TASK AND EGO ORIENTATION OF CRICKET PLAYERS: AN ANALYTICAL COMPARISON OF FOUR SOUTHERN INDIAN STATES

SANDY NAIR, DR RAZEENA K.I.

Abstract: The purpose of the study is to analyse the task and ego orientation of U-19 South Indian cricket players from four southern states of India, namely Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The data was collected with the 'Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire' developed by Duda. Descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation were used to know the nature of data, and ANOVA was used to determine the differences between the group in selected psychological variables. The level of significance was kept at 0.05 level. Results show that no significant difference exists in the task and ego orientation among U-19 male cricket players in the four southern states of India.

Keywords: Cricket, Goal Orientation, Task Orientation, Ego Orientation, Competitive Stress.

Introduction: Compare to many other games, cricket has the unique beauty of keeping suspense till the last moment. Even though this suspense adds the entertainment and sponsorship value of the game, the same add increased stress on players. As a result, the player may not be able to focus on the game. It will adversely affect not only his performance but the performance of the entire team also. In those matches where galleries are full of spirited spectators like any tournament's final, there are several situations where players get distracted often. The outcome may affect the player's future career. At the league level, it can even affect the team's sponsorship. Sports psychologists identified this issue among players in general and tried to address them since the middle of the second half of the last century.

The tendency of goal orientation of a player is the root of any anxiety-management in him (Belli, 2015). Goal orientation refers to the expectation of a player about the sport when participating in a game. Each player will have a different goal orientation from another (Belli, 2015). Goal orientation is divided into task-oriented goals and ego-oriented goals (Duda & Nicholls, 1992). Task orientation is used to describe the urge of players to participate in any match with the sportsman spirit of self-examining the skills than focusing on whether winning or losing the game. On the contrary, ego orientation refers to the tendency of players to join any match with a narrow aim of self-promotion irrespective of the kind (professional, amateur or friendly) of the competition or the athletic level of colleagues and opponents. Against the popular belief, the same person will tend both task and ego orientation within; however, the degree of both differ in him. Considering the relative difference in the value between two variables, the orientation of a person in addressing specific situations differ.

Background of the Study: Since the end of the nineteenth century, cricket has witnessed several leaps from time to time. The privateness of matches has vanished gradually, and it became a common man's game in the post-war period. When private capital interests entered the sector, along with dilution in the elite culture of the sport, upgrading competitiveness and entertainment value of the sports became a pressing need of time. Apart from timeless tests and five-day tests, four-day first-class matches were introduced at the beginning of the last century. One day limited over matches were started in the 1970s. Subsequently, twenty20 and T10 were introduced. These developments simultaneously demanded competent management, stadiums, practising nets, gymnasiums, physicians, coaches and others; among them most demanded were talented players. Compared to other team games in general, cricket demands exclusive talent for different positions in the sport. Bowler, batsman and wicket-keeper are expected to have specific skills to become a 'gifted' player. As cricket is a carnival of different kinds of players joining each other to make an orchestrated performance, all of them are supposed to play very cohesively with utmost team spirit.

Even though a team of eleven, each position within the cricket team practically performs like an exclusive team-within like bowlers and batsmen. It is not easy to replace one player in one particular position with someone else in another position compared to other games. Even if players of one position performed well, players' poor performance in another position could lead to the team's failure. Among them, the wicket-keeper alone can change the equations of a match. So that each player in the team has the responsibility to play dutifully and in tune with the team chemistry. All these pointed to the degree of stress created in a player in a cricket match; hence measures to address this stress, pressure or anxiety deserve special attention in the training of cricketers.

Scope of the Study: Scholars observed that an athlete with considerable task orientation generally associate with desirable or adaptive achievement behaviour, i.e. his primary goal will be to realise

mastery of the task at hand (Pensgaard & Roberts, 2003). So that his perception of sport-capability would be typically centred around consistent progress in athletic and sport skills (Jagacinski & Strickland, 2000); his focus is on improving the talent and working hard to the task with little or no concern for the outcome. So that, within the sports context, task orientation is considered as a positive predictive (Kavussanu, 2006). On the contrary, an athlete who is ego-oriented approaches sports-capability as an exhibitionist performance. Such players will be more interested in demonstrating the superiority of their athletic skills to others, even resorting to cheating to become successful in the match. Those players with ego-oriented goals are more particular to avoid challenges and be unwilling to struggle maximum in adverse circumstances (White & Zellner, 1996). The knowledge on such goal orientations within individuals and application of such within sports help to develop a competent generation of sportspersons. The relevance of goal orientation is specifically high in identifying younger players, like talented children, from the beginning (Fox, Goudas, Biddle, Duda, & Armstrong, 1994).

