and Weak Competitors in the Iraqi First League Basketball

Irak Birinci Ligi'nde Basketbol Oynayan Güçlü ve Zayıf Rakiplerin Durumluk Kaygı Düzeylerinin Karşılaştırılması

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Abstract:

The aim of this study was to compare the state anxiety levels of strong and weak competitors playing basketball in the Iraqi First League. The research focused on identifying the cognitive and somatic anxiety levels when strong teams play against weak teams, and vice versa. It also aimed to measure the cognitive and somatic anxiety levels across three games: strong teams versus weak teams and strong teams versus other strong teams. The study sample comprised 32 male athletes from four teams, all participants in Iraq's First Division Basketball League. A descriptive research method was employed, and data were collected using a questionnaire-based approach. Specifically, the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory questionnaire was utilized, which was translated into Arabic by two English language experts to ensure reliability and validity. The results indicated a significant difference in both somatic and cognitive anxiety levels between weak and strong teams, confirming the initial hypothesis. Additionally, the findings showed significant differences in anxiety levels when strong teams played against weak teams compared to when strong teams played against other strong teams. In conclusion, the study demonstrated a clear difference in state anxiety levels between strong and weak basketball competitors in the Iraqi First Division Basketball League.

Keywords: Basketball, Anxiety, Cognitive, Somatic, Self-confidence

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Öz:

Bu çalışmanın amacı Irak birinci liginde basketbol oynayan güçlü ve zayıf takım oyuncularının durumluk kaygı düzeylerinin karşılaştırılmasıdır. Araştırmada, güçlü takımların zayıf takımlarla oynaması durumundaki bilişsel ve bedensel kaygı düzeylerinin belirlenmesi, güçlü takımların güçlü takımlarla oynaması durumundaki bilişsel ve bedensel kaygı düzeylerinin bulunması ve iki maç arasında oynanan üç maçın toplamında bilişsel ve bedensel kaygı düzeylerinin bulunması amaçlanmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklemini 4 takımdaki 32 sporcu oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcıların tamamı Irak Basketbol kulüplerinde basketbol oynayan erkeklerden seçilmiştir. Çalışma betimsel araştırma yöntemi kullanılarak gereçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma ankete dayalı araştırma olarak yapılmıştır. Rekabetçi durumluk kaygı envanteri anketinde araştırmacı, anketin güvenirliğini ve ölçeğin geçerliliğini sağlamak için iki İngilizce uzmanından anketi Arapça diline çevirmesini ister. Çalışma sonuçlarına göre hipotezi kabul ettikleri güçlü takımlarla zayıf takımların bedensel ve bilişsel kaygı düzeyleri arasında anlamlı bir fark vardır. Sonuçlar aynı zamanda güçlü takımın zayıf takıma karşı oynaması durumunda ve güçlü takımın güçlü takıma karşı oynaması durumunda bedensel ve bilişsel kaygı arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğunu göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak çalışma, Irak birinci lig basketbol liginde oynayan güçlü ve zayıf basketbolcular arasında durumluk kaygı düzeyleri arasında bir fark olduğunu gösterdi.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Basketbol, Kaygı, Bilişsel, Somatik, Öz-güven

Introduction

Basketball is a high-scoring, fast-paced sport that involves quick decision-making. These features make basketball a psychologically complex, physical, and dynamic sport. Each team tries to destabilize their competitors and generate disorder while maintaining their self-organization and stability, despite being affected by disruptions or crucial events that can modify or disrupt team cohesion (Ferreira et al., 2014). Cognitive activities in sports, such as decision-making, feelings, and perception of competition, are crucial for players (Ruiz et al., 2006). Sports anxiety is a significant topic in scientific studies as it causes changes in athletes' somatic and cognitive states (Rhea et al., 2003). Participation in competitive sports like basketball can influence psychological measures, including self-confidence, cognitive and somatic anxiety, self-efficacy, enjoyment, and continued participation. These aspects are frequently measured in sports psychology, where anxiety is typically conceptualized with physiological arousal (Weinberg & Gould, 2014).

Anxiety is considered a multidimensional construct that involves both somatic and cognitive components. It can also be seen as a relatively stable personality characteristic. According to previous research, responses to competitive situations—whether as state anxiety (response to a specific situation) or trait anxiety (general tendency to experience anxiety)—can be significant in team sports like basketball (Zamani & Moradi, 2011). While various measures exist to assess anxiety and trait anxiety in sports, validated tools specifically for cognitive and somatic anxiety are limited, especially in adult populations (Smith et al., 2006).

