

What Influences First-Level Cricketers? Exploring Responsible Factors And The Way Forward

Muhammad Aslam¹, Prof. Dr. Sonia Aslam², Prof. Zulaikha Karim³, Faiz Ul Hasan Shah⁴, Inam Ullah⁵, Shahid Ali Khan⁶, Pir Muhammad Abdul Aziz Shah⁷

¹P.h.D. Scholar, Centre for Physical Education, Health & Sports Sciences University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan
Muhammadaslam1987@yahoo.com

²Centre for Physical Education, Health & Sports Sciences University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan
soniha.aslam1987@sindh.edu.pk

³Principal, Government College of Physical Education, Balochistan, Quetta. Zkareem.baloch@gmail.com

⁴P.h.D. Scholar, Centre for Physical Education, Health & Sports Sciences University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan
faizulhasan104@gmail.com

⁵Lecturer, Physical Education, Balochistan Residential College Zob, Quetta, Pakistan.
Inamzakhpail555@gmail.com

⁶Director Physical Education, Government Boys Degree College Korangi, No. 21/2,
shaid.physicaleducation@gmail.com

⁷P.h.D. Scholar, Centre for Physical Education, Health & Sports Sciences University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan.
Peershah4880@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: The Quaid-e-Azam Trophy is a domestic first-class cricket competition in Pakistan. Exploring the factors influencing any sport plays an important role in the development and promotion of any game.

Objectives: The basic purpose of the study was to determine the factors influencing first-class cricketers of Quetta Province, Pakistan.

Method: In this cross-sectional study, 100 first-class cricketers were recruited with the help of snowball sampling. Self-made structured questionnaire was developed and used to collect required information. The questionnaire's reliability and validity were evaluated and approved. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics by SPSS software version 25.

Results: The analyzed data described that existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism produced positive and significant correlation with paucity of cricket players. The analysis further indicated that that existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism produced significant effects upon paucity of cricket players:

Conclusions: The paucity among national level cricketers has different factors. In the current study, the most influential factors are prevailing standard of infrastructural sports facilities, favouritism and terrorism.

Given that the population of this study is limited to the game of cricket, further studies should be performed on the players of other games such as football, volleyball, and athletics.

Keywords: first-class cricket, existing facilities, favouritism & nepotism

INTRODUCTION

The Quaid-e-Azam Trophy is a domestic first-class cricket competition in Pakistan. With few exceptions, it has been staged annually since it was first played during the 1953–54 season. Domestic cricket in Pakistan has undergone many reorganizations, with the number of teams and matches in the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy changing regularly. Since the 2019–20 season it has been contested by six regional teams, having previously been variously contested by associations[a] or departments,[b] or a combination of the two (Balachandran & Kanishkaa, 2021)

First-class cricket, along with List A cricket and Twenty20 cricket, is one of the highest-standard forms of cricket. A first-class match is one of three or more days' scheduled duration between two sides of eleven players each and is officially adjudged to be worthy of the status by virtue of the standard of the competing teams. Matches must allow for the teams to play two innings each, although in practice a team might play only one innings or none at all.

Every athlete participating in a sporting event wants to perform at their very best. The province of Baluchistan does not follow the aforementioned rule of achieving optimal performance when playing cricket. The sport of cricket is played in the Baluchistan region as a forum for athletes who compete in the first level (Quaid-E-Azam), an annual event held by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Pakistan. Since those who perform well in the competition represent the province at national and subsequently international level, this championship is particularly popular for first

level cricketers to compete at their best level. Therefore, this championship is very popular for first level cricketers to compete at optimal level since those who performed well in the competition represent the province at national and then international level.

Any sport requires careful consideration of physical, physiological, and other relevant elements in order to perform at one's best. During the Games, players could run against psychological roadblocks that keep them from achieving this level of optimum performance. These factors include the accessibility of sporting infrastructure (Adeyeye & Kehinde, 2013).

Proper organization and administration of sport is considered as one of the most important determinants which influences performance of athletes (Adeyeye & Kehinde, 2013). Proper organization and management of sport program refers to the provision of desired sport facilities in the shape of proper playing space, equipment and attractive financial packages. In this regard, Umeasiegbu (2001) stated that proper and well-conditioned facilities and equipment are the significant contributors of an effective sport program. Oyilogwu (2005) therefore, emphasized on the provision of an adequate facilities for athletes.

