



P-ISSN: 2394-1685
E-ISSN: 2394-1693
Impact Factor (ISRA): 5.38
IJPESH 2022; 9(2): 82-86
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www.kheljournal.com
Received: 19-12-2021
Accepted: 03-02-2022

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The psychological impact of injuries on sports persons

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze critically the psychological impact of injuries on sports persons. The present study included 30 sport persons, having sports injuries in the past. Purposive sampling was applied to select the subjects and was included in the present study. A self-made questionnaire was developed in consultation with the experts in the field. The respondents were asked to rank their feelings as presented to them through the questionnaire. Garrett's Ranking Technique was adopted in this study to rank the responses with regard to the themes *viz.* confidence, concentration, attitude, anxiety recovery and mental agony after receiving sport injury. Getting annoyed and frustrated was very dominating response. A big part of the psychological recovery process is the social support that a sports person can get from a number of different people and places around them.

Keywords: Sports injury, Confidence, concentration, attitude, anxiety recovery and mental agony

Introduction

Competitive sport is one of the areas where most sports injuries originate. Sometimes they are considered as something usual in elite sports, regardless of their particularities. All who engage in professional practice in sport area should understand the injury from the athlete's stand point and evaluation, which is determined by various aspects, mainly subjective or personal in nature. The psychological impact refers to the emotional impression left by an event. In sports, an athlete's perception of his injury, both objectively and subjectively, can affect his or her general state of well-being. The existence of an injury may influence the perception of general and emotional health, but among the psychological well-being factors investigated, the 'environmental mastery' was the most negatively related to the perceived psychological impact. "Experiencing an injury is one of the most traumatic things to happen to an athlete, yet no athlete is immune to injury despite experience or ability" (Lattimore, 2017, p.17) [1]. Johnston and Carrol (2000) [2] was to test the assumption that the psychological impact of injury varies with involvement in sport and exercise, and that those who are more involved in sport and exercise before injury would experience greater negative affect and retarded recovery and concluded that incapacitation for those not involved in sport and exercise before injury may have much the same affective impact as it does for those with considerable involvement.

The purpose of this study was to analyze critically the psychological impact of injuries on sports persons.

Methodology

The present study included 30 sport persons, having sports injuries in the past. Purposive sampling was applied to select the subjects and was included in the present study. A self-made questionnaire was developed in consultation with the experts in the field. The respondents were asked to rank their feelings as presented to them through the questionnaire. Garrett's Ranking Technique was adopted in this study to rank the responses with regard to the themes *viz.* confidence, concentration, attitude, anxiety recovery and mental agony after receiving sport injury.

The prime advantage of this technique over simple frequency distribution is that the preferences are arranged based on their intensity from the point of view of respondents. Hence, the same number of respondents on two or more preferences may have been given different Garrett's formula for converting ranks into percent is:

$$\text{Percent position} = 100 * (R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where, R_{ij} = rank given for i^{th} factor by j^{th} individual;

N_j = number of factors ranked by j^{th} individual.

The percent position of each rank was converted into scores referring to the table given by Garrett and Woodworth (1969). For each factors or suggested answer under a theme, the scores of individual respondents were added together and divided by the total number of the respondents for whom scores were added. These mean scores for all the factors were arranged in descending order; the responses were accordingly ranked under each theme.

The respondents were asked to rank the four responses identified on each theme for the purpose of this study as 1, 2, 3 and 4 in order to know their preference as a response to sports injury. The calculated percentage position for the rank 1, 2, 3 and 4 and their correspondent Garrett table are shown

in Table 1. For individual factor or response, the total score was calculated by multiplying the number of respondents ranking that factor as 1, 2, 3 or 4 and then the mean score of the individual factor was calculated by dividing the total number of respondents and further ranked with regard to the mean score.

Findings

Table 1. Percentage positions on different factors under a theme and their corresponding Garret Table values.

