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Probabilistic Approach for Studying the Effects of Name Alphabets on Player Performance

Anwar Ali
Department of Statistics University of Peshawar. Email: anwar415546@gmail.com

Dr. Qamruz Zaman (Corresponding Author)
Department of Statistics University of Peshawar. Email: ayanqamar@gmail.com

Aimal Khan
Department of Statistics Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad.
Email: aimalkhan@stat.qau.edu.pk

Haider Jamal
Department of Statistics Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad.
Email: haiderjamal0123@gmail.com

Waqas Khan
Department of Statistics University of Peshawar. Email: khanwkwaqas@gmail.com

Muhammad Sajid Afridi
Department of Statistics Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad.
Email: msajidafridi@stat.qau.edu.pk

Rahmat Ali
Department of Statistics University of Peshawar. Email: rahmatalihasrat@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of the first letter of players' names on the performance and characteristics of T-20 international cricket players, focusing on data spanning from 2005 to 2023. Utilizing secondary data obtained from reputable sources such as Cricinfo and Cricbuzz, the research encompasses various player types, including batsmen, bowlers, and wicketkeepers, across notable cricketing nations. The analysis employs a tree diagram to categorize players based on the initial letter of their names, facilitating an examination of performance trends within these groups. Additionally, the study implements Bayesian probability to develop a predictive model for assessing the performance outcomes of left-handed and right-handed batsmen. This probabilistic approach allows for continuous refinement of predictions as new data is collected, enabling a comprehensive understanding of how a player's handedness and the alphabetical positioning of their names might influence their performance metrics. The findings contribute valuable insights into cricket analytics and player performance dynamics.

Keywords: T-20 International Cricket, Bayesian Probability, Player Performance, Alphabetical Positioning, Handedness

Introduction

Statistics, a field grounded in mathematics, provides the means to gather, analyze, and interpret data, allowing for insights into patterns and decision-making processes. It plays a pivotal role across various disciplines, including sports. In particular, cricket, a sport deeply rooted in tradition and strategy, offers an ideal environment for the application of statistical methods. With formats such as Test cricket, One Day Internationals (ODIs), and Twenty20 Internationals (T20Is), cricket has evolved significantly since its inception in England in the late 16th century. Of these formats, T20I cricket has gained global popularity due to its fast-paced nature and ability to captivate audiences within a shorter timeframe, typically around three hours.Amid the many factors contributing to a player's performance in cricket—such as skill, strategy, and physical ability—one less-explored aspect is the role of a player's name, specifically its alphabetical position. This study aims to explore whether the alphabetical order of players' names influences their performance on the field. It investigates if players whose names start with earlier letters in the alphabet experience subtle advantages compared to those with names beginning later in the alphabet. Furthermore, this research delves into how these alphabetical biases may manifest in various aspects of cricket, including batting and bowling, with a focus on left-handed and right-handed players.

Background and Motivation

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Names and their starting letters hold psychological significance, often influencing perceptions and behaviors. Research has shown that individuals tend to favor letters related to their own names—a phenomenon called the name-letter effect. While previous studies have primarily examined the broader social and psychological impacts of names, there has been limited investigation into whether the alphabetical order of names influences tangible outcomes like sports performance.

In cricket, where factors such as selection processes, team rankings, and match performance are scrutinized closely, even minor advantages could affect a player's career trajectory. For instance, players with names that start with earlier letters may receive more attention during selections or team lineups, leading to increased confidence and opportunities. Conversely, players whose names fall later in the alphabet may face reduced visibility, which could impact their psychological state and performance over time.

The motivation for this study stems from the need to investigate whether these alphabetical biases exist and, if they do, how they affect real-world outcomes in a competitive environment like cricket. The study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of how seemingly minor factors—such as the alphabetic positioning of names—can influence performance, particularly in cricket.

Cross-Sport Analysis of Alphabetical Effects

A cross-sport analysis helps explore whether the influence of a player's name position in the alphabet varies across different sports. In cricket, the format's strategic complexity makes it an excellent case study for understanding how name-based factors might impact performance. This study will also investigate if similar effects exist across other sports, providing context for whether the impact of alphabetical order is unique to cricket or consistent across various competitive environments.

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Investigation of Alphabetical Impact on Athletic Performance

This research investigates whether players whose names start with earlier letters in the alphabet achieve different performance outcomes compared to those with names beginning later. By analyzing performance metrics such as match scores, batting averages, and bowling statistics, the study seeks to determine whether players with alphabetically advantageous names have a statistically significant edge. For example, a focus will be placed on whether top-ranked players tend to have names starting with earlier letters, suggesting a correlation between name positioning and success in cricket.

Psychological Perspectives on Names and Performance

Names play a crucial role in shaping identity and self-perception. Psychological research has demonstrated that people tend to exhibit implicit egotism, gravitating toward elements associated with their own names. This bias can influence decision-making and behavior, extending to competitive environments like sports, where confidence and self-belief significantly affect performance.

In cricket, players who are consistently placed higher on alphabetical lists—such as team rosters or school selections—might develop greater self-confidence from an early age, which could positively influence their long-term performance. On the other hand, players with names that appear later in the alphabet might face subtle disadvantages in terms of visibility and opportunities, potentially affecting their self-perception and motivation.

Probabilistic Approaches in Sports Performance Analysis

Probabilistic models provide a valuable framework for analyzing sports performance by considering the uncertainty and variability inherent in competitive environments. Traditional performance metrics often focus on averages or absolute outcomes, but probabilistic methods allow for more dynamic assessments. This study will employ probabilistic techniques to evaluate whether name-based factors, such as the

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alphabetical positioning of players' names, correlate with performance outcomes in cricket.

For example, a probabilistic model will be developed to compare performance outcomes between left-handed and right-handed batsmen. By analyzing historical data, the model will account for various factors influencing player performance, including team dynamics, environmental conditions, and individual skill variability. Additionally, the study will explore how name-based factors might affect the performance of left-arm versus right-arm bowlers, using a non-deterministic approach to assess any potential correlations.

The Link between Name Order and Sports Performance

Uncovering whether the sequence of letters in players' names has any impact on their competitive results involves analyzing performance data such as scores, rankings, and success rates. This study aims to identify any potential correlations between name order and athletic performance, exploring whether players with alphabetically early names experience different levels of success. The results could reveal hidden biases and contribute to a deeper understanding of how minor factors, like alphabetical positioning, influence sports performance.

Impact on Youth Sports and Development

The impact of alphabetical order may be particularly pronounced in youth sports, where early advantages can compound over time. Young athletes whose names start with earlier letters may receive more attention during selection processes or developmental programs, which could influence their long-term opportunities and performance. This study will examine whether these biases exist in youth cricket and how they may affect player development and progression to professional levels.

Tree induction is widely recognized as an effective method for creating classification models, but certain applications require the ability to rank cases based on the likelihood

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of class membership. Probability Estimation Trees (PETs) offer the same benefits as traditional classification trees, such as being easy to interpret, accurate, and capable of handling large datasets with high-dimensional data. However, decision trees often produce unreliable probability estimates. While various methods have been proposed to improve the accuracy of PETs, no comprehensive experimental studies have been conducted to identify the most effective techniques for enhancing probability-based rankings.

Beygelzimer et al. (2014) focus on the problem of efficiently estimating the conditional probability of a label in logarithmic time, specifically in O(log n)O(\log n)O(logn), where nnn is the total number of possible labels. To address this, they propose a natural reduction of the problem into a series of binary regression tasks, organized within a tree structure. The authors derive a regret bound that scales with the depth of this tree. Building on this analysis, they introduce the first online algorithm that constructs a tree with logarithmic depth to efficiently handle the label set. Additionally, they conduct empirical tests on a dataset with approximately 10610^6106 labels, showcasing the algorithm's effectiveness. Neville et al. (2003) expand on the use of classification trees in machine learning, which traditionally model propositional data by assuming that training instances are homogeneous and independent. They introduce Relational Probability Trees (RPTs) to address the challenges of handling heterogeneous and interdependent data. The RPT learning algorithm incorporates relational features through the use of aggregation functions, transforming relational data into a propositional format for binary splits. Additionally, a unique randomization test is applied to minimize statistical biases. In several relational learning tasks, the RPTs generated using these techniques are notably smaller than other models while delivering comparable or even better performance. This study is important because it explores a new way of looking at how the first letter of a player's name might affect their performance in cricket. We want to understand if there's a connection between the first letter of a player's name and how well they play. We'll also create a special model to

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predict how left-handed and right-handed batters perform differently. Additionally, we're using a unique approach to figure out how left arm and right arm bowlers impact the game. The results of this study could teach us more about how our names might subconsciously affect how we play sports, especially in cricket. It could also help coaches and teams make better decisions about player strategies.

Methodology

Data

To accomplish the goals of my study, I am using existing information, specifically secondary data, which includes both quantitative and qualitative variables. The data is sourced from reputable websites like Cricinfo and Cricbuzz, covering the period from 2005 to 2023. I focus on T-20 international men's cricket players, including bowlers, batsmen, and wicketkeepers, from prominent teams such as Pakistan, India, England, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, West Indies, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, and Ireland. The exclusion of players from other national teams is due to the unavailability of their records. During data collection, I thoroughly consider players' performances, examining metrics like first played match, last played match, high score of player, 50s, 100s, catches, stumpings, bowling style, batting style, balls bowled, matches, maidens, runs conceded, best bowling, average, and total wickets to fulfill the study's requirements.

