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The role of psychology in sports activities

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Abstract

Sports psychology is the study of how psychological factors influence sport, athletic performance, exercise and physical activity. Sports psychologists will explore how participating in sports can improve health and well-being, and the findings will also help athletes utilize psychological factors to improve their performance their sports performance and mental health. A psychologist in this field not only works with athletes, but also helps non-athletes and people who simply exercise on a daily basis learn to love their sport and stay engaged with a physical health program.

Keywords: psychology, sport, activities

1. Introduction

Sports and exercise psychology: Is a field specializing in studying human psychology in sports activities. Subjects of sport and exercise psychology: Are all human psychological phenomena (including psychological state processes and psychological attributes) that arise in different conditions and circumstances of the sport sports activities.

Sports psychology is a relatively young psychology subspecialty; The first laboratory in the United States devoted to this field began operations in 1925 and was closed a short time later (early 1930s). US research did not continue in this area until the late 1960s when there was more interest. In 1965, the International Society of Sports Psychology (ISSP) was founded. It was not until the 1970s that sports psychology was introduced as a course in undergraduate programs offered at educational institutions across North America. By the 1980s, sports psychology became a field with more scientific emphasis. Researchers began to explore how psychology could be applied to improve athletic performance. They also looked at the opposite of how exercise improves mood and reduces stress levels.

2. Research content and results

2.1. The role of sports psychology

Sports psychology is the study of how psychological factors influence sport, athletic performance, exercise practice, and physical activity. The role of a sports psychologist will be to explore how participation in sport can improve an athlete's health and sense of well-being. They also help athletes apply psychology to improve sports performance, as well as take care of their mental health. Not only working with professional athletes, therapists in this field also help others learn how to take advantage of sports and how to stick with a healthy exercise program.

Contemporary sports psychology is a diverse field and has a number of different topics of particular interest to professionals. First, Focus your attention. Attention involves the ability to tune out distractions (like crowds of screaming fans) and focus on the task at hand. This allows athletes to manage their mental focus, even in the face of other factors competing for their attention. Common strategies often used for this purpose include deep breathing to calm the mind, paying attention to body signals and sensations, and mindfulness. All of these can help athletes stay focused on the present moment during sports competition.

Second, Mental toughness. Mental toughness has become an increasing area of interest in sports psychology. This term refers to the psychological characteristics important for an athlete to achieve optimal performance. Among these traits are an unshakable belief in oneself, the ability to bounce back from setbacks, and an insatiable desire to succeed. Responding positively to situations, remaining calm under pressure, and remaining in control are some factors that contribute to mental toughness.

Third, Visualize and set goals. Setting a goal and then visualizing each step necessary to achieve that goal can help athletes mentally prepare for training or competition. This visualization stage involves creating a mental image of what you intend to happen. Athletes can use this skill to visualize the results they are pursuing. For example, an athlete may visualize themselves winning an event, a competition, or going through the steps necessary to complete a difficult movement. This creates psychological motivation before and during competition very effectively.

Fourth, Create motivation and build team spirit. Some sports psychologists work with professional athletes and coaches to improve performance by increasing their motivation. This topic will be examined in terms of both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is external rewards, such as trophies, cash, medals, or social recognition. Intrinsic motivation arises from within such as a personal desire to win or a feeling of pride from performing a certain skill. Building team spirit is also an important topic in this field. Sports psychologists can work with whole teams to help develop team spirit, and support them to work together effectively.

Fifth, Reduce anxiety and exhaustion. Professional sports psychologists help athletes deal with the stress of competition. For example, find ways to reduce excessive performance anxiety and prevent burnout. Anxiety is a common mental state before competition in athletes. This can negatively impact performance. Therefore, learning strategies to stay calm is important to help athletes perform at their best. These techniques may include: relaxation techniques, ways to change negative thoughts, building confidence, finding distractions and reducing focus on competition anxiety. Burnout can also occur in athletes who regularly experience pressure, anxiety, and stressful training schedules. Therefore, to help athletes combat feelings of exhaustion, therapists will guide them in learning how to regain a sense of balance, learn how to relax, and stay motivated.