One of the most significant factors that affects how well athletes perform is regarded to be proper sport administration and organization (Adeyeye & Kehinde, 2013). The supply of required sport facilities in the form of appropriate playing area, equipment, and alluring financial incentives is referred to as proper organization and management of a sport programme. Umeasiegbu (2001) claimed that appropriate and

in good condition facilities and equipment are the major contributors to an efficient athletic programme in this regard. Oyilogwu (2005) placed emphasis on the need to provide athletes with suitable facilities.

The management of sport is clearly under the jurisdiction of the government. Authorities in Pakistan are making every effort to promote sports programmes for developing sportsmen and women, despite their failure to recognize the value of sports in creating a healthy society. The national and provincial governments, through their ministries of sports, may offer the fundamental amenities to all parts of Pakistan and especially the cricket players of Baluchistan in order to reach a high level or rank in cricket. However, there are several obstacles that cricket players must overcome at the local, national, and international levels in the vicinity of Baluchistan. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize these concerns and problems so that we can point out inadequacies and recommend ways to address the first class crickets with constructive actions.

Research Hypotheses

H1: The existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism are positively and significantly associated with national level cricketers.

H2: The existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism have significant effects on national level cricketers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This portion of the paper deals with the analysis of the intended correlations among the study variables under consideration and test the hypotheses.

Research Design

This study used a quantitative research design with exploratory aspects, which included both descriptive and inferential methodologies appropriate to the nature of the subject. By leveraging the potential methods for performing

the research using a specific design, the study provided the philosophical considerations (McKenney & Reeves 2018). As a result, the current study's research design was exploratory in order to describe research issues and the relationships among research variables in a specific context and to collect fresh information and original findings to support previous research.

Research Approach

Based on the type and requirements of research investigations, many methodologies are employed to perform the study. Based on the needs of the research design, a survey approach was used to support this study in order to access the public through a sample and analyse specific phenomena in specific contexts with specific consequences (Tobi & Kampen, 2018).

Population

The population consists of all the components that researchers are interested in considering when planning and generalizing sample results to the population (Dannels, 2018). Baluchistan first-level cricket players made up the study's sample population.

Sampling

Researchers used purposive sampling technique to collect information regarding paucity among first level cricketers. For this purpose, a sample of n=100 first level cricketers were contacted. It is important to mention that out of 100, only eleven players were those who currently participating at first level and 91 players were those who did not selected for national level.

Data Collection

The researcher always aims to gain something from the information required to perform the research in a specific context, hence different types of information from various sources are required (Janssen & LeBlanc, 2010). According

to the specifications of this research study, both primary and secondary data were gathered for the research. While primary data was gathered using a standardized questionnaire that was modified from earlier study on related topics, secondary data was gathered from various web sources.

Data Analysis

In order to analyse the data and extract the required results, data analysis is a crucial component of research. To obtain the needed information on potential relationships among research variables, the primary data was examined using a variety of statistical procedures in accordance with the hypothesised relationships.

Questionnaire Design

In accordance with the needs of the current investigation, a questionnaire was employed to collect primary data. The apparatus that is essential for gathering the basic data is the foundation of the quantitative investigations. The design and measurement of the questionnaire are crucial components of the study that aid in gathering first-hand information for performing the research for certain purposes. The questionnaire will be modified based on earlier research (Khan, 2016; Arif et al., 2016).

Validity and Reliability

Research that establishes an instrument's suitability for use in a given setting must consider the validity and reliability of the instrument (Singh, 2017). As a result, the questionnaire underwent pilot testing at the level of the primary study, and Cronbach's alpha was used to ensure reliability.

