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The Psychological Impact of Recreational Sports in Decreasing The Fear of Being Infected by The Covid19

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Abstract:

The purpose of the study is to identify The Psychological Impact of the recreational sports in decreasing the fear of being infected by the Covid19 among citizens, In addition to the role of this type of activities in decreasing the fear of the virus and the fear of the future as a result of the spread of pandemic, to achieve these objectives; the study relied on a descriptive method appropriate for the nature of the subject, through distributing electronic questionnaires via social media on non-random sample of citizens from Sétif City, the results showed that the entertaining sports activities have an important role in decreasing the fear of contracting the coronavirus, therefore the study recommended recreational sports as a means of avoiding anxiety and self-comfort for citizens.

Keywords: Psychological Impact; Recreational Sports; Fear; Covid19.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Many months ago, the whole world woke up to talk about a mysterious virus that could take many lives. At first, the majority of individuals underestimated this news, but soon their reactions changed and they became more serious about the emerging virus. Since December 2019, a number of cases of pneumonia of unknown origin have appeared in Wuhan, China's Hubei Province (Dong, Mo, Hu, Qi, Jiang, & Tong, 2020). This disease has spread rapidly around the world in many countries across 6 continents. In February 2020, WHO names this new disease associated with coronavirus 2019, (COVID-19). The spread of SARS-CoV-2 has drawn worldwide attention and the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic (Wu, et al., 2020).

To prevent this virus and control the hotbeds of its spread, and With an increasing number of governments hardening nationwide quarantine, or considering various forms of lockdown in attempts to hinder the spread of the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Algerian government, like most countries in the world, has taken a package of precautionary decisions that will limit its spread, and among these decisions we find medical isolation, home quarantine or social distancing, which is a complementary and resolute measure to the package of health measures accompanying it Such as regular sterilization, the use of masks and spacing out when leaving the house, these preventive measures vary in severity between total and partial quarantine according to the levels of virus outbreak in each city of the country. However, obliging citizens to stay at home is neither an easy matter nor an underestimated subject, rather it is an exceptional, unprecedented and unusual circumstance for people that requires psychological, physical and even mental preparation. What was before corona differs from what is now, and all of this has physical health effects and psychosocial problems that are reflected on people's behavior. The quarantine imposed on citizens is an unprecedented measure that restricts the freedoms of individuals, making the majority of them, especially young people who fail to deal positively with this circumstance, lives under severe psychological pressure and intense fear as a result of intimidation in the media about the virus and its broadcasting of false and misleading information, and with following the developments of the pandemic Coronavirus in the world, feeling of psychological stress becomes an inevitable thing, which in turn destabilizes the psychological fitness among the youth environment. This is what the researchers (Hawryluck, Gold, Robinson, Pogorski, Galea, & Styra, 2004) talked about in their study, that quarantine can result in considerable psychological distress in the forms of PTSD and depressive symptoms. Public health officials, infectious diseases

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physicians, and psychiatrists, and psychologists need to be made aware of this issue, They must work to define the factors that influence the success of quarantine and infection control practices for both disease containment and community recovery and must be prepared to offer additional support to persons who are at increased risk for the adverse psychological and social consequences of quarantine.

The novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) seems to be having a major impact on daily activities behaviors globally, including regular physical activity and exercise, The pandemic has forced many people around the world to stay at home and self-isolate for a period of time (Ben Larbi & Rebbouh , 2020, p. 172), that will inevitably disrupt the routine daily activities. In many countries, fitness centers are closed and athletes' training and competitions at all levels have been suspended. Prolonged self-quarantine (eg, over two weeks) poses a significant challenge for remaining physically active and may impact people's quality of life. During previous coronavirus outbreaks, increased stress and depression were reported following social distancing (Hawryluck, Gold, Robinson, Pogorski, Galea, & Styra, 2004). Although, it is hard for people to endure these imposed procedures for longer periods, it is a natural feeling. But high levels of stress have a negative effect on mood and can also reduce the capacity of the body to resist infection (Simpson, et al., 2020). Stress and psychological pressure feelings related to it does not mean in any case that the person cannot do his job and that he is weak (World Health Organization, 2020). It is necessary for individuals and societies, despite the diversity of psychological pressures that they are suffer from and the diversity of health systems all around the world, to coexist with this epidemic through beneficial coping, and following the World Health Organization instructions by changing bad lifestyle habits and some behaviors that can contribute in reducing the prevalence of covid-19 between individuals, relaxation during work time and between the shifts, eating sufficient healthy food and practicing physical activity and sports(WHO, 2020).

