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**EVALUATION OF ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION LEVELS IN KOLHAPUR  
FIELD HOCKEY PLAYERS ACROSS THREE STAGES OF COMPETITION**

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**ABSTRACT**

Achievement motivation plays a crucial role in determining sports performance, persistence, and success among athletes. The present study aimed to evaluate the levels of achievement motivation among field hockey players in Kolhapur across three stages of competition: district, state, and national levels. A total of ninety players (30 from each competitive level) were selected using purposive sampling. Standardized questionnaires were used to assess achievement motivation. Statistical analysis was conducted using mean, standard deviation, and ANOVA. The findings revealed significant differences in achievement motivation across the three levels, with national-level players exhibiting the highest motivation scores. The study highlights the importance of psychological training in enhancing athletic performance.

**Keywords:** - Achievement motivation, field hockey, competitive levels, sports psychology, Kolhapur

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Achievement motivation is widely recognized as one of the most influential psychological factors in determining success in sports performance. In competitive sports environments, where physical abilities are often similar among athletes, psychological attributes such as motivation, confidence, and mental resilience become critical differentiators. Achievement motivation refers to an individual's internal drive to accomplish goals, strive for excellence, and outperform others while maintaining high standards of performance. It plays a vital role in shaping an athlete's behavior, influencing their level of effort, persistence, and commitment toward training and competition. In the context of sports, especially team-based games like field hockey, achievement motivation is not only essential for individual performance but also contributes significantly to team success. Athletes who possess a high level of motivation are more likely to demonstrate discipline, focus, and determination, which are essential for achieving excellence at higher levels of competition.

Field hockey is a fast-paced and physically demanding sport that requires a combination of technical skills, tactical awareness, teamwork, and psychological strength. Over the years, the game has evolved significantly, with increased emphasis on scientific training methods and psychological preparedness. In India, field hockey holds historical and cultural importance, and regions like Kolhapur have contributed to the development of talented players at various levels of competition. Kolhapur, known for its strong sporting culture, provides a fertile ground for nurturing athletes who participate in district, state, and national-level competitions. However, the transition from lower levels of competition to higher ones is not solely dependent on physical training but also on the athlete's psychological readiness, particularly their level of achievement motivation.

The concept of achievement motivation has been extensively studied in the field of sports psychology. It encompasses two major components: the desire to achieve success and the fear of failure. Athletes with a high need for achievement tend to set challenging goals, take calculated risks, and remain persistent even in the face of difficulties. On the other hand, athletes who are driven by fear of failure may avoid challenging situations and exhibit lower levels of confidence and performance. Therefore, understanding the balance between these two components is crucial for evaluating an athlete's overall motivational profile. In competitive sports, especially at higher levels, the ability to cope with pressure, maintain focus, and sustain motivation over long periods is essential for success. This highlights the

importance of studying achievement motivation among athletes across different competitive stages.

Competitive level is an important factor that influences the development of achievement motivation. Athletes participating at district, state, and national levels are exposed to varying degrees of competition, training intensity, coaching quality, and psychological pressure. District-level players are often in the early stages of their sporting careers and may lack exposure to high-pressure situations. As a result, their motivation may be influenced more by external factors such as rewards, recognition, or social approval. In contrast, state-level players typically have more experience and exposure, which contributes to a moderate level of intrinsic motivation and confidence. National-level players, who compete at the highest level within the country, are usually characterized by strong intrinsic motivation, high levels of self-discipline, and a deep commitment to excellence. These athletes are more likely to be driven by internal goals and personal satisfaction rather than external rewards.

The relationship between achievement motivation and performance has been supported by numerous studies in sports psychology. Research indicates that highly motivated athletes are more likely to engage in deliberate practice, persist through challenges, and achieve higher levels of performance. Moreover, motivation has been linked to other important psychological constructs such as self-efficacy, goal orientation, and mental toughness. Athletes with high achievement motivation tend to exhibit greater confidence in their abilities, adopt a task-oriented approach to performance, and demonstrate resilience in the face of setbacks. These characteristics are particularly important in competitive sports like field hockey, where players must continuously adapt to dynamic game situations and maintain high levels of concentration and effort.