Competition between schools can influence the sports participation experience in nuanced ways, affecting overall satisfaction. Varying competitive challenges impact somatic anxiety, self-confidence, cognitive and mood measures. Specifically, assessing these measures in university basketball players during key points in the rivalry season can provide valuable insights for coaches (Eldridge et al., 2016). It was hypothesized that these measures could be effectively collected using validated psychometric tools. In basketball, somatic and cognitive anxiety, as well as self-confidence, are influenced by a complex interplay of various factors. Therefore, they should be investigated with a multidimensional perspective integrating cognitive, contextual, and psychological elements. For instance, unsportsmanlike fouls should be studied within their natural environment, considering high-level interactions, contextual factors, and the preceding and subsequent possessions, as these may have a time-dependent impact on successful or unsuccessful behaviors (Kirker, Tenenbaum, & Mattson, 2000). High levels of anxiety carry significant responsibilities both at the beginning and end of the game, necessitating a wide range of skills to manage the game's demands (Osama, 1995). These abilities require adaptability, incorporating changes in strategies and procedures to address high degrees of neuromuscular coordination. This is accompanied by high capacities for concentration and attention, as well as cognitive and physical confidence in the skills required (Mohammed, 2000).

Precompetitive anxiety tends to have a greater impact on athletes the more they interact with their opponents. This anxiety influences the relationship between cognitive and somatic anxiety in basketball, often having a more detrimental effect on high-level sports compared to lower-level sports due to the presence of opponents and less control over the game (Terry, 1995). The cognitive and physical anxiety experienced by athletes can negatively affect their skill levels, and while the relationship between these types of anxiety is not fully understood, their impact is considered moderate. This uncertainty contributes to the limited emphasis on the relationship between cognitive and somatic anxiety in competitive sports (Kleine, 1990).

Anxiety in a sports context, particularly in competitions, can be a challenge that manifests as negative thoughts and concerns. This anxiety reflects an athlete's recognition of the competitive situation rather than a direct response to anxiety itself (Cox, Martens, & Russell, 2003). Through the researcher's experience and observations of sports teams, it has been found that understanding the concept of anxiety in sports competitions requires distinguishing

between two main types of anxiety: competition-related anxiety and state anxiety. Competition-related anxiety refers to the stress caused by competitive sports situations. State anxiety, on the other hand, refers to the temporary emotional state experienced during competition. Competition-related anxiety can play a significant role in athletes' performance. It can serve as a positive driving force, motivating athletes to exert more effort. Conversely, it can also hinder their physical activity and skill execution, depending on how the anxiety is managed. Understanding these types of anxiety is crucial for optimizing athletes' performance in competitive settings.

The researcher has observed during local matches that some players, despite their high skill levels, sometimes fail to perform effectively. This failure is often attributed to psychological factors, including anxiety, which impacts their performance. The concern here extends beyond just the players' skills; it also involves the lack of awareness among coaches regarding the impact of sports anxiety on players before and during the game. Additionally, there is a gap in scientific knowledge on how to manage or mitigate anxiety, which influences players' cognitive and somatic states as well as their self-confidence. This ultimately affects their individual results and the team's overall performance. Given these observations, the researcher decided to study the degree of sports anxiety (both facilitating and debilitating) and its relationship with self-confidence, cognitive, and somatic anxiety among advanced teams participating in the elite basketball championship.

Main aim of the this study was to investigate cognitive and somatic anxiety levels while strong teams play with weak teams, also to find cognitive and somatic anxiety levels while strong teams play with strong teams, and to find cognitive and somatic anxiety for the sum of three games between strong team plays against weak team and strong team plays against strong team.

The primary objective of this study was to investigate cognitive and somatic anxiety levels among basketball teams in various competitive scenarios. Specifically, the study aimed to assess cognitive and somatic anxiety levels when strong teams play against weak teams, evaluate cognitive and somatic anxiety levels when strong teams play against other strong teams, analyze the cumulative cognitive and somatic anxiety levels across three games, and compare scenarios where strong teams play against weak teams and strong teams play against strong teams.

The secondary objective was to examine differences in self-confidence anxiety across similar competitive scenarios. This included comparing self-confidence anxiety when strong teams play against weak teams, comparing self-confidence anxiety when strong teams play against other strong teams, analyzing the cumulative self-confidence anxiety across three games, and comparing scenarios where strong teams play against weak teams and strong teams play against strong teams.