Regarding the specialization and the experiences of the researchers in the field of sports sciences, the researchers will try to present an important element that will enhance the individual's physical, mental, and even psychological health, and since the topic of the research focuses on the individual's psychological health, the researchers tried to shed light on an important element of mental health, which is reducing the stress of being infected by the coronavirus, especially in light the pandemic that the whole world is Experiencing. Where psychological health is a global indicator of the individual's ability to cope with various developments and

pressures without experiencing psychological setbacks or states of anxiety, depression, and psychological inability to deal with different life situations. Here, the importance of sports practice appears as one of the most important means that work to improve psychological health and rid the individual from feelings of anxiety, depression, and dissatisfaction. In this context, entertaining sports activities should be implemented. entertaining sports activities is not a novel topic, and its positive impact has been reported on both physical and psychological variables in various clinical populations. where entertaining sports activities defined as the activities where the primary purpose of the activity is participation, with the related goals of improved physical fitness, fun, and social involvement often prominent, recreational sports are usually perceived as being less stressful, both physically and mentally, on the participants (Encyclopedia, 2020).

On this context, the researchers found that there are many theoretical and applied studies and researches in the field of sports sciences demonstrated that practicing sports activities in its different types plays a stronger role in helping the individual to develop his different abilities, especially those mental ones, to face various levels of challenges and life pressures; among which the study of (Maugeri, et al., 2020), entitled " The impact of physical activity on psychological health during Covid-19 pandemic in Italy ", The study aimed to examine changes in the physical activity levels during self-quarantine in Italy, and the impact of exercise on psychological health, The questionnaire measured the total weekly physical activity energy expenditure before and during quarantine (i.e. the sum of walking, moderate-intensity physical activities, and vigorous-intensity physical activities) in Metabolic Equivalent Task minutes per week (MET-min/wk) using an adapted version of International Physical Activity Questionnaire and their psychological well-being using the Psychological General Well Being Index. The study suggest that the reduction of total physical activity had a profoundly negative impact on psychological health and well-being of population. Based on this scientific evidence, maintaining a regular exercise routine is a key strategy for physical and mental health during a forced rest period like the current corona virus emergency. There is also another study by (Kang, Sun, Zhang, Sun, Wang, & Zhu, 2020), entitled " Is Physical Activity Associated with Mental Health among Chinese Adolescents during Isolation in COVID-19 Pandemic ? ", The study was to explore the relationship of Physical Activity (PA) and Sedentary Time (SED) with mood states among Chinese adolescents during the pandemic. The most prominent results of the study indicated that the TMD of the Senior Grade 3 students was relatively higher than those in other grades, PA were significantly associated with mood states, with

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higher levels of PA during home isolation were related to more stable mood states. Maintaining an active lifestyle can help to reduce students' anger, fatigue, depression and produce positive emotional states during the COVID-19 pandemic. PA and exercise are important components of intervention programs for future study aiming to help children and adolescents protect their mental health from adverse impact of public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. In the same context the researchers (Carriedo, Cecchini, Fernandez-Rio, & Méndez-Giménez, 2020), entitled " COVID-19, Psychological Well-being and Physical Activity Levels in Older Adults During the Nationwide Lockdown in Spain", The aim of the study is to examine the psychological well-being of older adults during the home isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and to investigate whether meeting the World Health Organization's global recommendations on physical activity (PA) for health is associated with their resilience, affect, and depressive symptoms. The Results showed that older adults who regularly engaged in vigorous (VPA) and moderate-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) during the quarantine reported higher scores in resilience (Locus, Self-efficacy, and Optimism), positive affect, and lower in depressive symptoms.

