

**MENTAL TOUGHNESS, SPORTS COMPETITION
ANXIETY AND FEAR OF FAILURE AMONG YOUNG
CLUB CRICKETERS**



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Abstract

The present study was aimed at determining the relationship between mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure among a sample of young Pakistani club cricketers. Relationship between demographic variables and study variables was also analyzed. The sample comprised of 201 club Pakistani cricketers including 185 boys/men and 16 girls/women. The data was collected through an online Google Form by using convenient sampling technique. Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire (Sheard et al., 2009), Sports Anxiety Scale-2 (Smith et al., 2006) and Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory- Short Form (Conroy, 2003) were used to measure mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure respectively. Correlational research design was used in this research. The findings revealed that sports competition anxiety had a significantly positive relationship with fear of failure, while sports competition anxiety was significantly negatively associated with age. Additionally fear of failure was significantly negatively associated with age. Regression analysis manifested that Mental Toughness had a non-significant effect in determining Sports Competition Anxiety and Fear of Failure. Numbers of years of playing cricket were negatively correlated with both sports competition anxiety and fear of failure. Gender differences were found as female players exhibited higher levels of sports competition anxiety and fear of failure as compared to their male counterparts. Further researches can help young cricketers in Pakistan, as very less literature is accessible related to this domain of research, especially on a Pakistani sample.

CHAPTER 1**Introduction**

Sports Psychology is a branch of psychology which involves the study of how performance effect on psychological factors of player and how participation in sports affects mental toughness during competition. Psychological and physiological aspects play an important part in deciding success in games and athletics (Grange & Kerr, 2010). Sports Psychology has become a developing field for the last few decades. Numerous studies have shown that psychological aspects have an effect on athletic success (Crespo, 2002) Sports psychology has a major impact on a sportsperson's mental health. Since it addresses the personal challenges that athletes face through training and provides guidance to athletes.

There have been several researches on the psychological factors that influence athletes' sports performance and lifestyles, one of which is mental toughness. Mental toughness is widely acknowledged as an essential component of sporting success, especially in cricket. It goes by a variety of names, including attitude of a big match, barrel, and tenacity, and it is generally understood to play a role in a cricketer's performance, despite being difficult to identify and understand.

Recreational and social evaluative dimensions exist concurrently in the context of sports competition (Miller, 1985). This trait makes situations that are challenging possibly anxiety-inducing, especially for youngsters who are still developing a coping strategy range. As a result, anxiety is among the most popular researched subjects in sports psychology, and it is still the case a significant subject of study for professionals and investigators around the world (Hardy, Woodman, & Carrington, 2004).

Mental Toughness

Mental toughness is made up of a set of concepts, orientation, behavior, and feelings that make it possible for athletes to maintain their composure during a game against hurdles, stress, or challenges (Gucciardi & Gordon, 2009). Mental toughness is one of the psychological aspects that are thought to be

essential for success and happiness in a variety of areas of life. Mental toughness is a term used by trainers, players, and sports psychology experts while speaking about psychological concerns that distinguish efficient from less efficient sportsmen (Gucciardi, Gordon, & Dimmock, 2009). Mental toughness is an estimate that can minimize worry and gain confidence. Mental toughness is a specific psychological trait that only a skilled athlete can master both before and after a practice or competition (Coulter, Mallett, & Gucciardi, 2010).

Regardless of the fact that widespread usage of the word "mental toughness," there is still little ambiguity about its definition and empirical implementation. Researchers such as Jones (2002), Thelwell, Weston, and Greenless (2005), and Gucciardi et al. (2009) have only recently offered some philosophical clarification to minimize the uncertainty around the concept's interpretation and operationalization. It originated as a broad term in the sense of sports training, as a collection of characteristics that enable an individual to improve as an athlete and to cope with challenging training and competitive conditions without losing confidence (Lin, Clough, Welch, & Papageorgiou, 2017). Many qualities have been proposed by experts to explain the essence of mental toughness for example: not allowing adversity to have an effect on results (Gould, Hodge, Peterson, & Petlichkoff 1987), coming back out of setbacks (Hector, Desmond, & Woods, 1995), having superior mental abilities (Bull, Albinson, & Shambrook, 1996), overcoming the fear of dealing with stress (Goldberg, 2005).

Clough, Earlie, and Sewell (2002) considered that mental toughness is made up of a combination of positive psychological influences that minimize negative emotional and actual repercussion. This allows sportsmen to reliably execute efficiently regardless of the circumstances. To put it another way, mental toughness is important not just when confronted with difficulties, but it also promotes proper concentration and determination even when conditions are favorable (Gucciardi et al., 2009). Loehr (1986) described mentally tough athletes as self-regulated intellectuals that maintain a cool demeanor, unfazed, and electrify in the face of difficulties. They are able to do so and they have the ability to initiate the flow of productive energies in the face of adversity. Self-

assurance, negativity management, concentration regulation, imagery and visualization regulation, inspiration, constructive power, and controlling one's temperament are the seven basic traits of mental toughness (Loehr, 1986).

One needs to be more reliable and stronger than his/her competitors when it comes to staying committed, concentrated, calm, and in charge under extreme stress (Jones, 2002). Mental toughness is described as an individual's feelings, attitudes, and actions as compared to the pressures of situations or social settings (Jones, 2002). Mental toughness is a psychological capability (Loehr, 1986). Mental toughness has been defined as a term that encourages constantly high performance (Weinberg & Gould, 2015).

Researchers in sport psychology have been working to define and characterize mental toughness in order to better understand this term, which has been widely used by athletes, analysts, entrepreneurs, performers, and scholars for many years but was little known until recently (Jones, Hanton, & Connaughton, 2007). Having a mental edge that allows you to (a) handle it greater than your competitors with the many pressures (tournament preparation, lifestyle) that sport puts on the athlete, and (b) be further reliable and superior than your competitors in staying strong-minded, concentrated, calm, and in command underneath stress (Jones et al., 2007).

Mental toughness, as other psychological skills, requires a lot of time to build. Mental toughness traits have evolved over time and were thought to be influenced by a variety of factors (e.g., motivational environment, instructors' leadership skills, and other people such as parents and team members) (Gucciardi et al., 2009). "Those who believe in the gradual principle do not generally believe that everybody is born with the same skill or potential or that everyone can achieve any goal... [Rather], everybody has the capacity to improve given the right inspiration, incentive, and instruction." (Dweck, 2012).

Mental toughness has previously been clarified primarily by a set of desirable characteristics that mentally strong sportsmen exhibit, such as stamina (Gould et al., 1987), the capacity to endure losses and bad results (Goldberg, 2005), and ultimate self-assurance (Clough et al., 2002). Jones (2002) concluded

that these mental characteristics have certain comparative advantages (e.g., a psychological superiority and the ability to cope differently than one's competitors), and that they distinguish between good and unsuccessful results. Possessing the innate or established psychological advantage that allows you to usually survive more effectively than your competitors due to multiple requirements (competition, practice, way of living) that competition puts on an athlete, and especially, be more reliable and superior compared to your competitors in staying firm, concentrated, optimistic, and in command under stress (Jones et al., 2007).

Clough et al. (2002) identified mental toughness to represent the characteristics of mentally tough people. Since they can stay cool and happy, mentally strong people are more socially active and outward. In certain cases, they are competitive and have lower fear thresholds than others. They will influence their own fate if they have a strong sense of self-belief and unwavering confidence. These people are unable to be influenced by rivalry or hardship. An unwavering perseverance and determination against a mutual objective under stress or difficulties is mental toughness (Middleton et al., 2004). Middleton, Marsh, Martin, Richards, & Perry (2005) reinforced the widely held belief that mental toughness is multidirectional. They stated that an athlete is mentally strong whether he or she carries a minimum any of the 12 mental toughness qualities listed in their report. Self-efficacy, ability, self-perception, goal awareness, importance, personal best, mission determination, perseverance, task concentration, positivity, stress reduction, and constructive associations are only a few of them.

Mental toughness is described as having an innate or established psychological advantage that allows you to: Always deal better than your competitors with the numerous constraints (competitiveness, training, and way of life) that sports puts on the athlete, and especially, be rather reliable and superior over your competitors in staying committed, concentrated, calm, and in control under pressure (Thelwell et al., 2005). According to research, "mental toughness" is a critical trait for professional sport performance and the growth of successful athletes (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 2002). Mentally tough athletes

can easily and successfully recover from traumatic situations, such as participation in competitions (Golby & Sheard, 2006). It's being more reliable and stronger than your competitors at staying motivated, concentrated, optimistic, and in charge under extreme stress (Clough et al., 2002).

Mental toughness is described as the existence of any or more of the following beliefs, attitudes, feelings, cognitions, and behaviors that affect how a person addresses, reacts to, and evaluates both negatively and positively defined demands, threats, and difficulties in order to successfully meet his or her targets (Coulter et al., 2010). Gucciardi and Gordon (2009) defined mental toughness as a specific ability to provide high efficiency on a consistent basis despite various degrees of situational demands. Many scholars have since attempted to characterize the construct based on further rigorous analysis, describing it as one's quality to reliably perform to the upper limit of one's talent and abilities. Jones et al., (2007) described mental toughness as a psychological attribute that enables sportsmen to be continually committed in displaying mental skills such as concentration, determination, trust, and discipline when dealing with competition pressures.

Fourie and Potgieter (2001) published a study on mental toughness that generated growing concern in the definition of the term around the world. Based on their study with 131 qualified trainers and 160 sportsmen from 31 competitive codes, they established 12 aspects of mental toughness. Motivation, managing strategies, trust management, ability to think, consistency and enthusiastic, rivalry, possessing the necessary technical and mental abilities, group cohesion, planning skills, mental resilience, moral imprisonment, and ethics were among the factors considered.