These objectives were pursued within a sample of basketball teams to provide insights into how different competitive contexts affect anxiety and self-confidence levels among athletes.

Method

This descriptive study aimed to investigate the prevalence of cognitive and somatic anxiety among selected basketball teams and to explore their relationships within the context of the Iraq First Division Basketball League. Ethical permission for this study was obtained with the approval number NEU/SS/2023/1572 before data collection commenced.

The study was guided by the following hypotheses

H1: There is a significant difference between cognitive and somatic anxiety levels when
strong teams play against weak teams.

H2: There is a significant difference between cognitive and somatic anxiety levels when
strong teams play against other strong teams.

H3: There is a significant difference in cognitive and somatic anxiety across the sum of three games where strong teams play against weak teams compared to when strong teams play against strong teams.

H4: There is a significant difference in self-confidence anxiety when strong teams play against weak teams.

H5: There is a significant difference in self-confidence anxiety when strong teams play against other strong teams.

H6: There is a significant difference in self-confidence anxiety across the sum of three games where strong teams play against weak teams compared to when strong teams play against strong teams.

Study Group

The study focused on male basketball players affiliated with clubs participating in Iraq's first-division basketball league, specifically those in the advanced category. The study included 48 players from 11 clubs. Only players from the strongest and weakest teams within the league were selected for the study, resulting in a total of 32 male participants. These players were evenly distributed across four teams: Naft, Sharratah, Naft Aljanub, and Nasiriyah, with 8 players chosen from each team, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Basketball Athletes in Iraq's Basketball Clubs by Province.

No	Clubs	Number Of Players	Province
1	Naft	8	Baghdad
2	Sharratah	8	Baghdad
3	Naft Aljanub	8	Al Basrah
4	Nasiriyah	8	Nasiriyah
Total	**4**	**32**	**3**

Table 2. Descriptive summary of player sample in ıraq's basketball clubs by province

League Standings	Clubs	P	%
1	Naft	8	25
2	Sharratah	8	25
3	Naft Aljanub	8	25
4	Nasiriyah	8	25
Total	**4 Clubs**	**32**	**100**

Table 2 presents the distribution of participants in the current study, analyzed using frequency statistics across the clubs in sequence. The Naft club accounts for 25% of the sample (n=8), as does the Sharratah club with 25% (n=8), followed by the Naft Aljanub club also with 25% (n=8), and finally, the Nasiriyah club with 25% (n=8).

Data Collection Tools

The Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2), developed by Martens et al. (1990), consists of 27 items designed to assess anxiety levels in athletes. Each item offers four response options scored as follows: 1 (never), 2 (a little), 3 (moderately), and 4 (much). Therefore, the total score ranges from a minimum of 27 to a maximum of 108. The reliability of the CSAI-2 is measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which in this case is reported as 0.70. This coefficient indicates the internal consistency or reliability of the scale, with a value of 0.70 suggesting moderate reliability where items are reasonably consistent in measuring the same underlying construct of anxiety in competitive sports contexts.

Scale Validity and Reliability

To validate the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2), the researcher sought approval from experts and specialists in the field, achieving an 82% approval rate. According to Bloom et al. (1983), obtaining approval from 75% or more of expert opinions is considered adequate for scale validation. For reliability testing, the researcher administered the scale to basketball team players who were not part of the main research sample. This step was crucial to assess the scale's consistency and stability across different groups within the basketball community. Additionally, the CSAI-2 was translated into Arabic by three experts to ensure linguistic and cultural appropriateness for the study's context, enhancing its applicability and validity in Arabic-speaking populations.

The questionnaire used in this study was the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2), comprising 27 questions administered to male players from Iraq's basketball clubs participating in the advanced category of the first-division basketball league. The study included 32 athletes from four specific teams: Naft, Sharratah, Naft Aljanub, and Nasiriyah.

It is worth noting that the Nasiriyah team consisted of 10 players instead of 12, and not all players participated in all games due to roster constraints. Therefore, each team was represented by 8 players selected for the study.

The procedure involved measuring pre-competition state anxiety across 6 games against various opponents. The matchups were structured as follows:

* 1st team versus 2nd team
* 1st team versus 3rd team
* 2nd team versus 3rd team
* The lowest-ranked team played against the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd teams.

Details of the matchups and further procedural information are provided in Table 2.

