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## A survey on burnout amongst squash players

**Siddhant Kumar and Dr. Ashwani Saini**

### **Abstract**

Burnout is an undeniable and under reported phenomena that numerous sports men encounter. On occasion, it goes unreported for quite a while and result in the drop out of the sports person. It is important to examine the feeling of burnout in competitive young athletes. The present research focuses to identify the burnout amongst young squash players. Fifty two squash players from Delhi NCR region, who were registered with the squash racquets federation of India, were selected purposely as the participant of the study. To assess the burnout of the players' standardised questionnaire ABQ by Smith and Reideke (2001) was selected as a tool. Finding of the study revealed that the squash players sometimes have the feeling of burnout in terms of reduced accomplishment. But on the other hand the squash players rarely have the feeling of emotional exhaustion pertaining to squash. Moreover the squash players hardly ever have the feeling of devaluation pertaining to squash. Findings of the study will be helpful to the coaches; players and parents in reducing pressure of young athlete by avoiding overtraining and overreaching.

**Keywords:** Burnout, squash

### **1. Introduction**

Sports are the sources of recreation, relaxation and physical activity. They provide relief and sense calmness in a life of monotony of routine. They instil and infuse a sportive spirit to take up the heavy burden of life, help us to view life in a lighter sense and encourage us to not get burdened by the everyday traumas but as the ordinary business of living. It is very essential to maintain health and physical fitness alongside balancing life.

Squash is one of the most physically gruelling racquet sports. The game imparts a sense of discipline and fellow-feeling. They teach the value of time and how it is important to note even a minute, a fraction of a minute and even seconds can decide the fate of a young sportsman in the field of competition.

Games are the right avenues to channelize the energy and vitality of students and make their leisure hours worthwhile. Participating in sports helps build leadership skills. Sports give you an opportunity to surround yourself with competitive people and role models, and learn from them both.

However, there are some negative impacts of this, thus burnout may affect the young sportsmen. The vast majority of us know about getting consumed and feeling drained. What we don't know and be aware of is that young athletes can get burned out as well. Burnout is characterized by game analysts as. "Physical/emotional exhaustion, sport devaluation, and reduced athletic accomplishment". This is an imperative issue in youth sports since it is thought to dropping out of games by and large.

To build up one's ability in any field, it has been demonstrated that it takes no less than 10 years or more of deliberate practice. Development of the talent is based on consistent effort and regular practise over these years. Given the measure of time, give up, and exertion important to wind up noticeably a specialist competitor, so it becomes even more important to look at examining burnout in competitive young athletes.

In sports, competence refers to a feeling that one has the ability and the opportunity to be effective in one's sport. At the same time to be able to succeed with the right channels of discipline and attitude. According to Ryan and Deci (2002) "the extent to which the needs are satisfied will determine the degree to which positive psychological outcomes are experienced (e.g., engagement, flow); while the extent to which these needs are frustrated will determine the degree to which negative psychological consequences are experienced" (e.g., burnout, anxiety).

**2.1 Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out the existing status of burnout amongst junior squash players.
2. To find out symptoms of burn out amongst junior squash player
3. To assess the causes behind the burnout faced by the junior players in Delhi NCR, India.

**2.2 Selection of Participants**

To select the participants for the study non-random sampling method was used. For the purpose of the study 52 squash players who were registered with the Squash rackets federation of India were selected purposively from Delhi NCR region.

**2.3 Selection of Variables**

For the purpose of the study the following variables were selected:

1. Burnout
  - Reduced sense of accomplishment
  - Emotional/ physical exhaustion
  - Devaluation

**2.4 Selection of Questionnaire**

To meet the objective of the study standardised questionnaire -ABQ by Smith and Reideke (2001) was selected. The

reliability of the questionnaire for emotional/ physical exhaustion is (.92), for Reduced sense of accomplishment (.86) and for Sport devaluation it is (.92).