Despite the recognized importance of achievement motivation in sports, there is a lack of region-specific studies focusing on field hockey players, particularly in areas like Kolhapur. Most existing research has been conducted on athletes from different sports or broader populations, which may not fully capture the unique characteristics and challenges faced by hockey players in specific regions. Therefore, there is a need to conduct focused research that examines achievement motivation among field hockey players in Kolhapur, taking into account the different stages of competition. Such research can provide valuable insights into the motivational patterns of athletes and help identify factors that contribute to their success or failure.

The present study aims to evaluate and compare the levels of achievement motivation among field hockey players in Kolhapur across three stages of competition: district, state, and national levels. By analyzing the differences in motivation among these groups, the study seeks to understand how competitive exposure and experience influence an athlete's psychological development. The findings of this study are expected to have practical implications for coaches, trainers, and sports psychologists, who can use this information to design effective training programs that address both physical and psychological aspects of performance. Enhancing achievement motivation among athletes can lead to improved performance, greater consistency, and higher levels of satisfaction in sports participation.

## **II. MOTIVATION PATTERNS AMONG DISTRICT-LEVEL PLAYERS**

Motivation patterns among district-level field hockey players represent an important area of study, as this stage marks the foundation of an athlete's competitive journey. District-level players are typically in the early phases of structured sports participation, where their psychological characteristics, including achievement motivation, are still developing. At this level, motivation is often influenced by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, but it is generally observed that external influences tend to play a more dominant role. Understanding these patterns is crucial for coaches, trainers, and sports psychologists, as it helps in identifying areas that require intervention to enhance performance and promote long-term athletic development.

One of the most prominent features of motivation among district-level players is the reliance on extrinsic motivation. These players are often driven by external rewards such as recognition, selection for higher-level teams, praise from coaches, and social approval from peers and family. Since many of these athletes are at the beginning of their careers, their sense of identity as sports performers is still evolving. As a result, they may depend heavily on validation from others to sustain their interest and effort in the sport. Winning matches, receiving medals, and being appreciated publicly serve as strong motivational factors that encourage continued participation. However, this dependence on external rewards can sometimes limit the development of deeper, intrinsic motivation, which is essential for long-term success.

Another key aspect of motivation at the district level is the presence of moderate goal-setting behavior. District-level players often set short-term and relatively simple goals, such as improving specific skills, securing a place in the team, or winning local tournaments. While

goal-setting is an important motivational strategy, the goals at this stage may lack clarity, structure, and long-term vision. Many players may not have a clear understanding of what it takes to progress to higher levels of competition, which can affect their commitment and focus. In some cases, goals are influenced more by immediate outcomes rather than a systematic plan for development, leading to fluctuations in motivation over time.

Fear of failure is another significant factor influencing motivation patterns among district-level players. Unlike elite athletes who may view challenges as opportunities for growth, district-level players often perceive competition as a source of anxiety and pressure. The fear of making mistakes, losing matches, or facing criticism can negatively impact their confidence and willingness to take risks. This fear may lead to avoidance behaviors, such as hesitating to participate in crucial moments of the game or avoiding challenging situations altogether. Consequently, their performance may not accurately reflect their true potential. Addressing this issue is essential, as excessive fear of failure can hinder both skill development and psychological growth.

District-level players also exhibit variable levels of persistence and commitment. While some athletes demonstrate strong dedication and enthusiasm, others may show inconsistent effort in training and competition. This inconsistency can be attributed to several factors, including lack of structured training programs, limited access to quality coaching, and insufficient exposure to competitive environments. Additionally, academic pressures and social distractions may interfere with their commitment to sports. As a result, maintaining a consistent level of motivation becomes a challenge for many players at this stage.

The role of coaches and the training environment is particularly significant in shaping motivation patterns among district-level players. Coaches serve as primary sources of guidance, encouragement, and feedback, and their approach can greatly influence an athlete's motivation. Positive reinforcement, constructive feedback, and supportive coaching styles can enhance players' confidence and encourage them to strive for improvement. On the other hand, negative criticism, lack of attention, or inconsistent communication can reduce motivation and lead to disengagement. Therefore, creating a positive and motivating training environment is essential for fostering achievement motivation among these players.

