



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF WILL TO WIN AND AGGRESSION AMONG WRESTLERS AND BOXERS

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ABSTRACT

The current research study was aimed at investigating and comparing the intensity of Will to Win and Aggression in wrestlers and boxers. The research was carried out on a sample of 60 male sportspeople including 30 wrestlers and 30 boxers with age range being 18 to 28 years and had participated in All India University and National level events. The aggression and will to win in the selected athletes were measured using standardized questionnaires. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation and independent sample t -test at the level of significance of 0.05. The findings showed that the wrestlers compared to boxers showed a much higher rate of Will to Win, which showed that they were more motivated and were very determined to win. Conversely, boxers were much more aggressive compared to wrestlers, and this goes to show that boxing is a combat sport that requires a high level of aggression and offense. The results can be taught to indicate that psychological aspects, including will to win and aggression, are highly dependent on the needs of various combat sports. The paper highlights the significance of sport-specific psychological training interventions in order to improve performance as well as to ensure that athletes control their emotions and behaviour.

Keywords

Will to Win, Aggression, Wrestlers, Boxers, Combat Sports, Sports Psychology



INTRODUCTION

The field of combat sports, especially wrestling and boxing, offers a special environment, where one can study such psychological qualities like Will to Win and Aggression. Although these two sports demand high levels of physical dexterity and mental toughness, the psychological profiles of the sportsmen could differ greatly depending on the sports, the training strategies and the conditions of the competitions.

The Will to Win incorporates the motivation, the inner drive of an athlete and willingness to win in a competition. This character is very essential to the athletes since it helps them to stay focused, never give up, and perform when under pressure. The studies reveal that, in combat sports, high motivation is associated with better results in performance (Basiaga-Pasternak et al., 2017) (Barreira et al., 2025). Resilience was also demonstrated to play a major role in preventing and recovering injuries in a study focusing on martial artists, which indicated that having a strong Will to Win may help an athlete to overcome failures and keep struggling to achieve success (Patenteu et al., 2024). More so, the degree of competitiveness in wrestling and boxing highlights the role of motivation in developing performance improvement and emotional stability (Barley and Harms 2021; Barreira et al. 2025).

Sports aggression may be constructive and destructive. When athletes can regulate their aggression, they are able to utilize it to enhance performance and develop more intensity and competitiveness (Kusnierz and Bartik, 2014; Adithiya et al., 2022). Aggression, which is a prominent aspect of combat sports, may, however, when used advantageously, result in winning games, as well as improving decisiveness and assertiveness demanded in the field (Barczak et al., 2020). But undisciplined aggression may lead to punishment or injuries, which is a significant balance that athletes should find (Patenteu et al., 2023; Adithiya et al., 2022). Research shows that as much as aggression is good, there are certain details of differences in the ways it is exhibited among various combat sports. As an example, boxers can be more verbally and physically violent, which is commonly viewed as a requirement of their competitive spirit (Adithiya et al., 2022; Seidenbecher et al., 2023). Wrestlers, in their turn, can be more controlled in displaying aggression due to the methodical and grappling-focused character of the sport (Sharma and Purashwani, 2021;



Barreira et al., 2025). Interpersonal aspect of aggression according to the recent literature implies that wrestlers involve aggression to have tactical benefits without losing control so that they can implement sophisticated maneuvers (Patenteu et al., 2023; Barczak et al., 2020).

Although wrestlers and boxers are both combat athletes, the training and rules they use are not similar, and it can be the case they have undergone differently, which might affect the evolution of the psychological characteristics of Will to Win and Aggression. Wrestling has also focused on the methodology that involves balance and body control and strategy, which may develop a more rational and calm use of aggression (Patenteu et al., 2023; Barley and Harms, 2021). Boxing, conversely, requires fast reactions, speed, and hitting power, which tend to cause a more aggressive attitude of mind (Kusnierz & Bartik, 2014; Dincer et al., 2022). Such a shift in focus can have an impact on the experience and the manifestation of aggression by each group of athletes, which, in turn, can affect their psychological strength and the result of performance (Patenteu et al., 2024; Adithiya et al., 2022).

It has been concluded that involvement in combat sports can result in diverse degrees of aggression in contrast to the non-training counterparts. As an example, it has been shown that participation in combat sports like boxing can make people more aggressive, whereas grappling sports can be used to subdue aggressive behavior (Kusnierz and Bartik, 2014; Adithiya et al., 2022). This also highlights the effects of the psychological and training conditions on the aggressive behaviors of athletes.

