

## Abstract

It is proposed in this study, to investigate gender differences in the experience of state anxiety in competitive sport, among Hong Kong elite athletes. An interactional model of affective experience in sport, derived from social cognitive theory and grounded in a feminist cultural studies approach, was tested. The objective of the study was two-fold: 1. to establish the need for a feminist analysis of gender issues in elite sport and 2. to test the ability of the proposed model provide an analysis of anxiety experience in competitive sport which accepts as a basic premise that gender differences are not just categorical issues to be explained in terms of biological factors or socialization (Hall, 1993). Thus this research endeavoured to look at gender differences in competitive sport anxiety from a relational point of view.

In general it was found that the interactional model of anxiety experiences in sport could account for differences in the anxiety experience of male and female athletes in Hong Kong.

On a descriptive level, pathways to effective coaching social support were observed to be more strongly or easily predicted when the context was that of male elite athletes and male coaches rather than when the context is that of female athletes and male coaches.