

Research Paper

To Study the Impact of Motivational Videos on Injured Athletes: Exploring the Dynamics of Performance, Mental Toughness & Coping Strategies

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of social media on injured athletes, focusing on performance enhancement, mental toughness and coping strategies. Social media provided motivation and support to the athletes during their injury recovery process. This was an experimental study which involved 20 injured athletes aged 18-25 and mean age was 21.9 undergoing rehabilitation, who were exposed to motivational videos and verbal speeches from life coaches over 4 phases that were conducted in 4 weeks. The pre & post intervention assessments were conducted using Sports Performance Perception Scale (SPPS), Mental Toughness Test (MTT), and BRIEF-Cope questionnaire to measure the changes in their perception of performance, psychological resilience and coping mechanisms. The significant difference was found between pre-post scores on performance perception, mental toughness and coping strategies. Mean, SD, t-ratio were calculated for the statistical analysis. The results revealed that motivational videos during sports rehabilitation recovery period effect positively on all the sub variables of perception of performance, mental toughness and coping strategies.

Keywords: *Injured athletes, perception of performance, mental toughness, coping strategies, motivation, rehabilitation, sports psychology*

In the world of sports, athletes look for methods to enhance their well-being, resilience, performance, mental toughness and their physical ability. Just like physical training, mental training is also important in an athlete's life. Through their speeches, these speakers provide encouragement, resilience and inspiration which contributes in shaping the athlete's mind-set, improved mental toughness, and positive coping strategies which results in better perception of performance. Motivation can be defined as the mental process that initiates, sustains and guides an athlete's behavior. It is of two types, Intrinsic Motivation means what comes from within (personal interest or giving satisfaction) and Extrinsic Motivation means what comes from outside rewards or pressure in the game. Perception of performance is known as how an athlete evaluates his own success or failure of sports,

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influenced by their self-efficacy and confidence, Eklund & Tenenbaum, 2012. James E. Loehr defined mental toughness as an athlete's ability to consistently perform at their highest capability even under pressure by maintaining focus, confidence, and emotional control. Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, defined coping strategies as athlete's cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage the stress during the injury and aiming to regulate emotions and maintain performance.

Gould et al. (1999), investigated the variables affecting Olympic success among athletes and coaches from 8 US teams who were competing in Atlanta Olympics. Four teams performed below expectations, and four teams met or above them. Researchers used hierarchical content analysis to examine the data from focus groups with athletes and one-on-one interviews with coaches. Effective teams used mental preparation, got social and community support, trained residents, and showed a great deal of dedication and attention. Problems for underperforming teams included inadequate preparation, a lack of unity, inexperience, trouble traveling, and coaching difficulties. The study emphasized the intricacy of reaching optimal Olympic performance, which is impacted by organizational, social, physical, and psychological elements.

Vargas-Tonsing (2004) examined the effects of pre game speeches on the athletes' emotions and sense of self-efficacy, data was taken from Michigan State University. Ten male coaches (M = 32.78 years) and 151 competitive soccer players (M = 14.21 years) participated in the study. Surveys measuring self-efficacy, emotions, and perceived speech content were filled out by athletes prior to, during, and after the pre-game address. A poll about the topic of their speeches was filled out by coaches. Although self-efficacy varied according on the amount of information athletes perceived, repeated measures regression revealed no overall gain in self-efficacy following the speech. There was no effect of emotional content on self-efficacy. Two emotion components were found using exploratory factor analysis; Factor 1 displayed time-based variation predicted by perceived information. Other analyses looked at coach-athlete congruency, perceptions of speech effectiveness, and the connections between speech content, emotions, and self-efficacy.

Martin S. Hagger and Derwin King-Chung Chan (2012), had viewed transcontextual growth of elite athletes' motivation for preventing sports injuries. The transcontextual process of motivation in sports injury prevention was examined. They revealed the transcontextual mechanism of motivation helped the players to prevent sports injuries though proximal motivation, beliefs, and behaviors.

