

The contributions of recreational sports activities to alleviating psychological stress among middle school teachers

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to determine the contributions of recreational sports activities to reducing psychological stress among middle school teachers in the schools of ouedelabtal district, in the Mascara province, based on a sample of 31 randomly selected teachers. The tool used was the psychological stress scale using a descriptive approach, and statically analysis was conducted using Student's t-test, Pearson correlation coefficient, and percentage. The main conclusion was that recreational sports activities effectively contribute to reducing psychological stress among middle school teachers. On this basis, the study recommended paying attention to practicing recreational sports activities because of their great importance to the teacher from a psychological and health perspective for the body.

I. Introduction

Education is among the most demanding professions and, at the same time, the cornerstone for building a refined society in all its cultural, social, and economic dimensions. Therefore, every nation aspires to develop its educational curricula to advance and keep pace with the world scientifically and technologically, while also prioritizing its teachers. It is recognized that every instance of progress and technological advancement in this era has been spearheaded by a teacher.

However, teachers today face various pressures, including those stemming from their interactions with adolescents, a group requiring significant effort to achieve educational goals and to raise a generation that contributes to societal development. These pressures undoubtedly have a negative impact on the teacher's ability to perform their duties effectively and to deliver educational material as outlined by the curriculum for each level of middle school education.

This highlights the urgent need for intervention to manage and alleviate the psychological stress experienced by middle school teachers, reducing its intensity through a diverse range of recreational sports activities. Such activities positively affect the teachers (Mohamed, 2018, p. 20) by improving the functional capacity of various body systems, while also contributing positively to the psychological and social well-being of participants, helping them adapt to various situations they face (Hussein, 2021).

Several studies have addressed this phenomenon. For instance :

- Mohamed (2018) explored the contributions of recreational sports activities to certain psychological variables and their relationship to professional compatibility among middle school teachers. He found an inverse relationship between psychological stress levels in practitioners and non-practitioners of recreational sports activities.

- Hassan (2008) studied the relationship between psychological stress and some functional variables among practitioners and non-practitioners of sports activities. His study concluded that female students who regularly

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practiced sports exhibited lower levels of psychological stress compared to non-practicing students.

- Amer (2014) investigated the importance of recreational sports activities in achieving psychological well-being for individuals with physical disabilities, emphasizing its role in alleviating psychological stress.

Meanwhile, middle school teachers across the nation experience significant psychological and physical fatigue due to frustrating events or challenging situations. These issues are often accompanied by undesirable emotional reactions, including feelings of inadequacy when facing excessive burdens such as overcrowded classrooms, low income, and strained relationships with colleagues and administrators. These challenges have led to health problems, absenteeism, or even teachers leaving the profession altogether.

Recognizing the importance of recreational sports activities in maintaining individuals' psychological balance and well-being, this study seeks to explore the role of such activities in alleviating psychological stress. The main research question is as follows:

- Do recreational sports activities contribute to alleviating psychological stress among middle school teachers?

From this primary question, four sub-questions are derived:

1. Are there statistically significant differences in internal stress between teachers who engage in recreational sports activities and those who do not?
2. Are there statistically significant differences in job-related stress and resources between these two groups?
3. Are there statistically significant differences in social stress (relationships) between these two groups?
4. Are there statistically significant differences in stress related to salary and working hours between these two groups?

II. Method and Materials

This section describes in detail how the study was conducted, including conceptual and operational definitions of the variables used in the study.

A comprehensive description of the methods used enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of the methods and the reliability and validity of the results

2.1. Participants

The research sample included male teachers practicing and non-practicing recreational sports activities in middle schools located in the Wadi Al-Abtal district, Mascara state. Out of a total of 50 teachers, 31 were randomly selected (representing 62% of the population). The participants were divided into two groups:

- **Practicing group:** 16 male teachers who regularly engaged in recreational sports activities.
- **Non-practicing group:** 15 male teachers who did not participate in such activities.

Basic demographic data such as age and additional relevant details were not explicitly provided. Ethical approval and informed consent were obtained for the study, adhering to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki.

2.2. Material

The study employed the Psychological Stress Scale developed by Dr. Bouaziz Mohamed. The scale consists of four key axes, measuring different dimensions of psychological stress:

- **Axis 1:** Internal pressures (10 items).
- **Axis 2:** Pressures related to the nature of the profession and capabilities (16 items).
- **Axis 3:** Relational stress (17 items).

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- **Axis 4:** Pressures related to wages and working hours (7 items).

Table 1 summarizes the distribution of items across the scale's axes:

The number	The axis	Paragraphs
01	Internal pressures	01-10
02	Pressures related to the nature of the profession and capabilities	11-26
03	Relational stress	27-43
04	Wage and work time pressures	44-50

2.3. Design and Procedure

The study used a descriptive approach with the survey method. Below are the operational details:

- **Research Variables:**

- o **Independent Variable:** Recreational sports activities.
- o **Dependent Variable:** Psychological pressures.

