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A08: Effects of Participation in Sports Clubs Activity on College Students' Perceived Stress and Well-Being

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A08: Effects of Participation in Sports Clubs Activity on College Students' Perceived Stress and Well-Being

Abstract

Purpose: Mandated social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19 pandemic has brought more anxiety and stress to college students. The primary purpose of this study was to examine whether college students' participation in sports club activities can reduce anxiety and stress. The secondary purpose was to compare the effects of different types of sport clubs. **Methods:** The sample consisted of 242 college students (143 males; mean age=22.63 years old) in an academically prestigious university. They were voluntarily enrolled in either team sports clubs, such as volleyball, football, baseball, and softball, etc. (n=96), or individual sports clubs, such as squash, cycling, mountaineering, etc. (n=146). They responded to validated scales to assess perceived stress (Sheldon Cohen, 1983) and well-being (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2009). Self-compiled questionnaires on motivation to join sports clubs and basic information on club organization activities were collected. All surveys were conducted in October 2021. **Results:** A considerable proportion of students (34.7%) participated in sports clubs to reduce academic pressure. Most of them (72.26%) have already recognized the physical and mental health benefits of physical activity. Significant decreases were observed for perceived stress in both groups: team sports group ($\Delta M = -0.76$, $p < 0.01$), and individual sports group ($\Delta M = -0.77$, $p < 0.01$). A significant increase in well-being was observed in two types of courses led by the team sports group ($\Delta M = 1.55$, $p < 0.01$) followed by the individual sports group ($\Delta M = 1.34$, $p < 0.01$). Individual sports clubs have a more pronounced effect on reducing negative emotions than team sports clubs ($\Delta M = -2.01$, $p < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** Participation in both team sports clubs and individual sports clubs reduced perceived stress and increased well-being. Individual sports clubs had more decreases in negative emotions compared to team sports clubs.

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