**OPEN PEER REVIEW**

## Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

## What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

## Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/kowsar/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

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# Peer Review Report for "The Association of Visual Impairments of Elite Soccer Players with Concussion and Sports Injuries: A Prospective Cohort Study"

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## Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 25 Jul 2020
Revised Date: 29 Dec 2020
Accepted Date: 22 Jan 2021

**Revision (0)**

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

**REFEREE**: Reviewer | **Revision** (0)

6 Sep 2020

Dear AE,
The manuscript entitled “The Association of Visual Examination of Elite Soccer Players with Concussion and Sports Injuries: A Prospective Cohort Study” is relevant to the journal scopes and needs minor revisions by the authors.
- In the title replace sport with sports
Methods
- Please provide the ethics code number.
Results
- In table one please delete the rows showing total number and gender.
- In the title of table 5 “Table 5. Analysis of risk factor variables for lower from binary logistic regression” add lower extremity.
Conclusion
- Please give a brief report of the results in the first paragraph.
Thanks.

**REFEREE**: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 16 Sep 2020

Dear AE,

Thank you for letting me review the manuscript entitled "The Association of Visual Examination of Elite Soccer Players with Concussion and Sports Injuries: A Prospective Cohort Study."

This manuscript focuses on a complex issue in the field of professional sport. I think that if the authors wish this paper considered by experts, some key points have to be clarified or fixed before we can proceed, and positive action should be taken.

General Considerations:

• It seems that this study is part of a broader cohort study. If yes, please mention it in the manuscript and make it clear.

• The main objective of the manuscript is to find any relationship between impaired visual skills and sports-related injuries. In this regard, there are two main issues: first, the authors did not mention all parts of the body for injury registration (e.g., face, eyes, and chest or trunk injuries); second, did not describe their "online injury record service" protocol and data collection. For instance, what are the criteria for registering an injury regarding injury severity?

• There is no information about the ethical approval for the study.

Detailed considerations:

1) Topic: Did this manuscript report the association of "visual examinations" or "visual disorders" with concussion/injuries?

2) Keywords: According to the results of the study, refractive errors have more importance than color vision defects. Consequently, it seems a good idea to substitute the suggested term with it or add refractive errors to the keywords.

3) Background:

• It is not clear what type of visual skills are considered in the study (perceptual or motor) by the authors.

• There is a sentence in the ending of the background (line 45) about "sports injuries cause eye problems …" Did you evaluate this variable in the study?

4) Objectives: Injury of the head and face (except concussion) or trunk do not include in the manuscript. Please clarify the logic.

5) Methods:

• Line 57: change football to soccer

• Based on the manuscript's background, the eye examination that recruited in this study is not "complete" (line 59 and also in the abstract), while the authors did not evaluate performance-related skills for sports activities. The reported procedures are just a full medical eye examination.

• Please clarify about duration and sequences of study. The authors claimed their survey began in September 2016 and ended in October 2018 (more than two years) while they reported follow-up of participants was for one year (line 61).

• Please clarify about exclusion criteria. Why did the authors exclude these athletes? Did you sure about the effect of eye disorders on injury rate or concussion before analyzing the study results?

• There is one big question about participants with visual impairments. After the Pre-competition medical assessment, did the participants with refractory errors received treatment, or they began the league without any corrective devices?

Thanks.

**REFEREE**: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 22 Sep 2020

Dear EIC,
This is a cohort study about visual field defects and concussion in soccer players. Three reviewers have reviewed the document. There are some concerns with the study, and the reviewers have provided detailed feedback. Authors have put in the great effort; however, it needs 'major revision' before the acceptance.
Thanks.

**REFEREE**: EIC | **Revision** (0) 23 Sep 2020

Dear Author,
Your manuscript was reviewed by our reviewers. The reviewers have raised concerns regarding the manuscript, and therefore, your paper is not acceptable for publication in this format. However since the reviewers do find some merit in the paper, I would be willing to reconsider if you wish to undertake major revisions and re-submit, addressing the referees' concerns.
Please note that resubmitting your manuscript does not guarantee acceptance and that your resubmission will be subject to a re-review before a decision is rendered.
Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

## Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

**Reviewers' Comments:**

Reviewer 1:

Dear EIC,

Thank you for letting me review the manuscript entitled "The Association of Visual Examination of Elite Soccer Players with Concussion and Sports Injuries: A Prospective Cohort Study."