The questionnaire was administered immediately before the warm-up, approximately 30 minutes before the start of each game. Ultimately, data were collected from the sample, resulting in a total of 192 completed questionnaires.

Table 3. Selection of five matches against two different opponents by sequence

No	Two Competitors Teams	Stage
1	1. Naft × 2. Sharratah	Second
2	1. Naft × 3. Naft Aljanub	Second
3	2. Sharratah × 3. Naft Aljanub	Second
4	1. Naft × 5. Nasiriyah	Second
5	2. Sharratah × 5. Nasiriyah	Second
6	3. Naft Aljanub × 5. Nasiriyah	Second

Data Analysis

After collecting the data from the sample, frequency and descriptive statistics were performed using SPSS 21 to evaluate the differences in anxiety levels. A t-test was conducted to calculate the mean anxiety scores between strong teams playing against weak teams and strong teams playing against other strong teams.

Tablo 4. Normality analysis of data collection tools

Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistic	**df**	**Sig.**
Cognitive	0,939	32	0,071
Somatic	0,954	32	0,181
Self Confidence	0,962	32	0,304

Table 4 presents the Shapiro-Wilk test results assessing the normality of participants' scores in Cognitive, Somatic, and Self-Confidence. Based on these tests, it was concluded that the scores for Cognitive, Somatic, and Self-Confidence followed a normal distribution ($p > 0.05$).

The Demographic Information Form developed by the researchers aimed to collect personal information about university students. Accordingly, the form included expressions containing information such as age and gender.

Results

Table 5. Descriptive analyses and t-test results comparing cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between weak and strong teams

Anxiety		**N**	**Mean**	**St.Deviation**	**T**	**p-value**
Cognitive	Nasiriyah	24	24.0	3.2	8.28	**0.000***
	Naft, Sharratah, Naft Alj	24	16.2	3.1	8.28	**0.000***
Somatic	Nasiriyah	24	23.7	2.6	7.96	**0.000***
	Naft, Sharratah, Naft Alj	24	17.6	2.6	7.96	**0.000***

***p<0.05**

Table 5 displays the results of independent t-tests comparing cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between teams. The mean cognitive anxiety score for Nasiriyah (24.0 ± 3.2) was significantly higher than for the Naft, Sharratah, and Naft Alj teams (16.2 ± 3.1) ($p < 0.05$, $t = 8.28$), indicating a significant difference in cognitive anxiety levels between weak and strong teams. Similarly, the mean somatic anxiety score for Nasiriyah (23.7 ± 2.6) was significantly higher compared to the Naft, Sharratah, and Naft Alj teams (17.6 ± 2.6) ($p < 0.05$, $t = 7.9$), suggesting a significant difference in somatic anxiety levels between these groups. These findings support Hypothesis 1, indicating a significant disparity in both cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between weak and strong teams.

Table 6. Descriptive analyses and t-test results of the cognitive and somatic anxiety levels for strong vs strong teams

Anxiety		**n**	**Mean**	**St. Deviation**	**t**	**p**
Cognetive	Naft	24	27.0	2.5	1.37	0.17
	Sharratah, Naft Alj	24	26.1	2.2	1.37	0.17
Somatic	Naft	24	26.1	1.6	0.49	0.62
	Sharratah, Naft Alj	24	25.8	2.3	0.49	0.62

p>0.05

Table 6 presents the results of independent t-tests comparing cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between strong teams. The mean cognitive anxiety score for Naft (27.0 ± 2.5) was not significantly different from that of Sharratah and Naft Alj teams combined (26.1 ± 2.2) ($p > 0.05$, $t = 1.37$), indicating no significant difference in cognitive anxiety levels between these strong teams. Similarly, the mean somatic anxiety score for Naft (26.1 ± 1.6) did not significantly differ from Sharratah and Naft Alj teams combined (25.8 ± 2.3) ($p > 0.05$, $t = 0.4$), suggesting no significant difference in somatic anxiety levels. These findings contradict Hypothesis 2, indicating that there is no significant disparity in cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between strong teams.

Table 7. Descriptive analyses and t-test results of the cognitive and somatic anxiety for strong team vs weak team and strong team vs strong team.

