

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.

Sport Psychology Issues

- 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.

Sport Psychology Issues

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

Sport Psychology Issues

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

Sport Psychology Issues

- **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 than 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**