

Original Research Article

Relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricketers: a cross-sectional survey

Jeevitha Palanisamy^{1*}, Krishna N. S.², Yamuna C.³

¹KMCH College of Occupational Therapy, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

²Department of Occupational Therapy, NMC Healthcare, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

³Department of Occupational Therapy, KMCH Hospitals and College of Occupational Therapy, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

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*Correspondence:

Dr. Jeevitha Palanisamy,

E-mail: jeevithapalanisamy20@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Background: Self-esteem, defined as an individual's subjective evaluation of their own worth, is a key construct in sports psychology, influencing motivation, performance, and psychological resilience. Cricket, as a team sport that requires both strategic decision-making and individual skill execution, demands optimal levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Despite its importance, there is a lack of research focusing on these psychological constructs among female cricketers. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricketers.

Methods: A quantitative cross-sectional study was conducted among female cricket players in Tamil Nadu. A total of 50 participants were recruited using a convenient sampling method. Data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to eligible participants. The collected data were analysed to assess levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy, and to determine the relationship between these variables.

Results: The findings revealed a moderate positive correlation between self-esteem and self-efficacy ($r=0.500$, $p<0.001$), indicating statistical significance. Among the participants, 30% demonstrated low self-esteem, 66% had self-esteem within the normal range, and only 4% exhibited high self-esteem.

Conclusions: This study identified a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricket players. Overall, participants demonstrated predominantly moderate levels of both self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Self-efficacy, Female cricketers, Motivation, Sports psychology

INTRODUCTION

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform specific tasks and achieve desired outcomes. Conceptualized by Albert Bandura, self-efficacy reflects confidence in one's capacity to exert control over motivation, behavior, and environmental demands.¹ These cognitive self-evaluations influence goal setting, effort, persistence, and overall performance. In sports contexts, higher self-efficacy has been associated

with improved performance, resilience under pressure, and greater adaptability in challenging situations.² Athletes who possess strong self-efficacy are more likely to engage in deliberate practice, seek challenges, and persist despite setbacks, thereby enhancing their skill development and competitive outcomes.

Self-efficacy is not a fixed trait but a dynamic construct shaped by personal experiences, social influences, and environmental conditions. Factors such as mastery

experiences, observational learning, verbal encouragement, and emotional states play a significant role in its development. In sports, visualization techniques, positive feedback, and supportive coaching environments have been shown to strengthen self-efficacy beliefs. As a result, fostering self-efficacy is essential for optimizing athletic performance, motivation, and psychological well-being.²

Self-esteem, on the other hand, refers to an individual's overall sense of self-worth and value, as described by Morris Rosenberg. In cricket, self-esteem plays a crucial role in shaping confidence, decision-making, and performance under pressure. Athletes with high self-esteem tend to trust their abilities, take calculated risks, and demonstrate assertiveness during gameplay. Conversely, low self-esteem may lead to self-doubt, reduced confidence, and suboptimal performance. Since athletes are often evaluated based on their performance, they may be particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in self-esteem.³⁻⁵

Coach-player interactions and the broader social environment significantly influence self-esteem. Positive reinforcement, encouragement, and constructive feedback can enhance players' self-worth, whereas negative or inconsistent coaching behaviours may undermine it. Self-esteem is closely linked to mental health and overall well-being, making it a critical factor in sustained athletic participation and success.^{6,7}

The relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy is closely interconnected. While self-esteem represents a general sense of self-worth, self-efficacy is task-specific and relates to confidence in performing particular activities. High self-esteem can provide a foundation for developing self-efficacy, as individuals who value themselves are more likely to believe in their capabilities.⁸ In turn, successful performance experiences that enhance self-efficacy can further strengthen self-esteem, creating a positive feedback loop.

In recent years, women's participation in cricket has increased significantly; however, research focusing on psychological constructs such as self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricketers remains limited.⁹ Female athletes often encounter unique challenges, including gender bias, limited opportunities, and societal expectations, which may negatively impact their psychological well-being. They may also experience stress related to performance pressure, body image concerns, and balancing multiple roles such as academics, employment, and family responsibilities.¹⁰

Additionally, disparities in access to training facilities, financial support, and media representation continue to affect female cricketers. Cultural stereotypes and gender-based discrimination may further undermine confidence and self-perception. Lack of parental or societal support

can also hinder participation and development in sports.^{11,12}

Addressing these challenges is essential to promote the psychological well-being and performance of female cricketers. Enhancing self-esteem and self-efficacy through supportive environments, equitable opportunities, and targeted interventions can contribute significantly to both individual and team success.