This manuscript focuses on a complex issue in the field of professional sport. I think that if the authors wish this paper considered by experts, some key points have to be clarified or fixed before we can proceed, and positive action should be taken.

General Considerations:

• It seems that this study is part of a broader cohort study. If yes, please mention it in the manuscript and make it clear. **Not applicable**

• The main objective of the manuscript is to find any relationship between impaired visual skills and sports-related injuries. In this regard, there are two main issues: first, the authors did not mention all parts of the body for injury registration (e.g., face, eyes, and chest or trunk injuries); second, did not describe their "online injury record service" protocol and data collection. For instance, what are the criteria for registering an injury regarding injury severity? **The injury rate of head and neck injuries (other than concussion) and chest and trunk injuries were included in table 3. The injury record system was developed based on the article "Consensus statement on injury definitions and data collection procedures in studies of football (soccer) injuries," published in the British Journal of sports medicine 2006. As there was no face or trunk injury reported, it was not reported in the statistical analysis, but**

• There is no information about the ethical approval for the study. **Done**

Detailed considerations:

1) Topic: Did this manuscript report the association of "visual examinations" or "visual disorders" with concussion/injuries? **Done, it is changed to visual impairments**

2) Keywords: According to the results of the study, refractive errors have more importance than color vision defects. Consequently, it seems a good idea to substitute the suggested term with it or add refractive errors to the keywords. **Done**

3) Background:

• It is not clear what type of visual skills are considered in the study (perceptual or motor) by the authors.

• There is a sentence in the ending of the background (line 45) about "sports injuries cause eye problems …" Did you evaluate this variable in the study? **Reference was added for the sentence.**

4) Objectives: Injury of the head and face (except concussion) or trunk do not include in the manuscript. Please clarify the logic. **They are included in the table 3.**

5) Methods:

• Line 57: change football to soccer: **Done**

• Based on the manuscript's background, eye examination that recruited in this study is not "complete" (line 59 and also in the abstract), while authors did not evaluate performance-related skills for sports activities. The reported procedures are just a full medical eye examination.

• Please clarify about duration and sequences of study. The authors claimed their survey began in September 2016 and ended in October 2018 (more than two years) while they reported follow-up of participants was for one year (line 61). **Corrected (2017 to 1018)**

• Please clarify about exclusion criteria. Why did the authors exclude these athletes? Did you sure about the effect of eye disorders on injury rate or concussion before analyzing the study results? **The exclusion criteria were corrected in the text.**

The players who reported to correct their eye impairments before and during the season were excluded from the study as we could not reexamine these players to see the level of correction and consider their new examination. Also, Players with a documented ocular condition that was not evaluated during our eye examination were excluded from our study to eradicate the effect of other eye impairments on soccer injuries.

• There is one big question about participants with visual impairments. After the Pre-competition medical assessment, did the participants with refractory errors received treatment, or they began the league without any corrective devices? **It was added to the "participant" subtitle in the methods. While the players were not obligated to correct the reported visual impairments, the player or their team physicians had to report any correction.**

**Reviewer 2:**

Dear author

The manuscript entitled "The Association of Visual Examination of Elite Soccer Players with Concussion and Sports Injuries: A Prospective Cohort Study" is relevant to the journal scopes and needs minor revisions.

In title replace sport with sports: **Done**

Methods
Please provide the ethics code number. **Done**

Results
In table one please delete the rows showing total number and gender. **Done**

In the title of table 5 "Table 5. Analysis of risk factor variables for lower from binary logistic regression" add lower extremity. **Done**

Conclusion
Please give a brief report of the results in the first paragraph. **Done**

**OPEN PEER REVIEW**

**Revision (1)**

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

**REFEREE**: Reviewer | **Revision** (1) 2 Jan 2021

Dear AE,
All the corrections were made appropriately.
Thanks.

**REFEREE**: Reviewer | **Revision** (1) 18 Jan 2021

Dear AE,
The authors have clarified all of the questions I raised in my previous review. I think this paper excellent and is a significant addition to the literature.
Best regards

**REFEREE**: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) 19 Jan 2021

Dear EIC,
The second round of peer review is complete and reviewers are satisfied by the changes. Now we accept the article for publication.
Regards,

**REFEREE**: EIC | **Revision** (1) 22 Jan 2021

Dear Author,
The second round of peer review of your manuscript has been completed, and I am pleased to inform you that your manuscript has now been accepted for publication in our journal.
Thanks.