To understand how the first letter of players' names affects their performance, I will use a tree diagram in my research. This diagram will organize players into groups based on the starting letter of their names. Each group will represent players with the same initial letter. By doing this, I can look at the performance of different groups and see if there are any patterns or trends. The tree diagram will make it easier to see and understand how the first letter of a player's name might be linked to their overall performance in cricket.

To create a likely model for left-handed and right-handed batsmen, I am using Bayesian probability in my research. This method helps me adjust predictions based on existing knowledge and new information. It is effective for dealing with uncertainties in cricket player performance. I begin by determining the probabilities of different performance outcomes using past data and cricket insights. As I collect more data on left-handed and right-handed batsmen, the Bayesian approach allows me to update and refine these predictions. This way, I can develop a flexible and effective model to better understand the factors influencing the performance of left-handed and right-handed batsmen in T-20 international cricket.

Tree Diagram

A tree diagram is like a helpful tool in math and statistics. It helps figure out how many different things can happen in a situation. We can use it to organize and show all the possible outcomes of an event or problem. People also call it a probability tree or decision tree. It's useful in many areas, like finance. The diagram starts at one point, and you can make choices or go through different events by following the branches of the tree. The tree combines the chances of things happening, the choices you make, and the results you get. It's like a map that helps you make smart decisions. The diagram starts at one point and has branches going to other points, each representing different choices or events [10].

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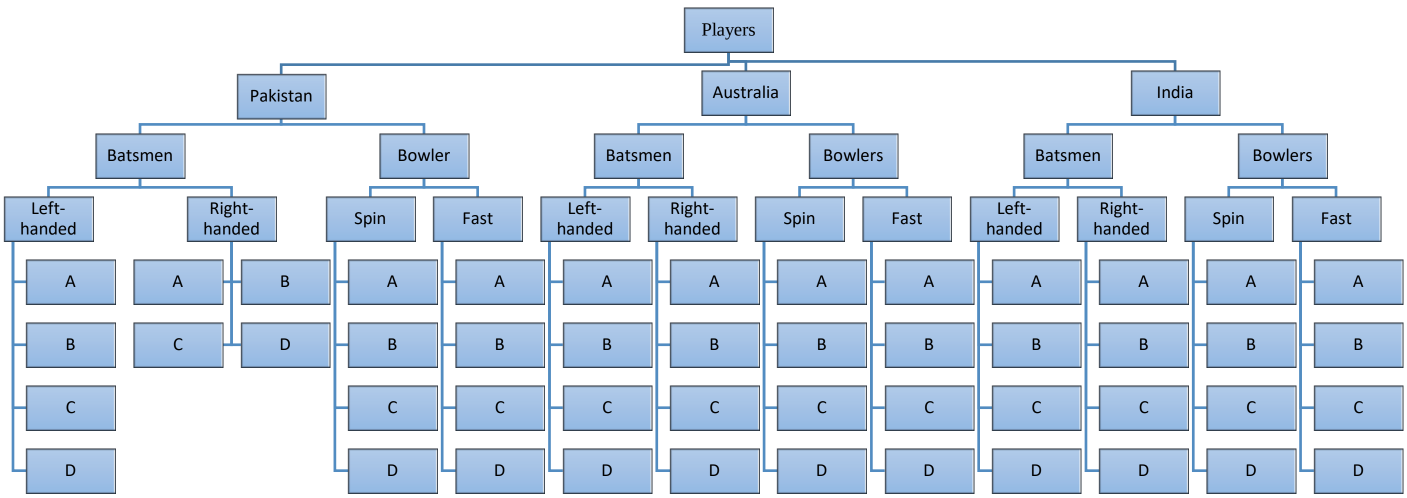

Bayesian Probability

In the 18th century, a guy named Thomas Bayes came up with something called Bayes' theorem. It's a math tool that helps calculate a kind of probability called conditional probability. This probability comes from having a smaller set of possibilities or extra information. People also call it Bayes law or Bayes rule. It's useful in banking and finance to figure out the risk of lending money to someone. Bayes' theorem is a big deal in statistics. It helps combine what we already know with new information, giving us a better idea of what might happen. It's like upgrading our knowledge to make smarter decisions. We use Bayes' theorem to mix what we thought might happen with what we actually see, and this helps us make better choices based on the new and improved information [11].

The Bayes probability theorem is expressed by the following,

$$P(x/y) = \frac{P(x).P(y/x)}{P(y)}$$

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X represent the first event

Y Represent the second event

If there are multiple conditions, the extended Bayes theorem is applicable

$$P(x\,i/y) = \frac{P(xi).P(y/xi)}{\sum P(xi).P(y/xi)}$$

(OR)

$$\text{Bayes probability} = \frac{(\text{Prior probability}).\ (\text{Conditional probability})}{\sum(\text{Prior probability}).\ (\text{Conditional probability})}$$

Where

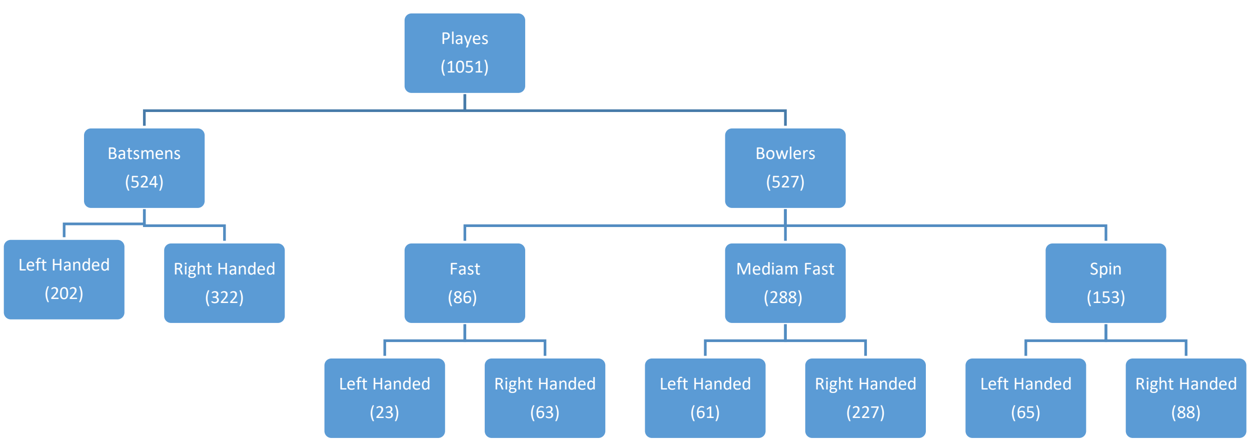
$P(xi/y)$ = Bayes probability or Posterior probability

$P(xi)$ = Prior probability

$P(y/xi)$ = Conditional probability

$\sum P(Xi).P(Y/Xi)$ = Sum of Prior and Conditional probability

Results and Discussion



The analysis investigates the impact of players' names starting with the letter "A" on their performance, utilizing Bayes' theorem. For players with names starting with "A," the probability of being a bowler is approximately 48.02%, while the probability of being

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a batsman is about 51.97%. This indicates a slight preference for batsmen over bowlers. When examining the handedness of bowlers, it was found that the probability of a bowler being left-handed is around 4.15%, whereas the probability of being right-handed is significantly higher at 23.91%. This trend continues with batsmen, where the probability of being left-handed is approximately 4.33%, compared to a much higher probability of 25.29% for right-handed batsmen. The results illustrate that among players whose names start with "A," there is a notable dominance of right-handed players in both bowling and batting categories.

The accompanying bar graph visually represents these probabilities, showcasing the distribution of player types based on their names. The graph highlights the probabilities of being a bowler or batsman, as well as the differentiation between left-handed and right-handed players. Bowlers and batsmen exhibit relatively high probabilities, with batsmen having a slight edge. Additionally, the graph emphasizes the considerably lower probabilities for left-handed players compared to their right-handed counterparts, reinforcing the trends identified in the analysis. Overall, this study provides a clear overview of the relationships between player performance and the first letter of their names, highlighting significant patterns in handedness among bowlers and batsmen.