**2.5 Administration of Questionnaire and Collection of Data**

The data was collected personally by the scholar by visiting various Squash academies located in Delhi NCR region. The scholar had personally administered the questionnaire to the participants. Necessary Instructions were given to the participants before filling up the questionnaire. As the questionnaire was in likert scale participant were asked to choose one option out of the five, which comes in their mind after reading the instruction.

**2.6 Statistical procedure**

For analysis of data non parametric statistic was used. To find out significance of squash players responses towards burnout chi-square was computed. The level of significance was kept at with 0.05 level of significance. The data was presented with the help of Pie diagram.

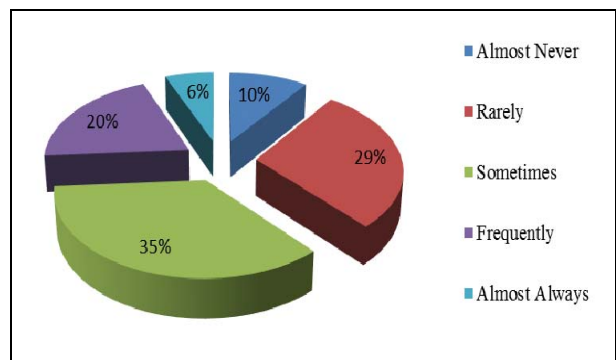
**3. Results and discussions**

The data of the study was analysed with the help of chi-square. Findings of the study are presented in following tables

**Table 1:** Analysis of frequency by chi-square of reduced accomplishment of squash players.

S no.	Statements		Responses of squash players(N=52)					df	X
			Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always		
1.	I'm accomplishing many worthwhile things in squash.	F	7	16	12	15	2	4	13.192*
		%	13.46%	30.77%	23.11%	28.85%	3.85%		
2.	I am not achieving much in squash.	F	5	18	22	5	2	4	30.885*
		%	9.62%	34.62%	42.31%	9.62%	3.85%		
3.	I am not performing up to my ability in squash.	F	6	10	21	14	1	4	22.423*
		%	11.54%	19.23%	40.38%	26.92%	1.92%		
4.	It seems that no matter what I do, I don't perform as well as I should.	F	8	20	18	1	5	4	26.269*
		%	15.38%	38.46%	34.62%	1.92%	9.62%		
5.	I feel successful at squash.	F	0	10	19	17	6	3	8.462*
		%	0.00%	19.23%	36.54%	32.69%	11.54%		
	Total	F	26	74	92	52	16		
		%	11%	28%	35%	20%	6%		

Table 1 depict the responses of squash players regarding reduced accomplishment with five statements. As far as the first statement is concerned the 30.7 % squash player felt the rarely that they are accomplishing worthwhile things in squash. Moreover 42.31 % squash players have an insight that sometimes they are not achieving much in squash. Further 40.38 % players sometimes felt that they are performing to their ability. But on the other hand 38.46 % rarely believe that no matter what they do they don't perform well as they should. In the case of feeling successful at squash 36.54 % players sometimes felt this scenario. The calculated chi square values of five statements are 13.1, 30.8, 22.4, 26.2 & 8.46 and degree of freedom are 4,4, 4,4 & 3 respectively. All the values of chi-square are significant statistically at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it is concluded that the squash players sometimes felt the reduced accomplishment regarding their squash performance.

