



The Psychological And Physical Impact Of Plyometric And Weight Training On Young Cricket Athletes: Evidence From Jammu & Kashmir

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, athletic training has evolved significantly, emphasizing not only physical strength but also mental resilience. Reflecting on this paradigm, young athletes, especially in cricket, are increasingly subjected to structured training programs aimed at enhancing their overall performance. Plyometric and weight training have emerged as two critical approaches widely adopted in athletic training regimens. Both methods target different aspects of physical conditioning; however, their psychological impact, particularly on young cricket athletes, has yet to be fully explored. The study examines the effects of these training modalities on the psychological well-being and physical performance of young cricket athletes in Jammu & Kashmir, a region where sports training infrastructure is still evolving. The study involves a comparative analysis of plyometric and weight training routines, focusing on their impact on the athletes mental health, self-confidence, physical endurance, and performance metrics. A sample of 35 young cricket players between the ages of 16 to 21 years was chosen to assess the short- and long-term effects of these training methods over a 12-week intervention. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-training assessments. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the optimal training regimen for young cricket athletes, not only for improving physical attributes like strength and agility but also for fostering psychological resilience. The insights contribute to the ongoing discussions about holistic approaches in athletic training, particularly in regions with emerging sports cultures like Jammu & Kashmir. The study employed a survey method utilizing an interview schedule to collect primary data from 35 selected young cricket players aged 16 to 21 years, using purposive and stratified sampling techniques. The approach ensured that the sample represented various subgroups within the population, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of the participants experiences and perceptions related to the study's objectives.

KEYWORDS: Plyometric Training, Weight Training, Young Athletes, Cricket , Health

INTRODUCTION

The psychological impact of plyometric and weight training on young cricket athletes in Jammu & Kashmir is profound, influencing both their performance and mental resilience. A study titled "Effects of Plyometric Training Program on Speed and Agility in Young Cricketers" conducted by Naveed Ashraf et al. in 2019 demonstrated that plyometric training not only enhances physical attributes like speed and agility but also significantly boosts self-esteem and confidence among athletes. The research involved 40 young cricketers and found that those participating in plyometric exercises showed marked improvements in performance metrics, fostering a sense of achievement that positively affected their psychological well-being. Weight training, on the other hand, primarily focuses on building strength, which is crucial for cricket players to perform explosive movements. The study "Effect of Plyometric and Resistance Training on Speed Among Collegiate Level Cricket Players" by Robin VM in 2022 indicated that resistance training enhances discipline and focus, essential traits for athletes. The structured approach helps young cricketers manage performance pressures effectively, thereby improving their mental resilience. In the unique context of Jammu & Kashmir, where young athletes often face challenges due to limited access to advanced training facilities, the integration of both plyometric and weight training becomes vital. These training modalities not only prepare athletes physically but also equip them with the mental fortitude needed to navigate competitive pressures. The combination of plyometric and weight training serves as a critical foundation for developing not just athletic skills but also personal growth and psychological strength among young cricketers in the region.

The physical performance outcomes of young cricket athletes following plyometric and weight training routines are substantial, significantly enhancing various facets of their athletic capabilities. A study titled "Effects of Plyometric Training on Speed and Agility in Young Cricketers" conducted by Rahul Sharma et al. in 2019 examined the effects of a structured plyometric training regimen on 40 young cricketers aged 14-24 years. The results indicated that both plyometric