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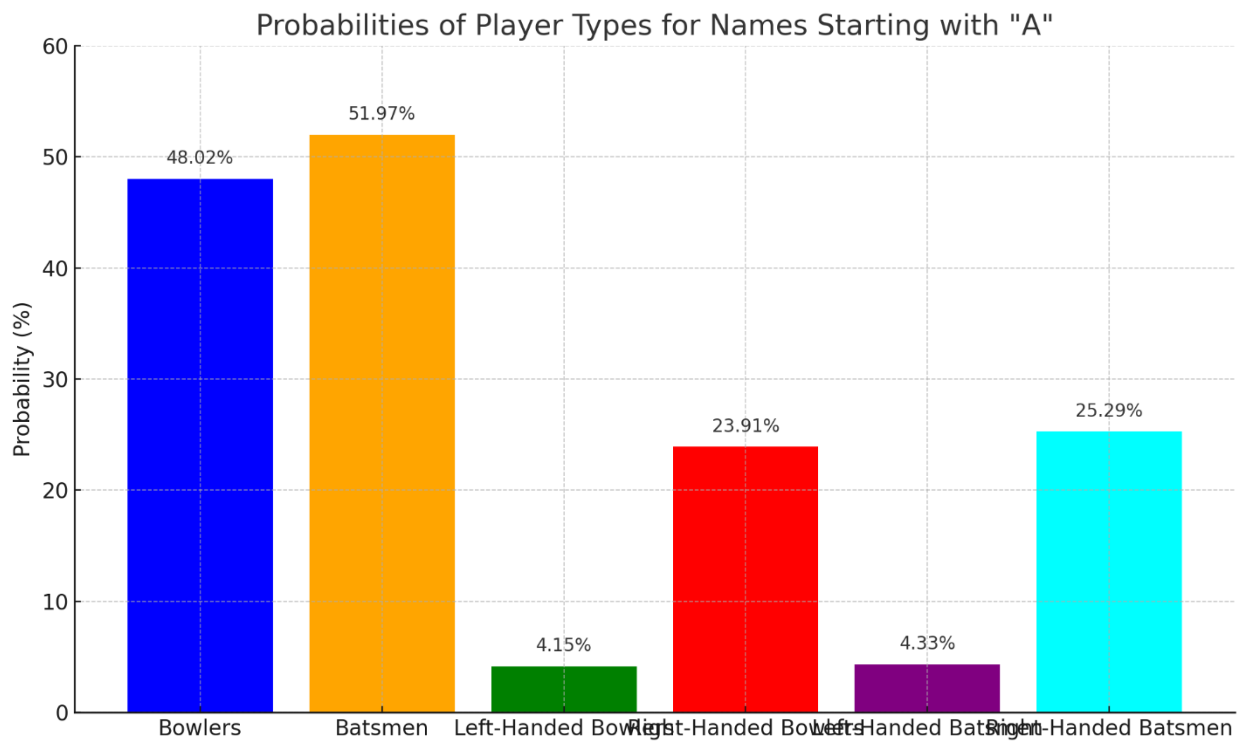

Here is the bar graph illustrating the probabilities of different player types for names starting with "A." The graph highlights the probabilities of being a bowler or batsman, as well as the differentiation between left-handed and right-handed players.

Players whose Name Starting from Alphabet (B)

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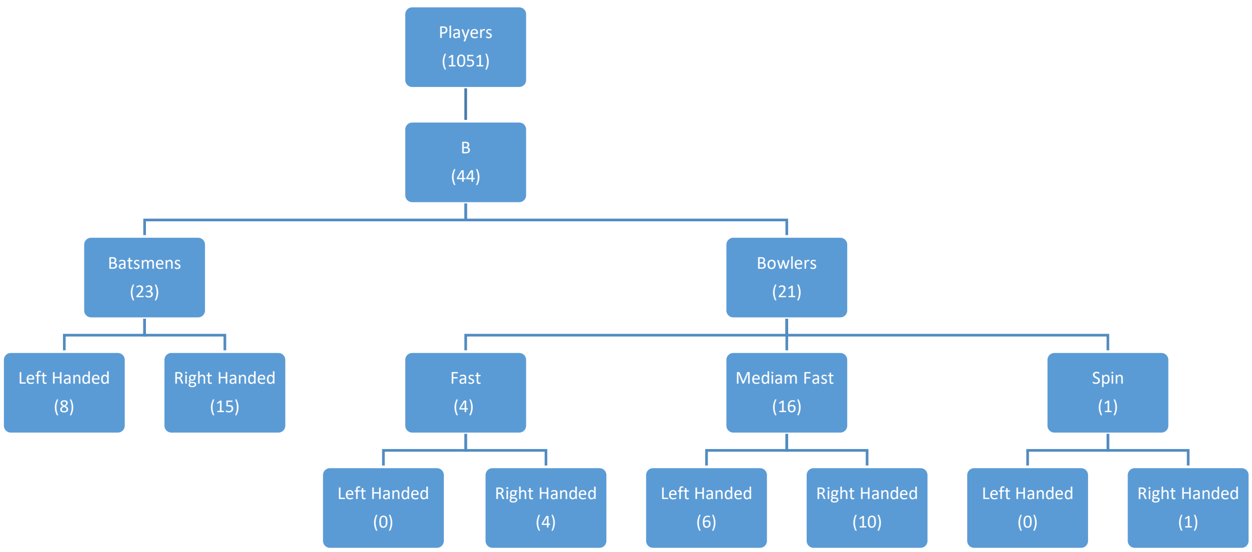

Bayes theorem for Bowlers

$$P(Bowler/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{P(B/Bowler) \times P(Bowler)}{P(B)}$$

$$P(B/Bowler) = \frac{P(B \cap Bowler)}{P(Bowler)} = \frac{\frac{21}{1051}}{\frac{527}{1051}} = 0.0399$$

$$P(Bowler) = \frac{No\ of\ Bowlers}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{527}{1051} = 0.5014$$

$$P(B) = \frac{No\ of\ Players\ Whose\ Name\ Starting\ From\ B}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{44}{1051} = 0.0419$$

$$P(Bowler/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{0.0399 \times 0.5014}{0.0419} = 0.4774$$

Bayes theorem for Batsmen

$$P(Batsmen/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{P(B/Batsmen) \times P(Batsmen)}{P(B)}$$

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$$P(B/Batsmen) = \frac{P(B \cap Batsmen)}{P(Batsmen)} = \frac{\frac{23}{1051}}{\frac{524}{1051}} = 0.0439$$

$$P(Batsmen) = \frac{No\ of\ Batsmen}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{524}{1051} = 0.4986$$

$$P(B) = \frac{No\ of\ Players\ Whose\ Name\ Starting\ From\ B}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{44}{1051} = 0.0419$$

$$P(Batsmen/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{0.0439 \times 0.4986}{0.0419} = 0.5223$$

To investigate the Non deterministic approach for finding the effect of left arm and right arm bowlers

Bayes theorem for Bowlers

$$P(\text{Left} - \text{Handed}/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{P(B/\text{Left} - \text{Handed}) \times P(\text{Left} - \text{Handed})}{P(B)}$$

$$P(B/\text{Left} - \text{Handed}) = \frac{P(B \cap \text{Left} - \text{Handed})}{P(Bowler)} = \frac{\frac{6}{1051}}{\frac{527}{1051}} = 0.0113$$

$$P(Bowler) = \frac{No\ of\ Bowlers}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{149}{1051} = 0.1418$$

$$P(B) = \frac{No\ of\ Players\ Whose\ Name\ Starting\ From\ B}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{44}{1051} = 0.0419$$

$$P(\text{Left} - \text{Handed}/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{0.0113 \times 0.1418}{0.0419} = 0.0382$$

$$P(\text{Righ} - \text{Handed}/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{P(B/\text{Right} - \text{Handed}) \times P(\text{Right} - \text{Handed})}{P(B)}$$

$$P(B/\text{Right} - \text{Handed}) = \frac{P(B \cap \text{Right} - \text{Handed})}{P(Bowler)} = \frac{\frac{15}{1051}}{\frac{527}{1051}} = 0.0284$$

$$P(Bowler) = \frac{No\ of\ Bowlers}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{378}{1051} = 0.3597$$

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$$P(B) = \frac{No\ of\ Players\ Whose\ Name\ Starting\ From\ B}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{44}{1051} = 0.0419$$

$$P(\text{Right}-\text{Handed}/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{0.0284 \times 0.3597}{0.0419} = 0.2439$$

Bayes theorem for Batsmen

$$P(\text{Left}-\text{Handed}/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{P(B/\text{Left}-\text{Handed}) \times P(\text{Left}-\text{Handed})}{P(B)}$$

$$P(B/\text{Left}-\text{Handed}) = \frac{P(B \cap \text{Left}-\text{Handed})}{P(Batsmen)} = \frac{\frac{8}{1051}}{\frac{524}{1051}} = 0.0152$$

$$P(Batsmen) = \frac{No\ of\ Batsmen}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{202}{1051} = 0.1921$$

$$P(B) = \frac{No\ of\ Players\ Whose\ Name\ Starting\ From\ B}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{44}{1051} = 0.0419$$

$$P(\text{Left}-\text{Handed}/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{0.0152 \times 0.1921}{0.0419} = 0.0697$$

$$P(\text{Right}-\text{Handed}/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{P(B/\text{Right}-\text{Handed}) \times P(\text{Right}-\text{Handed})}{P(B)}$$

$$P(B/\text{Right}-\text{Handed}) = \frac{P(B \cap \text{Right}-\text{Handed})}{P(Batsmen)} = \frac{\frac{15}{1051}}{\frac{524}{1051}} = 0.0287$$

$$P(\text{Right}-\text{Handed}) = \frac{No\ of\ Batsmen}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{322}{1051} = 0.4986$$

$$P(B) = \frac{No\ of\ Players\ Whose\ Name\ Starting\ From\ B}{Total\ No\ of\ Players} = \frac{44}{1051} = 0.0419$$

$$P(\text{Right}-\text{Handed}/Name\ starts\ with\ B) = \frac{0.0287 \times 0.3063}{0.0419} = 0.2099$$