Previous literature on the production of mental toughness has given some, although limited, focus to the 'nature-versus-nurture' controversy. Some researchers have pointed at the positive characteristics of mental toughness, often using them in definitions of the term (Coulter et al., 2010). But the vast bulk of research looking at the development of mental toughness have supported the conditional existence of the idea and that certain external factors promote

the development of mental toughness (Connaughton, Wadey, Hanton, & Jones, 2008). As a result of these studies, researchers have produced a vast array of external factors which contribute to the growth of mental toughness (Mahoney, 2015)

Theoretical framework of mental toughness. Bull, Shambrook, James, and Brooks (2005) made another effort to explore the concept and qualities of mental toughness. Bull et al., (2005) proposed that various characteristics of a sporting circumstance influence the meaning and understanding of mental toughness in that context. They researched mental toughness in the field of cricket by evaluating 12 participants believed to be England's mentally toughest cricketers to assess this claim. A self-managed focus-group dialogue amongst those investigators kicked off the technique for collecting participants' viewpoints. This enabled them to provide a structure for conducting the interviews with the participants, which focused on the various complex dynamics that affect the formation and persistence of a "winning mind."

Model of mental toughness. As more researchers recognize the significance of mental toughness in fields such as performance, sports, industry, and daily life, mental toughness research has advanced. Perhaps more encouraging is the increased interest that is being generated among the general population and officials of these different disciplines. The breakthrough in studying the measurement and growth of mental toughness, as well as the increased awareness that researchers have gained, worked out pretty well for mental toughness research in this field. However, the lack of a universally agreed concept of mental resilience, as well as a standard that can be used and implemented in various ways, is concerning. There's also a question over whether it's best to look for sport-specific concepts and models of mental toughness, or to create a generic model that can be used in any situation (Bull et al., 2005; Connaughton et al., 2008; Gucciardi & Gordon, 2009).

The study with British cricketers described as mentally tough was extremely beneficial in pursuing the aim of creating a representation of mental toughness (Bull et al. 2005). Because of the observational nature of the study and

their effort to classify the variables affecting mental toughness growth, this research is critical to recognizing how different aspects of psychological resilience interact. The study also aids scholars in differentiating mental resilience learning techniques from more general mental skills teaching. They developed a model of mental toughness in cricket considering the research findings, emphasizing the impact of the surroundings on the establishment of multiple sorts of mental toughness: tenacious personality (enduring personality traits), strong behaviors (enables efficient exploitation of traits), and tough reasoning (winning thought patterns) (Bull et al. 2005).

The significance of environmental effects on mental toughness can be shown by the fact that a wider and deeper basis can offer a more robust framework for the growth of character, behaviors, and thought, as well as making each factor greater in the face of competition and difficulties (Bull et al. 2005). Bull et al. (2005) identified a variety of factors that could contribute to the creation of an atmosphere conducive to the growth of mental toughness. Parent involvement is critical, particularly during the early years of a player's career, as it can affect the player's attitude to cricket.

Coaches who prioritized results over athlete performance, concentrated on athlete vulnerabilities rather than skills, had low and unreasonable standards, and provided simple or unsatisfying training environments could stymie mental toughness progress (Gucciardi et al., 2009). These examples support evidence from SDT-informed research has demonstrated how social groups can both fulfill and impede the psychological needs of freedom, competence, and similarity (Bartholomew, Ntoumanis, & Thøgersen-Ntoumani, 2009). Supportive coaches tends to encourage need fulfillment and may promote mental toughness growth, while restricting coaches suppresses psychological needs and probably undermines attempts to improve mental toughness (Mahoney, 2015).

In the last 10 years, scholars have looked at the definition of mental toughness, with some researchers looking at samples from a variety of sports and/or groups of players, and others looking at sport-specific mental toughness characteristics (Steele, 2017). These studies have not yielded an agreement on a

specific definition of mental toughness, nor have they provided definitions that clearly differentiate the concept in different sports. In comparison to an athletic term, research has not yet been able to form a generic definition of mental toughness. As there is still some debate in the literature on the most appropriate concept of mental toughness, particularly in relation to various contexts and levels of ability, there is more agreement on the features that distinguish mental toughness. Multiple features that are thought to represent mental toughness have been discovered by researchers based on different disciplines and samples. There is some agreement in the argument for particular mental toughness traits; in fact, the study has identified a variety of key mental toughness traits, including self-assurance, attention discipline, self-motivation/work ethic, optimistic and tough mentality, appreciate and withstand pain, stamina, and sensitivity (Driska, Kamphoff, & Armentrout, 2012)

Sports Competition Anxiety

Anxiety is characterized as anxiousness and stress brought on by situational stimuli that are correlated with stimulation. These expectations are normally overwhelming, signaling to the athletes that there is a perceived gap between the demand and their ability to meet it (Sajadi, Mohamadi, Eskandari, Heidary, & Darbani, 2011). Athletes at all levels, professional and inexperienced, all face anxiety before a competition. Competition anxiety is anxiety that occurs during professional sports. A pounding heart, sweating palms, or joint weakening are all physical signs of anxiety in athletes. What distinguishes professional athletes from mediocre ones is how they handle those conditions (Hardy et al., 2004). To put it another way, tension is an unavoidable part of professional athletics, but mental conditioning will educate a sportsman how to actually deal with it, decreasing the influence it has on their productivity. This mental conditioning, which is the predominant domain of sports psychology, will help a sportsman in achieving their maximum ability on the field, leading to greater achievement.

One of the most pressing issues of contemporary sports psychology is anxiety (Athans & Sampson, 2013). Competitive anxiety has a significant impact

on a sportsperson's results (Esfahani & Soflu, 2010). Researchers made a significant breakthrough when they discovered that anxiety is a response to particular circumstances rather than a universal condition (Smith, Smoll, & Schutz, 1990). Before a game, athletes will feel fear, and if this anxiety interferes with their ability to perform well, it is considered a significant concern (Wine, 1980). Cricket, rather than any other game, is played in the mind. Cricket is a sport where anxiety plays a big part. The fear of defeat is the primary cause of sports anxiety (Smith, 1994). Anxiety is an unpleasant situation in which a person experiences discomfort, anxiousness, uneasiness, and anticipation as a result of the body's stimulation or arousal (Weinberg & Gould, 2015).

As we all know, competition is a social mechanism in which individuals are awarded awards based on their performance in addition to the results of those competing in the same competition (Coakley, 1994). Sports competition anxiety is an uncomfortable condition in sports that is characterized by a vague yet constant sense of anxiety and uncertainty before a game. Anxiety is a natural response to impending threat, whether actual or imagined. It is made up of two subcategories: cognitive (psychological) and somatic (physiological), all of which have an effect on success before and during competition. Negative expectations about achievement or self-evaluation, negative thoughts, capacity to handle, concern about results, fear of loss, inability to focus, and attention narrowing characterize the cognitive portion (Jarvis, 2002). Worry has been described as a distinguishing feature of trait anxiety (Schwarzer, 1996). That is, players who are vulnerable to fear have a tendency for worrying as a result of their tendency for observing situational risks (Mathews, 1990).

Pre-competitive fear is one of the most important issues of contemporary sports psychology. It has long been understood that psychological factors, especially anxiety, play a significant role in competitive environment; every player feels anxiety and fear before, during, and after competitions (Lizuka, 2005). Moran (2004) in his research discovered that causes like fear of failing and a loss of trust cause players to feel anxious. Competition anxiety is similar to fear; it is an intense feeling that most athletes experience when confronted with an obstacle (Athan & Sampson, 2013). Sports competition anxiety is a negative

mental condition in which agitation or stimulation of the body is correlated with feelings of anxiety, anxiousness, unease, and discomfort (Weinberg & Gould, 2015). Individual players in individual sports have greater levels of competitive sports anxiety than group participants (Simon & Martens, 1979).

Competitive sports anxiety is a characteristic, similar to (trait) nervousness that reflects an individual's propensity to interpret danger and encounter pressure in sporting situations (Lewthwaite & Scanlan, 1989). In comparison to players with reduced feelings of stress about competition, players with higher levels of competitive anxiety face situations including excessive panic or intermittent physical and psychological stress more often and profoundly in competitive situations (Amanendra, Gurmeet, & Himanshu, 2018). Burton (1990) suggests that an athlete's anxiety problems should not have to be seen as a negative factor in their results.

An uncomfortable psychological condition in response to perceived tension over the success of a task under extreme stress (Cheng, Hardy, & Markland, 2009). Sports competition anxiety is a general mental condition that individuals at all levels of competition encounter. Trait anxiety is a permanent aspect of one's identity, while state anxiety is a more adaptable, situation-specific form of anxiety (Weinberg & Gould, 2015).

Anxiety is described as the anxiety and concern that arises as a result of a stressful situation. Anxiety is a negative emotional state that is characterized by unease and nervousness. In general, there are two types of anxiety traits and states. Trait anxiety is a personality trait that remains consistently constant over time and predisposes a person to be anxious in a wide range of circumstances. State anxiety, on the other side, is a situation-specific anxiety that occurs "right now (Khan, Khan, & Haider, 2012).

The amount of state anxiety faced prior to an athletic contest is thought to be one of the causes that have a direct impact on athletic success. This is known as pre-competitive fear in the literature (Khan et al., 2012). Due to sports competition anxiety, athletes are unable to compete to their full potential. As a result, their success during the game is hindered, and they rarely succeed

(Patsiaouras, Chatzidimitriou, Charitonidis, Giota, & Kokaridas, 2017). As a result, constructive thoughts and improved coping skills are needed to overcome the challenges that can occur as a result of sports competition anxiety. The competitor will lose composure and their results will suffer if it is not done properly or misinterpreted (Gualberto, & Wiggins, 2008).