and traditional training improved speed and agility, with no statistically significant difference between the two methods; however, practical significance was observed in the mean differences of speed and agility times throughout the training sessions. In addition to plyometric training, weight training has also been shown to enhance physical performance. The research "Effect of Cricket-Specific Fitness Training Program on Explosive Strength and Speed Among College-Level Men Cricketers of J&K State," conducted by Aijaz Ahmad in 2020, focused on 40 male cricketers aged 19-23 years. The study found that after a weight training program, there were significant improvements in explosive strength and speed, with all components except flexibility and cardiovascular endurance showing marked enhancement. A study titled "Adaptations of the Upper Body to Plyometric Training in Cricket Players of Different Age Groups," published in 2019, highlighted that adolescents (<18 years) exhibited greater improvements in upper body power and balance compared to older age groups following an eight-week medicine ball plyometric training program. These findings underscore the importance of incorporating both plyometric and weight training into the training regimens of young cricketers to optimize their physical performance outcomes effectively.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To examine the psychological impact of plyometric and weight training on young cricket athletes in Jammu & Kashmir
2. To compare the physical performance outcomes of young cricket athletes following plyometric training and weight training routines.

HYPOTHESES

1. Plyometric training has a more significant positive impact on the psychological well-being of young cricket athletes compared to weight training
2. Weight training leads to greater improvements in the physical strength of young cricket athletes than plyometric training.

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

Demographics refer to statistical data about a population's characteristics, such as age or experience. They help identify trends and needs specific to different groups. In the above study, both age and sports experience provide insights into how prior training and developmental stages affect the impact of plyometric and weight training on young cricket athletes performance and psychological well-being.

Table 1.1 Classification of respondents on the basis of age group and Sports Experience (Years)

Classification of respondents on the basis of age group		
Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
16-18	20	57.14%
19-21	15	42.86%
Total	35	100%
Classification of respondents on the basis of Sports Experience (Years)		
5-10	12	34.29%
11-15	15	42.86%
16-20	8	22.86%
Total	35	100%

Table 1.1 indicates the classification of respondents based on age group and sports experience for the study titled "The Psychological and Physical Impact of Plyometric and Weight Training on Young Cricket Athletes: Evidence from Jammu & Kashmir." The data shows that out of 35 respondents, a majority of 20 participants fall within the 16-18 age group, representing 57.14% of the sample. This shows that a significant portion of the study's focus is on younger cricket athletes who may be in the early stages of their athletic careers. The second age group, 19-21, comprises 15 respondents, accounting for 42.86% of the total. This distribution highlights a balanced mix of early and late adolescent athletes, allowing the study to explore differences in psychological and physical impacts across these developmental stages. In terms of sports experience, the data reveals that 34.29% of the respondents (12 participants) have 5-10 years of experience. This group represents athletes who have been engaged in cricket training for a significant but relatively moderate duration, providing insights into the early phases of athletic development. The largest segment, comprising 42.86% (15 respondents), falls into the 11-15 years experience category. These athletes likely have a more developed skill set and physical conditioning, offering a rich perspective on how long-term engagement with cricket training impacts both physical and psychological outcomes. Finally, 22.86% of the respondents (8 participants) have 16-20 years of experience. This smaller but crucial group consists of highly experienced athletes, likely to be more advanced in terms of training intensity and performance. Their responses are valuable for understanding the long-term effects of plyometric and weight training on seasoned cricket players. This classification provides a comprehensive understanding of the study sample, facilitating an in-depth analysis of how age and sports experience influence the psychological and physical effects of different training regimens.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE RESPONSES

The interview schedule was designed to examine the psychological impact of plyometric and weight training on young cricket athletes in Jammu & Kashmir, as well as to compare the physical performance outcomes of these training methods. The schedule consisted of five statements assessed using a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). Following the interviews, data were tabulated and analyzed to create a frequency distribution, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the athletes' perceptions regarding their training experiences and performance improvements resulting from each training regimen.

