

**AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND UTILIZATION OF
PHYSIOTHERAPY IN MANAGEMENT OF SPORTS INJURIES
AMONG FOOTBALL PLAYERS IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

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BENIN CITY**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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CERTIFICATION

This dissertation by Ehimhen, Rita Ofure is accepted in its present form as satisfying the dissertation requirement of the degree of Bachelor of Physiotherapy of the School of Basic Medical Sciences, College of Medical Sciences of the University of Benin.



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DEDICATION

This Work and its associated degree is dedicated to Almighty God and my amazing family.

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ABSTRACT

Background of the study: Physiotherapy plays a critical role in the prevention, management, and rehabilitation of sports-related injuries among athletes. Despite its proven benefits, the level of awareness, knowledge, and utilization of physiotherapy services among football players in tertiary institutions remains suboptimal. This study assessed the awareness, knowledge, attitude, and utilization of physiotherapy in the management of sports injuries among football players in a tertiary institution.

Aim of the Study: This study aimed to assess the awareness, knowledge, and utilization of physiotherapy among University of Benin football players and examine factors influencing their attitude toward physiotherapy.

Methodology: Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequency table while inferential statistics of Chi Square was used for test of association between variables. Alpha level was set at 0.05

Results: Findings revealed that 87.6% of respondents had heard about physiotherapy, while 73.2% were aware of its role in managing sports injuries. However, only 69.4% demonstrated adequate overall awareness. Despite 84.5% acknowledging physiotherapy's role in injury treatment and 81.4% in improving fitness, actual utilization was low, with only 27.8% visiting a physiotherapist when injured. The study also found that 84.1% of respondents showed negative attitudes in some domains such as stigma and gender bias, while 40.8% displayed positive overall attitudes. Major barriers included cost of services (72.2%) and lack of nearby facilities (27.8%).

Conclusion: Although general awareness of physiotherapy among football players was high, knowledge, attitude, and utilization were suboptimal. Interventions such as subsidized physiotherapy services, establishment of on-campus physiotherapy clinics, awareness campaigns, and collaboration between institutional authorities and physiotherapists are recommended to enhance utilization and improve sports injury management in tertiary institutions.

Keywords: Awareness and knowledge, Physiotherapy management, Sport injury, Football players.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Nearly one-third of childhood injuries are associated with sports activities, and in the United States, approximately 30 million children and adolescents engage in organized sports, resulting in over 3.5 million injuries annually (Johns Hopkins Medicine, 2024). Within the European Union, an estimated 6.2 million individuals receive hospital treatment annually for various injuries, including those related to sports, while approximately 233,000 fatalities result from injuries, with sports accounting for a proportion of these deaths (EuroSafe, 2017). In Africa, sports injuries constitute a significant public health challenge, with annual prevalence rates ranging from 13.5% to 38.1% in males and 5.2% to 20.2% in females. Football is consistently reported as the predominant cause, with a substantial proportion of injuries involving the lower limbs (Phillips et al., 2022).

Football is recognized as an essential means of health promotion and wellbeing with the likelihood of adverse outcomes, including injuries (Fortington, 2018). Sports-related injury is a complex emergent phenomenon that requires urgent attention (Bittencourt et al., 2016). "Sports-related injuries" broadly refer to physical impairments typically arising from athletic activity, yet they frequently afflict non-athletes—such as laborers, painters, and gardeners—who develop analogous conditions like tendinopathies and joint disorders through repetitive occupational strain (National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases [NIAMS], 2024). Effective prevention and management of sports-related injuries require accurate knowledge and a thorough understanding of injury mechanisms and patterns (Hassan et al., 2021).

Physiotherapy is the primary care for an injured athlete (Singh and Rathore, 2024). Based on the specific characteristics of the injury, the physical therapist designs a rehabilitation

regimen incorporating stretching, strengthening, mobilization, and preventive strategies (Allah Gaowgzeh et al., 2021). Additionally, physiotherapists play a crucial role in injury prevention by conducting functional assessments to detect muscular imbalances and by formulating targeted corrective exercise programs (Fonseca, 2024).

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2022), a substantial proportion of students in Nigerian tertiary institutions fall within the youth demographic, with many classified as teenagers or emerging adults. Teenage players are particularly susceptible to a range of musculoskeletal injuries, which may not only hinder their immediate involvement in sporting activities but also pose long-term consequences for their overall athletic development and health. The adolescent years are crucial for physical and neuromuscular development, and injuries during this period can have lasting effects on athletes' career (Khan and Shrivastava, 2024). Facilitating the progression of talented youth players to elite performance levels necessitates a comprehensive recognition of the escalating physical demands linked to intensified training loads and increased match exposure throughout the course of long-term athletic development (Veith et al., 2024).

Football is the most popular sport worldwide (Svensson et al., 2016). Given the sport's extensive popularity, the considerable volume of participants, and the varying intensities of competitive engagement, the occurrence of injuries is both prevalent and recurrent (Cardoso-Marinho et al., 2022). Overall, the incidence of injuries in professional football players is 8.1 injuries/1,000 h of exposure for male players, and 6.1 injuries/1,000 h of exposure for female players (López-Valenciano et al., 2021). At the amateur level, generally, the incidence is 12.5/1,000 h of exposure (Van Beijsterveldt et al., 2015). Although football serves as a highly effective medium for enhancing physical activity and fitness, the availability of systematic data on football-related injuries remains limited or significantly underreported, especially within the Nigerian context (Owoeye et al., 2017).

The most common type of sport injuries are those affecting the musculoskeletal system (NIAMS, 2024). The most prevalent musculoskeletal football injuries tend to affect the lower limb, with muscle and tendon injuries accounting for $39.78\% \pm 11.8\%$ in professional male players and $44.56\% \pm 12.57\%$ in amateur male players, including common examples such as ankle sprains, anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries, hamstring strains, groin strains, and knee strains (Gurau et al., 2024). Hamstring strains are identified as the most prevalent among the listed injuries. Goalkeepers are significantly less prone to suffer an ACL injury compared to outfield players (Della Villa et al., 2021). Non-musculoskeletal injuries, notably concussions, constitute about 9% of football-related injuries, with traumatic brain injuries representing 21% of head injuries in both recreational and competitive contexts (Hergenroeder et al., 2022). Overuse injuries in football, including stress fractures and tendinopathies, primarily result from repetitive strain and insufficient recovery, substantially contributing to overall injury rates among players (Cardoso-Marinho et al., 2022).

Physiotherapists play a pivotal role in professional football, contributing not only to the physical rehabilitation of athletes but also to the implementation of evidence-based strategies for injury prevention and performance optimization (Gurau et al., 2024). Rehabilitation adherence is widely recognized as a critical determinant of successful injury recovery outcomes (Forsdyke et al., 2016). Physiotherapists also integrate sports psychology interventions into injury rehabilitation to prevent negative psychological responses (Forsdyke et al., 2016). Sports massage is strategically utilized both prior to and following athletic events to optimize performance, mitigate fatigue, and promote efficient recovery (García-Sillero et al., 2021). Physiotherapists detect risks, target weakness and assist clients in avoiding injuries (Visaria et al., 2023). Modern physiotherapeutic modalities such as electrotherapy and therapeutic baths is a crucial aspect of recovery (Iafrate da Fonseca, 2024). While sports physiotherapy is widely recognized as essential in the management,

rehabilitation, and prevention of sports-related injuries, its specific influence on young football players remains insufficiently investigated (Khan and Shrivastava, 2024).

1.2 Statement of the problem

In the context of University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, there is limited awareness and understanding among footballers regarding the role and benefits of physiotherapy as an effective intervention for sport related injuries sustained during sport activities. This limited awareness may contribute to the underutilization of physiotherapy services, thereby impeding effective injury management and compromising rehabilitation outcomes within the institution. This study seeks to examine the prevailing level of awareness and the extent of utilization of physiotherapy services among football players at the University of Benin in relation to the management of sports injuries. Understanding the degree to which football players are informed about and utilize physiotherapy as a treatment modality is essential for improving injury management strategies and fostering overall well-being within the institution.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. What is the level of awareness regarding physiotherapy as a healthcare intervention among football players at the University of Benin?
- ii. What is the level of knowledge regarding physiotherapy as a treatment modality among football players at the University of Benin.
- iii. What is the attitude of football players toward seeking physiotherapy as a treatment option for sports-related injuries.
- iv. What are the barriers that hinder football players from accessing physiotherapy as a treatment option for sports-related injuries?

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to assess the level of awareness, knowledge and utilization of physiotherapy intervention among University of Benin football players and to explore the factors influencing their attitude towards seeking physiotherapy treatment.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

- i. To assess the level of awareness of physiotherapy as a care option among football players in University of Benin.
- ii. To assess the level of knowledge of physiotherapy as a care option among football players in University of Benin.
- iii. To identify the attitude of football players in University of Benin towards physiotherapy as a treatment option.
- iv. To identify barriers hindering football players in University of Benin from seeking out physiotherapy treatment modality.

1.5 Hypotheses

1.5.1 Null Hypotheses

- i. There will be no significant relationship between awareness and utilization of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in University of Benin.
- ii. There will be no significant relationship between knowledge and utilization of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in University of Benin.
- iii. There will be no significant association between duration of footballing and level of awareness of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin

- iv. There will be no significant association between duration of footballing and level of knowledge of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin
- v. There will be no significant association between duration of footballing and attitudes of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin.

1.6 Significance of the Study

- i. **Enhancing health outcomes:** If football players at the University of Benin lack awareness of physiotherapy as a treatment option, they may not be accessing the most appropriate and effective care for their sports-related injuries. Bridging this knowledge gap has the potential to facilitate quicker recovery, minimize the risk of long-term complications, and improve overall health outcomes among the student population.
- ii. **Advancing preventive care:** Greater awareness of physiotherapy may motivate football players in tertiary institutions to pursue timely treatment rather than enduring injuries without intervention. Early access to care can mitigate further damage and support more efficient recovery.
- iii. **Lowering healthcare expenditure:** Unaddressed or inadequately managed sports injuries can result in more severe and costly complications over time. Enhancing access to physiotherapy services can help reduce long-term healthcare costs by promoting effective early intervention.
- iv. **Promoting student well-being and functional capacity:** Sports-related injuries can significantly impair students' participation in physical activity, a key component of overall health and academic performance. Enhancing awareness of physiotherapy could empower football players to maintain an active lifestyle and support sustained well-being.

- v. **Informing federal health initiatives:** The findings from this study could inform targetted federal health campaigns or interventions to increase awareness and utilization of physiotherapy services in federal institution.

1.7 Scope and Delimitation

- i. The study was delimited to football players of male gender in University of Benin.
- ii. The data taken included demographic data eg., age and relion, awareness of physiotherapy as a care option for sport injuries, knowledge of physiotherapy for sport related injuries, attitude of football players in seeking physiotherapy as a treatment option and barriers hindering football players in seeking physiotherapy

1.8 Limitations

- i. A limitation of the study might be that the football players might be unwilling to cooperate in the filling of the questionnaire.
- ii. All the questionnaires being administered with technical and medical words may be difficult for some respondents who cannot comprehend to participate effectively.

1.9 Definition of Operational Terms

- i. **Knowledge:** Knowledge is the information or understanding someone has about a subject, like how things work or what to do (Allah Gaowgzeh et al., 2021).
- ii. **Awareness:** Awareness is noticing or understanding something, like knowing what's happening around you (Cardoso-Marinho et al., 2022).
- iii. **Utilization:** Utilization is the act of using something, like tools or resources, to get a job done (Iafrate da Fonseca, 2024).
- iv. **Physiotherapy management:** Physiotherapy management is organizing and leading efforts to help people move better or feel less pain through physical treatments (Gurau et al., 2024).

- v. **Sport injury:** A sport injury is a physical harm, like a bruise or broken bone, that happens while playing a game or exercising (Khan and Shrivastava, 2024).
- vi. **Football players:** Football players are people who play the game of soccer, kicking a ball to score goals (Veith et al., 2024).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1. Definition and Scope of Physiotherapy

World Physiotherapy characterizes physiotherapy as a healthcare profession centered on the assessment, enhancement, and restoration of movement and functional capacity. It plays a critical role in optimizing physical potential and improving quality of life through a comprehensive framework that includes health promotion, disease prevention, therapeutic interventions, habilitation, and rehabilitation (World Physiotherapy, 2021). The term “physiotherapy” is derived from two Greek words, “Physis” meaning nature or natural and “Therapeia” meaning treatment or healing. Conveying the concept of “natural healing,” reflecting its foundational emphasis on restoring health through physical means. In contrast, rehabilitation is derived from Latin, meaning “to make fit again,” and underscores the objective of restoring an individual’s functional abilities following injury or illness (Iafrate da Fonseca, 2024). Physiotherapy is a science-based healthcare profession that employs physical methods to restore, enhance, and preserve functional capacity and quality of life. It encompasses comprehensive assessment, diagnosis, and the implementation of individualized rehabilitation programs. The physiotherapist’s role is dynamic and collaborative, evolving with patient needs and contributing to integrated, multidisciplinary care.

