**Abstract**

Anxiety is one of the most widespread mental health disorders worldwide. It is prevalent throughout the life cycle and appears in multiple contexts, such as sports. In line with the idea of sport as a means of promoting integral health, the Andalusian Olympic Foundation promotes Olympic values through the “Olympism in School” programme. This programme, developed in two phases – theoretical and practical (including a “Mini Olympics”) – aims to improve the psychological development of participants through sporting competition. In order to demonstrate whether the management of factors such as competitive anxiety was achieved through this programme, 153 children aged 10-13 completed a socio-demographic data questionnaire and the SAS-2 questionnaire after participating in sporting events. The results showed that the participants endured intermediate levels of competitive anxiety (with greater weight given to the worry factor) and that the anxiety was greater in children not used to competition or who did not usually enjoy it. These findings indicate that competition is a factor related to anxiety in children and that strategies for managing the impact of the competitive context are necessary to enable enjoyment and healthy participation.

**Keywords:** Competition, Physical Education, Somatic Anxiety, Worry, Distraction

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**Introduction**

**Olympism in School**

There is some interest in Olympic education in the scientific literature, and a number of authors have conducted studies on the topic. For Brownlee (2000), Olympic education is an integrative concept in which the values of Olympism (e.g. tolerance, individual development, respect, cultural and personal identity, etc.) are combined with the philosophy of the Olympic movement. An important aspect would be to differentiate between Olympism and Olympic values, which, due to their particular idiosyncrasy, are closely related (Olympic Charter, 2020). Based on the Olympic Charter (2020), Olympism can be understood as a movement in which sport is associated with culture and education and, based on essential values, promotes a lifestyle associated with effort, setting a good example, social responsibility and respect for the fundamental ethical principles. However, Olympic education cannot be reduced to academic knowledge alone, but goes beyond that (Peneva, 2009). For other authors, this construct is complex, with great possibilities and great ignorance on the part of the educational community (González-Mármol et al., 2015; Hood and Kirkpatrick, 2010; Molina, 2011).
As stated in the Olympic Charter (2020), the values of Olympism must be transmitted, so various organisations are responsible for this function. At the national level, the Spanish Olympic Committee is in charge of these functions. As stated in the Olympic Charter (2020), National Committees must promote the principles and values of Olympism in their respective countries, supporting Olym-

pic education programmes at all levels of primary and secondary education. At the regional level, Andalusia has the Andalusian Olympic Foundation, which, as stated in Article 5 of Chapter I of its Statutes, is responsible for “de-

veloping and promoting the Movement in Andalu-

sia under the principles of the Olympic Charter, uniting
culture, education and sport, seeking the integral develop-

ment of society and contributing to a better and more peaceful world” (Andalusian Olympic Foundation, 2022).

From the Andalusian Olympic Foundation, Olympic education has been integrated into schools through its Olympism in the School programme (Áravolo and Sotoca, 2014; Andalusian Olympic Foundation, 2022). Specifically, its programme aims to introduce students from schools (state, subsidised and/or private) into the world of Olym-

pism through the celebration of an Olympic Week at their own schools, where participants must apply the Olympic values of team performance, justice, self-realisation, respect for opponents, etc., as well as compliance with rules and achievement of collective and personal goals (Andalu-

sian Olympic Foundation, 2022). As already explained by Áravolo and Sotoca (2014), the programme itself has two phases: the first is more theoretical and involves analysis and development of materials provided by the Andalusian Olympic Foundation; all schools that wish to participate do so. In the second phase, with a practical orientation, schools send a dossier reporting all activities at their centre to promote Olympic education and a video recording of the different activities implemented and de-

velopment of Olympism in the school. After receiving all materials, the Andalusian Olympic Foundation evaluates what was received and selects 14 schools from different Andalusian localities to participate in a “Mini Olympics”. This competition takes place over seven days, during which the selected schools participate in a multi-sport competition (mini-tennis, mini-basketball, wrestling, rowing ergometer, boccia, tag rugby and track-and-field). All sports modalities are counted to generate a general classification after the last test. Schools must select a team from their schools (10–12 individuals), who may belong to any cycle of primary edu-

cation. As stated by the Andalusian Olympic Foundation (2022), a total of 235 Andalusian schools participated in its 2021 edition, with more than 55,000 students; only 14 schools were excluded. It is a consolidated programme with great potential for action.

Olympic sport and Olympism have competition as their central component. However, competition cannot always be associated with positive values or adaptation; it can be detrimental to participants when not designed well or adjusted to the ages and characteristics of the target population. These characteristics include a higher risk of injuries, frustration, and competitive anxiety.