Mentally fierce individuals are less inclined to be troubled by unanswered questions and intense competition situations as upsetting and react with dysfunctional thinking and maladaptive behavior when it comes to anxiety (Hossein, Mohd, Soumendra, Anwar, & Muzaimi, 2016). Specific influences, such as success target orientations, were found to affect competitive anxiety (Amit, 2016). According to research, ego-oriented targets are positively correlated with sports competition anxiety, while superiority or role orientation is negatively associated with sports competition anxiety. Sports competition anxiety has also been linked to ego-oriented incentive environments, which rely on maximizing and contrasting oneself to another, whereas lower competition anxiety has been linked to mastery (task)-oriented environments (Smith, Smoll, Cumming, & Grossbard, 2006). According to the findings, self-esteem and sports competition anxiety have a negative association (Smith et al., 2006).

As a result, players with a high degree of sports competition anxiety are likely to have a poor level of self - efficacy, or likewise. The results of the research support that of Bawa (2001), who performed a study on male national level gymnasts and discovered that those who compete at a higher level have a mild level of competition anxiety than those who perform at a lower level. According to surveys, mentally strong players have lower levels of competition anxiety than less mentally tough players (Rogulj, Srhoj, Nazor, Srhoj, & ČAvala, 2006).

Tahmasebi, Mirheydari, Kaviri, and Shahhosseini (2012) explored the correlation among emotional intelligence, competitive anxiety, and mental toughness in a research. They discovered that emotional intelligence and competitive anxiety have a substantial negative relationship and that mental toughness and competitive anxiety have no relationship. Gucciardi, Hanton, Gordon, Mallett, and Temby (2014) anticipated that athletes with higher degrees

of mental resilience view obstacles as threats and experience less sports competition anxiety even when faced with a challenge.

One of the most significant individual factors that can affect sport competition has been discovered to be competitive anxiety. Competitive anxiety has a physiological and cognitive effect on performance, as well as interfering with emotional regulation (Neil, Hanton, Mellalieu, & Fletcher, 2007). Competitive anxiety is affected by a variety of personal influences, including social coping mechanisms, motivation, and, most recently, mental resilience (Burton, 1990). The association between sports competition anxiety and mental resilience has been supported by correlational and longitudinal research (Parfitt, Jones, & Hardy, 1990).

Individuals who score high on competition anxiety measures suffer greater state anxiety than those who score low on competition anxiety measures, especially in highly competitive, evaluative situations, according to research (Martens, Vealey, & Burton, 1990). As a result, it's important to research competition anxiety and the effects it has on the consistency of the sports event. The urge to develop competitive anxiety, especially cognitive anxiety manifested as fears, is linked to the perception of self-presentational danger during athletic competition (Wilson & Eklund, 1998). Self-presentational problems were shown to be closely correlated with cognitive anxiety rather than somatic anxiety, and self-presentational concern variables could account for a significant portion of the variation in competition anxiety (Wilson & Eklund, 1998).

Individuals with high sports competition anxiety are more concerned about variables related to unfavorable social assessment, according to studies, than those with low sports competition anxiety (Dunn & Dunn, 2001). There is a variety of research that shows a connection between increased self-awareness and different types of anxiety (Lechner & Rosenthal, 1984). Athletes are predisposed to competitive sports anxiety for a variety of reasons, including trait anxiety (Gould, Horn, & Spreeman, 1983). True and perceived self-presentational threats exist in competitiveness. Athletes have the ability to transmit a number

of misleading representations of themselves to a variety of evaluative others in competition (Wilson & Eklund, 1998)

Theoretical framework of sports competition anxiety. The effect of fear on success has gotten a lot of attention in the sport psychology literature. The inverted-U theory was one of the first hypotheses proposed. According to the inverted-U theory, competence and competition anxiety can be perceived as a U-shaped spectrum (Yerkes & Dodson, 1998). High competition anxiety causes performance to suffer, whereas low competition anxiety allows for optimum performance. Additional arousal/anxiety allows output to degrade past this stage, according to the model (Yerkes & Dodson, 1998). The drive model, on the other hand, suggests a there is a clear link between achievement and state anxiety, with higher anxiety resulting in improved productivity (Hull, 1943). High levels of arousal/state fear, according to the model, enhance a person's prevailing reactions to a challenge, resulting in higher-quality results. The reverse hypothesis adds another layer to the anxiety–performance relationship by claiming that how arousal/anxiety influences performance is determined by the individual's perception of their arousal/anxiety levels as maladaptive or constructive (Apter, 1984).

These early ideas served as a solid basis for the creation of more multidimensional models. The scientific model of sports competition anxiety was one of the first systematic multidimensional models to appear (Smith & Smoll, 1990). When presented with a competitive sporting environment, this psychological framework stated that an individual would analyze the observed discrepancy cognitively of contextual factors, capital, outcomes, and the “significance” of outcomes (Smith & Smoll, 1990). The person's somatic and cognitive sport-specific state anxiety, as well as current defensive activities such as a range of coping methods, can all influence the above-mentioned stress response process (Smith & Smoll, 1990). Task-relevant or task-irrelevant emotional, behavioral, and physiological reactions will follow depending on the stress response, influencing corresponding competition results. The model further suggests that the competition performance would affect any subsequent

competitive sports conditions, as well as any corresponding thought patterns and neural arousals associated with those scenarios (Smith & Smoll, 1990).

In terms of competitive anxiety when gender was taken into account, the results revealed that there were no major gaps between boys and girls who played basketball. This is because the importance of gender equity is encouraged, and coaches are educated in this area. Studies conducted in conventional tournaments with gender-segregated teams, on the other hand, affirm those variations (Pons, Viladrich, Ramis, & Polman, 2018). Athletes can experience discomfort as they train for competition, which may manifest itself during the competition. Given that pre-competitive anxiety may have a negative impact on competition results (Weinberg & Gould, 2015). Sport psychology practitioners, trainers, and competitors would benefit from knowing the individual variations that predispose athletes to feel elevated anxiety prior to competition. Individual sport athletes are found to have higher levels of competitive anxiety than team sport athletes, according to research (Simon & Martens, 1979).

According to a comprehensive review of literature on anxiety disorders in young athletes, with a particular focus on female athletes, women have a higher incidence of anxiety than men (Patel, Omar, & Terry, 2010). Women had less somatic anxiety than men, but there were no major variations in the cognitive anxiety subscale of Competitive State Anxiety Inventory (Arbinaga Ibarzabal, 2013). On the other hand, numerous journal articles have attempted to determine the impact of sports competitive anxiety on an athlete's age group. In this context, no substantial variations in sports competition anxiety were observed in any of the subscales based on the evidence collected in our research. The significance of these discoveries might be attributed to the fact that the competition program modifications made in both divisions are identical, and they have the same goal: to use the competition as a form of preparation, as informative as possible, rather than as an objective (Pons et al., 2018).

Fear of Failure

Fear of failure has been described as a constant and unreasonable fear of failing to meet one's own or others' expectations and goals. Failure apprehension leads to anxiety, self-doubt, and fear about one's ability to escape failure or attain prosperity (Covington, 1992). Fear of failure is a motivation in the domain of accomplishment that is best defined as an avoidance purpose. The dispositional propensity to move toward and attempt to prevent failure in order to achieve objectives since one feels guilty on failure can be described as fear of failure. It's crucial to emphasize at this stage that fear of failure does not suggest that "failure" is dreaded for its own sake; rather, it relates to the "guilt" which occurs with failure. (Conroy, Willow, & Metzler, 2002). Fear of failure is described as the avoidance of the proactive emotion of shame when faced with the prospect of failing in a difficult situation or at a difficult mission (Conroy, Metzler, & Hofer, 2003).

A more recent interpretation, on the other hand, refutes the concept's earlier one-dimensional build. "Fear of failure is the propensity to evaluate danger to the accomplishment of individually important whenever one fails to achieve one's objectives, the failure is viewed as challenging and feared, those who associate it with a negative outcome," according to the multi-directional theory of fear of failure (Conroy et al., 2003). As per studies, there are five views on the effects of loss, all of which are connected to risk management, and as a result, those effects are feared. The researchers developed the performance failure appraisal inventory, or PFAI, which assessed five forms of fear of failure, in order to provide a measurement instrument for assessing their definitions of fear of failure (Conroy, 2001). Fear of failure has the psychological risk of preventing an athlete from achieving their maximum potential (Conroy et al., 2002).

The motivation to prevent failure in evaluative contexts is described as fear of failure, which is linked to anticipatory shame and the ability to evaluate danger. Concerns over performance failure are the most common causes of stress for all competitors in competition, and constitutes a major

accomplishment and interpretative area. The prevalence of issues due to high fear of failure among competitors in performance environments is confirmed by research results, rendering it an urgent concern that must not be ignored (Conroy, 2001). Fear of failure is a performance motivation tendency that predisposes people to stress and discomfort because they have discovered that failure comes with negative consequences (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). In evaluative success situations where disappointment is tangible, fear of failure is conceptualized as the motivation to prevent failure (Conroy et al., 2002). There is indeed a desire to evaluate threat and guilt in this evaluative scenario, where failure is a possibility (Conroy & Elliot, 2004).

Concerns over performance failure are the most common causes of frustration and anxiety for competitors in competition, which is an extremely competitive field (Passer, 1983). Many athletes see winning as a benchmark for achievement, while failing is seen as a risk and a failure (Lewthwaite & Scanlan, 1989). A desire to avoid failure and/or the ability to experience humiliation or embarrassment as a result of failure is described as a capacity to experience fear or embarrassment as a result of failure (Atkinson & Cartwright, 1964). Elliot and Thrash (2004) placed guilt at the heart of the fear of defeat, describing it as an agonizing experience in which people view themselves as failures on a global scale. The connection between fear of failure and embarrassment has been established in both non-sport and sport samples; as a result, embarrassment tends to be a good fit for serving as the central feeling of the fear of failure reason (McGregor & Elliot, 2005).

