

Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice Regarding Ankle Sprain Management Among Sports Persons

Anitha P.*

Abstract

Ankle sprain is a frequently occurring musculoskeletal injury among athletes and sports participants. If not treated properly, it can result in pain, joint instability, and decreased athletic performance. The present study was conducted to evaluate the knowledge, attitude, and practices (KAP) of sports persons regarding the management of ankle sprain. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was used, involving 100 participants selected through convenience sampling. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire to assess knowledge related to the causes, signs, and symptoms, and immediate management of ankle sprain. Attitudes and practices were measured through a Likert scale and self-reported responses. The results indicated that most participants possessed general awareness about ankle sprains and their common causes. However, deficiencies were identified in areas such as correct first-aid management and rehabilitation procedures. Participants generally showed a positive attitude toward early treatment and preventive strategies, but their actual practices, including performing proper warm-up exercises, using supportive equipment, and consistently following rehabilitation programs, were not always adequate. The study also found a significant relationship between knowledge and practice scores, suggesting that increased awareness leads to better management behaviors. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of educational programs aimed at improving both understanding and practical management of ankle sprains among sports persons. Emphasis on structured training programs and awareness campaigns can help sports persons adopt appropriate preventive and management strategies, thereby reducing the risk of recurrent injuries and promoting faster recovery.

Keywords: Ankle sprain, knowledge, attitude, practice, sports persons

INTRODUCTION

Ankle sprains are widely recognized as one of the most frequent injuries encountered in sports and physical activities. It usually occurs when the foot turns or bends excessively beyond its normal movement, causing injury to the ligaments that support the ankle joint. Sports that involve running, jumping, and sudden directional changes, such as football, basketball, and volleyball, place athletes at particularly high risk. Although often considered a minor injury, an ankle sprain can have long-term consequences if not managed properly, including chronic instability, recurrent injuries, and decreased athletic performance [1].

*Author for Correspondence

Anitha P.

E-mail: anitha1903@gmail.com

Lecturer, Department of Nursing, Anupama College of Nursing, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

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The burden of ankle sprains extends beyond the immediate pain and swelling. For many athletes, even a single untreated or poorly managed sprain can interrupt training schedules, reduce participation, and affect overall fitness levels. In competitive settings, this can influence both individual performance and team outcome. Despite

the high prevalence of ankle sprains, there is considerable variation in how athletes perceive and manage these injuries. Some may ignore early symptoms or rely on informal advice, while others may lack awareness of proper first aid and rehabilitation practices [2].

Knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) studies are useful tools for understanding how individuals respond to health-related issues. In the context of ankle sprain management, knowledge refers to awareness of the causes, symptoms, prevention, and treatment options. Attitude represents an individual's beliefs and understanding of the severity of an injury and the need for appropriate treatment and care. In contrast, practice involves the actual measures taken by athletes, such as applying first aid, seeking medical attention, or following rehabilitation exercises. A gap between knowledge and practice is often observed, where individuals may be aware of correct management strategies but fail to implement them consistently [3].

In many cases, inadequate knowledge about immediate care, such as the RICE protocol (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation), and lack of adherence to rehabilitation exercises contribute to delayed recovery and increased risk of re-injury. Moreover, factors such as peer influence, accessibility of medical facilities, and personal attitudes towards injury can significantly shape management behaviors. Understanding these aspects is essential for designing effective interventions that not only improve awareness but also encourage positive behavioral changes [4].

Given the importance of proper injury management in maintaining athletic performance and preventing complications, it is necessary to evaluate the current level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices among sports persons. This study aimed to assess these components in relation to ankle sprain management. By identifying existing gaps and patterns, the findings can support the development of targeted educational programs and strategies to promote safer sports participation and better health outcomes for athletes [5].

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

A descriptive cross-sectional research design was used to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to ankle sprain management among sports participants.

Study Setting and Population

The study was conducted among sports persons actively engaged in various indoor and outdoor sports. The participants included both amateur and semi-professional athletes who were available during the data collection period.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study consisted of 100 participants who were chosen through a convenience sampling method according to their accessibility and readiness to participate in the research.

INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Inclusion Criteria

- Sports persons aged 18 years and above
- Individuals actively participating in sports activities
- Those who provided informed consent

Exclusion Criteria

- Individuals with a history of severe lower limb fractures or surgery
- Participants unwilling to complete the questionnaire

Data Collection Tool

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into three sections:

1. *Knowledge section*: Included multiple-choice questions related to the causes, symptoms, prevention, and first-aid management of ankle sprains.
2. *Attitude section*: Assessed using a Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree) to evaluate perceptions towards injury management and prevention.
3. *Practice section*: Focused on self-reported behaviors, such as the use of protective measures, adherence to warm-up exercises, and rehabilitation practices.

The questionnaire was pre-tested for clarity and reliability before final use.