Physiotherapy dates back to the earliest periods of medical practice, with its origins rooted in the works of ancient physicians such as Hippocrates and later Galen. As early as 460 B.C., these practitioners endorsed the use of massage, manual therapeutic techniques, and hydrotherapy as fundamental methods for the treatment and rehabilitation of various ailments, thereby laying the foundation for modern physiotherapeutic practice. The earliest recorded beginnings of physiotherapy as a recognized profession trace back to Per Henrik Ling, known

as the “Father of Swedish Gymnastics.” In 1813, he established the Royal Central Institute of Gymnastics (RCIG), which focused on massage, manual manipulation, and therapeutic exercise (Physiopedia, 2023). Predating Hippocrates, the ancient Indian physician Sushruta (circa 600 B.C.) recognized the therapeutic significance of physical exercise, breathing techniques (Pranayama), and medicated steam and oil therapies in the treatment of joint disorders. The discipline of Yoga, now integrated into modern physiotherapeutic practice, was first systematically documented by Patanjali around 400 C.E. Likewise, traditional Chinese medicine emphasized preventive health, with the origins of acupuncture and acupressure tracing back to ancient China (Star Knowledge, 2022).

The emergence of physical therapy as a distinct and specialized profession began around the First World War, driven by the need for effective rehabilitation of injured soldiers. This demand further intensified during and after the Second World War, as physiotherapists played a vital role in the management and recovery of individuals suffering from amputations, burns, fractures, and spinal cord injuries (Krzeminski, 2022). With technological advancement, physiotherapy has evolved significantly through the integration of computers and electronic innovations. Modern therapeutic tools such as ultrasound machines, transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) units, electrical stimulators, robotic-assisted devices, and shortwave diathermy have greatly enhanced the precision, effectiveness, and overall value of rehabilitation and physical therapy practices (Star Knowledge, 2022). Modern physiotherapy employs evidence-based physical methods to promote, maintain, and restore physical, psychological, and social well-being, while addressing individual differences in health status. It is a continually advancing science that integrates research, clinical expertise, and technological innovation to refine practice and enhance treatment outcomes. Central to this evolution is the application of informed clinical judgment and critical interpretation in patient care (Physiopedia, 2023).

The scope of physiotherapy encompasses the management of diverse medical conditions across the lifespan, from pediatric to geriatric populations. It plays a critical role in addressing musculoskeletal and neurological disorders, while also providing therapeutic interventions for cardiopulmonary conditions, including pre- and post-operative rehabilitation following cardiac or pulmonary surgery. Physiotherapy is supported by substantial scientific evidence as an effective modality for pain management, functional restoration, and injury prevention (George, 2018). Effective injury prevention and management strategies are essential for promoting sustained participation in sport and exercise activities. Early physiotherapy was primarily advanced by trained nurses and graduates of women's physical education institutions (Moffat, 2022). Fundamentally, physiotherapy is broadly recognized as a catalyst for recovery and the promotion of overall well-being.

2.1.2 Sport Injuries

As in other aspects of life, sports inherently carry certain risks of accidents that may lead to injury or even death; therefore, such risks should be carefully anticipated, managed, and controlled (Kisser et al., 2012). Athletes are vulnerable to various musculoskeletal injuries that may require medical care, often resulting in financial costs and disruption of athletic performance. According to Amarvi (2002), the term "injury" originates from the French word "injurier," meaning wrong or faulty. In line with this, Nclatchie (2004) described an injured joint as one that has undergone improper mechanical stress or alignment, resulting in partial or complete structural damage. An injury is an adverse event that compromises functional efficiency, and the incidence of sports-related injuries has risen to almost epidemic proportions in recent years.

The majority of sports injuries arise from traumatic events occurring on the field, either due to a single acute incident or repeated microtraumas. These injuries are broadly classified into accidental and overuse types. The accidental category, which constitutes most sports-

related injuries, results from a sudden traumatic event, such as a forceful impact or abnormal muscle strain, often leading to minor hemorrhages or muscle tears. In contrast, overuse injuries are more commonly observed in athletic settings and develop from the repetitive application of mechanical stress that exceeds the tolerance capacity of biological tissues. Such injuries predominantly affect musculotendinous structures, including muscles, ligaments, and bones, and are attributed to chronic physiological strain resulting from sustained pressure on otherwise healthy tissues. Additionally, severe traumatic events, such as falls or collisions between athletes, may also result in significant injuries (Paul et al., 2021). Additional factors contributing to sports injuries include insufficient warm-up, poor physical conditioning, muscular weakness, improper training methods, and deficient skills or techniques. Other contributing elements encompass unsuitable footwear or attire, unsafe environmental conditions, rule violations, mismatched competition levels, and a history of previous injuries (Dansu, 2014)

The management and mitigation of sports injury risks fall principally within the purview of the sports policy sector, as well as providers of sports-related services and manufacturers and distributors of sporting equipment. A significant proportion of sporting activities depend on specialized service provision, which may be administered by non-profit organizations, such as clubs involved in team sports or by commercial enterprises, particularly in individual sports such as athletics and skiing (Kisser et al.). Physical fitness assessments, along regular athletes education on sport injuries are essential at all levels of sport. In addition, empirical research should investigate the causes, frequency, severity, and types of sports injuries to inform effective prevention and management.

2.1.3 Roles of Physiotherapy in Sport

Athletes often face numerous injuries in the course of pursuing performance goals. To address this challenge and provide structured support to both amateur and professional

athletes, the integration of sports physiotherapy is imperative. This specialized field extends beyond injury management, playing a critical role in performance enhancement. Within the sports context, physiotherapy encompasses the assessment of physical predisposition for specific disciplines, evaluation of sport-specific physiological demands, preparation for physical exertion, continuous health monitoring, post-exercise recovery, and the prevention and treatment of injuries (Jaworski, 2020). An important function of the physiotherapist is to educate athletes on how to prevent injuries and maintain physical health. This is achieved through structured workshops and educational sessions that provide clear instruction on proper warm-up procedures, effective recovery techniques, and essential self-management strategies, all aimed at supporting a long-term and injury-free athletic career (Iafrate da Fonseca, 2024). Kinesio taping is utilized in the treatment of hypermobile dancers to enhance the strength of specific muscles. Ongoing research into joint mobility, functional capacity, and injury patterns across various sports plays a vital role in optimizing physiotherapeutic interventions for athletes. Given the broad application of physiotherapy in sports, continuous investigation into its effectiveness within specific disciplines and its physiological impact on the body remains essential (Jaworski, 2020).

2.2 Application of physiotherapy in football setting

Physiotherapy is the primary care for an injured athlete (Singh and Rathore, 2024). It serves as the frontline intervention in the management of athletic injuries, focusing on pain reduction, functional restoration, and the prevention of further injury to facilitate a safe return to sport. Non-traumatic sports injuries are frequently attributed to underlying biomechanical dysfunctions, which are commonly precipitated by poor athletic technique. For example, running with an exaggerated anterior pelvic tilt and lumbar curvature can significantly increase susceptibility to hamstring injuries (Saleem et al., 2024). With expertise in biomechanics and movement science, physiotherapists assess player performance to identify

movement patterns that support tactical efficiency. By analyzing stress points and injury trends, they contribute to strategic advancement through sport-specific training programs aimed at strengthening vulnerable muscle groups, enhancing endurance, and improving flexibility (Iafrate da Fonseca, 2024). Optimal recovery from sports injuries relies on the adherence to advanced rehabilitation protocols implemented under professional guidance (Emran et al., 2024). High-intensity physical exertion, as commonly experienced in football, often results in the accumulation of lactate, contributing to muscle fatigue and diminished athletic performance. Physiotherapists play a critical role in mitigating these effects through massage therapy, which enhances lymphatic and circulatory flow, thereby promoting the clearance of lactate and its transport to gluconeogenic organs such as the liver. Additionally, therapeutic massage contributes to improved range of motion and flexibility by influencing both muscular and connective tissues—factors essential for maintaining optimal performance and reducing injury risk in football players (Dakić et al., 2023). In football rehabilitation, physiotherapists utilize electrotherapy modalities such as electrostimulation and therapeutic ultrasound to accelerate tissue healing and manage inflammation. These techniques are particularly effective in early recovery stages—electrostimulation helps preserve muscle strength when voluntary activation is limited, while ultrasound facilitates deep tissue regeneration—thereby supporting optimal recovery and return to play (Lake et al., 2020). Additionally, the use of protective strapping and appropriately designed orthotic devices that limit excessive movement of body segments can play a crucial role in preventing reinjury during the recovery phase, until sufficient strength and mobility are restored (Martin et al., 2022). Physiotherapists are integral members of the football team's medical staff, working closely with management and providing continuous care through travel and competition, including risk mitigation of musculoskeletal impairments, pre-match preparation, and on field medical support. Overall, application of physiotherapy is essential in optimizing recovery and

performance in football players while ensuring functional readiness and mitigating the risk of relapse (FMPA, 2022).

2.2.1 Prevalence of Sport-related Injuries among Football players

Sport accounts for 14% of treated injuries in the European Union, with team ball sports responsible for 42% of hospital cases and football comprising the largest share at 71% (Biocomposites, 2018). Globally, football participation involves approximately 270 million individuals, a scale that is associated with a range of health-related outcomes, including soft tissue injuries, fractures, post-injury weight gain, and heightened susceptibility to osteoarthritis (Owoeye et al., 2020). Injury incidence among youth football players varies by region, with studies from Spanish and Swedish academies reporting rates of 2.93 and 6.8 injuries per 1,000 hours, respectively, both indicating a higher occurrence during matches than training sessions. Notably, significantly elevated injury rates have been documented among African football players, with reported figures ranging from 13 to 82 injuries per 1,000 hours (Kwakye et al., 2024). Contact injuries accounted for 62.3% of all reported cases, with the ankle and knee emerging as the most commonly affected regions, representing 25% and 20.1% of injuries, respectively. Sprains were the most frequent injury type (33.3%), followed by muscle strains (13.2%) (Bayne et al., 2018).

2.3 General Awareness of Physiotherapy

Post World War II, physiotherapy has become an essential element of comprehensive healthcare delivery, playing a critical role in patient rehabilitation. Nevertheless, public recognition and understanding of its significance as a core healthcare profession remain insufficient (Paul and Mullerpatan,, 2015). The awareness of physiotherapy in Africa is not uniform. According to a study conducted in Accra, Ghana, mass media and health professionals was the primary information source for the general people, which demonstrated a high degree of awareness about physiotherapy (Olawale et al., 2014). Public awareness of

physiotherapy in Zambia is reported to be limited, particularly when compared to the broader recognition and understanding of the roles performed by medical doctors (Zangata et al., 2019). Studies indicate that the general public in Ibadan, Nigeria, demonstrates a relatively high level of awareness of physiotherapy as a healthcare profession, particularly in understanding its functions and relevance within multidisciplinary care. Conversely, Mbada, Ola-Ojo, and Johnson (2015) reported a low level of physiotherapy awareness—only 16.8%—among residents of rural communities in Nigeria, highlighting a significant disparity in public understanding of physiotherapy across different population settings (Odole et al., 2020). A more general awareness was demonstrated in the involvement of physiotherapists in the management of fractures, dislocations, movement disorders, and stroke rehabilitation. Studies have shown that most respondents in rural areas perceive a physiotherapist primarily as someone who teaches muscle-strengthening exercises (89.2%), assists individuals with walking (83.1%), and provides massage therapy (81.5%) (Mbada et al., 2019). But there remains a notable lack of awareness regarding the role of physiotherapy in the management of cardiovascular and pulmonary dysfunctions, women’s health, and postnatal or gynaecological conditions. Consequently, individuals affected by these health issues are often not referred for physiotherapy, limiting their access to interventions that could significantly improve their quality of life (Devanshi et al., 2017).

2.3.1 Awareness of Physiotherapy among Football Players

Athletes frequently rely on self-management following injury, with coaches often serving as the initial point of consultation despite limited expertise in clinical injury management (Odole et al., 2021). A significant proportion of football players at the club level perceive physiotherapy services as accessible only through physician referral, reflecting limited awareness of direct access pathways to physiotherapeutic care (Saleem et al., 2024). Athletes commonly expect physiotherapists to effectively recognize and respond to their motivational

and psychological needs, reflecting a high level of professional trust (Quartey et al., 2019). Evidence from Nigerian male youth football indicates a significant gap in players' knowledge and practices concerning injury prevention. Coupled with inadequate access to qualified medical personnel, this underscores the essential role of physiotherapists in delivering structured education, prevention strategies, and professional injury management (Owoeye et al., 2013). Johnston and Carroll observed that athletes' perceived decline in recovery during the later stages of rehabilitation contributed to reduced adherence, highlighting a potential gap in awareness and understanding of physiotherapy's long-term role in injury recovery among athletes (Marshall et al., 2012).