Diane L. Gill, Katherine Wurst, and Leilani Madrigal (2016) investigated the mental toughness, injury reaction, and coping strategies of female athletes participating in collegiate rugby (n = 122) and roller derby (n = 68). Although their mental toughness was the same, injured roller derby players responded to their injuries more negatively than injured rugby players. Mental toughness had a negative correlation with negative psychological reactions to injuries and a positive correlation with coping strategies.

Ardern et al. (2022), They reviewed Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) on psychological assistance in Anterior Cruciate Ligament injury (ACL) rehabilitation and meta-synthesized qualitative research on athletes' experiences through internet delivered programme. They provided seven modules of the 24-week self-guided intervention, which supported physical recovery to the athletes and return to sport.

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METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study was to investigate how social media affects athlete's performance, mental toughness and coping strategies.

Aim:

The aim was to explore the relationship between all the measured variables, i.e. Performance, mental toughness and coping strategies.

Objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between all the variables i.e. performance, mental toughness and coping strategies.
2. To assess the impact of motivational speakers on athletes' mental toughness and resilience.
3. To explore the coping strategies employed by athletes in response to the influence of social media and motivation speeches.
4. To identify potential interventions or support systems for athletes to mitigate the negative effects of social media on their performance.

Hypothesis

- **Alternative Hypothesis-** There was a significant relationship between pre and post intervention.
- **Null Hypothesis-** There was no significant relationship between pre and post intervention.

Sample

This study was an experimental design in which 40 subjects were assessed and provided intervention but only 20 completed all the sessions of the intervention. Participants were injured athletes from different sports, with a minimum age of 18-25 years, coming to MYAS-GNDU Department of Sports Sciences and Medicines, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab, for their rehabilitation. The inclusion and exclusion criteria was as followed:

Inclusion criteria

- Participating players were between the ages of 18-25.
- Participants were injured athletes.
- Athletes had minor injuries (sprains and strains etc.)
- Participants had minimum one year experience in the sport.

Exclusion criteria

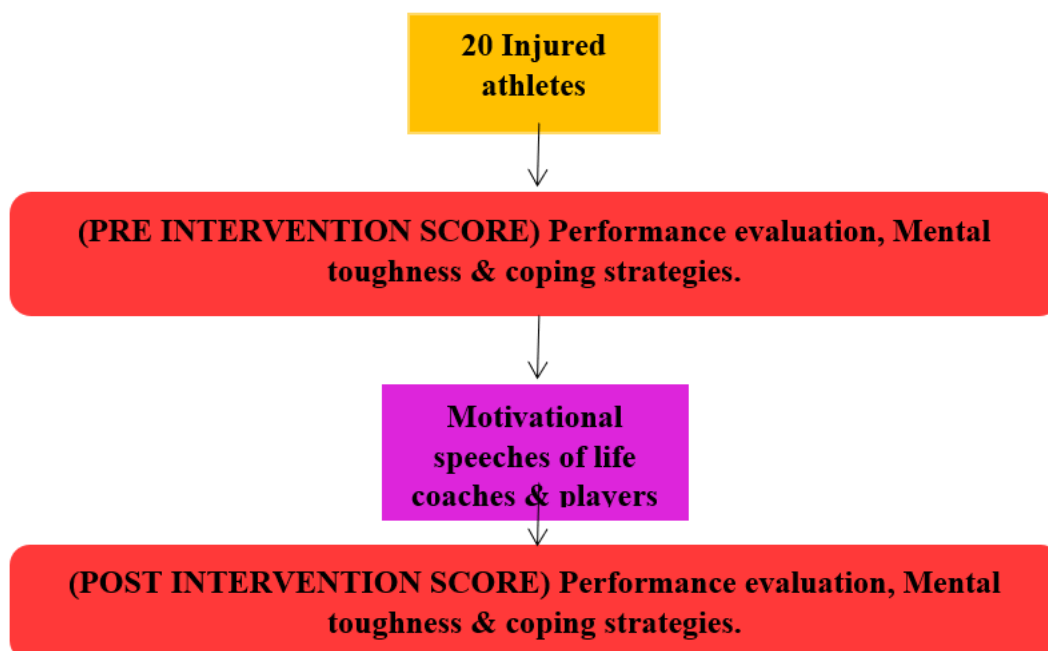
- Athletes who were not coming to the rehabilitation center less than 2 weeks.
- Athletes recovering from major surgery.
- Participants who didn't commit to the rehabilitation process or miss multiple sessions.
- Athletes who didn't actively participate in competitive sports.

