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Analytical research of selected psychological variables of different age groups cricket players

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Abstract

Cricket is a sport that calls for both mental and physical prowess. Numerous studies have been conducted on the psychological variables that affect cricket performance, with particular attention to motivation, anxiety, self-confidence, and coping mechanisms. This study has demonstrated the importance of psychological variables in cricket performance and the ways in which age, experience, and training can affect these variables. The research explores the relationships between three major variables - the Coping Strategy Scale, stress, and depression - across three age groups: Under 19, under 16, and under 14. The research provides information on players' stress levels, experiences with depression, and coping mechanisms through descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients.

Keywords: Cricket, psychological variables in cricket, sports psychology

Introduction

Cricket is a difficult and complex sport that calls for a high degree of mental and physical aptitude. Cricket players need to be able to handle pressure, act quickly, and stay focused in the face of intense scrutiny. They also need to be able to stay motivated for the duration of the season and function well in a team environment.

In recent years, a lot of research has focused on the psychological makeup of cricket players. According to this research, there are several crucial psychological traits that are necessary for cricket success.

The bat-and-ball game of cricket, which has captivated spectators for centuries across the globe, is played between two teams of eleven players on an oval field that has a 22-yard (20-meter) pitch in the middle with a wicket - a set of wooden stumps - at each end. The game originated from more basic bat-and-ball games like stool ball in the south of England during the 16th century (Gaskell *et al.*, 2004) ^[19].

The early days of cricket were marked by an informal game with no set rules. But as the game grew in popularity, it became more structured, with the London Cricket Club (LCC) establishing the first formal set of rules in 1744 (Birley, 1999) ^[20].

Cricket's internationalization beyond its English origins began in the 19th century. The sport took off in the British colonies, especially in Australia, India, and the Caribbean, where the local cultures embraced it wholeheartedly. As a result of cricket's globalization, international cricket bodies were established, including the Imperial Cricket Conference (ICC) in 1909, which currently oversees the game all over the world. With the introduction of new formats, including One Day International (ODI) cricket, a limited-overs format played over one day, and Test cricket, a five-day format regarded as the peak of the sport, cricket's popularity skyrocketed in the 20th century. Cricket became a truly international sport with the introduction of television and then the internet, which expanded its global appeal.

Cricket is still evolving today to meet the ever-evolving needs of its audience. Twenty20 (T20) cricket is a fast-paced, three-hour format that has brought the sport back to life, bringing in new spectators and enhancing its allure. With its unique blend of athleticism, drama, and cultural significance, cricket continues to be a sport steeped in tradition, strategy, and skill that captivates spectators around the globe.

Statement of the Problem

The Research problem of this study is stated as an “Analytical study of selected psychological variables of different age groups of Cricket players”.

Objectives of the study

1. To identify age-related differences in the psychological profiles of cricket players.
2. To investigate the relationship between age and selected psychological variables in cricket players.

Delimitations

1. The study was delimited to 180 male cricket players.
2. The study was delimited to subjects of 14 to 23 years of age.

Group	Number of Subjects	Age
U- 16	60 (30+30)	14-16
U- 19	60 (30+30)	17-19
U-23	60 (30+30)	20-23

3. The study is delimited to the following psychological variables:
 - Coping Ability.
 - Depression.
 - Stress.

Limitations

1. The sample size may be too small or not representative of the entire population of cricket players. This could limit the generalizability of the findings.
2. Although great care would be taken to ensure that the respondents provided truthful answers, the questionnaire itself has certain limitations. Therefore, any biased opinion that the subjects may have expressed in their responses that influences the study's findings could be viewed as a study limitation.

Hypothesis

1. Any meaningful correlation between a few chosen psychological factors across cricket players' age groups.
2. Any noteworthy connections between certain psychological factors and the regulation of the age effect on cricket players.

Literature Review

Title: Age-Related Differences in Psychological Variables among Cricket Players: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Authors: Jayasinghe, S., & McLachlan, A. (2020) [4].

Journal: Journal of Sports Sciences, 38(15), 1722-1732.

Summary

This systematic review and meta-analysis aimed to investigate age-related differences in psychological variables among cricket players. The authors examined 22 studies involving a total of 1,523 participants. They found significant age-related differences in motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence, with older players generally exhibiting higher levels of motivation and lower levels of anxiety compared to younger players.

Title: The Impact of Psychological Variables on Cricket Performance across Different Age Groups: A Longitudinal

Study

Authors: Muniraj, S., & Kumar, A. (2018) [5].

Journal: International Journal of Applied Exercise Physiology, 8(1), 1-9.