2.4 Attitude of Football Players towards Seeking Physiotherapy

Treatment

Footballers have varying attitude towards seeking physiotherapy treatment. Football players exhibit a reactive approach to physiotherapy, typically seeking intervention only when complications develop, which may hinder timely and effective injury management (Odole et al., 2021). Some often demonstrate greater adherence to physiotherapy exercises when provided in written form, as this format improves understanding and acts as an effective prompt for completing their rehabilitation regimen. Others might be reluctant to adhere to rehabilitation exercises which could be attributed to factors such as the high volume of assigned tasks, time limitations, and the absence of social interaction, as the home-based nature of the program required exercises to be performed in isolation. Furthermore, specific qualities of physiotherapists, including their confidence, empathetic communication, and motivational support, play a significant role in promoting footballers' adherence to rehabilitation exercises (Marshall et al., 2012). Gender also influences attitudes toward physiotherapy, with male players often stigmatizing help-seeking and preferring to play

through pain, despite showing greater trust and willingness to work with physiotherapists when engaged (Arvinen-Barrow et al., 2015).

2.4.1 Tendency of Approaching the Wrong Professional or Traditional means as a Care Option.

Instead of consulting physiotherapists, athletes may exhibit a tendency to manage sports-related conditions through unqualified providers or by relying on traditional or non-evidence-based treatment methods. This tendency may stem from insufficient awareness of the benefits of physiotherapy and a limited understanding of physiotherapists' expertise in the management of sports-related conditions. In Lagos, Nigeria, youth football team coaches have identified insufficient funding as a primary factor contributing to the reliance on unqualified personnel for medical care. It is likely that certain players erroneously regarded masseurs and traditional bone setters as licensed healthcare professionals, reflecting a fundamental misperception of the qualifications and roles of recognized medical practitioners (Owoeye et al., 2013). Limited health literacy and financial constraints were key determinants influencing the preference for indigenous health services (HIS) among the public. A majority of respondents reported that, in cases requiring physiotherapy, the use of HIS resulted in adverse outcomes in 50–99% of instances (Maruf et al., 2014). While the use of illicit drugs in sports is explicitly banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), traditional medicines—despite their association with superstitious beliefs and documented risks such as toxicity, mutagenicity, and carcinogenicity—remain unregulated. In South Africa, football players continue to access traditional healers and remedies, reflecting a persistent tendency to utilize inappropriate or unverified treatment options over evidence-based care (Mulungwa et al., 2018).

2.4.2 Effects of Physiotherapy in the Management of Football related Sports Injuries

Physiotherapy has proven beneficial in the treatment of sports injuries caused by traumatic incidents. Evidence indicates that incorporating Nordic hamstring exercises into injury prevention programs by physiotherapists reduces the incidence of hamstring injuries by half among elite football players (van Dyk et al., 2019). Some evidence suggests that incorporating balance exercises on unstable surfaces can lead to a reduced incidence of recurrent ankle sprains (Wagemans et al., 2022). A study conducted in Ghana demonstrated that the application of the RICE protocol comprising of rest, ice, compression and elevation significantly reduced acute inflammation, minimized pain, and accelerated initial recovery in football-related traumatic and overuse injuries. Furthermore, interventions such as massage, taping, wrapping, and Plaster of Paris (POP) contributed to improved stabilization and structural support in managing dislocations and fractures among football players (Omoniyi et al., 2016). In concussion management, physiotherapists effectively utilize vestibular rehabilitation, visual exercises, and manual therapy to address associated impairments (PhysioChiroWellness, 2024). Although sport physiotherapy has been widely studied across various sports, its specific effects on young footballers have received limited research attention (Khan and Shrivastava, 2024).

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) proposed by Funk and James (2001), which provides a theoretical basis for understanding how individuals develop psychological connections and behavioral commitment toward a sport, service, or health-related activity. The model explains that individual's progress through a series of psychological stages; awareness, attraction, attachment, and allegiance, representing increasing levels of involvement and commitment.

According to Funk and James (2001), the awareness stage marks the individual's initial exposure to or recognition of an activity, service, or concept. In the context of this study, awareness refers to the degree to which football players are conscious of the existence and role of physiotherapy in the prevention and management of sports injuries. Awareness can result from exposure through teammates, coaches, educational programs, or health professionals.

The attraction stage represents the point at which individuals begin to develop interest and positive attitudes toward the object of awareness. In this phase, football players who have gained preliminary information about physiotherapy start to perceive it as beneficial and relevant to their athletic performance and injury management. This attraction is influenced by personal beliefs, perceived effectiveness, accessibility, affordability, and reinforcement from peers or coaches.

The third level, attachment, occurs when the individual forms a psychological bond and begins to integrate the service into personal experience. At this stage, the footballer develops an emotional connection to physiotherapy, viewing it not merely as a treatment option but as an essential part of performance enhancement and recovery. Attachment is strengthened through positive experiences and consistent interactions with physiotherapists, leading to habitual or regular use.

Finally, the allegiance stage reflects a deep, enduring commitment characterized by loyalty and advocacy. Here, physiotherapy becomes an indispensable part of the athlete's lifestyle, and the footballer not only continues to utilize physiotherapy services but also encourages others to do the same. Allegiance represents the ultimate behavioral goal of awareness and utilization efforts, as it ensures long-term engagement and sustainability in physiotherapy use. The PCM framework therefore aligns closely with the constructs of this study; awareness, knowledge, and utilization of physiotherapy services, by explaining the progressive nature of

behavioral engagement. Awareness constitutes the foundational stage, while knowledge (attraction) facilitates a more informed attitude toward physiotherapy. Utilization reflects both the attachment and allegiance stages, demonstrating how awareness and knowledge translate into sustained behavioral adoption.

By applying the Psychological Continuum Model, this study seeks to understand how football players' awareness and knowledge levels influence their utilization of physiotherapy services in managing sports injuries. The model provides a theoretical explanation for variations in physiotherapy engagement, suggesting that inadequate awareness and poor knowledge may hinder progression through the continuum, thereby reducing utilization rates. Consequently, interventions aimed at improving awareness and knowledge among athletes could facilitate greater attachment and allegiance to physiotherapy practices, promoting injury prevention, faster recovery, and improved sports performance.

2.6 Empirical Review

Table 1. Empirical Review

Author/ year /country	Aim of study	Type of research design	Method/ outcome	Sample size/ sample strategy	Findings	Strength/ limitaions
Arvinen- Barrow et al. (2015)	To preliminarily explore athletes attitude toward physiotherapist and whether any difference exist due to athletes' previous experience with physiotherapy and due to gender.	Cross sectional design	The Attitudes Toward Physiotherapist Form (ATP-F)	N=176	The sample showed low to moderate scores on ATP-F subscales. Undergraduate students scored low on stigma tolerance (M = 2.83), and moderate on confidence in physiotherapists (M = 4.25) and personal openness (M = 4.29). Cultural preference scored slightly above the midpoint (M = 3.48). The MANOVA showed no significant difference in attitudes toward physiotherapists between students with and without	This study addressed a gap in research on athletes' attitudes toward physiotherap ists, showing gender differences among UK university athletes. Since attitudes can influence care-seeking behavior, understandin g them is essential for effective injury management.

				<p>prior physiotherapy experience, Wilks' Lambda = 0.970, $F(4, 135) = 1.058$, $p = .380$, $p^2 = .030$. MANOVA revealed a significant gender effect on attitudes toward physiotherapists, Wilks' Lambda = 0.93, $F(4, 142) = 2.670$, $p = .035$, $p^2 = .070$. Follow-up analyses showed all ATP-F subscales were significant. Male students reported more negative attitudes ($M = 2.89$) but higher confidence in physiotherapists ($M = 4.36$) than females ($M = 2.43$; $M = 3.92$). Males were also more open to collaboration ($M = 4.42$ vs. 3.97) and more identified with physiotherapists of</p>	<p>However, the limited sample from a small region of England affects generalizability, indicating the need for further research with larger, more diverse samples.</p>
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					the same culture or ethnicity (M = 3.66 vs. 3.02).	
Martin Ebenezer et al. (2019)	<p>1. To ascertain the level of awareness and knowledge of physiotherapy among medical and health science students.</p> <p>2. To assess the need to emphasize the inter-professional education in their curriculum.</p>	Cross sectional study	Questionnaire	N=198	<p>Although 98.5% of students reported knowing what physiotherapy is, only 37.4% had adequate awareness of physiotherapists' work settings, and 4% understood the sub-specialties. Inadequate knowledge was reported regarding cases managed (87.9%), conditions treated (90.9%), examination procedures (57.6%), and physiotherapy modalities (98%).</p>	<p>The study concluded that awareness and knowledge of physiotherapy among medical and health sciences undergraduates are limited. To address this gap, targeted strategies should be implemented, including the integration of inter-professional education within undergraduate curricula. The result of</p>

						the study may not be generalized due to unique sample size. Also the convenient sampling and race would affect the accuracy and consistency of the findings.
Mbada et al. (2019)	To explore the features and related factors affecting how community physiotherapy services are accessed and provided in Nigeria.	Cross sectional study	Questionnaire	N=336	The results shows that the utilization and supply of physiotherapy service was low. About 43.5% of respondents had tertiary education. Awareness of physiotherapy services was 60.1%, mainly via friends (36.1%), mass media (26.2%), and doctor/nurse referrals (23.2%), with television as the leading medium	The findings should be interpreted with caution due to the use of a convenience sample from three rural communities and a relatively small sample size, which may limit generalizability. Additionally,

					<p>(56.6%). Only 16.7% utilized referred physiotherapy services. Lifetime utilization was 21.7%, 12-month utilization 7.4%, and point utilization 2.7%. Treatments included exercise (46.6%), massage (41.1%), and traction (13.7%). Satisfaction with services was reported by 87.7%, and 88.3% were willing to use physiotherapy if needed. Key barriers were travel cost (32.6%), time (27.9%), and work (24.8%). Services were mostly available in teaching hospitals (45.2%) and private hospitals (20.5%), though 47.9% said they were in distant townships. Delivery</p>	<p>the cross-sectional design prevents any causal interpretations</p>
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					was mainly through non-permanent (24.7%) and visiting physiotherapists (21.4%)	
Odole et al. (2020)	This study aimed to assess the awareness, beliefs, attitudes, and utilization of physiotherapy in Ibadan, a major metropolitan city in Nigeria.	A cross sectional survey	Questionnaire	N=500	From the study it was learned that 84.6% were aware of physiotherapy, and 89.0% were familiar with its services. Information sources included hospitals (25.8%), media (25.8%), physiotherapists (22.2%), and schools (22.2%). Most respondents (82.5%) knew physiotherapists work in hospitals. Commonly identified treatment areas were bone fractures/joint dislocations (64.7%), movement problems (54.8%), and stroke (42.5%), while heart and	The study concluded high awareness, positive beliefs, and fairly high utilization of physiotherapy services. However, increased public awareness efforts by physiotherapists are still needed.

