ATTITUDINAL CHANGES DUE OF LOCK DOWN ON FITNESS TRAINING AMONG WOMEN SPORTS PERSONS – A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO CHENNAI CITY

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ABSTRACT

Sport has long been considered a valuable tool for fostering communication and building bridges between communities and generations. Through sport, various social groups are able to play a more central role towards social transformation and development, particularly in divided societies. Within this context, sport is used as a tool for creating learning opportunities and accessing often marginal or at-risk populations. The purpose of the study was to analyze the attitudinal changes due to lock down on fitness training among women sports persons. To study the attitudinal changes of sportswomen, 20 sports women in Chennai wererandomly selected and administered with a questionnaire seeking data on how many hours they devote in a day, both morning and evening for fitness training, skill training, game practice and coaching. The findings proved that there were marked reduction in their attitudes of fitness training with mean value. The paired mean comparisons proved that the reduction from PTL to DLD was significant. There was significant difference between PTL levels and AEL levels. The results also proved that there was no significant improvement in the attitudes from DLD to AEL. It was concluded that due to lock down attitudes of sports women towards fitness training was significantly reduced and the relaxation provided also did not produced significant improvements in their attitudes.

Key Words: Covid 19, Lockdown, Attitudes, Fitness Training, Skill Training, Games practice and Coaching.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sport has long been considered a valuable tool for fostering communication and building bridges between communities and generations. Through sport, various social groups are able to play a more central role towards social transformation and development, particularly in divided societies. Within this context, sport is used as a tool for creating learning opportunities and accessing often marginal or at-risk populations. Because of this the United Nations has declared that “Sport is a major contributor to economic and social development. Its role is well recognized by Governments, including in the Political Declaration of the 2030 Agenda, which reflects on “the contribution sports make to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities, as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives” (UN, 2020)

On 15 March, Chief Minister, Tamilnadu, Thiru Edappadi K Palaniswami ordered closure of primary schools throughout the state while shutting theatres, commercial complexes and malls. (News Today, 2020) He had also ordered to close state borders with Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh on March 20 until March 31 and constituted a task force to closely monitor the preventive measures against the viral outbreak. (Government Hospial, 2020)

On 22 March, the state government extended 'Janata curfew' to Monday morning 5 am. The next day, it announced that prohibitory orders under Section 144 will start from 24thMarch to March 31 which prohibited gatherings of more than 5 people. (The Hindu, 2020) On the same day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a nationwide lockdown (The New Indian Express, 2020). On 11th April, the state's chief secretary K Shanmugam said that it favoured a two-week extension of the lockdown, but would wait for PM's announcement.
Several efforts were put in to keep everyone socially distanced to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus in India. Now many states including Tamilnadu are easing restrictions on sports persons and residents. Restrictions on travel, physical activity, and mass gatherings because of COVID19 pandemic have had major implications for athletes and players, with restrictions of access to training venues, cancellation of events, and loss of earnings. Many individuals are therefore, not able to actively participate in their regular individual or group sporting or physical activities outside of their homes. Under such conditions, many tend to be less physically active, have longer screen time, irregular sleep patterns as well as worse diets, resulting in weight gain and loss of physical fitness. Lack of access to exercise and physical activity can also have mental health impacts, which can compound stress or anxiety that many will experience in the face of isolation from normal social life. Possible loss of family or friends from the virus and impact of the virus on one’s economic wellbeing and access to nutrition will exacerbate these effects(UN, 2020).

Women are especially vulnerable to negative effects of stay at home rules as they tend to have sub-standard accommodations and more confined spaces, making it difficult to engage in physical exercise. These implications can have commensurate psychological consequences. With easing of restrictions athletes are eager to return to their normal workouts and fitness training to assess what have they lost and how much training they have to do depending on several variables, and they will look towards sports professionals to help guide them. What they have lost will depend on how inactive they were during the lockdown. This study intends to find out to which extent these times of anxiety, stress, crisis and fear have influenced the attitudes of women sports person in their fitness training.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bram Constandt et al. (2020) examined the exercise levels and patterns of Belgium adults during lockdown. The results revealed that except aged people, majority of the respondents’ excessive practices have increased but a reduction in exercise pattern felt among adults above 55 years. More of sitting time, absence of familiar way of exercise and lack of competitive element were found to be the main reasons for such change.

Tereza Stverakova et al. (2021) examined the impact of lockdown in physical activity of Czech children. Thirty five children’s daily number of footsteps were measured through accelerometers and 95 children were distributed questionnaire on physical activity. The results revealed a significant reduction in physical activity. The lockdown, quarantine and social distancing substantially affected the physical and psychological issues of people. Low mood, stress, insomnia, depression and post-traumatic stress were found to be the common symptoms. (Brooks SK et al. 2020). Women experienced less physical activity compared to men during lockdown. (Carl P. Nienhuis and Iris A. Lesser, 2020). Lower mental health scores and lower psychological well-being were found to exist among those women with lesser physical activity.

Harleen Kaur et al. (2020) explored the alternate exercise and fitness practices adopted by fitness freaks during lockdown, to manage the psychological and physical issues, by understanding their experiences. The respondents had a negative perception towards lockdown and lack of motivation for fitness and preferred to spend the free time in social media. But with due course of time, they adopted alternate fitness practices at home. Home confinement due to COVID-19 led to adoption of unhealthy food habits. Daily sitting time at homes increased by 28% and a significant reduction is observed in the physical activities including fitness practices. Closure of gyms and grounds intensely affected the fitness activities of people. (Ammar et al. (2020a); de Oliveira Neto et al., 2020).

