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Essential biomechanical aspects in athletics

Daniel-Mihai Amariei, Zeno-Iosif Praisach*, Zoltan Iosif Korka, Andrade-Ionuț Bichescu

Abstract. *The aim of this paper is to present theoretical aspects of the study of biomechanics in athletics, which is essential for performance optimization, injury prevention, and improvement of athletes' capabilities. This study contains various research directions in athlete biomechanics as well as biodynamic modeling and simulation in athletics. Finally, aspects of athlete training design and optimization are presented, which are essential for tailoring training programs to the individual needs and goals of athletes.*

Keywords: *biomechanical model, optimization, performance, evaluation, objectives*

1. Introduction

Studies in the field of biomechanics have highlighted significant differences in performance between trained and untrained subjects regarding the biomechanical aspects of athletic movement. Here are some observed differences:

- ***Movement Efficiency***: Trained athletes generally exhibit greater efficiency in their movements compared to untrained subjects. This is primarily due to the development of better techniques, improved muscle coordination, and the ability to generate force and power optimally [8].
- ***Kinematics and Kinetics of Movement***: Trained subjects often demonstrate more precise and controlled movement patterns compared to untrained individuals. This can be reflected in more appropriate joint angles, better limb alignments, and more efficient force distributions [12].
- ***Muscle Power and Strength***: Trained athletes generally possess greater muscle power and strength compared to untrained subjects. This is due to specific muscle development and neuromuscular adaptations that occur through training.

- ***Muscular Endurance***: Trained athletes often exhibit superior muscular endurance compared to untrained individuals. This allows them to maintain performance and movement efficiency during intense and prolonged sports activities.
- ***Stability and Motor Control***: Regular training can contribute to improving the stability and motor control of athletes.

These aspects are essential for injury prevention and optimal performance in athletic movements. It is important to note that individual variations and differences in athletes' training can influence the performance differences observed in studies. Additionally, the level of training and sports experience can vary among different athletes and sports, contributing to variations in the biomechanics of athletic movements [2].

Overall, regular and specialized training plays a crucial role in the development of athletes' biomechanical capabilities, enabling them to achieve superior performance and maximize their potential in their sporting activities.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive theoretical review of the significance of biomechanics in the context of sports. This review aims to underscore the direct applications of biomechanical principles in enhancing sports performance, mitigating the risk of injuries, and fostering the development of athletes' skills."

2. Research Directions in Athlete Biomechanics

In the field of athletic biomechanics, there are several research directions that can contribute to understanding and enhancing athletic performance. Here are some relevant research directions in athlete biomechanics:

- ***Analysis and Technique Optimization***: Research can be focused on analyzing and understanding the specific techniques of each sport discipline. Studies can examine key factors influencing performance, such as proper body alignment, muscle coordination, applied force, and moment, to identify ways to optimize technique [8].
- ***Force and Power Generation Mechanisms***: Research can focus on understanding the mechanisms of force and power generation in various athletic movements. These studies can explore how muscular characteristics and neuromuscular coordination contribute to the development of force and power in specific sports activities [12].
- ***Injury Prevention and Rehabilitation***: Biomechanics can play a significant role in the prevention and rehabilitation of athlete injuries. Research can examine biomechanical risk factors for different types of injuries, such as running and jumping biomechanics, and identify interventions to minimize the risk of injury and accelerate recovery [2].

- ***Adaptation and Individual Performance***: Research can explore individual variations in athlete biomechanics and how they influence sports performance. This may include studies on gender differences, age differences, or variations based on training level and sports experience.
- ***Innovative Measurement and Analysis Technologies***: In recent years, new technologies and measurement methods in biomechanics have emerged, such as the Opto Jump system, 3D tracking systems, computerized image analysis, and numerical simulations. Research can explore the use of these technologies to obtain more precise data and investigate more detailed aspects of athlete biomechanics [1].

