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Mensural cycle knowledge in Saudi Female athletes and their coaches

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Men have dominated the field of sport for a long time. However, women have also raised their concerns and increased their presence in participating in sports. Sports influence to transform lives through educating women and girls concerning working in teamwork, suppleness, assurance, and self-reliance. Moreover, sports are among the best drivers of gender inequality because it ensures that all gender can participate in the international sports regardless of their gender or place, they come from. Girls and women participating in sport can challenge gender stereotypes and social values and encourage role models and indicate that both men and women are the same. Many athletics that championed women and girls in sports celebrate the outstanding accomplishment and unrivaled effort for women participating in sport. Nevertheless, there is significant knowledge that needs to be learned by both coaches and female athletes across the world regarding the menstrual cycle and how it affects performance. The purpose of this paper is to recognize menstrual cycle acquittance in Saudi female athletes and their coaches.

Participation: The Rise of a sportswoman

Championing for the rights of women participating in sports has a tremendous journey. Therefore, the rise of women in sports can be drawn in the 6th century B.C. even though the ancient Olympic games were originally planned to honor Greece's twelve Olympian gods, seven were men and five were women (Swann et al., 2016). However, between the 6th and 7th centuries, the Greece administration prohibited all women from engaging in the Olympic competition. Therefore, the earliest Greek women established their competition, which was referred to as the Heraean Games, which was conducted each year and comprised one event. Besides the effort made by women to ensure they participate in the Olympics globally, many critical and encouraging women contributed to the emergence of equality in sports. Therefore, these women created values that provided the path for many other equal opportunities for women in engaging in sports.

The progress of women in sports is great, and the current world witnesses multiple Olympics shifts. For instance, as Swann et al. (2016) stated, in 1900, the number of women participating in different sports was realized because among the nine hundred and ninety-seven players, twenty-two women were involved in the Olympics comprised 2.2%. Nevertheless, significant developments were also made concerning women's involvement in sport because, in 1905, the Camogie Association was created in Dublin to plan and encourage women's Olympic of camogie in Ireland as well as around the globe. From 1905 to the present noteworthy contributions have been developed to enhance the rise of women in sports across the world, including the formation of the English Women's Football association in 1969 and the implementation of the Title IX, which transformed the chances for females in athletics in 1972.

Swann et al. (2016) claimed that female involvement in sports increased from 2.2 percent in Paris in 1900 to around 48.8 percent in Tokyo, which indicated almost equal participation of women and men for the first time in history. Similarly, female athletes have made enormous leaps into competitions and athletics. Furthermore, Title IX emphasized that no individual in America will be discriminated against based on sex and exempted from the involvement or be deprived of the aids of or be exposed to discernment through any educational program or event getting federal financial assistance. Moreover, the rise of women in sports is inspired by the Olympic organizations and institutions that fostered women's right to engage in physical edification, activity, and sports in all divisions. Besides, the organizations have worked to ensure there is safety for women involved in sports against exploitation, nuisance and misconduct, and the utilization of Olympic to inspire gender equality. The increase in

physical activities comes with various positive effects, including an increase in self-esteem, body image, and female wellbeing.

Saudi Female Sport and Physical Activity

Saudi Arabia is faced with significant effects of religion, gender and education when associated with sports. Therefore, this has resulted in significant gender inequality in sports participation. For instance, according to the study conducted by Al Ruwaili (2020), claimed women's engagement in sports specifically in Saudi Arabia is limited and thus, the increased limitations cause an intensification in inequality for women in attaining other essential chances in life men. Similarly, based on the global gender gap report presented in 2017, which evaluated one hundred and forty-four nations based on partisan encouragement, health and survival, edification realization, and economic involvement and opportunity. Therefore, Saudi Arabia was ranked in position one hundred and thirty-eight (Al Ruwaili, 2020). Nevertheless, based on sport, Saudi Arabia women are not well-off because they usually fight to get sporting amenities despite the current developments.

Moreover, Saudi Arabia set the first women's sports centre in 2013, which started and accepted the private institutions to offer physical education. This was the first attempt for women to be allowed to engage in physical education. Al Ruwaili (2020) also stated that the private schools offering girls physical education paved the way for the public institutions to provide physical education to girls in 2017. Still, when women can access the sporting equipment, it usually results in substantial challenges. For instance, they will always need to obtain agreement from male members of the family as well as other codes of behavior such as dressing and following the stern sex discrimination. For a long period, before the 2030 Vision, more than 78% of Saudi women and adolescent females remained physically inactive (Al-Hazzaa & AlMarzooqi, 2018). Physical education was not allowed in public schools and became a priority for male students only.

The suppression of women's interests in sports had a serious impact because it was forbidden to visit sports stadiums and observe the events without mentioning direct participation restrictions. In 2012, one of the most provocative events happened when Sarah Attar participated in the London Olympics, promoting the idea of human rights through the prism of neoliberal feminism (Stevenson, 2018). Her decision to break the rules and follow sports standards served as a significant shift in understanding the worth of female sports in the 21st century. Al Ruwaili (2020) investigates the role of sport in increasing physical activity and its positive outcomes in health implications.