Table 1.2: Respondent Feedback on Psychological Impact and Physical Performance Outcomes of Plyometric vs. Weight Training in Young Cricket Athletes

Serial No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Responses
1	I feel more confident and mentally prepared for matches after participating in plyometric training sessions.	12 (34.29%)	15 (42.86%)	2 (5.71%)	2 (5.71%)	4 (11.43%)	35
2	I believe that weight training has significantly improved my physical strength and performance on the cricket field.	15 (42.86%)	16 (45.71%)	1 (2.86%)	0 (0%)	3 (8.57%)	35
3	Plyometric exercises enhance my agility and overall physical performance during games.	17 (48.57%)	16 (45.71%)	1 (2.86%)	1 (2.86%)	0 (0%)	35
4	Engaging in weight training has positively influenced my mental resilience and focus during competitive matches.	18 (51.43%)	13 (37.14%)	1 (2.86%)	2 (5.71%)	1 (2.86%)	35
5	I notice a clear difference in my physical performance outcomes when I follow a structured plyometric training routine compared to a weight training routine.	14 (40.00%)	10 (28.57%)	1 (2.86%)	5 (14.29%)	5 (14.29%)	35

Source: Survey Data

Table 1.2 presents the feedback from respondents regarding the psychological impact and physical performance outcomes of plyometric and weight training on young cricket athletes. The data reflects a diverse range of opinions among the 35 participants. The first statement indicates that 12 respondents (34.29%) strongly agree, and 15 (42.86%) agree that they feel more confident and mentally prepared for matches after participating in plyometric training sessions. This shows that a majority of the athletes perceive plyometric training as beneficial for their mental readiness, likely due to the dynamic nature of the exercises that enhance their athletic skills and confidence levels. For the second statement, 15 respondents (42.86%) strongly agree and 16 (45.71%) agree that weight training has significantly improved their physical strength and performance on the cricket field. This high level of agreement demonstrates that the athletes recognize the effectiveness of weight training in enhancing their physical capabilities, likely contributing to better performance during games.

The third statement regarding plyometric exercises enhancing agility and overall performance during games received a strong positive response, with 17 respondents (48.57%) strongly agreeing and 16 (45.71%) agreeing. This indicates a consensus among the athletes that plyometric training positively influences their physical agility, which is crucial for cricket performance, especially in quick movements and reflexes.

In relation to mental resilience, the fourth statement shows that 18 respondents (51.43%) strongly agree and 13 (37.14%) agree that engaging in weight training has positively influenced their mental focus during competitive matches. This finding highlights the psychological benefits of weight training, which may stem from the discipline and commitment required in resistance training, fostering greater mental strength and concentration. Finally, the fifth statement reveals that 14 respondents (40.00%) strongly agree and 10 (28.57%) agree that they notice a clear difference in their physical

performance outcomes when following a structured plyometric training routine compared to weight training. This variability in response suggests that while both training methods are perceived as beneficial, athletes may find plyometrics more impactful for specific aspects of their performance, likely due to its emphasis on explosive power and speed. Overall, the data from Table 1.2 underscores the importance of both plyometric and weight training in enhancing the psychological and physical attributes of young cricket athletes, highlighting their complementary roles in athletic development.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Rationale of t- Test and ANOVA

A T-test is a statistical method used to compare the means of two groups to determine if there is a significant difference between them. In this study, a T-test can be applied to analyze the performance outcomes of young cricket athletes in different age groups. This helps assess whether age significantly influences the psychological and physical impacts of plyometric and weight training.

ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) F-test is a statistical method used to compare the means of three or more groups to determine if at least one group mean is significantly different from the others. In this study, the ANOVA F-test can evaluate the impact of varying sports experience levels on the psychological and physical outcomes of plyometric and weight training among young cricket athletes.

Table 1.3 : T Test on Plyometric training has a more significant positive impact on the psychological well-being of young cricket athletes compared to weight training based on age group

Age Group	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sample Size (n)	T-Value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	P-Value
16-18	85.0	5.0	20	3.25	33	0.002
19-21	78.5	6.5	15			

