

# MOTIVATION IN SPORTSMEN: THE VALUES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ITS INSTILMENT IN PUPILS

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**Abstract:** This article aims to assess the personal and behavioral traits and characteristics which are common amongst outstanding sportsmen. In order to shed a light on their characteristic traits both internal and external, the purpose of the study is to analyze the dynamic relationship between personal traits and excellence in sports. The rational of the article is to reveal ways in order to both represent and instill these values in pupils. The basic assumption is that critiquing these traditional strategies will about improvement in the sports excellence field. By offering a method to cope with these inherent fallacies, the aim is to bring about both conceptual and structural change as well as dress psychological factors that play a major role in sports excellence.

**Key words:** Sports excellence, sports psychology, motivation, deterministic behavior

## **Introduction**

The most significant trait in sport psychology is motivation. However, the extensive use of this term has caused its ambiguity due to the fact that there are over 30 different theories pertaining to motivation in sports psychology, so much so that each theory has a different definition. In reference to the connection between sports psychology and physical education, as well as focusing on behavioral motivation and achievement levels, it is possible to narrow the significance of the term. Primarily, motivation in this context is inconsistent to

motivation theories that present its attributes as an inherent entity and rather motivation should be referred to as a process whereby psychological capabilities towards incentive are activated, direction and control of achievement behavior. Secondly, motivation in this context is inconsistent with deterministic and mechanistic theories, due to the fact that these theories refer to man as passive and reactive to psychological needs when they arise. Furthermore, it is inconsistent as well to organismic motivation theories in spite of the fact that these theories recognize the social context as having a significant impact on developing motivation, this inconsistency stems from the lack of focus in man as an active human being, initiating actions as a projection of subjective interpretation in achievement circumstances. Accordingly, these are cognitive theories of motivation that are more in accordance with physical education than other possibilities. They provide pupils with the autonomy to be active participants in decision making process and behavior planning in order to achieve goals. Under the concepts of these theories failure or success in achieving goals are based on subjective perceptions in accordance with the participant's evaluation of achievement behavior. Based on theories in compliance with these descriptions, the most compatible is the achievement destination theory which is based on the assumption that man is a focused and goal-directed human being who functions rationally, particularly when achievement goals that influence achievement perceptions and guide decision making processes in context with achievement behavior<sup>1 2 3 4 5 6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>(Roberts, Treasure, & Conroy, 2007)

<sup>2</sup>(Ford, 1992)

<sup>3</sup>(Pintrich, 2000)

<sup>4</sup>(Weiner, 1972)

<sup>5</sup>(Duda & Hall, 2001)

<sup>6</sup>(Spink & Roberts, 1980)

## **1. Behavior dynamics**

Before referencing additional character traits, it is worthwhile to primarily delve into the dynamics between motivation and excellence in sports. The nature of the dynamics between motivation and excellence in sports and in general between excellence in sports and character traits, is evident in the directions of its development. Meaning to say, it is clear that the levels of correlation between genetic tendency and high motivation levels and the tendency towards high sports capabilities is no more than minor. Meaning to say, that the correlation between motivation and sports capability is an indication of causality, whether or not direct or indirect. Furthermore, it is clearly evident that high levels of motivation create high levels of sports capabilities by proven effects of self-persuasion. In contrast, there is also a theory that high levels of sports capability raise motivation indirectly especially in adolescents, due to the fact that having the capability brings about positive reactions towards capability from the environment which in turn encourage motivation. Understanding the dynamics is essential as the significance of raising levels of motivation amongst students improve their capabilities in sports <sup>7 8 9</sup>.

The second significant trait that has significant dynamics with motivation according to the above-mentioned definition, is setting goals. Specifically, the higher the pupil sets his/her goals, the better his/her performance will be. The increase in productivity is found not only in correlation to the type of pupils with high potential in sports that set extremely high goals and have success scores, but is found also the minute that the pupil is convinced even by an external factor that

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<sup>7</sup> (Goodenow, 1993)

<sup>8</sup> (Maehr & Braskamp, 1986)

<sup>9</sup> (Alderman, 2013)

the goal he/she has set is higher than the goal he/she set previously, his/her performance will improve. Clearly, it seems that there is no limit to this phenomenon, meaning to say that the more ambitious the goal is, even if unrealistic, the more the performance improves. In respect to task difficulty, if the task is too difficult the pupil's performance will decline, however, if the task is difficult but has a reasonable success rate, the pupil's performance will be optimal. It is important at this point to refer to the specifics of goal-setting. When pupils are asked to perform a task to the best of their ability without specifying specific parameters to abide by them, the pupils' performance will decrease significantly. Similarly, when students' goals are to do the best that they can, their performance decreases in comparison to setting goals with specific achievements, due among other reasons to the idiosyncrasy of defining goals "do the best you can" instead of external measures of specific goals. The influence of goal-setting on performance is carried out in three major fields: focus on goals both behavior wise and cognitive wise, enhancing motivation and determination, expanding planning and aiding tools to accomplish goals. However, the power to influence alone is limited to possible ranges based on the characteristics of the task: the level of commitment to the task, the level of self-confidence. The more the advance towards the goal is more measurable, the more the sections in the goal achievement are autonomic, the level of complexity in achieving the goal is decreased, the higher the power to influence performance. Thus, at this point it is worthwhile to expand the list of traits of outstanding sportsmen to include the various psycho-cognitive characteristics that influence the intensity of goal-setting effects on performance <sup>10 11 12 13 14 15</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> (Locke & Latham, 2002)