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Measurement Tools:

- **Sports Performance Perception Scale** (Adam et. al 2023)- The 32-item SPPS is comprised of five subscales: athlete development (6 items, e.g., “I complete training that is event or position specific”), mastery and improvement (7 items, e.g. “when I am training I am focused on improving my sport specific skills”), strategy and preparedness (7 items, e.g., “I am confident making strategic decisions during competition”), recovery and injury prevention (8 items, e.g., “I take rest after a big competition to improve my recovery”), and psychological skills (4 items, e.g., “I feel like I can manage my emotions in my training”). Responses range from 1 (almost never) to 7 (almost always), with higher mean scores for each subscale and overall global scores representing higher sport performance perceptions.
- **Mental Toughness Test** (Alan Heary, 2015)- This test has questions related to four independent but correlated factors (Concentration, Commitment, Control and Confidence). It is used to measure the mental toughness of the athlete. The scores fall into any one of the categories: 0-4 means thriving, 5-14 means surviving and 15-24 indicates that the person is struggling in the mental toughness areas.
- **Brief-COPE Questionnaire** (Carver, C.S. 1997)- The Brief-COPE is a 28 item self-report questionnaire designed to measure effective and ineffective ways to cope with a stressful life event. “Coping” is defined broadly as an effort used to minimize distress associated with negative life experiences. The scale can determine someone’s primary coping styles with scores on the following three subscales: Problem-Focused Coping; Emotion-Focused Coping, Avoidant Coping.

Procedure:



A set of injured players were taken.

Each intervention was for 40 min and was conducted thrice a week across 4 weeks for 4 participants.

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Table 1 represents the phases of the entire procedure

Phase 1	Obtained informed consent. Taking their consents, I got the survey forms filled for the intervention from the participants. And told them about life coaches and motivational speakers & and encouraged them to listen to all the videos.
Phase 2	Made them listen to the selected videos for 3 times a week and this continued for 4 weeks.
Phase 3	The injured athletes were again asked to fill the survey forms for the post intervention scores.
Phase 4	The scores were being calculated and the participants were being told about the confidentiality of their identity and scores.

- In the post group, the athletes were shown videos of motivational speakers, life coaches etc. which motivated them to enhance their performance in the field.
- These videos were shown to them for 3-4 times a week.
- They were given questionnaires related to performance evaluation, mind toughness and coping strategies. After filling them the scores were recorded for further use.
- The athletes were told beforehand about the confidentiality of the scores and the sessions being held.
- At first pre scores were calculated and then after showing the videos to the injured athletes, post scores were calculated.

RESULTS

Table 2 represents paired sample scores for Sports Performance Perceptions Scale (N=20)

		Paired Differences					t-score	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre Test AD SPPS - Post Test AD SPPS	-.4400	.5933	.1327	-.7177	-.1623	-3.317	19	.004
Pair 2	Pre Test MD SPPS - Post Test MD SPPS	-.3000	.4634	.1036	-.5169	-.0831	-2.895	19	.009
Pair 3	Pre Test SP SPPS - Post Test SP SPPS	-.4700	.7012	.1568	-.7982	-.1418	-2.998	19	.007
Pair 4	Pre Test RP SPPS - Post Test RP SPPS	-1.2650	.6467	.1446	-1.5677	-.9623	-8.748	19	.000
Pair 5	Pre Test PS SPPS - Post Test PS SPPS	-.8500	.8941	.1999	-1.2685	-.4315	-4.251	19	.000

The scores showed that all the subscales of SPPS have positive impact after the intervention. In AD (Athlete Development) mean -.440, MD (Mastery and Development) mean -.300 and SP (Strategy & Preparedness) mean -.470, RP (Recovery and Injury Prevention) mean -

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1.265 and PS (Psychological Skills) mean -.850 the significant difference was noticed as shown 0.004, 0.009, 0.007, 0.000 and 0.000 respectively. The intervention helped athletes be more confident, motivated and enhanced their performance.

