

Psychological Factors Affecting the Success of Raiders and Defenders in Kabaddi

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Abstract— The term kabaddi refers to a team sport that originated in rural India. The objective of the present study was to compare selected motor components of raiders and defenders among kabaddi players. Kabaddi is an exciting indigenous team game, one requiring high levels of locomotive skill such as speed, agility, strength, and power coordination. As raiders and defenders play distinct roles in kabaddi matches, different motor qualities are required for these positions. Method: Thirty male kabaddi players were selected from the inter-collegiate competitions (18- 25 yrs) and assigned into two groups: raider (n=15) and defender (n = 15). The motor components chosen were speed, agility, muscular strength, explosive power, and coordination. Speed was evaluated using the 50 m dash test; agility using the shuttle run test; muscular strength using the push-up test; explosive power using the standing broad jump test; and coordination using the wall toss test. Differences between raider and defender were evaluated with an independent t-test. The threshold level for statistical significance was set at 0.05. Results: For selected motor components, raiders had significantly better results than defenders. Raiders were more dominant in speed, agility, and coordination, but defenders demonstrated higher muscular strength and explosive power. Conclusion: The current findings highlight the necessity of implementing position-specific training programs for kabaddi.

Keywords – Kabaddi, Raiders, Defenders, Motor Components, Speed, Agility, Muscular Strength, Explosive Power, Position-Specific Training.

I. INTRODUCTION

Kabaddi is one of the most popular indigenous sports of India, which has won acclaim internationally for its dynamic nature, strategic gameplay, and competitive format. The game demands a fusion of physical fitness, technical excellence, tactical knowledge, and psychological readiness. It is played between two teams in which players are divided into raiders and defenders. When a raider scores, it means the opponent's court has been invaded, and a man-to-man touch has been made whilst chanting "Kabaddi" continuously, with defenders uniting to prevent the raider from returning to safety. Both roles require different athletic capabilities, and each is subject to numerous psychological factors. (Sharma & Kumar, 2018).

At the heart of sports psychology is the assumption that all mental processes shape behavior and that deciding when, how, and what to train in preparation for competition matters. In Kabaddi, players constantly face high-pressure situations requiring fast decision-making, focus and concentration, self-belief, emotional control, and communication. Raiders need to be courageous and confident, have good anticipation and clutch-time composure when on the opposing side, and bring teamwork, awareness, perfection, discipline & coordination to execute a successful tackle. (Weinberg & Gould, 2019).

Motivation, self-confidence, concentration, anxiety management, mental toughness, and emotional stability, or the ability to make accurate decisions, play a large role in Kabaddi Players. An athletically

integrated psyche can learn to focus, handle the pressures of competition, bounce back from adversity, and perform under pressure when it matters most during a match. On the other hand, too much anxiety, not enough self-assurance, and a lack of emotional control can create poor performance and make sound decision-making more difficult. (Martens, Vealey, & Burton, 1990).

Due to the rising competition in Kabaddi at national and international levels, psychological factors in performance have gained greater importance for coaches, players, and sports scientists. Techniques such as goal setting, visualization, relaxation exercises, and positive self-talk are being integrated into training programs to improve psychological readiness and overall performance. (Weinberg & Gould, 2019).

Different competitive scenarios face raiders and defenders in the course of matches. Raiders then have to take smart risks and act under immediate pressure, as they will face multiple defenders. This means that defenders need to coordinate with their teammates and be focused for most of the game. Hence, the psychological requirements of raiders and defenders may vary immensely. (Singh & Kaur, 2020).

Hence, the current research, titled Psychological Factors Affecting the Performance of Raiders and Defenders in Kabaddi, aims to examine psychological factors expected to affect players' performance on both sides of the field: offensive and defensive. Overview/Abstract: The study identified the psychological qualities most essential in Kabaddi and aimed to derive insights to inform the development of useful psychological exercises for players, coaches, and fitness professionals.

Statement of the Problem

The study aims to analyze the psychological factors affecting success in raiding and defending, and how confidence, concentration, motivation, anxiety, and decision-making affect the kabaddi performance of raiders and defenders.

Objectives of the Study

- To determine the important psychological factors affecting Kabaddi players.
- To identify the psychological areas which can impact upon being a successful raider.
- To study the psychology of success for defenders
- Compare raiders' and defenders' psychological characteristics.
- To analyze the effect of psychological factors on Kabaddi performance.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature review is one of the backbones of any paper or study. It gives you insight into previous studies and findings related to your topic of study. Through the review, researchers can identify theoretical concepts, research gaps, the methodologies employed by previous researchers, and the importance of the contemporary study.

