What is Sport Psychology?

- The application of psychological theory and methods to the study of behavior resulting from or directly related to involvement in sport and physical activity.
- Examining the psychological and emotional factors that influence sport performance and exercise behavior.

 Psychological and emotional effects of sport on the competitor (e.g., winning, losing, perceived competence, stress, anxiety)

• Ways in which thoughts and emotions influence sport performance.

Sport Psychology Issues (con't)

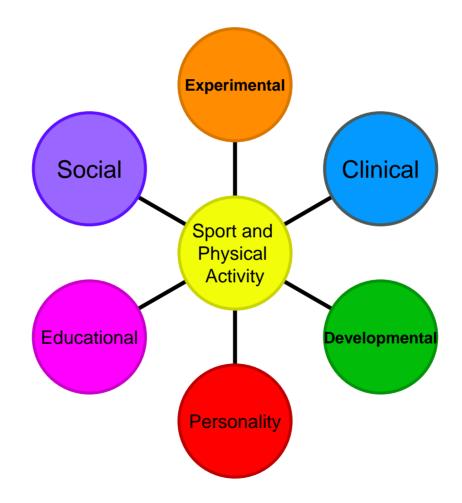
• Particular characteristics of individuals who are drawn to exercise versus those who remain sedentary.

 Dealing with coaching concerns; how to best motivate athletes, develop team identify, and maintain optimal performance.

• Predicting sport success (e.g., personality? skills tests? talent ID?).

• Effectiveness of interventions on the athlete's/exerciser's thoughts, emotions, and performance outcomes.

The Dimensions of Sport Psychology



Social Psychology of Sport

- Examining different leadership styles and their effect on team and individual performance;
- Influence of environmental and situational factors (e.g., audience, pressure, competition, coaching interventions) on sport performance quality;
- Does gender matter?

Educational Sport Psychology

• Influence of proper instructional strategies on learning and remembering sport skills;

• Ways to improve speed and accuracy of information processing;

 Use of different communication techniques on changing the athlete's mental or emotional status, and performance.

Personality Sport Psychology

- Can personality tests predict sport success?
- What is the relationship between certain personal traits or dispositions and performance outcomes (e.g., trait anxiety and performing under pressure; coping style and successful coping with stressful events).
- Talent identification programs.

Experimental/Cognitive Sport Psychology

 Examining the effects of interventions on selected outcomes (e.g., performance, emotions, attitudes);

 Determining the antecedents, mechanisms, or causes of certain
behavioral outcomes (e.g., what factors influence sport participation or engaging in regular exercise?)

Experimental/Cognitive Sport Psych (con't)

 What is the relationship between performer characteristics and the environment that explains performance?

Experimental/Cognitive Sport Psychology (con't)

• How do cognitive strategies influence performance or other outcomes?

• What is the psycho-behavioral profile of elite athletes?

• What factors improve motivation?

Experimental/Cognitive Sport Psych (con't)

• What is the influence of goal setting on performance outcomes?

How can we promote intrinsic motivation?

Clinical Sport Psychology

- Providing athletes or exercisers with counseling to overcome certain thought processes, emotions, or behavioral tendencies;
- Helping participants deal with depression, chronic anxiety, irrational thinking, low self-esteem, relationship problems, and other psychopathological issues;

Clinical Sport Psychology (con't)

- Dealing with drug-taking in sport
- (e.g., different types of drugs, causes and antecedents of drug-taking, interventions to prevent it)

Developmental Sport Psychology

• How are child athletes different from their adult counterparts?

 What are the special needs of child athletes that should influence coach and parent behavior?

• Why do some kids drop out of sport, while others remain?

Developmental Sport Psychology (con't)

 What socialization processes contribute to a child's decision to compete in sport versus not competing?

Exercise Psychology

- What are the personal factors that lead to developing an exercise habits as opposed to living a sedentary lifestyle?
- What interventions best promote exercise participation and adherence?
- Why do some individuals maintain an exercise habit, while others drop out?
- What is the effect of exercise on personal characteristics?

Sport Psychophysiology

 What are the physiological mechanisms or processes that influence performance (i.e., accuracy, speed, steadiness) in sport?

 What are the underlying physiological factors that influences performance when experiencing stress or anxiety?

Sport Psychophysiology

 How do physiological measures (e.g., heart rate, blood pressure, muscular tension) predict performance quality?

Roles of Sport Psychologists

Clinical Services

 Educational Services (usually performed by consultants rather then licensed psychologists)

Research Services

Ethics in Sport Psychology

• 1. Using the title of "psychologist;"

• 2. Coach approval of sport psychology intervention;

• 3. Testing (proper tests, test validity, how test scores are used)

Ethical Issues (con't)

• 4. Separating clinical work from performance enhancement;

• 5. Confidentiality

• 6. Team role of the sport psychology consultant