Table 3 represents paired sample scores for Mental Toughness Test (N=20)

		Paired Differences					t-score	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre Test Commit MTT - Post Test Commit MTT	.750	.851	.190	.352	1.148	3.943	19	.001
Pair 2	Pre Test Concrnt MTT - Post Test Concrnt MTT	.300	.571	.128	.033	.567	2.349	19	.030
Pair 3	Pre Test Control MTT - Post Test Control MTT	1.200	.894	.200	.781	1.619	6.000	19	.000
Pair 4	Pre Test Confident MTT - Post Test Confident MTT	.700	.923	.206	.268	1.132	3.390	19	.003

The scores showed that all the subscales of Mental Toughness Test that is Commitment, Concentration, Control and Confident have positive effect of motivational videos on the injured athletes. The mean score of commitment is 0.750, concentration is 0.300, control is 1.200 and confident is 0.700. All show significant decrease ($p < 0.05$) which indicated increase in the mental toughness.

Table 4 represents paired sample score for BRIEF-Cope test (N=20)

		Paired Differences					t-score	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre Test ProbF BC - Post Test ProbF BC	-.3900	.4800	.1073	-.6147	-.1653	-3.633	19	.002
Pair 2	Pre Test EmoF BC - Post Test EmoF BC	-.2850	.2870	.0642	-.4193	-.1507	-4.440	19	.000
Pair 3	Pre Test Avoidant BC - Post Test Avoidant BC	.0250	.2221	.0497	-.0790	.1290	.503	19	.621

The scores showed a positive impact on Problem-Focused (mean -.390) and Emotion-Focused (-.258) areas, as they both have $p < 0.05$, that's 0.002 and 0.000 respectively. However, there was no significant change in Avoidant Coping (mean 0.250) and $p > 0.0621$.

DISCUSSION

The alternative hypothesis was accepted as the results provide strong support for the hypothesis. The results showed that there has been improvement in all the aspects of the SPPS (Sports Performance Perception Scale); MTT (Mental Toughness Test) & BRIEF-Cope showing the motivational videos to the injured athletes. The results revealed that motivational videos were having positive effect on the perception of sports performance. In Athlete Development (AD) the athletes who were shown the motivational videos tend to have growth and progress in their sport. In Mastery and Development (MD) the athletes tend to focus on skill mastery and continuous improvement. In Strategy and Preparedness (SP) the athletes tend to make strategic plans and readiness for competition. In Recovery and Injury Prevention (RP) the athletes tend to do practices related to recovery and preventing injuries, as **Johnson & Andersen (2020)**, found that notable increase in RP, suggest that the athletes were taking care of their injuries and having an adequate amount of rest when required, leading to overall improvement in performance, psychological training, and motivation. In Psychological Skills (PS) the athletes tend to build mental skills, such as emotional regulation and focus. Thus it clearly indicated that the motivational videos have shown direct positive impact on AD, MD, SP, RP and PS.

In MTT, a significant decrease in the score indicated a shift from surviving state to thriving in post-intervention. In support of my results, the previous researches have strong evidence reflecting the psychological growth in the injured athletes. In commitment, athletes tend to make smarter goals, pushing themselves to their fullest abilities and working hard on achieving their goals, as **Gould, D. et al. (1996)**, found that goal-setting, perseverance, and intrinsic motivation are vital for athletic success. In concentration, athletes tend to remain focus on the given task and not being distracted, as **Wilson et al. (2006)**: found that injured athletes with better focus during rehab performed better and had quicker returns to sport. In control, athletes tend to cope effectively and stay calm under pressure, as **Raglin (2001)**: found that athletes who manage stress and anxiety well perform better post-injury. And in confidence, athletes tend to have unshakable belief to achieve their goals and overcoming obstacles, as **Vealey (2001)**: found that confidence predicts both performance and the likelihood of psychological recovery from injury. A significant decrease in the score indicated a shift from a surviving state to thriving post-intervention which revealed that the injured athletes showed resilience, self-confidence, and emotional control, improving their overall mental toughness (Gucciardi, et al. 2017).