These are just a few examples of research directions in athlete biomechanics. With technological advancements and progress in the field of biomechanics, there are ongoing opportunities for research and innovation in understanding and optimizing athletic performance [10].

3. Biodynamic Modeling and Simulation in Athletics

Biodynamic modeling and simulation in athletics is an approach that uses mathematical models and computer simulations to understand and evaluate the biomechanical behavior of athletes during sports activities. This method provides a detailed perspective on forces, moments, and interactions between body segments and musculoskeletal systems during athletic motion. Key aspects of biodynamic modeling and simulation in athletics include:

- ***Development of Biomechanical Models***: Biodynamic modeling involves developing mathematical models that describe the structure and behavior of the musculoskeletal systems involved in athletic movement. These models may include information about the geometry and mechanical properties of body segments, muscles, tendons, and joints [9].
- ***Model Validation***: To ensure the accuracy and validity of models, they must be validated by comparing their results with experimental data collected in real or laboratory conditions. This involves using measurement technologies such as 3D tracking systems, force plates, or EMG systems to collect reference data [12].
- ***Athletic Motion Simulation***: Using the developed models and validated data, computerized simulations of athletic motion can be created. These simulations can reproduce an athlete's specific movements and provide detailed information about the forces, moments, and muscle demands involved in that motion.
- ***Analysis and Interpretation of Results***: Biodynamic simulations can provide valuable information about the performance and behavior of athletes in different

situations. By analyzing the results, factors influencing performance can be evaluated, technical deficiencies can be identified, and strategies for optimizing athletic performance can be developed [6].

- ***Training Design and Optimization***: Biodynamic modeling and simulation can be used to optimize training programs. By simulating different scenarios and interventions, the effects of training on performance can be evaluated, and personalized strategies can be developed for each athlete.

Biodynamic modeling and simulation in athletics offer a complementary and detailed perspective on biomechanics and athletic performance. It can contribute to improving technique, optimizing performance, and preventing injuries in athletics [4].

4. Development of Biomechanical Models

The development of biomechanical models is a complex and interdisciplinary process that involves collecting data, identifying the structure and behavior of the biological system, and using mathematical and technological methods to create a representative model. The steps involved in developing biomechanical models are:

- ***Defining Objectives***: The first step in developing a biomechanical model is to establish objectives and research questions. It is important to clarify what information is desired and how the resulting model will be used [8].
- ***Data Collection:*** An essential aspect of developing biomechanical models is collecting relevant data. This can include measurements from human subjects, data from existing literature, information about the mechanical properties of tissues, medical images, and more. The data should be precise, valid, and representative of the biological system being analyzed [11].
- ***Identification and Description of Components***: Biomechanical modeling involves identifying and describing the key components of the biological system under study. This may include the structure and geometry of body segments, mechanical properties of tissues (such as stiffness and elasticity), and muscular and joint characteristics.
- ***Formulation of Mathematical Relationships:*** Biomechanical modeling involves formulating mathematical relationships that describe the behavior of the biological system. These may include equations of motion, equilibrium equations, relationships between force and motion, force and muscle length, and so on. These relationships are based on relevant physical and biomechanical principles [15].
- ***Model Implementation***: The biomechanical model is implemented in a computational environment, such as specialized software or simulation platforms. Here, the collected data, mathematical relationships, and other relevant parameters are entered to create a functional model [11].

- ***Validation and Evaluation of the Model***: Validation of the biomechanical model involves comparing the model's results with experimental data or real observations. This is a crucial step to ensure that the model accurately reproduces the behavior of the biological system and provides correct and valid results [3].
- ***Use and Refinement of the Model***: The biomechanical model can be used to investigate specific research questions, simulate different scenarios, or optimize athletic performance. Depending on the results obtained, the model may need refinement and improvement to provide more accurate and relevant results.

