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RESEARCH ARTICLE

DIETARY HABITS AND SPORTS PERFORMANCE AMONG BASKETBALL ATHLETES IN A SELECTED UNIVERSITY IN FUJIAN PROVINCE, CHINA.

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Abstract

The relationship between dietary habits and sports performance is a critical area of research in sports science, particularly for high-intensity sports like basketball. Nutrition plays a vital role in enhancing athletic performance, recovery, and overall health (Li & Wang, 2021). For basketball athletes, optimal dietary practices can significantly impact their endurance, strength, and agility, which are essential for peak performance on the court. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of macro nutrient balance in the diets of basketball players. Carbohydrates, proteins, and fat each serve distinct functions that contribute to an athlete's performance. Carbohydrates are crucial for providing the energy needed during high-intensity training and games (Sato et al., 2022). Proteins are essential for muscle repair and growth, while fats serve as a long-term energy source and support various physiological functions (Gomes & Silva, 2021).

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Introduction:-

Nutrition plays a pivotal role in determining the performance and recovery of basketball athletes. Proper eating and drinking habits can significantly impact an athlete's energy levels, endurance, muscle recovery, and overall performance on the court (Al-Qahtani & Al-Mutairi, 2021). One of the most critical aspects of an athlete's diet is the balance of macro nutrients: carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Carbohydrates are essential for providing the energy required during high-intensity activities such as basketball games and training sessions (Hassan & Youssef, 2022). Research indicates that basketball players who consume adequate carbohydrates perform better and experience less fatigue during games compared to those who do not (Ahmed & Saeed, 2023). Protein intake is crucial for muscle repair and growth, particularly after intense training or competition. Basketball athletes need to ensure they consume enough protein to support muscle recovery and reduce the risk of injury (Al-Qahtani & Al-Mutairi, 2021). Studies have shown that athletes with higher protein intake have better muscle strength and endurance, which are vital for performance in basketball (Hassan & Youssef, 2022). Fats, while often overlooked, are also important for providing long-lasting energy and supporting overall health. Healthy fats, such as those found in avocados, nuts, and fish, can help basketball players maintain

their energy levels during prolonged activities (Ahmed&Saeed, 2023). A balanced intake of macro nutrients ensures that athletes have the necessary energy and nutrients to perform at their best.

Hydration is another critical factor that can greatly affect sports performance. Basketball athletes lose significant amounts of fluids through sweat during games and training sessions, making it essential to maintain proper hydration (Ibrahim&Khalid, 2021). Dehydration can lead to decreased performance, muscle cramps, and a higher risk of injury. Research emphasizes the importance of regular fluid intake before, during, and after physical activity to sustain optimal performance levels (Al-Qahtani&Al-Mutairi, 2021).

Electrolyte balance is closely related to hydration. Electrolytes, such as sodium, potassium, and magnesium, are lost through sweat and must be replenished to maintain muscle function and prevent cramps (Ibrahim&Khalid, 2021). Studies have highlighted the benefits of consuming electrolyte-rich drinks, such as sports drinks, to help maintain performance and recovery in basketball athletes (Hassan&Youssef, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

This study will determine the relationship between dietary habits and sports performance among basketball athletes.

The results of the study will be used as a basis for a dietary program for basketball athletes.

Specifically, the study will answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the basketball athlete respondents in terms of:

1.1. sex;

1.2. age; and

1.3. number of years as basketball players?

2. What is the basketball athlete respondents' assessment of their dietary habits in terms of:

2.1. macronutrient balance;

2.2. micronutrient intake;

2.3. hydration;

2.4. meal timing and frequency;

2.5. quality of food choices;

2.6. nutrient timing;

2.7. supplementation; and

2.8. energy balance?

3. Is there a significant difference in the basketball athlete respondents' assessment of their dietary habits when they are grouped according to their profile?

4. What is the self-

assessment of the basketball athlete respondents of their sports performance in terms of:

4.1. physical fitness;

4.2. technical skills;

4.3. tactical awareness;

4.4. mental toughness;

4.5. team dynamics; and

4.6. recovery and injury prevention?

5. Is there a significant difference in the self-assessment of the basketball athlete respondents of their sports performance when they are grouped according to their profile?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the basketball athlete respondents'

assessment of their dietary habits and their self-assessment of their sports performance?

7. Based on the results of the study, what dietary program for basketball athletes can be proposed?

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses will be tested:

1. There is no significant difference in the

basketball athlete respondents' assessment of their dietary habits when they are grouped according to their profile.

2. There is no significant difference in the self-assessment of the basketball athlete respondents of their sports performance when they are grouped according to their profile.
3. There is no significant relationship between the basketball athlete respondents' assessment of their dietary habits and their self-assessment of their sports performance.

Research Methodology

The descriptive-comparative-correlational methodology used in this study is distinguished by its careful definitions, copious documentation, in-depth analysis, and comprehensive comprehension of contextual interactions. Johnson (2021) states that descriptive research aims to accurately capture the innate traits, behaviors, and properties of a phenomenon by illustrating and analyzing them in their natural condition. The principal aim is to augment comprehension of extant matters or formulate exhaustive portraits of particular demographics, consequently setting the stage for subsequent investigations. Lee and Martinez (2016) stress the value of using comparative analysis to spot trends and tell apart various circumstances. In order to investigate the relationships between variables in their natural contexts, they support the use of correlational analysis. The amalgamated methodology offers a sturdy basis for comprehending the complexities of connections and study circumstances.

Expanding on the viewpoint of Johnson (2021), descriptive research plays a critical role in fields like psychology and the social sciences by providing a more profound understanding of natural behaviors and trends. For instance, without putting arbitrary restrictions on target audiences, it may accurately record their demographic characteristics, opinions, and actions, offering significant insights into societal dynamics.

Additionally, Lee and Martinez (2016) contend that basic components impacting events in many contexts or populations are revealed by comparative approaches. They use correlational analysis to find possible causal correlations between variables, which improves the explanatory power of research designs. Correlational analysis may clarify the relationships between the study's demographic features and important attitudes or behaviors that are pertinent to the research topic, so guiding the development of theoretical frameworks and workable intervention techniques.

This study's descriptive-comparative-correlational technique provides a thorough and useful framework for analyzing the intricate relationships between the variables and situations being studied. This method relies upon the methodological recommendations proposed by Lee and Martinez (2016) and the basic insights offered by Johnson (2021) through careful representation, comparative analysis, and correlational insights. The findings' validity and depth are reinforced by this multidimensional technique, which also offers a strong foundation for further study and real-world applications in related domains.

This study aims to investigate the basketball athletes' dietary habits and its relationship to their sports performance.

This research approach allows the researcher to numerically analyze, compare, and correlate the relationships among the dependent variables included in the study.

By utilizing this approach, the researcher will be able to find any significant difference or relationship in the basketball athlete respondents' dietary habits and their demographic data such as sex, age, and number of years as basketball athletes. Also, the researcher will be able to find any significant difference or relationship in the basketball athletes' sports performance and their demographic data such as sex, age, and grade level. The basketball athletes' assessment of the dietary habits and their self-assessment of their sports performance will then be correlated.

All the above discussion on the descriptive research method will suit the nature of research that this present study would do; hence this method will be adopted.

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