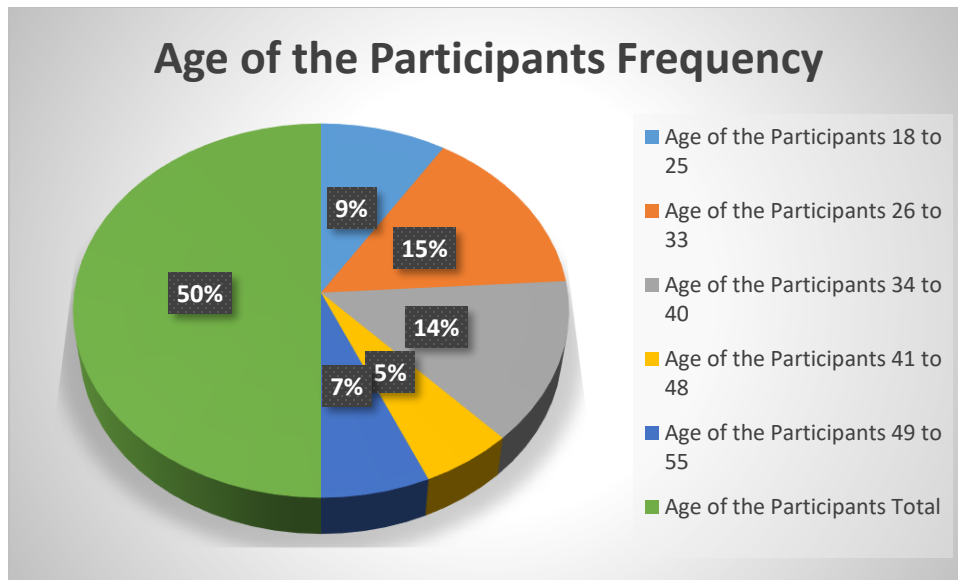
Results and Discussion

In this section, the researcher presented the key conclusions drawn from the statistical methods used to arrive at the study questions' resolutions. This section discusses data interpretation and analysis. The analysis, which is set up in tables and figures, is presented using three main profiles. It provides information on descriptive and inferential statistics for analyzing the relationships and correlations between the research variables.

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis offers details to help with the description of demographic and research variables. Because they provide information about the research variables, descriptive statistics are an essential part of research investigations because they help make the descriptions of the research variables more understandable.

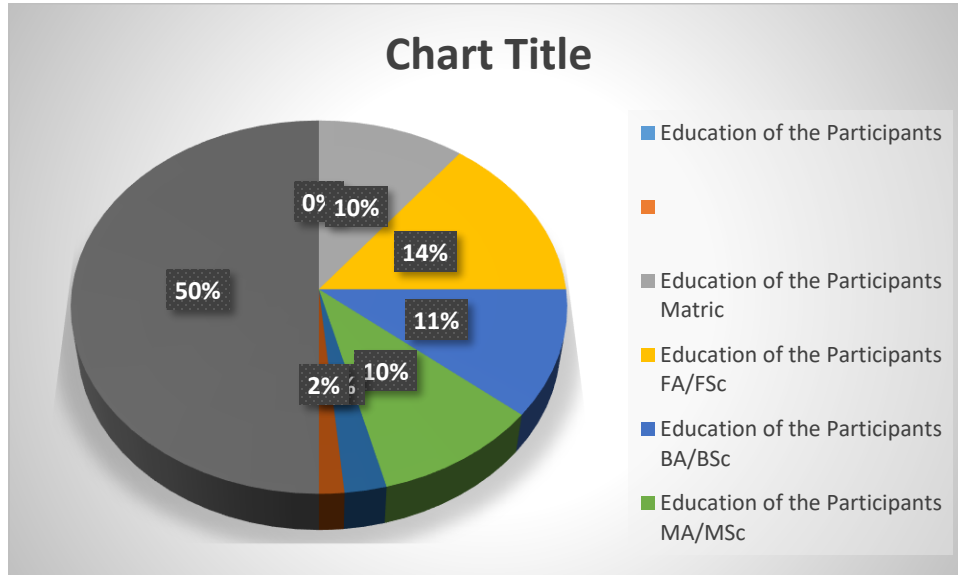
Age of the Participants



The above pichart concerning the age-wise frequency and percent of the participants show that among 100 participants, 18 were those having 18 to 25 years and 30 participants having 26 to 33 years of age. Similarly, 28 participants