Sixth, Rehabilitation in sports psychology. Another focus of sports psychology is helping athletes recover and return to their sport after injury. Sports injuries can lead to other emotional reactions, including feelings of anger, frustration, despair and even fear. Psychologists in this field work with athletes to help them cope with the mental recovery process and regain confidence when they are ready to return to sport.

2.2. Psychological status when competing in sports

Besides physical training, professional sports require good psychological preparation and confidence. This is also the focus of the online discussion on strategies to increase mental focus and confidence for athletes. In recent times, sports and Olympic bodies have paid great attention to the mental, psychological and mood stability of athletes during training and competition, and sports psychology has become a mandatory subject for students of universities and sports

colleges in Vietnam.

Stress that reduces performance is almost inevitable for professional athletes in tournaments. Typically, stress is the result of an exchange between two factors: needs and resources. A person may feel stressed about an event if they feel the demands on them are greater than they can handle. So, for an athlete, the requirements include the high level of physical and mental effort needed to succeed, his level of uncertainty with the tournament or his chances of success, and any any potential risks to their health (such as injury)... or their own expectations and desires.

On the other hand, resources are a person's ability to cope with these needs. These include factors such as their level of confidence, the level of control they believe they have over their outcome in this competition they are participating in. Each new demand or change in circumstances affects whether a person responds positively or negatively to stress. Typically, the more resources a person feels they have to handle a situation, the more positive their stress response is. This positive stress response is called the state of defiance. But if a person feels there are too many demands placed on them, they are more likely to experience a negative stress response – known as a threat state. Research shows that challenge states lead to good performance, while threat states lead to poorer performance.

Our response to challenge and threat fundamentally affects how our body reacts to stressful situations, as both influence the production of adrenaline and cortisol (also known as “stress hormones”). In a state of challenge, adrenaline increases the amount of blood pumped out of the heart and dilates blood vessels. This is good for the body, because adrenaline allows more energy to be supplied to the muscles and brain. This increase in blood volume and decrease in blood vessel pressure is closely related to outstanding sports performance in all fields, from golf, tennis and other sports... typical in Vietnam for many of us. See the status of penalty kicks in football.

But in a state of threat, cortisol inhibits the positive effects of adrenaline, leading to tighter blood vessels, higher blood pressure, slower psychological responses (such as poorer decision making), and heart rate higher. In short, a state of threat makes people more anxious – they make worse decisions and perform worse.

That said, anxiety is also a common experience for athletes when they are under pressure. Anxiety can increase heart rate and sweating, causing heart palpitations, muscle tremors and difficulty breathing, as well as headaches, nausea, stomach pain, weakness and the desire to escape in more severe cases. Anxiety can also reduce concentration and self-control (such as the ability to stay calm) and cause overthinking. A person's level of anxiety depends on their needs and the resources they have.

Negative stress responses can be harmful to both physical and mental health, and repeated responses can increase the risk of heart disease and depression. But there are ways athletes can ensure they react positively under pressure. Positive stress responses can be promoted by encouraging feelings of confidence and control through the language we and others (such as coaches or parents) use. Psychologists can also help athletes change the way they view their physiological responses – for example, helping them see higher heart rates as excitement rather than stress. Psychological skills: like visualization, imagination, building confidence – can also help reduce our physiological response to threat. This may

involve creating a mental picture of a time when the athlete performed well or envisioning themselves doing well in the future. This can help create a sense of confidence and manage stressful events. Recreating competitive pressure during training can also help athletes learn how to cope with stress. An example of this could be athletes creating races with their peers during training to create a sense of competition. This will raise the bar on the player's experience compared to a normal training session, while still allowing them to practice dealing with stress. This is considered the most effective method and is applied by many athletes and coaches.

Therefore, it is possible to learn how to react better to stressful situations by applying the above measures at the same time, but the best measure according to most experts as well as the writer's experience is to practice yoga. Regularly monitor to create good psychology and at the same time master the practice of techniques. Especially for young athletes, regular practice is the best way to create a state of mind for the big matches that await them.