METHODS

The present study adopted a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to explore the relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricketers. The study was conducted between March 2023 and October 2023 among female cricket players in the Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu, India. Participants were recruited from cricket clubs and academies including Coimbatore Cricket Association (SNR College), Papanaiickenpalayam, Coimbatore, My Life Sports Academy, Coimbatore, and Suresh Sports Academy, Coimbatore.

A total of 50 female cricket players were selected using a convenient sampling method. The inclusion criteria were female cricketers aged 18-25 years, having a minimum of three years of cricket practice, residing in Tamil Nadu, and actively participating in cricket at the time of the study. Participants with locomotor disabilities, married individuals, and those who participated in cricket only as a leisure activity were excluded.

Data were collected using standardized instruments, namely the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES) and the general self-efficacy scale (GSES), to assess self-esteem and self-efficacy.¹³ Permission to conduct the study was obtained from KMCH College of Occupational Therapy and the respective cricket academies.¹⁴ Verbal informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Instructions regarding the questionnaires were explained in the participants' regional language to ensure clarity and understanding.

As the study involved a healthy population and was conducted using a questionnaire-based survey without any intervention, formal ethical committee approval was not required. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. Confidentiality and anonymity of participant information were maintained throughout the study.

Upon completion of the questionnaires, responses were collected and analyzed using IBM statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) statistics version 25.

RESULTS

A total of 50 female cricketers who met the inclusion criteria participated in the study. To assess the

psychological constructs of interest, two standardized tools were used: the Rosenberg self-esteem scale and the general self-efficacy scale. The collected data were entered and analysed using IBM SPSS statistics (version 25). Descriptive statistics were initially applied to summarize the demographic characteristics of the participants and to examine the distribution of scores on both scales (Table 1 and Figure 1). Further analysis was conducted using Pearson's correlation coefficient to evaluate the relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy, providing an understanding of the association between these variables among female cricketers (Table 2 and Figure 2).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of female cricketers.

S. no.	Variables	Mean±SD
1	Age (years)	19.74±1.747
2	Years of practice	3.84±1.131
3	RSES score	17.16±0.271
4	GSES score	30.18±5.724
5	Age (years)	19.74±1.747

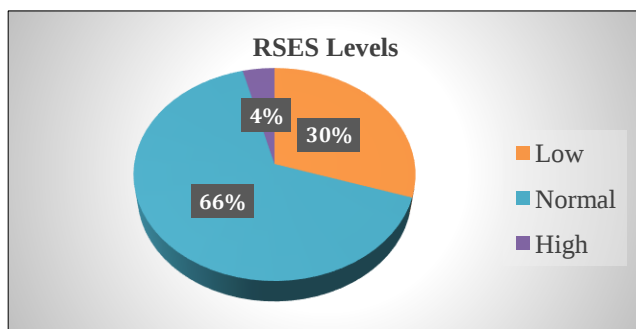


Figure 1: Distribution of RSES scores among female cricketers.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of female cricketers.

Variables compared	Pearson's 'r' value	P value
RSES versus GSES	0.500	0.001

RSES-Rosenberg self-esteem scale; GSES-general self-efficacy scale

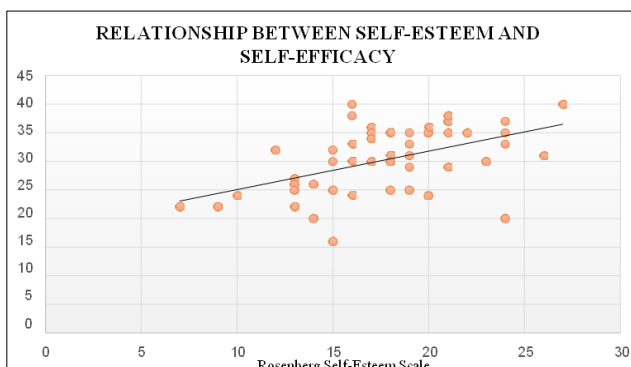


Figure 2: Relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricketers.

