

A Study on Psychological Characteristics of Elite Women Cricket Players

Manoj Kumar Pandey

Associate Professor, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Pg College, Mughal Sarai Chandauli India

Abstract

The objective of the study was to study the psychological characteristics of elite women cricket players of India. For study a total of 50 elite level national women cricket players were selected as the subjects. The age of the subject was ranged between 19 to 28 years. For the study the questionnaires used was mental toughness developed by Dr. Alan Goldberg assesses complete mental toughness of the players, self-confidence developed by Robin S. Vealy assesses complete self-confidence of the players, aggression inventory developed by Anand Kumar and P.S. Shukla assesses complete aggression of the players. In order to describe the psychological characteristics of elite player's descriptive statistics was applied.

Introduction

Cricket is a unique team sport, but two differences stick out. One is the sheer length of the game. Cricket demands concentration over enormous periods of time-you have to maintain attention, to be ready to react in a fraction of a second, to the situations that might come once in 2 or 3 hours. Secondly to impose yourself on a game of cricket-especially 3 and 5 day cricket-requires every ounce of your effort over that entire period.

Cricket is a game steeped in tradition and its innate conservatism has hindered the investigation into the key factors that differentiate elite performance at the highest level. Many coaches and players recognize the importance of mental factors in sports performance. Consequently, many individual athletes and sports teams have employed a sport psychologist to help ensure that they perform to the best of their ability.

Sports psychology is a science in which the principles of psychology are applied in a sport or exercise setting. These principles are often applied to enhance performance and to understand how participation in sport, exercise, and physical activity affects psychological development, health, and well. The main role of sports psychologists is to provide information and help the athletes cope with the effects of sports by offering techniques and strategies to increase concentration, confidence, consistency, control and motivation. Sports psychology can help the athletes to cope with the pressures of sports by helping individual athletes to learn different coping skills and stress management skills.

Mental training or sports psychology is no substitute for skills and it is vital to emphasize the importance of skills, particularly while coaching. The journey of competition is a tough road. It makes one confront their past and think about the future. Being in all stages of life "Sports psychology is the study of a person's behavior in sport" Alderman. Self-confidence is an important antecedent to good performance. It tends to act as a self-fulfilling prophecy. If one does not believe in his ability to perform well of the probability that he probably will fall short of his goal, whereas if one thinks one can do well, he is more likely to come through. Sports provide an outlet for the suppressed internal feelings of a person; it is like a safety valve it is like a safety valve to "blow off the steam". Nervous, tired and frustrated persons can take sports as a tonic.

Sports can be utilized for the students to dissociate them from the monotony of books and the pressure of studies. Psychology is a behavioral science has made its contribution for improving the sports performance. It has developed coaches to coach more effectively and athletes to perform more proficiently. This psychological aspect of sports in gaining much attention among sports administrators.

Sports and games play an important role in the development of human personality. Physical Education and sports is one of the most important for the development of personality. "Sound mind in sound body" both are co-related if you are physical fit, you are mental health fit. He or she would know on how to be emotionally balanced.

Methodology

For study a total of 50 elite level national women cricket players were selected as the subjects. The age of the subject was ranged between 19 to 28 years. For the study the questionnaires used was mental toughness developed by Dr. Alan Goldberg assesses complete mental toughness of the players, self-confidence developed by Robin S. Vealy assesses complete self-confidence of the players, aggression inventory developed by Anand Kumar and P.S. Shukla assesses complete aggression of the players. In order to describe the psychological characteristics of elite player's descriptive statistics was applied.

Findings and Results

Table – 1

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Elite Women Cricket Players on Four Psychological Variables (N=50)

S. No.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Aggression	12.56	2.68
2.	Personality	5.25	1.22
3.	Self Confidence	74.96	10.95
4.	Mental Toughness	34.94	7.04
(A)	Handling Pressure	10.52	3.10
(B)	Concentration	9.14	2.81
(C)	Mental Rebound	8.50	2.31
(D)	Winning Attitude	6.78	1.36

Table-2

Descriptive Statistics of Aggression of Elite Women Cricket Players

Variable	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Aggression	50	11.00	7.00	18.00	12.56	2.68

Table-2 indicates that the mean score of elite women cricket players in relation to aggression was 12.56 and standard deviation was 2.68. Therefore the hypothesis that aggression of elite women cricket player has high level is rejected. Elite level players have low level of aggression in comparison to the players of different levels. Sometimes they believe in aggressive playing depending upon the situation of the game. There are certain circumstances in the game of cricket which makes a player aggressive but in case of the elite level players it was found that they have low level of aggression.

