Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation is a judgement of merit, sometimes based solely on measurements such as those provided by test scores but more frequently involving the synthesis of various measurements, critical incidents, subjective impressions, and other kinds of evidence.¹

Evaluating the amount of knowledge achieved, skills developed, and attitudes formed is an important function of teaching any subject and discipline. The extent of its importance can be visualised by the never-ending schemes and reports on examination reforms in the academic education as the factors affecting in learning physical skills are too numerous such as physical fitness, motor fitness, motivation, intelligence, besides instruction got from well planned schemes of lessons. Further the criterion behaviour in evaluating physical skills is not amenable to easily grading objectively especially in the skills of sports and games which are dependent equally on the circumstances of playing and the physical skills of the players².

In Physical Education two types of tests are mainly used for objectively grading students i.e. the teacher made test and standardised test. The teacher made tests has the advantage of being pertinent to a particular group as the teacher is aware of what he has covered in the instruction and what he actually wants to assess. But these tests are not scientifically made. Therefore the need for standardised test is more vital as they are scientific in nature and can be universally applied.


In any game, be it indoor or outdoor, to have complete command, perfection is needed. Game of badminton is no exception. This perfection comes out through certain skills and techniques. It is apparently clear that if a sportsman wants to declare his mastery over any game, he will have to be well equipped with the skills and strategy of that particular game.

Badminton is a game of graceful perfection, the stretch and bend of leg and back, the flick of wrist and sudden, quick leap into the air. The shuttle, guided by delicate drop shots or deep tosses to the base line, just clears the net or settles precisely on the third line, out of reach in the backhand corner. The arc of the shuttle, the sweep of the racket, the stride and then the long stretch and reach; there is an almost symmetrical beauty to the game. And yet badminton, for all its elegance and grace, can be hard and, cruel game: the dart to the net, and then the scramble back; the constant, relentless effort of stretching left and right; the sudden smash coming hard at the body, or the agony of being caught on the wrong foot and once again, lunging forward or leaping backwards. The legs ache and shoulders droop, breathing is short and gasping and there is no energy left for the finishing smash. It is this combination, this need for absolute control and perfection, coupled with complete stamina and subtle strength, that makes Badminton such a wonderful game to play and to watch.

A beginning badminton player needs to learn the basic shots that are useful in singles and doubles, as well as the stroking techniques employed to produce these shots. In preparation for this, it is also necessary to acquire some associated skills that accompany a good stroking technique. Before attempting stroking techniques, one must learn prerequisite skills of effective stroke production.

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As badminton is complex sporting activity, the learning of many skills which make up the best players will require a great deal of time. Also the players will need:

1. A high level of fitness.

2. An ability to play all of the shots within the game, effectively and efficiently, with total consistency and accuracy, imaginatively and with creativity.

3. To develop both the desire to win and dogged determination not to be defeated².

For all practical purposes there are six stroking actions to consider, namely, overhead, shoulder high and underarm, all played off both the forehand and backhand sides of the body. From these basic stroking actions, one can produce a number of basic shots and then an almost infinite number of variations. All of the basic stroking actions have a number of common elements; distinct differences between forehand and backhand shots; and then smaller variations for each of the specific shots³.

Forehand strokes and shots for the right-handed player, are those shots played in front of, or to the right of, the body. They can be played below the shoulder, at the shoulder level or above the shoulder.

Backhand strokes and shots for the right-handed player, are those shots played on the left hand side of the body whether below, at or above shoulder level. Very seldom backhand shots are played directly in front of body; exceptions being some shots at the net⁴.

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³Ibid., p.4.

⁴Ibid., p.5.
A complete badminton player should possess agility of an acrobat, power of a race horse, killer instinct of a panther, accuracy of a marksman, delicacy of a dancer, speed of a sprinter, leap of a high jumper, stamina of a marathon runner, creativity of an artist, agility of a gymnast, and so on. His judgement has to be so sharp and accurate that he should be repeatedly able to send a shuttle to the inner-edge of the line and if a shuttle is likely to fall only an inch outside, he should leave it confidently. Instant co-ordination of all the above mentioned faculties is a must for success. Any wavering can spell his doom.

Today's badminton players have all these qualities in plenty and that makes things all the more difficult and complicated. The player wishing to come to the top has to have all these and something which he can claim to be his own. The variation between shots coupled with tactics and strategy makes badminton more demanding\(^9\).

Experts agree that success in badminton depends on three factors - ability of the player to execute a full range of shots, the artfulness in the use of court strategy and the stamina\(^10\).