Several descriptions of fear of failure have been offered over time, including the need to get out of an uncomfortable position or escape situations that may lead to belittlement. A tendency to escape failure and the ability to feel guilt and embarrassment as a result of failure is called fear of failure. A proclivity to feel nervous over defeat when confronted by adversity is also known as fear of failure. Both of these concepts of fear of failure imply that failure poses a danger to the person, but they don't specifically state that failure poses a threat to the individual (Conroy, 2001). Fear of failure has been associated to plenty of unfavorable consequences in sports, including burnout, drop-out, and excessive

concern, fatigue, and anxiety. The areas of fear of failure perceptions would be aided in this respect, because specifically mentioning that not meeting evaluative expectations for success will stimulate failure expectations (Conroy, Kaye, & Fifer, 2007). This shift suggests that fear of failure is fueled not only by a fear of embarrassment as a result of failure, but also by a fear of the repercussions of failure (Conroy et al., 2001).

A significant correlation between embarrassment and fear of failure, as well as a strong correlation among paternal humiliation and fear of failure, according to (Conroy et al., 2001). Individuals with a higher fear of failure indicated feeling more embarrassment than people with less fear of failure. Stronger levels of fear of failure have expanded the imperialism of embarrassment perceptions, reinforcing the centrality of embarrassment in the fear of failure experience, according to the researchers. Female athletes have higher levels of fear of embarrassment and humiliation, lower levels of fear of devaluing one's self-worth, and lower levels of fear of an unknown future than male athletes. This association between embarrassment and fear of failure has also been discovered in the sports domain (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). Many who fail believe they would be socially isolated as a result of their failure (Conroy, 2001).

Based on recent studies, this sensation (for example, shame) improves intellectual capacities, behavioral abilities, and emotions, leading to the creation of strategy and objectives to avoid obligations or the anxiety component (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). This hunt for it and recognition of these types of techniques (e.g., avoidance motivating tendency) also leads to the introduction of avoidance-based objectives and strategies (e.g., self-handicapping, performance-avoidance goals), which have negative consequences (Elliot & McGregor, 1999). In professional sports, there is a greater fear of disrupting important others and affecting important others' attention. In sports, there have been many articles about the risks of fear of failure (Anshel, 1991).

The effects of fear of failure can be disturbing, since people who are afraid of failing may have decreased self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as detrimental restless, emotional, and behavioral consequences, over time (Caraway, Tucker,

Reinke, & Hall, 2003). Fear of failure has been linked to a number of problem behaviors in the sporting world. Given the limited literature on the sport background, fear of failure has been linked to referees fatigue (Rainey, 1995), using by drugs by athletes (Anshel, 1991), Furthermore, elevated levels of concern, discomfort, and anxiety (both somatic and cognitive) have been linked to fear of failure (Conroy et al., 2002). It has been found to have an effect on the behavioral conduct, athletic success, and well-being of teenage athletes (Sagar, Lavallee, & Spray, 2009).

Athletes with a strong fear of failure have reported that they resist challenges or try incredibly hard to avoid failure (Elliot & Church, 1997). Fear of failure is positively related to superiority prevention, success strategy, and performance avoidance objectives (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). Fear of failure may have significant affective effects in players, as stress, anxiety, and poor self-esteem are all strongly linked to fear of failure (Schouwenburg, 1992). Individuals are encouraged to escape situations in which they believe and believe there is a risk of failing and that failure would have negative affective effects (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). Individuals tend to prevent failure in general, but the effects of failure in specific (Birney, Burdick, & Teevan, 1969)

Fear of failure is an avoidance-based motivation that motivates people to prevent failure in performance environments because failure causes embarrassment (McGregor & Elliot, 2005). Embarrassment, according to these psychologists, is at the root of the fear of failure. As a result, when assumptions or cognitive schemas about the aversive repercussions of failing are triggered by circumstances in which failure is likely, fear of failure develops. These beliefs potentially expose a person to construct hazard appraisals and, as a result, to feel the state anxiety correlated with fear of failure in interpretative circumstances (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). there is still a lack of understanding of how fear of failure affects various factors, such as an athlete's age, gender, sport style, skill level, and practice time, as well as how athletes respond to its consequences (i.e., what coping strategies are used). Further research into the developmental roots of fear of failure in sports is required (Sagar et al., 2009).

Fear of failure in performance environments may have a negative impact on children, impacting multiple facets of their lives. Preadolescent athletes were more concerned than young athletes over significant people losing interest. Fear of failure is based on the perception that the results of failure are adverse, and the expectation of a challenging result evokes fear. Fear of failure is a common source of distress in competitive environments. Sport is a common and important performance area for children and teenagers, but there is little research on their fear of failure in sports (Sagar & Stoeber, 2009). Conroy (2001) claimed that the occurrence of issues linked to a high fear of failure in youngsters in accomplishment settings is a significant social issue. Children's fear of failure can be emotionally draining when they understand by verbal and nonverbal interactions that good progress results in increased appreciation and validation, while failure results in isolation (Conroy et al., 2002).

As a result athletes that have a fear of failing always prioritize not to fail. In the short term, this mindset will lead to decreased performance, dissatisfaction (due to the gap between potential and real performance), and a reduction in the consistency of interactions. It will act as a deterrent to potential involvement in achievement activities in the long run (Conroy, 2001). Increased cheating in academic activities has been identified as one of the consequences of fear of failure in the academic domain (Monte & Fish, 1989) and increased fear, poor balance expectations, poor self-respect, negativity, and self-defeating behavior (Martin & Marsh, 2003).

Theoretical framework of fear of failure. Fear of failure is described as the desire to see failure as a barrier to achieving individually important goals. Individuals with a strong fear of failure have learned to equate failure with negative outcomes, and they therefore regard failure in analytic contexts as risky, believing that negative consequences will follow failure (Conroy et al., 2002). The cognitive motivational-relational theory of emotion was used to develop this new multidimensional paradigm of fear of failure (Lazarus, 1991) and is associated with other highly complex concepts of fear of failure (Birney et al., 1969).

Fear of failure is a profoundly ingrained motivation in self-assessment behavior that is distributed during adolescence, especially between the ages of 5 and 10 years (Atkinson, 1957). The limited literature on the roots of fear of failure suggests that it is firmly established in family interaction and integration relationships (McGregor & Elliot, 2005). Conroy et al. (2007) their research concentrated on the development of a theoretical framework for understanding fear of failure scores in children and adolescents. They discovered a limited impact size between age and fear of failure, supporting the idea that more mature children had marginally higher fear of failure levels than adolescent kids. According to Sagar and Jowet (2012), an athlete's age influences his or her threat of losing one's self-respect. Junior male athletes, in particular, registered lower levels of threat of losing one's self-respect than senior male players; fear levels are higher in adolescent female players than in mature female players.

In sports, losing, underperforming, or failing to fulfill one's position on a team will jeopardize both in terms of connections and socioeconomic position, acceptance, and popularity earned by participation. Since they showed greater degrees of anxiety about losing social power, team sport players will have Individual players had higher degrees of fear of failure (Massey, 2007). Athletes in team sports were also slightly more likely to be fearful of losing social status if they failed in competition (Massey, 2007). Failure in sports has the ability to evoke guilt, and this feeling may be amplified in a squad environment, where teammates' approval and recognition are crucial to the team's dynamics (Massey, 2007). Individual sport players share the burden of playing in front of mentors, friends, and other supporters, but team sport players have the extra the stress of not disappointing players of their very own squad. Young athletes will feel much more pressure to be welcomed by their teammates in a team game atmosphere (Ellison & Partridge, 2012).

There is a constructive correlation between fear of failure and sport anxiety, according to analysis (Conroy et al., 2002). Fear of failure is an accomplishment motive tendency that predisposes people to stress and discomfort because they have discovered that failure comes with negative consequences (Conroy & Coatsworth, 2004). When an athlete is presented with a

match scenario, fear of failure has been conceptualized as a reasonably robust cognitive schema that raises the probability of adverse self-evaluations (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). In evaluative contexts, these belief structures allow a person to make cognitive assessments of danger (Passer, 1983). As a result, it's understandable that people who are afraid of failing will feel anxious before a competition. Eysenck (2000) discovered that people with high stress levels have an expressive bias, which causes them to perceive stimuli as a risk.

Achievement motivation theory internalized fear of failure as the idea that a person must aim for success and escape failure that is correlated with feelings of guilt or embarrassment (Atkinson & Cartwright, 1964). Fear of failure has been theorized from a self-determination context, in context of how a person views the effects of defeat, and it is used as a situational predictor to form and affect motivation and commitment. Fear of failure was operationalized in terms of its five aversive effects in order to investigate the impact of fear of failure on competition anxiety and mental toughness (Conroy et al., 2002). Fear of failure and fear of losing one's self-respect; humiliation; fear of an unknown future; threat of losing social power; and fear of offending significant people were among these fears. Fear of failure, according to studies, may be useless if not described in accordance with its feared implications (Conroy & Elliot, 2004). Fear of failure is thought to be linked to negative effects such as guilt and humiliation, devaluing one's self-esteem, an unpredictable future, sacrificing social control, and disappointing significant people (Conroy, 2001).

Literature Review

Mental toughness and sports competition anxiety. Uncertain facts and intense competition situations are less likely to influence mentally strong individuals and retaliate against unhealthy thinking and maladaptive behavior when it comes to anxiety (Hosseini et al., 2016). Athletes with a greater level of mental toughness have less discomfort during sporting competitions (Golby & Sheard, 2006). Competition anxiety was shown to be greater in players with poor mental toughness (Kalinin, Balázs, Péntek, Duică, & Hanțiu, 2019). A low mental toughness score has been linked to a high level of competitiveness

anxiety. This finding is in line with previous research, which found that athletes who are not physically strong have higher anxiety levels than others (Schaefer, Vella, Allen, & Magee, 2016).