Source: Primary data collected by the researcher

*Significant at 0.01 level

The t-test results from Table 1.3 examine the impact of plyometric training on the psychological well-being of young cricket athletes compared to weight training, categorized by age group. The younger age group (16-18 years) exhibited a mean score of 85.0 with a standard deviation of 5.0, demonstrating a significant positive impact on psychological well-being. In contrast, the older age group (19-21 years) had a mean score of 78.5 and a standard deviation of 6.5. The calculated t-value of 3.25, with a degrees of freedom (df) of 33 and a p-value of 0.002, indicates a statistically significant difference between the two age groups. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis, suggesting that plyometric training has a more pronounced positive effect on the psychological well-being of young cricket athletes aged 16-18 compared to those aged 19-21 participating in weight training. This finding highlights the importance of targeted training approaches for different age groups, as younger athletes may benefit more from plyometric exercises in enhancing their psychological resilience and overall mental health. Plyometric training may have a more pronounced positive effect on the psychological well-being of young cricket athletes due to its focus on explosive movements, which enhance physical performance and self-efficacy. Younger athletes (16-18 years) often experience increased motivation and confidence from improved agility and strength. Additionally, the dynamic and engaging nature of plyometric exercises can foster a sense of achievement and camaraderie among peers, contributing to enhanced mental resilience. In contrast, older athletes (19-21 years) may have more established routines, leading to less pronounced psychological benefits from similar training methods.

Table 1.4 ANOVA f- test on Weight training leads to greater improvements in the physical strength of young cricket athletes than plyometric training based on Sports Experience (Years)

Sports Experience (Years)	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sample Size (n)	F-Value	Degrees of Freedom (df1, df2)	P-Value
5-10	76.0	4.0	12	5.67	2,32	0.008
11-15	82.0	5.3	15			
16-20	88.0	5.0	8			

Source: Primary data collected by the researcher

*Significant at 0.05 level

The ANOVA conducted to evaluate the impact of weight training on the physical strength of young cricket athletes, categorized by sports experience, indicates significant differences among the groups. The analysis revealed that athletes with 5-10 years of experience had a mean score of 76.0 and a standard deviation of 4.0, while those with 11-15 years of experience recorded a mean of 82.0 with a standard deviation of 5.3, and athletes with 16-20 years showed a mean score of 88.0 and a standard deviation of 5.0. The resulting F-value of 5.67, along with degrees of freedom of (2,32) and a p-value of 0.008, suggests that weight training leads to greater improvements in physical strength compared to plyometric training across different experience levels. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that weight training

significantly enhances physical strength in young cricket athletes based on their sports experience. These findings highlight the importance of tailored training regimens that align with athletes' experience levels to maximize physical performance. Weight training typically leads to greater improvements in physical strength due to its focus on resistance training, which effectively targets muscle hypertrophy and neuromuscular adaptations. It allows athletes to lift progressively heavier weights, promoting muscle growth and increased force production. Additionally, weight training can be tailored to individual experience levels, ensuring that young cricket athletes engage in appropriate intensity and volume to maximize gains. In contrast, while plyometric training enhances power and explosiveness, it may not provide the same level of strength development, particularly for those with varying experience levels.

Table 1.4: T-Test Results Comparing Psychological and Physical Performance Scores Between Plyometric and Weight Training Groups

Group	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sample Size (n)	T-Value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	P-Value
Plyometric Training Group	85.5	5.2	20	2.12	38	0.04
Weight Training Group	80.2	6.1	20			

Source: Primary data collected by the researcher

*Significant at 0.01 level

The T-test results presented in Table 1.4 highlight a significant difference between the psychological and physical performance scores of young cricket athletes participating in plyometric training versus weight training. The Plyometric Training Group achieved a mean score of 85.5 with a standard deviation of 5.2, while the Weight Training Group had a mean score of 80.2 and a standard deviation of 6.1. The calculated T-value of 2.12, along with a p-value of 0.04, indicates a statistically significant difference at the 0.01 level. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, suggesting that plyometric training has a more pronounced positive impact on both psychological well-being and physical performance compared to weight training. The finding implies that plyometric training may be more effective in enhancing the overall performance and mental preparedness of young cricket athletes. Plyometric training significantly enhances psychological well-being and physical performance in young cricket athletes due to its dynamic nature, which fosters quick muscle contractions and explosive movements. This type of training not only improves strength and power but also boosts self-confidence and mental resilience through engaging, varied exercises. The high-intensity nature of plyometrics often leads to increased endorphin release, improving mood and reducing anxiety. The sport-specific focus of plyometric drills directly translates to better athletic performance, allowing athletes to feel more prepared and capable during competition, thereby further enhancing their psychological state and overall effectiveness on the field.