In view of the foregoing, the following question can be asked:

- Does entertaining sports activities have psychological impact in reducing the anxiety of contracting the Covid19?

Under this question, we have the following secondary questions:

- Does entertaining sports activities have psychological impact in reducing the fear of contracting the Covid19?
- Does entertaining sports activities have psychological impact in reducing the fear of the future due the Covid19?

2. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

-THE MAIN HYPOTHESIS:

The recreational sports have psychological impact in decreasing the fear of being infect the Covid19.

- THE PARTIAL HYPOTHESIS:

- The recreational sports have psychological impact in decreasing the panic of being the Covid19.
- The recreational sports have psychological impact in decreasing the fear of the future due the Covid19.

3. THE OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF RESEARCH TERMS AND CONCEPTS:

- **Psychological impact:** defined as the effect caused by entertaining sport activities on individuals during home quarantine pandemic.

- **The recreational sports:** The researchers defines it as a set of physical activities subjectively chosen by individual, it may be organized or not, practiced anywhere (homes, stadiums, gardens), it open the way for the individual to express himself and help him to eliminate excess energy and exploit the time of the home quarantine.

- **The fear of being infected:** it leads to a feeling of psychological tension; this is precisely the kind of pressure caused by the corona (COVID-19) pandemic and the problems caused by the period of home quarantine, the closure of public places, and the isolation of the population.

- **The Covid19:** (Covid-19) is the illness caused by the new type of coronavirus that started in China at the end of 2019, This disease has spread rapidly around the world in many countries across 6 continents, that affected individual's lifestyle especially during the quarantine.

4. METHOD AND TOOLS:

- **The method:** the study relied on a descriptive method appropriate for the nature of the study.

- **The Research Community:** the citizens who practicing entertaining sports activities in Sétif City –The Wilaya of Sétif-.

- **The Sample and methods of its selection:** The sample study included a group of citizens selected as randomly who practicing entertaining sports activities in Sétif city, where the total sample was 100 (63 of them male, 37 female), their ages varied from 18 to 36, This sample was chosen in a nonrandom (purposive) manner.

- **Search field:**

Spatial field: The study was carried out in Sétif City – The Wilaya of Sétif -

Temporal field: The study was conducted in the period from 15 September to 20 October 2020.

- **Identification of the variables:**

The independent variable: Which is recreational sports; it is the variable that has an impact on the anxiety of being infected.

The dependent variable: the anxiety of being infected, which is the variable which is affected by the recreational sports.

- **Study Tools and Scientific foundations:**

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Study Tool: In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers used the questionnaire form technique and this after consulting a series of previous studies and tools used in it, such as the study of (Carriedo, Cecchini, Fernandez-Rio, & Méndez-Giménez, 2020), the study of (Maugeri, et al., 2020), and the study of (Mahmud, Talukder, & Rahman, 2020). After consulting the content of the previous studies and different scales related to covid-19, the form of the subject of our study was built and submitted to a group of arbitrators in order to adjust it. The questionnaire was based on 24 items. For the purpose of obtaining precise results, a closed type of questionnaire was based on the type was used, it means that the answer is whether yes or no, and each item expressed only one idea without interpretation. The questionnaire distributed via social media network to sétifien citizens.

- Scientific foundations of the tool:

▪ Questionnaire form honesty:

The arbitrators' honesty (apparent honesty): In order to establish the tool's honesty, an arbitrators' opinion survey method was used and the tool was presented to a group of university professors among psychological and sports specialists who gave their remarks on the relevance of the questionnaire's items, its degree of relationship and the clarity of its language. In the light of this, some paragraphs were adjusted and some were deleted.

The stability calculation for the index (internal coherence): The stability has been verified through the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, and the following table shows the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha relative to the questionnaire stability measurement.