Statement of the Problem: Considering the underdeveloped sports market of India, particularly cricket, the psychological orientation of players is a vital area that requires urgent attention from all stakeholders. Individuals differ in coping with competitive stress based on their task and ego orientation. Similarly, age, gender, and nature of the sport influence a player's level of task and ego orientation. As like as most of the popular team sports, all these factors mentioned above are very crucial in cricket too. Considering the increasing level of competitive stress of the game irrespective of formats over time, addressing a player's task and ego orientation becomes very important. Psychological coaching will help to sharpen the required mental skill according to the requirements. However, as mentioned above, studies in this regard are hardly available in India. The paper is attempting to fill this gap.

Objectives and Research Questions: The paper is a quantitative attempt to discover and compare the extent of the task and ego orientation of U-19 male cricket players of four South Indian states of India, namely Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The research questions of the present paper are given below.

1. What is the level of task orientation of U-19 male cricket players of four South Indian states of India?
2. What is the level of ego orientation of U-19 male cricket players of four South Indian states of India?
3. Whether there is a difference in the task orientation of U-19 male cricket players of four South Indian states of India?
4. Whether there is a difference in the ego orientation of U-19 male cricket players of four South Indian states of India?

It was also hypothesised that there would be a significant difference among selected U-19 men state-level cricket players in the task and ego orientation.

Review of Literature: Even though sports psychology literature is wealthy with studies on competitive stress, psychological skills, mental toughness, and other many variables, very few made expeditions on the rough terrain of goal orientation of players. As goal orientation is one of the principal pillars on which the 'mental playability' of a player stand, the area demands the exclusive attention of researchers. Those observed sudden variations in the attitude of players within the match tried to go beyond the familiar concepts of stress and mental toughness since the second half of the last century; but it was at the end of the 1980s that the concepts of task and ego orientation became established (Dweck & Elliott, 1983; Maehr & Nicholls, 1980).

There were studies on goal orientation of players in football (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage & Kavussanu, 2008; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006; Smith, Balaguer, & Duda, 2006; Van-Yperen & Duda, 1999), hockey (Bergin & Habusta, 2004) and another thirty-two sports (Lochbaum & Cetinkalp, 2016). Scholars studied the relationship between goal orientation and the sources of enjoyment of players (Yoo & Kim, 2002) and the link between task orientation and motivation in sport (Duda, Chi, Newton, Fry, & Catley, 1995). The combined effect of both task and ego orientation on sport motivation was also studied (Fox, Goudas, Biddle, Duda, & Armstrong, 1994). Studies also found that task and ego orientation are positively related to pro-social and anti-social activities, respectively (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage & Kavussanu, 2008; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006). Gender wise studies found that males are more ego-oriented and females are task-oriented (Murcia, Cervello, & Coll, 2011; Hanrahan & Cerin, 2009). Similarly, the team players show more task orientation, whereas those in individual sports display more ego orientation (Hanrahan & Cerin, 2009).

Attempts to measure goal orientation also started in the 1970s (Lochbaum & Cetinkalp, 2016). In 1989, the 'Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire' (TEOSQ) was developed, which helped to measure an individual's goal orientation most accurately (Fox, Goudas, Biddle, Duda, & Armstrong, 1994). TEOSQ overcame the limitations posed by the Competitive Orientation Inventory (Vealey, 1986) and Sport

Orientation Questionnaire (Gill & Deeter, 1988). Later Perception of Success Questionnaire (PSO) was also developed (Roberts, Treasure, & Balague, 1998).