It behooves anyone who wishes to become an advanced player to keep in mind that the fundamentals can not be overlooked. Eager to be successful, the novice may choose to use any method or device that gets results now. Because he achieves temporary success (against inferior competition) he may then continue his unsound technique for so long that it becomes virtually impossible to correct it\(^11\).

Strategy is the process of using shots in a deliberate way either to win a point or to take the service from the opponent. It begins with the game's first serve-or even earlier. With each stroke the player wants to play the shuttle into the opponent's court in a way that (1) prevents the opponent from making a dangerous

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return or (2) forces the opponent to miss a return or make a weak return that gives the player a chance to make a decisive stroke.

Weakness in badminton is of two kinds; those common to all players (such as shots hit to the backhand) and those peculiar to the individual. Strategy is the process of using shots in a deliberate way either to win a point or to take the service from the opponent. It begins with the game's first serve—or even earlier. With each stroke the player wants to play the shuttle into the opponent's court in a way that (1) prevents the opponent from making a dangerous return or (2) forces the opponent to miss a return that gives the player a chance to make a decisive stroke.

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In no racket games does defence change to offence so rapidly as in badminton, and the attacker can lose the offensive equally fast. A single return, well hit will drive the opponent back and force him to reply with a defensive shot; or a drop shot off a smash may have him scrambling to get his racket to the shuttle. By the same token the player may see an opening for a point but his opponent, having anticipated the shot, has made a forcing return and has now got the player in trouble.

Certain strategies and tactics apply to all forms of badminton—singles, doubles or mixed doubles. Strategies are "plans made for accomplishing an end;" tactics are "skillful devices" for carrying out these plans. Winning badminton is generally a question of playing basic fundamentals better than the opponent and understanding and applying strategic principles.

Essentially, tactics are logical solutions actually encountered in games play. In addition to allowing to exploit the opponent's deficiencies, tactics should have regard to protecting the inadequacies. While the principles of basic tactics are valid at all levels of play (including the very highest) they must be subject to adaptation dependent upon individuals and circumstances.

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13 Bloss and Hales, *Badminton*, p. 64.
Too often players assume a better understanding of tactics to be a panacea allowing them to overcome deficiencies in stroke and shot making, movement about court and general fitness. In actual games play they soon learn otherwise, as more experienced and capable opponents will quickly expose any such deficiencies. Even basic tactics, therefore, assume that the players have most, if not all, of the essential attributes required by the complete badminton player. Certainly, a better appreciation of tactics will assist the endeavours to win more often than lose. However, practising and perfecting shots should not be neglected, otherwise the player will be unable to successfully employ this better appreciation.

Players want to know if they are making progress. While each player has an idea about his or her skill level, objective evidence of success strongly motivates him or her to continue practicing. Appropriate skill test accurately assess a player's badminton ability. Subjective appraisals of performance based on rating scales provide a guide for correcting stroke procedures and movement patterns. Top level performance in badminton requires that all required movements be executed in proper sequence and that the player be in proper position for stroke execution. The purpose of evaluation by the coach is to analyse for the player, until such time as the player can complete an adequate self-assessment of personal skills.

Evaluation of any programme be it academic sports or any other field is a very important aspect of the teaching learning process. This is only natural as every individual likes to know the improvement he or she makes in the field of endeavour whichever be it.

Evaluation enables us to analyse the programme rationally, to know the progress made, the shortcomings and the necessary steps that ought to be taken to bring about further progress and effectiveness in the programme.

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14 Roper, Badminton: The Skills of the Game, p. 93

15 Ballou, Teaching Badminton, p. 123.
Evaluation could be objective, subjective or a combination of both subjective and objective. This is because the skill can be measured in an objective manner with the help of skill tests.

Skill tests reflect the ability of the pupil to perform in a specified sport such as badminton, handball or basketball and helps for purpose of classification, determining progress and marking\textsuperscript{16}.

Some skills are evaluated by means of a rating scale specified in the rules governing the competition.

Many skills are not evaluated separately in the normal competitive situation. In team and racket games, for example, the manner in which the various skills are performed is reflected only in the final score--an overall measure of many performances of many different skills. The performance is thus evaluated subjectively to determine whether the skill was executed to the best advantage\textsuperscript{17}.

Rating scales are useful for evaluating qualities that cannot be measured objectively or at least not easily and efficiently.

Subjective evaluations are often used to determine the validity of objective tests. Judges ratings are among the most widely-used criteria for validating skill tests for team sports. Although it is true that anything that exists can be measured, the system for measuring it may not be an objective test. Certainly, wherever feasible, objective evaluation should be used. But many important instructional objectives cannot be measured objectively. In fact objective skill tests are not even available for gymnastics, folk dancing, fencing and team work.