Mentally tough people are known for their commitment to a significant level, dedication, and consistency, even in the face of difficulties, and they see obstacles as opportunities (Gucciardi et al., 2014). This intellectual and attitudinal technique might help in understanding why mentally tough players have lower anxiety levels (Schaefer et al., 2016). People who are mentally strong are less prone to see unclear facts or intensive competition stressors as dangerous and react with erroneous thinking and inappropriate actions when formulated in terms of fear (Hosseini et al., 2016). This suggests that athletes might benefit from being able to regulate their emotions when competing (Kaiseler, Polman, & Nicholls, 2009).

Before and after a sports competition, almost all athletes feel varying levels of anxiety. This can also result in a poor performance. As a result, experts and coaches are working to identify and monitor it. The positive relationship discovered between mental toughness and sports competition anxiety is in line with theoretical concepts of mental toughness, which state that one of the most important characteristics of mentally tough sportsmen is their capacity to deal with negative feelings like competition anxiety (Thelwell et al., 2005). The association among mental toughness and competition anxiety in sportsmen competing in exposed versus walled sports was examined in a report. It was discovered that the level of competition anxiety, as well as self-confidence, varied between open and close talent athletes. Furthermore, open and close talent athletes vary in how their mental toughness leads to stress and self-assurance (Aufenanger, 2005).

Mental toughness refers to the ability to maintain one's optimal success state under pressure in a competition. Strong technique and mental skills are required to perform at one's best (Hanton, Thomas, & Maynard, 2004). Psychological ups and downs are often linked to success outcomes. Players that build a unique experience within themselves regularly perform well.

Consistency is the greatest test of mental toughness. It's possible that the conclusions are attributed to the fact that anxiety and mental toughness management are necessary for competitive mastery, and competitive success is directly linked to trait and state anxiety (Aufenanger, 2005).

Mental toughness and fear of failure. Failure is unavoidable, and athletes must develop mental toughness in order to overcome their fear of failure (Eytel, 2020). The players' self-reported fear of failure was adversely linked to higher levels of mental toughness (Gucciardi et al., 2014). Fear of failure was shown to be negatively correlated to mental toughness (Conroy et al., 2004). Fear of failure is linked to mental toughness in a negative fashion (Cowden, Fuller, & Anshel, 2014). Stability of results and inconsistent attributions after fear of failure are adversely associated in mentally tough athletes (Golby & Sheard, 2006).

A recent study by Cowden (2017) has aimed to explain how self-awareness is linked to the preservation of mental toughness, as well as how athletes' post-failure attributions are essential cognitions that underpin mental toughness. Maintaining a good mindset after a competition failure is an essential aspect of mental toughness (Meggs, Golby, Mallett, Gucciardi, & Polman, 2015). Controllability of results and dysfunctional attributions after defeat can be closely linked in psychologically tough performers. Since some scholars claim that mental toughness may be improved, it could be useful to look at how mental toughness predicts complex attribution patterns. The generalizability component of globalist, interestingly, is described as to which source of the success is judged to have an impact on broad or narrow variety of circumstances with which the individual is confronted (Golby & Sheard, 2006). It is reasonable to assume that mentally tough people will consider the source of disappointment to be localized and limited rather than directly applicable to potential performances, as this will make it easier to view as dysfunctional (Meggs et al., 2015).

Previous research has shown that controllability attributions are a significant basis for retaining trust while focusing constructively on loss, and is

thought to be an important element for a group of people that are committed to sustaining a healthy mental toughness (Golby & Sheard, 2006). In reaction to competitive failure, a study provided evidence that mental toughness predicts controllability attributions. Controllability was favorably linked to high mental toughness levels. This suggests that higher mental toughness levels are linked to conceptualizing the factors of failure as being under one's reach after a perceived failure, which is probably favorable to sustain self-belief and determination after failure. As a result, people with higher mental toughness levels are more likely to attribute failure on controllable reasons for poor performance (Coffee & Rees, 2009). Controllability attributions have been proposed in previous research as a vital basis for retaining trust while thinking excessively on failure, which is considered to be a major element of people retaining strong mental toughness (Golby & Sheard, 2006).

Sports competition anxiety and fear of failure. There is a clear connection among competition anxiety and the fear of failure. Athletes with high levels of competition anxiety often have a greater fear of failure (Hossein et al., 2016). In the Iranian Taekwondo Premier League, researchers looked into the association between fear of failure and familiarity with competitive anxiety. The findings revealed a positive relationship between sports competitive anxiety and fear of failure (Bakhtiary, Arabameri, & Shojaei, 2015). Fear of failure was identified as a significant contributor to sports competition anxiety (Gould et al., 1983). In wrestlers, it was discovered that those with elevated degrees of sports competition anxiety have a history of failure (Gould, Petlichkoff, & Weinberg, 1984).

Fear of failure is linked to anxiety about competing in sports (Conroy et al., 2002). Specific fear of failure can affect players by causing cognitive disturbance, somatic distress, worry, and overall sport anxiety, according to research (Conroy et al., 2002). Smith et al. (2006) Suggested that fear of failure is one of the most common causes of situational anxiety in professional sports. Over the course of an athlete's career, the adverse and optimistic effects of failure and achievement in athletics combined to build up competitive trait anxiety (McGregor & Abrahamson, 2000). Prior to the fencing tournament,

athletes with a greater general fear of failure were more likely to have elevated competition anxiety (Athanas, 2007). To put it another way, fencers who had a strong fear of failure still had a high level of cognitive anxiety before the competition began (Athanas, 2007).

Fear of failure and competitive state anxiety has a strong positive relationship in terms of both somatic and cognitive dimensions (Bakhtiary et al., 2015). Fear of failure has been identified as a significant contributor to state anxiety. The cognitive side of competition anxiety, on the other hand, has been seen to have a similar impact (Gould et al., 1983). Fear of failure, according to the theory, moderated the association between an ego-involving environment and both cognitive and somatic anxiety, as well as negatively in relation to self. Fear of failure, on the other hand, should not mediate the relationships between a task-involved environment and somatic and cognitive anxiety, as well as self-confidence (Gómez-López, Chicau Borrego, Marques Da Silva, Granero-Gallegos, & González-Hernández, 2020). Often athletes fear failure in a highly competitive sporting atmosphere, such as team competitions, because they are constantly evaluated based on results and progress parameters (Moreno-Murcia, Huéscar Hernández, Conte Marín, & Nuñez, 2019). Performance failure is one of the most common causes of situational tension in professional sports settings. Increasing the burden putting pressure on young athletes to achieve top achievements would almost certainly cause stress and fear of failure. (Smith & Smoll, 1990).

Relationship of Variables with Demographic Variables

Mental toughness and age. According to the study of Kayhan, Haciceferoğlu, Aydoğan and Erdemir (2018) there had been a positive link among both mental toughness age, as well as difficulties in leisure time factors. Athletes aged between 18 and 19 years are less confident in their minds than those aged 20 to 21 years (Kayhan et al., 2018). The conclusion that mental toughness is linked to age has significant theoretical consequences. It appears that as people get older; their mental toughness improves in general, as well as their degree of confidence, emotional intelligence, and life control (Gucciardi et al., 2009). As a result, developmental variables such as age might significantly

affect mental toughness. It might also be argued that sporting experience is a more complicated indicator than age. Professional exposure was an important component in the evolution of mental toughness in sportsmen (Connaughton et al., 2008). Significantly higher mental toughness scores were discovered to be linked to increasing age and years of experience (Kayhan et al., 2018).

Mental toughness and gender. On the total mental toughness, men scored much higher than women (Connaughton et al., 2008). Only a small number of researches explored gender differences in the mental strength of teenagers, although differences are seldom seen when gender differences have been studied. In research, the link between mental toughness, achievement, attitude and well-being was examined, with greater levels of mental toughness indicated by men. This might emerge from cultural variations since men and women receive different treatment within the local region according to societal standards (Clough, Earle, Perry, & Crust, 2012). Interestingly enough, gender differences in mental toughness were also shown in a sporting environment. Males were shown to be far more mentally tough than females, having age and experience indicating a higher degree of mental toughness for their specific activity. It was proposed that this apparent difference in gender may be caused by changes in the underlying manifestation of the traits associated with the mental strength of women and men (Nicholls, Polman, Levy, & Backhouse, 2009).

Sports competition anxiety and age. Today, since competitive anxiety is a significant issue in young athletes, there are researches that assess how it effects, at an intellectual functioning level, in young athletes. It becomes obvious that unsuitable early competing tactics might drive athletes to sports competition anxiety (Pons et al., 2018). Another significant element is the age of the athletes. In this regard, young athletes demonstrated high competition anxiety than in the lower groups (Grossbard, Smith, Smoll, & Cumming, 2009).

The fact that anxiety rises in older groups might be due to the fact that teenagers at that age have a larger desire for winning. In this regard, it's worth

mentioning that research studies are divided on whether or not anxiety is linked to a player's age (Kontos, 2004).

Sports competition anxiety and gender. Studies have connected competitive anxiety with the athletes' age and gender. In this respect, research suggests that women are more competitively anxious than men (Patel et al., 2010). During their research with young individuals, in team sports, they found that female athletes were far more concerned than male athletes and those male athletes were showing higher levels of concentration as compared to female athletes (Grossbard et al., 2009). When compared with their female counterparts male athletes have a higher level of competitive anxiety (Grossbard et al., 2009). Multiple studies show that male athletes are less anxious than female athletes, although there is no significant difference in sports competition anxiety among male athletes and female athletes (Scanlan & Passer, 1979). The findings revealed that there were substantial variations in sports competition anxiety among men and women cricketers (Garnit, 2011). Female athletes had a higher level of competition anxiety than male athletes (Martens et al., 1990).