Anxiety		n	Mean	St. Deviation	t	p-value
Cognitive	Naft vs Nasiriyah	24	16.2	3.1	-15.31	**0.000***
	Naft vs Sharratah	24	26.6	2.4	-13.98	**0.000***
Somatic	Naft vs Nasiriyah	24	17.6	2.6	-14.93	**0.000***
	Naft vs Sharratah	24	26	2.2	-13.72	**0.000***

***p<0.05**

Table 7 displays the results of independent t-tests comparing cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between scenarios where a strong team competes against weak teams versus strong teams. The mean cognitive anxiety score for Naft versus Nasiriyah was 16.2 ± 3.1 and versus Sharratah team was 26.6 ± 2.4 ($p < 0.05$, $t = -15.31$ and -13.98, respectively), indicating a significant difference in cognitive anxiety levels between these matchups. Similarly, the mean somatic anxiety score for Naft versus Nasiriyah was 17.6 ± 2.6 and versus Sharratah team was 26 ± 2.2 ($p < 0.05$, $t = -14.93$ and -13.72, respectively), demonstrating a significant difference in somatic anxiety levels. These findings align with Hypothesis 3, indicating a significant disparity in both cognitive and somatic anxiety levels depending on whether a strong team competes against a weak team or another strong team.

Table 8. Descriptive analyses and t-test results of the self confidence levels for weak vs strong teams

Self Confidence	N	Mean	St. Deviation	t	p-value
Naft, Sharratah, Naft Alj	24	24.2	2.3	9.6	**0.000***
Nasiriyah	24	16.6	3.3	9.6	**0.000***

***p<0.05**

Table 8 presents the results of an independent t-test comparing self-confidence anxiety levels between teams. The mean self-confidence anxiety score for Naft, Sharratah, and Naft Alj teams was 24.2 ± 2.3, whereas for the Nasiriyah team, it was 16.6 ± 3.3 ($p < 0.05$, $t = 9.6$), indicating a significant difference in self-confidence anxiety levels between strong teams playing against weak teams. These findings support Hypothesis 4, suggesting that there is a significant disparity in self-confidence anxiety depending on whether strong teams compete against weak teams.

Table 9. Descriptive analyses and t-test results of the self confidence levels for strong vs strong teams

Self Confidence	N	Mean	St. Deviation	T	p- value
Naft	24	26,5	1,6	0.76	0.44
Sharratah, Naft Alj	24	26,0	3,0	0.76	0.44

p>0.05

Table 9 illustrates the results of an independent t-test comparing self-confidence anxiety levels between strong teams. The mean self-confidence anxiety score for Naft was 26.5 ± 1.6, and for Sharratah and Naft Alj teams combined, it was 26.0 ± 3.0 ($p > 0.05$, $t = 0.76$), indicating no significant difference in self-confidence anxiety levels between these strong teams. This finding contradicts Hypothesis 5, suggesting that there is no significant disparity in self- confidence anxiety when strong teams compete against other strong teams.

Table 10. Descriptive analyses and t-test results of the self confidence levels for strong team vs weak team and strong team vs strong team

Self Confidence	N	Mean	St.Deviation	t	p-value
Naft vs Nasiriyah	24	24.2	2.3	-3.33	**0.001***
Naft vs Sharratah	24	26.3	2.4	-3.36	**0.002***

***p<0.05**

Table 10 presents the results of independent t-tests comparing self-confidence anxiety levels across three scenarios: Naft versus Nasiriyah, Naft versus Sharratah team, and the sum of these comparisons. The mean self-confidence anxiety score for Naft versus Nasiriyah was 24.2 ± 2.3, and versus Sharratah team was 26.3 ± 2.4 ($p < 0.05$, $t = -3.33$ and -3.36, respectively), indicating a significant difference in self-confidence anxiety levels between strong teams playing against weak teams versus strong teams playing against other strong teams. This finding supports Hypothesis 6, suggesting a significant disparity in self-confidence anxiety across these scenarios.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate cognitive and somatic anxiety levels when strong teams compete against weak teams and when they compete against other strong teams. Additionally, the study aimed to examine cognitive and somatic anxiety levels across all three games combined, comparing strong teams playing against weak teams versus strong teams. Furthermore, the study aimed to identify differences in self-confidence anxiety between strong teams playing against weak teams and strong teams playing against other strong teams among a sample of basketball teams. The researcher translated the questionnaire into Arabic to ensure accuracy, and then back-translated it into English to validate the questionnaire's reliability.

One of the hypotheses of this study aimed to explore the differences in cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between weak and strong basketball teams. The study's findings revealed a significant difference in these anxiety levels between weak and strong teams.

