

Role of Concentration on Player's Performance: A Study on Cricket Players in India

Anjan Kumar Khuntia
Ph.D Research Scholar
Utkal University

Abstract: In recent decades coaches, Sports persons and Trainers emphasised the psychological variables due to their significant impact on the Player's performance. It directly or indirectly affects players' performance in every type of game. Many works of literature provide a significant relationship between psychological variables and Players' performance. Therefore, the Researcher tries to find out the most important psychological variable that significantly impacts players' performance. For this study, the researcher selects seven important psychological variables: Will Power, Aggression, Concentration, Anticipation, Anxiety, Intelligence, and Motivation. The researcher found that Concentration is the most important variable and provides a hierarchical structure for Psychological variables. This study strongly emphasised that players need to Concentrate on their games more than anything else, and this variable helps them to perform well in each game. This Hierarchy can be used as a guide or manual for training players.

Keywords: Psychological Variables, Cricket, Concentration, Player & Performance.

Date of Submission: 02-12-2022

Date of Acceptance: 14-12-2022

I. Introduction

The healthy mind in a healthy body philosophy dates back to ancient human civilisation. However, in recent years, sports psychology has become recognised and acknowledged as a significant component of sports performance (Bull, 1993). In the last two decades, sports psychology has advanced tremendously. The first study in Sports Psychology was conducted at the end of the nineteenth century. Normal Triplett is widely credited with leading the first social and sports psychology experiments. Triplett researched the phenomenon of social facilitation. He showed that cyclists tended to go faster when racing against another cyclist than when riding alone. In every sport, psychological factors play a significant role in the Player's performance. The present study attempts to identify the key psychological factors responsible for high-level performance in the game of cricket. Undoubtedly, psychology plays a vital role in cricket (Villuela, R. 2020). Cricket requires many unique psychological challenges and opportunities during competition. Hence it is becoming increasingly imperative to pick up those psychological characteristics. The present study is a modest attempt to look at these psychological characteristics.

Sports help individuals with personal and group adjustments, which are part of socialisation. Traditionally sports have been conceived as a physical endeavour. However, as scientists began to explore this area, it became known as psycho-social activity and not merely physical. In other words, it is the interplay of aptitude, training and other things like physiological or physical, anthropo-metrical and psychological, which considerably the top performance. Analysing the highest achievers in any sport shows that excellence combines physical, psychological and sociological features. The study of psychology in sports enhances the success rate among players, and it has become a necessity for sports training and coaching institutions. It also deals with players' behaviour and performance by applying basic psychological learning principles during sports events. It helps Sports persons maximise their output through various skill development training in general & Cricketers to cope with internal and external pressures.

In sports, psychological factors are important since strong mental players can perform better. Psychological variables are well-known to be important in sports activities and performance. It investigates how psychological factors influence performance and how sports and exercise change mental and physical traits. Psychology is the science of sports that seeks to understand the mental factors that affect performance in sports, physical activity, and exercise and apply them to improve the performance of individuals and teams. It provides instruction and training in psychological skills to improve performance (Tomar & Dhuna, 2018). Motivation, Willpower, Intelligence, Concentration, Anticipation, Anxiety, and Aggression are the psychological characteristics that influence sports performance and personality.

Sports psychology studies how a player's psyche affects their performance in their chosen sport. Various concepts such as how players prefer to learn, what their personality is, how they can achieve states of relaxation and concentration (narrow and broad focus), how players know to visualise a successful performance, do they understand and overcome their limiting beliefs, and how do players develop high levels of self-awareness are all covered by sports psychology principles (Joseph, 2022). A sports psychologist's value as a member of the coaching and health-care teams is well acknowledged. These abilities were thought to be genetically based or acquired early in life. It is now widely understood that players and coaches are capable of learning a wide range of psychological abilities that can help them learn and perform better.

