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Stress management for athletes

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Abstract

Stress Management is very important aspects in world. There are different types of stress, it can attack athletes, youth, or corporates. Present paper is highlighting Stress Management, symptoms of stress, parameters of stress and how to resolve stress. Now recently stress is a very chronic disease, slowly and gradually destroying humans. Athletes also face stress and depression.

Stress is a condition of mental pressure for particular individual facing problems from environmental and social well-being which leads to so many diseases. Young age is the critical period because at this time youth faces lots of changes in his/her life especially in sports and education sector.

They are expected to be the leaders in the society. Thus, they should enhance their stress management abilities so as to live a healthy life after entering the society and as well as corporate sector. When a child enters into the youth age, they need to not only adapt themselves to the new life and new environment but also be familiar with many new people, and friends. The life stress on them is considerable. Therefore, understanding the sources of stress among them and how they can manage with the stress is very important.

The current paper researcher found that the stress mainly comes before and in some cases after sports event like Olympics, national competitions, state level competitions, and also in personal relations, relationship problems, life changes, and career exploration. Such stress may usually cause psychological, physical, and behavioral problems.

This study finds the causes of stress among athletes. So after identifying causes the researcher suggests that more emphasis can be given to development stage of child into adolescence. They should be brought up in the optimistic environment. More emphasis should be given to the outdoor activities and create hostile learning environment by minimizing the negative impact of stressors. The findings will help the athletes, individual students, scholars, career guidance, personality development and counseling centers.

Keywords: Stress, management, sports, athletes, symptoms

Introduction

Stress is normal physical responses to events that make you feel endangered or troubled your balance in some way. When you sense danger – whether it's real or fictional – the body's defenses kick into high gear in a fast, automatic method known as the —fight-or-flight reaction, or the stress reaction.

Main purpose of stress reaction is to defend your body. When working properly, it helps you to stay attentive, enthusiastic and aware. In emergency situations, stress can save your life – giving you extra strength to defend yourself, or encouraging you to slam on the brakes to avoid a mishap.

Observing the present Athletes lifestyle, various inquiries and opinions have been gathered up in the mind of researcher. It is very important to understand the factors responsible for a certain marvel and various angles related to it. The present study is pointing to represent the hint of the research work so far has been done in the field of stress, its techniques, factors related to it and the ways to manage it.

Stress is an inescapable consequence of modern living. Modern life is full of disturbances, targets, obstructions, and demands. For many people, stress has become a part of their life. Stress isn't always bad. In small doses, it can help you perform under pressure and encourage you to do your best. But when you're continuously running in emergency mode, your mind and body have to pay. Stress management is essential. Today stress management plays a vital role in everyone's life. It's required for long happy lives with fewer problems that will come about. Stress management involves understanding the psychology behind or that is causing the

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stress and finding plans to deal with, lessen, or reduce the stress. Stress decrease results from handling or inspecting situations in a positive way, taking action, organizing, planning, and finding solutions.

Management of stress for athlete

Managing stress is all about control your thoughts, emotions, schedule, environment, and the way you deal with problems. If you're experiencing stress, you need to try and make some changes to avoid stress in your routine. Talk to your coaches, physical trainer, or your teammates. Let them know how you feel. Ask them what you can do together to help you reduce or manage stress. Stress isn't always bad. A little bit of stress can help you stay concentrated, enthusiastic, and able to meet new challenges in your career.

Stress disorders

The learning of stress in sport lies within the study of sport psychology. There are many disorders which are related to stress. Typically, an athlete is diagnosed with general stress disorder, but there are more specific stress disorders as well. These disorders include, but are not limited to, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Stress can be manifested in people with OCD because the person will become so obsessed with their traditions, whether it is the number of times they must turn a light off, or clean their hands, if the person does not do it the correct number they will become stressed and will consume their thoughts until they go and correct it.

Depression can cause a person to become stress, and stress can cause depression because a person will become preoccupied with what is stressing them out, and will begin to focus only on that and soon not find pleasure in their normal everyday activities which will end up like a snowball effect and continue to get worse, unless they get help. Post-traumatic stress disorder is not usually a disorder that affects athletes but sometimes it may, especially after a traumatic car accident, or serious injury. PTSD is a very serious condition that can lead to further problems such as suicide. This is a condition not to be taken lightly and if the athlete is showing any signs of PTSD, they should be referred to a counseling center in order to get proper treatment.

There are many different stress disorders, many which need specialized treatment. At any time an athletic trainer feels like the athlete's stress level is becoming too high and unmanageable then the athlete needs to set up with a counseling center so they can get proper help, and tools to help lower their stress level. (Fullerton, 2020)

Athletes have to deal with mainly two kind of stress

1. Pre-season stress
2. Post-season stress

Pre-season stress is common in athletes it occurs due to tension of performance. Athletes get nervous and get anxiety attacks due to fear of performance before starting of the season.

Post-season stress is occur due to results of sport event, during the competition many people have expectation from athlete or athlete have to pursue his/her career which depends on the results, so if they lost the match expectation or their career got affected and many athletes cannot handle this pressure and they got into depression. Few athletes have left sports due to stress they started drugs to deal with stress

which affects their performance.

Below is the example of famous athletes struggle with depression.