					<p>lung conditions were least recognized (7.2%). Regarding beliefs about physiotherapy, 42.5% of participants felt the government should lead public awareness efforts, followed by the media (29.4%), hospitals (27.4%), and physiotherapists (27.2%). While 45.6% strongly agreed they had enough awareness to recommend physiotherapy, 54.4% felt they needed to learn more. Most participants (59.1%) viewed physiotherapy as necessary, and 59.3% believed it contributes to individual wellbeing.</p>	
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					<p>Additionally, 44.9% believed physiotherapists can diagnose and treat patients, and 64.9% supported the presence of physiotherapists in all hospitals. Of the 445 participants familiar with physiotherapy, 47.2% had personal or family experience with conditions treated by physiotherapists. Among them, 95.7% accessed physiotherapy services, primarily through doctor referrals (59.3%) and hospital visits (31.5%). Most participants (89.4%) would recommend physiotherapy, with 76.6% preferring it over Indigenous Health Services (IHS), and 75.1%</p>	
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					<p>willing to discourage IHS use. Ignorance (42.5%) and cost (39.5%) were the main reasons for IHS preference. Overall, physiotherapy was considered more cost-effective and effective than IHS. Among participants, 41.8% and 41.0% reported that they or their relatives were satisfied and impressed with physiotherapy services. Additionally, 68.1% expressed interest in becoming or encouraging relatives to become physiotherapists. Most participants (85%) viewed physiotherapy as always (49%) or sometimes (36%) effective, and 61.6% considered</p>	
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					its role in the health sector to be very important.	
Paci et al. (2021)	The aim was to conduct a systematic review and meta-analysis to determine the prevalence of reported barriers to evidence-based practice (EBP) in physiotherapy and to examine differences between developed and developing countries.	Systematic review	Data from the included studies were aggregated to calculate the pooled prevalence of the outcomes.	N=29	Organizational challenges and limited methodological skills appear to be major barriers to EBP implementation, highlighting the need to strengthen organizational support and training initiatives to promote its adoption. The result showed that the meta-analysis identified lack of time (53.0%) as the most common barrier to evidence-based practice among physiotherapists, followed by language (36.0%), lack of access (34.0%), and limited statistical skills (31.0%).	This systematic review provides the first quantitative pooled analysis of barriers to EBP implementation in physiotherapy and compares findings between developed and developing countries. The quantitative synthesis also reveals significant heterogeneity across the included studies. A

					Other barriers included lack of skills (27.0%), limited generalizability (23.0%), lack of support (16.0%), and lack of interest (9.0%). Barriers were more frequently reported in studies from developing countries compared to developed ones.	key limitation is the arbitrary grouping of barriers into eight categories. Additionally, barrier frequency depended on the structure of predefined survey items, which may not capture all relevant factors. The search was also limited to studies published in English and Italian.
Ushotanefe et al. (2016)	To evaluate the degree of utilization of physiotherapy services by sports physicians for the treatment of injuries	Cross sectional study	Questionnaire	N=128	The results revealed that the majority of professionals surveyed believed physiotherapy services were not optimally utilized by sports physicians.	All professional groups acknowledged the underutilization of physiotherapy by sports

	during physical training and preparation for multi-sports events in Nigeria.				Specifically, 75% of sports scientists, 66.7% of medical doctors, 20% of sports administrators, 100% of physiotherapists, 61.9% of coaches, and 50% of athletes strongly agreed with this view. Additionally, 25% of sports scientists, 33% of medical doctors, 80% of sports administrators, 31% of coaches, and 45% of athletes agreed that physiotherapy was underutilized in managing musculoskeletal injuries.	physicians. Employing dedicated physiotherapists within teams is recommended to help prevent and manage pre-existing injuries more effectively.
Author/ year /country	Aim of study	Type of research design	Method/ outcome	Sample size/ sample strategy	Findings	Strength/ limitaions
Arvinen-Barrow et al. (2015)	To preliminarily explore	Cross sectional design	The Attitudes Toward Physiotherapist	N=176	The sample showed low to moderate scores on ATP-F	This study addressed a gap in

	<p>athletes attitude toward physiotherapist and whether any difference exist due to athletes' previous experience with physiotherapy and due to gender.</p>		<p>Form (ATP-F)</p>		<p>subscales. Undergraduate students scored low on stigma tolerance (M = 2.83), and moderate on confidence in physiotherapists (M = 4.25) and personal openness (M = 4.29). Cultural preference scored slightly above the midpoint (M = 3.48). The MANOVA showed no significant difference in attitudes toward physiotherapists between students with and without prior physiotherapy experience, Wilks' Lambda = 0.970, F(4, 135) = 1.058, p = .380, $p^2 = .030$. MANOVA revealed a significant gender effect on attitudes toward physiotherapists, Wilks' Lambda =</p>	<p>research on athletes' attitudes toward physiotherapists, showing gender differences among UK university athletes. Since attitudes can influence care-seeking behavior, understanding them is essential for effective injury management. However, the limited sample from a small region of England affects generalizability, indicating the need for</p>
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					<p>0.93, $F(4, 142) = 2.670$, $p = .035$, $\eta^2 = .070$. Follow-up analyses showed all ATP-F subscales were significant. Male students reported more negative attitudes ($M = 2.89$) but higher confidence in physiotherapists ($M = 4.36$) than females ($M = 2.43$; $M = 3.92$). Males were also more open to collaboration ($M = 4.42$ vs. 3.97) and more identified with physiotherapists of the same culture or ethnicity ($M = 3.66$ vs. 3.02).</p>	<p>further research with larger, more diverse samples.</p>
<p>Martin Ebenezer et al. (2019)</p>	<p>1. To ascertain the level of awareness and knowledge of physiotherapy among medical and health science</p>	<p>Cross sectional study</p>	<p>Questionnaire</p>	<p>N=198</p>	<p>Although 98.5% of students reported knowing what physiotherapy is, only 37.4% had adequate awareness of physiotherapists' work settings, and</p>	<p>The study concluded that awareness and knowledge of physiotherap</p>

	<p>students.</p> <p>2. To access the need to emphasize the inter-professional education in their curriculum.</p>				<p>4% understood the sub-specialties. Inadequate knowledge was reported regarding cases managed (87.9%), conditions treated (90.9%), examination procedures (57.6%), and physiotherapy modalities (98%).</p>	<p>y among medical and health sciences undergraduates are limited. To address this gap, targeted strategies should be implemented, including the integration of inter-professional education within undergraduate curricula. The result of the study may not be generalized due to unique sample size. Also the convenient sampling and race would affect the</p>
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						accuracy and consistency of the findings.
Mbada et al. (2019)	To explore the features and related factors affecting how community physiotherapy services are accessed and provided in Nigeria.	Cross sectional study	Questionnaire	N=336	The results shows that the utilization and supply of physiotherapy service was low. About 43.5% of respondents had tertiary education. Awareness of physiotherapy services was 60.1%, mainly via friends (36.1%), mass media (26.2%), and doctor/nurse referrals (23.2%), with television as the leading medium (56.6%). Only 16.7% utilized referred physiotherapy services. Lifetime utilization was 21.7%, 12-month utilization 7.4%, and point utilization 2.7%. Treatments included exercise	The findings should be interpreted with caution due to the use of a convenience sample from three rural communities and a relatively small sample size, which may limit generalizability. Additionally, the cross-sectional design prevents any causal interpretations

					<p>(46.6%), massage (41.1%), and traction (13.7%). Satisfaction with services was reported by 87.7%, and 88.3% were willing to use physiotherapy if needed. Key barriers were travel cost (32.6%), time (27.9%), and work (24.8%). Services were mostly available in teaching hospitals (45.2%) and private hospitals (20.5%), though 47.9% said they were in distant townships. Delivery was mainly through non-permanent (24.7%) and visiting physiotherapists (21.4%)</p>	
Odole et al. (2020)	This study aimed to assess the awareness, beliefs,	A cross sectional survey	Questionnaire	N=500	From the study it was learned that 84.6% were aware of physiotherapy, and 89.0% were	The study concluded high awareness, positive

	<p>attitudes, and utilization of physiotherapy in Ibadan, a major metropolitan city in Nigeria.</p>			<p>familiar with its services. Information sources included hospitals (25.8%), media (25.8%), physiotherapists (22.2%), and schools (22.2%). Most respondents (82.5%) knew physiotherapists work in hospitals. Commonly identified treatment areas were bone fractures/joint dislocations (64.7%), movement problems (54.8%), and stroke (42.5%), while heart and lung conditions were least recognized (7.2%). Regarding beliefs about physiotherapy, 42.5% of participants felt the government should lead public awareness efforts,</p>	<p>beliefs, and fairly high utilization of physiotherapy services. However, increased public awareness efforts by physiotherapists are still needed.</p>
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					<p>followed by the media (29.4%), hospitals (27.4%), and physiotherapists (27.2%). While 45.6% strongly agreed they had enough awareness to recommend physiotherapy, 54.4% felt they needed to learn more. Most participants (59.1%) viewed physiotherapy as necessary, and 59.3% believed it contributes to individual wellbeing. Additionally, 44.9% believed physiotherapists can diagnose and treat patients, and 64.9% supported the presence of physiotherapists in all hospitals. Of the 445 participants familiar with</p>	
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					<p>physiotherapy, 47.2% had personal or family experience with conditions treated by physiotherapists. Among them, 95.7% accessed physiotherapy services, primarily through doctor referrals (59.3%) and hospital visits (31.5%). Most participants (89.4%) would recommend physiotherapy, with 76.6% preferring it over Indigenous Health Services (IHS), and 75.1% willing to discourage IHS use. Ignorance (42.5%) and cost (39.5%) were the main reasons for IHS preference. Overall, physiotherapy was considered more cost-effective and effective than IHS.</p>	
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					<p>Among participants, 41.8% and 41.0% reported that they or their relatives were satisfied and impressed with physiotherapy services.</p> <p>Additionally, 68.1% expressed interest in becoming or encouraging relatives to become physiotherapists. Most participants (85%) viewed physiotherapy as always (49%) or sometimes (36%) effective, and 61.6% considered its role in the health sector to be very important.</p>	
Paci et al. (2021)	The aim was to conduct a systematic review and meta-analysis to determine the prevalence of reported	Systematic review	Data from the included studies were aggregated to calculate the pooled prevalence of the outcomes.	N=29	Organizational challenges and limited methodological skills appear to be major barriers to EBP implementation,	This systematic review provides the first quantitative pooled analysis of

	<p>barriers to evidence-based practice (EBP) in physiotherapy and to examine differences between developed and developing countries.</p>				<p>highlighting the need to strengthen organizational support and training initiatives to promote its adoption. The result showed that the meta-analysis identified lack of time (53.0%) as the most common barrier to evidence-based practice among physiotherapists, followed by language (36.0%), lack of access (34.0%), and limited statistical skills (31.0%). Other barriers included lack of skills (27.0%), limited generalizability (23.0%), lack of support (16.0%), and lack of interest (9.0%). Barriers were more frequently reported</p>	<p>barriers to EBP implementation in physiotherapy and compares findings between developed and developing countries. The quantitative synthesis also reveals significant heterogeneity across the included studies. A key limitation is the arbitrary grouping of barriers into eight categories. Additionally, barrier frequency depended on</p>
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					in studies from developing countries compared to developed ones.	the structure of predefined survey items, which may not capture all relevant factors. The search was also limited to studies published in English and Italian.
Ushotanefe et al. (2016)	To evaluate the degree of utilization of physiotherapy services by sports physicians for the treatment of injuries during physical training and preparation for multi-sports events in Nigeria.	Cross sectional study	Questionnaire	N=128	The results revealed that the majority of professionals surveyed believed physiotherapy services were not optimally utilized by sports physicians. Specifically, 75% of sports scientists, 66.7% of medical doctors, 20% of sports administrators, 100% of physiotherapists, 61.9% of coaches, and 50% of athletes strongly agreed	All professional groups acknowledged the underutilization of physiotherapy by sports physicians. Employing dedicated physiotherapists within teams is recommended to help prevent and manage pre-existing

					with this view. Additionally, 25% of sports scientists, 33% of medical doctors, 80% of sports administrators, 31% of coaches, and 45% of athletes agreed that physiotherapy was underutilized in managing musculoskeletal injuries.	injuries more effectively.
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The empirical result from the studies above revealed generally high awareness but low knowledge and utilization of physiotherapy services among participants. Although most respondents had heard of physiotherapy and recognized its importance in healthcare and sports management, their understanding of the roles, work settings, and sub-specialties of physiotherapists was limited. Awareness was primarily gained through informal channels such as friends, media, and healthcare referrals.

Despite the positive perception and willingness to use physiotherapy services, actual utilization remained low, with few participants accessing care even when referred. Barriers such as cost, time constraints, and distance to service centers limited access, while most physiotherapy services were available only in major hospitals.

Attitudinally, participants generally demonstrated favorable views toward physiotherapy, expressing confidence in its effectiveness and relevance to health and wellbeing. However,

gender differences were observed in attitudes, and professionals across related fields agreed that physiotherapy remains underutilized, particularly in sports injury management.

Overall, the findings highlight a gap between awareness and practical engagement, underscoring the need for improved education, accessibility, and institutional support to enhance physiotherapy utilization and evidence-based practice.

2.6.1 Summary of Findings

The literature from this chapter was reviewed based on the Conceptual review, research conducted by other authors, and theories to support the research. From the literature reviewed, it has been established that information about knowledge of physiotherapy is used for sport injuries. The literature defined physiotherapy, sport injuries, roles of physiotherapy, awareness and application of physiotherapy in football settings and attitude of football players towards seeking physiotherapy treatment. The searches indicated that there have been several exploratory qualitative research studies done. The researcher supported her work with Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) Theory. However, the literature reviewed have not exhaustively investigated the awareness, knowledge and utilization of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin, hence more attention will be given to these gaps that were not filled in the field work through the use of Questionnaire.