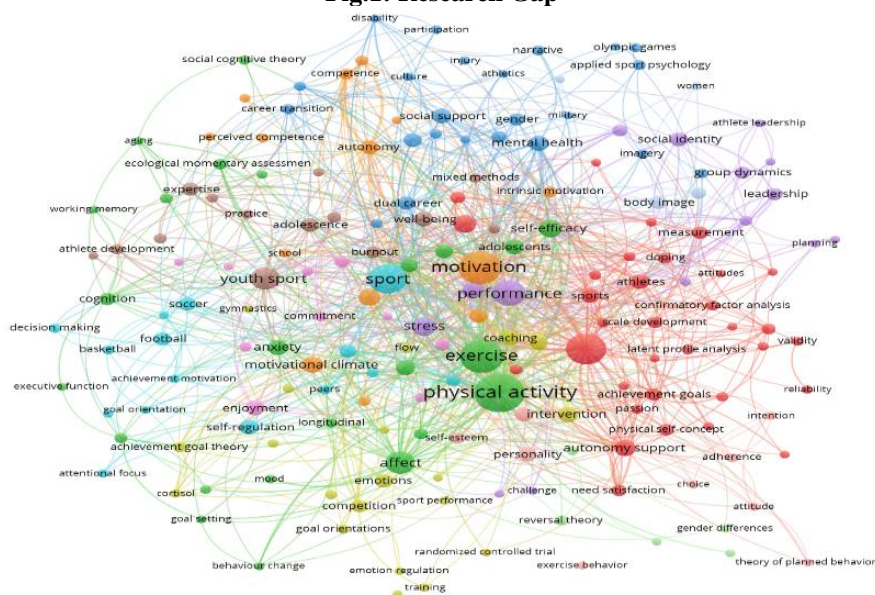
A player should be alert and concentrate more on his game during sports. He has to be physically and emotionally stable before any game. Someone has rightly said that "A race is won in mind" first, then psychical performance counts.

II. Review of Literature

Ghildiyal R. (2015), in his article "Role of Sports in the Development of an Individual and Role of Psychology in Sports", argued that Sports help an individual substantially more than in the actual perspectives alone. It constructs character, instructs, and creates vital reasoning, logical reasoning, administrative abilities, objective setting, and hazard taking. This article discussed the importance of several psychological aspects: positive attitude, respect for the opponent, killer instinct, never giving up perspective, fear of losing the will, stress, and positive body language. **Jooste J. & et al. (2014)**, in their article "The relationship between psychology skills and specialised role in cricket", argued that mental skills or psychological aspects are an integral part of sports. This study evaluated the relationship between the role of cricket players and the psychological skills of 127 national players of South Africa. This study classified four cricket players: Wicketkeeper, Batsman, All-rounder, and Bowler. They mentioned that all-rounders have more skill than bowlers and batsmen and the psychological aspect helped them to perform their unique role in the team game. The after-effects of the investigation ought to be deciphered carefully as the discoveries demonstrated insignificantly critical contrasts. The aggregate outcomes uncovered a fractional connection between mental ability scores and concentrated parts in cricket. Henceforth, considering the inclinations, it might be assumed that all-rounder cricketers are more mentally talented than those only arranged as bowlers or batsmen.

In their article, **Monsma, E & et al. (2017)** argued that Concentration is the key to developing skills in sports. They claimed that sports performance depends on mental preparedness rather than physical. The impact of Concentration is very dynamic in the sports environment, and it presents careful reflection. In their article, **Chaturvedi, S. & Mehta D. (2015)** discussed mental imagery and concentration training for the elimination of Anxiety and building positive self-confidence among female cricket players. The researcher stepped through the pre-exam by utilising the standard survey. For the measurable understanding of the gathered information t-test was utilised independently among the factors and every one of the three levels. The outcomes show that Mental Imagery and Concentration Training helps improve fearlessness and influences the degree of mindset among female cricket players.