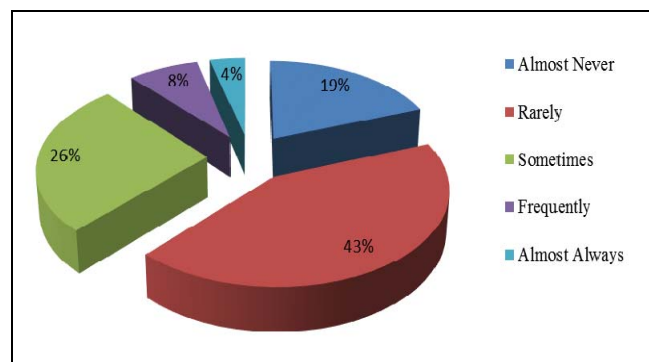


**Fig 1:** Feeling of reduced accomplishment of squash players

**Table 2:** Analysis of frequency by chi-square of Emotional Exhaustion of squash players

S. no.	Statements		Responses of squash players(N=52)					df	X
			Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always		
1.	I feel so tired from my training that I have trouble finding energy to do other things.	F	4	21	22	3	2	4	39.7*
		%	7.69%	40.38%	42.31%	5.77%	3.85%		
2.	I feel Overly tired from squash training.	F	9	26	12	4	1	4	36.2*
		%	17.31%	50.00%	23.08%	7.69%	1.92%		
3.	I feel wipe out from squash.	F	14	21	13	4	0	3	11.2*
		%	26.92%	40.38%	25.00%	7.69%	0.00%		
4.	I feel physically worn out from squash.	F	10	21	11	4	6	4	16.6*
		%	19.23%	40.38%	21.15%	7.69%	11.54%		
5.	I am exhausted by the physical and mental demand of the squash.	F	13	22	11	5	1	4	24.9*
		%	25%	42.31%	21.15%	9.62%	1.92%		
Total		F	50	111	69	20	10		
		%	19.%	43%	26.%	7%	5%		

Table 2 depict the responses of squash players regarding emotional exhaustion with five statements. As far as the first statement is concerned the 42.31 % squash player felt that sometimes that they are feel so tired from their training that they have trouble finding energy to do other things. Furthermore 50 % squash players have an insight that rarely felt overly tired from training. Further 40.38 % players rarely felt wipe out from squash. 40.38 % player thinks that rarely they feel worn out from squash. Moreover 42.31 % players rarely get exhausted by the physical and mental demand of the squash. The calculated chi square values of five statements are 39.7, 36.2, 11.2, 16.6 & 24.9 and degree of freedom are 4, 4, 3, 4 & 4 respectively. All the values of chi-square are significant statistically at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it is concluded that the squash players rarely have the feeling of emotional exhaustion pertaining to squash.



**Fig 2:** Emotional exhaustion of squash players

**Table 3:** Analysis of frequency by chi-square of Devaluation of squash players.

S. no.	Statements		Responses Of squash players(N=52)					df	X
			Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always		
1.	The efforts I spend in squash would be better spent doing other things.	F	23	13	13	1	2	4	31.8*
		%	44.23%	25.00%	25.00%	1.92%	3.85%		
2.	I don't care as much about squash performance as I used to.	F	15	15	14	8	0	3	2.6**
		%	28.85%	28.85%	26.92%	15.38%	0.00%		
3.	I am not into squash like I used to be.	F	14	16	11	7	4	4	9.3**
		%	26.92%	30.77%	21.15%	13.46%	7.69%		
4.	I feel less concerned about being successful in squash than I used to.	F	11	13	19	8	1	4	16.8*
		%	21.15%	25.00%	36.54%	15.38%	1.92%		
5.	I have negative feelings towards squash	F	37	5	7	3	0	3	59.6*
		%	71.15%	9.62%	13.46%	5.77%	0.00%		
Total		F	100	62	64	27	7		
		%	38.0%	24%	25%	10%	3%		

Table 3 depict the responses of squash players regarding devaluation with five statements. As far as the first statement is concerned the 44.2 % squash player almost rarely felt that the efforts they spend in squash would be better spent doing other things. Furthermore 28.5 % squash players almost never felt they don't care as much about squash performance as they used to. Further 30.77 % players rarely felt they are not into squash like they used to be. On the other hand 36.5 % player sometimes thinks feel less concerned about being successful in squash than they used to. As far as felling negative about

the squash is concerned 71.1 % players almost never have that feeling. The calculated chi square values of five statements are 31.8, 2.61, 9.34, 16.8 & 59.6 and degrees of freedom are 4, 3, 4, 4 & 3 respectively. The chi-square value of 1, 3 and 5 statements are significant statistically at 0.05 level of significance. But the chi square values of 2, and 4<sup>th</sup> statement are not significant statistically at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore overall it is concluded that the squash players are hardly ever have the feeling of devaluation pertaining to squash.