Table-3
Descriptive Statistics of Mental Toughness and its sub factor of Elite Women Cricket Players

Variable	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Handling Pressure	50	13.00	5.00	18.00	10.52	3.10
Concentration	50	12.00	4.00	16.00	9.14	2.81
Mental Rebounding	50	9.00	4.00	13.00	8.50	2.31
Winning Attitude	50	6.00	3.00	9.00	6.78	1.36
Mental Toughness	50	31.00	24.00	55.00	34.94	7.04

Table-3 indicates that the mean score of elite women cricket players in relation to mental toughness was 34.94, which falls within the class interval below 40 and it is characterized by the need mental toughness exercise. Elite level players required counseling and various mental toughness exercises with the help of different yogic techniques and meditation techniques.

When all the variables were studied separately it was found that the mean scores for handling pressure, mental rebounding, concentration, winning attitude are 10.52 ± 3.10 , 9.14 ± 2.81 , 8.50 ± 2.31 and 6.78 ± 1.36 respectively. This indicates that elite women cricket player are having below average and need mental toughness exercise on almost all the variables of mental toughness. Therefore the hypothesis that mental toughness and its sub factor of elite women cricket player have high level of mental toughness is rejected.

Table-4
Descriptive Statistics of Self Confidence of Elite Women Cricket Players

S. No.	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	50	8.00	1.00	9.00	5.40	1.78
2	50	7.00	1.00	8.00	5.30	1.70
3	50	7.00	1.00	8.00	5.34	1.79
4	50	8.00	1.00	9.00	5.40	1.89
5	50	6.00	3.00	9.00	5.96	1.59
6	50	8.00	1.00	9.00	5.54	1.50
7	50	7.00	2.00	9.00	5.90	1.73
8	50	8.00	1.00	9.00	6.14	2.00
9	50	6.00	3.00	9.00	5.82	1.29
10	50	7.00	1.00	8.00	5.96	1.50
11	50	6.00	2.00	8.00	6.02	1.69
12	50	7.00	2.00	9.00	6.16	1.61
13	50	8.00	1.00	9.00	6.02	1.86

Table-4 reveals that the descriptive analysis of Self Confidence mean values were 5.40, 5.30, 5.34, 5.40, 5.96, 5.54, 5.90, 6.14, 5.82, 5.96, 6.02, 6.16, and 6.02 respectively and std. deviation 1.78, 1.70, 1.79, 1.89, 1.59, 1.50, 1.73, 2.00, 1.29, 1.50, 1.69, 1.61 and 1.86.

Discussion of Findings

The objective of the study was to analyze the psychological characteristics of Elite Women Players of India. The subjects for the study were 50 elite women's cricket players of National level. The questionnaires used to assess was Self-

Confidence developed by Robin S. Vealy, Mental Toughness developed by Dr. Alan Goldberg and Aggression developed by Anand Kumar and P.S. Shukla.

Elite level players have low level of aggression in comparison to the players of different levels. Sometimes they believe in aggressive playing depending upon the situation of the game. There are certain circumstances in the game of cricket which makes a player aggressive but in case of the elite level players it was found that they have low level of aggression. As the level of aggression was found low in elite level players the performance of the player increases.

In relation to mental toughness the elite women players need mental toughness exercise. They required counseling and various mental toughness exercises with the help of different yogic techniques and meditation techniques. With the help of all these techniques there may be increase in handling pressure situations, mental rebounding, winning attitude and overall mental toughness.

In self-confidence elite women cricket players were having moderate self-confidence. This was due to how self-confident you are when you compete in sport. Ability to execute the skills, critical decisions during competition, ability to perform under pressure situations etc. are found at moderate level in relation to elite players.

Conclusions

- Elite level players have low level of aggression in comparison to the players of different levels.
- Elite women cricket player are having below average and need mental toughness exercise on almost all the variables of mental toughness.
- Elite level players have good level of confidence in comparison to the players of different levels.

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