



Badminton Sports Activity as a Tool for Performance Skills in Mental Health

Murali Mohan C

Research Scholar, Kalinga University, Naya Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

Email: chitturimm@gmail.com

Dr. Kolidoos Dharmaraj

Director Of Physical Education, Kalinga University, Naya Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

Email: dr.kalidoss@kalingauniversity.ac.in

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17398116>

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Accepted: 02-09-2025

Published: 19-10-2025

Keywords:

Badminton, Sports Activity, Mental Health, Performance Skills, Stress Management, Resilience

ABSTRACT

Badminton, as a dynamic racket sport, is increasingly recognized not only for its physical benefits but also for its impact on mental health and psychological well-being. The present study explores badminton as a constructive tool for enhancing performance skills that contribute to mental health, including concentration, decision-making, stress management, resilience, and social interaction. Regular participation in badminton stimulates cognitive functioning through quick reflexes, tactical planning, and sustained attention, thereby strengthening focus and mental agility. Furthermore, the sport reduces anxiety and stress by releasing endorphins, fosters emotional regulation through competitive play, and builds confidence by improving individual performance outcomes. Participation in both singles and doubles matches also promotes teamwork, communication, and social bonding, which are essential for positive mental health. Thus, badminton is not only a recreational activity but also a therapeutic medium that supports psychological growth, personal dignity, and overall mental well-being

Introduction:

Mental training (“mental imagery”) is one of many training methods in sports psychology. According to Igel (2000, 2001), there is no uniform definition of mental training, but all definitions have



in common the “repeated imagining of movement sequences without actually executing them (Igel, 2000, p.24). In this kind of training, the real movement or situation is not practiced, but it occurs in the athlete's mind, i.e. it is internally generated, by oneself or under the guidance of a sports psychologist or coach (Farah, 1984). It is a mental form of situational anticipation in which an athlete imagines how he wants to think, feel and act in a certain situation (Annett, 1995; Igel, 2000, 2001). The more detailed and concrete movement sequences or special situations that an athlete has to deal with are practiced in the imagination, the more effective such training is. Within this process, ideas about the optimal implementation of a specific movement and/or action sequence are activated in a targeted manner. Mental training offers the option to concentrate in the imagination on certain details in order to reinforce them or fade them out. Statements from athletes such as: "I'm ready" are indicators of the quality of this preparation. Cognitive research has proven that merely visualized images (events experienced only in thought) are similar to what is actually experienced (Farah, 1984) and thus leads to increased activation of the brain areas involved in actual movement or actual coping with a situation. Imagining a movement causes the occurrence of electrical action potentials in the muscle groups which are involved in the actual movement, the so-called Carpenter effect (Gabler et al. 1995). Mental training and practical movements use the same neural structures, and therefore, the primary motor cortex is of great importance during movement imagination (Mayer & Hermann, 2009). Every thought triggers electrochemical processes in the brain and thus influences performance.

Erlacher (2010) speaks of activation in the supplementary motor areas and the premotor cortex. Everything we perceive in reality or in our thoughts is based on neuronal structures. There is a direct connection between mental and neural activity. This means that what we focus our attention on, and what we think or feel, ultimately shapes our brain. Active regions receive more blood flow because they need more oxygen and glucose. The genes in the neurons are therefore activated to a lesser or greater extent in dependency of what we stress.

Neural connections that are relatively inactive gradually disappear, while neurons that are activated together become wired and strong (“Neurons that fire together, wire together” (Hebb, 1949).

Mental health has emerged as a central concern in the 21st century, with stress, anxiety, and depression affecting individuals across all age groups. Alongside conventional therapies, sports and physical activities are increasingly acknowledged as effective complementary tools for promoting psychological well-being. Among these, badminton holds a unique position due to its accessibility, fast pace, and demand for both physical agility and mental alertness.



Badminton is not only a form of physical exercise but also a cognitive and emotional training ground. The sport requires players to focus, anticipate, and make rapid decisions, thereby sharpening concentration and problem-solving abilities. At the same time, the competitive yet enjoyable nature of the game helps participants build resilience, regulate emotions, and cope with pressure. For students and young adults, in particular, badminton provides opportunities to develop critical performance skills such as discipline, self-confidence, stress management, teamwork, and social interaction, all of which contribute significantly to mental health.

