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The benefits of planning recreational activities in the psychological development of high-level sports adolescents

Submission date
26/03/2024

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
26/03/2024

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
26/03/2024

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[ ] Results
[ ] Individual participant data
[ ] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
A large number of teenagers participate in sports with the goal of becoming top-tier athletes by focusing on one sport early on. However, this early specialization in sports can bring about both physical and mental challenges for young athletes. They face immense pressure to perform at very high levels, and if they fall short of expectations, it can affect their self-confidence. Moreover, dedicating all their time and energy to sports leaves little room for other aspects of their personal growth. This intense focus on sports can lead to an identity solely centered around being an athlete, which can make them more vulnerable if their sports career ends unexpectedly. The rigorous training schedules they follow also give them little time to rest, which can increase the risk of mental health issues.

Our study aims to see how effective a program is for elite teenage athletes. We introduced a program called Organized Leisure-Time Activities (OLT3A) and compared it to a group of athletes who didn't participate in the program yet. We looked at their self-confidence and their feelings of happiness or sadness – all crucial factors in the mental well-being of teenagers. Additionally, we wanted to make sure that the athletes didn't see our program as something that disrupted their breaks or leisure time.

Who can participate?
Elite teenage athletes aged 13 -15 years

What does the study involve?
In this study, we're using a method called randomized controlled design, which means we've split the participants into two groups randomly. One group will receive the OLT3A program, while the other group will be put on a waiting list and won't receive the program immediately. The group sessions will happen once a week for seven weeks, and they'll last about 30 minutes each. These sessions will be led by a sports psychologist who's also a researcher. We're mainly interested in seeing how the participants' self-esteem and emotions change throughout the program, so we'll be checking in with them at the end of each week using a method called ambulatory assessment, which involves both qualitative and quantitative methods. We're also

looking at whether the program disrupts their breaks or leisure time. We'll be doing these assessments every week.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Main benefits: feeling more pleasant emotional states and less unpleasant emotional states; preservation of self-esteem in stressfull environments. Main risks: alteration of break time leading to an increase in environmental stressors and reduction of recovery window, this risk is controlled by using the RESTQ-36-R-Sport subscale "disturbed breaks"

Where is the study run from?
Alliance Universitaire Bretagne (France)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
Seteber 2019 to March 2024

Who is funding the study?
Investigator initiated and funded

Who is the main contact?
Dr Phillippe Vacher, philippe.vacher@univ-brest.fr

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
2312152

Study information

Scientific Title

Organized leisure time activities for adolescent athletes: impact on physical self-esteem and emotional states

Acronym
OLT3A

Study objectives
The primary objective of this study is to assess the effects of an Organized Leisure Time Activities protocol in promoting adolescent athletes key mental health variables (i.e., self-esteem and emotional states).
We hypothesize that both active interventions are more effective than a waiting-list control condition in promoting self-esteem and functional emotional states.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 15/12/2023, Alliance Universitaire Bretagne Comité d'Ethique pour la Recherche (3 rue des Archives, 29238 BREST, Brest, 29238, France; +33 297017066; dg@aub.bzh), ref: 2312152

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Interventional randomized controlled trial

Study type(s)
Prevention, Quality of life

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Prevention of self-esteem and emotional states development in elite adolescent athletes.

Interventions
The presented trial uses a randomized controlled design with two groups, comparing OLT3A and a waiting list control condition. Group intervention will last seven weeks, one session per week (~30 minutes each), and will be administered by a sports psychologist researcher.

The first step will consist of an individual interview with each athlete to (1) diagnose their schedule and identify break periods; (2) find individual preferential leisure activities (e.g., playing music, cooking, reading, social activities like a family meal or social event with friends, reading). The principal criterion will be that athletes should consider activities as a priori resourcing and pleasant. According to the OLTA literature, video games and watching television will be the only activities excluded from the possible choices. Complementary physical activities will be allowed if they are done in leisure and not competitively.

The second step of the study will consist of 6-weeks of individualized guidance. During this period, athletes will complete questionnaires each Saturday morning (before the last training of the week) to monitor their emotional states and physical self-inventory and evaluate the impact of the OLT3A protocol on their break time perception. In addition, once per week (on Monday), a half-hour interview will be organized with the first author to plan the week (which activities, at

what time, with whom, and how much time for each activity). Complementary, qualitative semi-directive interviews (30 minutes in addition to the previous conversation) will be conducted once a week with volunteered athletes from the global sample. These semi-directive interviews will aim to obtain qualitative evaluations of the protocol's benefits and risks for the seven volunteers.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
Self-esteem (PSI6b) and emotional states (SEQ) were measured each week using psychometric questionnaires

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Disturbed breaks (specific subscale of the RESTQ36-R-Sport) were assessed each week using a psychometric tool
2. Qualitative interviews were done on a subpanel of the treatment group each week in order to explore their subjective feeling and behavioral transformation throughout the protocol.

Completion date
31/03/2024

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Elite adolescent athletes
2. Members of a high-level training organization
3. Engaged in an early sport specialization process

Participant type(s)
Healthy volunteer, Other

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Child

Lower age limit
13 Years

Upper age limit
15 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
25

Key exclusion criteria
1. Likely mental disorder
2. Less than 18 hours of athletic training per week
3. Less than 6 years of competitive training experience
4. Less than 2 years at a national performance level
4. Being younger than 13 years
6. Being older than 15 years

Date of first enrolment
01/09/2019

Date of final enrolment
01/12/2019

Locations

Countries of recruitment
France

Study participating centre
Alliance Dijon Natation
Piscine de la Fontaine d'Ouche
All. de Ribeauvillé
Dijon
France
21000

Sponsor information

Organisation
Alliance Universitaire Bretagne - CERNI

Funder(s)

Funder type
Other

Funder Name
Investigator initiated and funded

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be available upon request from Philippe Vacher (philippe.vacher@univ-brest.fr)

IPD sharing plan summary
Available on request