Subjective evaluation may also be more efficient than objective testing. Certain subjective scoring can be carried out while the students are practicing or competing, making it unnecessary to set aside special testing periods. Also the number of trials for objective evaluation can make those tests unfeasible for mass testing.


A rating scale reflects the careful planning procedure required to give reliability, validity and objectivity to subjective evaluation. The scale lists the traits to be evaluated, reflects the teacher-determined importance of each trait, describes the performance standards, and provides a format for immediate recorded scoring\textsuperscript{18}.

In sports-advanced countries the measurement and assessment of basic skills and specific fitness are receiving much importance not only to assist in the selection of sports but also for planning, control and evaluation of training methodology.

In the game of badminton as in all other games and sports, many standardised tests are available but the available tests have been constructed in countries like U.S.A., Canada, etc. and as such these tests may not be very applicable to the Indian players, also these tests have been constructed a long time back and there after a tremendous improvement in techniques and systems of play has taken place.

Hence the research scholar felt the need to evaluate the specific skills and strategy in badminton through subjective and objective criteria which play a dominant role in enhancing the performance.

**Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of the study was to develop criteria for evaluation of specific skills and strategy in badminton through subjective and objective techniques.

Delimitations

The study was delimited to:

1. Subjective and objective analysis of specific skills.
   (a) i) High Serve
       ii) Low Serve
       iii) Forehand Overhead Clear
       iv) Forhand Overhead Smash
       v) Forhand Overhead Drop Shot
       vi) Backhand Overhead Clear
       vii) Backhand Overhead Drop Shot.
   (b) Strategy

2. Sixty, district male badminton players from M.P. State for subjective and objective analysis.

Limitations

For district badminton players from M.P. State factors like diet, daily routine, life style, habits etc, which may affect the study were not controlled by the investigator.

Definitions and Explanations of the Terms

Skill

Skills refers to the level of proficiency on a specific tasks.\textsuperscript{19}

Sports Skill

Sports skills are comprised of more complex, coordinated or specialised abilities associated with particular sports such as a tennis serve, a baseball throw for accuracy, a golf drive, dribbling in basketball etc.\textsuperscript{20}


High Serve

The high serve is a pleasant flowing shot in which the shuttle is hit high and deep to the long service line. High serve is basic to singles play.\(^{21}\)

Low Serve

A stroke used to put the shuttle into play at the start of each rally and skims the net and lands on the front service line near the center or the side.\(^{22}\)

Forehand Overhead Clear

Forehand overhead clear is a stroke played on the natural side of the body and which sends the shuttle high and deep to the back of the court.\(^{23}\)

Forehand Overhead Smash

Forehand overhead stroke whereby the shuttle is hit downward with power from natural side of the body, the intention being to kill the shuttle with speed.\(^{24}\)

Forehand Overhead Drop Shot

A stroke played overhead from natural side of the body from the rear court to fall rapidly and close to the net on the opponent's side.\(^{25}\)


\(^{23}\)Bloss and Hales, *Badminton*, p. 97.

\(^{24}\)Ibid.

\(^{25}\)Ibid., p. 96.
Backhand Overhead Drop Shot

A stroke played softly from inactive side of the body from the rear court to fall rapidly and close to the net on the opponent's side.²⁶

Backhand Overhead Clear

A stroke played from inactive side of the body from the rear court which sends the shuttle high and deep to the opponent's back court.²⁷

Strategy

Strategy is the process of using shots in a deliberate way either to win a point or to take the service from the opponent.²⁸

Significance of the Study

Badminton is a competitive game. Players compete against each other whenever they go on to the court to play a game. If winning is of primary importance in competition then the performance the player gives in the game is the determining factor in winning. The competition is the arena in which a player tests his skills against his opponent. The criteria for evaluating a performance includes the player's skill i.e. his stroke or tactical ability, his fitness i.e. his speed, agility, strength, or his attitude i.e. his determination, concentration, commitment etc.. Since the very limited research in the area of skill and strategy aspects of badminton has been done, hence the researcher felt the need to take this study, the results of which may reflect in following significances:

1. The study may provide guidelines to the physical education teachers and badminton coaches to evaluate specific skills and strategy in badminton.
2. The study may serve as motivational force to the badminton players to improve upon their specific skills and strategy.

²⁶Ibid., p.95.

²⁷Davis, Play the Game Badminton, p.35.

²⁸Ballou, Teaching Badminton, p.77.
3. Subjective analysis in this study may help badminton coaches to identify the faults in specific skills.

4. This study may help the coaches to diagnose the player's weaknesses and need in specific skills and strategy.

5. The study may assist coaches and physical education teachers in grading and classifying badminton players.