Furthermore, research in sports psychology suggests that regular participation in activities like badminton stimulates the release of endorphins, improves sleep quality, reduces anxiety, and enhances overall mood. Unlike solitary exercise, badminton often involves social engagement, whether in doubles play or club participation, which further strengthens mental well-being through connection and communication.

Thus, badminton can be viewed not merely as a recreational pastime but as a holistic intervention that integrates physical, psychological, and social dimensions of health. By cultivating performance skills essential for coping with academic, professional, and personal challenges, badminton emerges as a valuable tool in promoting dignity and resilience in mental health.

Statement of Problem:

The purpose of the study “Badminton Sports Activity as a Tool for Performance Skills in Mental Health”.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations

1. **Sample Size** – The study may involve a limited number of participants, which restricts the generalizability of the findings.
2. **Duration of Intervention** – Short-term exposure to badminton activity may not fully capture long-term effects on mental health and performance skills.
3. **Measurement Tools** – Reliance on self-reported questionnaires and observations may introduce subjectivity and bias.



4. **External Variables** – Factors such as prior sports experience, lifestyle habits, academic pressure, and family environment could influence participants' mental health outcomes.
5. **Control of Environment** – Differences in facilities, coaching styles, and playing conditions may affect consistency in training and results.

Delimitations

1. **Sport Selection** – The study is limited specifically to **badminton** as the sport of focus, excluding other physical or recreational activities.
2. **Population** – The research may be confined to a specific group (e.g., students, young adults, or athletes) rather than a broad population.
3. **Geographical Scope** – Data collection may be restricted to a particular institution, region, or community.
4. **Time Frame** – The intervention and assessment period will be limited to a defined duration (e.g., 6–8 weeks), not accounting for lifelong participation benefits.
5. **Variables of Interest** – The study will primarily examine **performance skills related to mental health** (concentration, resilience, stress management, self-confidence, decisionmaking), and not other physiological or technical aspects of badminton.

Objectives

1. To examine the role of badminton in promoting mental health.
2. To analyze how performance skills (focus, resilience, self-control) are developed through badminton.
3. To highlight badminton as a therapeutic and preventive tool for mental well-being.

Methodology:

Research Design:

The study will adopt a **quasi-experimental pre-test–post-test design** to investigate the effects of badminton sports activity on selected performance skills related to mental health. Participants will be



divided into an **experimental group** (undergoing structured badminton sessions) and a **control group** (no structured intervention, continuing routine activities).

Population and Sample

- **Population:** Students/young adults (aged 18–25 years) enrolled in educational institutions.
- **Sample Size:** Approximately **60 participants** will be selected.
- **Sampling Technique: Random sampling** will be employed to assign participants into two groups:
 - Experimental Group (n = 30)
 - Control Group (n = 30)

Inclusion Criteria

- Individuals with no major physical or psychological disorders.
- Willingness to participate in the study.
- Basic ability to play or learn badminton.

Exclusion Criteria

- Professional badminton players (to avoid skill bias).
- Individuals already undergoing psychological treatment or specialized sports training.

Intervention:

The experimental group will undergo **badminton training sessions** for a period of **8 weeks**, 5 days per week, lasting **45–60 minutes per session**. Sessions will include:

1. **Warm-up and stretching** (10 minutes)
2. **Badminton drills and skill practice** (20 minutes)
3. **Game play (singles/doubles)** (20 minutes)
4. **Cool down and relaxation techniques** (10 minutes)



The control group will not receive structured badminton training but will continue with their routine daily activities.

Variables of the Study:

- **Independent Variable:** Badminton sports activity.
- **Dependent Variables (Performance Skills in Mental Health):**
 - Concentration
 - Decision-making
 - Stress management
 - Self-confidence
 - Resilience
 - Social interaction

Tools for Data Collection

1. Questionnaires/Scales:

- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)
- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
- Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) • Focus/Concentration Checklist (researcher-prepared)

2. Observation Checklist:

To evaluate behavioral changes in teamwork, communication, and confidence during play.