Fear of failure and age. Fears of failure and rejection can start throughout secondary school development (ages 11 to 14), and fears of social judgment and criticism become more apparent throughout adolescent years (ages 15 to 18), when the future and academic accomplishment become more important (Gullone & King, 1993). According to studies, junior elite wrestlers were most concerned with making mistakes, not achieving to their potential, not increasing their performance, not competing in title competitions, doing poorly, and failing. All of these research found that the most common reasons of concern for adolescent athletes are fear of failure and fear of social rejection (Gould et al., 1983). Fears appear to be ingrained in children at an early age and may last into maturity (Conroy, 2001).

Fear of failure and gender. The findings revealed that the fear of failure among female athletes has been substantially higher than their male counterparts. Women also showed greater values on the sub scales of Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory Long Form (PFAI-L), Fears of Guilt and

Humiliation (FGH), and the Fear of Devaluation of the Future (FUF) (Conroy et al., 2003). According to Lewis (2000), female students are more prone to experience fear of failure because they are more concerned with building relationships. Miller (1985) makes a similar claim, claiming that female undergraduate students are more "ashamed" than male undergraduate students. As a result, female athletes are more likely than male athletes to be afraid of humiliation and disgrace. Since the fear of failure is linked to the self-efficacy and self-esteem, these anxieties might affect the career and decision-making of women (Nasution, Sipahutar, & Gultom, 2019). Results have shown that when other people are aware of their own failure, women will probably be more afflicted with embarrassment and discomfort and will be more conscious of others. Furthermore, if female athletes fail, the doubts of others about their performance on ability and competence could be more likely to be true. This can enhance the concern of women players over what other people think of them if they show failure attitude (Elliot & Thrash, 2002).

Rationale

We conducted this research because we wanted to explore mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure among Pakistani club cricketers. Very little research has been conducted on mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure among club cricketers in Pakistan, specifically in Islamabad and Rawalpindi hardly any research has been conducted on club cricketers that's why we wanted to explore more about cricketers in the context of the present study variables.

Many researches have explored the link between mental toughness and sports competition anxiety of players during competitions but we want to conduct research specifically on club cricketers and we are conducting research on both genders i.e. male cricketers and female cricketers.

There is almost no past research on the current study's variables together. This research has explored the relationship between the study variables. Sports psychology is a relatively recent discipline, particularly in developing nations such as Pakistan, where athletes' psychological

characteristics are barely examined (Amjad, Irshad, & Gul, 2018). Researchers are advised to continue to investigate and identify the coping practices of young athletes in relation to fear of failure throughout age groups (Conroy, 2001).

For the past two decades, sports technology has progressed by leaps and bounds. It is important for the athletes' psychological health. It may aid in improving athletic performance by decreasing psychological barriers to good athletic fitness, enabling athletes to achieve their maximum athletic capabilities (Anshel, 1991). There has been very little research on the variables in the present study, especially in the field of cricket. It is critical to resume exploring fear of failure between adolescent sportsmen because (a) it enables scholars to examine the progress of appropriate and destructive behaviors with cultural implications, and (b) fear of failure may play a role in underperformance and distress, as well as take the focus away from the quality of the sport participation experience (Conroy, 2001).

The aim of the proposed research was to draw attention to the general lack of literature on mental toughness and fear of failure, as it is also critical to learn how mentally tough athletes deal with fear of failure. As a result, the present research has looked at the relationship between mental toughness, sports competition anxiety, and fear of failure. Fear of failure is an important construct to explore because it can directly lead to performance deficits and dissatisfaction, potentially lowering the consistency of sports participants' experiences (Conroy, 2001).

Chapter 2

Method

Objectives

Following were the objectives of the present study:

To find the association among mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure in a sample of young club cricketers

To find the relationship between study variables and relevant demographics

Hypotheses

Following hypotheses were formulated on the basis of existing literature:

Mental toughness will negatively correlate with sports competition anxiety in a sample of young club cricketers.

Mental toughness will negatively correlate with fear of failure in a sample of young club cricketers.

Sports competition anxiety will positively correlate with fear of failure in a sample of young club cricketers

Operational Definitions

Mental toughness. When confronted with stressors, stresses, or obstacles, mental toughness is better described as an attitude that defines our

default response. Athletes' accomplishment or failure is impacted by a number of elements. A variety of factors influence it, including physical, tactical, technological, and psychological ones. The psychological aspect is the key factor in most sports, a winner and a failure (Brewer, 2009). Mental toughness refers to a collection of psychological characteristics that are required for optimal achievement. Mental resilience has consistently been recognized as one of the most significant psychological traits linked to sports performance by competitors, instructors, and sport psychologists (Robinson & Clore, 2001).

In several competitive sports, mental toughness has been demonstrated to be a necessity for accomplishment (Middleton et al., 2004). Problem-focused adjustment is one of the traits (Middleton et al., 2005) and self-reliance (Masten, Cutuli, Herbers, & Reed, 2009) have already been discovered to also have a relationship to mental toughness. Mentally strong sportsmen are driven to achieve and can maintain self-confidence despite various defeat in competition (Masten, 1994).

In current research mental toughness is measured with the help of Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire (SMTQ) developed by Sheard, Golby, and van Wersch (2009). High score on the questionnaire predicts that athletes are mentally tough and low score indicates less mentally tough athletes.

Sports competition anxiety. Anxiety is such a big issue in sports that the stronger you are and the greater your quality of competition, the more anxious you become. An athlete's success may be negatively impacted by anxiety. Regardless of how no matter how much talent or ability a person possesses, if he or she lives in fear of every case, he or she will never perform at their best. The exact effect of anxiety on athletic performance is determined by how you view your surroundings. Anxiety is thought to influence almost every aspect of human endeavor in today's world.

Usually described as an uncomfortable psychological condition resulting from the perception of stress in the execution of an activity under tension, (Dickerson & Gable, 2004) anxiety is a natural unpleasant feeling that sportsmen at all levels of competition feel. Anxiety is a natural unpleasant feeling

that sportsmen at all stages of competition feel (Lewis, 2000). Competitive anxiety in sports may make even the most accomplished sportsmen uneasy, and it is among the most significant and fascinating aspects of sport psychology (Robinson & Clore, 2001). The relation between anxiety and performance has been the subject of many thorough researches (McGregor & Elliot, 2005). If an athlete wants to achieve optimal performance, he must have the ability to overcome his anxiety (Lewis, 2000).

In the present study sports competition anxiety is measured with the help of Sports Anxiety Scale - 2 (SAS-2) developed by Smith et al. (2006). High scores on Sports Anxiety Scale - 2 indicate higher levels of sports anxiety faced by athletes before and during the competition and low scores indicate that athletes face less sports anxiety before and during the competition.

Fear of failure. Fear of failure is a common and quite well persisting and illogical fear of not being able to finish a task or achieve a given benchmark. Fear of failure has indeed been characterized as a continuous and unreasonable fear of failing to meet one's own or others' expectations and aspirations (American Psychological Association 2007, p.369). Failure apprehension leads to anxiety, self-doubt, and apprehension over one's capacity to avoid failure or obtain achievement (Dickerson & Gable, 2004). Fear of failure may be crippling, since it has been linked to issues with success, psychological health, ethical growth, and general wellbeing (Conroy, 2003). The effects of fear of failure are exhibited in both athletes competing in team sports and those competing on an individual basis, but the equivalence of their intensity in the different spheres is questionable. (Conroy et al., 2004). Fear of Failure's popularity as a psychological construct materialized in the twentieth century (Elliot et al., 2003).

Fear of failure is a motivational state in which a person feels guilt when they fail and overgeneralizes failure (Bartels & Magun-Jackson, 2009). Furthermore, people who are afraid of failure are less likely to use cognitive techniques (Brown & Dutton, 1995). This will improve student performance and encourage the use of cognitive techniques (e.g., self-handicapping; Cohen, 1992) that raises the chances of failure. Though shame is prevalent in FF, those with a high level of

efficiency may have more negative emotional states to failure in general. Participants in a recent study by Sagar and Stoeber (2009) were given circumstances in that they were to assume they would have lost a competitive sport and describe how they felt as a consequence of their defeat. In response to failure scenarios, the results showed positive associations between FF and negative emotions (e.g., humiliated, depressed, and disappointed).

In the current study fear of failure is measured using Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory – Short Form developed by Conroy, (2003). High scores on Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory – Short Form indicates more fear of failing and on the other hand low scores predict less fear of failing.

Instruments

A sheet of demographic and three instruments were used in the study.

Demographic sheet. A demographic sheet was prepared to set demographic information from the respondent. Demographics included in the study were age, gender, number years of playing cricket at club level, monthly family income in PKR, level at which player is currently playing cricket and education.

Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire (SMTQ). It is a 14 items questionnaire developed by Sheard et al. (2009). This scale was used to measure the participant's mental toughness in a sporting context. The rating is done on a four point Likert-type scale, varying from 1 (not at all true) to 4 (very true). A high score indicates high sports mental toughness of an athlete and vice versa. Alpha reliability of this scale is .97 as indicated by (Sheard et al., 2009). The maximum score on Mental Toughness Scale is 56 and minimum score is 14. The scoring was done by adding the scores on all the 14 items of the scale to get one composite score. The alpha reliability of Sports Mental toughness Questionnaire in the current study was .72.

Sports Anxiety Scale 2 (SAS-2). It is a 15 items questionnaire developed by Smith et al. (2006). The rating is done on a four point Likert-type scale, varying from 1 (not at all) to 4 (too much). High score indicates high sports

anxiety faced by athletes and vice versa. Alpha reliability of this scale is .91 (Smith et al., 2006). The maximum score on Sports Anxiety Scale-2 is 60 and minimum score is 15. The scoring was done by adding the scores of all the 15 items to get one total score. The alpha reliability of Sports Anxiety Scale - 2 in the current study was .89.