2.3. Solutions to improve psychology in sports activities

Firstly, for football. For soccer and volleyball athletes, the highlight is the collective nature of competition. Therefore, you must set an action plan, check and adjust your actions.

Perform group coordination actions, obstructing the opponent's actions. These psychological components combined with social psychological components such as awareness, responsibility, collective spirit, solidarity and willingness to help each other are necessary psychological factors for movement. member of team soccer.

As for athletes competing in soccer sports such as table tennis, badminton, and tennis, the psychological activity of the athlete has a 2-fold nature, including:

Set your action plan.

Predict the opponent's actions, react quickly and reasonably to the opponent's actions.

Because competition situations in soccer are highly variable, athletes must be able to maintain and control movements under conditions of fatigue and heightened emotions.

Must have good volume and attention movement.

Must have good observation ability to quickly and accurately reflect complex and ever-changing competition situations.

Must have intelligence and good tactical thinking to handle and make timely decisions appropriate to the competition situation.

Needs to have high development, timely response to moving targets, helping athletes move quickly and promptly in time-constrained situations.

Must maintain emotional stability to control oneself and the situation, because during competition there can be many unfavorable situations that make athletes lose their composure (audience reactions, rotation, etc.). rapid transition from success to failure, field conditions, tools, weather...).

Stable competition. For soccer and volleyball athletes, the highlight is the collective nature of competition

Second, antagonistic subjects, direct subjects

For individual fighting sports (wrestling, boxing), two-way psychological activities are clearly shown:

Athletes set programs and check and control their own actions. Defend and reduce the effectiveness of the opponent's operations.

In individual combat sports, the emotional, volitional and cognitive processes that arise in the competition situation are

always changing. Therefore, the competition situation must be quickly covered and decisions must be made through implementation. That has the most important meaning. The psychological requirements of athletes in this sport are: Have good observation ability. Have high speed and accuracy of thinking. There is a developmental selection response. Have a sense of creativity, courage, and resilience. The two-dimensional psychological activities of individual fighting subjects are clearly shown.

Third, individual sports. Gymnastics, shooting, throwing, pushing, jumping.

The psychological requirements for athletes in these sports are:

Maximum concentration and attention. Know how to self-check basic techniques, practice and understand methods to combat negative external influences. Have a precise feel for the distribution of muscular effort (especially the trigger pull). Have a high willpower effort to control high concentration and attention for long periods of time, to combat nervous fatigue caused by prolonged monotonous activities, to overcome feelings of frustration and agitation after attacks shot did not meet the requirements. High emotional stability. Strong nervousness is a psychological factor that reduces the competitive performance of shooters. A highly developed sense of timing helps athletes trust and maintain a steady rhythm between shots.

Psychological requirements for gymnasts: Control to avoid unfortunate occurrences in dangerous and complex movements, which often cause great emotional stress. Therefore, athletes must develop willpower qualities such as independence, self-control, courage...Controls to perform complex and highly difficult movements well. Therefore, athletes must have high concentration to complete a reasonable, complex movement... Sense of rhythm, appropriate use of force and ability to coordinate movements help athletes perform movements with high aesthetic value. The psychological requirement for athletes in individual sports is maximum concentration and attention

3. Conclusion

The contribution of the sports psychologist is not limited to the use of standard questionnaires (which in many cases are ineffective and sometimes harmful) and training athletes to master the skills relaxation techniques or imagination, but his contribution is as essential in sports performance as it is, for example, the contribution of the physical coach in the aspect of physical conditioning. In other words, the athlete's psychological function is as important to the athlete as the physical, technical and tactical, strategic function. In addition, regarding the latter, the psychological function can have a positive or negative influence in its functioning, so it is very important to control the mental aspect in the right direction. It is therefore essential that psychological preparation is integrated into the overall preparation of the athlete, which, as one more factor, will interact correctly with the physical, technical and tactical schemes.

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