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A Study of the Impact of Sports Activity on Mental Health

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Abstract: *The purpose of this narrative review is to investigate evidence for sports activity affecting mental health. Knowledge about pre-emptive and treatment effects on achieving and maintaining an average level of physical abilities is considered nowadays to be a significant achievement of modern science. This knowledge has influenced the creation of various programs for the improvement of the holistic wealth of an individual. The accent is on the investigation of psychological benefits of exercising both in terms of prevention, and in treatment of stress, depression and anxiety. It is necessary to establish a parallel between the positive and negative influences of sports activity on mental health, and use of the individual approach in the way, attitude, motive, intensity and scope of recreational/sport activity. Regarding professional athletes, harmonization of physical and psychological preparation with adequate professional supervision is of great importance. Coordinated physical and psychological preparations can act positively on the attainment and achievement of goals, but also on the preservation and maintenance of mental health. Sports activity may play an important role in the management of mental health diseases, especially depression and anxiety. Although people with depression tend to be less physically active than non-depressed individuals, increased aerobic activity or strength training has been shown to reduce depressive symptoms significantly.*

Key Words: Mental Health, Sports Activity, Depression, Anxiety and Self confidence, investigatievidence.

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behaviour could be affected. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, Looking after mental health can preserve a person's ability to enjoy life. Doing this involves reaching a balance between life activities, responsibilities, and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. Conditions such as stress, depression, and anxiety can all affect mental health and disrupt a person's routine. he WHO stress that mental health is "more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities." Peak mental health is about not only avoiding active conditions but also looking after ongoing wellness and happiness. They also emphasize that preserving and restoring mental health is crucial on an individual basis, as well as throughout different communities and societies the world over. In the United States, the National Alliance on Mental Illness estimate that almost 1 in 5 adults experience mental health problems each year. Sport pertains to any form of competitive physical activity or game that aims to use, maintain, or improve physical ability and skill while providing enjoyment to participants and, in some cases, entertainment to spectators Sports can, through casual or organized participation, improve one's physical health. Hundreds of sports exist, from those between single contestants, through to those with hundreds of simultaneous participants, either in teams or competing as individuals. Sport is generally recognised as system of activities based in physical athleticism or physical dexterity with major competitions .Depression is a mental state of low mood and aversion to activity. Classified medically as a mental and behavioural disorder the experience of depression affects a person's thoughts, behaviour, motivation, feeling, and sense of well being. Anxiety is an emotion which is characterized by an unpleasant state of inner turm oil and it includes subjectively unpleasant feelings of dread over anticipated events. It is often accompanied by nervous behaviour such as pacing back and forth, somatic complaint and rumination. Anxiety is a feeling of uneasiness and worry, usually generalized and



unfocused as an overreaction to a situation that is only subjectively seen as menacing. The concept of self-confidence is commonly defined as self-assurance in one's personal judgment, ability, power etc. One's self-confidence increases as a result of experiences of having satisfactorily completed particular activities. Self-confidence involves a positive belief that in the future, one can generally accomplish what one wishes to do.

The Mechanisms of action of Sports against Depression- Other scientific research reported by S. Cascua (2002) has shed greater light on the mechanisms through which the sport has a positive effect on recovery from depression. Regular exercise in some sports counteracts the harmful physiological effects produced by the accumulated negative stress (distress) which, if protracted, can stimulate endogenous changes that support the development of neuro-chemical depression, linked to low levels of some neurotransmitters. During the practice of moderate endurance sports, however, the brain undergoes a eustress, or positive stress (only during moderate practice!) thus it activates the production of a complex molecule that, subsequently, generates the production of two important types of neurotransmitters: acetylcholine and endorphins. These are the molecules that produce the sensations of analgesia and a sense of well-being, properties that have often led to them being defined "happiness hormones".

Sports and Anxiety- Sports help you manage anxiety. Exercise causes your body to release endorphins, the chemicals in your brain that relieve pain and stress. It also reduces the levels of stress hormones, cortisol and adrenaline. Studies have shown that 20 to 30 minutes of exercise each day can make people feel calmer.

Boost mental health with sports- Taking part in sports in a group has a greater impact on mental health than individual sports. Researchers in Australia found that women who played tennis and netball in clubs had better mental health than those who exercised alone, like walking or working out at the gym. There were no differences in physical health between the two groups. A study of teenage athletes found that those who played individual sports more likely reported experiencing anxiety and depression. This may be because those in team sports often play for fun. Individual sports don't require another person to compete together and may make the athlete experience more stress than enjoyment.

Help fight Addiction- A study of Norwegian teenagers found that those who played in team sports were less likely to smoke cigarettes and use cannabis as adults. Researchers in Korea recommended the use of sports to help teens combat internet addiction.

Help with depression- Sports help treat depression. Studies show that exercise improves symptoms of depression and reduces the risk of relapse. Exercise was found to be as effective as standard, antidepressant treatment in one study, with modest amounts of exercise helping to improve depression. Many high-profile athletes struggle with mental health issues. Researchers say certain factors may increase the risk of depression among athletes. These include injury, retirement from the sport, and performance expectations. It's also possible that there may be underreporting of depression among athletes.

Improve serious mental disorder- Exercise can help if you have a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia. It improves some symptoms of schizophrenia, including loss of motivation and thinking difficulties, but is less effective with other symptoms like hallucinations. While sports relieve stress, sometimes they create it. Parents or coaches may push children too hard. Older athletes may place pressure on themselves to perform well. This leads to burnout which is when an athlete's performance worsens despite intense training.

Improve confidence in Sports- If you asked anyone, "what do you think is the most important psychological factor needed to excel in sport?", you would likely come across self-confidence and self-belief in the answers. Many people think self-confidence helps athletes thrive in their chosen sport, helping them to overcome obstacles they experience along the way. Some even consider confidence as the single, most-important mental factor in sports. We often think there are people who have it and people that don't. However, confidence is a skill, which means you can learn it. Sport might be one of the best ways to help you develop the skill of confidence. As your strength, skills, and



stamina increase through training, you'll have more confidence in your ability because you'll see them visibly improve.

Conclusion- Sports has positive impact on mental health of children and adolescents. Despite the psychological and social benefits of sports there are only handfuls of mental health professional who use sports as intervention for treating various disorders. Extensive research needs to be done on how sports is helpful in alleviating symptoms of various mental disorders so that the findings can help the mental health professionals to include sports as part of intervention of mental disorders.

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