The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (PFAI-S). It is a 5 items questionnaire developed by Conroy (2001). The rating is done on a five point Likert-type scale, varying from 1 (do not believe) to 5 (strongly believe). Alpha reliability of this scale is .88 (Conroy et al., 2003). 1 total score is obtained on one measure. Score range is from 5 to 25. This scale has no subscales. The scoring is done by adding the scores of all the 5 items to get a composite score. High scores indicate higher fear of failing and vice versa. The alpha reliability on the scale in the current study was .78.

Sample

The sample consisted of 201 Club Cricketers (boys/men = 185, girls/women = 16). The acquisition of data was held through convenient method of sampling and snow ball method. Age range of the sample was 16-24 years ($M = 21.13$, $SD = 2.54$). In order to be part of the research, individuals were required to be playing cricket in a club or academy that was registered with Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). Additionally individuals should have been playing in any of these three levels: Under 19, Under 23 and senior level.

Table 1

Demographics Characteristic of the Sample (N=201)

Demographics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
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Gender

Boys/Men	185	92
Girls/ Women	16	8

**Current Level of
Playing Cricket**

Under19 years	44	21.9
Under23 years	64	31.8
Senior level	93	46.3

Education

Less than 10 years	36	17.9
10years	34	16.9
12 year	56	27.9
14 year	75	37.3

Table 1 illustrates the various demographics obtained from the sample ($N = 201$). The sample comprised of 92% boys/men playing club cricket and 8% girls/women playing club cricket. The sample consisted of 21.9% cricketers that were playing at Under 19 level and 31.8 % players were playing at Under 23 level and 46% players were playing 23 and above levels also known as senior level. In the sample there were 17.9% cricketers, who had less than 10 years of education, 16.9% had completed 10 years of education, 27.9% had completed 12 years of education and 37.3% of club cricketers had completed their 14 years of education.

Procedure

Convenient and snow ball sampling techniques were used after permission was given by the participants. Firstly, we designed an online Google Form which included a consent form and study questionnaires. To avoid

response distortion due to social desirability effect, true nature of the study was hidden from them. The respondents were first asked for their consent, and then told them to fill in the study measures. We sent the online questionnaires to club cricket players and asked them to fill it according to their personal experiences and observation during and before a competition. We approached the participants through different social media sources i.e (Whatsapp and Facebook Messenger) to send the Google Form link and asked the participants to fill the questionnaire by themselves, their fellow cricketers and asked the management of cricket clubs.

Results

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the relationship between mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure among club cricketers and to demonstrate the role of demographic variables (age, gender, years of playing cricket, current level of playing, education, and monthly family income) in relation to study variables. It was a quantitative study and the analyses were run on the data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-19). Pearson Product Moment Correlation was computed to explore the relationships between study variables of the study and certain demographics. Independent sample *t*-test was computed to ascertain group differences along with some demographic variables. Simple linear regression was used to investigate the role of predictor variable in determining the dependent variable. The results are presented in tabulated form in this chapter.

Table 2

Alpha Reliability and Descriptive Statistics for Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire, Sports Anxiety Scale- 2, Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory - Short Form, (N =201)

Scale	K	A	M	SD	Range		Skewness	Kurtosis
					Potential	Actual		
SMTQ	14	.72	30.5	6.2	14-56	14-56	-.21	2.30
SAS-2	15	.89	28	9.46	15-60	15-54	.67	-.45
PFAI-S	5	.78	12.8	5.12	5-25	5-25	.56	-.44

Note. k = Number of items α = Alpha reliability; SMTQ=Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire; SAS-2= Sports Anxiety Scale-2; PFAI-S = Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory-Short Form.

Table 2 summarises alpha reliability and descriptive statistics for mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure. This table shows mean standard deviation, alpha reliability skewness and kurtosis and minimum and maximum scores of each variable. Cronbach alpha suggests satisfactory internal consistency for all the measures employed. It can be seen that the scales used to measure mental toughness and fear of failure have shown a good reliability of .72 and .78 respectively, whereas the scale used to measure sports competition anxiety has produced an excellent alpha reliability of .89 indicating that these measures can be trusted with the respective constructs being measured on the study's sample. The skewness and kurtosis values indicate that the data is distributed. The value is regarded acceptable within the range from +1 to -1.

Table 3

Correlation Between Study Variables, Age, Experience of Playing Cricket and Monthly Family Income (N=201)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 SMTQ	-	-.05	-.08	.07	-.05	.06
2 SAS-2		-	.56**	-.18**	-.15*	-.04
3 PFAI-S			-	-.15*	-.14*	.10
4 Age				-	.54**	.12
5 Years of Playing Cricket					-	.11
6 Monthly Family Income						-

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$; SMTQ=Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire; SAS-2= Sports Anxiety Scale-2; PFAI-S = Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory-Short Form.

Table 3 displays Pearson Product Moment correlation values that indicate the direction and the degree of the link between the research and demographic variables. This table outlines bivariate correlations of the variables under the study Mental Toughness and Sports Competition Anxiety and Fear of Failure along with demographic variables age, years of playing cricket and monthly family income. Analyses demonstrated a significantly positive relationship between Sports Competition Anxiety and Fear of Failure. Additionally Fear of Failure showed significantly negatively associated with age. The demographic variable of years of playing cricket had a negative relationship with sports competition anxiety and fear of failure.

Table 4

Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Effect of Mental Toughness on Sports Competition Anxiety Among Club Cricketers (N = 201)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
								<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Constant	30.4		.052	.003	0.54	3.37	0.00	23.8	37.0
SMTQ	-0.79	-0.52				.107	0.46	-0.29	0.13

Note. SMTQ= Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire; *CI* = Confidence Interval; *LL* = Lower Limit; *UL*= Upper Limit; *S.E* = Standard Error.

Table 4 represents the role of Mental Toughness in predicting Sports Competition Anxiety. The given results show that Mental Toughness has a non-significant effect on Sports Competition Anxiety. The regression results show that the predictor shows 0.3% variance in the dependent variable where $R^2=0.003$ and $F = 0.548$.

Table 5

Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Effect of Mental Toughness on Fear of Failure Among Club Cricketers (N = 201)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
								<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Constant	14.9		.086	.007	1.46	1.80	.000	11.3	18.4
SMTQ	-0.07	-0.08				.058	.227	-0.18	0.04

Note. SMTQ= Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire; *CI* = Confidence Interval; *LL* = Lower Limit; *UL*= Upper Limit; *S.E* = Standard Error.

Table 5 represents the role of Mental Toughness in predicting Fear of Failure. The given results show that Mental Toughness had a non-significant effect on Fear of Failure. The regression results show that the predictor shows 0.7% variance in the dependent variable where $R^2 = 0.007$ and $F = 1.46$.

Table 6*Comparison of Gender Differences Along Study Variables (N=201)*

Variables	Boys/Men (N=185)		Girls/Women (N=16)		<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	95% <i>CI</i>		Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
	SMTQ	30.3	6.3	32.9			4.6	-1.6	
SAS-2	27.3	9.1	36.3	10.4	-3.7	.000	-13.7	-4.3	1.25
PFAI-S	12.4	4.8	16.5	6.6	-3.1	.002	-6.6	-1.5	0.71

Note. *M*= Mean; *SD*= Standard Deviation; *LL*= Lower Limit; *UL* = Upper Limit; SMTQ=Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire; SAS-2= Sports Anxiety Scale-2; PFAI-S = Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory-Short Form.

Independent Sample *t*-test was carried out to study variables. Table 5 illustrates the gender differences on Mental Toughness, Sports Competition Anxiety and Fear of Failure. Significant gender differences on Sports Competition Anxiety and Fear of Failure were observed. On Sports Anxiety Scale-2 girls/women scored significantly higher than boys/men which shows that girls/women face more Sports Competition Anxiety than boys/men and on Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory-Short Form, boys/men scored significantly low as compared to girls/women, which suggest that boys/men face less fear of failure than girls/women.

Table 7*On Way Anova for Current Level of Playing Cricket Along Study Variables (N=201)*

Variables	Under 19		Under 23		Senior Level		F	P
	Years		Years					
	(n = 44)		(n = 64)		(n = 93)			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
SMTQ	29.3	7.3	31.	6.1	30.	5.	1.6	.193
			5		4	7	6	
SAS-2	30.3	9.	28.	9.7	26.	9.	1.9	.145
		7	1		9	1	5	
PFAI-S	13.7	4.	13.3	5.2	12.	5.	2.13	.121
		8			0	1		

Note; M=mean; SD=standard deviation; SMTQ=Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire; SAS-2=Sports Anxiety Scale-2; PFAI-S = Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory-Short Form.

Table 8 shows the results of one-way ANOVA across current level of playing cricket along the study variables. Results illustrate that there was no significant difference found between level of playing cricket and study variables. This suggests that club cricketers playing at different levels of cricket had similar score on all the measures of study variables. It was concluded that in terms of average scores, there is no discernible difference in mean scores of level of playing cricket along with study variables.

Table 8

Variables	Less than 10 years (n = 36)		10 years (n = 34)		12 years (n = 56)		14 years (n = 75)		95% CI		i-j	MD (i-j)	F	P
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	LL	UL				
SMTQ	28.	7.	3	4.	3	7	3	5					1	.1
	3	7	0.	6	1.	.	0.	.					.	3
			9		3	3	7	0					8	8
SAS-2	3	9	2	1	2	9	2	8	0	1	1	5	3	.02
	1.	.	8.	0.	7.	.	6.	.	.	0	<	.	.	7
	9	1	3	5	6	4	2	7	7	.	4	7	1	
									1	7		4		
														*
PFAI-S	1	5	12.	4.	1	5	12.3	4.6					.92	.42
	2.	.	3	7	3.	.							9	8
	7	4			7	7								

On Way Anova for Education Along Study Variables (N=201)

Note; M=mean; SD=standard deviation; SMTQ=Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire; SAS-2= Sports Anxiety Scale-2; PFAI-S = Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory-Short Form.

