

## **Psychological Evaluation of Sensation Seeking and Anxiety State among Body Builders and Weight Lifters**

Syed. Tariq Murtaza

Department of Physical Health and Sports Education,  
Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 202002, (U.P.), India.

E-mail: [abunaraashans@yahoo.co.in](mailto:abunaraashans@yahoo.co.in)

Ikram Hussain

Department of Physical Health and Sports Education,  
Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 202002, (U.P.), India.  
E-mail: [ikram.husain@gmail.com](mailto:ikram.husain@gmail.com)

Mohd. Imran

Corresponding Author

Department of Physical Health and Sports Education,  
Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 202002, (U.P.), India.  
E-mail: [imranphe09@yahoo.co.in](mailto:imranphe09@yahoo.co.in)

Mohd. Arshad Bari

Department of Physical Health and Sports Education,  
Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 202002, (U.P.), India.  
E-mail: [sbiomech90@gmail.com](mailto:sbiomech90@gmail.com)

Farkhunda Jabin

Department of Hifzane Sehat Wa, Samaji Tibb, Faculty of Unani Medicine,  
Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 202002, (U.P.), India.  
E-mail: [far.khun.da@hotmail.com](mailto:far.khun.da@hotmail.com)

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of the present study was to compare the sensation seeking on Body Builders and Weight Lifters. The total hundred (50 body builders and 50 weight lifters) male All-India intervarsity players were selected for this study. The age of the subjects were ranged between 18 to 25 years. The data on sensation seeking and anxiety state of the subjects were obtained by using a questionnaire developed by Neary and Zuckerman (1976). The t test was used to determine the difference between the mean score of the body builders and weight lifters. Results revealed that there was a significant difference between body builders and weight lifters at 0.05 level of significance with 98 degree of freedom. Study showed that body builders have higher level of sensation seeking and anxiety state as compared to weight lifters.*

**Key Words:** Body Builders, Weight Lifters, Sensation Seeking, Anxiety State.

## **1. Introduction:**

Sensation seeking is a much interesting personality trait that has its effect on several aspects of our lives. It affects what activities we prefer, what sports or occupations we choose. Personality traits are underlying characteristics of an individual that are relatively stable over time, and explain regularities in people's behaviors. When thinking about people we know well, we will naturally have noticed how we differ, and our everyday language is full of ways of describing and comparing people. People may be outgoing or unsociable, shy or confident, friendly or rude, and so on. People instinctively observe that persons react differently to the same situations, and these differences are caused by natural variations in personality traits. Sensation seeking has been identified as a human trait defined by the seeking of varied, novel, complex, and intense sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take physical, social, legal, and financial risks for the sake of such an experience (Zuckerman, 1994). There are differences between sensation seekers and sensation avoiders, not only in genetic and biological characteristics, but also in their habits, preferences, emotional, experiences, cognitive style, and personality (Zuckerman & Kuhlman, 2001). Many studies involving sensation seeking have been conducted across a variety of anti-social risk-taking behaviours, such as drug use and unsafe sexual practices, as well as more socially acceptable forms of risk-taking behaviours (Zerevski et al., 1998) such as engaging in extreme sports (Donohew, Zimmerman Cupp, Novak, Colon & Abell, 2000; Kerr, 1991; Zuckerman, 1994). The sensation-seeking scale (Zuckerman, 1978; 1994) was initially developed in the late 1960's to help researchers identify the sensation-seeking personality type of trait.

Sensation seeking is conceptualized as the need for individuals to reach and maintain an optimal level of arousal. Sensation seekers seen characterized by a chronic under activation, and sight stimulations to increase their level of arousal to a point that is hedonically positive for them (Eysenck & Zuckerman, 1978). Some studies have shown that sensation seeking was a significant determinant of the choice of risky activities (Zalesky, 1984; Zuckerman, 1983) and of the adoption dangerous behaviours in these activities (Connolly, 1981; Rossi & Cereatti, 1992).

