

# Trait Anxiety among Perlis Silat Athletes During SUKMA Tournament

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## Abstract

This study was conducted to examine the effects of the level of concerns among Perlis Silat athletes before the Sukma competition. The study focuses on the level of anxiety among the Perlis Silat athlete before the Sukma tournament. This study found that Silat athletes showed the highest result of anxiety. Moreover, the main objective of this study is to determine the different levels of trait anxiety seven days before the game, one day before the match and 30 minutes before the game. This study is significant to martial arts athletes in addition to being a reference to Silat Association of Perlis and other sports agencies in Perlis. The researchers aim to examine the anxiety level among the athletes who participated in the Perlis Sukma competition. 17 Perlis martial arts athletes aged 18-21 were chosen as subjects. The SCAT (Sport Anxiety Test) questionnaire was used in this study. The subjects were given a questionnaire that was distributed seven days before a game, one day before the game, and 30 minutes before the game. The study found that the mean internal concerns seven days before a match was 2.60, the mean internal concerns for one day before the competition was 2.60 while 30 minutes before the game, the mean was 2.99. In this regard, the results of the present study show a higher level of competition concerns.

**Keywords:** Trait Anxiety, Martial Arts Athlete, Sukma, Silat.

## Introduction

Silat has been Malaysia for over 400 years old, and until now, the art of Silat is always passed on from one generation to another. Such effort is made to preserve the authenticity of the martial arts. The teaching of Silat is still active among Malay communities, especially in villages. As a martial art, its aesthetics and artistic aspects should be preserved, maintained and upheld in

the international level. Silat is accepted as one of the martial arts taught in schools through the launch of 1 Silat, 1 School by the Ministry of Education (MOE). In this light, the quality of Silat is further enhanced through martial arts competitions in schools. Silat is also one of the martial arts in the Sukma Games which is joined by both male and female athletes.

The sport has now been highlighted and acknowledged by the general public and becomes the pride of the Malaysian public. The Perlis Silat Association has produced several martial arts champions who have shown high quality performances. Silat is now taught in schools and has gained a place among both primary and secondary school students.

The purpose of this study is to make a comparison of the level of concern among Perlis martial arts athletes match held seven days, one day and 30 minutes before the game. The performance of Perlis Sukma Silat athletes are growing, however, some of the athletes targeted for gold medals did not reach the expected level. These athletes often show weak or their performance when they feel threatened and disturbed. Therefore, this study will examine the impact of the level of concern on the performance of Perlis Sukma Silat athletes.

### **Literature Research**

Depressed mood can cause high concerns as the athlete will lack focus and began to lose concentration. As a result, they are unable to perform as expected when they feel anxious, and uncomfortable. They start to lose concentration and the athletes play out of focus and have little control of their strategies.

As known, anxiety constitutes of an emotional state that is difficult to define and to detect in a person. It is a psychological phenomenon that was born in an individual at varying levels. In the context of sports , we can see a positive development in terms of the athlete performances or even in the development of the sport itself. In this regard, to achieve the expected goals is not as easy as we think as the athletes and coaches need to face various constrains and challenges achieve the success of team. They are constantly being plagued by the various problems that can affect their reputation and their commitment in realizing their dreams.

Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the anxiety level of Silat athletes participating in state level competitions. In this regard, psychological aspects are identified as an important contribution to the success of a martial arts athlete. Orlick (2000) advocated that psychological aspect plays an important role in improving athletes' performance and psychology is associated with improved performance in martial. This study was supported by Devonport (2006) who found the mental strength is important to martial arts athletes. Hence, mental strength will help athletes to achieve success in sports competition.

Over the past years, issues on anxiety and performance are among the topics of interest among athletes as they are constantly being surrounded by these issue before, during and after a match. (Hanizah & Gomez, 2003) and are prone to emotional distress when there is a competition looming. The athletes often feel depressed and anxious before a match and this further derails an athlete's performance. Previous studies have also shown that mental factors like anxiety can optimize an athlete's motivation to its best during the competition but at the same time, it can also cause them failure.

Past studies have identified various approaches in overcoming these issues. (Melati Sumari, Ida Means, Ahmad Tharbe, 2014) described that the theory of behavior is an effective approach that can be used effectively in reducing or eliminating the inconvenience caused by various problems. The theory can be adopted to help individuals to reach their top achievement, to enhance any spiritual and mental practices and keep them physically positive. Among these interventions, spiritual practises such as praying, meditating, visualisation and imagery, spiritual, focus, and bibliotherapy combined with the reading and practising religious scriptures could increase the level of awareness and of self-consciousness. As psychology and counseling are two areas that were born in the West, the separation between counseling with religion and spirituality is something that can be accepted. However, in the context of Malaysia, religious and spiritual aspects should both be given due attention. Cooperation between these two sides is necessary.