The graph demonstrates statistically significant positive correlation between self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricket players ($r=0.500$, $p<0.001$).

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricketers. The findings revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between these two psychological constructs, indicating that higher self-esteem is associated with higher self-efficacy. This result is consistent with existing literature, which suggests that individuals with a positive evaluation of self-worth are more likely to demonstrate confidence in their abilities to perform specific tasks effectively.^{15,20,21}

The analysis of self-esteem levels among participants showed that the majority of female cricketers had moderate self-esteem, with a smaller proportion demonstrating low self-esteem and very few exhibiting high self-esteem. These findings align with previous research in sports psychology, which indicates that female athletes often experience fluctuations in self-esteem due to factors such as societal expectations, body image concerns, gender stereotypes, and unequal access to opportunities.^{16,22,23} In the context of cricket, these challenges may be further intensified due to the historically lower visibility and support for women's participation in the sport.

Similarly, the results related to self-efficacy indicated that most participants demonstrated moderate levels, with only a few reporting high self-efficacy. According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is influenced by mastery experiences, social modelling, verbal persuasion, and physiological states.¹ Limited exposure to high-level competition, inconsistent training opportunities, and lack of institutional support may contribute to moderate self-efficacy levels among female cricketers. These findings are supported by previous studies that highlight the role of environmental and social factors in shaping athletes' confidence and performance beliefs.^{17,25,26} Athletes with stronger self-efficacy are more likely to persevere during setbacks, regulate emotions effectively, and maintain optimal performance under pressure.

The significant positive relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy observed in this study reinforces the theoretical understanding that these constructs are interrelated. Individuals with higher self-esteem tend to approach challenges with greater confidence and persistence, thereby enhancing their perceived self-efficacy. Conversely, successful performance experiences that improve self-efficacy can also contribute to a stronger sense of self-worth.^{18,20,27} This reciprocal relationship is particularly relevant in sports settings, where psychological factors play a critical role in performance outcomes.

In recent years, women's cricket has witnessed considerable growth and increased global recognition, as seen with organizations such as the International Cricket Council promoting women's tournaments and visibility.⁹ This expansion has contributed to improved opportunities, greater participation, and enhanced societal acceptance of female athletes. Such developments may positively influence psychological well-being, including self-esteem and self-efficacy, by providing athletes with greater opportunities for achievement, recognition and professional development.^{19,28}

The findings of this study have important implications for the field of occupational therapy, particularly in the domain of sports mental health. Occupational therapists can play a significant role in enhancing the psychological well-being of female cricketers through holistic and client-centered interventions. By identifying factors that negatively impact self-esteem and self-efficacy, therapists can implement targeted strategies such as cognitive-behavioural techniques to address maladaptive thought patterns, goal-setting interventions to enhance motivation, and occupation-based interventions to promote competence and successful participation.^{29,30}

Furthermore, interventions such as social skills training, stress management, mindfulness practices, and relaxation techniques can support emotional regulation and performance consistency. Techniques like mental imagery, role-play, and behavioural rehearsal can also help improve confidence and coping skills in competitive situations. Through psychoeducation and individualized intervention planning, Occupational therapists can empower female cricketers to overcome psychological barriers, thereby enhancing both performance and overall quality of life. Addressing these psychological factors is essential for promoting optimal performance and well-being of female cricketers.

This study has certain limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. The relatively small sample size may limit the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the study included only female cricketers aged 18–25 years competing at the district and state levels; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to athletes of other age groups, competitive levels, genders, or sports. Future research should include larger, more diverse samples encompassing athletes from different age groups and competitive levels to improve the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, longitudinal and intervention-based studies are recommended to further examine the relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy and to evaluate strategies for enhancing psychological resilience and performance among female athletes.

CONCLUSION

The present study found a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy among female cricketers, with most players showing moderate levels of

both. These psychological factors play an important role in a player's performance and overall experience in the sport. Lower self-esteem and self-efficacy may reduce confidence and prevent players from fully using their abilities. Occupational therapists can support female cricketers by identifying factors affecting their confidence and helping them improve through simple strategies such as goal setting, positive thinking, and coping skills. Such interventions can enhance confidence, improve performance, and promote overall well-being among female cricketers.

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Ethical approval: This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. Institutional permission, club permission, and written informed consent from all participants were obtained prior to data collection

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