Table 8 illustrates the results of one-way *ANOVA* and Bonferroni's post-hoc analysis across education along the study variables. It shows significant differences along Sports Competition Anxiety. Bonferroni's post hoc results represented that on the construct of Sports Competition Anxiety, significant mean differences were found between two groups (less than 10 years of education and 14 years of education respectively).

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to explore the relationship between mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure among young club cricketers. The sample comprised of 201 young club cricketers including men/boys ($n=185$) and women/girls ($n=16$). The data collection was conducted using a convenient and snowball sampling approach. In order to take part in the study; individual were required to be playing cricket in a registered. Demographics variables included in the research were age, gender, years of playing cricket, current level of playing, education, and monthly family income in relation to study variables. In the Pakistani context, the scales had been previously utilized and the psychometric properties of the measures were quite satisfactory (Amjad et al., 2018). So a pilot study was not necessary. The major constructs of the study were assessed with Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire (Sheard et al., 2009), Sports Anxiety Scale-2 (Smith et al., 2006) and Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory- Short Form (Conroy, 2003). The alpha reliability of Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire (Sheard et al., 2009) reported in the current study is 0.72, alpha reliability of Sports Anxiety Scale-2 (Smith et al., 2006) is 0.89 and alpha reliability of Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory- Short Form (Conroy, 2003) reported in the current study is 0.78.

The sample consisted of young club cricketers ($N= 201$) and was taken from registered cricket clubs of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The age range of the respondents was between 16 years to 24 years. Data were collected online through convenient and snowball sampling. To find out the relationship between the study variables and demographic variables, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Linear Regression, One-Way ANOVA and *t*-test were conducted.

Descriptive statistics of the data were evaluated, and the alpha reliability values, skewness and curtosis values were found to be in normal range. The findings of all scales suggested that the scores of Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire, Sports Anxiety Scale-2 and Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory- Short Form were normally distributed.

The first hypothesis of the study was related to mental toughness among club cricketers and sports competition anxiety. It stated that mental toughness will negatively correlate with sports competition anxiety. Correlation coefficient was found and the results demonstrate there is no significant relationship between mental toughness and sports competition anxiety. There are also some researches that failed to find any relation between mental toughness and sports competition anxiety. When tennis athletes and coaches reported their sports competition anxiety characteristics, psychologists discovered a non-significant connection between sports competition anxiety traits and mental toughness (Cowden et al., 2014). Tahmasebi et al. (2012) performed a study to examine the link between intellectual ability, competitive anxiety, and mental toughness. They discovered a strong negative association among sports competition anxiety and intellectual ability, a strong healthy relationship among mental toughness and emotional intelligence, and no relationship across mental toughness and sports competition anxiety. As there is very less research on these variables, relationship needs to be explored further.

The second hypothesis of the current research is related to mental toughness among club cricketers and fear of failure. It stated that mental toughness will negatively correlate with fear of failure in a sample of club cricketers. Correlation coefficient score exhibited a non-significant negative relationship mental toughness and fear of failure. The current research is one of the first to look at the relationship between mental toughness and fear of failure. Despite being an exploratory research, it has provided theorists and practitioners with insight into teenage athletes' mental toughness and fear of failure. The results are unlikely to be relevant to the larger population of young players, however, given to the limited sample size. Furthermore, the negative consequences of fear of failure may grow with time (Conroy, 2001). As a result, we advise scholars to keep looking into the fear of failure and mental toughness of adolescent and young players in both genders. Individual variables (e.g., personality characteristics such as positivity, consciousness, and self-evaluative processes) and contextual variables should also be examined in connection to fear of failure and mental toughness (e.g., mentor-athlete, sibling-athlete, and peer-athlete relationships) (Sagar et al., 2009).

The study's third hypothesis focused on young club cricketers' sports competition anxiety and fear of failure. It stated that in a sample of young cricketers, sports competition anxiety will be positively correlated with fear of failure. The findings found a significant relationship between sports competition anxiety and fear of failure. There was a positive relationship between competitive anxiety and fear of failure (Conroy et al., 2004). Individuals with a history of failure had greater levels of competitive anxiety, according to this study. Another study discovered that accomplished wrestlers had lower levels of competitive anxiety than those who had encountered more failure (Morgan, Johnson, & Morgan, 1977). Athletes who had a history of higher levels of competitive anxiety, similarly athletes with a higher overall fear of failure were more likely to have significant competition anxiety before the fencing event, according to the findings. To put it another way, fencers that had a higher fear of failure also had a significant level of competition anxiety before the tournament began (Athanas, 2007).

With the help of Independent Sample *t*-test it was found that boys\men club cricketers will face less sports competition anxiety as compared to girls\women club cricketers. As boys\men club cricketers score low on sports anxiety scale-2 this predicts that boys\men club cricketers will face less sports competition anxiety. As compared to boys\men club cricketers, girls\women club cricketers score high on sports anxiety scale-2 this predicts they will experience more sports competition anxiety as compared to boys\men club cricketers. Studies have connected competitive anxiety with the participant's age and gender. In this respect, research suggests that women are more competitively anxious than men (Patel et al., 2010). During their research with young individuals, in team sports, they found that female athletes were far more anxious than males and those boys were showing higher concentration levels compared to females (Grossbard et al., 2009). When compared with their female counterparts male athletes have a lower level of competitive anxiety (Grossbard et al., 2009). Multiple studies show that male athletes are less anxious than female athletes, although there is no significant difference in sports competition anxiety among males and females (Scanlan & Passer, 1979).). The findings revealed that there were substantial variations in sports competition anxiety among men and women cricketers

(Gamit, 2011). Female athletes had a higher level of competition anxiety than male athletes (Martens et al., 1990).

According to the results of the present study it was found that girls\women cricket players experience more fear of failure as compared to boys\men club cricketers. As girls\women cricket players will score high on performance failure appraisal inventory- short form this predicts that girls\women will face more fear of failure. As compared girls\women club cricketers, boys\men club cricketers score less on performance failure appraisal inventory – short form this predicts they would experience more fear of failure. Results have shown that when other people are aware of their own failure, women will probably be more afflicted with embarrassment and discomfort and will be more conscious of others. Furthermore, if females fail, the doubts of others about their performance on ability and competence could be more likely to be true. This can enhance the concern of women over what other people think of them if they show failure attitude (Elliot & Thrash, 2002). Since the fear of failure is linked to the self-efficacy and self-esteem, these anxieties might affect the career and decision-making of women (“Gender Differences in Eleventh Grade Science Major High School Students' Studying Styles and opinions,” 2019). According to Lewis (2000), girls\women are more prone to experience fear of failure because they are more concerned with. Miller (1985) makes a similar claim, claiming that women are more "embarrass able" than males. As a result, female athletes are more likely than male athletes to be afraid of humiliation and disgrace.

Conclusion

The current research investigated the relationship between mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure among young club cricketers. The results of the study found that boys/men face less sports competition anxiety and fear of failure as compared to girls\women. There was a significantly positive relationship found between sports competition anxiety and fear of failure which predicts that club cricketers that face sports competition anxiety will also experience fear of failure. There was also a significant negative

relationship between sports competition anxiety and age of the participants which predicted that club cricketers included in the sample who had less age faced more sports competition anxiety. When the means of study variables were compared with one of the demographic variables, education it was found that club cricketers with 14 years and above education scored less on sports anxiety scale-2 as compared to other education levels. Mental toughness had a non-significant effect on sports competition anxiety and fear of failure according to Linear Regression Analysis.

Limitations

The current research is among the first to investigate into the relationship between mental toughness, sports competition anxiety, and fear of failure among young club cricketers in Pakistan. However, due to the limited number of respondents, the results are unlikely to be able to generalise to the larger population of young cricketers. If the sample size was much bigger we could have got better results that could have helped us in generalising our results. Having a larger sample size could have helped us in getting more consistent results and it would have helped us in proving our hypothesis that were placed according to previous researches.

Sports competition anxiety and fear of failure are very sensitive constructs. People might become reactive and control the actual information for social acceptability. One of the primary limitations of the study is that it depended on the sample's self-report data. Respondents may not have provided genuine knowledge, may have been reactionary, or may be unaware of their own personalities.

Future Research/Suggestions

Future research should thus aim to explore research variables with a bigger sample size, yielding generally applicable scientific conclusions. The research will also benefit from gathering self-reported and informant assessments of the research variables from players' peers, teammates, guardians, and trainers, for example.

Additional resources are required to undertake a comparable study at the national level, which will not only diversity the sample but also provide some critical

data that may assist enhance our players' competitive achievements in professional sporting competitions. In the future researches this thing should be kept on mind that the sample of males and females should be equally divided for better findings and more valid results.

Implications

Some of the studies mentioned in this research on decreasing competitive anxiety in athletes revealed that therapies would be much more successful if they were combined. This has undoubtedly piqued the interest of academics and practitioners for a long time, with evidence of study discoveries dating back several years. This research is expected to contribute towards a better understanding of the mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure among players and this aims to answer all questions related to mental toughness, sports competition anxiety and fear of failure of cricket players.

The findings of the current study can help create awareness in young club cricketers and even other athletes about the psychological side of a game. This can help coaches and mentors understand the importance of mental toughness and coping techniques. As sports competition anxiety and fear of failure are almost experience by every sportsman, so it is very important to create awareness among young club cricketers so that they could become mentally tough and they could dealt with different types of anxieties and stresses of performing and doing better in front of their loved ones. This can help them become successful sportsmen in future at international levels and this is one of the most important things which is lacking in Pakistani athletes. The findings of the current study can increase more awareness in athletes about how important psychological aspects of any sports are.

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