- **Domains:**

- o **Human Domain:** The study focused on 31 male teachers, divided into two groups as previously mentioned.
- o **Spatial Domain:** The research was conducted in seven middle schools within the Wadi Al-Abtal district, Mascara state.
- o **Time Domain:** The study period extended from November 16, 2023, to May 25, 2024.

- **Validation and Reliability Testing:**

- o The validity of the tool was confirmed by distributing the initial questionnaire to eight experts (four from Mostaganem University and four from Tissemsilt University), who approved the tool's consistency with the research objectives.
- o Reliability was tested using a test-retest method on a pilot sample of 10 teachers, with a one-week interval between applications. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to calculate reliability.

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Table 2 presents the reliability and validity coefficients for the questionnaire:

Questionnaire axes	Sample	reliability coefficient	stability coefficient	R table	Degree of freedom	Significance level
M. First	10	0.99	0.99	0.63	08	0.05 Statistics
M. II	10	0.97	0.96			
M. III	10	0.94	0.89			
M. IV	10	0.94	0.90			
The questionnaire as a whole	10	0.96	0.94			

All coefficients exceeded the threshold value of 0.63, indicating statistically significant reliability and validity at a 0.05 significance level.

2.4. Statistical Analysis

The data were analyzed using the following statistical tools:

- Arithmetic means.
- Standard deviation.
- Pearson's correlation coefficient.
- T-test.

These analyses were performed to evaluate the relationship between recreational sports activities and psychological pressures, ensuring consistency with the study's hypotheses and objectives.

III. Results:

1- Displaying the results for the two research samples in the variable of internal pressures:

Table No.03: Explains the significance of the differences between the two research samples in the variable of internal pressures.

Phrases	Sample	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	T. Calculated	T. Tabular	degree freedom	Significance level 0.05
Internal pressures	Practicing professors	18.56	4.32	4.39	2.04	29	Statistically significant
	Non-practicing professors	27.53	6.92				

The table reached 2.04 at the degree of freedom $(n1 + n2) - 2 = 29$ and the significance level 0.05. Referring to the results in Table No. 03 related to the

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results of practicing teachers and teachers who do not practice recreational sports activities in the first axis related to internal pressures, it becomes clear to us that there are statistically significant differences between the results of practicing teachers and non-practicing teachers in favor of teachers who do not practice recreational sports activities.

2- Presentation and discussion of the results of the two research samples in the stress variable. Related to the nature of the profession and capabilities:

Table No.04: It clarifies the significance of the differences between the two research samples in the variable of pressures related to the nature of the profession and capabilities.

Phrases	Sample	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	T. Calculated	T. Tabular	degree freedom	Significance level 0.05
Pressures related to the nature of the profession and capabilities	Practicing professors	56.19	10.17	2.55	2.04	29	Statistically significant
	Non-practicing professors	64.13	6.80				

The table reached 2.04 at degree of freedom $(n_1 + n_2) - 2 = 29$ and significance level 0.05. Referring to the results in Table No. 04 related to the results of practicing teachers and non-practicing teachers of recreational sports activity in the second axis related to pressures related to the nature of the profession and capabilities, it becomes clear to us that there are statistically significant differences between the results of practicing teachers of recreational sports activity and non-practicing teachers in favor of non-practicing teachers of recreational sports activity.

3- Presentation and discussion of the results of the two research samples in the stress variable. Relational (relationships):

Table No.05: Explains the significance of the differences between the two research samples in the stress variable.Relational (relationships):

Phrases	Sample	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	T. Calculated	T. Tabular	Degree of freedom	level Significance
Relational stress	Practicing professors	37.31	10.42	2.46	2.04	29	0.05 Statistically significant
	Non-practicing professors	48.40	14.52				

The table reached 2.04 at degree of freedom $(n_1 + n_2) - 2 = 29$ and significance level 0.05, and by referring to the results in Table No. 05 related to the results of practicing teachers and non-practicing teachers of recreational sports activities in the third axis related to stress Relational (relationships) It is clear to us that there are statistically significant differences between the results of practicing teachers and non-practicing teachers in favor of teachers who do not practice recreational sports activities.

4- Presentation and discussion of the results of the two research samples in the stress variable.Related to wages and working hours:

Table No.06: Explains the significance of the differences between the two research samples in the stress variable.Related to wages and time the job:

Phrases	Sample	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	value T calculated	value T tabular	Degree of freedom	Significance level
Wage and work time pressures	Practicing professors	18.44	6.08	2.30	2.04	29	0.05 Statistically significant
	Non-practicing professors	24	7.38				

The table reached 2.04 at degree of freedom $(n_1 + n_2) - 2 = 29$ and significance level 0.05. Referring to the results in Table No. 06 related to the results of practicing teachers and non-practicing teachers of recreational sports activities in the fourth axis related to stress Related to wages and working hours It is clear to us that there are statistically significant differences between the results of teachers who practice recreational sports

activities and teachers who do not practice them, in favor of teachers who do not practice recreational sports activities.