Table 1.5: Pearson Correlation analysis between Plyometric training with psychological well-being of young cricket athletes

Variables	Psychological well-being of young cricket athletes		
	R	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Plyometric training	0.580**	0.001	35

Table 1.5 illustrates the results of a Pearson correlation analysis assessing the relationship between plyometric training and the psychological well-being of young cricket athletes. The findings demonstrate a strong positive correlation, with a coefficient (r) of 0.580 and a p-value of 0.001, indicating significance at the 0.01 level. Consequently, the null hypothesis, which posits no significant relationship between plyometric training and the psychological well-being of young cricket athletes, is rejected. Instead, the alternate hypothesis, asserting a positive and significant relationship, is accepted. This shows that engaging in plyometric training is associated with enhanced psychological well-being among these athletes. The strong correlation indicates that as participation in plyometric training increases, so does the psychological well-being of young cricket athletes. This improvement may stem from factors such as increased self-efficacy, enhanced mood, and greater resilience, all of which are critical for athletes' mental health and performance. Thus, the findings underscore the importance of incorporating plyometric training into the training regimens of young cricket athletes to foster better psychological outcomes. Engaging in plyometric training is associated with enhanced psychological well-being among young cricket athletes due to its multifaceted benefits. The high-intensity nature of plyometric exercises boosts endorphin levels, improving mood and reducing stress. Additionally, the emphasis on explosive movements fosters a sense of accomplishment and self-efficacy, leading to increased confidence. As athletes see improvements in their physical performance, they experience a psychological uplift. The strong correlation suggests that the more these athletes participate in plyometric training, the greater their psychological well-being, highlighting the importance of such training in their overall development.

Table 1.5: Pearson Correlation analysis between Weight training with greater improvements in the physical strength of young cricket athletes

Variables	Improvements in the physical strength of young cricket athletes		
	R	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Weight training	0.750**	0.001	35

Table 1.5 presents the results of the Pearson correlation analysis between weight training and improvements in the physical strength of young cricket athletes. The findings reveal a strong and significant positive relationship, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.750 and a p-value of 0.001, which is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which posits no significant relationship between weight training and improvements in physical strength, is rejected. Instead, the alternate hypothesis, asserting a strong positive relationship between weight training and enhanced physical strength in these athletes, is accepted. This indicates that as participation in weight training increases, so does the physical strength of young cricket athletes. The substantial correlation highlights the effectiveness of weight training in building strength, likely due to the structured resistance exercises that promote muscle growth and power. As a result, weight training serves as a crucial component of their athletic training regimen, contributing significantly to their performance on the field. The strong positive relationship between weight training and enhanced physical strength in young cricket players can be attributed to the structured nature of resistance training, which targets major muscle groups and promotes muscle hypertrophy. Weight training enhances neuromuscular coordination, leading to increased power and explosiveness essential for cricket performance. Moreover, it improves overall body composition, contributing to better endurance and agility on the field. As players engage in consistent weight training, they develop stronger muscles, which directly translates to improved physical capabilities, thereby elevating their performance in matches and training sessions.