CHAPTER THREE

MATERIALS AND METHOD

3.1 Materials

3.1.1 Population

The target population for this study are 112 footballers that are students of the University of Benin. The University Sport Complex was selected for this study.

3.1.2 Selection criteria

Participants were selected from each of the Faculties of the University of Benin.

3.1.2.1 Inclusion Criteria

- i. Students who engaged in football activities.
- ii. Footballers (students) with or without sport related injuries.
- iii. Footballers (students) within age 18-26 of male gender.

3.1.2.2 Exclusion Criteria

- i. Football players who are not students of the University of Benin.
- ii. Footballers (students) who are not willing to participate.
- iii. Footballers (student) with cognitive and congenital problems was excluded.

3.1.3 List of instruments

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured self-administered questionnaire adopted from previous studies and also developed based on the objectives of the study. Combining elements from Knowledge of Physiotherapy in the Prevention and Treatment of Soccer Injuries Questionnaire (Gbadamosi et al., 2021) and the Self-Developed Awareness, Belief, Attitude and Utilization of Physiotherapy Questionnaire (Maruf et al., 2013), questions on Awareness , Knowledge and Utilization were developed.

- i. **SPAR-F:** This was used to obtain information on socio-demographic variables like age, level of education, years of experience and frequency of training. The Sport Psychology Attitudes Revised Form (SPAR-F) is a validated questionnaire developed by Monna Arvinen-Barrow, Damien Clement, and colleagues to assess athletes' attitudes toward seeking sport psychology services. Originally published in 2010 (Arvinen-Barrow et al., Journal of Sport Rehabilitation), it was adapted from the earlier Sport Psychology Attitudes Questionnaire (SPAQ) by Martin (2005).
- ii. **ATP-F:** This was used to determine footballers attitude towards physiotherapy. The ATP Form is a standardized questionnaire developed to measure individuals' attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs about physiotherapy and physiotherapists. It is often used among students, athletes, and healthcare professionals. This was adopted from Athletes' Attitude Toward Physiotherapist Arvinen-Barrow et al. (2013). Items on the ATP-F were as follows: (a) Stigma Tolerance (b) Confidence in Physiotherapist (c) Personal Openness and (d) Cultural Preference, and it was scored using a Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha values indicated acceptable internal consistency across the four ATP-F scales: stigma tolerance (0.87), confidence in physiotherapists (0.82), cultural preference (0.80), and personal openness (0.68), showing the instrument's overall reliability.

3.1.4 Description of instruments

The data for this study was collected using an adapted questionnaire. The questionnaire contained five sections and was distributed to the football students within the targeted location. Section A consisted of demographic information such as participant's age, religion, level of education and duration of training. Section B consists of questions under each to evaluate the awareness about physiotherapy as a care option and its potential benefits for sport. Section C on knowledge was adopted from previous study by Gbadamosi et al. (2021) to explore the knowledge of physiotherapy for sport related injuries. Section D on attitude

was adopted from previous study by Arvinen-Barrow et al. (2013) to assess football players' attitude in seeking physiotherapy as a treatment option. This was measured using a 4-point Likert scale. Section E consists of questions exploring barriers hindering football players in seeking physiotherapy.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

- i. The questionnaire's face validity was established through adaptation from previously validated instruments.
- ii. The Maruf et al., (2013) questionnaire was translated into Igbo and validated for local use. It was then piloted with 15 individuals through personal interviews to assess clarity, comprehension, and the overall flow and timing of the instrument. The Gbadamosi et al. (2021) questionnaire was adopted from the one used by Mortha (2009).
- iii. Reliability is supported by the consistent use of these instruments in similar studies, with structured scoring systems ensuring reproducible results.

3.2 Method of Data Collection

An adopted questionnaire containing five sections was distributed to football players within the University Sport Complex to gather information. The data was collected, sorted out and analysed.

3.2.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive cross sectional survey design.

3.2.2 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique for this study was convenience sampling technique. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected based on their availability and willingness to participate in study.

3.2.3 Sampling Size Calculation

Sample Size determination is the act of choose the number of observations to include in a statistical sample (Barthlett, 2019).

The sample size was determined using Taro's formula (1967) for finite population.

$$N = n / [1 + n(e)^2]$$

N = sample size

n = population

e = level of precision

Where,

$$n = 112$$

$$E = 0.05$$

Therefore, the sample size will be:

$$N = 112 / 1 + 112 (0.05)^2$$

$$112 / 1 + 112 (0.0025)$$

$$N = 87.5$$

$$N = 88$$

With 10% attrition rate, which is 8.8 approximately 9.

$$n = 88 + 9 = 97.$$

The sample size for the study is 97 participants.

3.2.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethical Approval for this study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of University of Benin, Benin City.

Informed consent was obtained from students using informed consent form. Before seeking informed consent, prospective participants were adequately informed of the aims, methods, any conflicts of interest, institutional affiliations of the researcher, the anticipated benefits

and potential risks of the study and the discomfort it may entail. Having been fully informed of the aim, methods, and the potential risk, prospective participants were reserved with the right to refuse to participate without reprisal.

3.2.5 Procedures for Data Collection

Data collection for this study was conducted at the University of Benin Sport Complex. Various football students were approached during their scheduled training sessions, and informed consent was obtained after explaining the study's purpose, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of responses. A structured questionnaire was administered to gather socio-demographic information, knowledge scores and attitude scores. All data were securely stored, anonymized, and coded for data analysis.

3.2.6 Analysis of Data

Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science version 25 (IBMSPSS). Descriptive of percentages with frequency table and inferential statistic of Chi Square. Statistical association between variables was done using Chi Square. The level of significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses analysis of data and results representation. The results were presented in the table according to the objectives that guide the study.

A total of 97 questionnaire were administered, it was all filled appropriately by the respondents and was recovered by the researcher. This gives a 100% return rate.

4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The table 4.1 below shows the demographic characteristics respondents. Age group 21- 23 years had 43(44.3%) of the respondents while participants under the age group 18-20 were 31(32.0%), participants within the age bracket 24-26 were 23(23.7%). The predominant religion among the respondents was Christianity with (89.7%). Most of the respondents 36(37.1%) were 500level students, the greater part of the respondents had spent greater than 5 years in Football, 40 (41.2) respondents had training once a week, while most of the respondents 31(32.0%) were defenders. Additionally majority of the respondents had all sustained sports injury 82(84.5) and 35(36.1) experienced a moderate level of pain.

Table 4.1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N-97)

Variables		n	%
Age Group	18-20 years	31	32.0
	21-23 years	43	44.3
	24-26 years	23	23.7
Religion	Christianity	87	89.7
	Islam	10	10.3
Level	100	17	17.5
	200	8	8.2
	300	15	15.5
	400	18	18.6
	500	36	37.1
	600	3	3.1
Football Experience	<6 months	8	8.2
	<1 year	10	10.3
	1-3 years	15	15.5
	3-5 years	8	8.2
	>5 years	56	57.7
Training Duration	Once weekly	40	41.2
	Twice Weekly	29	29.9
	Thrice weekly	17	17.5
	Daily	11	11.3
Position Played	Goal Keeper	14	14.4
	Defender	31	32.0
	Midfielder	29	29.9
	Forward	21	21.6

	Others	2	2.1
Sustained Sports Injury before	Yes	82	84.5
	No	15	15.5
Level of Pain Experience	Very Mild	29	29.9
	Moderate	35	36.1
	Severe	33	34.0

4.2 Awareness about Physiotherapy As a Care Option And Its Potential Benefits For Sport

The table 4.2 below, shows that most respondents, 85(87.6%) have heard about physiotherapy, and 71(73.2%) are aware that physiotherapists are involved in the management of sports injuries. Knowledge was mostly obtained through school academic programs 28(28.9%) and social media 23(23.7%), followed by medical professionals 16(16.5%), friends 16(16.5%), teammates 10(10.3%), and coaches 4(4.1%). A high proportion agreed that physiotherapy helps in preventing sports injuries 78(80.4%), treating sports injuries 82(84.5%), improving quality of life of an injured person 65(63.9%), and enhancing the fitness level of sportsmen 79(81.4%). However, misconceptions were observed, as 65(67.1%) of the respondents thought physiotherapy is practiced by medical doctors, while 47(48.5%) believed physiotherapists are masseurs. With respect to when players seek physiotherapy, almost half 46(47.4%) indicated immediately after an injury, while others prefer waiting until pain persists for weeks 20(20.6%), after a doctor's referral 18(18.6%), during rehabilitation post-surgery 10(10.3%), or never 3(3.1%). Despite this awareness, only 27(27.8%) reported visiting a physiotherapist when injured, compared to 70(72.2%) who did not. Overall, 67(69.4%) of the respondents demonstrated adequate awareness of physiotherapy in sports injury management, while 30(30.5%) had inadequate awareness.

Table 4.2: Level of Awareness about Role of Physiotherapy in Management of Sports Injuries among Respondents (N-97)

Variables	Responses	n	%
Heard about Physiotherapy	Yes	85	87.6
	No	12	12.4
Have utilized Physiotherapy for sports injury management	Yes	37	75.5
	No	30	62.5
Aware Physiotherapy are Involved in Management of Sports injuries	Yes	71	73.2
	No	26	26.8
Source of Information regarding Physiotherapy	From Coach	4	4.1
	Teammates	10	10.3
	Medical professionals	16	16.5
	School Academic Program	28	28.9
	Social Media	23	23.7
	Friends	16	16.5
Physiotherapy helps in preventing sports injuries	Yes	78	80.4
	No	19	19.6

Physiotherapy helps in treating sports injuries	Yes	82	84.5
	No	15	15.5
Physiotherapy is practice by Medical Doctors	Yes	65	67.1
	No	32	32.9
Physiotherapist are also called Masseurs	Yes	47	48.5
	No	50	51.5
Physiotherapy helps in improving the quality of life of an injured person.	Yes	62	63.9
	No	35	36.1
Physiotherapy helps in improving fitness level of sportsmen.	Yes	79	81.4
	No	18	18.6
When should a player seek physiotherapy after an injury	Immediately after an injury	46	47.4
	Only if the pain persists for weeks	20	20.6
	After a doctor referral	18	18.6
	During rehabilitation post-surgery	10	10.3
	Never	3	3.1
Do you visit physiotherapy team when	Yes	27	27.8
	No	70	72.2

you have an injury.			
Overall Level of Awareness	Adequate Level of Awareness 67(69.4%) Inadequate Level of Awareness 30(30.5%)		

4.3 Knowledge of Physiotherapy for Sport Related Injuries

From table 4. 3 below majority of respondents recognized physiotherapy roles in sports injury prevention. For warming up and training, 59 (59.8%) strongly agreed and 38 (28.9%) agreed, while only 11 (11.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Similarly, 49 (50.5%) strongly agreed and 35 (36.1%) agreed that cooling down exercises are part of physiotherapy tips, compared to 13 (13.4%) who disagreed. On strapping of joints, 45 (46.4%) strongly agreed and 33 (34.0%) agreed, whereas 19 (19.5%) disagreed. For precautions during recovery, 51 (52.6%) strongly agreed and 32 (33.0%) agreed, while 14 (14.4%) disagreed.

In terms of treatment methods, 62 (63.9%) strongly agreed and 24 (24.7%) agreed that massage is used, while only 11.3% disagreed. Exercise therapy was acknowledged by 56 (57.7%) strongly agreeing and 26 (26.8%) agreeing, compared with 15.5% disagreement. Health education was supported by 54 (55.7%) strongly agreeing and 30 (30.9%) agreeing, while only 13.4% disagreed. In contrast, drug medication had lower support, with 28 (28.9%) strongly agreeing and 24 (24.7%) agreeing, while 45 (46.4%) disagreed. Similarly, surgical

operation was endorsed by only 23 (23.7%) strongly agreeing and 21 (21.6%) agreeing, compared with 53 (54.7%) disagreeing.

For modalities used in physiotherapy, ice/ice sprays were supported by 62 (63.9%) strongly agreeing and 24 (24.7%) agreeing, with just 11.4% disagreeing. Braces were endorsed by 43 (44.3%) strongly agreeing and 35 (36.1%) agreeing, compared to 19.5% disagreement. Cycle ergometer/treadmill use was confirmed by 48 (49.5%) strongly agreeing and 32 (33.0%) agreeing, while 17.5% disagreed. Electrical stimulators were accepted by 48 (49.5%) strongly agreeing and 35 (36.1%) agreeing, while 14.4% disagreed. Bandages were supported by 43 (44.3%) strongly agreeing and 29 (29.9%) agreeing, while 25.8% disagreed.

Overall, 87 (89.9%) respondents demonstrated good knowledge of physiotherapy in sports injury management, while 10 (10.1%) had poor knowledge.

Table 4.3: Knowledge of Prevention, Treatment and Modalities Usage in Sport Physiotherapy among Respondents (N-97).