<sup>11</sup>(Seijts & Latham, 2000)

<sup>12</sup>(Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989)

## **2. Psychological aspects and sports**

It is evident that motivation, goal-setting, commitment, self-confidence, introspection self-'diagnosis as well as long term planning serve as essential traits that require focus in physical education, based on their generality, they pose significant character traits of exceptional performers in fields other than sports and accordingly have double the importance in the students' lives. The encouragement gained from these traits and the values that they incorporate are complex and multi-layered render individual observation. Therefore, for example, long-term planning can be understood as simple and intuitive, from the first year of school, the teacher gives the students a perennial schedule stating the tasks for years to come. The distinct failure of this tool is due to a number of reasons, primarily, the pupil should set his own goals, he is entitled to advice and guidance in the goal-setting process, however, goals should not be set for him in order for him to perform fruitfully. Secondly, the pupil must believe in the importance of the goal, to feel a sense of commitment and desire to accomplish the goal, meaning the pupil should be persuaded of the importance of the goal and the positive influences in its achievement, it is not possible to expect him to feel deep commitment towards sports achievements instinctively. Thirdly, it is important to limit the pupil's expectations on the natural improvement of his physical capabilities while in the growing process, meaning to say, creating a situation where long-term planning serves like a fantasy, the pupil assumes that his growth an maturity will suffice to make him capable to achieve goals he has set for himself, even if he does not take an active part in practice in achieving the

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<sup>13</sup> (Dorner, 1991)

<sup>14</sup> (Bandura & Cervone, 1983)

<sup>15</sup> (Strang, Lawrence, & Fowler, 1978)

goals. Accordingly, it is significant to instill values of self-efficacy, capabilities, perceptions in pupils in order to influence decisions made in the present that will impact and enhance his/her opportunities in the future<sup>16 17 18 19 20</sup>.

### **3. Coping mechanisms**

Whereas it is advisable and correct to instill values such as long-term planning in regards to sports activities and sports achievements in physical education classes, there is reasonable cause for doubt regarding its efficiency in developing traits such as self-confidence. It is evident that the pupils' level of self-confidence is dynamic and influenced by a number of traits mentioned above, however, a focused attempt to strengthen self-confidence by a physical education class, in spite of numerous trials, consistently resulted in failure. First of all, there is no existing theory in Developmental Psychology or cognition that offer ways of enhancing self-confidence in this manner and secondly, due to the fact that available models for improving self-confidence in totally different contexts – (for example in psychotherapy and coping with stage fright) – models that were programmed and integrated in physical ed classes in a number of contexts mostly that show contrasting directions of intervention; for example, one posits that coping with embarrassment in the overcoming of fear process will enable self-acceptance and self-confidence, the other posits that one should engage in self-analysis and a type of internal struggle with the gap between the identity of the self in reality versus the pupil's social image in order that the pupil adopts identity traits that will make him proud of himself – a concept that is not entirely sure that it is applicable. In reality, the hunt for focused improvement of self-confidence is

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<sup>16</sup>(Wilson, 2002)

<sup>17</sup> (Sniehotta, Schwarzer, Scholz, & Schüz, 2005)

<sup>18</sup>(Kyllo & Landers, 1995)

<sup>19</sup>(Stafford, 2005)

<sup>20</sup> (Ford, et al., 2011)

in vain, the physical ed teacher should be aware of the limitations in his role but at the same time give encouragement, compliments and consultation which are an essential part of his role and can contribute in one way or another to the pupil's self-confidence, however, the attempt to expand his role which will enable him to influence the pupil's self-confidence significantly and in a focused manner are unrealistic goals based on the limitations of the lesson<sup>21 22 23</sup>.

### **Conclusion**

In this context it is necessary to reference the limiting circumstances of physical education lessons in modern pedagogical systems, the most crucial of them is the lack of compatibility in adapting the lesson to the pupil's needs. Meaning to say, the heterogeneous classroom prevents focusing on activities and values that the pupil requires. The most intuitive and resourceful approach to coping with difficulty is dividing the students in sub groups in addition to gender grouping. Such a division can be dynamic, one class the students are divided into ability in sports groups, another class can divide into groups according to values, traits or coping with difficulties they encounter. The physical education classes are adapted to each sub-group, the nature of these classes is more significant than other classes, as one physical ed teacher can effectively supervise a number of such groups that form a class, and moreover, without limiting the sports activities. Another major limitation that physical education teachers contend with is the prior archetypes of a pupils, those teachers that identify with archetypes and are devoid of physical exercise capabilities.

Even when encountering difficulty, there is a distinct coping mechanism, the relationship between sports and health, sports and challenges, even between sports

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<sup>21</sup>(Greenberg, 2008)

<sup>22</sup>(Humphrey, 2004)

<sup>23</sup>(Humphrey, 2004)

and success comprise a bridge between the pupil's archetype and the world of physical education so that detachment from sports is substituted by motivation<sup>24 25 26 27 28</sup>.

Sincere coping with the limitations of the lesson, the limitations of the psychological impact on pupils as well as the importance of instilling values that form the foundation for promoting a modern pedagogical system and improving lives and achievements of its students.

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<sup>24</sup> (McKay, Gore, & Kirk, 1990)

<sup>25</sup> (Gallahue & Donnelly, 2007)

<sup>26</sup> (Salter, 2017)

<sup>27</sup> (Laker, 2002)

<sup>28</sup>(Jung, 1940)

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