Rank	Percent Position		Garret Table
1	100(1-0.5)/4	12.5	73
2	100(2-0.5)/4	37.5	56
3	100(3-0.5)/4	62.5	44
4	100(4-0.5)/4	87.5	27

Table 2: Ranking of different factors under respective themes

Theme	Factors	Rank1	Rank2	Rank3	Rank4	Total Score	No of respondents	Mean Score	Rank
Confidence	unshakable confidence in ability	5	14	11	0	1633	30	54.433	2
	regain after getting healed	25	5	0	0	2105	30	70.17	1
	worried about doing mistakes	0	0	6	24	912	30	30.40	4
	give-up under injury	0	11	13	6	1350	30	45.00	3
Performance	apprehend performing poorly	4	9	9	8	1408	30	46.93	3
	may not perform as usual	4	13	8	5	1507	30	50.23	2
	worried about consequences of failure	0	8	9	13	1195	30	39.83	4
	do well on shortcomings in performance	22	0	4	4	1890	30	63.00	1
Feelings	feel tired very quickly	11	14	4	1	1790	30	59.67	1
	feel restless	0	15	15	0	1500	30	50.00	3
	evaluate myself more critically	0	1	11	18	1026	30	34.20	4
	worried about the future with uncertainty	19	0	0	11	1684	30	56.13	2
Concentration	Uncontrolled anxiety about competition	0	11	14	5	1367	30	45.57	3
	Unable to concentrate on societal issues	4	8	10	8	1396	30	46.53	2
	conscious of every moment during injury period	3	13	8	6	1461	30	48.70	1
	get distracted easily and loose concentration	2	8	8	7	1135	30	37.83	4
Mental Agony	become annoyed and frustrated	11	16	3	0	1831	30	61.03	1
	overcome by self-doubt during injury	0	14	16	0	1488	30	49.60	3
	hope to regain composure	0	0	11	19	997	30	33.23	4
	feel tensed and accompanied by headache	19	0	0	11	1684	30	56.13	2

Results depicted in Table 2 indicate that, analysis of confidence level of subjects under injury ranked the factors ‘regain after getting healed’, ‘unshakable confidence in ability’, ‘give-up under injury’ and ‘worried about doing mistakes’ were ranked as 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, respectively in

the present study. Confidence of regaining after getting healed was very dominating response with mean score of 70.17 against 54.43, 45.00 and 30.40 with other factors. Graphical comparison of preferences of factors with regard to confidence is presented in Fig 1.

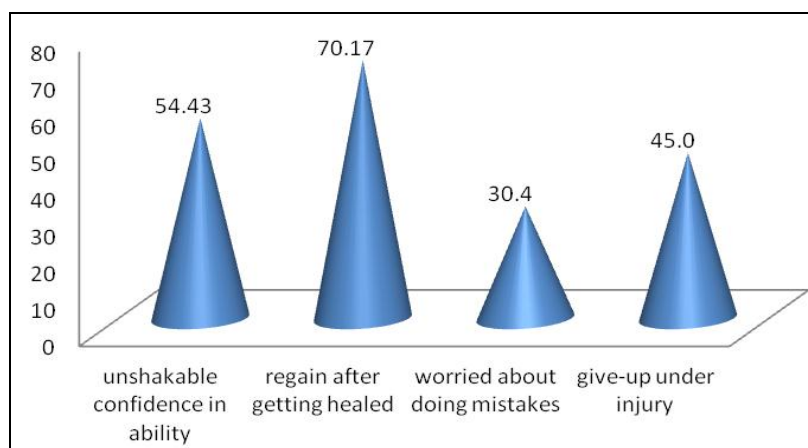


Fig 1: Comparison of Preferences of Factors with regard to Confidence

Analysis of responses with regard to performance of subjects under injury ranked the factors 'do well on shortcomings in performance', 'may not perform as usual', 'apprehend performing poorly' and 'worried about consequences of failure' were ranked as 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, respectively in the

present study. Confidence of doing well on shortcomings was preferred response with mean score of 63.00 against 50.23, 46.93 and 39.83 with other proposed factors. Graphical comparison of preferences of factors with regard to performance is presented in Fig 2.