Fig.1: Research Gap



Source: Research Gap through VOS viewer

Many works are available on the psychological aspect, but many pieces of literature are available on the concentration role in the Player's performance. Here a gap is created between a player's performance and psychological factors, which try to fill by the researcher.

This chapter provides a brief overview of the research methods used in this study. This chapter focuses on the research strategy and methodologies used in the research and the overall flow of the research project. This section of the research design and approach explains how the study's research outcome corresponded to the study's purpose. As a result, it encompasses the study's research technique, from the research strategy to the presentation of the results.

Design of the Study

The researcher used this design to describe the current study's psychological perceptions of cricket players and coaches. The present study is an honest attempt to look at "the perception of players and coaches towards psychological factors responsible for high-level performance in the game of Cricket". While it is clear from different important studies that psychological factors play a prominent role in enhancing players' performance, the perception of these players and coaches towards these key psychological factors has rarely been scrutinised. The central question of this study is to find out how Concentration is related to the Player's performance.

The current study includes 150 respondents (50 coaches and 100 players). In this study, the Systematic Random Sampling approach was utilised to collect data from recognised Cricket Players and Coaches from five zones: North Zone, South Zone, East Zone, West Zone, and Central Zone.

III. Discussion

Concentration is the capacity of an individual to focus their attention in a linear way for a goal (Sarah M, 2016). Concentration is selective attention that allows us to process the information we are interested in while disregarding the rest of the external stimuli or circumstances. Concentration is crucial in sports, and a lack of it in anybody who participates in one can result in many errors. As a result, lack of Concentration is regarded as one of the most severe deportation issues. Although motivation and activation can allow players to maintain adequate Concentration and hence good performance, technical professionals in the sports world have established that the participation of sports psychologists can assist sportsmen in avoiding errors due to a lack of Concentration. In cricket or any game, Concentration is significant. It helps cricketers to improve themselves.

The Importance of Psychological Features in Sports

1. Increasing Performance Capacity: performance capacity refers to a role in improving strength, speed, and flexibility, among other things.
2. Learning Motor Skills: Learning motor skills depends on a person's psychological preparation, which includes gaining the necessary strength, flexibility, and endurance, as well as providing effective ways to deal with various situations.
3. It recognises athletes' personality traits, instincts, hobbies, attitudes toward physical exercise, and personality attributes.
4. Managing Feelings: Anger, contempt, fear, negative thinking, and a sense of ownership are all emotions that must be addressed and avoided under stress.
5. Mental Preparation for Contests: Mental preparation for competitions has become increasingly important. Psychological growth develops a desire to win and a positive attitude toward failure.
6. Role in Sportspersons' Emotional Difficulties: Stress, tension, and Anxiety are frequent emotional problems in Cricket Players, and relaxation and stress management strategies can help for better performance.
7. Psychological factors aided in reducing stress, which had a detrimental impact on Players' performance.

A Physical, Mental or Emotional Pressure that disrupts the body's balance is classified as stress. It is a regular aspect of existence: we would most likely be "bored to death without it". Stress is unavoidable in life and sports, and all performers, artists, and players work under varying amounts of stress. The word can refer to any type of strain imposed by one's career, schoolwork, marriage, illness or the death of a loved one. Change is the unifying denominator in all of these. Any change is perceived as a threat when familiarity is lost.

To check whether Concentration is an essential factor among psychological factors, researchers interviewed 150 respondents, as mentioned in the methodology section.