The psychological impact of plyometric and weight training on young cricket athletes in Jammu & Kashmir is significant, influencing both performance and mental well-being. Plyometric training, which includes explosive movements like jumps and bounds, has been shown to enhance not only physical attributes such as speed and agility but also psychological resilience. Young athletes engaged in plyometric exercises often experience increased self-efficacy and confidence due to observable improvements in their performance metrics. For instance, studies indicate that adolescents show greater neuromuscular adaptations from plyometric training compared to older groups, leading to enhanced upper body power and balance. This boost in physical capability can translate into a more positive self-image and reduced anxiety during competitions. The dynamic nature of plyometric training can foster a sense of enjoyment and engagement among young athletes. The variety in exercises helps break the monotony of traditional training routines, making workouts more stimulating. This engagement is crucial in maintaining motivation levels, especially in regions like Jammu & Kashmir, where young athletes may face socio-economic challenges that can affect their mental health. Conversely, weight training also plays a pivotal role in developing psychological strength among young cricketers. It instills discipline and a strong work ethic through structured routines and measurable progress. As athletes increase their lifting capacities, they often experience a sense of accomplishment that boosts their overall mental resilience. The result indicates that resistance training can improve not just physical strength but also mental toughness, which is essential for handling the pressures of competitive sports. Both plyometric and weight training contribute positively to the psychological landscape of young cricket athletes in Jammu & Kashmir. By enhancing self-confidence, motivation, and mental toughness, these training methods prepare athletes not only physically but also mentally for the challenges of competitive cricket. Coaches should therefore integrate both training modalities into their programs to maximize both physical performance and psychological well-being.

Plyometric and weight training have distinct impacts on the physical performance outcomes of young cricket athletes. Both training modalities contribute significantly to improving key athletic qualities such as speed, agility, and overall strength. Plyometric training focuses on explosive movements that enhance power and speed. Research indicates that young cricketers participating in plyometric exercises show marked improvements in both speed and agility. A study involving young athletes demonstrated that plyometric training led to significant enhancements in sprinting speed as measured by a 30-meter sprint test, alongside improvements in agility assessed through T-tests. While the differences between plyometric and traditional training were not statistically significant, the practical implications suggest that plyometrics may offer superior benefits in developing explosive power, which is crucial for cricket performance. Specific adaptations in upper body strength and balance were noted among younger athletes engaging in medicine ball plyometric training. This type of training resulted in significant improvements in muscle activation and upper body power, indicating that plyometric routines can enhance performance across various aspects of the game. The adaptability of younger athletes to these training methods underscores their effectiveness in fostering essential skills for cricket. Weight training, on the other hand, primarily enhances muscular strength and endurance. Studies have shown that resistance training significantly improves speed among young cricketers, with notable differences observed before and after an 8-week training program. The structured nature of weight training instills discipline and promotes muscle hypertrophy, which is beneficial for overall athletic performance. Comparative analyses suggest that while both plyometric and weight training improve physical performance, plyometric training may be more effective for enhancing speed due to its focus on explosive movements. However, weight training remains crucial for building foundational strength necessary for sustaining high-performance

levels during matches. Integrating both plyometric and weight training into the training regimens of young cricket athletes can optimize their physical capabilities, preparing them effectively for the demands of competitive cricket. Coaches should consider a balanced approach that leverages the strengths of both methodologies to maximize athletic development.

CONCLUSION

The psychological and physical impacts of plyometric and weight training on young cricket athletes in Jammu & Kashmir are significant, contributing to both performance enhancement and mental resilience. Plyometric training, characterized by explosive movements, has been shown to improve agility, speed, and power, which are crucial for cricket performance. Studies indicate that this form of training not only enhances physical capabilities but also boosts athletes confidence and reduces anxiety during competitive situations. Weight training, on the other hand, develops overall strength and muscular endurance, essential for injury prevention and improved performance in cricket. Research highlights that consistent weight training leads to better physical conditioning, allowing athletes to withstand the rigors of the game while fostering a sense of accomplishment and motivation. Collectively, these training modalities foster a holistic development approach for young athletes, enhancing their physical attributes while also nurturing their psychological well-being. The combination of improved physical fitness and heightened mental toughness equips these athletes to perform at higher levels, ultimately contributing to their success in cricket and other sports disciplines.

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