### Competitive Anxiety

There are an increasing number of mental health prob-

lems in the world, with anxiety being one of the most prominent (Eime et al., 2013; Nixdorf et al., 2016; Phuhar et al., 2019). As various authors have pointed out (Glover and Mesh, 2010; Grossbard et al., 2009), competition is an en-

demic illness, with prevalence data ranging from 5–10%
in children and up to 25% in adolescents. In this context, physical activity has been shown to be a useful tool in the prevention and management of anxiety disorders (Eime et al., 2013; Nixdorf et al., 2016). However, sports practice can also have an impact on the development of psycho-

logical disorders in childhood and adolescence, such as eating disorders (Díaz-Ceballos, 2005; Pustivšek et al., 2020; Gang and Fritsch, 2018) or anorexia nervosa (Pérez-Cáceres et al., 2021; Ramis et al., 2015). Gender (Grossbard et al., 2009; Parnabas, 2015; Pulido et al., 2019), and type of activity practiced (Bohórquez and Checa, 2017; Núñez et al., 2020; Ramis et al., 2013), as well as other variables such as com-

petitive level, group cohesion, and resilience (Arnau et al., 2018; Bohórquez and Checa, 2017; Pérez-Cáceres et al., 2021; Pulido et al., 2019; Ramis et al., 2015). Similarly, the scientific community has also taken account of the influence of sports and competitive practice of relatives, and athletes’
taste experiences and their perception of anxiety with competitive anxiety (Bohórquez and Checa, 2017).

Thus, the importance of competitive anxiety for chil-

dren has examined, leading to an increase in the number of studies linked to this theme (Arnau et al., 2018; Bohórquez and Checa, 2017; Bois et al., 2009; Borges et al., 2020; García-Mas et al., 2011; Grossbard et al., 2007; Grossbard et al., 2009; Pérez-Cáceres et al., 2021; Phuhar et al., 2019; Ramis et al., 2013). High levels of competitive anxiety are presented as a predictor of abandoning sports practice and are associated with low performance and less enjoyment (Gould et al., 1985; Scanlan et al., 2005; Smith and Smoll, 1991). Furthermore, competitive anxiety can act as a block to or debilitating element in performance, acting at a motor, physiological and cognitive level, with the latter being associated with concern for performance (Borges et al., 2020; Ponseti et al., 2016).

The higher values of competitive anxiety found in male athletes are linked to a higher level of demand and, as a consequence, a higher level of performance (Borges et al., 2020), which may be linked to greater experience at competitive levels. Phuhar et al. (2019) indicate that young athletes in individual sports activities demonstrate higher levels of anxiety and depression than those in collective sports. In the case of family sports practice, Bohórquez and Checa (2017) indicates that it does not reduce the competitive anxiety of minors, although it could be linked to family expectations and their sports practice. However, minors’ sports practice depends on the support provided by parents, which may be linked to their own sports prac-

tice (Arnau et al., 2019; Smoll and Micallef, 1999). This in turn indicated that family practices at the level of support-under-

standing or pressure would influence subjects’ anxiety.

While the relationship between competitive sports practice and experiential anxiety in childhood and ado-

lescence has been studied, there is currently no informa-
tion available about the relationship between competitive sports practice in school sports and competitive anxiety. Thus, it is necessary to explore the influence that this competitive practice may have on participants’ competitive anxiety depending on the influence of family members’ sports practice (mother, father and siblings), family members’ competitive habits (mother, father, and siblings), and the affinity with competitive contexts and the competitive experience of young athletes.

### Research Problem

As Gómez-Márquez et al. (2019) point out, there are few studies in Spain that address Olympism from an educational perspective. There is a need to study the role that the influence of this type of action on the subjects involved would be key in developing effective programmes that do not negatively affect their participants. In accordance with this aim, Áravolo and Sotoca (2014) focused on an-

alyzing teachers’ perceptions about their minors’ sports practice in school programmes, but attending to the perceptions of teachers and focusing closely on the more theoretical and con-

ceptual part of the programme. However, there is a lack research related to the practical part of this programme and its relationship to the anxiety it may perceive in the Mini Olympics competition; as represen-
tatives of their schools, they could feel a responsibility and expectations that are far removed from the principal aim of this type of programme.