The results of this study are consistent with those of Thuot et al. (1998), which highlighted differences in physical and competitive anxiety among basketball players during games. They noted that anxiety levels were notably heightened during competition, affecting players' cognitive abilities and performance in response to challenging circumstances and strong opponents (Thuot, Kavouras & Kenefick, 1998).

Another hypothesis of the study aimed to investigate the distinction in cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between strong basketball teams. However, the results indicated no significant difference in these anxiety levels among strong teams. In another study by Balyan et al. (2016), it was found that a relationship exists between physical anxiety and cognitive anxiety among players experiencing heightened physiological arousal during competition. Interestingly, this study also revealed no significant difference in physical and cognitive anxiety levels among players during competition (Balyan et al., 2016).

Another hypothesis in this study was to examine the variance in cognitive and somatic anxiety levels when strong basketball teams compete against weak teams versus other strong

teams. The results demonstrated a significant disparity in both cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between these scenarios. In a related investigation by Cano et al. (2010), cognitive and physical anxiety levels were evaluated during basketball competitions among 10 players from Spanish teams. The study revealed varying levels of cognitive and physical anxiety among players, alongside a positive correlation during competitive events (Cano et al., 2010).

In this study, another hypothesis explores the differences in self-confidence and anxiety levels between basketball teams playing against strong versus weak opponents. The findings indicate a significant disparity in self-confidence and anxiety levels between these team conditions. Smith's study also revealed gender differences in self-confidence levels among players, correlating with varying skill levels. Female players showed higher levels of anxiety but also increased self-confidence compared to their male counterparts, whose self-confidence levels decreased relative to perceived abilities and anxiety levels. These findings underscore the strong impact of situational factors on competitive dynamics (Smith et al., 2006).

Another hypothesis of the study investigates the levels of self-confidence and anxiety between basketball teams playing against strong opponents versus teams of similar strength. The results indicate that there is no significant difference in self-confidence and anxiety levels between teams playing against equally strong opponents. This aligns with Parfitt's findings using the CSAI-2 scale, which showed no difference in self-confidence among players. Winners displayed higher anxiety levels related to self-confidence, while losers experienced lower physiological effects and nervousness. These findings highlight the psychological impact of competitive sports on anxiety levels during competition (Parfitt & Pates, 1999).

The final hypothesis of the study examines the levels of self-confidence and anxiety across a series of three games where strong teams play against weak teams and against other strong teams in basketball. The results indicate a significant difference in self-confidence and anxiety levels across these game scenarios. Bernardo's study also revealed a negative relationship between anxiety and competition, highlighting higher anxiety levels during competitive matches. This study underscores differences in self-confidence and anxiety among players during games (Sonstroem & Bernardo, 1982).

Conclusion

This study revealed significant differences in cognitive anxiety levels between weak and strong teams. It also found significant differences in somatic anxiety levels between these team strengths. However, there were no significant differences in cognitive or somatic anxiety levels when strong teams competed against each other.

The study further demonstrated significant differences in both cognitive and somatic anxiety levels between strong teams playing against weak teams compared to strong teams playing against other strong teams. Overall, the research highlighted significant differences in cognitive and somatic anxiety across these different game scenarios.

Additionally, the study observed a significant difference in self-confidence and anxiety levels when strong teams played against weak teams. Conversely, no significant difference was found in self-confidence and anxiety levels when strong teams competed against other strong teams.

Finally, the study identified significant differences in self-confidence and anxiety levels across a series of three games where strong teams played against weak teams versus strong teams playing against other strong teams.

Suggestions

Further studies on the vision for life are necessary due to the theoretical and empirical limitations mentioned above. To address these limitations, we recommend additional research to overcome them. Here are our recommendations:

This study focused on the relationship between cognitive and somatic anxiety among selected basketball teams in the Iraq First Division Basketball League. We suggest further research to explore this relationship among teams in other sports such as volleyball.

The study exclusively involved male participants; we propose conducting a similar study with female athletes.

Additionally, there is a need for further research to compare self-confidence and anxiety levels among teams from different sports.

Statements And Declarations

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Competing Interests

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Author Contributions

The first and second authors contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, and study design. The third and fourth authors conducted the data collection and analysis, as well as drafted the original manuscript.

Ethics Approval

This study was conducted following the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethics approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Near East University (NEU/SS/2023/1572).

Consent to Participate

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, D.E., upon reasonable request.

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