Table 1. the stability coefficient of each questionnaire axis and the sum of the axes

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha
Total questionnaire items	24	.0861

Reference: Based on SPSS outputs

We note from Table 1 that the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of all the questionnaire axis ranges reached (0.861), which prove the high stability value and shows that the stability value is high and indicates that the search tool is highly stable, making us

fully confident that our questionnaire is appropriate for the study and the hypotheses testing.

5. RESULTS:

Presentation of the hypothesis results:

- Shows the results of the first axis: panic of being infected by the Covid19

Table 2: The table represents statistical operations for the first axis

	Paragraphs	YES%				NO%			
1	Have you been affected mentally after hearing about Coronavirus?	73.5				26.5			
2	Did you get scared during the spread of Covid-19?	82.4				17.6			
3	Do you think you need psychological assistance due to the spread of Covid-19?	17.6				82.4			
4	Do you go to public places respecting the preventive measures?	76.5				23.5			
5	Have you or any family members been exposed to psychological stress due to the spread of Covid-19?	51.5				48.5			
6	How do you overcome the fear of the Virus?	reading	Sport	Visit a doctor	watch the media	Social media	Religious tracks	others	
		20.6 %	26.5 %	1.5 %	7.4 %	25 %	20.6 %	%17.6	

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7	Do you suffer from sleep disorder during quarantine?	44.1	55.9
8	Do you think Recreational activities helps you mentally and physically during quarantine?	94.1	5.9
9	Do you make entertaining sports activities as an excuse for you to get out from the house during quarantine?	39.7	60.3
10	Do you enjoy practicing Sports?	94.1	5.9
11	Does Working out help you control your emotions due to the pandemic news?	93.8	16.2
12	Does Working out affect your mood positively?	95.6	4.4

The first hypothesis where we dove into the fear of injury and whether entertaining sports activities help overcome it, we can say from the answers of the subjects that a large percentage declared their psychological impact after hearing the news about the spread of Covid-19 and the questionnaires (1) and (2) validate that since the percentage of answering with ‘‘Yes’’ is over 70% which corresponds with (Carriedo, Cecchini, Fernandez-Rio, & Méndez-Giménez, 2020)study that showed a concern and stress about the spread of the virus all over the world whether as the increase of the death ratio or the fact that there’s no cure or vaccine yet, plus the change of the individuals behaviors in a preventative manner and we can conclude that from the questionnaire (4) that addressed the subjects respect of the precautionary measures in public places, we find that this protective etiquette was followed by 76.5% of the people, but this fear does not elevate to an illness or

become a barrier to the person's daily activities, which we notice in the questionnaire (3) a huge percentage of 82.4% denying their need to a mental help due to that fear, and that proves the responses of the questionnaire (6), where we found that the dominant percentage was in favor of sport activities, because to the participants it is the preferable way to overcome boredom, routines and the fear of the virus and that's what made most of them don't need psychological assistance, even their sleeping habits didn't get affected due to the fact that they maintained their exercising, in addition to that sport activities benefited the participants and the questions (10) (11) (12) showed their enjoyment, controlling anxiety and mood changes after practicing sports since 90% of the people replied with "Yes" specially in (10) and (11), according to the study published of (Maugeri, et al., 2020) and the study of (Lee, 2020), the results of the two studies strongly support the probability that entertaining sports activities reduces the fear of infection with coronavirus and increases the individual's enjoyment during exercise.

-Shows the results of the second axis : fear of the future

Table 3 : The table represents statistical operations for the second axis

	Paragraphs	YES%	NO%
1	Did quarantine affect your daily routine?	89.7	10.3
2	Did you panic of the possibility that whether you or family members will be exposed to Covid-19?	95.6	4.4
3	Did quarantine affect your working out program?	79.4	20.6
4	Do you think you can make up for what you missed from recreational activities during quarantine?	67.6	32.4
5	Do you feel happy after exercising?	97.1	2.9
6	Do you feel confident after exercising?	94.1	5.9