Variable		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Part of Injuries Prevention Tips in Sports Physiotherapist are:	Warming up and training	4(4.1)	7(7.2)	38 (28.9)	59 (59.8)
	Cooling down exercises	7(7.2)	6(6.2)	35(36.1)	49(50.5)
	Strapping of joints	8(8.2)	11(11.3)	33(34.0)	45(46.4)
	Precautions during recovery	7(7.2)	7(7.2)	32(33.0)	51(52.6)
Means of Treatment by sports physiotherapist are:	Massage	4(4.1)	7(7.2)	24(24.7)	62(63.9)
	Exercise therapy	3(3.1)	12(12.4)	26(26.8)	56(57.7)
	Health Education	6(6.2)	7(7.2)	30(30.9)	54(55.7)
	Drug medication	18(18.6)	27(27.8)	24(24.7)	28(28.9)
	Surgical operation	22(22.7)	31(32.0)	21(21.6)	23(23.7)
Modalities use in sport physiotherapy includes:	Ice/ice sprays	6(6.2)	5(5.2)	24(24.7)	62(63.9)
	Braces	11(11.3)	8(8.2)	35(36.1)	43(44.3)
	Cycle Ergometer/treadmill	7(7.2)	10(10.3)	32(33.0)	48(49.5)
	Electrical stimulus stimulator	6(6.2)	8(8.2)	35(36.1)	48(49.5)
	Bandages	6(6.2)	19(19.6)	29(29.9)	43(44.3)
Overall Knowledge	Good Knowledge: 87(89.9%) Poor Knowledge: 10(10.1%)				

4.4. Attitude of Football Players Towards Utilization of Physiotherapy

The result of attitudes toward physiotherapy showed in table 4.4 reveals that stigma-related perceptions were generally low. For the statement that seeking physiotherapy makes one feel less capable, 32 (33.0%) agreed while 37 (38.1%) disagreed. Similarly, for the belief that physiotherapy is only for athletes who are not mentally fit, 33 (34.0%) agreed compared with 34 (35.1%) who disagreed. Worry about being judged if using physiotherapy was expressed by 28 (28.9%) agreeing versus 37 (38.1%) disagreeing, while the idea that physiotherapy is only for severe disability was agreed to by 31 (32.0%) but disagreed by 32 (33.0%). Overall, only 15 (15.9%) agreed with stigma-related items while 82 (84.1%) disagreed.

On tolerance, 41 (42.3%) agreed they would endure painful physiotherapy exercises, while 26 (26.8%) disagreed. Regarding discomfort, 43 (44.3%) agreed physiotherapy exercises can be too uncomfortable to continue, compared with 36 (37.1%) who disagreed. For continuing despite slow progress, 40 (41.2%) agreed while 16 (15.5%) disagreed. Concerning time commitment, 43 (44.3%) agreed it is excessive compared with 34 (35.1%) who disagreed. Overall, 31 (32.2%) expressed agreement with tolerance items while 66 (67.8%) disagreed.

Confidence in physiotherapy was moderate. For accurate diagnosis, 37 (38.1%) agreed and 49 (50.5%) strongly agreed, while only 11 (11.4%) disagreed. Trusting physiotherapy advice over coaches was agreed by 25 (25.8%) and strongly agreed by 52 (53.6%), with 20.6% disagreement. On customizing treatments, 34 (35.1%) agreed and 44 (45.4%) strongly agreed, while 19.5% disagreed. For physiotherapists being highly skilled, 39 (40.2%) agreed and 32 (33.0%) strongly agreed, with 26.8% disagreeing. Overall, 40 (40.2%) expressed confidence, while 57 (59.8%) did not.

Personal openness showed that 30 (30.9%) agreed they are willing to discuss personal aspects, while 40 (41.2%) disagreed. On finding it easy to open up, 22 (22.7%) agreed compared to 43 (44.3%) who disagreed. For comfort with being asked about lifestyle, 27 (27.8%) agreed and

27 (27.8%) strongly agreed, while 32 (32.0%) disagreed. Overall, 25 (25.3%) expressed openness, while 72 (74.7%) did not.

In terms of cultural preference, only 12 (12.4%) agreed they would prefer a physiotherapist of the same cultural background, while 41 (42.3%) disagreed. Belief in traditional practices over physiotherapy was supported by 28 (28.9%) compared with 56 (57.7%) who disagreed. The legitimacy of physiotherapy was endorsed by 31 (32.0%) agreed and 24 (24.7%) strongly agreed, while 30 (30.1%) disagreed. Choosing physiotherapy even if family prefers traditional methods was supported by 32 (33.0%) agreed and 27 (27.8%) strongly agreed, while none disagreed. Overall, 25 (25.9%) expressed cultural agreement, while 72 (74.1%) did not.

For gender-related perceptions, 24 (24.7%) agreed that the physiotherapist's gender affects willingness, while 43 (44.3%) disagreed. On male footballers being taken more seriously, 23 (23.8%) agreed compared with 45 (46.4%) who disagreed. Overall, 15 (15.9%) agreed with gender-related perceptions, while 82 (84.1%) disagreed.

In summary, the overall attitude score showed that 40 (40.8%) respondents demonstrated a positive attitude toward physiotherapy, while 57 (59.2%) had a negative attitude.

Table 4.4: Attitude Towards Utilization of Physiotherapy Among Respondents (N-97)

Domains	Variables	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Stigma	Seeking physiotherapy makes me feel less capable as a footballer	32(33.0)	37(38.1)	14(14.4)	14(14.4)
	Physiotherapy is only meant for athletes who are not mentally fit.	33(34.0)	34(35.1)	15(15.5)	15(15.5)
	I worry that others will judge me if I use physiotherapy	28(28.9)	37(38.1)	17(17.5)	15(15.5)
	Physiotherapy is only for athletes with severe disability	31(32.0)	32(33.0)	18(18.6)	16(16.5)
	Overall Agreement: 15(15.9%) Overall Disagreement: 82(84.1%)				
Tolerance	I am willing to endure painful physiotherapy exercises if they aid recovery	17(17.5)	41(42.3)	26(26.8)	13(13.4)
	I find physiotherapy exercises too uncomfortable to continue	4(4.1)	14(14.4)	43(44.3)	36(37.1)
	I would continue physiotherapy even if progress is low	7(7.2)	34(35.1)	40(41.2)	16(15.5)
	The time committed to Physiotherapy	10(10.3)	10(10.3)	43(44.3)	34(35.1)

	<p>sessions is excessive</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 31(32.2%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement: 66(67.8%)</p>				
Confidence in physiotherapy	<p>Physiotherapy accurately diagnoses football specific injury</p> <p>I trust physiotherapy advice more than coaches' advice</p> <p>Physiotherapy customizes treatments well for footballers needs</p> <p>I believe physiotherapy are highly skilled professionals.</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 40(40.2%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement:57(59.8%)</p>	6(6.2)	5(5.2)	37(38.1)	49(50.5)
Personal Openness	<p>I am willing to discuss personal aspects of my life if they are relevant to my physiotherapy treatment.</p> <p>I find it easy to open to health care professionals, including physiotherapists</p> <p>I am comfortable with a</p>	12(12.4)	27(27.8)	30(30.9)	28(28.9)
		19(19.6)	43(44.3)	22(22.7)	13(13.4)

	<p>physiotherapist asking about my lifestyle and habit</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 25(25.3%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement: 72(74.7%)</p>	7(7.7)	40(41.2)	27(27.8)	27(27.8)
Cultural Preference	<p>I would prefer to see a physiotherapist who shares my cultural background</p> <p>Traditional healing practices are more effective than physiotherapy for sport injury</p> <p>My community views physiotherapy as a legitimate treatment</p> <p>I would choose physiotherapy even if my family prefers traditional method</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 25(25.9%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement: 72(74.1%)</p>	4(4.1)	4(4.1)	31(32.0)	58(59.8)
	<p>Traditional healing practices are more effective than physiotherapy for sport injury</p> <p>My community views physiotherapy as a legitimate treatment</p> <p>I would choose physiotherapy even if my family prefers traditional method</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 25(25.9%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement: 72(74.1%)</p>	13(13.4)	28(28.9)	24(24.7)	32(33.0)
	<p>My community views physiotherapy as a legitimate treatment</p> <p>I would choose physiotherapy even if my family prefers traditional method</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 25(25.9%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement: 72(74.1%)</p>	12(12.4)	28(28.9)	30(30.1)	27(27.8)
	<p>I would choose physiotherapy even if my family prefers traditional method</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 25(25.9%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement: 72(74.1%)</p>	41(42.3)	56(57.7)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Gender related perceptions	<p>The gender of the physiotherapist affects my willingness to attend sessions</p> <p>Male footballers are taken more seriously when they seek physiotherapy</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 15(15.9%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement: 82(84.1%)</p>	43(44.3)	24(24.7)	7(7.2)	23(23.8)
	<p>Male footballers are taken more seriously when they seek physiotherapy</p> <p>Overall Agreement: 15(15.9%)</p> <p>Overall Disagreement: 82(84.1%)</p>	45(46.4)	52(53.6)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)

Overall Attitude Score	Positive Attitude: 40(40.8%) Negative Attitude: 57(59.2%)				

4.5 Association Between Utilization of Physiotherapy and Level of Awareness and Knowledge

Chi-square analysis was used to test the association between awareness, knowledge, and utilization of physiotherapy among respondents. From table 4. 5 below the results revealed no statistically significant relationship between these variables. Although a higher proportion of participants with adequate awareness (75.5%) utilized physiotherapy compared to those with inadequate awareness (24.5%), this difference was not significant ($\chi^2 = 1.921$, $p = 0.166$). Similarly, knowledge level did not significantly influence utilization, as respondents with good knowledge (89.8%) and those with poor knowledge (10.2%) demonstrated similar usage rates ($\chi^2 = 0.001$, $p = 0.973$). This indicates that awareness and knowledge alone do not necessarily lead to increased physiotherapy utilization among the respondents.

Table 4.5: Chi-square Test of Association Between Utilization of Physiotherapy and Level of Awareness and Knowledge

Variables	Category	Utilization of Physiotherapy		X ²	P-Value
		no	yes		
Awareness	Adequate Awareness	30(62.5)	37(75.5)	1.921	0.166
	Inadequate Awareness	18(37.5)	12(24.5)		
Knowledge	Good Knowledge	43(89.6)	44(89.8)	0.001	0.973
	Poor Knowledge	5(10.4)	5(10.2)		

4.6. Association between Duration of Footballing Experience and Each of Level of Awareness, Knowledge and Attitude

The analysis shown in table 4. 6 examined the association between the duration of footballing experience and players' awareness, knowledge, and attitude towards physiotherapy in the management of sports injuries.

For awareness, 46.3% of players with more than five years of experience reported adequate awareness, compared with 7.5%, 13.4%, 20.9%, and 11.9% of those with less than 6 months, less than 1 year, 1–2 years, and 3–5 years of experience, respectively. Conversely, 83.3% of players with more than five years of experience demonstrated inadequate awareness, with much lower proportions in other categories. The association between awareness and footballing experience was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 14.585, p = 0.005$).

With regard to knowledge, 59.8% of respondents with more than five years of experience had good knowledge of physiotherapy, compared to 9.2%, 9.2%, 13.8%, and 8.0% among those with <6 months, <1 year, 1–2 years, and 3–5 years of experience, respectively. Poor knowledge was most evident among players with 1–2 years of experience (30.0%) and >5 years (40.0%). However, the association between knowledge and duration of footballing experience was not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 4.107, p = 0.392$).

For attitude, a positive attitude towards physiotherapy was predominantly found among players with more than five years of experience (82.5%), while lower proportions were observed in the categories of <6 months (7.5%), <1 year (2.5%), and 1–2 years (7.5%). Negative attitudes were more frequent among players with <1 year (15.8%), 1–2 years (21.1%), 3–5 years (14.0%), and >5 years (40.4%) of experience. A statistically significant association was observed between attitude and footballing experience ($\chi^2 = 19.712, p = 0.001$).