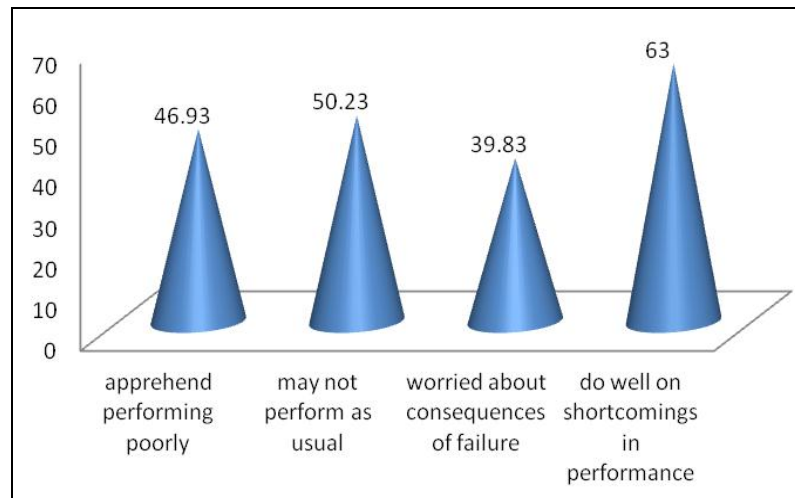


Fig 2: Preferences of Factors with regard to Performance

Analysis of responses with regard to feelings of subjects under injury ranked the factors 'feel tired very quickly', 'worried about the future with uncertainty', 'feel restless' and 'evaluate myself more critically' were ranked as 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, respectively in the present study. Evaluation of self more critically was rated as the least preferred response with

mean score of 34.20 as against other three factors having almost similar scores ranging from 50 to 60 in the present study indicating a casual response to the injury incurred in sports with the subjects. Graphical comparison of preferences of factors with regard to feelings is presented in Fig 3.

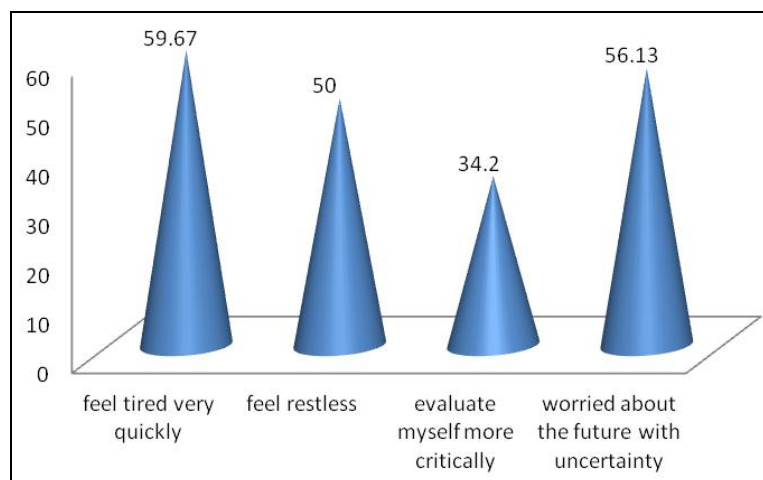


Fig 3: Comparison of preferences of factors with regard to Feelings

Analysis of responses with regard to concentration of subjects under injury ranked the factors 'conscious of every moment during injury period', 'Unable to concentrate on societal issues', 'Uncontrolled anxiety about competition' and 'get distracted easily and lose concentration' were ranked as 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, respectively in the present study. Consciousness of every moment during injury period was

rated as the least preferred response with mean score of 37.83 as against other three factors having almost similar scores ranging from 45 to 50 in the present study indicating low acceptance to distraction among the subjects. Graphical comparison of preferences of factors with regard to concentration is presented in Fig 4.

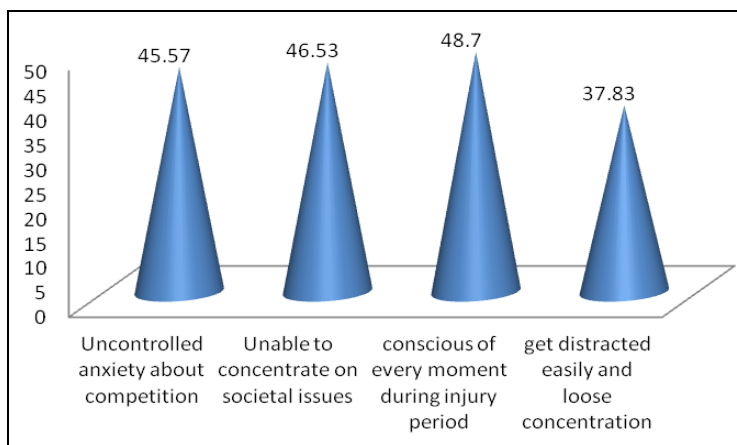


Fig 4: Comparison of Preferences of Factors With Regard to Concentration

Analysis of mental agony of subjects under injury ranked the factors 'get annoyed and frustrated', 'feel tensed and accompanied by headache', 'overcome by self-doubt during injury' and 'hope to regain composure' were ranked as 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, respectively in the present study. Getting

