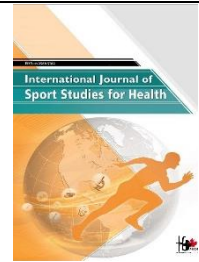


International Journal of Sport Studies for Health

Journal Homepage



A Qualitative Analysis of the Role of Sleep Disorders in Sports Injuries Among Competitive Athletes in Canada

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1 Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

While the sentence “Recent evidence highlights that elite athletes not only exhibit poorer sleep hygiene...” (p. 1) provides a solid empirical anchor, it would benefit from clarification of which sports or competition levels this applies to (e.g., Olympic, collegiate, or club athletes) for greater contextual precision.

The statement “This study seeks to contribute to the evolving understanding...” is appropriate, but a more precise research question or aim would strengthen clarity. For example, specify what emotional or behavioral dimensions were explored.

While stating the study is “qualitative,” it would be helpful to explicitly mention the methodological approach (e.g., phenomenology, grounded theory, or thematic analysis) used to shape the interview guide and analysis process.

The authors mention “78 recurring codes”—this level of granularity is excellent, but Table 1 is overwhelming and hard to interpret. Consider clustering similar open codes or highlighting the top 10 most frequently cited.

Several codes (e.g., “Use of compression gear for sleep” or “Dreams of injury”) are intriguing but not explored later in the discussion. Consider either removing less-relevant codes or expanding on their significance in the narrative analysis.

The sentence “This step involved reassembling the data...” is clear, but the analysis could be enhanced by providing a brief excerpt from one participant under each axial category (e.g., for “Anxiety-related sleep disruptions”) to improve thematic transparency.

The axial code “Avoidance and distrust” is insightful, but please consider rewording to “Avoidance of support systems and distrust of healthcare” to clarify the social structures involved.

In the sentence “Athletes frequently described how poor sleep preceded or exacerbated physical injuries...”, include whether this relationship was described as causal, correlative, or speculative by participants to avoid overinterpretation.

The authors write “Participants described heightened sleep anxiety before major competitions...”—it would be helpful to relate this to sport-specific performance contexts (e.g., pre-race insomnia vs. post-game fatigue) to deepen insight.

Author revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

1.2 Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The authors write “Sleep disturbances may impair an athlete’s ability to process pain, regulate mood, and maintain focus...”—consider expanding this with specific neurological mechanisms (e.g., prefrontal cortex involvement) or citing a meta-analysis to ground this in neurophysiological evidence.

The discussion on gender differences in sleep (“female athletes may experience higher rates of sleep-related symptoms...”) is important but underdeveloped. Please elaborate on whether hormonal or sociocultural variables are more influential, as this distinction impacts intervention design.

The authors note that “interviews were conducted in person or via video conferencing...” but do not comment on whether mode differences were controlled or reflected in the data. Consider including a reflection on how interview modality may have influenced disclosure.

The paragraph states “The selective coding process synthesized the findings...”—this is conceptually strong, but it would be more robust to include quotes that illustrate each of the four core themes in the body of the text.

The authors say “These reports align with prior research...”—please provide more depth on how these findings advance or challenge existing knowledge, especially regarding the use of wearables and their psychological impact.

Author revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.