Another important aspect is the limited exposure to high-level competition, which affects the development of motivation. District-level players often compete within a restricted environment, which may not provide sufficient challenges or opportunities for growth.

Without exposure to higher standards of performance, players may struggle to understand the level of effort and dedication required to succeed at advanced stages. This lack of exposure can result in lower aspirations and reduced motivation to push beyond their current limits. Providing opportunities for inter-district or state-level competitions can help broaden their perspective and enhance their motivation.

Peer influence and social factors also play a crucial role in shaping motivation patterns at the district level. Athletes are often influenced by their teammates, friends, and social circles. A supportive peer group can encourage healthy competition, teamwork, and mutual motivation. Conversely, negative peer influence, such as lack of seriousness or discouraging attitudes, can hinder motivation and performance. Family support is equally important, as encouragement and understanding from family members can significantly boost an athlete's confidence and commitment.

Despite these challenges, district-level players possess significant potential for growth and development. With proper guidance, training, and psychological support, their motivation levels can be enhanced effectively. Introducing mental skills training, such as goal-setting techniques, visualization, and confidence-building exercises, can help players develop a more positive and resilient mindset. Encouraging intrinsic motivation by focusing on personal improvement, enjoyment of the game, and self-satisfaction can also contribute to long-term engagement and success.

### **III. IMPACT OF COMPETITIVE EXPOSURE ON MOTIVATION**

Competitive exposure plays a vital role in shaping the achievement motivation of athletes, particularly in team sports like field hockey. It refers to the extent to which players participate in organized competitions at various levels such as district, state, and national tournaments. Exposure to competition is not merely about participation; it encompasses the experience of facing diverse opponents, adapting to different game situations, managing pressure, and striving for performance excellence. As athletes progress through different competitive stages, their psychological attributes, especially motivation, undergo significant transformation. Understanding the impact of competitive exposure on motivation is essential for developing athletes who are not only physically skilled but also mentally resilient and goal-oriented.

One of the most significant effects of competitive exposure is the enhancement of intrinsic motivation. As athletes gain more experience in competitive environments, they begin to shift

from external rewards, such as medals and recognition, to internal satisfaction derived from performance improvement and mastery of skills. At the early stages, players may participate primarily for enjoyment or rewards, but with increased exposure, they develop a deeper connection with the sport. They start valuing personal growth, self-improvement, and the challenge of competition. This transition from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation is crucial for long-term athletic success, as intrinsically motivated athletes are more consistent, committed, and resilient.

Competitive exposure also contributes to the development of confidence and self-efficacy, which are closely linked to motivation. Athletes who regularly participate in competitions gain a better understanding of their abilities and limitations. Success in competitive situations boosts confidence and reinforces the belief in one's capabilities, encouraging athletes to set higher goals and strive for excellence. Even experiences of failure can positively impact motivation if they are perceived as opportunities for learning and improvement. Over time, repeated exposure helps athletes build a strong sense of self-efficacy, enabling them to approach challenges with determination rather than fear.

Another important aspect is the influence of competitive exposure on goal-setting behavior. Athletes who are exposed to higher levels of competition tend to set more realistic, specific, and challenging goals. They develop a clearer understanding of the standards required to succeed and align their efforts accordingly. For instance, a district-level player may initially aim to perform well in local matches, but after experiencing state or national competitions, their goals may evolve to include skill refinement, tactical awareness, and long-term career objectives. This progression in goal-setting reflects an increase in achievement motivation, as athletes become more focused and purposeful in their training and performance.

Competitive exposure also plays a crucial role in enhancing mental toughness and resilience, which are key components of motivation. High-level competitions often involve intense pressure, uncertainty, and high expectations. Athletes who are regularly exposed to such environments learn to cope with stress, maintain concentration, and perform under pressure. These experiences help in developing resilience, enabling athletes to recover quickly from setbacks and continue striving toward their goals. In contrast, athletes with limited exposure may struggle to handle competitive stress, leading to decreased motivation and performance anxiety.

Furthermore, exposure to competition fosters a competitive mindset and desire for excellence.

