

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-53287

Date: 12-08-2025

Title: Mulligan Mobilization Techniques to Restore Knee Flexion in a Post-ACLR Handball Player: A Case Report

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

✓ Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity	✓			
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Name: Dr.D.Kalidoss

Date: 12-08-2025

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

This case report presents a clinically relevant and well-structured account of using Mulligan Mobilization with Movement techniques to address chronic knee flexion deficit post-ACLR in a competitive handball player. The intervention is clearly described, and the outcomes are meaningful for sports rehabilitation practice. Minor revisions are recommended to clarify methodology, include objective pain and functional measures, and expand the discussion to compare alternative techniques. Overall, the manuscript holds good potential for publication.

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Strengths

1. Clinical Relevance

- Post-ACLR knee flexion deficits are common but underreported in sports-specific contexts, especially for late-stage rehabilitation. This report addresses a gap that is directly applicable to physiotherapists and sports clinicians.

2. Clear Outcome Reporting

- Objective improvement in knee flexion ($125^{\circ} \rightarrow >135^{\circ}$), pain reduction, and return to full sport participation are well-documented and clinically meaningful.

3. Concise Intervention Description

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- The Mulligan techniques are described in enough detail for replication, including positions, mobilization direction, and repetitions.

4. Integration with Literature

- References to key works (Hall et al., 2007; Hing et al., 2019; Vicenzino et al., 2009) demonstrate awareness of the evidence base.

Limitations & Suggestions for Improvement

1. Methodological Clarity

- There is inconsistency in intervention frequency:
 - Lines 20–22 suggest weekly supervised sessions for 8 weeks.
 - Lines 82–83 mention three sessions per week for three weeks. Clarification is essential for reproducibility.

2. Lack of Quantitative Pain Assessment

- Pain is described subjectively (“resolution of pain”), but no validated scale (e.g., VAS, NPRS) is reported. Including pre- and post-intervention scores would enhance objectivity.

3. Absence of Functional Performance Measures

- Given the athletic population, functional hop tests, Y-Balance Test, or agility drills could be reported alongside ROM to strengthen the link to return-to-sport readiness.

4. Limited Differential Consideration

- It is assumed that the flexion deficit was purely arthrokinematic, but potential contributing factors (capsular tightness, scar adhesion, patellofemoral mobility) are not explored in detail.

5. Discussion Depth

- While literature is cited, the discussion could critically compare Mulligan techniques with other manual therapy methods (e.g., Maitland, Kaltenborn) or adjuncts (PNF stretching, joint distraction).
- Potential placebo or therapist–patient interaction effects are not addressed.

6. Long-term Follow-Up

- Only a 2-month post-treatment follow-up is reported. Given the athlete's demands, a longer follow-up (6–12 months) would help assess durability of outcomes.

7. Figures & Visual Aids

- Clinical images or diagrams of the Mulligan techniques used would make the intervention more accessible to readers and improve educational value.

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Minor Editorial Points

- **Title:** Consider specifying "Mulligan Mobilization with Movement" instead of just "Mulligan Mobilization Techniques" for precision.
- **Abstract:** Include baseline and final pain/ROM scores to quantify improvements.
- **Keywords:** Consider adding "manual therapy", "joint mobilization", and "rehabilitation outcome" for better indexing.
- **Consistency in Units:** ROM degrees should always be expressed with the degree symbol and no space before (e.g., 125° not 125 °).

Recommendation

- **Decision:** Minor revision
- The case report is valuable for sports physiotherapy practice. Clarifying methodology, integrating objective pain/function measures, and slightly expanding the discussion will elevate the quality to meet the standards of a high-impact sports rehabilitation journal.