Fig.2: Respondent Profile

Coach or Player		Education Level	
Category	Response in Percentage	Category	Response in Percentage
Coach	33%	Upper Primary	3%
Player	67%	Intermediate	11%
		Graduation	59%
		Master Degree	28%
Types of Coach		What level you have played	
Category	Response in Percentage	Category	Response in Percentage
NIS Coach	24%	Under-23	17%
BCCI Level Coach	76%	Senior National	73%
		Vizzy Trophy	8%
Gender		International	3%
Category	Response in Percentage		
Male	80%	Bowler, Batsman or All-Rounder	
Female	20%	Category	Response in Percentage
		Bowler	13%
Age Group		Batsman	63%
Category	Response in Percentage	All-Rounder	25%
21-30 Years	51%		
31-40 Years	13%		
41-50 years	22%		
51-60 Years	13%		

Source: Primary Study

Fig. 2 represent that the researcher interviewed 50 coaches and 100 players for the study. Most respondents are graduates, while 1/4th are completed master's degrees. Among the coaches, 3/4th is BCCI level coach, and the rest are NIS level coaches. The majority of the respondents are male, and only 20% of the respondents are female. Most of the respondents played senior-level tournaments while under 23 levels followed senior level and 1/2nd are belongs to 21-30 year age group, while 22% are 41-50 year age group, only 13% of respondent belongs to both 31-40years age group and 51-60 years age group. As per the researcher's study, he takes 7 types of psychological factors as independent variables. Here these factors and interpretations are discussed in detail with the help of a Table and Figures.

Table No.1: How much psychological factors influence

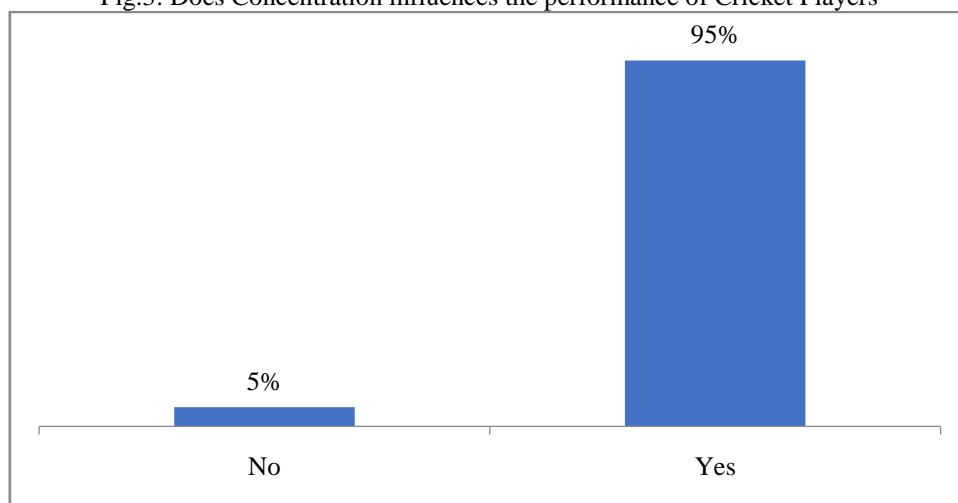
Category	Response in Percentage
Medium	21%
High	45%
Very High	34%

Source: Primary Study

n=150

Table 1 shows that 21% of the players stated that psychological factor influence is medium. In comparison, 45% of the players said that psychological factor influences are strong, and only 34% stated that psychological factor influences are powerful.

Fig.3: Does Concentration influences the performance of Cricket Players



Source: Primary Study n=150

Fig.3 states that out of all respondents, only 5% of respondents are likely to be said that Concentration does not influence the performance of cricket players. For the rest of all, which was almost 95% of the respondent, it is likely to be noted that Concentration affects Cricket Players' performance.

Table No.2: How much does Concentration influence the performance of cricket?

Category	Response in Percentage
Medium	5%
High	27%
Very High	68%

Source: Primary Study n=150

Table No.2 states that only 5% of respondents said concentration influences a medium role in the performance of cricket, 27% of respondents indicated Concentration has a high impact in influencing the performance of cricket, and 68% of respondents stated Concentration has a very strong influence in the performance of cricket.