The psychological aspects of the Will to Win and Aggression in wrestling and boxing are very important to the coaches, trainers, and sports psychologists. Practitioners can use the effects of these variables in different sports to develop training interventions aimed at increasing emotional control and resilience and improving performance. The adoption of measures that will help instill a healthy competitive spirit and the practice of controlled aggression could lead to better performance of athletes in the competition environment as well as personal growth. Growing psychological resilience and physical abilities in programs can produce more than just athletes, though they perform very well in their individual fields; they can also actively contribute to their sports communities (Lane, 2025; Kotarska et al., 2019).



Comparison of Will to win and Aggression of wrestlers and boxers reflects a lot in the way these two psychological variables present vary with the type of sport. Although there are some similarities in terms of the level of competition, these two different environments that wrestling and boxing exist in largely influence the psychology aspect of the participants. The knowledge of these factors can contribute to better coaching practices, training programs and eventually athletic performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current research used a descriptive comparative study design to determine the differences in Will to Win and Aggression in Wrestlers and Boxers. The study was cross-sectional because the data were obtained at one time of the subjects.

Selection of Subjects

Study sample included 60 combat sport male athletes (30 wrestlers and 30 boxers) aged 18-28 years old. The sample size was selected among various university and training centres in sports and had participated in the intercollegiate and national level competition. The purposive sampling method was used due to the need to make sure that all participants had proper competitive experience.

Variables of the Study

a) **Independent Variable:**

Type of Sport (Wrestling and Boxing)

b) **Dependent Variables:**

- i. Will to Win
- ii. Aggression

Tools Used

The following standardized tools were used to collect the data:

1. Will to Win was assessed by using the standardized questionnaire of Prof. Anand Kumar.
2. Mental toughness was measured by using the standardized questionnaire Sheard, Golby & Van Wersch (2009).

PROCEDURE

Before commencing the data collection, the necessary authorities were contacted and informed consent was obtained by all the participants. The participants were well informed of the goals of the study. Individual administration of questionnaires was done under the supervision of the investigator to guarantee the correctness of the responses. Sufficient instructions were given to the participants and their confidentiality guaranteed. The questionnaires were given enough time to complete.

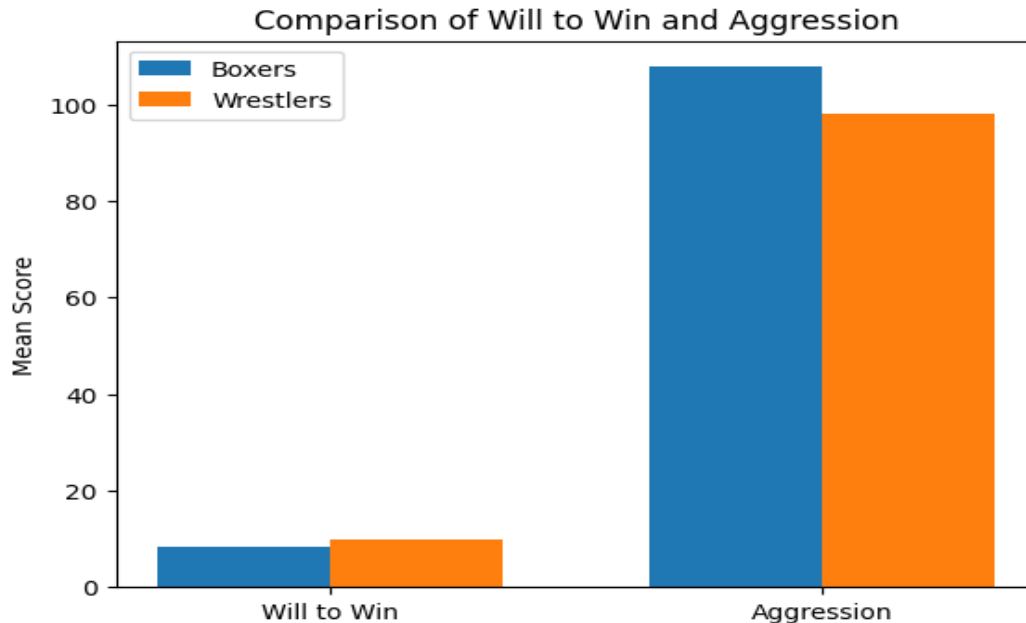
RESULTS

Table 1: Comparison of Will to Win and Aggression between Boxers and Wrestlers

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Significance
Will to Win	Boxers	30	8.40	1.16	-5.84	Significant at 0.05
	Wrestlers		10.03	1		
Aggression	Boxers	30	107.77	8.17	5.68	Significant at 0.05
	Wrestlers		97.97	4.75		