After participating in the organisation of some of the tests of the Mini Olympics in Andalusia, the first author of this paper was able to verify first-hand that participants (often novices in competition) showed signs of nervous-

ness and frustration, which gave the event a character far from the educational perspective. Therefore, focusing on the in-

formation available about the relationship between competitive sports practice and the development of anxiety in young athletes is necessary.
and a need to determine whether the programme itself was moving away from its primary sense or whether it required some type of modification. It was also evident that there is controversy regarding the experience/demand of competitive activities and the action of family sports practices in relation to competitive anxiety perceived by children. This subject requires greater in-depth analysis, and this paper can help shed light on these aspects.

Research Objectives and Hypotheses

After reflecting on all of the reasons above, the main objective of this work is to determine the influence of the Mini Olympics phase of the Olympism in School programme of the Andalusian Olympic Foundation on competitive anxiety as perceived by participants. The previous main objective suggests two specific objectives:

- Detect competitive anxiety among Mini Olympics participants based on family sports practice and attendance at competitions (father, mother or siblings).
- Detect competitive anxiety among Mini Olympics participants based on their taste and competitive experience.

Based on the stated objectives, the following research hypotheses are formulated:

H1: Mini Olympics participants will perceive intermediate levels of competitive anxiety.
H2: Those participants in the Mini Olympics whose parents play sports will perceive more competitive anxiety than those whose relatives are not involved in sports.
H3: Those participants in the Mini Olympics whose parents compete will perceive more competitive anxiety than those whose relatives are not involved in competitive activity.
H4: Those participants in the Mini Olympics who do not like to compete will perceive more competitive anxiety than those who declare the aim to enjoy competitive activity.
H5: Those participants in the Mini Olympics without previous competitive experience will perceive more competitive anxiety than those who have competed before.

Methodology

Participants

This study involves students selected for the Mini Olympics phase of the Olympism in School programme of the Andalusian Olympic Foundation. Following the rules of this competition, 14 schools participate with a representation of 10–12 subjects per school, so the total sample universe is 140–168 subjects. The sample selection was carried out through a non-probabilistic convenience sampling, and a total sample of 153 subjects (91.07% of the sample universe) was collected. Concerning the age of the subjects, the rules indicate that students from any cycle of primary education can participate. However, on this occasion, the schools selected only students from grades 5 and 6 (10–12 years old) (Table 1). More specific data can also be found in Table 1 in relation to the competitive practice of participants’ relatives, as well as in relation to previously exposed data. Data collection was carried out during the 2021 edition of the Andalusian Olympic Foundation’s Mini Olympics (2021).

Instruments

For the evaluation of the main study variables, a structured questionnaire battery was constructed composed of different scales. Specifically, we used:

- Sociodemographic data questionnaire: To obtain sociodemographic data from participants in this study, an ad hoc questionnaire was designed that included questions related to sex, age, habitual sports practice, sport practised, competitive experience (external to educational centre and in Physical Education classes) and family sports practice (father, mother or siblings).
- SAS-2 Competitive Anxiety Questionnaire (Ramis et al., 2010). This questionnaire is used to evaluate athletes’ competitive anxiety. It is composed of 15 items divided into three dimensions: somatic anxiety, worry and distraction. A four-point Likert scale is used, where 1 means ‘nothing’ and 4 a ‘lot’. The values of each dimension are obtained by adding the scores obtained in the different items that make up each dimension, leading to total obtain values between 5 and 20. Obtaining low/high values in the sums of each dimension means that there is low/high somatic anxiety, worry and/or distraction. This questionnaire is validated and has demonstrated its reliability in the field of sports through the works of several authors (Bohórquez and Checa, 2017; Ramis et al., 2010).

Data Analysis

The current study followed a descriptive survey model, which is a quantitative research method. After the data were collected, the databases were cleaned up and the data were dumped into SPSS (IBM, 2017), relevant information regarding the sociodemographic data was obtained through frequency analysis. Likewise, through a descriptive analysis of three variables that make up competitive anxiety (somatic anxiety, worry and distraction), values were determined in relation to the competitive anxiety levels of Mini Olympics participants. Subsequently, normality tests were carried out to determine the distribution of the sample, and a non-normal distribution was obtained. Therefore, we opted for non-parametric mean comparison analysis for independent groups U of Mann-Whitney to determine influence of family sports practice (mother, father and siblings), competitive habits relatives (mother, father and siblings), taste for competition and competitive experience of participants on competitive anxiety levels (somatic anxiety worry distraction) of participants using a significance level of p < .05.