Table No.3: Psychological Factor Coefficients Table

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.225	.173		7.064	.000
	How much Motivation Influences the performance of Cricket Players	-.016	.031	-.055	-.510	.611
	How much Will Power influence the performance of Cricket Players	.042	.033	.134	1.265	.208
	How much Intelligence influences the performance of Cricket Players	.005	.030	.016	.162	.871
	How much does Concentration influence the performance of cricket	.138	.035	.383	3.982	.000
	How much does Anticipation influence the performance of Cricket Players?	-.040	.017	-.203	-2.281	.024
	How much Anxiety influences the performance of Cricket Players	.016	.019	.072	.842	.401
	How much do aggressions influence the performance of cricket players?	.022	.020	.104	1.124	.263

a. Dependent Variable: Psychological Factors Influence Players' Performance

Source: Primary Study

n=150

Here constant is 1.225, and the sig value is 0.00, which is very significant. Here it is clearly shown that there is a significant relationship between dependent and Independent Variables. Only one value is the beta value which presents the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable. This table clearly showed the Concentration too much B value of .138, greater than other independent variables.

- Concentration influences the performances of Cricket Players have a more substantial impact on the Psychological factor that influences players' performance.

Concentration Coefficient Table

The below table shows the strength of the relationship, i.e. the significance of the variable in the model and the magnitude with which it impacts the dependent variable. This analysis helps in performing the hypothesis testing for a study.

Table No. 4: Coefficients Table for Concentration

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.443	.238		18.656	.000
Infrastructural Facilities	-.060	.039	-.131	-1.540	.126
Incentives	.002	.038	.004	.047	.963
Recognition	-.036	.037	-.088	-.965	.336
Fair Selection Process	-.019	.044	-.042	-.433	.666
Employment Opportunities	.187	.043	.374	4.324	.000
Family Member's Support	-.051	.036	-.135	-1.407	.161

a. Dependent Variable: How much Concentration influence the performance of cricket

Source: Primary Study

n=150

Here, the constant B value is 4.443, and the Sig Value is 0.00, which is very significant. Here it is clearly shown that there is a significant relationship between dependent variable Concentration and Independent Variables like Infrastructural Facilities, Incentives, Recognition, Fair Selection Process, Employment Opportunities and Family Member Support. This table presents the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable. In Concentration, Employment Opportunity strongly impacted the factor with .187 b value with sig value .000. In the question of how much Concentration influences cricket performance, researchers found that employment opportunities and incentives are an essential component of Will Power.

Alternate hypothesis H₁: Concentration does not influence a player's performance.

Null hypothesis H₀: Concentration influences a player's performance.

There is a strong relationship between Concentration and Player Performance; therefore, the Null Hypothesis is accepted, and the Alternative Hypothesis is rejected.

Figure No.4: Word Cloud of Psychological Aspects



Source: Primary Study

n=150

In the study, the researcher found that Concentration is the topmost element influencing psychological factors. Secondly, Will Power is the second most important factor, followed by Aggression, Anxiety, Intelligence,

Motivation, and Anticipation. While Concentration is the topmost important factor, and Anticipation is the least important factor for a player's performance.

Therefore, it is clear that players and coaches need to focus on Concentration for better performance in cricket. For this factor, sports authorities need to care about several things, i.e. Fair Selection Process, Incentives, and Recognition.

IV. Conclusion

The researcher started this argument by stating no relationship between psychological aspects and a player's performance. Unfortunately, the Alternative hypothesis was rejected, and the null hypothesis was proved & accepted. This study established that Concentration has a strong relationship with players' performances. The researcher used SPSS methods to check the hypothesis and many more supportive arguments also support the null hypothesis.

Therefore, Sports Administrators and Coaches need to focus on improving development Concentration among players. Thus, this study shows the importance of Concentration in cricket, and history witnessed that strong psychological players always perform better than weak players. Therefore, it is essential to emphasise this sphere because there is a gap where everyone needs to work harder to produce good players.

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Anjan Kumar Khuntia. "Role of Concentration on Player's Performance: A Study on Cricket Players in India." *IOSR Journal of Sports and Physical Education (IOSR-JSPE)* 9(6), (2022): pp. 29-35.