Sources of Data and Methodology: For the purpose of the study, 50 each U-19 men state-level cricket players were selected from cricket associations of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka during the year 2014-15. The age of players was 16 to 19 years, and the average age of subjects was 17.5 years. The variables for the study were task and ego orientation in sports. The tool used to assess the variable 'the Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire' (TEOSQ) developed by Duda (Duda, 1989). TEOSQ is used to assess whether an individual defines success in a sporting context as 'task orientated' or 'ego orientated'. The questionnaire was developed to assess individuals' different orientations to achievement, such as task and ego, which are simultaneously getting activated in any athletic context (Duda & White, 1992; Duda, 1992; Duda, 1989).

The researchers were present while administering the questionnaire. The respondents themselves were expected to fill the questionnaire, and they were asked to respond to each of the statements as truthfully as possible. In order to address the problem of language, a local translator was always present in the collection of data from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. As soon as they complete the test, the investigator collected the data. The athletes were assured of the confidentiality of the report.

In accordance with the hypothesis, the analysis of the cricket player's descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation was computed for the selected psychological variables. To determine whether the differences exist state wise in selected psychological variables, ANOVA was used. Where ever the ANOVA is found to be significant, Tukey's pairwise comparison test was used. A calculated '*p*' value less than 0.05 is considered to be statistically significant. The statistical analyses were carried out with the help of SPSS 16.0 for Windows.

Analysis and Findings of the Data: The descriptive statistical tools of mean and standard deviation are calculated to assess the general nature of the collected data of task and ego orientation. The results are given in the following.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of U-19 Male Cricket Players in Task Orientation

State	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
TNCA	50	4.76	0.48
ACA	50	4.72	0.45
KCA	50	4.64	0.48
KSCA	50	4.82	0.39
Total	200	4.74	0.45

Source: Calculated Figures

TNCA – Tamil Nadu Cricket Association; ACA – Andhra Pradesh Cricket Association; KCA –Kerala Cricket Association; KSCA – Karnataka State Cricket Association.

The nature and level of task orientation were estimated here. The mean of fifty players from TNCA are 4.76 (SD = 0.48), ACA are 4.72 (SD = 0.45), KCA are 4.64 (SD = 0.48), and KSCA are 4.82 (SD = 0.39). Based on this result, it seems that the cricket players of Karnataka have more task orientation than other states' cricket players. The mean of the total two hundred players is 4.74 (SD = 0.45). So that the mean value of task orientation of cricket players' Tamil Nadu and Karnataka is more than the mean value of two hundred, whereas it is less for cricket players' of Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. When the task orientation is highest for Karnataka cricket players, it is the least for cricket players' of Kerala. The tendency to deviate from the average is less in the case of cricket players' of Karnataka whereas highest in the cricket players' of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The results show that the task orientation of players is more or less similar as the tendency to deviate from the average shows minimal values. In order to compare the value of task orientation with each other, the analysis of variance is calculated below.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance of Task Orientation of U-19 Male Cricket Players

Source of variance	**SS**	**Df**	**MSS**	***F***	***p***
Between Group	0.86	3	0.29	1.393	0.246
Within Group	40.10	196	0.20		
Total	40.96	199			
Significant at 0.05 level					

Source: Calculated Figures

Table 2 reveals no significant difference (F= 1.393, df = 3, p = 0.246) in ANOVA of task orientation scores of U-19 men state-level cricket players from TNCA, ACA, KCA and KSCA. So that, as mentioned in the above explanation on mean values, the task orientation of players among the four southern states are almost similar. As the value of ANOVA is insignificant, Tukey's pairwise comparison test was not used. The mean and standard deviation of ego orientation is calculated and given below.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of U-19 Male Cricket Players in Ego Orientation

State	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
TNCA	50	3.00	0.61
ACA	50	3.06	0.65
KCA	50	2.84	0.58
KSCA	50	2.86	0.73
Total	200	2.94	0.65

Source: Calculated Figures

TNCA – Tamil Nadu Cricket Association; ACA – Andhra Pradesh Cricket Association; KCA –Kerala Cricket Association; KSCA – Karnataka State Cricket Association.