annoyed and frustrated was very dominating response with mean score of 61.03 against 56.13, 49.60 and 33.23 with other factors. Graphical comparison of preferences of factors with regard to mental agony is presented in Fig 5.

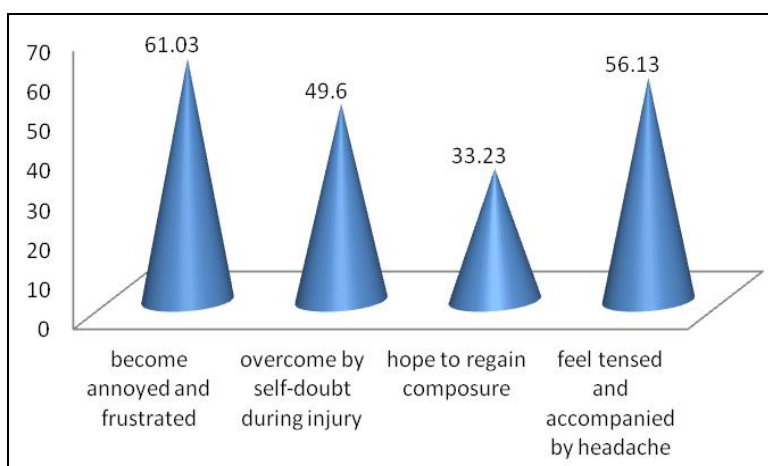


Fig 5: Comparison of Preferences of Factors With Regard to Mental Agony

Discussion on Findings

Confidence of regaining after getting healed was very optimistic view of the sport persons and need further boosting. In contrary, worries about doing mistakes with poor mean score of 30.40 is indicative of low level of repent showing acceptance of mistakes as part of sport. This attitude may be taken positively for getting optimum confidence triggering optimum performance.

Confidence of doing well on shortcomings was the only optimistic response asked to the subjects and all three other factors were little pessimistic. That might have influenced the preference of subjects. However, all the three other factors recorded mean scores ranging from 40 to 50 against the most preferred response score of 63, indicating that, most of the subjects apprehended a question mark on optimal performance after getting injured. The past incidences or history of such situations with senior sport persons might have influenced the views of subjects in present study. So availability of better recovery treatments, better availability of modern trainings and coaching must be in the knowledge of today's sport persons and case studies on stronger come-backs of athletes and sport persons may be put to such individuals to boost their views in this context.

Casual response to the injury on the subjects was very positive attitude and need to be firm with sport persons to

perform to their threshold. Though highest rated response was feeling tired quickly over worries on uncertainty and restless feeling, the three responses can be taken similarly. So psychological counseling may be helpful in overcoming the issues, generated due to sport injury.

Consciousness of every moment during injury period was rated as the least preferred response. This attitude was very encouraging and need to be stressed upon among sport persons. Though highest rated response was found to be higher intensity of consciousness of the subjects during injury, losing concentration on societal issues and uncontrolled anxiety were also rated almost similarly. So psychological counseling may be helpful in overcoming the issues, generated due to sport injury.

Getting annoyed and frustrated was very dominating response. This was very pessimistic view of the sport persons and need to get rid of such mentality. In contrary, hope to regain composure with poor mean score of 33.23 is indicative of low level of confidence level among subjects in present study. This issue may be addressed with regular interactions with motivators and counselors.

Conclusion

A big part of the psychological recovery process is the social support that a sports person can get from a number of

different people and places around them. Athletes/ players going through an injury can receive social support from their coaches, teammates, athletic trainers, physical therapists, friends, and family. Previous studies have indicated that social support is a huge resource for athletes that are recovering from an injury

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