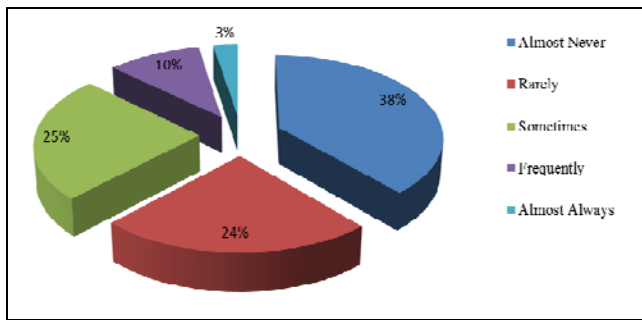


Fig 3: Feeling of devaluation of squash players

#### 4. Discussion on findings

Burnout may also occur due to reasons that are less visible to the eye and hide between layers. Prior research has determined athletes are likely to experience burnout if they are participating in sports for reasons other than sport attraction. As far as reduced accomplished is concerned the finding of the study revealed some relevant fact that players have sometime felt the feeling of reduced accomplishment.

Coakley (2015) [1] conducted informal interviews with high-level adolescent athletes who were “burned-out” and determined that burnout was directly related to the social organization of intense sport participation that may not be wanted by the athlete. More specifically, burnout is related to control and identity issues that entrap athletes into sport.

Burnout is characterized by a lack of perceived accomplishment in terms of what one has accomplished and/or what one will accomplish. This accomplishment may be subjective in nature which may affect them differently. (Shaffran *et al*, 2016) [6]

Burnout also involves feelings of exhaustion that take multiple forms such as physical, mental, and emotional. These may be experienced simultaneously or in stages. This exhaustion is often seen in individuals involved in tasks that demand a great deal of interpersonal interaction such as nursing, practicing, training, social work, coaching, and high level competitive sport. In the case of emotional exhaustion the findings revealed that that squash players rarely felt it.

The Key finding does not support the previous studies that explain how burnout effects athletes in various sports. The research’s main contribution to literature is that burnout may actually not affect the young athletes.

Burnout may actually not exist in younger players they may only experience exhaustion and stress. This may not actually be equivalent to burnout. This is suggestive to be a contradiction to burnout model. Burnout occurs due to overtraining and inadequate rest as per the model. Silva and Kentta have explained that high training volumes that are too persistent and intense can cause staleness and eventually lead to a burnout (Kentta *et al*, 2007) [10]. This means that the athletes are not experiencing that level of overtraining or stress.

Lastly, it may also be a case that in Delhi and NCR coaches, parents and children themselves are taking care of such pressures by avoiding overtraining and overreaching. While previous studies suggested off young athletes training too heavy, being highly involved in many competitions, attaining deep focus over a single sport at a young age, and have high learning agility towards coping through the pressure of higher authority. It can be suggested that there is more awareness in metropolitan cities of the various health hazards and mental health; hence plans of better coping have emerged.

#### 5. Conclusion

On the basis of findings and discussion of the study, following conclusions were drawn:

1. It is concluded that the squash players rarely have the feeling of reduced accomplishment. As far as Reduced accomplishment is concerned squash players rarely worthwhile things in squash at the same time it is concluded that sometimes they are not achieving much in squash. Another aspect of reduced accomplishment is performance where it was found that sometimes players are not performing to their ability. It also felt by the players that no matter what they do perform to their ability. Lastly players only sometimes feel successful in the game of squash. So it can be concluded that players sometimes show symptoms of burnout in aspect of reduced accomplishment variable.
2. In the aspect of emotional exhaustion it is concluded that players sometimes felt so tired from the training that they do not have the energy left in them to do other things But it is also concluded that players are not overly tired from squash participation. Even it is concluded that players rarely feel wiped out from squash. Further players really felt physically worn out, exhausted by the mental and physical demands of squash. So as far as Emotional exhaustion is concerned Players do not show symptoms of burnout
3. Now as far as Devaluation is concerned it can be concluded that players never repented in spending their efforts in squash. Therefore it can be concluded that players rarely show the feeling of Devaluation in squash

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