

Personality & Sport

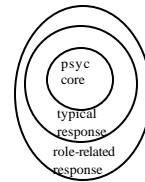
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Advanced Sport Psychology
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What Personality Characteristics Would You Seek in Athletes?

What is Personality?

- How is personality related to behaviour?
- How do personality theories explain behaviour?
- How is personality measured?

Hollander's Model (1976)



Personality

- The complex of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that distinguish an individual.
- Relevant factors; drugs, illness, ..
- Developmental factors: age/hormone level, ..
- Situational factors: reduced functioning under duress

Behaviour Largely Determined by Social Setting

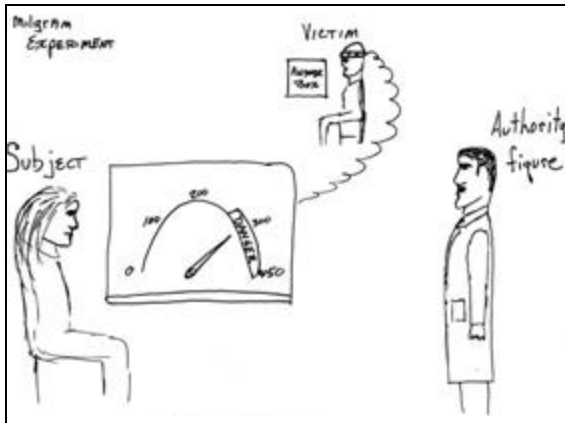
- Milgram
 - crowd size, shock
- Ash
 - Vertical lines

Milgram 1

- People standing around looking up
- The bigger the crowd, the more likely passers by will perform similar behaviour
- Especially when models appear to have status
- Trivial. Does it extend to matters of consequence?

Milgram 2

- Learning and punishment
- 15-450 volts: Slight - Danger - Severe
 - Would not sustain “permanent” damage
- Shock according to lowest of the 3 -
 - another variant
- “Experts” agreed that only the deranged would comply
 - 25, 50, 25



Types of Conformity (Change?)

- Compliance
- Identification
- Internalization

Factors in Conformance

- Why might people conform: examples?

Factors in Conformance

- Fear
 - of what others might think
 - person dressed like Madonna to express her individuality
- Acceptance

Theories of Personality

- Freudian Theory
 - id, ego, super-ego; unconscious processes
- Hulls 's Drive Theory: $B = HS * D$

Theories of Personality

- Trait theories
 - individuals described by their particular levels
 - stable over time and situations
 - much of the personality research in sport is based on trait theory
 - Big 5
 - neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness

Theories of Personality

- Behaviourism
 - Stimulus => response
 - Antecedents, behaviours, consequences
 - Contingencies
- Social Learning Theory
 - Stimulus => organism => response
 - Observational learning
 - Emulation of sporting heroes
 - Bobo Doll Study

Theories of Personality

- Interactional Approach
 - Considers interaction between person and situation
 - Emphasizes individual differences
 - rewards valued differently by different people

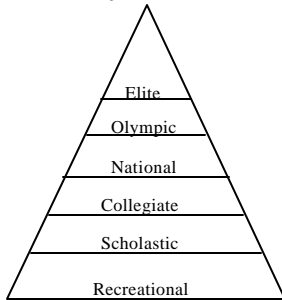
Measuring Personality

- Triangulation: conclusions based on multiple sources of information: interview, observation, and paper/pencil assessment
- Issues:
 - Accessibility, awareness, transparency, response bias, reliability, validity, socio-environmental interaction, ..

Personality & Sport Performance

- The credulous & the skeptics
 - The credulous believe personality is related to sport participation and performance
 - less agreement regarding strength of association
 - The skeptics believe there is no relation
 - 3 main reasons
 - research not generalizable
 - poor research design
 - inconsistent operationalization of personality

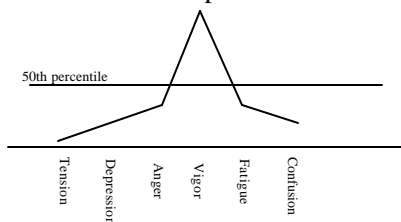
Personality & Performance Pyramid



Qualities of Elite Athletes

- Positive Precompetitive Affect

Qualities of Elite Athletes: Positive Precompetitive Affect



Iceberg Profile

Qualities of Elite Athletes

- emotional stability
- relaxed
- conscientiousness
- tough-mindedness
- self-sufficiency
- self-control
- organized

Positive Reinforcement, Performance Feedback, And Performance Enhancement

Behaviour Theory

- Antecedents
- Behaviour
- Consequences

Antecedents

- Antecedents
 - Discriminative stimuli – stimuli with known/predictable consequences
 - Stimulus control – Behaviours are under stimulus control when they are triggered by antecedents

Consequences

Stimuli	Present	Remove
Positive	Pos reinforce (+beh)	Extinction (-beh)
Aversive	Punishment (-beh)	Neg Reinforce (+beh)

Contingencies

- The relations between antecedents, behaviours, and consequences

Negative Approach: Punishment

- Effective –
 - The most widespread means of behavioural control: religion, law
- Negative effects
 - Fear of failure, resentment, hostility (malicious obedience)
 - Potential impact on personal growth of athlete

Positive Approach: Positive Reinforcement

- Mistakes as “stepping stones to achievement” providing info needed to improve
- The style preferred by athletes (Martin & Hyrcenko, 1983)
- Inform instead of ridicule
- Effective reinforcer:
 - Is valued by individual athlete
 - Make reinforcement dependent on behaviour
 - Be sure athletes understands why the reinforcement is given

Selecting Behaviours to Reinforce

- Organize behaviour into stages
- Organize behaviour into components
 - Performance profiling

Schedules & Timing of Reinforcement

- Continuous schedule – every correct response is rewarded
- Partial schedule – some correct responses are reinforced, some not
- Behaviours reinforced on partial schedules persist longer in the absence of reinforcement than do those that have been reinforced only on a continuous schedule
- Reinforce as soon after event as possible
- Use continuous schedule during cognitive phase

The End