Data Collection Procedure

Participants were contacted at their respective sports venues, where the objectives of the study were explained to them. Informed consent was obtained before the questionnaire was distributed. Sufficient time was provided for participants to complete their responses, and confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the data collection process [6].

Data Analysis

The data collected was entered into statistical software for analysis using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to present and summarize the results. To determine the relationship between knowledge and practice, suitable statistical tests, including the chi-square test, were used. Statistical significance was set at p of less than 0.05.

Ethical Considerations

Prior approval for the study was obtained from the appropriate institutional authority of our hospital. Participants were informed that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that their responses would be kept private. No personal information was collected, and all data was used exclusively for research purposes [7].

Results

A total of 100 sports persons participated in this study. The findings are presented under three main domains: knowledge, attitudes, and practice of ankle sprain management.

The majority of participants were aged between 18 and 23 years (72%) and were predominantly male (68%). More than half of the participants were engaged in team sports (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants (n = 100).

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age (years)	18–20	38	38%
	21–23	34	34%
	24–26	18	18%
	>26	10	10%
Gender	Male	68	68%
	Female	32	32%
Type of sport	Team sports	57	57%
	Individual sports	43	43%
Experience (years)	<2	29	29%
	2–5	41	41%
	>5	30	30%

Table 2. Knowledge level of participants.

Knowledge level	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Good	36	36%
Moderate	44	44%
Poor	20	20%

Table 3. Attitude level of participants.

Attitude level	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Positive	62	62%
Neutral	26	26%
Negative	12	12%

Table 4. Practice level of participants.

Practice level	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Good	28	28%
Moderate	39	39%
Poor	33	33%

Table 5. Association between knowledge and practice levels.

Knowledge level	Good practice	Moderate practice	Poor practice	Total
Good	18	12	6	36
Moderate	8	22	14	44
Poor	2	5	13	20

Knowledge Regarding Ankle Sprain Management

Most participants (44%) demonstrated moderate knowledge. While many were aware of common causes and symptoms, fewer participants correctly identified appropriate first-aid techniques and rehabilitation strategies (Table 2).

Attitude Towards Ankle Sprain Management

The majority of participants (62%) showed a positive attitude towards proper injury management, including seeking medical care and following preventive measures (Table 3).

Practice Related to Ankle Sprain Management

Practice levels were less satisfactory than knowledge and attitude. Only 28% of the respondents reported good practices, while a considerable proportion (33%) demonstrated poor management behavior (Table 4).

Association Between Knowledge and Practice

Statistical analysis revealed a significant association between knowledge and practice levels ($p < 0.05$), indicating that participants with better knowledge were more likely to follow appropriate management practices (Table 5).

DISCUSSION

The present study explored the knowledge, attitude, and practice regarding ankle sprain management among sports persons and identified several important patterns. Although a fair proportion of participants demonstrated moderate-to-good knowledge, there were noticeable gaps, particularly in areas related to first aid and rehabilitation. This suggests that while general awareness exists, a detailed and practical understanding remains limited [8].

The positive attitudes observed among the majority of participants were encouraging. Most athletes acknowledged the importance of early treatment, injury prevention, and adherence to recovery

protocols. However, this favorable outlook has not consistently translated into appropriate practices. A significant number of participants reported irregular warm-up routines, inconsistent use of protective equipment, and poor adherence to rehabilitation exercises. This mismatch between attitudes and actual behavior highlights a common challenge in health-related practices.

One possible explanation for this gap is the lack of structured guidance and supervision in the field. Many athletes rely on informal sources of information, such as peers and coaches, rather than trained healthcare professionals. Time constraints, lack of access to physiotherapy services, and underestimation of injury severity may also contribute to inadequate practice. Furthermore, some athletes may resume activity prematurely due to competitive pressure, increasing the risk of recurrent injuries [9].

The study further identified a significant relationship between knowledge and practice levels, suggesting that greater awareness contributes to more positive management behaviors. Individuals with better knowledge scores were more likely to follow appropriate ankle sprain management techniques. This result highlights the importance of educational programs that not only increase awareness but also enhance practical skills and their application. Overall, the results suggest that simply having knowledge is not sufficient; there must be emphasis on translating knowledge into consistent and effective action. Structured training sessions, workshops, and regular monitoring can help bridge this gap and promote safer sports participation [10].

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that although sports persons possess a reasonable level of knowledge and a generally positive attitude towards ankle sprain management, their actual practices are often inadequate and inconsistent. The observed gap between knowledge and practice indicates the need for more practical and action-oriented interventions. Improving awareness alone is not enough; efforts must be directed towards ensuring that sports persons are equipped with the skills and motivation to apply proper management techniques. Educational programs, supervised training, and increased access to professional guidance can play a crucial role in enhancing both preventive and rehabilitative practices. By addressing these gaps, it is possible to reduce the incidence of ankle sprains, prevent long-term complications, and support better performance and well-being among athletes.

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