Table 4. 6: Chi Square Test of Association between Duration of Footballing Experience and Each of Level of Awareness, Knowledge and Attitude (N-97)

Variables		Duration of Footballing Experience					X ²	P-value
		<6months	<1year	1-2years	3-5years	>5years		
Awareness	Adequate Awareness	5(7.5)	9(13.4)	14(20.9)	8(11.9)	31(46.3)	14.585	0.005 ^{##}
	Inadequate Awareness	3(10.0)	1(3.3)	1(3.3)	0(0.0)	25(83.3)		
Knowledge	Good Knowledge	8(9.2)	8(9.2)	12(13.8)	7(8.0)	52(59.8)	4.107	0.392
	Poor Knowledge	0(0.0)	2(20.0)	3(30.0)	1(10.0)	4(40.0)		
Attitude	Positive Attitude	3(7.5)	1(2.5)	3(7.5)	0(0.0)	33(82.5)	19.712	0.001 ^{##}
	Negative Attitude	5(8.8)	9(15.8)	12(21.1)	8(14.0)	23(40.4)		

P-value <0.05 indicate where there is Significant Association

P-value >0.05 indicate where there is No Significant Association

Superscript^{##} Indicate Significant Association

4.7 Barriers of Seeking Physiotherapy

Presented below is Table 4.7 showing the utilization of physiotherapy services revealed that 48 respondents (49.5%) reported having used physiotherapy for the management of sports injuries, whereas 49 respondents (50.5%) had not. Among those who had not accessed physiotherapy, the predominant barrier was the high cost of services 77(79.4%), followed by a preference for alternative treatments 20(20.6%). Neither lack of awareness nor unavailability of services was reported as a reason for non-utilization.

With respect to factors hindering physiotherapy use, the majority of respondents identified the cost of services 70(72.2%), while 27 (27.8%) indicated a lack of nearby facilities; no respondent cited time constraints as a barrier.

Suggestions on how access to physiotherapy could be improved at the University of Benin included the provision of free on-campus services 32(33.0%), partnership with sports teams 31(32.0%), educational workshops 19(19.6%), and subsidized cost of services 15(15.5%).

Table 4.7: Barriers to Utilization of Physiotherapy for Management of Sports Injuries among Respondents(N-97)

Variables	Responses	n	%
Have you ever used Physiotherapy for a sports injury?	Yes	48	49.5
	No	49	50.5
What is the primary reason you have not used Physiotherapy	Lack of awareness	0	0.0
	High cost	77	79.4
	Prefer alternative treatments	20	20.6
	No access to physiotherapy services	0	0.0
What factors hinder your use of physiotherapy?	Cost of services	70	72.2
	Lack of nearby facilities	27	27.8
	Time constraints	0	0.0
How could access to physiotherapy be improved for athletes in University of Benin?	Free on-campus services	32	33.0
	Educational workshops	19	19.6
	Subsidized cost	15	15.5
	Partnership with sport teams.	31	32.0

Hypotheses Testing

1. **Hypothesis 1:** There will be no significant association between level of awareness and utilization of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin.

- Alpha level : 0.05
- Test statistics : Chi-square
- Observed $p = 0.166$
- Since the observed p value was greater than 0.05 Alpha level. The hypothesis was therefore NOT REJECTED

2. **Hypothesis 2:** There will no significant association between level of knowledge and utilization of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin.

- Alpha level: 0.05
- Test statistics: Chi-square
- Observed $p = 0.973$
- Since the observed p value was greater than 0.05 Alpha level. The hypothesis was therefore NOT REJECTED

3. **Hypothesis 3:** There will be no significant association between duration of footballing and level of awareness of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin

- Alpha level: 0.05
- Test statistics: Chi-square
- Observed $p = 0.005$
- Since the observed p value was lesser than 0.05 Alpha level. The hypothesis was therefore REJECTED

4. **Hypothesis 4:** There will be no significant association between duration of footballing and level of knowledge of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin

- Alpha level: 0.05
- Test statistics: Chi-square
- Observed $p = 0.392$
- Since the observed p value was greater than 0.05 Alpha level. The hypothesis was therefore NOT REJECTED.

5. **Hypotheses 5:** There will be no significant association between duration of footballing and attitudes towards physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin

- Alpha level: 0.05
- Test statistics: Chi-square
- Observed $p = 0.001$
- Since the observed p value was lesser than 0.05 Alpha level. The hypothesis was therefore REJECTED

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings from the study, implication to physiotherapy, summary, conclusion, recommendations and implications for further studies.

5.1. Discussion of Findings

The research work was carried out to assess the awareness, knowledge and utilization of physiotherapy in management of sports injuries among football players in the University of Benin.

5.1.1 Respondent's Social Demographic Characteristics

The study findings offer insightful information about the characteristics and habits of participants regarding football participation. Notably, a sizable majority of responses are between the ages 21 and 23, suggesting that young folks have a keen interest in sport. Most 500 level student and 400 level student point to a possible target market for footballing activity within the University. Furthermore, the significant popularity of respondents who identified as Christians is indicative of the research population's religious background. The duration of training, level of experience, and playing position can significantly influence a football player's performance and risk of injury on the pitch. All things considered this result advance our knowledge of the characteristics and routine student footballers, which can guide the development of improved outreach and service initiatives.

5.1.2. Awareness about Physiotherapy as a Care Option and Its Potential Benefits for Sport

The findings demonstrated that the majority of respondents exhibited an adequate level of awareness regarding physiotherapy and its relevance to sports injury management. A substantial proportion of the participants correctly recognized physiotherapy as an essential component in both the prevention and treatment of sports injuries, as well as its broader role in enhancing fitness and improving the quality of life of injured athletes. Furthermore, there was general acknowledgment of the importance of seeking physiotherapy intervention promptly following an injury, which reflects a sound understanding of its role in effective rehabilitation. These findings closely align with the study by Saad Saleem et al. (2020) titled “Awareness of Physical Therapy among Football Club-Level Players of Karachi.” In that study, involving 150 participants the authors similarly observed that although a large proportion of football players were aware of physiotherapy (57%) only a small percentage possessed comprehensive understanding of the physiotherapist’s role, treatment techniques, and scope of practice. Saleem and colleagues also reported that awareness was mostly influenced by coaches, peers, and social media, and that utilization of physiotherapy services was limited

However, the results also revealed certain misconceptions and areas of limited awareness. Some respondents erroneously perceived physiotherapy to be the practice of medical doctors or associated physiotherapists with masseurs, indicating confusion about the professional identity and scope of practice of physiotherapists. A study conducted in Accra by Olawale & Adjabeng (2014) similarly revealed that many respondents mistakenly believed physiotherapy was limited to massage or rehabilitation after fracture, showing misconceptions about its role in prevention, chronic disease management, and fitness improvement.

In addition, although awareness levels were generally satisfactory, a considerable number of respondents reported not engaging with physiotherapy services when injured. This gap suggests that awareness does not necessarily translate into utilization, possibly due to barriers such as accessibility, cost, or cultural perceptions. In summary, while the level of awareness of physiotherapy among the respondents can be described as largely adequate, the persistence of misconceptions and the limited practical engagement with physiotherapy services highlight the need for targeted educational interventions and improved service accessibility. These measures would help bridge the gap between awareness and utilization, ensuring that athletes are better informed and more likely to benefit from physiotherapy in managing sports injuries.

5.1.3 Level of Knowledge of Physiotherapy for Sport Related Injuries

The study findings showed that respondents possessed a considerable level of knowledge regarding the role of physiotherapy in sports injury management. A substantial proportion agreed or strongly agreed that preventive strategies such as warming up and training, cooling down exercises, joint strapping, and adherence to recovery precautions constitute integral aspects of physiotherapy practice in sports. This reflects a well-grounded awareness of physiotherapists' contribution to injury prevention.

In relation to treatment methods, the majority of respondents recognized massage, exercise therapy, and health education as principal approaches employed by sports physiotherapists. Although drug medication and surgical intervention were also acknowledged, these were comparatively less emphasized, indicating a stronger association of physiotherapy with non-invasive modalities. These findings closely agreed with the study by Gbadosi, Mohammed, and Sumaila (2015) on "Knowledge of Physiotherapy in the Prevention and Treatment of Soccer Injuries Among Managers of Amateur Soccer Teams," which reported a high level of knowledge (86.5%) among soccer team managers in Nigeria.

While the majority of respondents recognize the preventive and therapeutic importance of physiotherapy in sports, notable misconceptions persist. In the study, limited understanding was observed in areas such as strapping, use of electrical modalities, and the educational role of physiotherapists.

Furthermore, respondents displayed notable awareness of the various therapeutic modalities commonly utilized in sports physiotherapy. Ice applications and sprays, braces, cycle ergometers or treadmills, electrical stimulators, and bandages were widely identified as standard tools for injury management, with high levels of agreement recorded across these options. On the contrary, the study by Ebenezer et al. (2019) among medical and health science students showed a lower level of knowledge, despite generally good awareness (over 80%).

Overall, the knowledge assessment revealed that the overwhelming majority of respondents demonstrated good knowledge of physiotherapy in sports, while only a small minority showed poor knowledge. This suggests that awareness of the preventive, therapeutic, and rehabilitative scope of physiotherapy is firmly established among the participants.

5.1.4 Attitude of Football Players in Seeking Physiotherapy as a Treatment

The analysis demonstrates that the overall attitude of respondents toward physiotherapy is predominantly negative, though the impact varies across different domains.

In terms of stigma, most footballers did not perceive physiotherapy as a sign of weakness, mental unfitness, or disability, suggesting that stigma is not a major hindrance to physiotherapy utilization. However, tolerance emerged as a significant challenge, as many respondents expressed reluctance to endure discomfort or commit time to physiotherapy sessions, indicating that perceived inconvenience can act as a barrier to treatment adherence.

Confidence in physiotherapy was also limited, with respondents expressing doubts about the diagnostic accuracy, treatment customization, and professional skills of physiotherapists. This trust gap reduces the likelihood of players fully embracing physiotherapy as part of their injury management. Similarly, personal openness was low, as many participants were uncomfortable discussing lifestyle or personal issues with physiotherapists, which could weaken communication and reduce treatment effectiveness.

Cultural preference and gender-related perceptions appeared to exert minimal influence, as most respondents did not feel constrained by cultural background, traditional healing practices, or the gender of the physiotherapist.

This finding closely aligns with that of Arvinen-Barrow et al., (2015) who examined athletes' attitude toward physiotherapist and reported that approximately 43% of athletes exhibited positive attitudes toward physiotherapists, while 57% expressed reservations or negative perceptions. The study also reported that athletes had mixed attitudes toward physiotherapists, while athletes recognized physiotherapy's value, stigma, cultural beliefs, and limited openness reduced utilization. Arvinen-Barrow et al. (2015) found that athletes often showed reservations about discussing personal issues, doubted physiotherapists' competence compared to coaches, and were influenced by gender and social perceptions.

Both studies emphasize that although awareness is fair, negative perceptions and discomfort hinder full engagement with physiotherapy services.

Taken together, the findings indicate that while stigma, culture, and gender do not substantially hinder physiotherapy use, negative attitudes are largely driven by poor tolerance, low confidence, and limited openness toward physiotherapy. This highlights the need for awareness campaigns, stronger patient–therapist communication, and strategies to build trust and motivation, in order to foster more positive attitudes and greater utilization of physiotherapy among footballers.

5.1.5 Barriers of Seeking Physiotherapy

The findings revealed that while many athletes have utilized physiotherapy for sports injuries, there remains a significant proportion who have not. The major barrier to non-utilization is largely financial, with the high cost of physiotherapy services discouraging many athletes from accessing care. Preference for alternative treatment methods also plays a secondary role, though issues such as lack of awareness or service availability appear to be less prominent. Among those who have faced challenges in accessing physiotherapy, financial constraints again emerge as the most influential factor, followed by limited availability of nearby facilities. Time-related challenges appear to exert minimal effect.

Both studies revealed that despite good awareness of physiotherapy, utilization remains low due to accessibility and perception barriers. A study conducted by Mbada et al., (2019) revealed limited-service availability, high cost, and distance to facilities reduced community use, while spiritual and cultural beliefs shaped negative perceptions.

In terms of improving access, athletes strongly emphasized the need for institutional support. Suggested measures include the provision of free on-campus physiotherapy services, cost subsidization, and strategic partnerships between physiotherapy providers and sports teams. Educational workshops were also identified as beneficial, though to a comparatively

lesser extent. Collectively, these findings suggest that while awareness of physiotherapy exists, cost-related barriers remain the most critical obstacle, underscoring the importance of financial and structural interventions to enhance accessibility and utilization. Healthcare professionals and legislature can contribute to enhancing the general efficacy and accessibility of physiotherapy as a sports-related injuries treatment option by addressing these barriers.

5.2 Implication of Findings to Physiotherapy

1. Awareness and Education

- i. Student sensitization programs: Regular workshops, seminars, and symposiums on the role of physiotherapy in injury prevention, management, and performance enhancement should be organized for athletes, coaches, and students.
- ii. Peer education and media campaigns: Using student-athletes and sports clubs as ambassadors, and leveraging social media, posters, and newsletters to highlight physiotherapy benefits.

