



ANALYSIS OF THE LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING OF INJURY HANDLING IN FEMALE FOOTBALL ATHLETES AT STKIP PASUNDAN

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the level of understanding of injury management among members of the Women's Football UKM at STKIP Pasundan. A quantitative approach with a descriptive survey design was used. Data were collected through a closed-ended questionnaire distributed to 20 active athletes. The results showed that respondents' understanding was categorized as "good" (30%), "fair" (55%), and "poor" (15%), with a mean score of 38.80 and standard deviation of 11.37. The understanding of acute injuries was higher (mean = 9.20) than chronic injuries (mean = 7.85). These findings emphasize the need for enhanced education and practical training in injury management for student athletes.

Keywords: Football, Understanding, Injury Management.

Sport is a vital activity in modern life, both for physical and mental health.[1]. However, in contact sports like soccer, the risk of injury is very high.[2]. This also applies to female soccer athletes, who have seen significant increases in participation and performance in recent decades. However, this progress is accompanied by serious safety challenges, including athletes' lack of understanding of proper injury management.[3]. Soccer, as a sport that demands intense physical, technical, and tactical demands, carries a high risk of various types of injuries, such as cramps, bruises, muscle or ligament tears, and fractures.[4]. Improper injury management can negatively impact an athlete's performance and future.[5]. Therefore, understanding how to prevent and treat injuries, particularly through methods such as RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) and supportive therapies such as physiotherapy and sports massage, is an essential skill for every athlete and coach.[6].

Injuries in sports are common, especially in contact sports like soccer. Football demands high levels of technical skill, physical strength, and mental toughness, so the risk of injury is very high.[7] In recent years, women's football has grown rapidly in various countries, including Indonesia, both in terms of participation and development. However, as participation increases, safety challenges also arise, including athletes' low understanding of proper injury management.[8].

Proper injury management, such as the RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) method, is crucial for athletes and coaches to master. Furthermore, the use of modern tools and techniques such as physiotherapy, exercise therapy, and massage therapy can also support the recovery process [9]. With a good understanding, athletes can perform first aid and injury prevention measures more effectively, thereby improving their readiness for competition [10].

More specifically, this study revealed that athletes' understanding of acute injury management, such as the RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) method, is better than their understanding of chronic injuries, which require long-term recovery [11]. This suggests that most athletes are more familiar with the immediate and minor treatment of injuries, but do not fully understand follow-up procedures or long-term rehabilitation [12]. Factors influencing this level of understanding include a lack of regular training, limited access to accurate information, and the suboptimal role of coaches in providing education on injury prevention and treatment [13]. Consequently, this limited understanding can slow the recovery process and impair athlete performance, especially during competitions or intensive training. Therefore, there needs to be a more structured integration of injury management theory in learning and field practice to improve athletes' understanding and skills [14].

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the level of understanding of female soccer athletes at STKIP Pasundan regarding injury management in sports. The main focus of this study is to determine the extent of athletes' understanding of injury management and identify factors that influence this understanding. This research is expected to contribute to efforts to improve the safety and quality of sports coaching on campus.

METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach with a descriptive survey design aimed at analyzing the level of understanding of female soccer athletes regarding sports injury management [15]. This approach allowed researchers to systematically describe the actual situation through a questionnaire as a measurement instrument.

The population in this study was all female athletes who are members of the Student Activity Unit (UKM) Soccer at STKIP Pasundan Cimahi. The sample was determined using purposive sampling, a sampling technique based on specific considerations or criteria deemed relevant to the research objectives [16]. These criteria

included athletes actively participating in training and matches during the research period. Based on these criteria, 30 athletes were selected as the research sample.

Data collection was carried out by distributing a closed-ended questionnaire containing a number of statements regarding athletes' understanding of sports injury management, specifically in the context of the RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) method. The questionnaire instrument was designed with reference to the theory of Sugiyono (2017) and underwent validity and reliability tests to ensure its feasibility and consistency [17].

