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**Amit Tomar**

Research Scholar University of  
Delhi, New Delhi, India

**Kapil Dev Dhunna**

Research Scholar University of  
Delhi, New Delhi, India

## The role of psychological factors in sports

**Amit Tomar and Kapil Dev Dhunna**

### Abstract

Sport psychology is the recent concern of sport science in India. Psychology preparation is a fact that has been often neglected by athletes and coaches. Studies have shown that mental readiness was felt to be the most significant statistical link with Olympics ranking. Vishwanathan Anand, a professional chess player suggested that the game is 99% psychological. "The total time spent by the chess player is almost all of their 'thinking time'". Within the areas of psychological aspects of athletic performance, it is interesting to note that more than 70 percent questions raised, discussed and debated at the International conferences and seminars on sport psychology pertain to anxiety, Motivation, Arousal, Personality, concentration, Mental imagery, confidence, goal setting etc. They arise under varying sets of circumstances and form a sort of continuum but always moving upward. Sport psychology is now a firmly recognized sport science in the curriculum of most colleges of physical education.

**Keywords:** Anxiety, motivation, arousal, personality, concentration, mental imagery, confidence, goal setting

### Introduction

It is recognized that psychological factors are of crucial importance in sports activities and performance. The psychology of sport is an interdisciplinary science that is based on the knowledge of many related fields, such as biomechanics, physiology, kinesiology and psychology. It involves the study of how psychological factors affect performance and how participation in sports and exercise affect psychological and physical factors. In addition to the instruction and training of psychological skills to improve performance, psychology is the science of sports that seeks to understand the psychological and mental factors that affect performance in sports, physical activity and exercise and apply them to improve performance individual and team. There are many psychological factors that affect sports performance and personality such as: Motivation, Concentration (or attention), Confidence, Anxiety. Athletes must be aware of the psychological.

### The Role of Psychological Factors in Sport

The factors in sport, the important role they play and how they contribute towards maintaining health and well-being. Being aware of this will help ensure athletes training and performance is not affected.

### Definition of Terms

**Aggression:** Is defined as any behaviour directed toward intentionally harming or injuring another living being.

**Anxiety:** Is a negative emotional state characterized by nervousness, worry and apprehension and associated with activation or arousal of the body.

**Arousal:** Is a general physiological and psychological activation, varying on continuum from deep sleep to intense excitement.

**Attitude:** A belief and feeling that predisposes one to respond in particular way to objects, peoples and events.

**Correspondence**

**Amit Tomar**

Research Scholar University of  
Delhi, New Delhi, India

**Emotion:** An intense mental state that arise subjectively rather than through conscious effort and is accompanied by physiological changes related to autonomic activation.

**Environmental factors:** The polices, systems, social contexts, and physical barriers or facilitators that affect a person's participation in activities.

**Motivation:** A need or desire that energized and direct behaviour toward a goal.

**Intrinsic motivation:** Refers to people's impetus to perform an activity for itself and pleasure and satisfaction derived from participation.

**Extrinsic motivation:** A desire to perform behaviour due to promised rewards or threats of punishment. Goal setting" Is an extremely powerful technique for enhancing performance.

**Imagery:** Mental picture a powerful aid to effortful processing, especially when combined with semantic encoding.

**Performance:** Is an observable behaviour that demonstrates skill.

**Self-confidence:** Is the belief that you can successfully perform a desired behaviour.

**Self-efficacy:** Perception of one's capability to carry out behaviour with known outcome; expectations of personal mastery regarding initiation and persistence of a behaviour.

**Social factors:** Factors which are related with a given society.

**Stereotype:** A generalized belief about a group of people.

**Stress:** Is a process, it occurs when people perceive an imbalance between the physical and psychological demands of them and their ability to respond.

**Team cohesion:** A dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency for a group of team to stick together and remain united pursuit of goals and objectives.

There are four major performance skills for all elite sportsmen and women, these being technical, physical, tactical and mental. The latter skill is one that can make the crucial difference for athletes performing consistently to their abilities.

### Review of Related Literature

Mental preparation is defined as those cognitive, emotional, and behavioural strategies athletes and teams use to arrive at an ideal performance state or condition that is related to optimal psychological states and peak performance for Either competition or practice. Discussion of mental preparation is also limited to purposeful efforts that athletes and coaches use to ready themselves, although it is recognized that many athletes may unknowingly engage in certain preparatory behaviours through force of habit or because those in their sport have always done it that way (Brewer, 2009).

It is perhaps easiest to begin by saying what aggression is not. Aggression is not competitiveness, nor is it anger. Competitiveness is an attitude, anger is an emotion. While

anger and competitiveness may both contribute to aggression. Aggression itself is behaviour. It involves actively doing something unpleasant to someone. Aggressive behaviour may come in many forms, ranging from verbal abuse-designed to cause psychological harm- to physical violence (Jarvis, 1999). A key question is how self-confidence works to influence the way that athletes perform. Self-confidence can be thought of as the "mental modifier," because confidence seems to modify how athletes feel about, respond to, and think about everything that happens to them in sport. For example, self-confidence has been shown to positively predict athletes' effort and persistence in sport (Brewer, 2009).

Confidence consistently appears as a key skill possessed by successful athletes, and international level athletes have identified confidence as the most critical mental skill defining mental toughness. Knowing this, athletes have stated that the development and maintenance of confidence is one of their biggest needs in mental training. This is because along with its importance as a mental skill critical to sport performance, another defining characteristic of confidence is its fragility (Brewer, 2009).

Stress can be considered from two standpoints. It can be viewed from an individual's reaction to stress and it can also be viewed with respect to the source of stress. When the source of stress is refereed to, the terms stressor or stress agent are generally used. Stressful agents in sport include 11 spectators and incentives, such as rewards, which may come in the form of prizes and prestigious recognition at national, county and club level. Increasing the incentive, increasing the importance of the event for the individual increases the stress (Davis, 1989).

### Conclusion

Much of the sport research has examined self-confidence in relation to actual sport performance in terms of skill rather than in terms of the motivational behaviour actually specified by the theories, such as persistence or mastery attempts, choice of activities or skills, and effort expended. These behaviours are certainly contributors to skilful performance and should be given more attention in the study of self-confidence in sport. We can conclude with the help of available literature and the studies that psychological factors are the main and important factor helping athlete to achieve the desired goal.

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