

POPINVITED: ID# 100927

Title:

The Journey Back to Myself: Returning to Baseline Functioning Post-Concussion, a Phenomenological Study

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ACCEPTED

Session Title:

Rising Stars of Research and Scholarship Invited Student Posters

Slot:

RS PST1: Sunday, 17 November 2019: 11:45 AM-12:15 PM

Applicable Category:

Clinical, Academic, Students, Researchers

Keywords:

Concussion, mTBI, Qualitative Research and Rehabilitation, Recovery

References:

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McCrory, P., Meeuwisse, W. H., Aubry, M., Cantu, R. C., Dvorak, J., Echemendia, R. J., . . . Turner, M. (2013). Consensus statement on concussion in sport: The 4th international conference on concussion in sport, zurich, november 2012. *Journal of Athletic Training, 48*(4), 554-575. doi:10.4085/1062-6050-48.4.05 [doi]

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Abstract Summary:

Pilot Phenomenological study concerning the experience of returning to baseline following concussion. Thoughts and emotions of students regarding the healing process and feelings of frustration regarding lack of available treatment for a concussion.

Content Outline:

Content Outline

1. Introduction
2. Example 3.8 Million sport related TBI annually (CDC,2019). Numerous individuals unlikely to seek medical care
3. Example Current treatment is “cognitive rest” no widely accepted treatment intervention__
4. Body (Overarching Themes)
5. Main Point #1 Feeling frustrated and annoyed with self
6. Supporting point #1

This was supported by multiple significant statements, most notably “It was like frustrating...I was annoyed with myself every day.”

1. Main Point #2 A sense of overwhelming confusion.
2. Supporting point #1

significant statement “Honestly, you just feel a step behind everything mentally. I feel like it just takes longer to do things and it’s a lot more difficult. It was hard. It was overwhelming...It [the concussion symptoms] makes things a lot more confusing.”

1. Main Point #3 memory loss
2. Supporting point #1

During the interviews, participants mentioned not being able to remember details

2. Supporting point #2

mentioned feeling foggy regarding their own feelings and perceptions of the entire recovery process.

III. Conclusion

The journey back to self, following a concussion, is plagued with overwhelming feelings of confusion, trudging through each day without motivation. Essentially feeling as if they are going through the motions of life waiting for their symptoms to subside. Feelings of frustration and annoyance with themselves and the ineffectiveness of treatment. The recovery process is also hindered by an inability to focus on daily life leading to increased effort for simple tasks like conversation with others. Having symptoms negatively impact relationships with family. Leading to an overall feeling of uselessness shrouded in a fog from memory loss as a result of the injury.

Topic Selection:

Rising Stars of Research and Scholarship Invited Student Posters (25201)

Abstract Text:

Research Question: What is the experience of coming back to baseline following a concussion?

Population/Sampling: 3 individuals were recruited through word of mouth and social media inquiry. No advertisement was done for this study. Participants' ages ranged from 18-22 with two participants having had a concussion within 6 months of their interview.

Methods: Colaizzi's 7 step method for phenomenological analysis was employed for this study. The researcher kept a reflexive journal to bracket prior knowledge, personal thoughts, emotions and perceptions in attempt to remain as objective as possible throughout this analysis. Husserl's underlying philosophy of phenomenology was used to guide the pilot study.

Data Analysis: Interviews were transcribed electronically by a transcription service, then reviewed for accuracy by the researcher. Transcriptions were then uploaded to the phenomenological analysis software *Atlas.ti* to be re-read whole. Significant statements were found in each interview, translated into formulated meanings and then clustered into themes. Themes were later reconsidered and condensed into a more manageable number of themes. Themes were used to create an exhaustive description of the experience.

Quality of Data Analysis: Respondent validation was used to determine the accuracy of themes and the exhaustive description. 2 out of 3 participants provided positive feedback with the results. Each participant was contacted following the completion of data analysis and formulated meaning elucidation from themes and supporting statements.

Findings: Following 3 short interviews, 9 clusters of themes were teased out of formulated meanings from the participant interviews. 3 themes were highlighted in this poster presentation. All themes were analyzed and formed into an exhausted description of the recovery process following a concussion.

Conclusions: The recovery period following a concussion is littered with persistent symptoms and the symptoms impact a multitude of daily activities. This includes work responsibility, social and familial interaction as well as feelings of frustration with self.