Results

Competitive anxiety levels represent average values of around 10.80 points out of 20. If we attend to the three variables that make up the competitive anxiety construct, worry represents the highest values M = 13.87 SD ± 3.82, followed by somatic anxiety M = 10.17 SD ± 3.84, and lastly distraction M = 8.35 SD ± 2.70. Table 2 presents descriptive statistics obtained from Mini Olympics participants in this study.

In this way, it can be asserted that participants in the Mini Olympics manifest a medium level of competitive anxiety, with high values of participants’ worry and representing statistically significant values in terms of competitive experience and its direct impact on participants’ distraction.
Regarding somatic anxiety (Table 3), the highest values are manifested in participants who do not like to compete (M = 12.95; SD ± 4.71). On the other hand, distraction represents the highest values in subjects without competitive experience (M = 8.99; SD ± 2.82) and the lowest in those who do have it (M = 7.82; SD ± 2.49).

In order to determine the influence of family sports practice (mother, father and siblings), competitive experience (mother, father and siblings), taste for competition (mother, father and siblings), taste for competition (mother, father and siblings), and competitive experience, Mann-Whitney U mean contrast tests for independent groups were used (Table 3). The results indicate that sports practice, relatives’ competitive habits and taste for competition did not influence any of the three components of competitive anxiety. However, mother’s sports practice (U = 2408, p = .071) and taste for competition (U = 951.50, p = .074) represented results close to significance, so they should be taken into account in relation to their influence on somatic anxiety and, therefore, on competitive anxiety. Nevertheless, previous competitive experience of Mini Olympics participants did generate statistically significant differences in terms of distraction (U = 2806.50, p = .004), without affecting somatic anxiety or worry; specifically, those participants with previous competitive experience had less distraction than those without competition experience.

Table 2. Competitive anxiety levels of Mini Olympics participants’ tennis modality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mín.</th>
<th>Máx.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skewness Value</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Kurtosis Value</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before or while I play or compete...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I feel my body is tense</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I feel a knot in my stomach</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I feel my muscles trembling</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I have an upset stomach</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I feel my muscle tension because I’m nervous</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>10.17</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I’m worried about not playing or competing well</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-1.22</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I’m worried about disappointing others (teammates, coaches, parents, etc.)</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I’m worried about not competing or playing as well as I can</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-1.13</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I’m worried about competing or playing badly</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-1.31</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I’m worried about screwing up during the game or competition</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>13.87</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
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<td>... I have trouble concentrating on the game or competition</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I have trouble focusing on what I’m supposed to do</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distraction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I lose concentration in the game or competition</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I can’t think clearly during the game or competition</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... I have trouble concentrating on what my coach has asked me to do</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>8.35</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N, Sample; Mín., Minimum; Máx., Maximum; M, Mean; SD, Standard Deviation; SE, Standard Error.

Table 3. Influence of family sports practice, relatives’ competitive habits, competitive experience and taste for competition of participants’ children's competitive anxiety (somatic anxiety, worry and distraction).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>DT</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>DT</th>
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<th>U</th>
<th>p</th>
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<td>Do your relatives play sports? (Mother)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9.51</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>2408</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>13.51</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>2656</td>
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<td>14.17</td>
<td>3.81</td>
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<td>2.88</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do your relatives play sports? (Father)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>2650</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td>13.51</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do your relatives play sports? (Siblings)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>2485</td>
<td>0.878</td>
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<td>2.53</td>
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<td>Do your relatives compete? (Mother)</td>
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<td>2.83</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>0.528</td>
<td>13.57</td>
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<td>Do your relatives compete? (Siblings)</td>
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<td>Do you usually compete?</td>
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<td>2821</td>
<td>0.875</td>
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<td>3.85</td>
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Note: M, Mean; SD, Standard Deviation; U, Mann-Whitney U; p, significance.
their family (mother, father and siblings) (Hypothesis 3), and taste for competition (Hypothesis 4). The results obtained in this study indicate that the null hypotheses must be maintained in both cases and, therefore, we must reject Hypotheses 3, 4 and 5. In none of the three cases were statistically significant differences obtained in any of the four components of competitive anxiety (somatic anxiety, worry and distraction). The results are corroborated by those revealed in the literature and that are in the same line of enquiry (Bohórquez and Checa, 2017, although Bois et al. (2009) indicated that the presence of parents during competition was understood as a factor eliciting anxiety. Likewise, parental support can be linked to sports practice and/or their competitive experience, which could cause a perception of negative parental support (competitive anxiety in childhood) and/or positive (positive emotions in competition/training) (Atkins et al., 2015; Bohórquez and Checa, 2017; Hellstedt, 1990). However, although the results have not shown statistically significant differences, mothers’ sports practice (U = 2408, p = .071) and taste for competition (U = 951.50, p = .074) represented values close to significance in the somatic anxiety component. Linking this with all previous research, sports practice should continue to be encouraged among the population and, in this case, that of women should be promoted, as it has shown in the competitive anxiety of their children.