Michael Phelps

Retired competitive swimmer Michael Phelps is the most successful and most decorated Olympian of all time, boasting a total of 28 medals, but that didn't make him immune to depression. "After every Olympics I think I fell into a major state of depression," said Phelps in a 2018 interview with CNN, who has admitted to using drugs to self-medicate and contemplating suicide. He now uses his experience to help others through the Michael Phelps Foundation and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

Serena Williams

Serena Williams may have had a hugely successful career as a global tennis champion, but her sporting achievements weren't enough to keep depression away. In 2011, Williams revealed that she had been battling depression since winning Wimbledon the previous year, following injuries and health difficulties. "I cried all the time. I was miserable to be around," she said in a 2011 interview with *The Telegraph*. Williams has also opened up about postpartum depression following the birth of her daughter Olympia in 2017.

Ronda Rousey

After two devastating defeats in the ring, WWE fighter and former UFC champion Ronda Rousey suffered from depression and contemplated suicide. "I did a whole lot of crying, isolating myself," she said in a 2018 interview with *The Guardian*, adding that her husband Travis Browne helped her through a period of depression that lasted two years. Rousey's advice is that "Time is a great teacher," and she relies on the belief that "time passes, even bad times."

Delonte West

Former professional basketball player Delonte West confirmed that he was battling depression and had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 2008. "It's been haunting me my whole life, self-destructive behavior," he said in a 2008 interview with *Cleveland.com*. "When everything is on the upside, I'm feeling the worst." West's mental health has continued to make headlines in recent years, such as when photos of him walking around late at night in a hospital gown, without shoes were shared on social media. (Gillespie, 2020)

Signs and symptoms of stress

Cognitive Symptoms

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Constant worrying

Emotional Symptoms

- Irritability or short temper
- Agitation, inability to relax
- Sense of loneliness and isolation

Physical Symptoms

- Aches and pains
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Chest pain, rapid heartbeat

Behavioral Symptoms

- Sleeping too much or too little
- Isolating yourself from others
- Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax

Other causes of stress

The events that incite stress are called stressors, and they cover entire range of situations. It includes Managing finances, Relationships.

Finances – Almost all the famous athletes have lot of money and due to lack of managing ability they almost went broke. They are just athletes from childhood they just focus on their sport, once they get famous they get millions of dollars to sign contract with famous brands, to play matches, or for their appearances but due to lack of knowledge about managing finance they went broke very early. They want to uphold the standard of living and accomplish the demand of luxury life but if they fail to achieve the necessity then it creates a stress.

Relationships – Relationships are another big factor of stress in athlete's life. Many athletes got divorced because they cannot give proper time to their partner or due to external affairs. This kind of problems can also create stress.

Mike Tyson is the perfect example for both factors: When Tyson was young, he got famous very early due to his fighting ability. He was the youngest boxer to win the title, at 20 years. Tyson nicknamed as Iron and Kid Dynamite in his early days later known as The Baddest Man on the Planet. He gets millions of dollars to fight matches, but later on it came to the news that his C.A. manipulated his accounts for personal benefits and Tyson fired him then. Tyson was also charged by his wife Robin Givens for violence and filed for divorced in October 1988. This kind of situations creates lot of stress in Tyson's life.

Recommendations on stress management

Stress can't be completely avoided. It is part of life and is even beneficial in small doses to keep the body ready to respond to environmental demands. To avoid or reduce the effects of stress there are few ways to combat it need to be known. Methods and techniques to combat stress include but are not limited to stress awareness, avoidance of people or situations known to cause stress, sports or physical exercise, time management, and boosting self-motivation and self-respect, practicing relaxation techniques like meditation, breathing techniques, positive thinking, etc.

There are a variety of coping mechanisms available for athletes who may be suffering from stress or anxiety. Each athlete needs to figure out which one works best for them, and that may take them a while as they need to try out each mechanism for a while to see if it works for them. There are many methods available including "hypnosis, progressive relaxation, visualization, biofeedback, autogenic training, mediation, negative thought stoppage, and confidence enhancement" (Hann, 2000). Reilly and Williams (2003) stated seven different demand categories in which an athlete may need to alter in order to lower their levels of stress and anxiety, these categories include: "physical demands, psychological demands, environmental demands, expectations and pressure, relationship issues, life direction concerns and uncategorized stress sources." In each category Reilly and Williams listed a variety of coping mechanisms the athlete can use to help limit stress and anxiety in that category. For

physical demands they suggest, "rational thinking, pre-competition mental preparation, changing to healthy acting attitudes and behavior, and training hard and smart." For psychological demands they suggested using "pre-competition mental preparation, management, positive focus and orientation, and training hard and smart." (Fullerton, 2020)

Conclusion

Stress is a normal part of life and therefore unavoidable. But, every effort should be done to reduce it. Reducing your stress levels can not only make you feel better right now, but may also protect your health long-term. The World Health Organization has highlighted stress as one of the major health challenges of the twenty first century. Many athletes struggle with these conditions more than others despite the well-prepared benefits from exercise and sports participation even some athletes at times face psychological, emotional, and behavioral problems. Athletes have to learn methods to avoid stress it should be included in their routine which they practice regularly. Till particular stage stress is good it gives them courage to perform well. After certain stage stress affects their career and personal life.

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