The kingdom has continued to have tremendous liberalization because of the vision 2030 goals. The goals create a segment of a Saudi Arabia effort in improving quality of life of the citizens. Therefore, involvement of women in sports makes them be involved in physical activity, which in return increases their quality of life. Stevenson (2018) stated that physical activity is normally a health behavior identified due to its work to enhance health at the same time stop illness. Alternatively, lack of physical activity and an inactive lifestyle are related to several unwanted health conditions such as obesity and type 2 diabetes mellitus. Nevertheless, it is well known that physical activity is essential in resulting in non-communication illness in high-income nations and is progressively increasing in low- and middle-income nations.

Stevenson (2018) also claimed that Saudi Arabia had experienced modernism in the past few decades because of the massive economic transformation and lifestyle changes, fast demographic variations and widespread urbanization. Therefore, modernism has resulted in immense adverse variations in individuals' lifestyle behaviors with the augmented physical inactivity. Also, modern Female Athletes are involved in sports is a critical aspect of the new "modern" Saudi Arabia; various

developments about women right occurred during King Salman's reign in line with the original government's partisan and pecuniary urgencies. The rate of these developments has dramatically increased women's selection of Mohammed bin Salman, as the top leader. Also, in August 2016, Reema Al Saud was appointed as the leader of women in athletics. Months later, the government has gradually begun to license female gyms, license sporting venues for female attendees, and physical education to female public schools. Currently, Saudi females have far more chances to license in sports than before. After Vision 2030, sports in Arabia have undergone a paradigm shift.

Research into Women's Physiology

Research in human physiology plays a critical role in understanding the effects of how the body works. Therefore, significant research needs to be conducted because proper mechanisms and approaches can change the prevailing conditions. People can follow proper methods of changing their situations to live a healthy life. The majority of women are currently involved in sport and exercise; therefore, this creates a substantial need to realize their physiology and how it will affect their performance and training in the athletic industry. Women's involvement in sports has increased tremendously over the years, researching women's physiology less than the rise in the number of women in sports.

Moreover, fewer research papers conducted examined women in the sports industry. Many have not concentrated on creating an understanding of women's menstrual cycle in sports and their coaches. For instance, research conducted by Bruinvels et al. (2016) focused on recognizing the occurrence and effects regarding heavy menstrual bleeding (HMB) pertaining physical exercise women in instances anemia can substantially impact training and performance. Therefore, the paper utilized a questionnaire designed to integrate a HMB sequence authenticated diagnostic, demographics as well as exercise status, training capacity, anemia and iron supplementation together with checking of menstrual cycle effects on exercise at the same time performance.

All research articles in three sports science and medicine journals were also compiled and assessed to realize the research conducted on women in sports within one year. Therefore, among all the papers assessed, the ones found to deal with women in sports were between four to thirteen percent (Costello et al., 2014). For example, Costello et al. (2014) concentrated on predicting the ratio of men and women involved in sports and exercise medicine research, and the research papers were assessed based on the number of individuals involved in the exercise, number of males and females involved. Therefore, the ratio of males and females was then calculated. The authors realized that sports and exercise medicine physicians need to be conscious of sexual dimorphism and gender difference in the present research. Thus, implementing an evidence-informed method when operating with women athletics is restricted because women in sports always train the same way as their men counterparts, which makes it not ideal. Moreover, male coaches understand they do not have acquaintance on the menstrual cycle and require a framework that will educate them on the appropriate training sessions in women athletics and how to contentedly together with reverentially explain menstrual cycle effects on health together with athletic performance. Thus, athletic women will benefit from research papers that will be based on a specific gender.

Menstrual Cycle

Women pass through significant challenges despite their increased number participation in sports. Therefore, with the menstrual cycle having significant effects on their training and performance, as Pantano (2017) stated, coaches and women athletics need to focus on monitoring and tracking their menstrual cycle. Also, Findlay et al. (2020) claimed that in 2016, over half of the elite female athletics

argued hormonal variations while on their menstrual cycle interfered with their performance and training. Bambaiechi (2004) defined the menstrual cycle (MC) as a monthly hormonal cyclic process in the female body that prepares the system for a possible pregnancy. The MC typically starts around the ages of 13 and lasts to 45 years old.

Moreover, MC results from the interaction of ovarian, hypothalamus, and pituitary hormones that start and preserve several women's reproductive structure variations. Similarly, the time from the first day of women's period to the day before their next period and typically MC last 28 days, but it's worth knowing that not all sort of textbooks and they do not all have those 28 days so normal 21 to 35 (Julian et al., 2017). Also, the same source added that across these 28 days, women have two predominant sex hormones that rise and fall; these are estrogen and progesterone. Therefore, on day 1 (which is the 1st day of the period), O & P levels are at their lowest. And then, after the period or around or after day 5, one of the hormones, estrogens, starts to increase and reaches its peak just before ovulation. Thus, ovulation refers to the release of an egg from the ovaries and usually happens at the mid-point of the cycle, so around day 14. After ovulation, estrogen has a little bit of decline before it starts to peak again in the second half and reaches its peak around day 21 to 23 (Julian et al., 2017). At the same time, we've got progesterone which starts to increase after ovulation, also reaching its peak. Then, if pregnancy didn't occur, both these hormones drop off, which allows the cycle to begin again.