In addition, these results indicate that schools should perhaps attend to criteria linked to taste for competition in their selection of athletes in order to avoid exposure to anxiety and/or to create programmes/projects that provide tools for its control and for promoting mental habits in the student population. Finally, Hypothesis 5 indicated that there would be differences in competitive anxiety of participants based on their previous competitive experience. The results obtained showed that there were statistically significant differences in terms of distraction based on previous competitive experience, without obtaining significant values on somatic anxiety or worry. Therefore, this hypothesis 5 will only be accepted for the distraction component. However, as has been extensively shown throughout this work, competitive anxiety is composed of three components, so it would be inappropriate to extrapolate these results to the whole construct. In this way, the results are in line with those found by various authors (Arnan et al., 2018; Jones, 1995; Pozo, 2007), who indicated that experience in competition did not affect competitive anxiety, being influenced by acquired competitive level and interpretation thereof. However, Núñez et al. (2020) found that it is possible that years of experience influence the perception of anxiety and performance. Nonetheless, other authors indicated in previous studies on adults that greater competitive experience would influence competitive anxiety values by reducing them (Hammermeister and Burton, 1995; Mellalieu et al., 2004). As Borges et al. (2020) have shown, early experiences in competition are of vital importance, as they could define ways of coping with competitive stress and condition its interpretation and motivation towards competition.

Conclusions

The analysis of competitive anxiety perceptions of Mini Olympics participants has shown that they perceive the components of competitive anxiety (with greater weight given to the worry factor), and that this was greater in children who were not used to competition or who did not usually enjoy it.

Family sports and competitive practice, as well as taste for competition, do not influence competitive anxiety of Mini Olympics participants, although mother’s sports practice and taste for competition are very close to being determinant. As for competitive experience, the values obtained in terms of distraction give evidence in favor of this hypothesis. However, it is therefore very important that the organisers of Mini Olympics take into account the profile of participants and the possible psychological burden that could be induced in them, and that mental health levels could be counter-productive to their participation. In addition, it is of vital importance to develop intervention programmes on competitive anxiety of participants, so that they are prepared for their participation and enjoyment.

Limitations and Future Lines of Research

Although this work is not without its limitations, they can be considered to the extent that there were statistically significant differences in terms of distraction based on previous competitive experience, without obtaining significant values on somatic anxiety or worry. Therefore, this hypothesis 5 will only be accepted for the distraction component. However, as has been extensively shown throughout this work, competitive anxiety is composed of three components, so it would be inappropriate to extrapolate these results to the whole construct. In this way, the results are in line with those found by various authors (Arnan et al., 2018; Jones, 1995; Pozo, 2007), who indicated that experience in competition did not affect competitive anxiety, being influenced by acquired competitive level and interpretation thereof. However, Núñez et al. (2020) found that it is possible that years of experience influence the perception of anxiety and performance. Nonetheless, other authors indicated in previous studies on adults that greater competitive experience would influence competitive anxiety values by reducing them (Hammermeister and Burton, 1995; Mellalieu et al., 2004). As Borges et al. (2020) have shown, early experiences in competition are of vital importance, as they could define ways of coping with competitive stress and condition its interpretation and motivation towards competition. Therefore, it is very important that the organisers of Mini Olympics take into account the profile of participants and the possible psychological burden that could be induced in them, and that mental health levels could be counter-productive to their participation. In addition, it is of vital importance to develop intervention programmes on competitive anxiety of participants, so that they are prepared for their participation and enjoyment.

and because Mini Olympics consist of both individual and collective sports, the results of this work cannot be understood as definitive and should not be generalised.

In future works, a broader study should be developed in which the competitive anxiety of Mini Olympics participants is analysed in different tests and thus be able to carry out a deeper and more exhaustive analysis.

Finally, as a future line of work, the need for the development of an intervention programme for control and training on competitive anxiety in Mini Olympics participants is evident. It has been shown that many participants have never participated in competitive activities before the development of the Mini Olympics, so representing their educational centre and their lack of competitive experience could entail great anxiety for them. Therefore, implementing an intervention programme on competitive anxiety could give benefits on competitive anxiety shown by participants.

Acknowledgments

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