Islam provides many ways for people to find ways to solve a problem and find inner peace. In this regard, an individual's peace of mind is a priceless award from Allah SWT . Mohd Razali (2010) suggested that the remembrance of God is a way to find peace. The findings showed that various methods and strategies can be effectively adopted if the athletes themselves take positive actions to overcome anxiety in a productive way.

### **Research Objective**

1. To identify the level anxiety among Perlis SUKMA Silat athletes before the game.
2. To identify the level of anxiety Perlis Sukma Silat athletes seven days, one day and 30 minutes before the game.

### **Research Design**

The study adopts the quantitative research design. A total of 17 Silat male and female athletes representing the state of Perlis during the Malaysian Games sport tournament were selected to undergo this study through the purposive sampling technique. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling as they are deemed as able to answer the research objectives. The respondents were aged between 19 to 22. The questionnaires were designed to see the effect of the athletes' anxiety level before competing.

The questionnaire is divided into three parts, seven days before the contest, one day before the match and 30 minutes before the game. The researcher had listed some idea of feeling the athlete to identify the level of anxiety that will affect the athletes' confidence level. The samples consisted of subjects who either have a background in sports excellence, experience in participating in martial arts sports championships or junior tournaments or the beginners in the sports.

### **Research Instrument**

As a psychological research, the success of this study is closely related to the initial preparation. Instruments array was used to help researchers in the process of data collection. The SCAT

(Sport Anxiety Test) questionnaire is a typical questionnaire for detecting the level of internal anxiety among athletes and non-fiction researchers. The questionnaire contained 15 question related to sports performance. Each question contains a statement with three scales - never, sometimes and often. This instrument was used to gather information about the respondents' feelings before taking part in a competition.

The (Sport Competition Anxiety Test / SCAT) questionnaire was used by researchers to assess trait anxiety. The SCAT questionnaire was used during the pilot study which involved athletes participating in the SUKMA Championship. The results of the trait anxiety analyses can be viewed through the Table 1 below. The questionnaire was developed by Martens, Vealey & Burton (1990) and SCAT was adapted by Norsilawati (2010). The pilot study of the study used the SCAT questionnaire and obtained the validity of 0.95, and the reliability was 0.63. According to Ary, Jacobs & Razavi (2002), these values can be applied to the real study . The SCAT score was calculated by adding all scores of 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 15. Items 1, 4, 7, 10 and 13 were ignored because they did not measure the symptoms of anxiety, (Morrow, Jr., Jackson, AW, Disch, JG & mood, 2000), athletes show higher level of anxiety trait score before the contest.

### **Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed using the program Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0. Mohd Majid Konting (2006) posits that the analysis of statistical data using this software can produce accurate results. Descriptive statistics , such as mean and standard deviation were used to identify the level and position of dimension concerning the performance of Sukma Silat athletes based on the questionnaire. The study showed significant difference between the athletes' anxiety level before taking part in the competition. In this regard, compared to athletes in different types of sports, this study shows that martial art athletes have the highest level of anxiety compared to other sports . The study also aims to identify the level of concern among Perlis Sukma Silat athletes seven days, one day and 30 minutes before the game. The findings are presented in two parts: Part A: Part demographic and division: feelings of athletes before taking part in the competition.

### **Findings**

Table 1 presents an overview of the mean and the standard deviation obtained from Perlis martial art athletes. From this data, we can see that statement 2 resulted in highest value of Silat athletes (M=3.00, SD=.000), followed by statement 3 (M=2.56, SD=.511), statement 5 (M=2.89, SD=.323), statement 8 (M=2.78, SD=.647), statement 9 (M=.94, SD =.236), statement 12 and 14 (M=2.94, SD=.236) and statement of 15 (M=3.00, SD=.000). Further analysis showed that "I feel relaxed" (statement 6) obtained the lowest result compared to all sports occasion, while the Silat athletes score was significant with M=1.61, SD=.502 (Silat). The result indicates that the Silat athletes showed the highest level of anxiety level.