IV. Discussion

1- The results extracted from Table No. (03) After the statistical processing in the first axis related to internal pressures, there are statistically significant differences between the results of teachers practicing recreational sports activities and teachers not practicing in favor of teachers not practicing recreational sports activities. The researchers attribute these results to the fact that non-practicing teachers have greater internal pressures than teachers practicing recreational sports activities. This is due to the presence of a feeling of unjustified anxiety and a feeling of discomfort when trying to reconcile the requirements of work and family life. As for teachers practicing recreational sports activities, the results of internal pressures were few compared to non-practicing teachers, as they get rid of these pressures by practicing recreational sports activities, which is considered a therapeutic means for them, and in which they find an opportunity to overcome the accumulated psychological pressure they find within the school environment. The results of this study are consistent with the study Yassin is annoying Titled The role of recreational sports activities in reducing some psychological pressures and professional compatibility among secondary school teachers 2021 Which concluded that recreational sports activity has a role in reducing some psychological pressures, as well as with the study (Hassan, 2008) which concluded that female students who practice regular sports activities are characterized by less psychological stress than female students who do not practice them.

2- The results extracted from Table No. (04) In the second axis related to the pressures related to the nature of the profession and capabilities, there are statistically significant differences between the results of teachers practicing recreational sports activities and teachers who do not practice in favor of teachers who do not practice recreational sports activities. The researchers attribute this to the existence of great pressures related to the nature of the

profession and capabilities of teachers who do not practice recreational sports activities. This is due, in their opinion, to the difficulty of the teaching profession. As for capabilities, teachers see a lack of educational tools, which makes them always feel anxious and tense, as they find great difficulties in performing their work with the tools they have. This is the opposite of teachers practicing recreational sports activities, who have a low level of psychological pressure, as they get rid of these pressures by practicing recreational sports activities, which is considered a therapeutic means for them, in which they find an opportunity to overcome the accumulated psychological pressure they find within the school environment. These results were consistent with the study (Fatiha,2013) which concluded that teachers suffer from psychological pressure due to the combination of Several factors contributed to this, including work conditions, lack of time, and the density of study programs with a lack of hourly volume.

3- The results extracted from Table No. (05) In the third axis related to pressures Relational (relationships) There are statistically significant differences between the results of practicing teachers and non-practicing teachers in favor of non-practicing teachers in recreational sports activities. The researchers attribute this to the type of relationships existing in the school environment, which is characterized by coldness and discord, especially with officials, administrators and students. These results are consistent with the study of (Kanza,2016) which concluded that practicing recreational sports activities reduces social and psychological stress.

4- The results extracted from Table No. (06) For the fourth axis related to stress Related to wages and working hours There are statistically significant differences between the results of teachers who practice recreational sports activities and teachers who do not practice them in favor of teachers who do not practice recreational sports activities. The researchers attribute these results to the fact that non-practicing teachers have stress. Related to wages and working hours This is due to the lack of sufficient rest time, long working hours, and an insufficient salary for the requirements of a decent

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life. This is the opposite of teachers who practice recreational sports activities and who have a low level of stress because they get rid of this stress by practicing sports activities, which is considered a therapeutic means for them, and in which they find an opportunity to overcome the psychological pressures they find accumulated within the school environment. The results of this study are consistent with the study of (Al-Shakhanbeh, 2010) who concluded that organizational and professional factors (such as working hours, lack of sufficient rest time and salary) affect the psychological state of the worker because the worker expects to receive a wage appropriate to the effort he exerts, and if the wage is less, he will inevitably feel psychological pressure.

V. Conclusion:

The main idea that we have been inspired by through this research is that practicing recreational sports activities contributes to alleviating psychological pressures, and therefore it has become necessary for everyone to pay attention to this by conducting awareness campaigns that highlight the importance of recreational sports activities in alleviating psychological pressures, especially in educational circles, where the teacher is exposed to psychological pressures that affect his health conditions, which is negatively reflected in his teaching performance, and therefore it is time for the Algerian state to pay attention to this segment of society as it constitutes a large percentage of this society that it affects, and this is by providing all means of comfort and preparing recreational sports programs that are compatible with this category, which allows the teacher to practice the teaching process and provide quality teaching at the level of educational institutions in the middle education stage, which has a positive impact on the student and society.

In light of the results reached, we present the following suggestions and recommendations:

- Paying attention to practicing recreational sports activities, as they are of great importance to the teacher from a psychological and physical health perspective.
- Highlighting the importance of practicing recreational sports activities and the role they play in achieving psychological and social harmony among teachers.
- Intensifying the holding of recreational sports courses within educational institutions that take place between teachers, with the aim of coordinating work and exchanging experiences.
- The necessity of intensifying scientific research on this topic by preparing recreational sports programmes that suit this category.
- Working to establish a culture of recreational sports activities among middle school teachers.

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