Psychologists have long argued that athletic success is nevertheless dependent not just on physical and technical prowess but also psychological factors. Things like confidence, concentration, motivation, emotional control, and anxiety-management skills, along with team cohesion, are things that can have a bearing; you need mental skills to have an edge in your performance.

Kabaddi is a physically grueling sport that tests you and your mental capabilities as you need to deliver in the most chaotic of circumstances with fractions of seconds deciding fate. Raiders and defenders have different roles to fulfill; hence, they might wield different psychological profiles. The current paper reviews the literature on psychological predictors of performance and Kabaddi players in particular.

Pandey et al. (2025) examined the impact of pre- and post-competition anxiety among Kabaddi players during an inter-faculty tournament at Banaras Hindu University.

Forty-eight Kabaddi players participated in the study. Anxiety levels were measured before and

after intervention. Statistical analysis revealed a significant reduction in anxiety scores after intervention.

The researchers concluded that anxiety-management strategies can substantially improve psychological readiness and competitive performance.

Rajveer Singh and Chaudhary (2022) conducted a comparative study on aggression and anxiety among district-level Kabaddi players in Muzaffarnagar.

Sixty Kabaddi players who participated in district selection trials were selected as subjects. The researchers investigated anxiety and aggression as important psychological barriers influencing performance.

The findings indicated that anxiety affects cognitive functioning, emotional stability, and athletic performance. The study emphasized the importance of psychological training programs for Kabaddi players.

Devaraju and Needhiraja (2012) conducted a study titled "*Prediction of Playing Ability in Kabaddi from Selected Anthropometrical, Physical, Physiological and Psychological Variables among College Level Players.*" The purpose of the study was to predict Kabaddi playing ability using anthropometric, physiological, physical fitness, and psychological variables.

A total of 126 male inter-collegiate Kabaddi players from Tamil Nadu aged 18–28 years were selected. Psychological variables included somatic anxiety, cognitive anxiety, self-confidence, and sports achievement motivation. The Competitive State Anxiety Inventory (CSAI-2) and Sports Achievement Motivation Test were used.

The findings revealed that psychological variables significantly contributed to the prediction of playing ability. Self-confidence and achievement motivation were found to be important factors associated with successful Kabaddi performance.

Devaraju (2010) conducted a doctoral investigation on the prediction of Kabaddi playing ability among

college athletes. The study included 126 male Kabaddi players and examined psychological factors such as self-confidence, cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and achievement motivation.

The results demonstrated that self-confidence positively influenced performance, whereas anxiety showed a negative influence. The study concluded that psychological characteristics should be included in talent identification and training programs.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is a descriptive survey research design of one group which aims to assess psychological factors of success among raiders and defenders in Kabaddi. Method: A comparative research design was adopted to systematically examine and compare the selected motor components of kabaddi players across their playing positions namely raiders and defenders. The investigator intends to use a non-experimental research design whereby their focus is on comparing the responses of two groups. The current study administered assessments using standardized testing protocols to both groups under the same conditions, ensuring that the results were completely objective and reliable.

As a more appropriate comparative design was accepted, the main purpose of the study is to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences in the various motor components (speed, agility, strength, power, coordination, etc.) between raiders and defenders.

The research design helped develop an understanding of position-wise motor demands in kabaddi and thus enabled a performance comparison between the two groups.

Selection of Subjects

Thirty male kabaddi players were selected purposively from inter-collegiate kabaddi tournaments. The subjects were divided into two groups based on their playing positions.

- Raider (n= 15)
- Defender (n= 15)

Age Group

The age of the subjects ranged from 18 to 25 years.

Selection of Variables

The selected motor components and their corresponding tests were as follows:

Table No.1	
Motor Component	Test Used
Speed	50 Meter Dash
Agility	Shuttle Run Test
Muscular Strength	Push-Up Test
Muscular Strength	Standing Broad Jump
Coordination	Wall Toss Test

Variables

- **Independent Variables:** Self-confidence, concentration, motivation, anxiety, decision-making ability, and emotional control.
- **Dependent Variable:** Success/performance of raiders and defenders in Kabaddi.

Population

The study population will consist of Kabaddi players from colleges and universities.

Sample

A sample of 30 Kabaddi players (15 raiders and 15 defenders) will be selected using the purposive sampling technique.

Tools for Data Collection

A standardized Sports Psychology Questionnaire will be used to assess the selected psychological factors.

Procedure

Questionnaires and performance records will be used to collect the desired data from kabaddi players. The feedback will be analyzed to find out the psychological factors behind the success of the raider and defender.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data from the experiments were analyzed statistically and systematically to obtain meaningful results.