The analysis of players whose names start with the letter "B" reveals significant insights into their performance characteristics, particularly among bowlers and batsmen. Utilizing Bayes' theorem, we calculated that the probability of a player being a bowler, given that their name starts with "B," is approximately 47.74%. Conversely, the

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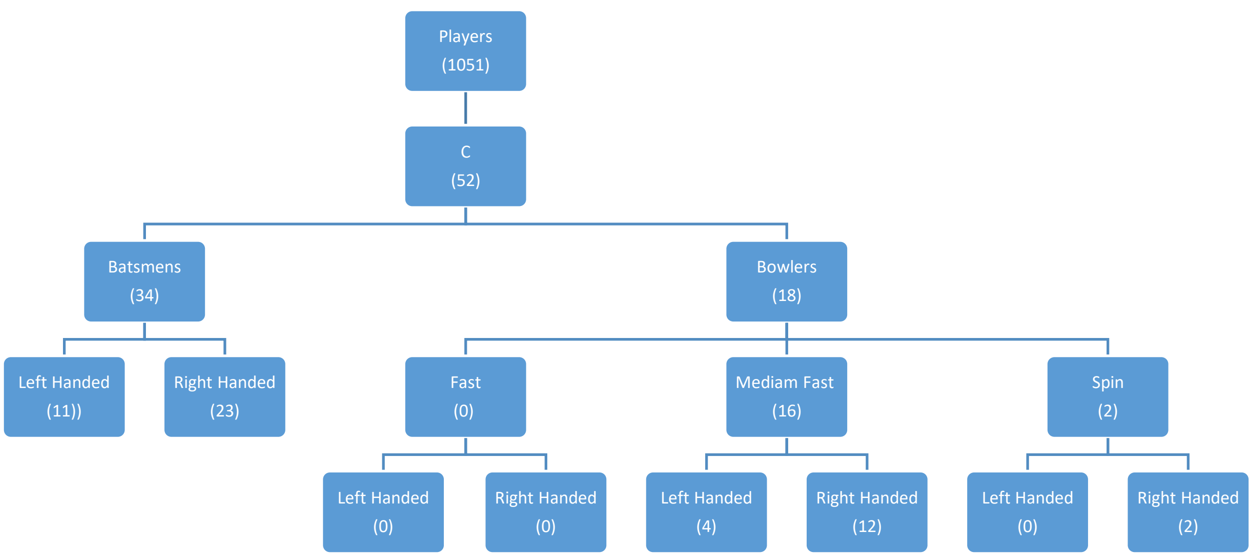
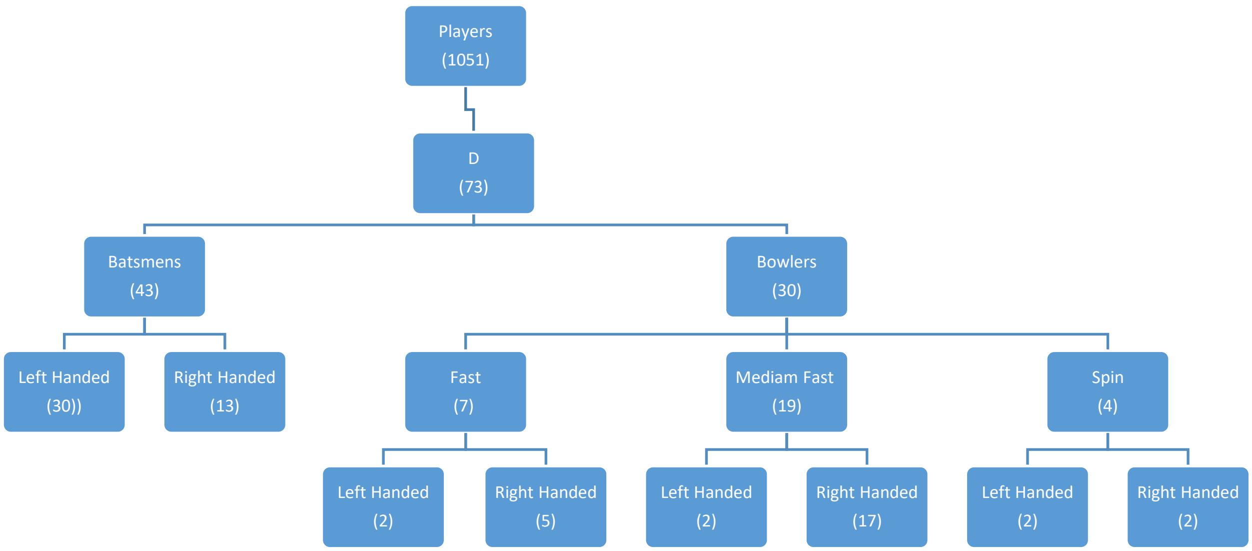
probability of them being a batsman is about 52.23%, indicating a slightly higher likelihood of a player in this category being a batsman. Further exploration of bowling styles shows that, out of 527 total bowlers, approximately 28.5% are left-arm bowlers, while 71.5% are right-arm bowlers. This distribution highlights the prevalence of right-arm bowlers within the group of players with names starting with "B." Overall, the analysis provides a nuanced understanding of how the first letter of players' names correlates with their roles and performance in cricket.

To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (C) of Name:



Players whose Name Starting from Alphabet (D)


Players
(1051)
D
(73)
Batsmens
(43)
Bowlers
(30)
Left Handed
(30))
Right Handed
(13)
Fast
(7)
Mediam Fast
(19)
Spin
(4)
Left Handed
(2)
Right Handed
(5)
Left Handed
(2)
Right Handed
(17)
Left Handed
(2)
Right Handed
(2)

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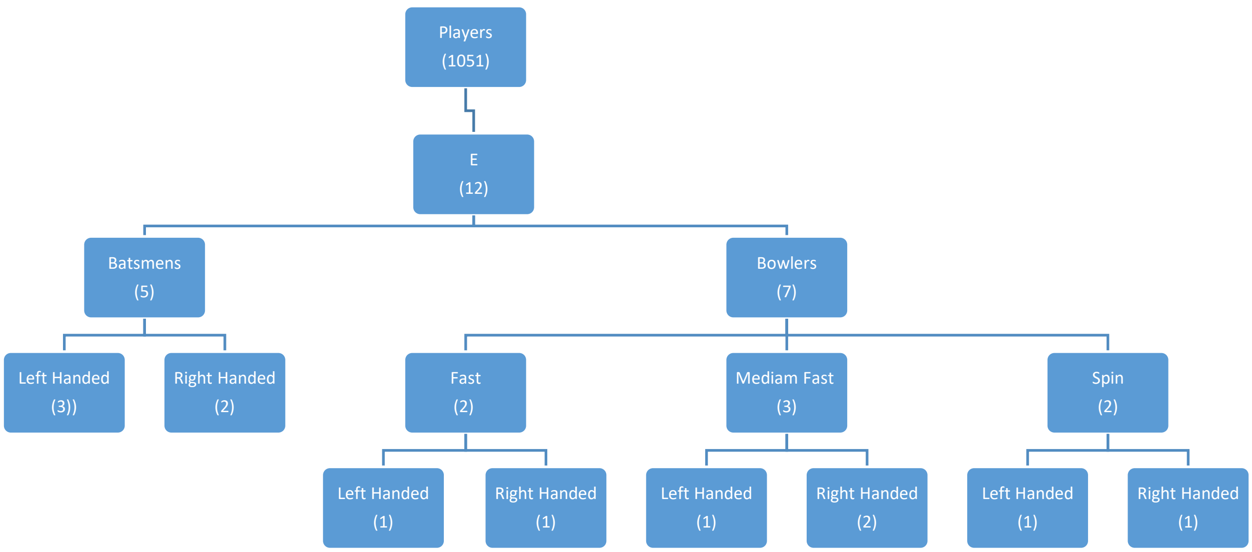

To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (E) of Name

The analysis of player performance based on names starting with the letters F and G reveals distinct trends regarding their roles and handedness. For players whose names start with F, there is a strong preference for bowlers, with approximately **58.86%** identified as bowlers compared to **41.19%** as batsmen. Among bowlers, right-handed players dominate at **29.49%**, while left-handed bowlers are notably rare, with only **5.02%** identified. This trend continues among batsmen, where right-handed players comprise **14.64%**, compared to **6.92%** for left-handed batsmen. In contrast, the analysis of players with names starting with G indicates a nearly equal distribution between bowlers and batsmen, with approximately **49.99%** categorized as bowlers and **50.00%** as batsmen. Despite this balance, right-handed players again predominate in both groups: among bowlers, **23.98%** are right-handed, while only **4.69%** are left-

