



MENTAL HEALTH, EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Psychology

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ABSTRACT

Physical activity and exercise plays an important role to deal with daily mental health issues of sports person, such as depression and anxiety. While people with depression have a tendency to be less physical active than non-depressed individuals, increased aerobic exercise or strength training has been revealed to reduce depressive symptoms significantly. On the other hand, habitual physical activity has not been shown to helping factor for depression. Anxiety symptoms and panic disorder also improve with regular exercise, and beneficial effects appear to equal meditation or relaxation. In general, acute anxiety responds better to exercise than chronic anxiety. Studies of older adults and adolescents with depression or anxiety have been limited, but physical activity appears beneficial to these populations as well. Excessive physical activity may lead to overtraining and generate psychological symptoms that mimic depression. Numerous psychological and physiological factors have been proposed to explain the effect of physical activity on mental health problems. The present article emphasized the need to simplify the mental health benefits of exercise among various populations and to address the underlying the benefits of exercise on mental health.

KEYWORDS

Mental Health, Exercise, Physical Activity

INTRODUCTION

Mental health issues are of most important public health significance. It has been claimed that strong physical activity has positive effects on mental health in both clinical and nonclinical populations. This paper reviews the evidence for this claim and provides recommendations for future studies. Some of these proposed psychological benefits are improved confidence, well-being, sexual satisfaction, anxiety reduction, and positive effects on depressed mood and intellectual functioning (Hughes, 1984). In general, findings from research indicate that exercise is associated with improvements in mental health including mood state and self-esteem, although a causal link has not been established. Research on acute exercise indicates that 20 to 40 minutes of aerobic activity results in improvements in state anxiety and mood that persist for several hours. Evidence from studies involving clinical samples indicates that the psychological benefits associated with exercise are comparable to gains found with standard forms of psychotherapy. Hence, for healthy individuals the principal psychological benefit of exercise may be that of prevention, whereas in those suffering from mild to moderate emotional illness exercise may function as a means of treatment. Exercise may also result in detrimental changes in mental health. Some individuals can become overly dependent on physical activity and exercise to an excessive degree. This abuse of exercise can result in disturbances in mood and worsened physical health. In the case of athletes the intense training, or overtraining, necessary for endurance sports consistently results in increased mood disturbance. Extreme cases of overtraining may result in the staleness syndrome; a condition associated with deteriorating performance and behavioral disturbances including clinical depression. Exercise can result in either beneficial or detrimental changes in mental health, and the outcome appears to be largely dependent on the 'dosage' employed. Although recent studies have provided promising findings regarding the efficacy of exercise in clinical samples, additional research is clearly needed. Mental health problems are pandemic in modern society. Stress related conditions such as anxiety and depression accounted for the greatest proportion of disorders. Furthermore, the effects of stress have been estimated to be a factor in up to 50 % of all visits to medical practitioners (Kuyler & Dunner 1976). Psychotropic medication and psychotherapy are effective in treating many mental health problems, but it has been estimated that approximately 20% of affected individuals do not receive any treatment. Increasing interest has been paid to the use of alternative means of treating and preventing mental health problems. One nontraditional technique involves the use of long term, or chronic, exercise programmes, and research evidence suggests that exercise is associated with improvements in anxiety and depression (Morgan & Goldston 1987). However, much of the extant research has employed quasi experimental designs, or suffers from fundamental design weaknesses such as a lack of control and placebo groups (Morgan &

O'Connor 1989; Morgan et al. 1990). There remains a clear need to systematically investigate the psychological effects of acute and chronic exercise under controlled conditions in comparison to alternative treatments and placebo conditions.

In the general population, physical activity may be inversely associated with psychiatric morbidity and psychosocial function, including depression and emotional wellbeing (Brown et al., 2003; Dunn, Trivedi, & O'neal, 2001; Goodwin, 2003). For instance, a number of cross-sectional studies found lower depressive symptomatology among physically active men and women (Allgower, Wardle, & Steptoe, 2001; Stephens, 1988; Wassertheil-Smoller, et al., 2004). Prospective studies have also found individuals who increase physical activity at reduced risk of exhibiting depressive symptoms or developing a depressive disorder (Strawbridge, Deleger, Roberts, & Kaplan, 2002; Van Gool, et al., 2003). Moreover, several investigators reported significantly reduced fitness level among men and women with depressive symptoms or disorders (Hollenberg, Haight, & Tager, 2003; Lavoie, et al., 2004). Yet there is conflicting evidence for a graded dose-response association between physical activity or fitness level and depressive symptoms (Dunn, Trivedi, & O'neal, 2001). In context of Indian studies, researchers are trying to find out the role of mental skills among sports person (Panchal, 2016).

Some Proposed Psychological Benefits of Exercise and Physical Activity

Studies show the positive correlation between exercise and psychological status among active and inactive employees (Tayebisani et al., 2014). There are several benefit of exercise like, Academic Performance, Assertiveness, Confidence, Emotional Stability, Independence, Intellectual Functioning, Internal Locus of Control, Memory, Mood, Perception, Popularity, Positive Body Image, Self Control, Sexual Satisfaction, Well Being, and Work Efficiency. One another study conducted by Motallebi and Noorbaksh (2010) showed participation in sports activities have significant effects on mental health. Tyson, et al. (2010) found significant differences between the low, medium and high exercise groups on the mental health, which means those who engage in more exercise has better mental health than the less exercise group. They concluded that the engagement in physical activity can be an important contributory factor in the mental health of undergraduate students. Moreover, Exercise Decrease Absenteeism at Work, Alcohol Abuse, Anger, Anxiety, Confusion, Depression, Headache, Hostility, Phobias, Psychotic Behavior, Stress Response, Tension, Type-A Behavior and Work Error.

CONCLUSION

Physical activity has beneficial effects for the prevention and treatment of different mental health problems such as depressive and anxiety

disorders. Nevertheless, physical activity can also be harmful, especially when performed in an inappropriate or in a very intense manner (as observed in conditions as "excessive exercise" and "overtraining syndrome"). Specifically with respect to the association between physical activity and mood, evidence indicates that moderate exercise improves mood (or helps maintain it at high levels), while intense exercise leads to its deterioration, and that these mood variations are more related to the construct of depression than to the construct of anxiety. Knowledge about the relationship between physical activity and mental health, or more specifically between physical activity and mood, is still limited; Therefore, at this time, it is not possible to define the cause effect relationship or to describe in detail the psychological and physiological mechanisms underlying this association.

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