Findlay et al. (2020) claimed that the menstrual cycle has significant effects on athletic women's performance and training. The source emphasized that nearly seventy-five percent of women athletics experience adverse side effects because of menses. Nevertheless, the most prevalent effects of MC side effects are back pain and cramps and headaches. However, some female athletics use hormonal contraceptives, which overwhelm the normal endogenic creation of estrogenic and progesterin to stop ovulation. Elliott-Sale et al. (2020) claimed that sportswomen who utilize the contraceptive always have a low-hormone phase, hence reducing the performance and training because of the contraceptives' adverse side effects increased weight, deprived skin and uneven periods.

According to Wiecek et al. (2016), menstrual cycle has minor effects on anaerobic performance because they found no substantial changes in maximal anaerobic performance in the varying menstruation cycle stages. Therefore, the outcomes indicated an occurrence or nonappearance of premenstrual syndrome signs that can probably impact the cycle of ligaments. However, Bell et al. (2011) argued that the menstrual cycle does not affect muscle strength because changes in women's reproductive hormones in the menstrual cycle phase do not have any relation with the muscles and the contractile features and fatiguability.

Female Athlete Menstrual Cycle Experiences

Female athletics experience significant challenges when training during their menstrual cycle. However, Romero-Moraleda et al. (2019) argued that the menstrual cycle phase has ambivalent impacts on the period when role catastrophe. Therefore, the source claimed that MC has substantial effects on perceived performance. At the same time, Bruinvels et al. (2016) added that perceived performance is affected in initial follicular together with late luteal stage overlap with incidence of menstrual signs; a usual reason accredited towards reduction in performance is experienced worn out. Female athletes require substantial knowledge to realize the effects of using an oral and hormonal contraceptive. This will enable them to discover chances that will enable them to determine ways that will enhance their performance. Ansdell et al. (2019) found that acquaintances surrounding the MC together with oral contraceptives are low to many elite athletes. Moreover, edification comes in to allow athletes raise informed choices concerning hormonal contraception as well as other educational strategies that can be

used to maintain a good sport performance. Therefore, this research paper will first study Saudi female athletics acquaintance and realize the effects of the menstrual cycle on sporting performance.

Similarly, another research by Clarke et al. (2021) concentrated on the knowledge of coaches concerning MC and use of hormonal and contraceptives taken orally. Therefore, through use of questionnaires, this authors found that coaches do not know anything concerning oral contraceptives and hormonal contraceptives. Also, coaches know little information on menstrual cycle effects towards female athletics performance because they view it as a source of stress that can make the athletics depressed, affecting their performance negatively (Brown et al., 2021). Also, the paper will then study coaches' acquaintance and realize menstrual cycle effects on performance in sports.

Aims and final study

Main purpose of the study is examining the knowledge and understanding of impacts of the menstrual cycle towards the performance of Saudi female athletes. Also, this paper will focus on investigating the knowledge and understanding of menstrual cycle effects on performance in athletics in sports coaches in Saudi Arabia. Although proper knowledge is presented with studies focusing on women involved in sports, limited research is available on the understanding and knowledge available concerning Saudi female athletics and their use of contraceptives to counter the effects of the menstrual cycle on sports performance. Therefore, the goals of the study will be to:

Identify current menstrual cycle knowledge in Saudi female athletes.

Understand, support and provide relevant information for coaches to talk concerning menstrual cycle challenges with the athletes.

Investigate the effects of MC on the sporting performance of female athletes.

Methodology

To obtain data used in this study, questionnaires and interviews will collect the qualitative data. Seventeen Saudi female athletes will participate in answering the questionnaire. All participants will range between 21-29 years. Also, 20 coaches will participate in the interview process. The qualitative study is essential because it will be able to examine in-depth concerning the realization of female Saudi athletes' experiences and practices and provide descriptive accounts. Nevertheless, the thematic analysis will evaluate the interview results to arrange the data into significant ideas and meaningful topics. Nevertheless, SPSS will be used to analyze the questionnaires using descriptive codes to recognize raw data themes.

In summation, Saudi female athletes pass through significant challenges in enhancing their voices to be heard by the male counterparts. Although males well-dominated sports, currently, female voices are heard and an almost equal number of females are participating in sports. Religion is one of the things that resulted in significant challenges for women involving in physical activity. However, although more women are participating in sports, the menstrual cycle is one thing that many organizations, coaches and female athletics fear talking about. Nevertheless, the menstrual cycle is a hindrance to sports performance among Saudi female athletes.

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