When athletes compete against skilled opponents, they become more aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. This awareness acts as a motivating factor, pushing them to improve their performance and match higher standards. Observing and interacting with more experienced players can inspire athletes to adopt better training habits, discipline, and work ethic. This competitive environment encourages continuous improvement and reinforces the desire to succeed, which is central to achievement motivation.

The role of feedback and evaluation in competitive exposure is another critical factor influencing motivation. Competitions provide immediate and objective feedback on performance, allowing athletes to assess their progress and identify areas for improvement. Constructive feedback from coaches and performance outcomes help athletes refine their skills and strategies. This process of evaluation and improvement enhances motivation by providing a sense of direction and purpose. Athletes become more engaged in their training as they strive to correct mistakes and achieve better results in future competitions.

Competitive exposure also influences social and environmental factors that contribute to motivation. Participation in higher-level competitions often brings athletes into contact with professional coaching, advanced training facilities, and a more disciplined sporting environment. These factors create a positive atmosphere that encourages motivation and commitment. Additionally, the recognition and respect associated with competing at higher levels can serve as powerful motivators, inspiring athletes to maintain high standards of performance.

However, it is important to note that competitive exposure can also have negative effects on motivation if not managed properly. Excessive pressure, unrealistic expectations, and repeated failures can lead to stress, burnout, and decreased motivation. Athletes who are not adequately prepared for high-level competition may experience anxiety and self-doubt, which can negatively impact their performance. Therefore, it is essential to provide appropriate support systems, including psychological training and guidance, to help athletes cope with the demands of competition.

In the context of field hockey players in regions like Kolhapur, competitive exposure plays a significant role in determining the progression from district to state and national levels. Players who have greater exposure to competitive environments are more likely to develop higher levels of achievement motivation, which in turn enhances their performance and career prospects. Providing opportunities for regular competition, organizing tournaments, and

encouraging participation in higher-level events can significantly contribute to the development of motivated and skilled athletes.

Moreover, coaches and sports authorities play a crucial role in maximizing the positive impact of competitive exposure. By creating a supportive and encouraging environment, they can help athletes view competition as a learning experience rather than a source of pressure. Incorporating psychological training, such as stress management and confidence-building techniques, can further enhance the benefits of competitive exposure.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

The present study aimed to evaluate the levels of achievement motivation among field hockey players in Kolhapur across three stages of competition—district, state, and national levels. Based on the analysis and interpretation of data, it can be concluded that achievement motivation significantly varies with the level of competition. The findings clearly indicate that national-level players exhibit the highest levels of achievement motivation, followed by state-level players, while district-level players demonstrate comparatively lower motivation levels.

This variation in motivation can be attributed to differences in competitive exposure, training facilities, coaching quality, and psychological preparedness. Players at higher levels benefit from greater exposure to competitive environments, which enhances their confidence, goal-setting ability, and intrinsic motivation. They are more focused, disciplined, and driven by a strong desire to achieve excellence. In contrast, district-level players, being at the शुरुआती stage of their sporting careers, are more influenced by external factors such as rewards, recognition, and social approval. They may also experience fear of failure and lack the psychological readiness required to perform consistently under pressure.

The study further highlights the crucial role of competitive exposure in shaping motivation patterns. Increased participation in competitions helps athletes develop mental toughness, resilience, and a positive attitude toward challenges. It enables them to shift from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation, which is essential for long-term success in sports. Additionally, the influence of coaches, training environment, and support systems plays a significant role in enhancing or hindering motivation levels among players.

Overall, the results emphasize that achievement motivation is not static but develops progressively with experience, exposure, and proper guidance. Therefore, it is essential to provide structured training programs that include psychological skill development alongside

physical and technical training. Coaches and sports authorities should focus on creating a motivating environment, especially for district-level players, to help them build confidence, set meaningful goals, and sustain their interest in the sport.

In conclusion, achievement motivation is a key determinant of performance and success in field hockey. Enhancing motivation among players at all levels, particularly at the grassroots level, is essential for developing future elite athletes. The study contributes valuable insights into the motivational differences across competitive stages and underscores the need for integrating psychological training into sports development programs.

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