

Relationship Between Varsity Sports and Athletic Injury Prevalence at the University of Wisconsin River Falls

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Background

Many athletes face the incidence of injury at some time in their sport career. Injuries are sustained in sports on a regular basis as the ultimate risk factor that balance the benefits that sports provide to athletes. It is important for the NCAA and the collegiate institution to help prevent injuries and keep them at a regulated level. Athletic injuries can be costly to the player in many ways. Injuries are a source of pain and also financial loss when treated at medical facilities. The injury can also cost the player key participation time in games and practice. For this study an injury is classified as any injury sustained during colligate sport practice or competition, that took the player out of practice or a game for one or more days. The injury was reported to and treated by a certified athletic trainer at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to explore the relationship between sport type and athletic injuries sustained at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. We are looking at the relationship of injuries per population of players in a select group of varsity sports at UWRF. This information will help us to determine which sports have the highest and lowest prevalence of injury. The data will provide beneficial information for coaching staff and athletic personnel. The data will help to identify high injury sports and can be used to improve conditioning or coaching tactics as well as indicate where more medical staff could be utilized.

Methods

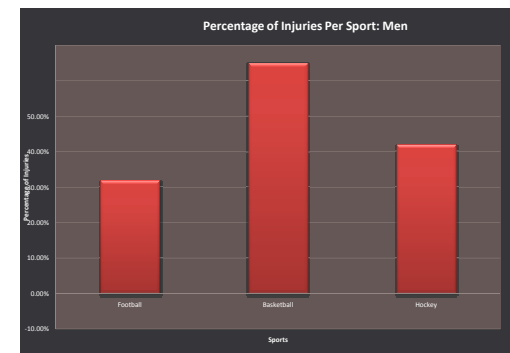
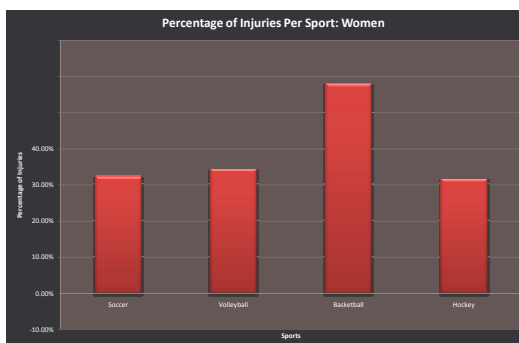
For this research project we collected secondary data that had been recorded in special program; The Datalys Injury Surveillance Tool. Whenever an athlete sustained an injury it was recorded in this program by the Certified Athletic Trainers at UWRF. For our study we defined an injury as anything that took a player out of a game or practice for one or more days. We narrowed the data in the program and picked out all the injuries that fit our parameters. The men's sports that we chose to explore were: football, hockey, and basketball. The women's sports that we examined were soccer, basketball, hockey and volleyball.

Results

Our results show that the highest number of injuries sustained per the number of athletes on the team, was basketball, for both the men's and women's sports. The men's team injuries was at 64.9% and the women's team was at 57.97%. Looking at a literature review we compared our findings to the results found in "Epidemiology of Severe Injuries Among united States High School Athletes," our results were similar. Girl's basketball again had the highest percentage of injuries while the boy's basketball was number two on the percentage list after football. Unlike the literature study the men's team sustained more injuries than the women's team. In the study they found a much higher prevalence of injuries in women's sports over all.

We had hypothesized that football would be the leading cause of injuries due to the high contact sport and the population of athletes in the sport. When we took a closer look at the ages of the individuals that were prone to injuries we found that the years that teams had more freshmen were the years that the injury levels went up. This number was especially significant in the football data. We attribute this large rise in injuries because of the lack of experience. We concluded that the age and ability levels have a lot to do with the number of injuries that will occur during the sports' season.

This information helps us to see that when training younger athletes, coaches need to focus on personal safety and the preparation, as well as conditioning younger athletes. Concentrating on conditioning and preparation for body fatigue and constant use will better enable coaches to provide athletes the groundwork for the preparing them for the caliber of competition they will be competing in at the collegiate level.



References

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