Michael Mutz and Markus Gerke (2020) analyzed the Leisure Time Sports and Exercise (LTSE) of Germans during the lockdown period due to pandemic. The researchers found through analysis a significant decline in LTSE, particularly among older people. The ‘Intensifiers’ group adopted home based workouts for fitness maintenance.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE SIZE
A sample of 20 sportswomen were selected for the present study.

SAMPLING METHOD
Convenient Random sampling method was adopted to choose the sample respondents for the study.
TYPE OF DATA

Both Primary and Secondary data were used for the study. Primary data is elicited through a questionnaire and secondary data were collected from Published articles, Journals and Newspapers.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION AND SCORING

Sports women participate in fitness training both in the morning. The usual timing ranged from 1 to 2 hours in morning and 1 to 2 hours in the evening. The schedule of training for sportswomen were utilized for their fitness, skill practices, sport of their specialization and coaching. The state has been under a lockdown since 25th March which was relaxed to an extent from 31st May onwards. The lockdown was eased with more relaxations with effect from 1st June, 2020. In order to find out the attitudinal changes during lock down period on fitness training of sports women, the investigator collected responses through a properly drawn questionnaire to determine their attitudes on fitness training including skill training, games practice and coaching sessions prior to lock down (PTL) the attitudes until 20th March, 2010. The attitudinal changes in fitness training between 21st March to 31st May, 2020, was considered as during lock down (DLD) and the attitudina l changes in their fitness training after easing lockdown 1st June 5o 18th June, 2020 (AEL).

In order to ascertain the attitudinal changes of sportswomen, 20 sports women in Chennai were randomly selected and administered with a questionnaire seeking data on how many hours they devote in a day, both morning and evening for fitness training, skill training, game practice and coaching. The filled in questionnaire were converted into standard scores using the scoring method that ‘less than 1 hour’ was given the least score of 1 point, ‘between 1 to 1.5 hours’ was given a score of 2 point and ‘more than 1.5 hours’ was scored as 3 points. Thus, the fitness training attitude of the sportswomen were scored for a maximum of 12 points for PTL, DLD and AEL periods which represents the attitudinal changes of sports women due to lockdown. Table I shows the scoring pattern of the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Time (hrs) allotted in a day</th>
<th>Fitness Training</th>
<th>Skill Training</th>
<th>Games Practising</th>
<th>Coaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to Lockdown (before 20th March)</td>
<td>Less than 1 hr</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1 hr</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1.5 hrs</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During Lockdown (March to May, 2020)</td>
<td>Less than 1 hr</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1 hr</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1.5 hrs</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After easing Lockdown from 1st June, 2020</td>
<td>Less than 1 hr</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>1 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1 hr</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1.5 hrs</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. RESULTS

The descriptive statistics on collected data is presented in Table II.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

www.turkjphysiotherrehabil.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to Lockdown (before 20th March)</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During Lockdown (March to May, 2020)</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After easing Lockdown from 1st June, 2020</td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. INference:

From the above table, it can clearly be inferred that the average workout time is reduced during lockdown compared to work out before lockdown and it can well be noted that the hours spent on fitness and work-out have increased with the ease of lockdown restrictions.

The mean values obtained are presented through bar diagram in Figure 1.

![Fig 1: Mean Values on Attitudinal changes of Sportswomen](image)

In order to determine the statistical significance of the attitudinal changes among sportswomen, the data were subjected to ANOVA and the results presented in Table III.

Table III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between</td>
<td>115.43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>57.72</td>
<td>20.12*</td>
<td>0.008*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>163.50</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.05 level

Since significant differences were obtained the results further subjected to paired mean comparisons based on Scheffe’s post hoc analysis and results presented in Table IV.

Table IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheffe’s Post Hoc Analysis of Differences of Attitudinal Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The outbreak of COVID-19 has resulted in closure of gyms, stadiums, pools, dance and fitness studios, physiotherapy centers, parks and playgrounds. Many individuals are therefore not able to actively participate in their regular individual or group sporting or physical activities outside of their homes. Under such conditions, many tend to be less physically active, have longer screen time, irregular sleep patterns as well as worse diets, resulting in weight gain and loss of physical fitness. (UN, 2020) This study intends to find out to which extent these times of anxiety, stress, crisis and fear have influenced the attitudes of women sports person in their fitness training. The findings of this study proved that there were marked reduction in their attitudes of fitness training with mean value of 8.75 prior to lock down (PTL) to 5.45 during lock down period (DLD). After the ease of lock down (AEL) with relaxations in movements the attitude of the sports women have slightly improved with mean value of 6.40. The differences in the means were tested for statistical significance and the ANOVA results proved that there were significant attitudinal changes in fitness training of sportswomen as the obtained F value of 20.12 was significant. The paired mean comparisons using Scheffe’s confidence interval test proved that the reduction from PTL to DLD was significant. It was also found that that AEL level attitudes were not improved to off set the reduction, that is, there was significant difference between PTL levels and AEL levels. The results also proved that t here was no significant improvement in the attitudes from DLD to AEL.

The findings of this study were in agreement with the report of UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs social inclusion (2020) which reported that Under such conditions, many tend to be less physically active, have longer screen time, irregular sleep patterns as well as worse diets, resulting in weight gain and loss of physical fitness and Alicia Filley (2020) who reported athletes will find themselves plucked up out of their periodization schedule and plopped right into recovery or pretraining mode. The unexpected outbreak of COVID 19 and the resultant lock down significantly reduced the attitudes of sports women towards fitness training and the relaxation provided also did not produced significant improvements in their attitudes. To be in alignment with fitness practices, the sportswomen can make use of household items like chairs and stairs and at the same time should maintain a stable emotional and mental well-being. They can seek the help of fitness trainers and coaches to receive advice and suggestions for maintaining their physical fitness.

**REFERENCES**

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