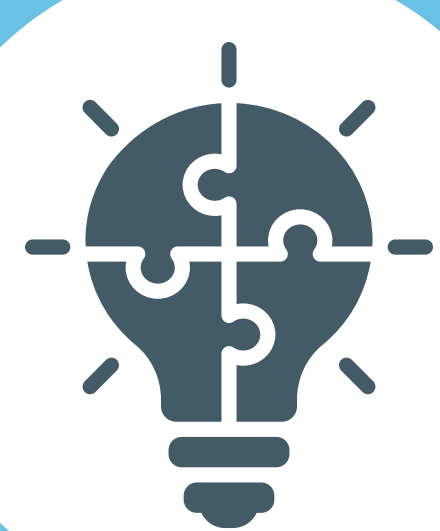


Profiles of Teenage Athletes' Exposure to Violence in Sport



Violence in sport is a major social issue that has attracted a great amount of research interest over the last ten years.

Although allegations of **sexual** violence involving coaches receive the most media attention, **psychological**, **physical** and **neglect** abuse involving teammates, coaches and parents is also prevalent.

Objectives

Describe the profile of young people who have experienced violence in sport:

1) Using latent class analysis, identify different profiles of athletes according to their experience of violence in sport;

2) Determine how these violence profiles differ according to risk of exposure, sociodemographic data, sports participation characteristics, problematic athletic behaviours and young people's mental health.

Sample

- 1057 youth (72 % girls)
- Average age 15.29 (SD = 1.07)
- Organized sport (within a league, club or sports team with training and competition)

A wide variety of sports, including:

- Soccer (21 %)
- Volleyball (13 %)
- Swimming (11 %)

Sport practice:

- Individual (43 %)
- Team (53 %)
- Both (4 %)

Results : Profiles of exposure to violence

1 Non-victimized profile

37 % of participants in the study were not exposed to violence in their sporting activities.

Compared to athletes in the other two classes, non-victimized athletes :

- are younger ;
- practice their sport at local/regional levels;
- report a low level of early specialization;
- have more parental involvement in their sport
- are less likely to continue their sport despite injury;
- have better mental health.

Their risk of exposure to violence was not influenced by whether they played individual or team sports.

2 Psychological violence profile

52 % of participants present a profile of psychological victimization.

These teenagers:

- participate more in their sport at national or international level compared to the other two groups ;
- train more than non-victimized athletes ;
- benefit from greater parental involvement in their sport, compared with poly-victimized athletes.

3 "Poly-victimized" profile

10 % of participants have experienced at least two of the following forms of violence: psychological, physical, sexual and neglect.

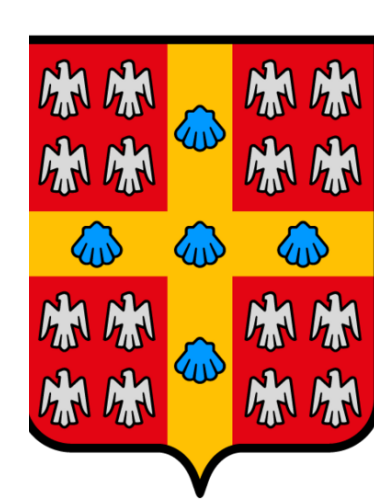
Compared with the other two profiles, these athletes have more of the following characteristics:

- have less parental involvement in their sport;
- have experienced early specialization ;
- train more hours per week ;
- continue to practice their sport despite injury ;
- present extreme weight control behaviors ;
- present self-harming behaviors ;
- have low self-esteem, more symptoms of severe psychological distress and more post-traumatic symptoms ;
- are significantly more likely to practice their sport at the provincial level.

Practical implications

Reducing tolerance and raising public awareness of forms of violence (overt and covert) and their related consequences should be a priority.

In order to prevent the short- and long-term effects of violence among young athletes, it is suggested to promote early detection of victimization and to develop intervention strategies adapted to each profile.



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