In the BRIEF-Cope, the athletes developed strong coping mechanisms in both emotion and problem-focused situations. The avoidant coping being the maladaptive strategy was also reduced. In support of my results, it revealed that previous empirical findings have a positive impact on the athletes promoting adaptive coping during injury rehabilitation. In problem-focused coping, athletes tend to have a practical approach to problem solving as, **Carver et al. (1989)**: found coping leads to better long-term adjustment to stressors. In emotion-focused coping, athletes tend to regulate emotions associated with the stressful situation as, **Udry et al. (1997)**: found that injured athletes who received emotional and practical support had better psychological outcomes. In avoidant coping, athletes tend to have adaptive coping as, **Gustafsson et al. (2011)**: found that avoidant coping was related to burnout and longer injury recovery times. Athletes developed strong coping mechanisms in both emotion- and problem-focused situations. The athletes became more adaptive in handling stress and competition-related challenges and increased their ability in emotion regulation and problem-solving (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This also improved their ability to manage

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frustration, anger, and anxiety during the recovery period. However, avoidant coping showed no significant change, meaning the athletes did not resort to avoidance as a strategy (Nicholls et al., 2009).

CONCLUSION

The result demonstrated the impact of motivational videos on injured athlete's perception of performance, mental toughness and coping skills. Analysis indicated a strong and positive impact of motivational videos on all the measured variables. The results suggested that current interventions could help the athletes with their transition from survival mental state to a thriving mental state, which means they are not just thriving but also show skills to accept challenges. Coaches, sports psychologists and other rehabilitation specialists should engage in providing motivational videos as a tool to reinforce mental resilience and recovery among injured athletes.

This also showed how powerful psychological interventions were in helping injured athletes develop a growth mind-set, turning obstacles into opportunities. By reducing frustration and anxiety, these motivational videos kept injured athletes focused and motivated, reminding them of their goals and their progress. It also helped in rebuilding their confidence and believe in their ability to return stronger for competitive games.

Limitations

1. It was a short-term assessment test, for future research it should be conducted with long term follow-ups to determine whether there will be improvement in mental toughness, coping strategies and performance over time.
2. The sample originated from athletes within the university, potentially restricting the generalization of findings to other populations or contexts. Athletes at this university may differ in demographics, training routines, and competitive levels compared to athletes at other institutions.
3. This study was only dedicated to injured athletes exploring how motivational content helps in their recovery process.
4. There was limited sample size.

Future Research Directions:

1. Longitudinal studies will be more advantageous for examining the changes in an injured athlete's performance, mental toughness and coping strategies with the help of motivational videos.
2. Studies should follow a long-term follow-up for the athletes to determine if the impact of the content has diminished or retained over time.
3. Targeting other effective techniques like self-talk training, imagery, visualization and even mindfulness interventions may help alleviate the recovery process and a strong comeback in the competitive games.

Practical Implications

1. Sports rehabilitation centres and physiotherapy clinics can incorporate motivational speeches, success stories, and psychological training as part of their recovery programs.
2. Coaches and sports psychologists can curate video playlists featuring inspirational athletes and life coaches to enhance motivation during injury recovery.

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3. Sports organizations should educate athletes on the responsible use of social media, emphasizing the benefits of consuming positive and educational content.
4. Athletes can be encouraged to follow sports psychologists, rehabilitation experts, and successful athletes who share their recovery journeys rather than engaging in harmful social comparisons. Coaches and psychologists should help athletes set social media boundaries to prevent excessive exposure to criticism, unrealistic comparisons, and performance anxiety.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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