Table 1 shows the highest and the lowest scores obtained from Perlis martial art athletes. The statement shows anxiety level at 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14, 8, and 15. The statement 2 is the highest among martial art athletes, followed by statement 3 and statement 5. Statement 6 which related to feeling calm showed the lowest score for the Silat athletes. This shows that martial art athletes are less calm and showed a high level of anxiety

**Table 1**

The difference in mean and standard deviation the highest and the lowest for the Perlis martial art athletes

Items		High			
Low		Min	SD	Sports	Min
SD	Sports				
1. Competing against others is socially enjoyable .707	Karate	3.00	.000	Archery	1.50
2. Before I compete I feel uneasy .516	Taekwando	3.00	.000	Silat	1.47
3. Before I compete I worry about .000	Hockey	2.56	.511	Silat	3.00
not performing well					
4. I am a good sportsman when I compete .575	Silat	2.50	.707	Silat	1.72
5. When I compete, I worry about making .258	Taekwando	2.89	.323	Silat	1.07
mistake					
6. Before I compete I am calm .502	Silat	2.50	1.00	Sailing	1.61
7. Setting a goal is important when .577	Sailing	3.00	.000	Hockey	2.50
competing					
8. Before I compete I get a queasy .000	Karate	2.78	.647	Silat	1.00
feeling in my stomach					
9. Just before competing, I notice my .548	Badminton	2.94	.236	Silat	1.50
heart beats faster					
10. I like to compete in games that demands a lot of physical energy	Karate	2.67	.577	Hockey	2.00 .000
11. Before I compete I feel relaxed .758	Silat	3.00	.000	Karate	1.89

12. Before I compete I am nervous .548 Badminton	2.94	.236	Silat	1.50
13. Team sports are more exciting than Karate individual sports	2.50	.514	Silat	1.50 .707
14. I get nervous waiting to start the game .577 Hoki	2.94	.236	Silat	1.50
15. Before I compete I usually get .516 Badminton uptight	3.00	.000	Silat	1.67

The researcher also looked at the athletes' anxiety level 7 days, one day and 30 minutes before competition. The Inner anxiety Phase before Silat Match can be viewed in Table 2. The anxiety level before the athletes compete in the martial arts is reflected in the difference between the mean and standard deviation below:

**Table 2** Anxiety among Silat Athletes before the Competition

Before the Contest Period	Min	Std Standard Deviation (SD)
<b>7 Days</b>	2.60	.12
<b>1 day</b>	2.60	.12
<b>30 Minutes</b>	2.99	.03

### Conclusion and Discussion

This study found significant differences in the level of anxiety 7 days, 1 day, and 30 minutes before the competition. Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the martial arts athletes' concerns before competition. The study found that there is no different in the level of anxiety 7 days and 1 day before the competition, but there is a difference 30 minutes before the competition with the means (M = 2.60, SD = .12) to (M = 2.99, SD = .03).

The results show the higher the state of anxiety the closer to the competition. In this light, when they are in a competition, athletes experience either cognitive or somatic anxiety. This matter must be addressed immediately to ensure best performance among the athletes. This clearly shows that anxiety still exist in every competing athlete. Despite the limitations of the study regardless whether they have a background in martial arts and are experienced in joining sports competitions.

Anuar Din (2010) study on school athletes in Malaysia confirmed that maturity and confidence of an athlete can be improved through competition. It is necessary to face

competition with mental preparation and the athletes need to be prepared at various levels of competition so that they can have a positive mind before the match.

Therefore, it is apparent that the athletes' ability to address anxiety is significant in influencing the performance of the athletes (Ani Mazlina Dewi Mohamed, Mohamed Ruzli Mawarni, Zairazi and Mohd. Sofian Omar Fauzee, 2005). A further study carried out by Horn (2002) examined the 'intensity and Interpretation Anxiety on Performance Improvement and Decline through Competition' reflects the level of anxiety and self-confidence pre-game, during and after the match and the level of intensity and interpretation concern to success in a competition which followed. In this regard, it is necessary to study the issue anxiety the athletes before, during and after the match in order to get early exposure and prepare the athletes mentally to face anxiety in various stages of the competition.

This study does not only identified the anxiety of athletes before the game, but it also helps to equip the athletes with the steps that can be taken to motivate athletes in dealing with anxiety and physiological aspects .

One of the probable factors that cause athlete's level of anxiety is the attitude of the athletes themselves. In this light, if the athlete is able to control himself, then the level of concern can be reduced. Therefore, various ways can be done to complement the role of the coach in order to help athletes show optimum the performance in sports, particularly during the competition.

The analysis found that the athletes did not show any changes in the level of concern seven days and one day before the competition. These results show that in the early stages, it is likely for athletes to consider that when the competition is still far away, the athletes may not take the matter seriously. Moreover, the athletes have the ability to associate goals with self-motivation. However as an athlete, they also need to have the feeling of assurance and do not just rely on the quality of the show, and instead, demonstrate the spirit of sportsmanship.

Through this study, Perlis Silat athletes can learn how to effectively and efficiently address their concerns. The results of this study also help the athletes to make early preparations after identifying and facilitating a strategy to control their level of anxiety. Furthermore, in regard to the mental /psychological aspects, the athletes will indirectly know how to motivate themselves when fear occurs.

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