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. This analysis includes calculating the mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution that groups the respondents' level of understanding into three categories: good, sufficient, and poor. The analysis process was carried out to describe the distribution of respondents' understanding as a whole and to identify the aspects of injury management that are most and least understood by athletes, [18].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyze the level of understanding of athletes in the women's soccer unit (UKM) at STKIP Pasundan regarding injury management in sports. Based on a questionnaire distributed to 20 respondents, it was found that 30% had a "good" understanding, 55% a "fair" understanding, and 15% a "poor" understanding. These results indicate that most athletes still have limited understanding of injury management, particularly chronic injuries that require long-term treatment.

The overall mean score for the questionnaire was 38.80 with a standard deviation of 11.37. Understanding of acute injury management showed a higher score (mean 9.20) compared to understanding of chronic injuries (mean 7.85), with standard deviations of 1.17 and 0.98, respectively. This indicates that athletes tend to be more knowledgeable about how to manage sudden injuries, while understanding of injuries that arise from accumulated stress or repetitive movements is still lacking.

Table 1. Distribution of Level of Understanding of Injury Management

No	Understanding Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)	Stem Representation
1	Good	6	30%	
2	Enough	11	55%	
3	Poor	3	15%	
Total		20	100%	

Based on the data obtained, the respondents' level of understanding was divided into three categories: good, adequate, and poor. Six respondents, or 30%, demonstrated a

good understanding, meaning they possessed sufficient knowledge and skills in injury management. The majority of respondents, 11 (55%), fell into the adequate category, indicating that most athletes still need to improve their knowledge to better understand injury management. Meanwhile, three respondents (15%) fell into the poor category, indicating their understanding was still minimal and required special attention.

These findings align with previous research by Putri et al. (2021), which stated that athletes tend to have a higher understanding of acute injuries due to their greater frequency in training and competitions. Meanwhile, educational aspects regarding chronic injuries are fully rarely disseminated. This finding is further supported by Anderson's (2018) opinion, which emphasizes that in-depth understanding can only be achieved through active, reflective, and continuous learning. This situation reflects the disparity in injury literacy levels among athletes, which is likely influenced by a lack of formal education and direct training within the UKM environment or with the relevant coaches.

This fact aligns with research conducted on schoolchildren and university students in several regions in Indonesia, where the majority of respondents had a poor understanding of the RICE method. Other research indicates that the majority of students were unable to identify the correct steps for injury management and preferred traditional methods such as direct massage or the use of balms. This suggests that although the RICE method is relatively simple, without systematic education and training, its understanding will not develop optimally.

Furthermore, these findings also demonstrate the importance of a practice-based learning approach, not just theory. Experimental research conducted in several schools and sports clubs has shown that training through role-playing or on-field injury simulations is highly effective in improving athletes' knowledge and skills. With this approach, athletes not only understand the concept but are also able to directly apply the treatment steps when an injury occurs. Education that combines theoretical and practical understanding has been shown to result in significant improvements in athletes' injury management knowledge and skills.

Although the RICE method has long been used as a first step in injury management, several recent studies suggest that its use should be limited. According to analyzes of various sports medicine studies, excessive ice cooling can inhibit the body's natural inflammatory process, which is essential for the initial stages of tissue healing. Therefore, the ideal approach is to incorporate the RICE method in the first 24-48 hours after injury, followed by light physiotherapy and rehabilitation exercises to support comprehensive recovery.

From this overall discussion, it can be concluded that athletes' understanding of injury management is greatly influenced by educational interventions and hands-on practice. It is crucial for institutions, coaches, and sports administrators to emphasize not only the technical aspects of training but also equip athletes with basic injury management skills. If this understanding can be improved across the board, not only will injury recovery be more optimal but the risk of further injury can also be minimized.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that the level of understanding of female soccer athletes at STKIP Pasundan regarding injury management in sports is still in the moderate category, with the majority of respondents having sufficient understanding and only a small portion showing a good understanding. This finding indicates that although some athletes have understood the basic steps in injury management, there is still a need for increased education, both in theory and practice. Knowledge about injury management, particularly through the RICE method and exercise therapy, is not yet fully widespread and in-depth among athletes. Therefore, a more comprehensive understanding is crucial to support athletes' readiness to prevent, deal with, and manage injuries appropriately to maintain optimal performance.

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