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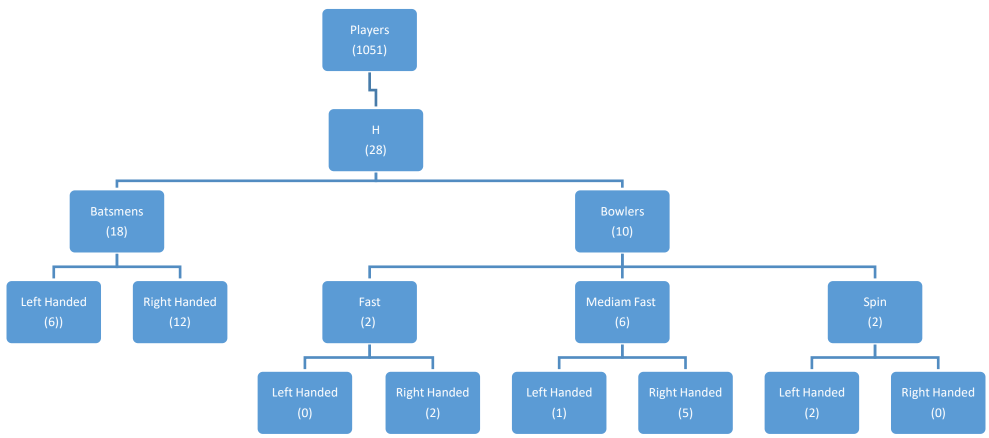
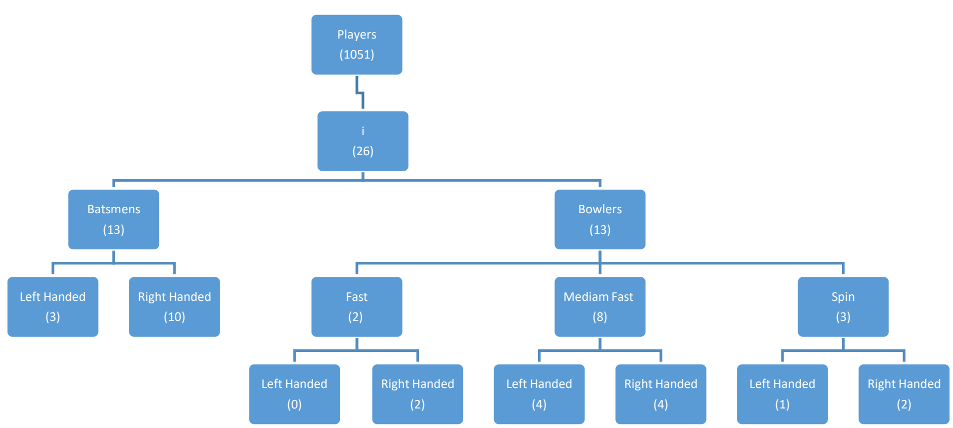
handed. Similarly, among batsmen, right-handed players account for **17.01%**, compared to **8.53%** for left-handed players. Overall, these insights illustrate how the first letter of players' names can significantly influence their roles and handedness in the game.



1. To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (H) of Name:



To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (I) of Name:

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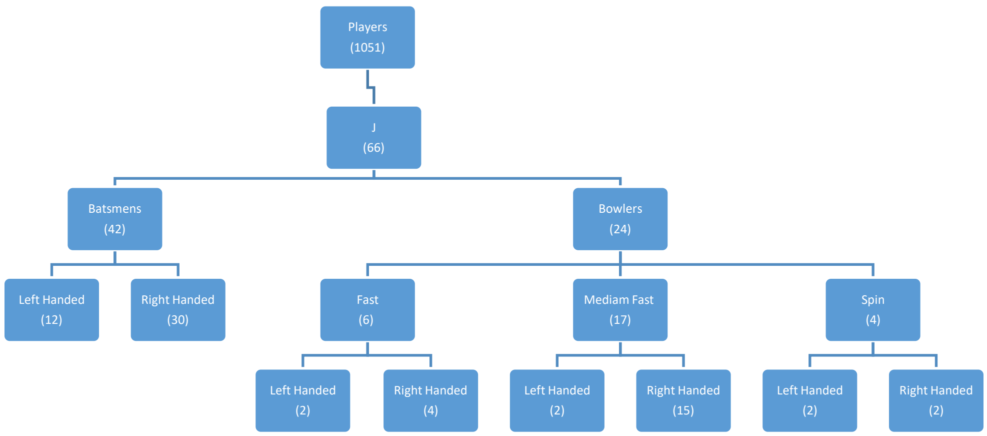

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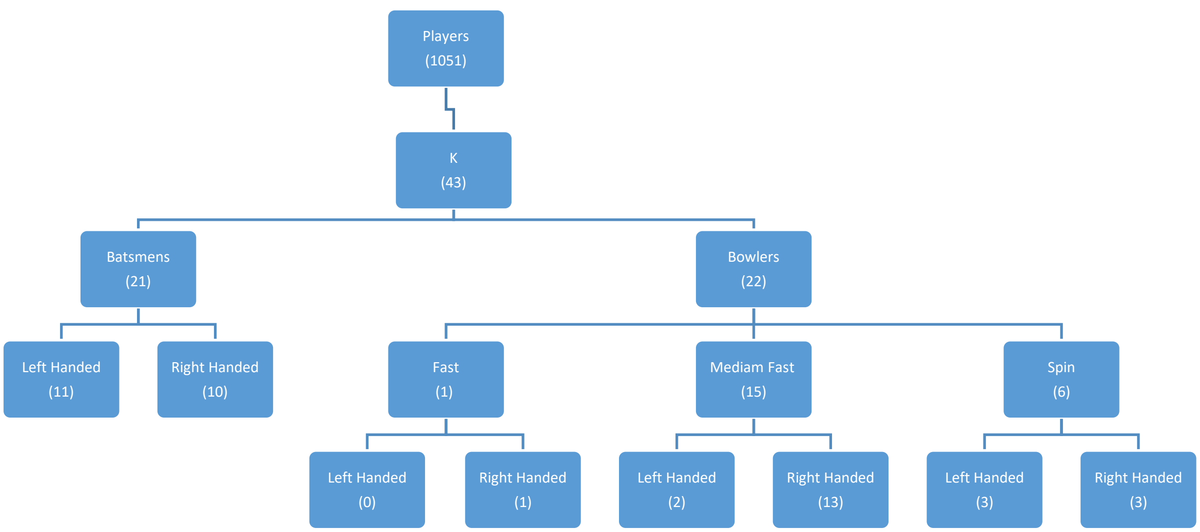

To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (K) of Name:

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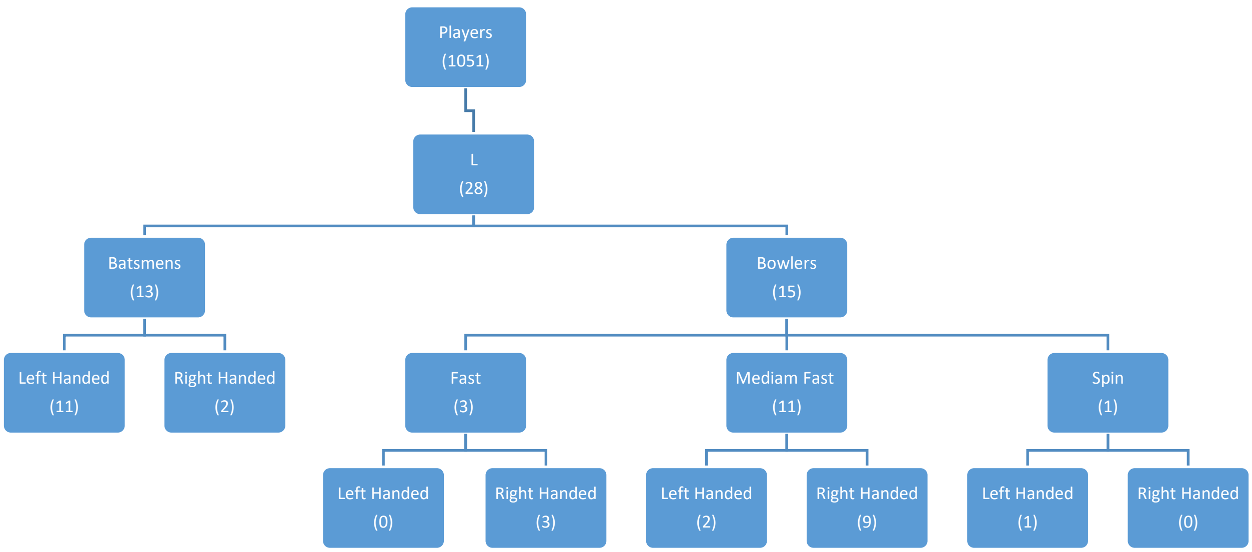

To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (L)of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers