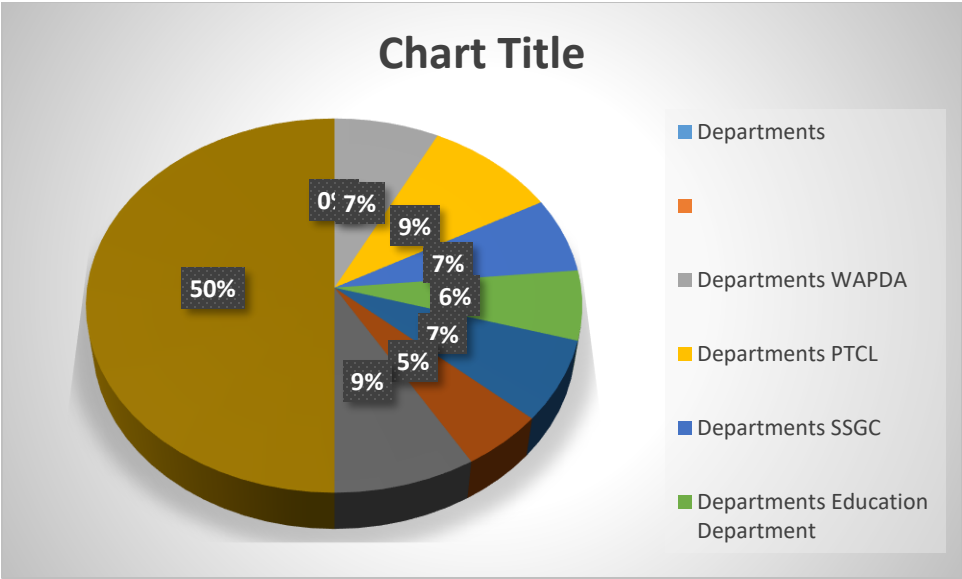
were those having 34 to 40 years and 11 participants having 41 to 48 years, while 13 participants having 49 to 55 years.

Qualifications of the Participants



Out of 100 participants, 21 have qualification (Matric), 29 have (FA/F.Sc), 22 have BA/B.Sc. Also, out of 100 participants, 20 MA/M.Sc. 05 have MS/M.Phil. and only 03 were those having Ph.D.

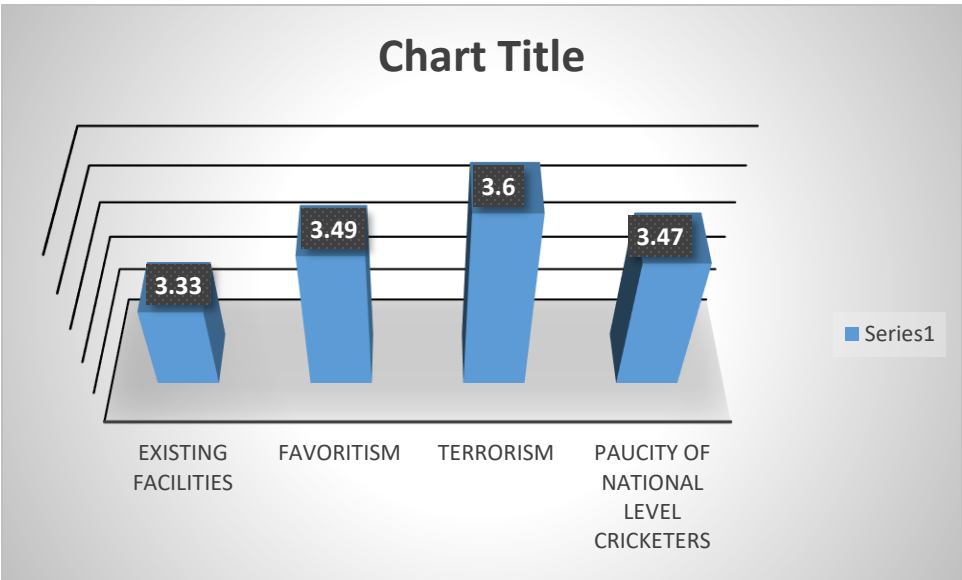
Departments-wise distribution of the Participants



The table above shows the frequency and percent across departments which shows that out of 100 participants, 15 were those played from WAPDA, 19 from PTCL, 13 from SSGC, 12 from

Education Department, 14 from UBL, 10 from state bank, and 17 from others.