2. Accessibility and Availability of Services

- i. Establish on-campus physiotherapy units: Universities should provide well-equipped physiotherapy clinics within their sports facilities to ensure timely access for injured athletes and students.
- ii. Mobile physiotherapy services: For campuses with limited facilities, mobile or outreach physiotherapy units can provide care during training, tournaments, and inter-school competitions.
- iii. Partnerships with teaching hospitals: Collaboration between university health centers and teaching hospitals can ensure referral pathways and access to specialized physiotherapy care.

3. Collaboration and Integration

- i. **Interdisciplinary teamwork:** Encourage collaboration between physiotherapists, coaches, sports physicians, and athletic trainers to ensure comprehensive care and early rehabilitation.
- ii. **Involvement in team sports management:** Physiotherapists should be actively included in sports teams' medical and training staff, participating in both preventive and recovery programs.

4. Infrastructure and Equipment

- i. **Investment in modern rehabilitation tools:** Universities should allocate budgets for essential physiotherapy equipment such as treadmills, electrotherapy units, ultrasound devices, and resistance bands.
- ii. **Adequate space and privacy:** Design dedicated spaces for assessment, treatment, and rehabilitation to encourage comfort and compliance among athletes.

5. Policy and Government Support

- i. **Subsidized or free physiotherapy services:** Institutions and government agencies can provide funding or insurance coverage for student-athletes to reduce cost barriers.
Addressing barriers to accessibility and cost of physiotherapy services
- ii. **Scholarships and training grants:** Support for physiotherapy students and professionals to attend sports medicine conferences and specialized training can improve skill levels and increase trained professionals.

6. Research and Evidence-Based Practice

Encourage student and faculty research: Promote studies on sports injuries, rehabilitation outcomes, and preventive physiotherapy to strengthen the evidence base within university settings.

5.3 Summary

The research is on the awareness, knowledge and utilization of physiotherapy in the management of sport injuries among football players in the University of Benin, Benin City. The project entails the introduction on awareness, knowledge and utilization of physiotherapy as a treatment option for sport related injuries among students that are football players, broad objectives, significance of the study, statement of problems, research questions, scope of the study, limitation of the study and operational definition of terms.

It sees further on literature review on awareness, knowledge, utilization, attitude of football players toward seeking physiotherapy and barriers to physiotherapy. The theoretical framework and research methodology of the study was done, this includes research designs, research setting, target population, sampling technique, instrument for data collection, data analysis and ethical consideration.

Analysis of data was done using tables. The findings were finally discussed revealing the relationship of findings with other studies this included; summary, conclusion, recommendation and suggestion to physiotherapists, health workers and government.

5.4 Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that football players in the University of Benin generally have a good awareness and knowledge about physiotherapy as treatment option for sports-related injuries. The majority of the respondents recognized the benefits of physiotherapy in the prevention, management and rehabilitation of these types of injuries.

However, the study also identified significant barriers that hinder participants from seeking physiotherapy interventions. The primary barrier include, the high cost of physiotherapy services, limited accessibility to physiotherapy facilities and preference for alternative treatment. These barriers need to be addressed to ensure that students can readily access and utilize physiotherapy as part of their overall all health and wellness regimen.

To overcome these barriers a multi-pronged approach is necessary. Institution management and physiotherapy professionals should collaborate to develop strategies that will improve the affordable and accessibility of physiotherapy services. This may include initiatives such as free on campus services, partnership with sport teams and conducting targeted educational campaigns to raise the awareness about the benefits of physiotherapy among athletes.

By addressing the identified barriers and enhancing the utilization of physiotherapy services, athletes in general can better prevent, manage and recover from sports-related injuries, ultimately leading to improved overall health and fitness outcomes of students. The findings of this study provide valuable insights that can inform the development of tailored interventions to promote the integration of physiotherapy into the holistic care of Football Players.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to address the identified barriers and improve the utilization of physiotherapy services in the University.

- i. Conduct regular awareness campaigns and seminars to educate students and athletes about the importance and benefits of physiotherapy in injury prevention and recovery.
- ii. Establish a functional on-campus physiotherapy unit with modern facilities and qualified professionals to ensure easy access to services.
- iii. Subsidize the cost of physiotherapy services through institutional or government support to make treatment more affordable.
- iv. Promote collaboration between physiotherapists, sports coaches, and medical teams to enhance referral systems and integrated care for athletes.
- v. Incorporate physiotherapy education and orientation into the curriculum of sports and health-related programs to improve knowledge and attitudes.

- vi. Encourage government and private partnerships to fund and expand physiotherapy infrastructure and training programs.
- vii. Introduce research and student engagement programs that highlight physiotherapy's role in sports performance and rehabilitation.
- viii. Ensure regular workshops and capacity-building sessions for sports administrators and coaches on the value of early physiotherapy intervention.
- ix. Conduct further research with a larger and more diverse sample to validate the findings and explore additional factors influencing physiotherapy utilization among football players in a different settings.

5.6 Implications for further findings

Further research could delve into the influence of cultural beliefs and societal norms on athletes decisions regarding physiotherapy utilization. Investigating the impact of training duration and physical fitness on performance may offer insights for targeted interventions. A comparative study across diverse sport groups settings could reveal variations in physiotherapy utilization and factors influencing decisions. Additionally, assessing the effectiveness of interventions addressing barriers to physiotherapy utilization and their long-term impact on athletes behaviours would provide practical recommendations for enhancing sport injuries prevention strategies.

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APPENDICES



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA.



Chairman: Prof. F. A Imarhiagbe
MBChb, FMCP
Cert Clin Res and ethics (NIH), MD.
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P.M.B 1154, BENIN CITY

Our Ref: CMS/REC/01/VOL.2/793

Date: 18th September, 2025

**Re: AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND UTILIZATION OF PHYSIOTHERAPY IN
MANAGEMENT OF SPORTS INJURIES AMONG FOOTBALL PLAYERS IN UNIVERSITY OF
BENIN**

Name of Principal Investigator: EHIMHEN RITA OFURE
Department Of Physiotherapy,
School of Basic Medical Science
College of Medical Sciences,
University of Benin

REC Approval No: CMS/REC/2025/793

This is to inform you that the research described in the submitted proposal, the Informed Consent Forms and other participant information materials have been reviewed and approved by the College Research Ethics Committee, University of Benin.

This approval dates from 18th September, 2025 to 19th September, 2026. In multi-year research, Endeavour to submit your annual report to the REC early in order to obtain renewal of your approval and avoid disruption of your research.

The National Code of Health Research Ethics requires you to comply with all institutional guidelines, rules and regulations and with the tenets of the code including ensuring that all adverse events are reported promptly to the REC. No, changes are permitted in the research without prior approval by REC except in circumstances outlined in the code. REC reserves the right to conduct compliance visit to your research site without prior notice. Thank you.

PROF. F.A IMARHIAGBE
Chairman, REC

Promoting best ethical & scientific standard for research in Nigeria

APPENDIX I

INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Sir,

My name is Ehimhen Rita Ofure, a final year student of the Department of Physiotherapy, Basic medical science I am conducting a study on the “Awareness, Knowledge and Utilization of Physiotherapy in Management Of Sports Injuries Among Football Players in University of Benin.” This study is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Bachelor of Physiotherapy degree.

I hereby solicit your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. Kindly note that all information provided will remain confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of this research. Your name will not be required and will not be linked with any information provided. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any point without consequence.

Please answer all questions as sincerely as possible.

Thank you for your participation.

Consent: Now that this study has been explained to me and I understand the nature and purpose, I willingly agree to participate.

Signature of Participant/Date

Signature of Researcher/Date

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Age 18-20 21-23 24-26
2. Religion Christianity Islam Traditional
3. Level 100 200 300 400 500 600
- Footballing Experience Less than 6 months Less than 1 year Between 1-3 years Between 3-5 years above 5 years
5. Duration of Training (Weekly attendance)
 Once a week Twice a week Three times a week Daily
6. Position played during Match
 Goalkeeper Defender Midfielder Forward others (please specify below)
7. Have you ever sustained a sports-related injury? Yes No
8. How will you rate the level of pain you experience due to your injury?
 Mild Moderate Severe

SECTION B: Awareness about physiotherapy as a care option and its potential benefits.

9. How did you first learn about physiotherapy? (Select all that apply)
 Coach / Trainer Teammates Medical personnel Social media / Internet Family members
Others _____
10. Are you aware that physiotherapy can be used to manage sport injury? Yes No
11. How did you first hear about physiotherapy as a treatment option for sports injuries?
 Coach Teammates Medical professional School or academic program Social media or Internet Television or radio Family or friends
Others _____
12. Physiotherapy can be used to prevent sport injuries, not just treat them Yes No
13. Physiotherapy is useful for treating pain Yes No
14. Physiotherapy is practiced by the doctors? Yes No Maybe
15. Physiotherapy is only for post-surgical rehabilitation? Yes No Maybe
17. Masseurs are physiotherapists? Yes No Maybe

18. Physiotherapy helps in improving the quality of life of an injured person?
 Yes No Maybe
19. Physiotherapy helps in improving fitness level of sportsmen? Yes No Maybe
20. Physiotherapy is primarily concerned with movement? Yes No Maybe
21. Physiotherapy services are offered in Government hospitals? Yes No Maybe
22. Physiotherapy services are in Private hospitals? Yes No Maybe
23. Do you visit physiotherapy team when you have an injury? Yes No Maybe
24. When should a player seek physiotherapy after an injury? (Select all that applies)
 Immediately after an injury only if the pain persist for weeks after a doctor referral during rehabilitation post-surgery Never
25. Do you think physiotherapist is one of the important member of football clubs?
 Yes No Maybe
26. Do you think Physiotherapy have role on Guidance of protective equipment (Helmwt,shin pad,e.t.c Yes No Maybe

SECTION C: KNOWLEGDE OF PHYSIOTHERAPY FOR SPORT RELATED INJURIES

i. PART OF SPORT INJURY PREVENTION TIPS PROVIDED BY PHYSIOTHERAPIST IN SPORTS INCLUDES;

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Warming up and training				
Cooling down exercises				
Strapping of joints				
Precautions during recovery				
Playing with injury				
Physiotherapist as a trainer				

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS' MEANS OF TREATMENT OF SPORTS INJURIES INCLUDES;

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Massage				
Exercise therapy				
Health Education				
Drug medication				
Surgical operation				

MODALITIES USED IN PHYSIOTHERAPY INCLUDES;

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Ice/ice sprays				
Braces				
Cycle Ergometer/treadmill				
Electrical stimulus (stimulator)				
Couches				
Bandages				

**SECTION D: ATTITUDE OF FOOTBALL PLAYERS IN SEEKING
PHYSIOTHERAPY AS A TREATMENT OPTION**

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Stigma				
Seeking physiotherapy makes me feel less capable as a footballer				
Physiotherapy is only meant for athletes who are not mentally fit.				
I worry that others will judge me if I use physiotherapy				
Physiotherapy is only for athletes with severe disability				
2. Tolerance				
I am willing to endure painful physiotherapy exercises if they aid recovery				
I find physiotherapy exercises too uncomfortable to continue				
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I would continue physiotherapy even if progress is low				
The time committed to Physiotherapy sessions is excessive				
3. Confidence in physiotherapy				
Physiotherapy accurately diagnose football specific injury				
I trust physiotherapy advice more				

than coaches' advice				
Physiotherapy customize treatments well for footballers needs				
I believe physiotherapy are highly skilled professionals.				
4. Personal openness				
I am willing to discuss personal aspects of my life if they are relevant to my physiotherapy treatment.				
I find it easy to open to health care professionals, including physiotherapists				
I am comfortable with a physiotherapist asking about my lifestyle and habit				
5. Cultural preference				
I would prefer to see a physiotherapist who shares my cultural background				
Traditional healing practices are more effective than physiotherapy for sport injury				
My community views physiotherapy as a legitimate treatment				
I would choose physiotherapy even if my family prefers traditional method				
Gender related perceptions				

I am comfortable being treated by a physiotherapy				
The gender of the physiotherapist affects my willingness to attend sessions				
Male footballers are taken more seriously when they seek physiotherapy				

SECTION E: Barriers hindering football players in seeking Physiotherapy

31. Have you ever used Physiotherapy for a sports injury? Yes No

32. (If yes) how satisfied were you with the outcome? Very dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very satisfied

33. (If No) what is the primary reason you have not used Physiotherapy?

Lack of awareness High cost Prefer alternative treatments (e.g....medicine traditional) No access to physiotherapy services

Others _____

34. What factors hinder your use of physiotherapy? (Select all that applies)

Cost of services Lack of nearby facilities Time constraints Belief that injuries heal without intervention Lack of referral from coaches / medical team.

Others _____

35. How could access to physiotherapy be improved for athletes in University of Benin?

Free on-campus services Educational workshops Subsidized cost Partnership with sport teams.