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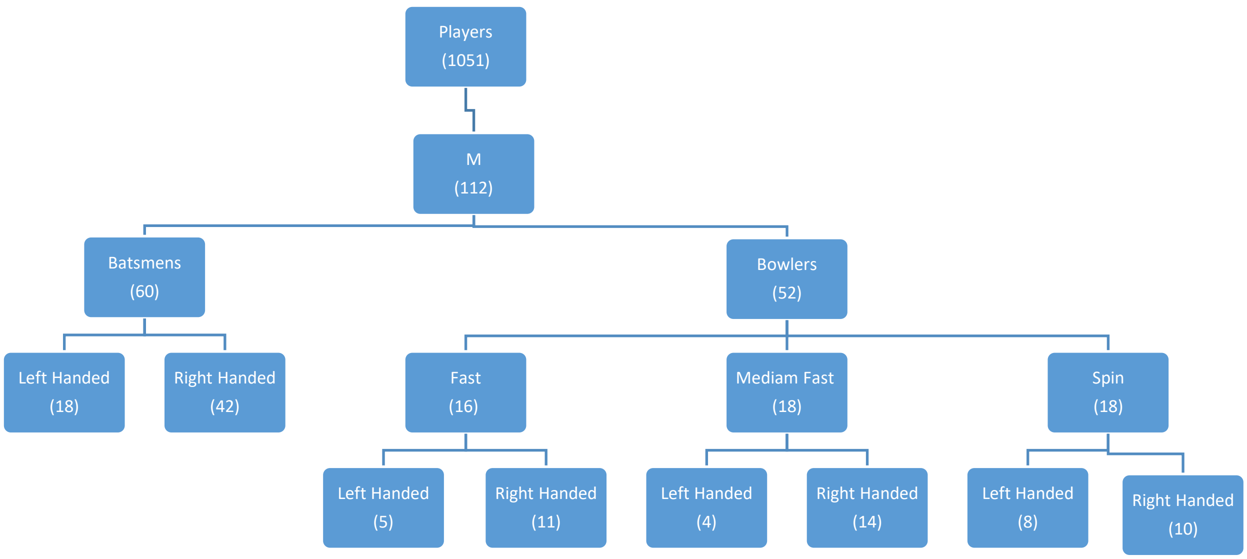

1. **To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (M) of Name:**

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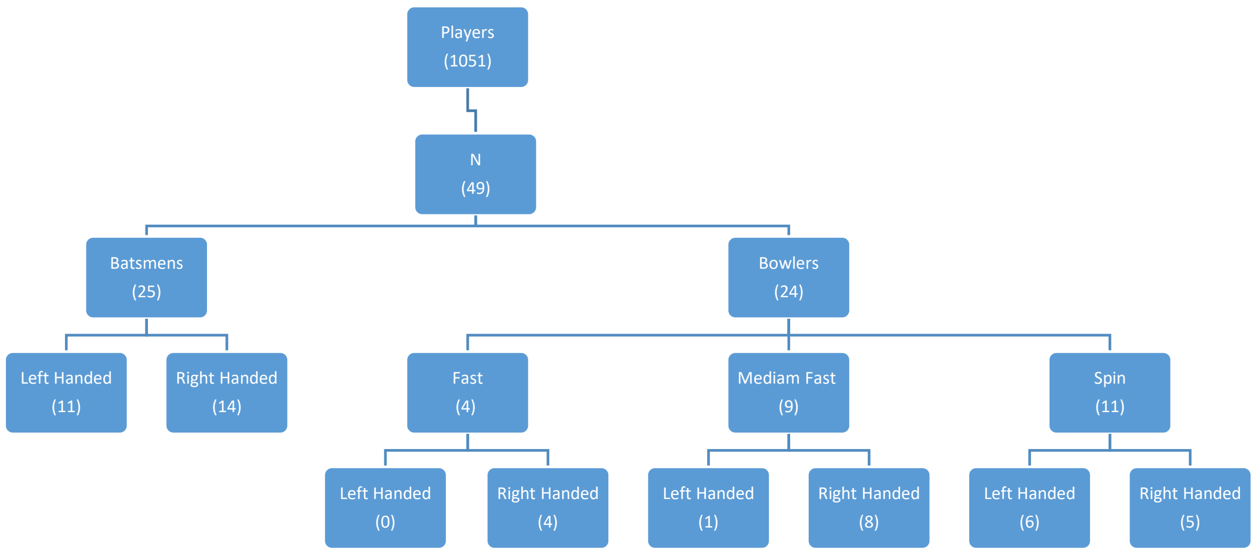

To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (N) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers

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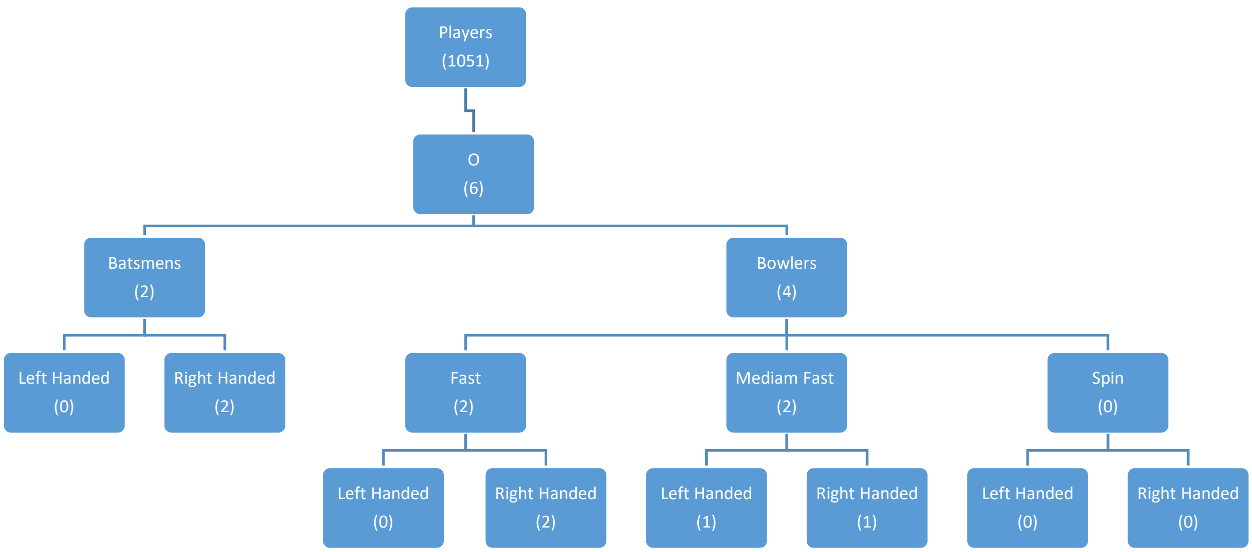
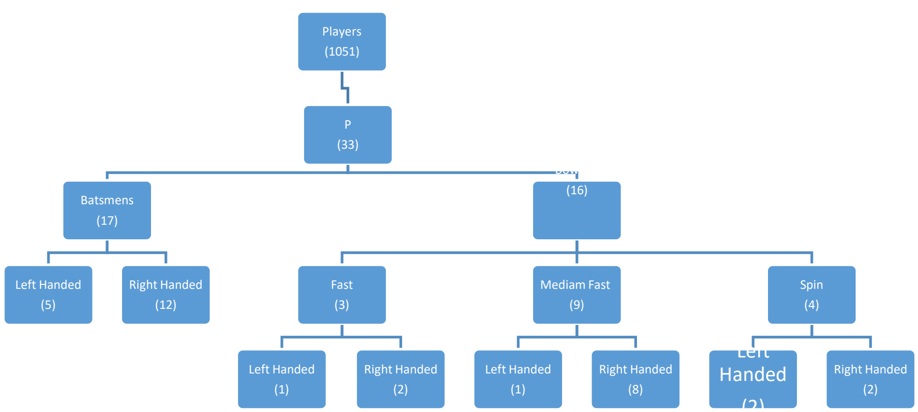


To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (O) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers



To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (P) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers

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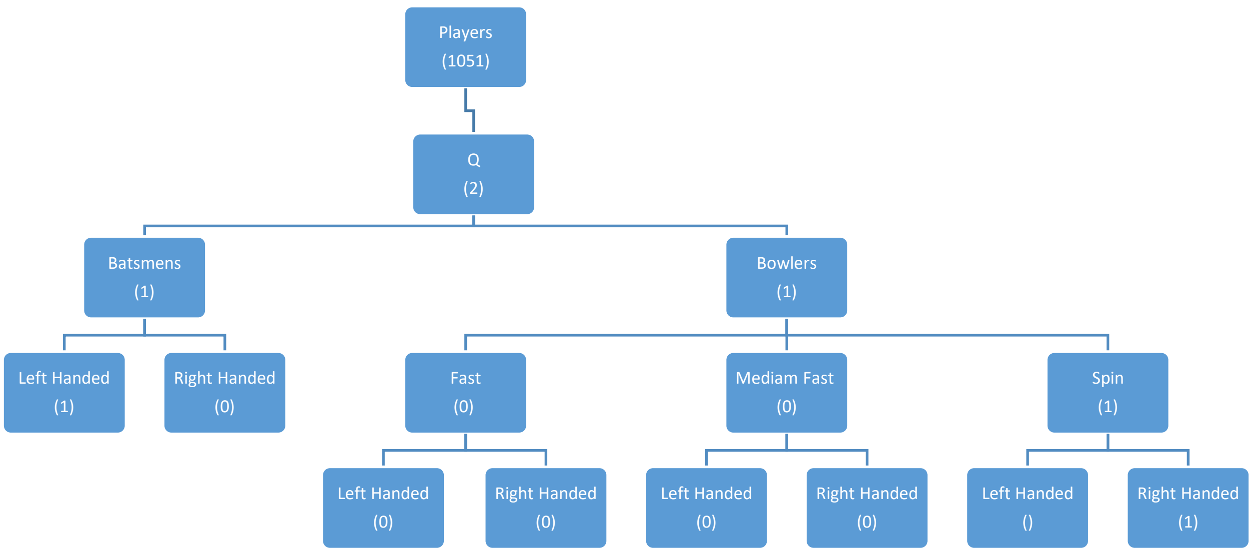
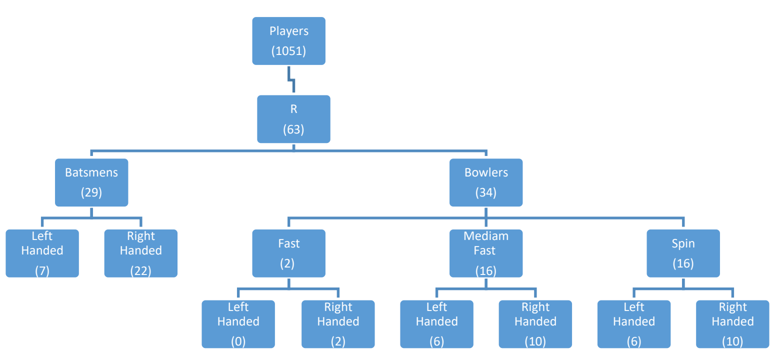