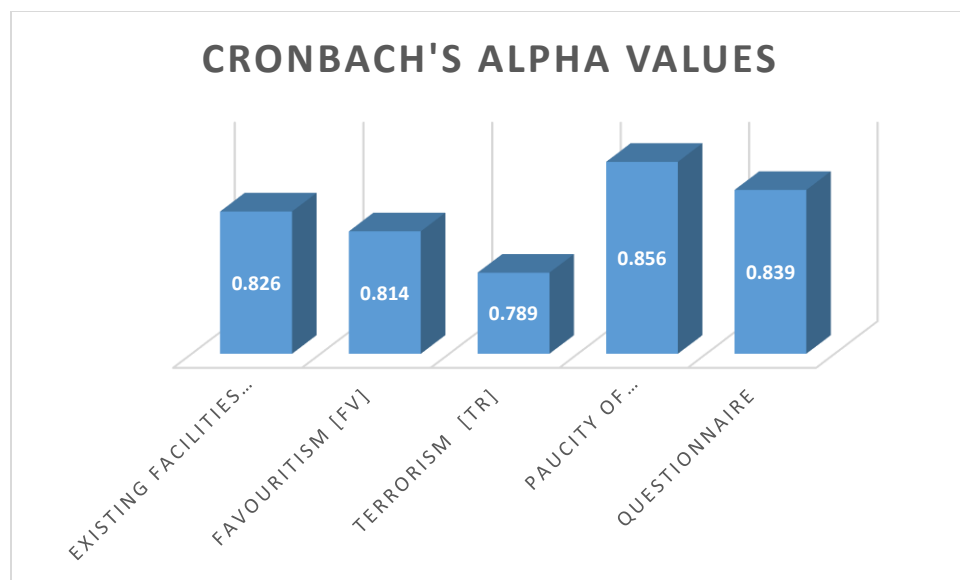
Descriptive Statistics



The table chart shows descriptive statistics concerning research variable (existing facilities, favouritism & terrorism) with regard to the mean scores. This could aid readers in comprehending

respondents' response rates to the research factors being taken into account.

Reliability Statistics



The internal consistency of the measures in the instrument is good and adequate, according to the reliability statistics provided by Cronbach Alpha. In this regard, reliability data indicate that a Cronbach Alpha range of .6 is appropriate; nevertheless, in the present case, dependability statistics are higher than (.6). Similar to how favouritism was tested over four items, terrorism was measured over 12 items, and a lack of cricket players was measured over ten items, the current facilities measured via 12 items are (.826), (.814), (.789), and (.789), respectively (.839). As a result, internal consistency among all the research variables is satisfactory, according to the reliability statistics.

Testing of Hypotheses

The influence and linkages among the research variables under consideration are examined via the testing of hypotheses, also known as inferential analysis. Correlation and regression, which aid in identifying associations and cause-and-effect linkages, are frequently used tools in this context to investigate relationships.

4.2.1 Correlation Analysis

H1: The existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism are positively and significantly associated with paucity of national level cricketers.

Correlations

Research Variables	Statistics	Existing Grounds	Existing Coaches	Financial Facilities	Paucity of National level Cricketers
Existing Facilities	Pearson	1			
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Favoritism	N	100			
	Pearson	.274**	1		
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			

Terrorism	N	100	100		
	Pearson Correlation	.057	.230**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.279	.000		
Paucity of National level Cricketers	N	100	100	100	
	Pearson Correlation	.777**	.659**	.561**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	100	100	100	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table presented that independent variables like existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism have positive and significant association with paucity of national level cricketers. Existing grounds and paucity of national level cricketers reported (.777** & .000), favouritism and paucity of national level cricketers reported (.659** & .000), and terrorism with paucity of national level cricketers indicated (.561** & .000). Based on the above

analysis, it can be interpreted that existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism produced positive and significant correlation with paucity of cricket players. Therefore, the H1 is hereby accepted.

4.2.2 Regression Analysis

H2: The existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism have significant effects on paucity of national level cricketers.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.861 ^a	.742	.734	.31726

a. Predictors: (Constant), Existing Facilities, Favoritism, Terrorism.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.815	3	9.272	92.114	.000 ^b
	Residual	9.663	96	.101		
	Total	37.477	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Paucity of National level Cricketers

b. Predictors: (Constant), Existing Facilities, Favoritism, Terrorism.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.010	.273		3.706	.000
	Existing Facilities	.068	.032	.112	2.141	.035
	Favoritism	-.125	.063	-.104	-1.993	.049
	Terrorism	.794	.049	.850	16.145	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Paucity of National level Cricketers

The second hypothesis was framed to examine the effect of existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism upon paucity of cricket players and the regression analysis reported that 74.2 % variance is expected in paucity of cricket players due to existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism provided to first class cricketers. The analysis further indicated that that existing facilities, favouritism and terrorism produced significant effects upon paucity of cricket players (Beta=.068, -.125, .794 & P=.035, .049 & .000). Based on regression analysis, H2 has been accepted.