Performing to the best of abilities has become more relevant in today's sports, because of the extensive media exposure and monumental monetary gains. Sports are at the peak of their popularity throughout the world, cutting across the barriers of richness or poverty, nationality, race or religion. In order to sustain the tremendous expectation of the fans and also to maintain a high ranking in the international arena, it is important to perform well. Self confidence, strong resolves, humility to except defeat and experience are the best tools to counter the effects of anxiety. Anxiety is not a disease that a sports person can get rid of once and for all. It has to be used as a booster to improve performance, to achieve sporting glory. Anxiety is a complex mental state made up by many components. Everyone experiences some sort of anxiety but many people rarely think about it to the extent to which an athlete would. The ability to cope with it is essential for performance. The major problem in competition is letting your mind work against you rather than for you. One must accept anxiety symptoms as part and parcel of the competition experience; only then will anxiety begin to facilitate your performance. Sport competitions create some anxiety in nearly all participants, and for some individuals the anxiety is so intense that successful performance and enjoyment of the activity is impossible. To an extent, all human behaviour is influenced by anxiety. Anxiety is a fundamental human emotion that evolved over countless generations as an adaptive mechanism for coping with change (Spielberger, 1989). Due to the uncertain nature of sports, each sportsperson must learn to cope with anxiety associated with competition. An individual's performance is directly affected by the perception of his/her capabilities to meet the situational demands (Spielberger, 1977).

## **2. Methodology:**

### **2.1 Subjects**

A total of hundred (50 Body Builders and 50 Weight Lifters) male All-India intervarsity level players were randomly selected for this study. The age of the selected subjects were ranged between 18 to 25 years.

### **2.2 Instruments**

Investigators used the Sensation Seeking and Anxiety State Test (SSAST) developed by Neary and Zuckerman(1976) to obtain data on Sensation Seeking and Anxiety State of the subjects.

### 2.3 Procedure

The data were collected from the various university players who participated in All India Inter-University Weight Lifting, Power Lifting and Best Physique Championship. Investigators used the Sensation Seeking and Anxiety State Test developed by Neary and Zuckerman (1976). The tool consists of 36 statements in which 15 items were regarding Sensation Seeking (SS), and 15 items were for Anxiety State (A). The remaining six items were the items from the anxiety scale that did not meet the factor analysis criteria. The scoring varies from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much) for each item (range=15 to 75). The item no. 5, 9, 14, and 25 are scoring reversed, i. e. 1 (very much) to 5 (not at all). They have shown high internal consistency and low retest reliabilities of the SSAST (Sensation Seeking and Anxiety State Test). It is a Likert type 5 points scale and its reliability is reported to be 0.93.

### 2.4 Statistical Analysis

The t test was used to determine the differences between the means of Body Builders and Weight Lifters scores. Further the level of significance was set at 0.05 level.

## 3. Results

**Table 1: Indicating mean differences between Body Builders and Weight Lifters on their sensation seeking.**

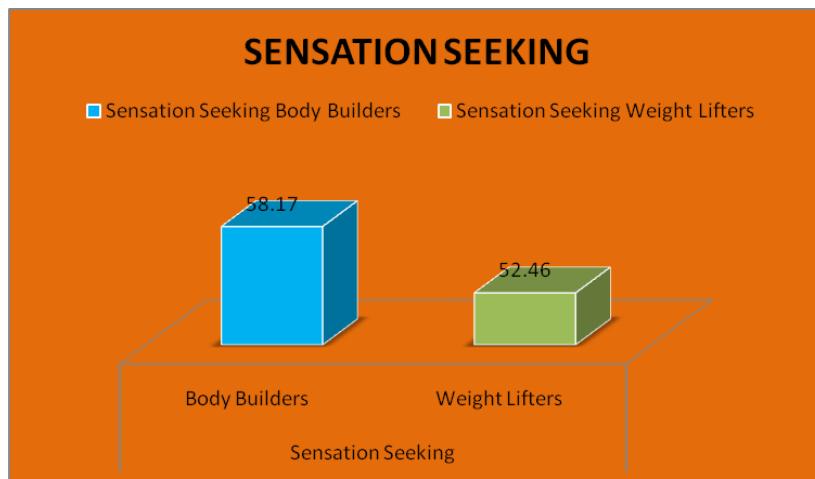
	Mean	SD	Cal. T
Body Builders	58.17	7.53	3.53*
Weight Lifters	52.46	5.76	