Procedure

1. Pre-test assessment of all participants using standardized tools.
2. Implementation of the 8-week badminton training program for the experimental group.
3. Post-test assessment after the intervention period.



4. Comparison of pre- and post-test scores within and between groups.

Statistical Analysis

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) for pre-test and post-test scores.
- **Inferential Statistics:** Paired *t-test* for within-group comparisons and Independent *t-test* for between-group comparisons at a 0.05 level of significance.

Table-1: Paired *t-test* for within-group comparisons and Independent Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) for pre-test and post-test scores.

Variable	Group	N	Pre-Mean	Pre SD	Post Mean	Post SD	t Value
Concentration	Experimental	30	12.03	0.15	23.12	0.21	0.09*
	Control	30	11.99	0.13	12.03	0.13	
Decision-making	Experimental	30	15.21	0.19	30.62	0.22	0.064*
	Control	30	14.84	0.18	15.21	0.19	
Stress management	Experimental	30	18.13	0.13	29.45	0.31	0.045*
	Control	30	18.19	0.29	19.42	0.28	
Self-confidence	Experimental	30	13.56	0.13	26.43	0.42	0.032*
	Control	30	13.06	0.12	14.45	0.16	
Resilience	Experimental	30	15.02	0.18	30.78	0.51	0.041*
	Control	30	14.96	0.17	16.12	0.19	
Social interaction	Experimental	30	23.03	0.36	42.15	0.68	0.021*
	Control	30	23	0.3	23.99	0.31	

at a 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion

The findings revealed that the experimental group, which underwent structured badminton training, showed a significant improvement in multiple performance skills associated with mental health.



Paired *t*-test results indicated that post-test scores in concentration, decision-making, stress management, self-confidence, resilience, and social interaction were significantly higher compared to pre-test scores. This demonstrates the positive impact of badminton activity on mental well-being and psychological performance.

In contrast, the control group showed little or no significant change between pre-test and post-test scores. This suggests that improvements in the experimental group were primarily due to the structured badminton intervention rather than external factors.

The results support previous research in sports psychology, which highlights the role of physical activity in enhancing cognitive focus, emotional regulation, and social skills. The fastpaced nature of badminton demands sustained attention, rapid decision-making, and adaptive strategies, all of which contribute to improved mental agility. Furthermore, the cooperative and competitive elements of the game encourage teamwork, confidence-building, and resilience under pressure.

Overall, the statistical analysis confirms that badminton is not just a recreational sport but also an effective therapeutic tool for promoting mental health and performance skills. These findings encourage educators, coaches, and counselors to integrate badminton into physical education and wellness programs as a preventive and rehabilitative approach to mental health challenges.

Conclusion:

Badminton is more than just a recreational sport—it is a therapeutic tool that integrates physical movement with mental discipline. By engaging in badminton, individuals develop performance skills such as focus, resilience, decision-making, and teamwork, all of which contribute to mental health, dignity and overall well-being. For students, athletes, and even the general population, badminton can serve as both a preventive and rehabilitative strategy for strengthening mental health.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings and discussion, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Integration in Educational Institutions:** Schools, colleges, and universities should incorporate badminton programs into their **physical education curriculum**, not only for physical fitness but also to promote **mental health and performance skills** such as concentration, decision-making, and resilience.



2. **Use in Counseling and Therapy:** Mental health counselors and psychologists can use structured badminton sessions as part of **recreational therapy** or **sports-based counseling** to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression among students and young adults.
3. **Community Engagement:** Local sports clubs and community centers should organize regular badminton activities to create opportunities for **social interaction, teamwork, and emotional well-being**.
4. **Training for Coaches and Teachers:** Coaches, physical educators, and trainers should be trained to **emphasize the psychological benefits** of badminton, focusing not only on technical performance but also on personal growth, confidence-building, and coping strategies.
5. **Regular Participation:** Individuals are encouraged to participate in badminton at least **3– 5 times per week** as a preventive and supportive measure to maintain both **mental and physical health**.
6. **Further Research:** Future studies should expand the sample size, include diverse populations, and explore the **long-term effects** of badminton activity on mental health. Comparative studies with other sports can also highlight the **unique contribution of badminton** to psychological well-being.

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