For raider and defender performance scores on selected motor components, descriptive statistics

(mean and standard deviation) were assessed to summarize and describe the central tendency. These parameters offered a straightforward depiction of performance levels and the spread within groups. An independent t-test was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the motor components of raiders and defenders. In other words, independent t-test is used to compare two independent groups. Through this statistical procedure, we were able to observe if the obtained performance differentials were random or genuine discrepancies between the two playing positions. The t-value is statistically significant if the t-calculated is more than the t-critical at $p < 0.05$. Thus, the results indicate that the difference in motor performance of raiders and defenders is valid.

IV. RESULTS

TABLE II
COMPARISON OF RAIDERS AND DEFENDERS ON SELECTED MOTOR COMPONENTS

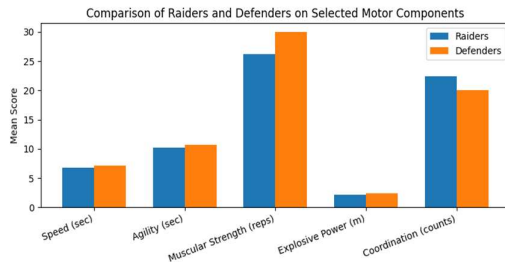
Motor Component	Group	Mean	SD	t - Value	Result
Speed (sec)	Raiders	6.75	0.32	2.61	Significant
-	Defenders	7.10	0.40	-	-
Agility (sec)	Raiders	10.18	0.50	2.34	Significant
-	Defenders	10.65	0.55	-	-
Muscular Strength (reps)	Raiders	26.2	3.0	2.71	Significant
-	Defenders	30.0	3.5	-	-
Explosive Power (m)	Raiders	2.21	0.15	2.28	Significant
-	Defenders	2.35	0.18	-	-
Coordination (counts)	Raiders	22.4	2.6	2.19	Significant
-	Defenders	20.1	2.8	-	-

Table value at 0.05 level ($df = 28$) = 2.045

Table 2: Comparison of raiders and defenders from table 2. The mean speed of raiders was 6.75 ± 0.32 s and defenders recorded a mean value of 7.10 ± 0.40 s (obtained $t = 2.61$). Reference values were 10.18 ± 0.50 and 10.65 ± 0.55 seconds for agility raiders and defenders, respectively ($t = 2.34$; $p < 0.05$). For raiders, the mean muscular strength was 26.2 ± 3.0 repetitions, while defender had a higher mean of

30.0 ± 3.5 repetitions with highly significant t value (t = 2.71). For explosive power, the raiders (2.21 ± 0.15 meters), and defenders (2.35 ± 0.18 meters) mean distance was reported with a t value of 2.28 showing significance level for this item In coordination, raiders yielded a mean of 22.4 ± 2.6 counts while defenders had a mean of 20.1 ± 2.8 counts (t = 2.19, p < 0.05).

GRAPH - I



**Graph no.1: Graphical representation of Raiders and Defenders on Selected Motor Components*

Statistical Techniques

The data will be analyzed using:

- Mean
- Standard Deviation
- Percentage Analysis
- Independent t-test (where applicable)

This methodology will assist you in establishing a relation between the impact of psychological factors on Raiders' and Defenders' performance in Kabaddi.

V. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Results from the current study indicated substantial differences between raiders and defenders in specific motor components. Demonstrated to be faster and more agile than defenders. Part of this could be due to the type of raiding, where players have limited time and need to catch up with opposing defenders.

There was better muscular strength and explosive power in defenders than in raiders. In defense, you must tackle the opponent firmly with full strength, resist his body, and suddenly burst forward to block the Raiders. This ultimately means defenders need more strength and power to do their jobs.

Raiders were also found to be better at coordination,

which might be because they need to synchronize movements and balance, and make quick decisions while raiding. These results support the theory that playing position has a high effect on the development of motor components among kabaddi players.

VI. CONCLUSION

Thus, it is concluded that there were significant differences in the selected motor components of kabaddi players based on the position they played, and playing position had a noticeable effect on developing motor ability. The study found that raiders have higher speed, agility, and coordination. These qualities were necessary for them to execute quick raids, avoid defenders, and respond effectively to the dynamic situation of the game. On the other hand, defenders exhibit greater muscle strength and explosive power to deliver a good tackle, counter the number of disturbances caused by the raider during play, and stabilize their movements when tackling. These findings suggest that kabaddi conditioning should target specific positions or roles rather than using a more holistic approach. Performance efficiency can be improved through tailored training programs based on the match-specific motor demands of raiders and defenders. Therefore, it is highly recommended that coaches and trainers design appropriate clinical supervised training regimens such as speed agility and coordination-oriented training for raiders, whilst strength and power development oriented periodization strategies would be very beneficial for defenders. These exercise programs, planned based on object (space and content), may facilitate in optimizing item performance but also work to considerably ceasing the risk of sport s-related accidents, by improving efficacy with regard to human movement and physical readiness.

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