The mean and standard deviation of players were calculated to analyse the nature and level of ego orientation among different states. The mean of ego orientation of fifty players from TNCA is 3.00 (SD = 0.61), ACA is 3.06 (SD = 0.65), KCA is 2.84 (SD = 0.58), and KSCA is 2.86 (SD = 0.73). Players from Andhra Pradesh show the highest ego orientation among the four states. The mean of the total two hundred players is 2.94 (SD = 0.65). The value of ego orientation of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh are higher than the value of all players taken together, whereas it is less for Kerala and Karnataka. The tendency to deviate from the average is less in the case of Kerala, whereas highest in Karnataka. The results show that the ego orientation of players is more or less similar as the tendency to deviate from the average shows minimal values. Now the analysis of variance among different states is calculated in order to compare their value of ego orientation with each other. The details are given below.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance of Task Orientation of U-19 Male Cricket Players

Source of Variance	SS	Df	MSS	*F*	*p*
Between Group	1.77	3	0.57	1.378	0.251
Within Group	81.56	196	0.42		
Total	83.28	199			
Significant at 0.05 level					

Source: Calculated Figures

The table reveals no significant difference (f = 1.378, df = 3, p = 0.251) in ANOVA of ego orientation scores of U-19 men state-level cricket players from TNCA, ACA, KCA and KSCA. So that, as mentioned in the above explanation on mean values, the ego orientation of players among the four southern states are almost similar. As the value of ANOVA is insignificant, Tukey's pairwise comparison test was not used.

Discussion of Hypothesis: For comparing the values of task and ego orientation, the first and third table is reproduced in the following.

Table 5: Comparison of Mean and Standard Deviation of U-19 Male State Cricket Players in Task and Ego Orientation

State	N	Task Orientation		Ego Orientation	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
TNCA	50	4.76	0.48	3.00	0.61
ACA	50	4.72	0.45	3.06	0.65
KCA	50	4.64	0.48	2.84	0.58
KSCA	50	4.82	0.39	2.86	0.73
Total	200	4.74	0.45	2.94	0.65

Source: Calculated Figures

From the analysis, the respondents had more task orientation compared to ego orientation while doing sports. This is in accordance with other studies, too (Belli, 2015; Pepijn, Pol, & Kavussanu, 2011). Generally, in team sports like cricket, task orientation is higher than ego orientation (Belli, 2015). Considering the age of U-19 players, those in early adulthood, i.e. youth or university players, also show higher values of task orientation than the other (Belli, 2015).

The international male average of task orientation based on all studies is 4.06 with a standard deviation of 0.25. It is 4.13 (SD = 0.27) and 4.01 (SD = 0.28) for youth and university community respectively (Lochbaum & Cetinkalp, 2016). In the case of ego orientation, the international male average is 2.82, with a standard deviation of 0.44. It is 2.88 (SD = 0.50) and 3.08 (SD = 0.33) for youth and university community respectively (Lochbaum & Cetinkalp, 2016). Thus, all cricket teams' values of task orientation are showing higher mean values than the international average. Even if we equate U-19 players either as youth or university communities, their average values of task orientation are far better than international figures. But that is not the case with ego orientation. The general ego orientation of male players is lesser than the value of any teams taken here. But Kerala and Karnataka have lesser values of ego orientation than international youth figures. In the case of university figures, all these teams are showing a lower value than international figures.

Similarly, the four different states' U-19 cricket teams show almost similar task and ego orientation values. The analysis of variance of both task and ego orientation has no significant difference exists among the selected groups at 0.05 level. So that the hypothesis stated that there would be a significant difference among the selected U-19 men state-level cricket players in the task and ego orientation is rejected.

Conclusion: Considering the unexpected growth of the cricket market in the country with the introduction of league matches and the gradual expansion of sports in many countries, the near supremacy of India in the cricket world is getting challenged. Providing more facilities for physical training alone will not address this. Psychological skills training of players is urgently required to equip Indian youth to face future challenges. However, in the present world of cricket, psychological coaching is as important as physical; hence identifying the tendency of task and ego orientation of each player and taking measures accordingly is becoming more and more relevant.

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Sandy Nair
Assistant Professor, NSS College, Pandalam, University of Kerala
Dr Razeena K.I.
Associate Professor, Iqbal College, Peringamala, University of Kerala