\*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Tab t = 1.980

When we go through table 1: it is documented that calculated t was higher than tabulated t which indicated that significant difference between body builders and weight lifters in their sensation seeking at 0.05 level of significance with 98 degree of freedom.

**Figure 1: Showing graphical representation of mean difference between Body Builders and Weight Lifters.**



**Table 2: Indicating mean differences between Body Builders and Weight Lifters on their anxiety state.**

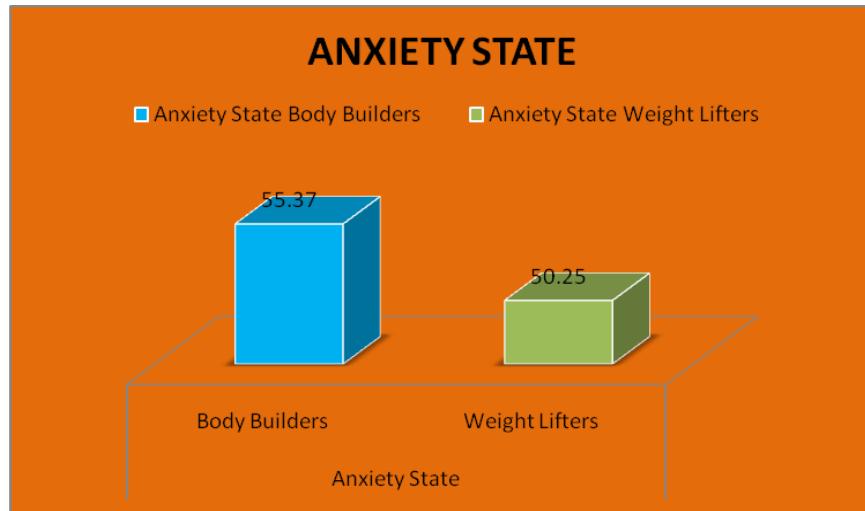
	Mean	SD	Cal. T
Body builders	55.37	4.93	3.07*
Weight Lifters	50.25	6.79	

\*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Tab t = 1.980

It is clearly documented in table 2 that calculated t was higher than tabulated t which indicated that significant difference exists between body builders and weight lifters in their Anxiety State at 0.05 level of significance with 98 degree of freedom.

**Figure 2: Showing graphical representation of mean difference between Body Builders and Weight Lifters.**



#### **4. Discussion:**

The result of the study showed that there was a significant mean difference between body builders and weight lifters in their sensation seeking. Body builders were found to have more sensation seeking trait in comparison to weight lifters because they do not visualize the level of competition in their sports. They can only 'see through' their competitors but cannot scale the amount of musculature required for overcoming the opponents. This is consistent with (Marvin 1995) which quantitatively examined the sensation seeking of amateur body builders.

The result of the study revealed that anxiety state of body builders and weight lifters was found significant mean difference. This finding also corroborates the preceding findings of sensation seeking level of bodybuilders. Cause for this finding also comes from the fact that there is more ambiguity in the sports of body building as compared to weight lifting.

Future research should examine differences between competitive and non-competitive bodybuilders, and weight-lifters on various psychological profiles.

#### **5. Conclusion**

On the basis of obtained results it is concluded that there was a statistical significant difference between body builders and weight lifters in their sensation seeking and anxiety state.

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