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7	Does exercising add somewhat of an enthusiasm to your daily lifestyle?	92.6	7.4
8	Do you get excited when you are about to work-out?	83.8	16.2
9	Do you feel isolated when you don't exercise?	58.8	41.2
10	Do you think that entertaining sports activities help reduce the constant news follow up about Covid-19?	82.4	17.6
11	Does allocating time for entertaining sports activities make you accept the idea of social isolation from work colleagues, society and friends?	60.3	39.7
12	Does practicing sports make you optimistic about tomorrow?	89.7	10.3

The second hypothesis in which we dealt with fear of the future and does the practice of entertaining sports activities help in alleviating it? We can say, through the responses of the participants, that a large proportion indicated that it was severely affected by the pandemic, and this appears in statement No. (2) Where was the percentage of the participants' fear about the possibility of their infection or of one of their family members by 95.6%, in addition to the impact of their lifestyle in an unexpected way, for example, the statement No. (1) and (3) where the percentage of answers with "yes" was very high, reaching 70%, and this indicates that the routine that was Before the pandemic was not the same as the one during it, it affected the way of life and all that can be done is to sit down and follow the latest Headlines about the virus. This is what was discussed in the study of (Bouchareb &

Saidia, 2020) that the period of the outbreak of the virus and taking measures of isolation and social distancing, has affected the individual's lifestyle. Therefore, some may overlook the importance of following a healthy lifestyle during this period in particular, and this is what the participants showed in their answers about the questionnaire No. (10) (11), that practicing recreational exercises is the best solution to get rid of the constant follow-up of news and accept the idea of isolation that may last for an unknown period, as the participants assure in phrase No. (10) that their practice of recreational activities made them accept the idea of isolation and social distance from their work colleagues, training buddies ... etc., not only that, as well as the practice of this type of sports made them add some enthusiasm and break the routine on Their lives during quarantine plus to being optimistic about tomorrow, and this appeared in their agreement in each of the statement No (5) (6) (7) where the approval rates were above 93.6%, and this is confirmed by the study (Hammami, Harrabi, Mohr, & Krustup, 2020)that allocating a period of time for practicing sports activities would change the lifestyle of an individual for the better during the pandemic and takes him out of his shell of psychological pressures to make him optimistic about himself, tomorrow and his future, and this supports the idea that practicing entertaining sports activities reduces the fear of the future resulting from The emerging virus.

6. CONCLUSION:

We have tried to see how recreational sports can help reduce the anxiety of being infected by the coronavirus during quarantine. We have therefore seen a positive impact of this type of sports activity on psychological health through the sample answers to the questions asked in the questionnaire. From here we conclude that this type of activity has a great effect on the individual's psychological aspect well, as these activities open the way for the individual to express himself and help him to eliminate excess energy and exploit the time of the home quarantine, this makes him feel very glad and confident. This kind of activities achieves psychological stability, eliminate fear too; fear leads to a feeling of psychological tension. It is also an activity that the individual resorts to achieve relaxation. In this context, the internal pathologist and psychologist "Kora Feber" said that practicing sport for 45 minutes at a rate of 3 weekly times helps to get rid of depression and improve mood, she added that sport helps to eliminate fear too; fear leads to a feeling of psychological tension, this is precisely the kind of pressure caused by the corona (COVID-19) pandemic and the problems caused by the period of quarantine, the closure of public places, the isolation of the population and their travel ban, which is overcome by sport; also, the researcher "George Mathmen",

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from the Canadian University of Toronto, has proved that on 2013 study in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that moderate exercise prevents long-term depressive episodes. The first study of its kind is to help eliminate depression and improve mood, because it focuses in the role played by sports in maintaining mental health and preventing depression from emerging in advanced life (Bouchareb & Saidia, 2020), also the researcher (Benaki, 2021, p. 64) expressed support for the idea of maintaining a regular exercise routine is a key strategy for physical and mental health during the lockdown notably the current coronavirus emergency.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Spreading the culture of practicing sport activities in general and recreational sport in particular in Algerian society.
- Recreational sports activities can relieve depression, stress, and anxiety.
- Make entertaining sport activities as one of the basic practices of the individual.
- Work to provide a suitable environment for practicing Recreational sport.
- Supporting scientific researches on Recreational sports.

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