5. Model Validation

Model validation is an important process to ensure that developed models are representative and provide accurate and credible results. Validation involves comparing the results obtained from models with experimental data or real observations to check their accuracy and reliability. Basic information about model validation includes:

- ***Experimental Data Collection***: To validate a biomechanical model, it is necessary to collect relevant experimental data. This data may include measurements from human subjects, data from existing literature, or results from laboratory experiments. It is essential that the data is collected under controlled conditions and accurately represents the behavior of the biological system being studied [8].
- ***Comparison of Model Results with Experimental Data***: After developing the model, the results obtained from it are compared with relevant experimental data. This involves analyzing both numerical values and trends and general characteristics of motion or biomechanical behavior. The comparison can be done using statistical methods such as root mean square error (RMSE), correlation coefficient, or cross-validation tests [9].
- ***Sensitivity to Variations and Uncertainties***: Model validation must take into account the sensitivity of the model to variations and uncertainties in experimental data or model parameters. Sensitivity analysis can identify factors that may influence the results and help improve the accuracy and robustness of the model [12].
- ***External and Internal Validation***: Validation of biomechanical models can involve both external validation, where model results are compared with experimental data from other sources or studies, and internal validation, where model results are compared with experimental data from the same dataset or subjects.

- ***Reassessment and Model Refinement***: Depending on the results obtained during the validation process, it may be necessary to reassess and refine the model. This may involve adjusting model parameters, revising mathematical relationships, or adding additional factors to improve the accuracy and validity of the model.

Model validation is a critical step in ensuring that biomechanical models provide reliable and trustworthy results, which can be used for research, analysis, and decision-making in various fields, including sports biomechanics [10].

6. Athletic Motion Simulation

Athletic motion simulation is the process of using mathematical models and computer simulations to recreate and analyze the movements and biomechanical behavior of athletes during sports activities. This approach provides an opportunity to better understand the mechanisms and factors influencing athletes' performance and can help optimize technique, training, and injury prevention. Key aspects of athletic motion simulation include:

- ***Biomechanical Modeling:*** Athletic motion simulation begins with the development of a biomechanical model representing the biological system involved. This model may include the structure and geometry of body segments, mechanical properties of tissues, muscle and joint characteristics, and other relevant factors [9].
- ***Data Input and Parameters:*** Simulation involves entering the collected data and parameters into the biomechanical model. This data may include information about initial motion, muscle properties, neuromuscular coordination, external forces, and other factors influencing athletic motion [8].
- ***Numerical Simulation:*** Using numerical methods and algorithms, the biomechanical model is simulated in a computational environment, such as specialized software. During simulation, values and mathematical relationships are evaluated at each moment of motion to determine the evolution and behavior of the biomechanical system [2].
- ***Analysis of Results:*** After completing the simulation, the obtained results are analyzed and interpreted. These results can include information about trajectories, joint angles, forces, joint moments, load distribution, and other parameters relevant to athletic motion. The analysis of results can provide insights into factors contributing to performance, efficiency, and the risk of injury [12].

- ***Optimization and Performance Improvement:*** Athletic motion simulation can be used to optimize and enhance athletes' performance. Based on the results, technical deficiencies can be identified, personalized training strategies can be developed, and variations and interventions can be explored to maximize athletes' performance [10].

7. Training Design and Optimization

Training design and optimization involve the process of developing training programs that maximize athletes' performance and help them achieve their individual and performance goals. Here are some key aspects of training design and optimization:

