

Sports and student happiness: psychological health and academic stress of college athletes

Xian CHEN

Physical Education College, Chengdu University of Technology, Chengdu 610059, China

Abstract: In college education, we should pay close attention to the academic pressure and happiness of college athletes, and take corresponding education measures to help college students alleviate academic pressure and enhance happiness. Therefore, during the stage of data survey, the relationship between college students' academic stress and well-being was understood, and effective countermeasures were put forward.

Key words: sports items; students' happiness; mental health; academic stress

1 Introduction

College students are the backbone of the future development of our society and the important pillar of the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Therefore, it is necessary to study the relationship between college students' academic stress and their mental health, and take corresponding measures to cope with it, so as to improve their happiness. Therefore, this paper takes college athletes as an example to probe into the relationship between students' mental health and academic stress, and to put forward corresponding education measures.

2 Research design and methods

The aim of this paper is to explore and analyze the influence of sports on college students' mental health and well-being, and the role of sports in relieving students' academic stress. During the stage of questionnaire distribution, XX college students were randomly selected to be distributed with 170 questionnaires and 168 questionnaires, of which 167 were valid, resulting in a validity rate of 98.82%.

3 Analysis of research results

3.1 Effects of academic stress on mental health of college athletes

According to the data in Table 2-1, it can be seen that there is a correlation between students' academic stress and feelings of anxiety and stress. With the increase of academic stress level, the number of students who feel anxiety and stress is also increasing. Only 14.97% of students feel anxiety or stress under the first academic stress level, while the proportion increases to 43.11% at the high academic stress level, which indicates that there is a positive correlation between academic stress and students' anxiety and stress. Furthermore, only 4.79% of the students in the first academic stress group had mental health problems. However, in the group with high academic stress, the proportion of students with mental health problems increased to 31.74%, which indicated that high academic stress might cause mental health problems. From the overall data, 53.30% of students are facing different degrees of academic stress, indicating that academic stress has a significant impact on the mental health of college athletes.

Table 2-1. Statistical table of effects of academic stress on mental health of college athletes

Academic stress level	Number of students feeling anxious or stressed	Zombie	Number of students with mental health problems	Zombie
Low	25	14.97%	8	4.79%
Medium	70	41.92%	28	16.77%
High	72	43.11%	53	31.74%
Total	167	100%	89	53.30%

3.2 Role of physical exercise in relieving academic pressure and improving happiness

During the stage of data investigation, we are aware of the effect of physical exercise on alleviating students' academic pressure and improving their sense of happiness. The specific statistical results of the data investigation are shown in Table 2-2 below. According to the statistical results of the data investigation in the table, we can understand that there is a close relationship between physical exercise and students' academic stress. With the increase of physical exercise frequency of students, the proportion of students who feel that the academic pressure has been alleviated also shows an upward trend. Only 6.0% of students who have never exercised feel that the academic pressure has been alleviated, whereas the proportion of students who have exercised for more than three times rises to 37.1%. This indicates that regular physical exercise may help students release pressure and improve their ability to cope with academic stress. In addition, there is a close relationship between physical exercise and students' happiness. Only 4.8% of the students who never do physical exercise and 44.9% of the students who exercise more than three times a week are happy. In general, the higher the frequency of physical exercise, the higher the proportion of students reporting academic stress relief and well-being improvement, especially for students who exercise three times or more per week.

Table 2-2. Statistical table of the effects of physical exercise on students' academic stress and well-being

Frequency of physical exercise	Number of students feeling less academic stress	Zombie	Number of students who reported increased happiness	Zombie
Never exercise	10	6.0%	8	4.8%
Occasional exercise	35	21.0%	28	16.8%
1 - 2 times per week	60	35.9%	56	33.5%
Three or more times a week	62	37.1%	75	44.9%

3.3 Different effects of different sports on mental health and well-being

During the stage of data investigation, we are ware of the different impacts of various sports events on the mental health and happiness of college athletes. The statistical results of the specific data investigation are shown in Table 2-3 below. From the statistical results of the data investigation in the table, it can be seen that the proportion of the students who feel good about their mental health is 20.96%, followed by basketball, which is 17.96%, which shows that the students who participate in the track and field events perform well in the aspect of mental health. In terms of the number and proportion of students who reported higher levels of happiness, track and field was also the highest, followed by basketball.

Table 2-3. Statistical differences in effects of different sports on mental health and well-being

Sports	Number of students in good mental health	Zombie	Number of students who reported higher levels of happiness	Zombie
Football	25	14.97%	22	13.17%
Basketball	30	17.96%	27	16.17%
Swimming	20	11.98%	18	10.78%
Athletics	35	20.96%	32	19.16%
Tennis	15	8.98%	14	8.38%
Others	42	25.15%	38	22.75%

4 Countermeasures and suggestions

4.1 Establishing a dredging mechanism to relieve academic pressure

According to the statistical results of the survey, the anxiety and pressure that college athletes feel along with the increase of students' academic pressure are also increasing. Therefore, it is necessary for colleges and universities to establish a set of perfect psychological counseling mechanism to help college athletes cope with psychological pressure and ease academic pressure. For example, in the scope of colleges and universities, we can set up a special psychological health consulting room for college athletes, and establish professional psychological consulting teachers in the psychological health consulting room, so as to provide professional psychological health counseling services for college athletes and protect the psychological health of college athletes [1]. Colleges and universities can also conduct regular lectures on mental health education and organize mental health workshops for college athletes, through diversified publicity and lectures to teach college athletes how to cope with learning pressure and do a good job in emotional regulation. In addition, it is also necessary to set up a mutual help group for students to support each other and face academic challenges together, which cannot only mitigate the negative impact of academic stress on students' mental health, but also help to improve students' happiness.

4.2 Encouraging active exercise and enhancing the ability to resist pressure

The results show that there is a very significant positive correlation between physical exercise and students' academic stress and well-being. Therefore, college students should be encouraged to take part in physical training in order to enhance their ability to cope with pressure and enhance their sense of well-being. During this process, colleges and universities first need to improve the curriculum, such as the physical education curriculum for college athletes, to provide students with a variety of sports. This will not only expose students to rich sports content, but also stimulate students' interest in sports [2]. In addition, colleges and universities can also carry out a variety of extracurricular sports activities for college students, such as college games, college students sports competitions and so on.

4.3 Optimizing physical education curriculum and taking into account project differences

The results show that different types of sports have different effects on students' psychological health and well-being. Therefore, these differences should be taken into account when setting up physical education courses in colleges and

universities [3]. For example, it is advisable to establish a diverse range of track and field events for college students to choose from, and to consider the appropriateness of increasing the proportion of track and field classes in college education. In addition, colleges and universities can also set up some new sports items according to the interests and needs of college students, so as to help college athletes to choose more sports items in their study, such as yoga and dance, and meet the learning needs of different students through diversified sports, so as to enable students to bring into play their potential and talent in sports, help college athletes to relieve academic pressure and enhance their happiness [4].

5 Conclusion

To sum up, in college education, there is a very close relationship between sports and academic pressure and happiness of college athletes. Therefore, it is necessary to make a deep investigation and understanding. Based on the survey results presented in the paper, we put forward corresponding recommendations to help enhance the well-being of college athletes and alleviate their academic pressure.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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