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A study of sports psychology

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Abstract

Lather states that "Sports psychology is an area which attempts to apply psychological facts and principles to learning, performance, and associated human behaviour in the whole field of sports." A majority of research work undertaken in Physical education is focussed on the physiological areas of human performance. But, many psychologists and coaches say that in a competition, - competition is ten percent physical, and ninety percent mental. Usually in a competitive situation, the probability is that both teams possess nearly the same physical skills and fitness levels. But beyond that the winner is determined by mental preparation. Hence the purpose of Sports Psychology is to understand, explain, predict and control behaviour of players and athletes.

Keywords: sports psychology, psychological facts and principles to learning

Introduction

"A race is won in the mind" said by Donschellander. And it is quite acceptable that for doing anything and everything first of all the player must feel well. Then only he can perform great it is not only applicable to the player but also the entire population. Feeling better is the result of an alerted emotional state which is also known as mental toughness.

Thus, Psychology entered physical education much earlier than did sports. The terms such as psychological conditioning, psychological preparation and psychological training have become a commonality in the field of sports.

Rather these processes have entrenched themselves in the entire programme of sports everywhere. No training in sports field is complete without psychological study and psychological training of sportsmen. Likewise psychological training and psychological preparation is very essential for Sportsmen, policemen and public sector employees apart from college sportsmen. The psychological factors can decisively affect either way for betterment and for the worse.

Vanek and Cratty comment that, future records will be broken primarily because of increased attention to the psychological parameters of human personality.

One of the important topics of concern for sports psychologists is the area that deals with personality factors. Many sports Psychologists work with professional teams of various games in order to enhance the performance of the players through the use of various psychological techniques.

Psychological preparation in sports

The corrective responses of the sportsmen or players is the combination of isolated motor responses and cognitive responses. This package of various responses filled together forms the correct motor skills demanded in performance. This preparator responses are "Psyching up" preparations, traditionally recognized by sportsmen as vital which can be influenced by physical and psychological steps.

For example, in weight lifting, the lifter mentally attempts to dominate weights. This preparation causes arousal levels to move in either direction, that is, "Psyching up" or "Psyching down" and assessment of his level prior to the performance is the must for every sportsman. Because Donschellander states that "winning is 20% physical and 80% mental" it clearly indicates that psychological preparation of sportsmen is the important aspect of the total preparation of sportsmen. But this kind of preparation is planned and carried out with the

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aim of enabling the players to stick on optimum psychic state during competition based on the following things which are as follows:

- a) The psychological character of sport
- b) The competitive conditions
- c) The personality character of the sportsmen

So, it has to be planned in such a way in order to build a strong mental feeling before competition.

Also it is the fact that each individual is very unique starters and first substitutes seem to take their preparation more seriously by spending their time in mental practice the day before the game and on game day. It is approximately 40% for individuals and 60% for the team.

Types of Psychological Preparation

Mathesius Doil, as quoted by Hardayal Singh divided it into two types:

- a) Long term and
- b) Short term psychological preparations.

Short Term Psychological Preparation

It ends as soon as the competition is over. It is normally between 4 to 6 weeks. And the aim of this kind of preparation is as follows:

It mainly aims at direct preparation for an important competition.

- a) It mainly points out the information about the importance, date, venue, time of competition, the area and its conditions, climate, its surface, the officials of the competition, the nature of the opponents, their experience, strategies, style of play etcetera.
- b) Try to understand his own strong and weak points.
- c) Consult with the other players about their nature of play repeatedly and thereby avoid confusion which highly leads to anxiety and tension.

Long Term Psychological Preparations

In this the aim of the player is to be achieved over a long period. Its aims are as follows:

1. Development of position attitudes and motives for strength training
2. Development of self control, persistence and concentration.
3. Development of specific psychic abilities such as rhythmic
4. Development of high psychic lead tolerance ability.

Thus, psychological preparation mainly aims to help the players to obtain self confidence, self control, self realization and high concentration which mainly help to improve the player's performance. Lack of these parasupra things mainly 'burns up' the sportsmen within. So, a player must prepare adequately - psychologically to achieve optimum performance which can be obtained through psychological preparation. Due to this strong will for mental preparation and behavioural pattern a player can overcome so many psychological problems such as anxiety, stress and emotional outburst due to fear of opponents, lack of control, lack of proper feed back, improper attention, visualisation, lack of selfconfidence, lack of experience, crowding etcetera.

The Meaning of Personality

Personality is the whole of man; his inherited aptitudes and capacities; all his past learnings. The integration and synthesis of these factors into characteristic behaviour patterns; and his

ideals, values and expectations. Since personality is a gentle term involving intelligence, emotion, motivation, learning, memory, thinking, perceiving and other factors, some psychologists believe, it would be better to drop the word personality entirely. These psychologists assert that explanations of these components leave nothing further to be said.

In the organic world, however, the whole is more than the sum of its parts. A synthesis of dynamic parts produces something unique. There are so many cross-relationships involved in an organic combination of living, interacting parts that very small differences can produce very great effects. A primary fact about personality is that each personality is unique. No two personalities are alike, not even those of identical twins. Of course, personalities are similar in one or another factor and can be arranged into rough classifications. But they cannot be precisely catalogued. An individual remarkably stable at times, may act in an unstable way at other times. A similar personality trait may function differently in different personalities. It may do so even in seemingly similar personalities. The dynamics of individual personalities differs and generalization about them are often unsatisfactory.

Conclusion

Another basic fact about personality is, that it is a product of its own functioning. Today's functioning of a personality will depend, impart, on how it functioned yesterday. The experiences accumulated from today's responses will influence how the personality will function tomorrow. Personality is constantly in the process of becoming. This fact has profound significance for education. Each person develops his personality by slow situations and roles. The reactions of others to a person's behaviour will have a confirming or weakening effect on his personality. Each personality factor is shackled to its own past, yet it is the determiner of its own future strongly influenced by the actions of significant persons in the environment.

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