Discussion

The findings indicate that first-level cricketers' participation in cricket has positively impacted by the availability of sports facilities. This result is consistent with findings from other research conducted in both the Pakistani and international contexts (Abedalhafiz, 2013; Black et al., 2019). (Khan, 2016; Khan, 2017). The results of this study are consistent with those of Mwihaki (2007), who claimed that the accessibility of sports facilities and equipment had a significant influence on students' participation in physical activity. Additionally, Kabunge (2012) found that the degree of equipment and facility upkeep varies significantly, which has an impact on how well secondary schools conduct their sports programmes. The results are also in line with Oyeniyi's (2002) assertion that equipment and facilities are the lifeblood of sports and are therefore essential to competitive sports, as well as Omolawon's (2000) assertion that the provision of proper facilities is crucial to the success of any sports programme. It is clear that a variety of barriers, such as lack of time, money, or access to facilities, prevent certain people from participating in sports. (Jowett & Felton, 2013). This suggests that providing players with a solid schedule of sporting activities they can take part in during the semester might not be enough if the

university's facilities are difficult to reach or offer few options. As a result, there is a higher level of engagement in various sports at the institution thanks to the availability of suitable sports facilities. Additionally, university administration may play a significant part in boosting students' enthusiasm to participate in sports activities by building additional structures and facilities that can offer students integrated sports facilities.

The second influential factor was favouritism and the analyzed data indicates that first-level cricketers' participation in cricket has positively impacted by the favouritism. However, research conducted the past indicates that in some circumstances, the identity of the referee may suggest a natural default preference between two teams/competitors. Previous research findings revealed that preferences are not readily apparent. This is especially true when one of the teams or contestants' nationality or locality is shared by the referee. Researchers have paid a great deal of attention to the issue of national/local favouritism from referees. Numerous sports, particularly those that are judged subjectively, have been linked to national favouritism. In particular, there has been clear national favouritism in the following events: figure skating, gymnastics, ski jumping rhythmic gymnastics (Popovi'c 2000; Emerson, Seltzer, & Lin 2009; Zitzewitz 2006). It has been discovered that referees consistently favour athletes from their own nations in all of these sports. Given the significance of referee decisions on the final rankings in these contests, the impact of this favouritism is noteworthy.

The next influential factor was terrorism and the analyzed data indicates that first-level cricketers' participation in cricket has positively impacted by the threats of terrorist attacks. The findings of the current study are consistent with other studies in this rea. For instance, the results are examined in relation to managing sporting events, and the

discussion is concluded with implications for organizing sporting events in the future. While this study concentrated on the effects of terrorism, it is advised that when arranging major athletic events, consideration should be given to the effects of other significant incidents with global repercussions, such as the recent war in Iraq and the SARS outbreak (Toohey, Taylor, & Lee, 2003). Another study revealed that the planning and risk management techniques for sporting events today incorporate increased focus on safety management, public awareness about terrorism risks, and public perception of risk (Taylor & Toohey, 2007). However, contrary to the above findings, one study described that the majority of participants reported feeling secure and saying that the security precautions neither increased nor decreased their degree of enjoyment. Many people who attended the gathering were either openly dismissive of any threat to their security or publicly belligerent about terrorism (Taylor & Toohey, 2005).

Conclusion

The results of the current study have demonstrated that the accessibility of sporting venues, nepotism, and favouritism have a significant impact on first-level cricketers' participation in sports. Therefore, it is essential to emphasize that the relevant authorities may offer appropriate and cutting-edge sports facilities and programmes that suit the needs of the top cricket players. Additionally, all parties involved in the education and sports sectors, particularly in the study region but also across the nation as a whole, must pay close attention to the absence of suitable sports facilities. This will encourage enough public participation, which is beneficial.

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Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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