Summary

This longitudinal study investigated the impact of psychological variables on cricket performance across different age groups. The authors followed 120 cricket players aged 14-20 years for a period of 3 years. They found that motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence were significantly related to cricket performance, with these relationships varying across age groups.

Research Methodology**Selection of Subjects**

Using stratified random sampling, 180 male cricket players between the ages of 14 and 23 were chosen from various stadiums in Varanasi and Allahabad for this study.

Selection of Variables

The following psychological variables were chosen with consideration for the goal of the study. They are as follows:

- a) Coping Ability.
- b) Depression.
- c) Stress.

Administration of Questionnaire

Subjects and coaches were asked to participate honestly and were personally consulted. When respondents have enough time to finish the testing and are not otherwise occupied, they are called to a shared location. The subjects won't be able to conceal their genuine emotions because their remarks are kept confidential.

Questionnaire

1. **Stress Vulnerability:** L.H. Miller and A.D. Smith
2. **Depression:** Goldberg Depression Questionnaire (GDQ)
3. **Coping Strategy:** Scale of Coping Strategies (C S S): A.K. Srivastava

Data Collection

180 participants from various Varanasi and Allahabad stadiums were given the data. The information was gathered by using the Stress, Coping Ability Inventory and Decision Making.

Statistical Technique

In this Study, Descriptive statistics, Mean, and Standard Deviation are applied to summarize the data. To compare the selected psychological Variables between different age groups, Correlation Analysis was used and the level of significance was set at 0.05.

Analysis of Data, Result, and Discussion

Using IBM SPSS 24, a popular statistical analysis program, we present the results of the statistical analysis in this chapter. The necessary results were produced by the software after the data was entered into an SPSS sheet. Mean, standard deviation and other statistical metrics were used to determine the statistical significance of the data analysis.

Table 1: Shows the descriptive statistics of the selected Variables

		Descriptive					
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Coping Strategy Scale	Under-19	60	70.7500	30.06976	3.88199	62.9822	78.5178
	Under-16	60	78.6667	30.89768	3.98887	70.6849	86.6484
	Under-14	60	77.2333	29.75970	3.84196	69.5456	84.9211
	Total	180	75.5500	30.27440	2.25652	71.0972	80.0028
Stress	Under-19	60	28.5667	13.29249	1.71605	25.1329	32.0005
	Under-16	60	30.7000	18.29819	2.36229	25.9731	35.4269
	Under-14	60	23.1833	19.37279	2.50102	18.1788	28.1879
	Total	180	27.4833	17.38858	1.29607	24.9258	30.0409
Depression	Under-19	60	93.8667	40.42757	5.21918	83.4231	104.3102
	Under-16	60	93.6667	41.88146	5.40687	82.8475	104.4858
	Under-14	60	94.2167	44.82209	5.78651	82.6379	105.7954
	Total	180	93.9167	42.17944	3.14387	87.7129	100.1205

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that young male cricket players in Varanasi and Allahabad use coping mechanisms to manage the difficulties and pressures they face while playing the game. For the age groups of Under 19, Under 16, and under 14, the mean coping strategy scores are approximately 70.75, 78.67, and 77.23, in that order. These results imply that the players employ coping mechanisms to handle the challenges of cricket.

Cricket is one of the sports where stress is a common occurrence. According to the study, the Under-19, Under-16, and Under-14 age groups have mean stress levels of roughly 28.57, 30.70, and 23.18, respectively. All players have an average stress level of about 27.48.

Summary

The psychological characteristics of young male cricket players in Varanasi and Allahabad are examined through the analysis of the data that was provided. The information includes the Coping Strategy Scale, Stress, and Depression variables for each of the three age groups (Under 19, Under 16, and Under 14), along with descriptive statistics, and Pearson correlation coefficients. The average scores for coping strategies, stress levels, and depression were computed for every age group and the entire sample consisting of 180 subjects. The Under-19, Under-16, and Under-14 groups had mean coping strategy scores of approximately 70.75, 78.67, and 77.23, respectively. For the same groups, the mean stress levels were roughly 28.57, 30.70, and 23.18. Approximately 93.87, 93.67, and 94.22 were the mean depression scores for the Under-19, Under-16, and Under-14 age groups.

Conclusion

An in-depth analysis of the data gives insight into the psychological makeup of young male cricket players in Varanasi and Allahabad. The research explores the relationships between three major variables - the Coping Strategy Scale, stress, and depression - across three age groups: Under 19, under 16, and under 14. The research provides information on players' stress levels, experiences with depression, and coping mechanisms through descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients.

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