



The Relation Between Sports Performance Anxiety and Athletic Performance Within a Competition

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Introduction

Sports Performance Anxiety (SPA): Psychological response to pressure experienced before, during, or after an athletic competition.

- Can influence: concentration, confidence, physiological arousal, and perceived performance
- While anxiety is common among athletes the relation between anxiety and performance is complex and inconsistent

Methods

SAS-2

Pre-competition Survey

Post-competition Survey

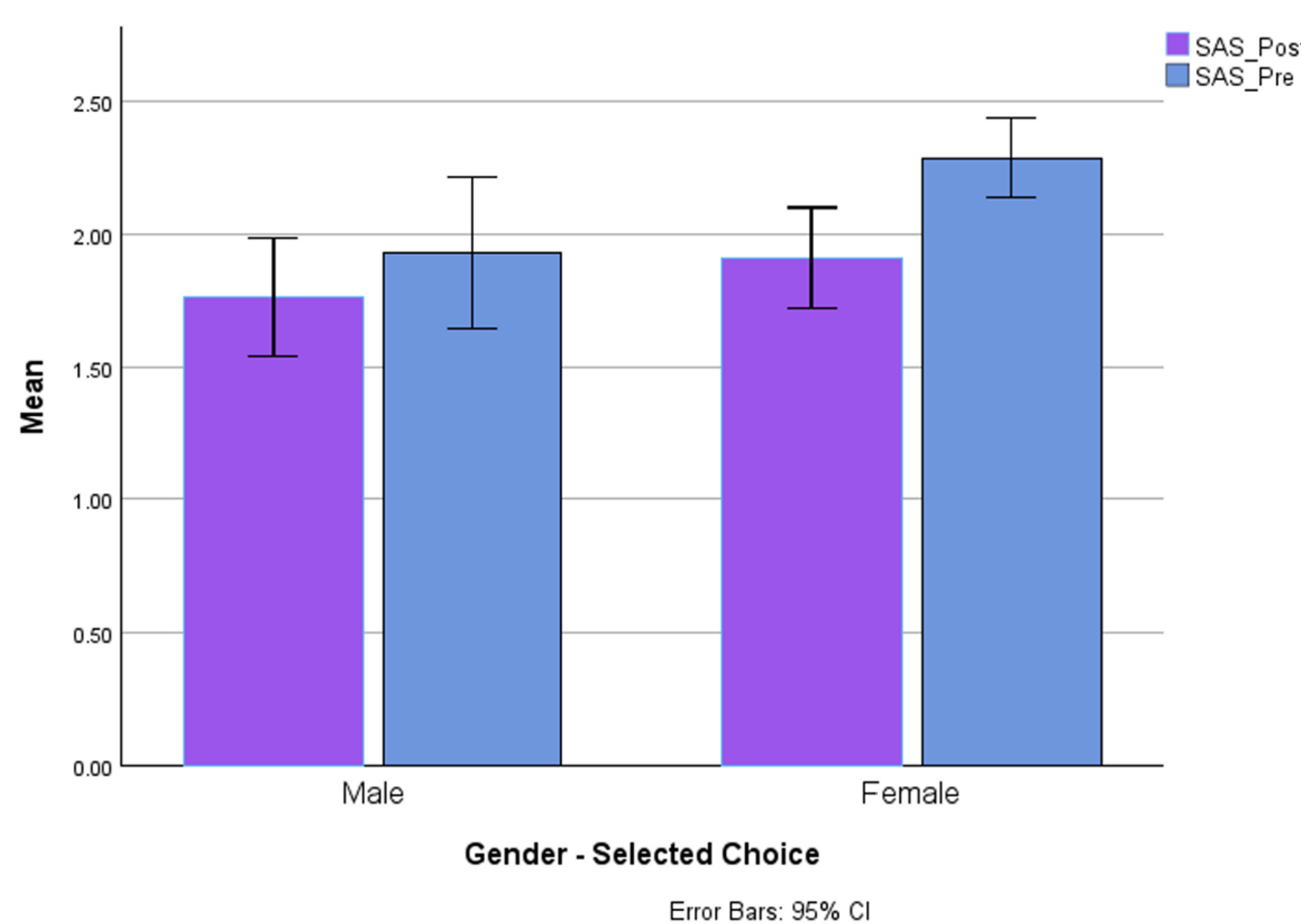
82 Participants (Pre)
 63 Participants (Post)

Between the ages of 18 and 23

College of Wooster Varsity Student Athletes

54 females
 28 males (Pre)

Bar Graph SAS-Pre by Gender Post and Pre



Hypotheses

H1: High levels of perceived sports performance anxiety prior to a competition is negatively related to athletes' reported performance during the game.

H2: More athletes will report that they will have more perceived sports performance anxiety before a competition in the place of competition as compared to before a competition outside the place of competition.

H3: Athletes that are underclassmen (first-years and sophomores) will report higher levels of anxiety compared to upperclassmen (juniors and seniors).

H4: Women will report higher levels of sports performance anxiety compared to men.

Results

Chi-Square Test Examining Reported Anxiety by Location

Location Response	<i>n</i>	%
In the place of competition	51	63.0
Outside the place of competition	11	13.6
Neither	8	9.9
Both	11	13.6

Note. $\chi^2(3) = 62.56, p < .001$

Independent Samples t-Test Comparing Pre-Competition Anxiety by Class Standing

Group	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Underclass students	34	2.14	0.66					
Upper-class students	44	2.25	0.45	-0.11	-0.84	55.08	.402	-0.20

Note: Unequal variances assumed

Discussion

- SPA is complex and multi-dimensional
- Anxiety does not always **negatively** impact perceived performance
- Situational context (place of competition) influences anxiety levels
- Gender differences suggest demographic factors play a role
- SPA may function as motivation not just impairment

Limitations

- Self-reported measures
 - Game outcome, emotions, injury
- Sample Size
- Sport Variability
 - Sport type
- Timing of the surveys
- Perceived performance rather than objective performance

Future Directions

- Include objective performance measures (stats, win/loss outcomes)
- Examine differences between team vs. individual sports
- Increase sample size
- Change the timing component
- Focus on a specific sport