

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHNICITY, SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND VISUAL SKILL IN ADOLESCENT CRICKET BATSMEN IN SOUTH A

Paper in preparation for submission

Sharhidd Taliep, Ruan Rust, Njabulo Mhlongo, Catherine Draper, Sherylle Calder, Christi Botha, Janine Gray



What is the problem?

Black African batting performance at a junior and senior provincial level has been poor over the last 10 years.

Why did the researchers do this particular study?

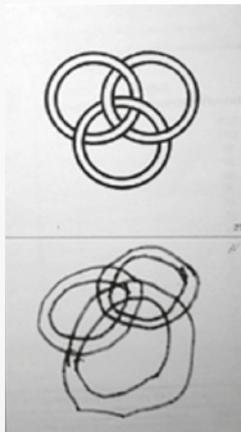
The researchers set out to investigate a possible reason for this poor batting performance by investigating the relationship between ethnicity, socio-economic status and visual skill in adolescent cricket batsmen.

Who was studied?

Fifty-one Adolescent male, under 15 cricketers, participated in the study. These participants were recruited by Western Province Cricket Association and represented some of the best players in that age group in the Western Province region. The players were divided into three groups: 16 White, 17 Coloured/Indian and 18 Black African batsmen.

How was the study done?

The participants completed the 3 phases of visual skill tests. Phase 1: Simple visual motor skills were assessed using the Beery-Buktenica Test. This test requires the participant to copy a drawing and measures fine motor skills. Phase 2: Visual skills important for ball sport performance were assessed using saccadic eye movement, visual tracking, depth perception and eye-hand reaction/eye-hand coordination tests. Phase 3: Visual perceptual and anticipatory skills important for cricket batting performance were assessed using a temporal occlusion technique.



Example of a drawing task in the Beery-Buktenica Test.



An example of visual skills tests important for ball sports.



Visual perception and anticipation skills test. Ball in the above example was occluded at 200ms after ball release.

What did the researchers find?

Phase 1: Black African batsmen scored significantly worse than Coloured/Indian and White batsmen in all 3 phases of visual skill tests.

Interestingly, Black African batsmen that came from a low socio-economic background but attended a sporting school, performed better than the Black African batsmen that did not attend a sporting school. Furthermore, there appeared to be little differences in the visual skills of the Black African batsmen that attended the sporting schools compared to White and Coloured/Indian batsmen.

What are the implications of the study?

The poor batting performance of Black African batsmen in South African is associated with poor visual motor skills. Black African visual skills and batting performance will significantly improve if provided with access to good sport schools, facilities, training programmes and coaches.



CRICKET
SOUTH AFRICA

