Chapter 2: Personality & Sport

- What Makes Up Personality
- Approaches to Personality
- The Measurement of Personality
- Using Psychological Measures of Personality
- Personality Research in Sport & Exercise
- Cognitive Strategies and Athletic Success
- Your Role in Understanding Personality

What is Personality?
The characteristics or blend of characteristics that make a person unique. The personal characteristics that account for consistent and enduring patterns of response to various situations.

What Makes Up Personality?
*Psychological Core* is the most basic and deepest attitudes, values, interests, and motives of a person.
*Typical Responses* is the way one typically responds to the environment.
*Role-Related Behaviors* is how one acts in a particular social situation.

Approaches to Personality

- Psychodynamic Approach
- Trait Approach
- Situational Approach
- Interactional Approach
- Phenomenological Approach

Psychodynamic Approach
Superego, Id, ego ...

Trait Approach
Behavior is determined by relatively stable traits which are fundamental units of personality. These traits predispose one to act in a certain way regardless of the situation

Questions

- Does your personality change over time? or
- Does your personality change in different situations?

Situational Approach
Behavior is determined largely by the situation or environment

Interactional Approach
Behavior is determined by person and situational factors, as well as their interaction
Phenomenological Approach
Behavior is best determined by accounting for both situations and personal characteristics; however, instead of focusing on fixed traits or dispositions as the primary determinants of behavior, the psychologist examines the person's understanding and interpretation of himself/herself and his/her environment.

Most contemporary sport and exercise psychologists adopt an interactional approach to the study of personality. The phenomenological approach is the most popular orientation taken today.

The Measurement of Personality

*Trait versus States*

- Trait-a typical style of behavior
- State-the situation's effects on behavior - a "right now" feeling that can change from moment to moment

What is a Test?
A systematic procedure for observing a person's behavior and describing it with the aid of a numerical scale or a category-system.

What is a Psychological Test?
Essentially an objective and standardized measure of a sample of behavior a device for measuring characteristics of human beings that pertain to behavior (overt and covert)

The Measurement of Personality

Rating Scales -- judges observe a situation
Unstructured Projective -- procedures that infer underlying motives
Structured Questionnaires -- paper-and-pencil test

Validity, Reliability, and Norms

*Validity* refers to how far a given measure assesses what it was intended to measure
*Reliability* the consistency of a measure how likely it is to produce the same results
*Norm* standard or pattern; sample of which the test was normed and is therefore intended

The Measurement of Personality

*General versus Situation (Sport) Specific Measures*
A Sport Specific Measure will predict behavior more reliably for given situations because they consider both the personality of the participant and the specific situation (interational approach).

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Sport-Specific Measures

- Sport Competition Anxiety Test
- Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2
- Trait-State Confidence Inventory
- Tennis Test of Attentional and Interpersonal Style Anxiety
• Assessment for Wrestlers Group Cohesion Inventory for Basketball

Example of Personality Traits

• endurance
• ambition
• aggressiveness
• organization
• dominance
• deference
• self-confidence

Personality Research in Sport and Exercise Psychology

• Some relationship exists between personality and sport performance, but it is far from perfect
• No specific personality profile has been found that consistently discriminates athletes from nonathletes
• Few personality differences are evident between male and female athletes, especially at the elite level

Personality Research in Sport and Exercise Psychology

• Morgan's (1980) mental health model shows that successful athletes exhibit greater positive mental health than less successful (unsuccessful athletes)
• Type-A behavior patterns (particularly the anger-hostility component) is associated with cardiovascular disease and appears to be altered via exercise
• Exercise and increased fitness appear to be associated with increased self-esteem, especially in low self-esteem individuals

The Iceberg Profile

Cognitive Strategies and Athletic Success

• Practice specific plans to deal with adversity during competition to enhance confidence.
• Practice routines to deal with unusual circumstances and distractions before and during competition.
• Concentrate wholly on the upcoming performance and block out irrelevant events and thoughts.

Cognitive Strategies and Athletic Success

• Use several mental rehearsals prior to competition.
• Don't worry about other competitors before a competition - instead focus on what you can control.
• Develop detailed competition plans.
- Learn to regulate arousal and anxiety.

**Your Role in Understanding Personality**

- Consider both personality traits and the situation
- Be an informed consumer
- Be a good communicator
- Be a good observer
- Be knowledgeable

**Reasons for Discontinuing Involvement in Sport and Exercise**

- Interest in other activities,
- Lack of playing time,
- Lack of success,
- Lack of skill improvement,
- Lack of fun or boredom,
- Injury,
- Lack of encouragement from significant others

**The Importance of Perceived Competence**

Children with low perceptions of their athletic abilities drop out or do not participate in sport, whereas children with high perceptions of their competence participate and persist.

**Define key terms and answer review questions**