- ***Initial Athlete Assessment***: The process of designing training starts with an initial assessment of athletes, including evaluations of physical capacities, technical skills, and sports performance. This assessment helps identify athletes' strengths and weaknesses and sets realistic and personalized goals [9].
- ***Goal Setting***: Based on the initial assessment, specific goals are set for each athlete. These goals can include improving strength, power, endurance, speed, or sport-specific techniques. Goals should be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) [5].
- ***Training Planning:*** Training planning involves structuring the volume and intensity of training sessions. It considers principles of adaptation and progression, exercise variation, and recovery periods. Training can be planned for the short term (weeks) and long term (months/years), taking into account competitions and rest periods [7].
- ***Individualized Training***: Each athlete has unique needs and capabilities. Training design should consider these differences and be tailored to individual needs and goals. This may involve modifying the volume and intensity, choosing exercises and training methods, and considering physical, technical, and psychological aspects [13].
- ***Monitoring and Adjustment***: Training needs regular monitoring to assess progress and the effectiveness of the training program. This may involve measuring athletes' performance, evaluating established goals, and providing continuous feedback based on progress and adjusting training according to the results.
- ***Integration of Recovery Factors***: Optimizing training goes beyond the training sessions themselves. Attention should be given to recovery factors such as rest, proper nutrition, sleep, stress management, and active recovery techniques. These aspects contribute to recovery, regeneration, and the avoidance of overtraining.

Training design and optimization are crucial for improving athletes' performance, and they require a personalized and goal-oriented approach. The design and monitoring of training programs help athletes reach their full potential while minimizing the risk of injury and overexertion [4].

The process of selecting articles for this review of biomechanics in sports involved the following steps:

I conducted a systematic search across various academic databases, including PubMed, Google Scholar, Web of Science, and sport science journals. These databases were chosen for their comprehensive coverage of relevant literature.

Articles were considered for inclusion if they met the following criteria:

Published within the last 10 years (between 2013 and 2023) to ensure relevance.

Relevant to the study's objectives, specifically addressing biomechanics in sports and its applications in performance optimization, injury prevention, or athlete skill development.

Selected articles from the initial screening phase underwent a comprehensive examination of their full texts. We assessed them for relevance, methodology, and their potential contributions to the study's objectives.

In addition to the database search, we reviewed the reference lists of selected articles to identify additional sources that might have been overlooked in the initial search.

After a thorough evaluation, the final selection of articles was made based on their alignment with the study's focus and their potential to enhance the theoretical review of biomechanics in sports.

An assessment of each article's quality, methodology, data sources, and potential biases was conducted. This quality assessment was a critical part of the final selection process.

By following this systematic methodology for article selection, my aim was to ensure the integrity and comprehensiveness of the review, providing readers with a well-rounded understanding of the role of biomechanics in sports.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of biomechanics in athletics is essential for optimizing performance, preventing injuries, and enhancing athletes' capabilities.

It encompasses various research directions, such as technique optimization, force and power generation, injury prevention, and the use of innovative measurement technologies. The development of biomechanical models and their validation is

crucial for ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the results obtained. Athletic motion simulation offers a detailed perspective on athletes' movements, which can be used to analyze and optimize performance. Finally, training design and optimization are essential for tailoring training programs to individual athletes' needs and goals. The field of athlete biomechanics continues to evolve with advancements in technology and research, offering new opportunities to improve athletic performance and overall well-being. Understanding and applying biomechanical principles in sports not only benefits athletes but also contributes to the advancement of sports science as a whole.

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Addresses:

- Phd. Daniel-Mihai Amariei, Doctoral School of Engineering, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Faculty of Engineering, Piaţa Traian Vuia, nr. 1-4, 320085, Reşiţa, Romania
  daniel.amariei@ubbcluj.ro
- Lect. Dr. Eng. Habil. Zeno-Iosif Praisach, Department of Engineering Science, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Faculty of Engineering, Piaţa Traian Vuia, nr. 1-4, 320085, Reşiţa, Romania, zeno.praisach@ubbcluj.ro
  (corresponding author)*
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eng. Zoltan Iosif Korka, Department of Engineering Science, Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Faculty of Engineering, Piaţa Traian Vuia, nr. 1-4, 320085, Reşiţa, Romania, zoltan.korka@ubbcluj.ro
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Andrade-Ionuț Bichescu, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, andrade.bichescu@ubbcluj.ro