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The relationship between psychological factors and sports injuries with special reference to volleyball players of South India

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Abstract

Across all levels of sports there has been a great deal of concern owing to the fact that the rate at which injuries happen is increasing at an appalling rate. It has often been implied that the injuries caused on players emanate from external proponents, though this is not entirely the case; rather psychological factors are also likely to contribute to this (Kerr & Fowler, 2008). This paper discusses the relationship existent between psychological factors and sports injuries with special reference to volleyball players of South India.

Keywords: Psychological factors, sports injuries, volleyball players

Introduction

From the many studies conducted in the sports realm, it is apparent that psychological factors do contribute to sport injuries experienced by players in the various games. It is also evident that life events are bound to result to the injuries (Backx *et al.*, 2011) [1]. Various methods have been employed in the studies conducted with an aim of establishing how the psychological factors influence injuries (Hanstad *et al.*, 2011) [4]. This research study will seek to establish how the aforementioned factors relate to sport injuries.

Literature Review

With reference to the simple injury model, it has been observed that most of the injuries caused in the field occur owing to external factors such as the environment. For instance, a study conducted on skaters revealed that 14 percent of all injuries resulted from the condition of the ice (Reeser & Bahr, 2017) [10]. Up to 35 percent of injury causes were, however, attributed to the lack of necessary sporting equipment (Orchard, 2008) [8]. Recently, however, it has been established that failure to have enough concentration on the sport and also having thoughts outside the scope of the sport, have turned out to be some of the major contributing factors (Caine, Harmer & Schiff, 2009) [3]. This implies that psychological factors are some of the most critical reasons why injuries occur especially in volleyball whereby environmental factors have little significance (Rechel, Yard & Comstock, 2008) [9]. The psychological factor that mainly affects players is their assumption that factors such as luck or fate are likely to influence their performance.

Methods

Following the successful completion of the literature review, questionnaires were set up in order to collect information pertaining to the subject of contention. The questionnaire contained 14 items which the participants were expected to respond to. A total of 90 questionnaires were sent out to the respondents with 60 of them being sent online to individuals while the rest were issued manually. Up to 60 individuals participated, with 45 of them being online respondents. Participants involved volleyball players of South India, who had been injured in the course of playing.

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Results

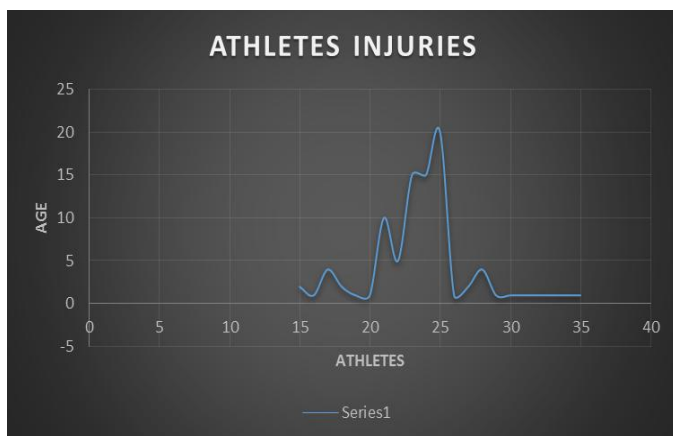
It was observed that 67 percent of the participants completed the questionnaires. Out of these, 72% were male individuals within 20-26 years of age. Precisely, only 15% of people were above 25 years. The partial ligament tear on individuals' ankle appeared to be the most common form of injury among all the respondents. Though 18% of the people indicated that they got injured before the main event or game, 82% stated that the accident occurred during the game. A thorough inquiry into the causes of the injuries established that 51% of individuals were solely responsible. Alternatively, 9% placed the blame on their coach, while the rest indicated other circumstances. Besides this, psychological factors such as stress and anxiety happened to be some of the reasons why the players got injured.

Table 1: Participants of the Study

	15-20	21-25	26-30	31-34
Athletes	11	65	9	5
Percent	10%	59%	13%	8%

Table 2: Volleyball Players Injured

Sl. No	AGE	Athletes	Sl. No	Age	Athletes
1.	15	2	13	26	1
2.	16	1	14	27	2
3.	17	4	15	28	4
4.	18	2	16	29	1
5.	19	1	17	30	1
6.	20	1	18	31	1
7.	21	10	19	32	1
8.	22	5	20	33	1
9.	23	15	21	34	1
10.	24	15	22	35	1
11.	25	20			



Discussion

From the results obtained it can generally be implied that injuries are not only caused by external factors but they also result from psychological elements. For instance, an individual who is stressed may end up losing focus in the course of the game leading to injury (Bandyopadhyay, 2007) [2]. In addition to this, the injury in most cases is self-inflicted (Jadhav *et al.*, 2012) [5]. In this case he player may be the sole cause of the injury owing to failure to follow instructions.

Findings

Undoubtedly, it is apparent that psychological factors influence sports injuries. On the other hand, injuries were observed to have psychological effects on the performance of players (Koley & Kaur, 2011) [7]. Most of them end up

becoming non-performers for fear of being injured again. Owing to disappointment some of them even end up leaving the team. Lack of confidence on the coach on the other hand, was observed to lead to psychological effects among players resulting to the aforementioned injuries.

Conclusion

Based upon the above findings, it is apparent that there is a direct connection between psychological factors and sports injuries. Factors such as fear, anxiety and engagement in thoughts outside the scope of the game happen to lead to some of the injuries experienced by the players. In addition to this, poor performance was also observed to cause psychological effects on the players leading them to acquire injuries during the course of their game or even prior to that. It can hence be concluded that a lot has to be done in order to ensure that players are psychologically well prepared before playing any game in order to avoid injury and poor performance.

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