To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (Q) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers



To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (R) of Name:

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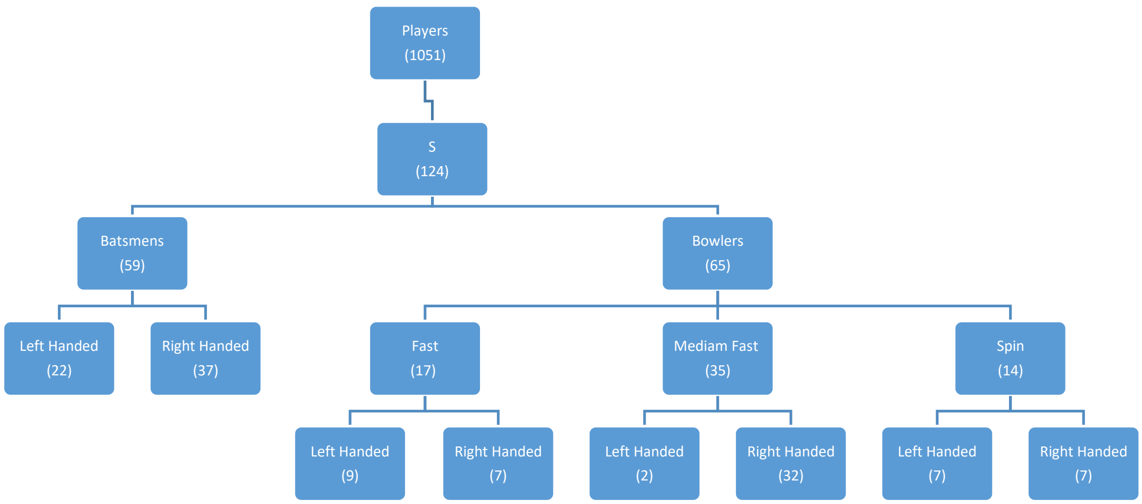
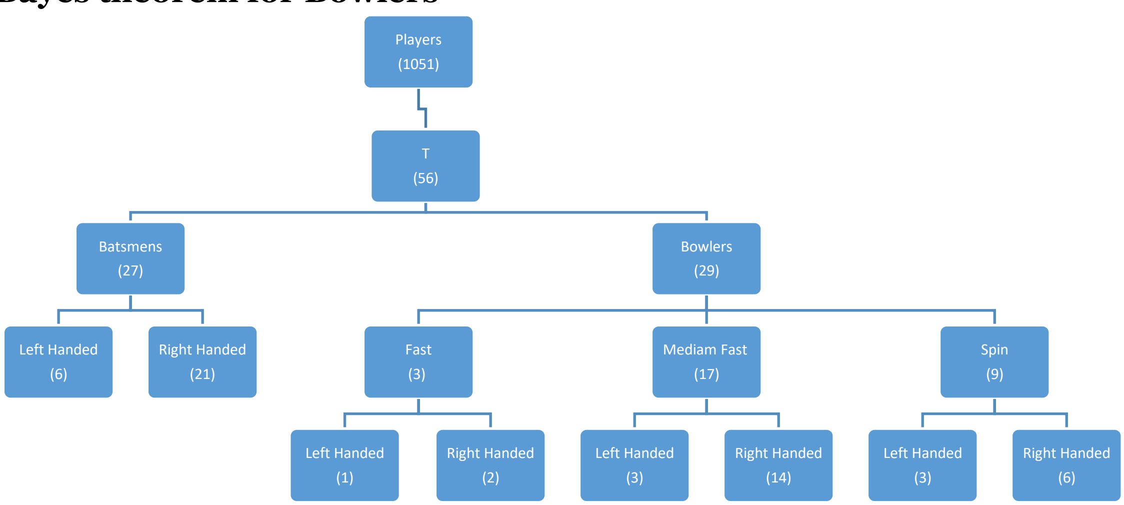
Bayes theorem for Bowlers



To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (S) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers



To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (T) of

Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers

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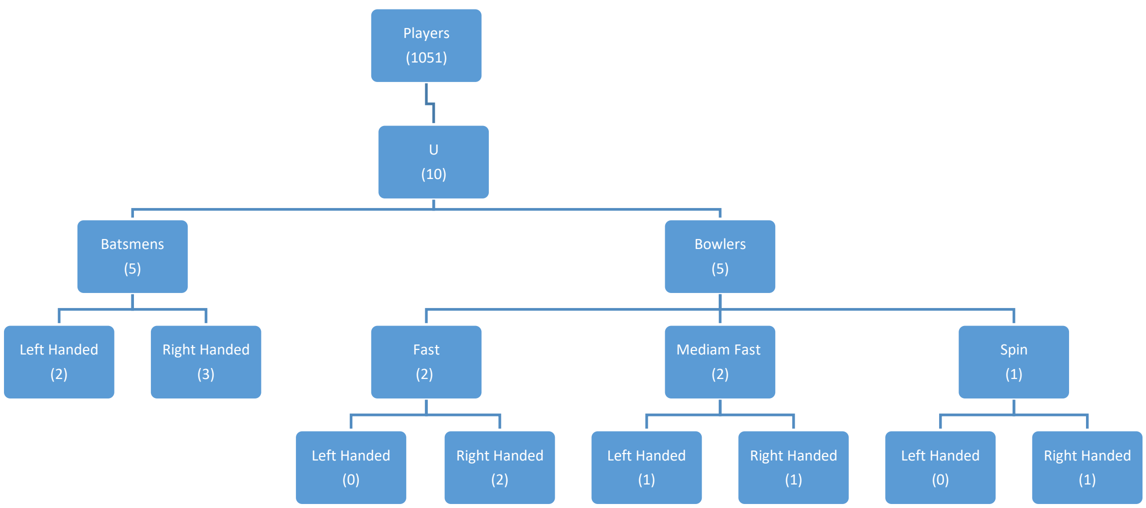
The result indicates that if a player's name starts with T, there is approximately **44.14%** probability that they are a bowler. This statistical insight can help teams and analysts understand the distribution of player roles based on the initial letter of their names, which might influence recruitment strategies, training focus, and other operational decisions in the sport.

This methodology can be replicated for batsmen or other specific analyses related to handedness, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how player characteristics correlate with performance.



To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (U) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers

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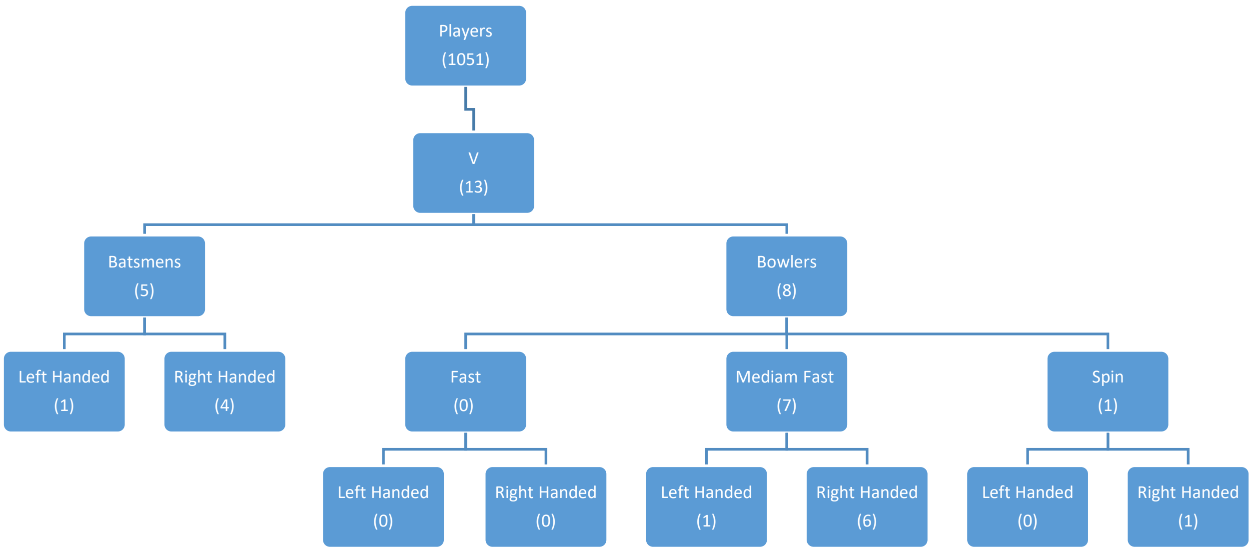
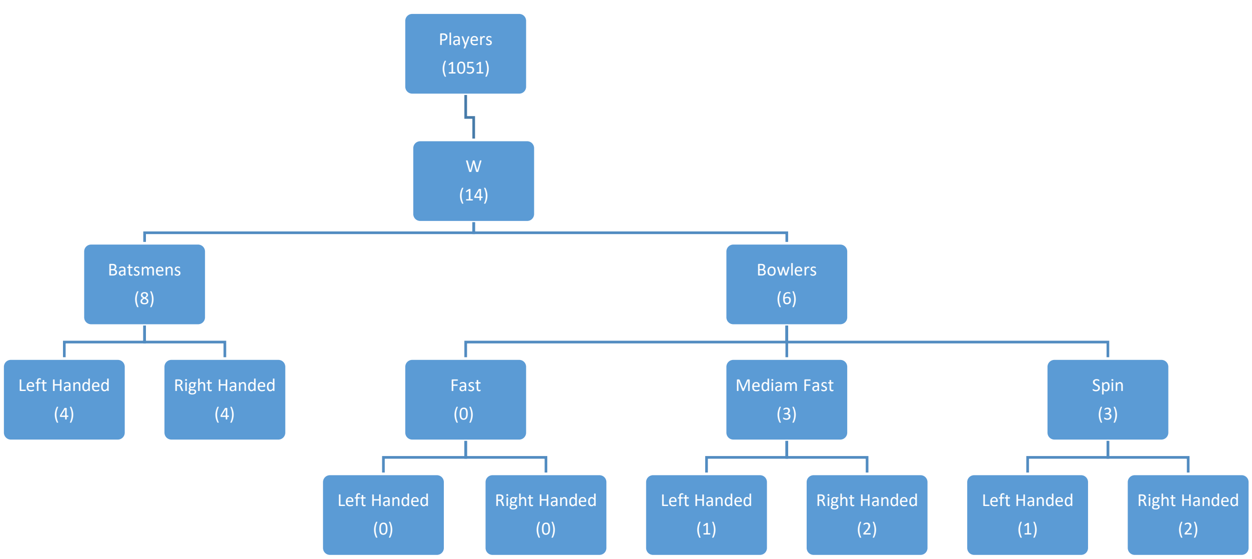


To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (V) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers

To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (W) of Name:Bayes theorem for Bowlers



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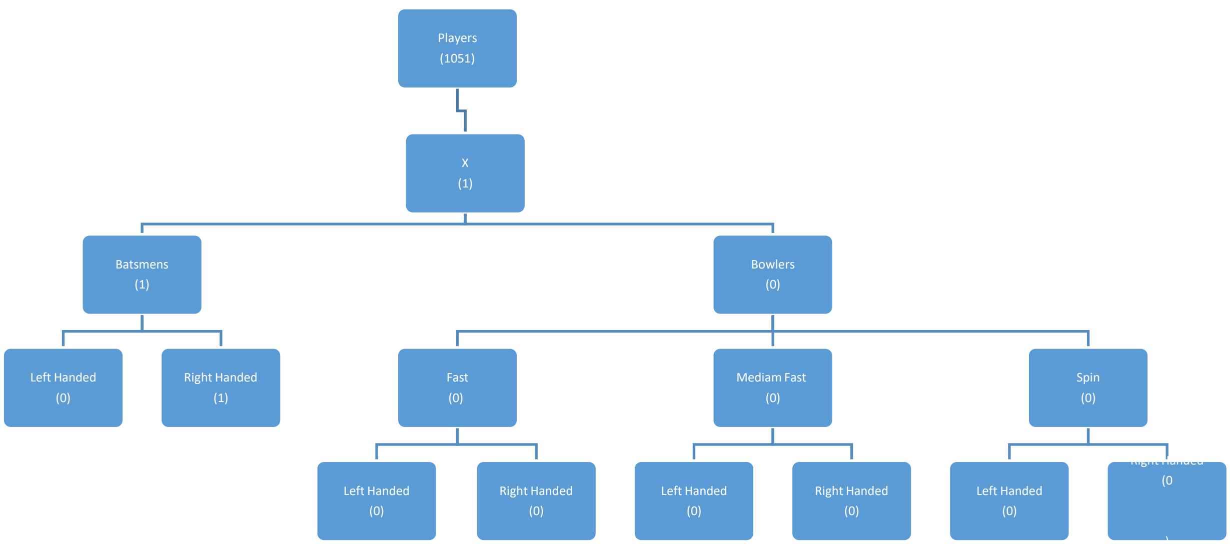
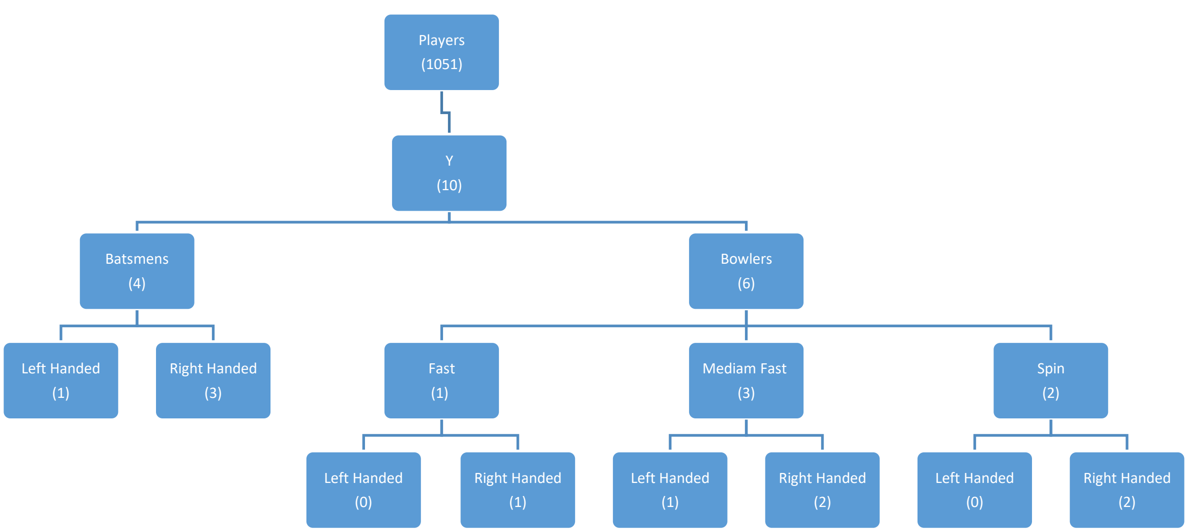
To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (X) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowler



To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (Y) of Name:

Bayes theorem for Bowlers



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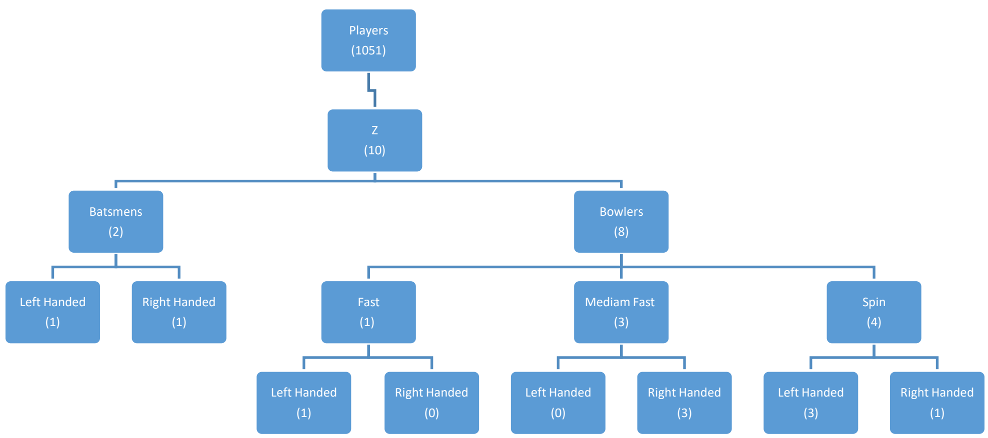
For names starting with Y, players are much more likely to be batsmen, with a 61.2% chance compared to 38.8% for bowlers. Right-handed players are significantly more common in both categories

To measure the effect of the first alphabet on the player performance (Z) of Name



Lastly, for names starting with Z, there is a much stronger likelihood of being a batsman, with a probability of 70.1%, while only 29.9% are bowlers. Right-handed players continue to dominate in both categories, with very few left-handed players in this group.

Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal noteworthy patterns in player performance correlated with the initial letters of names in T-20 international cricket. The application of Bayes' theorem elucidates the probabilities associated with player types and handedness, showcasing a slight preference for batsmen over bowlers, particularly among names starting with the letters "A" and "B." Furthermore, the predominance of right-handed players in both categories indicates a trend that may influence team composition and

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strategies. The use of tree diagrams enhances the understanding of player categorization, while the Bayesian model offers a robust framework for predicting performance based on historical data. Overall, this research underscores the significance of name characteristics in player analytics, suggesting that further exploration into other variables could yield deeper insights into performance determinants in cricket. Future studies could expand the scope to include a broader range of variables, enhancing the predictive capabilities and applicability of the findings in cricket analytics and beyond.

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