To determine statistically significant differences between boxing and wrestling participants in terms of the construct of will-to win and aggression, Table 1 shows that there are statistically significant differences between the independent variables of boxing and wrestling. The average will-to-win score among wrestlers ($M = 10.03$) was much larger than among boxers ($M = 8.40$), and the t-statistic (-5.84) was significantly large at the 0.05 level. Boxers, in contrast, were more aggressive ($M = 107.77$) compared to wrestlers ($M = 97.97$) with t-value of (5.68), and it was also statistically significant. Thus, the null hypotheses of will-to-win and aggression were dismissed.

Figure 1: Comparison of Will to Win and Aggression between Boxers and Wrestlers



DISCUSSION

The research into psychological traits among athletes demonstrates that there is a complicated interaction that depends on the nature of the sport that the athletes are engaged in. Specifically, the dramatic contrasts between wrestling and boxing offer a good idea of the impact that sport-specific requirements have on psychological characteristics like persistence and aggression. The sign of high scores on the will-to-win scale that was reported among wrestlers may be explained by the fact that the field is individualistic. Wrestling is a sport that requires a lot of individual investment, and the success of such competitions relies on the persistence and hard work of each competitor as well as the ability to control their opponent physically. This type of individual focus will create a high level of motivation in wrestlers since they have to always motivate themselves in the sometimes tedious and distressing duration of matches. According to Armendariz et al., the overall psychological pressure that athletes experience when playing an individual sport, such as wrestling, makes it necessary to constantly develop the ability to endure and the ability to become mentally tough (Armendariz et al., 2023).



Additionally, psychological training has become one of the key factors in the improvement of the performance of wrestlers. Danko et al. state that introducing mental skills and strategies into training programs has a substantial positive impact on the performance of athletes due to the strengthening of their mental resilience (Dadelo et al., 2018). This drive continues to be a vital element in case of contests, where emotional and physical discomfort may cause fatigue and a decrease in the performance when it is not adequately addressed. The studies conducted by Gierczuk et al. also confirm this claim, with response time and mental preparedness revealed as key performance indicators that are necessary to win in wrestling scenarios (Gierczuk et al., 2024).

Boxing on the other hand offers a very stark contrast in terms of psychological terrain that is full of aggression. The very essence of boxing as to striking, power, and speediness of offensive attacks promotes aggressive thinking in the athletes. This violence is critical in the attainment of dominance and the acquisition of points in fights. According to Julio and Franchini, the performance in boxing is strongly dependent on the capacity to promptly and efficiently use aggression (Julio & Franchini, 2021). The violence that is competition sport is controlled and besides intensifying the competition, it also affects psychological readiness, leading to another form of mental training other than in wrestling.

Studies show that aggression in boxing is not only a behavior, but also a psychological tool that one must possess to be successful. The historical context of boxing as pointed out by Telles and Machado accentuates the role of aggression and dominance in defining the psyche of the athlete regarding competition (Telles and Machado, 2022). This need is exhibited in an increased level of aggression, which makes boxers attune their levels of aggression in addition to their technical abilities. The developed culture of restrained violence is a massive mental distinction factor between wrestlers and boxers.

The difference in the psychological peculiarities of wrestlers and boxers helps to support the idea that the requirements of each sport result in different impacts on the psychological peculiarities of the athletes. Although wrestlers tend to show persistence that is based on personal tenacity, boxers tend to show more aggression that goes in line with the aspect of offensive aggression that their

sport requires them to apply. This idea is supported by research by Barley and Harms, where it is shown that competitive history and training habits are affected by the psychological demands, linked with various forms of combat sports (Barley and Harms, 2021). The concept of sport-specific psychology implies that special training programs must consider such natural differences. There are better ways to prepare athletes in the special psychological factors they will face in a competition by devising the mental conditioning techniques that will be used in wrestling and boxing to match the unique demands of the two sports. Therefore, both the psychologists and coaches should take these differences into account when developing a training program that will maximize the performance of the athletes depending on their specialization.

CONCLUSION

The researchers find that wrestlers have a better desire to win whereas boxers are more aggressive. Both psychological features seem to be influenced by the peculiarities of technical and competitive requirements of the corresponding sport. The coaches and sport psychologists need to integrate sport specific psychological training in order to improve performance without dispensing emotional balance.

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