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Children's Psychological Adjustment from a Sport Psychology Perspective

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Abstract:

Some may think that sports psychology is only a modern saying or trend in sports, but in fact, sports psychology is an existing discipline with its principles, conditions and measurement tools,

It is a specialty of general psychology, which works on studying human behavior in the field of sports and the psychological, physical and social factors affecting sports performance, while proving the extent to which sports psychology can calculate sports performance.

As our article aims to clarify the role of achieving psychological adjustment in sports from the perspective of sports psychology in the child athlete through Provide an overview of what psychosocial adjustment and sport psychology are and explain how sport psychology can contribute to achieving psychosocial adjustment in children.

Keywords: psychology; sport psychology; sports; athlete; psychological adjustment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Psychology studies human behavior, thinking, feeling, emotions, tendencies and attitudes, as well as motivation, emotions, intelligence, learning, forgetting, cognition, thinking ... etc. While sports psychology studies everything related to the behavior of the athlete during training, national and international sports, as sports psychology aims to achieve a number of goals, namely understanding and explaining sports behavior, based on the knowledge of the relationships that exist between sports phenomena related to this field.

Therefore, the study and understanding of the athlete's behavior can greatly contribute to predicting his steps and directing him towards success in the field of sports by focusing on the various aspects of his life, whether it is in his relationship with his parents, coaches, fellow athletes or the sport itself. In light of the above, we can ask the following question:

How can we achieve psychology adjustment in the child athlete by relying on the principles of sports psychology?

1. Psychology Adjustment:

1.1 The concept of adjustment:

Adjustment is one of the general topics that have been addressed in psychology to refer to the ability of an individual to conform to the requirements during participation in social relations. Thus, adjustment is in fact the ability of an individual to provide an appropriate physical, psychological and emotional response to the pressures imposed in the surrounding social environment, and refers to the individual's ability to meet internal requirements (Al-Alawi, 2017, p. 14).

It is also defined as: “the continuous dynamic process that achieves the individual's goals and satisfies his needs, as well as provides him with mental and physical health in addition to adaptation and harmony with the environment.” (Sassi, Rahmani, 2016, p. 40).



1.2 Psychological adjustment:

This dimension focuses on the psychological aspect of the individual, and his needs, as this type of adjustment is achieved by satisfying them, while the absence of psychological adjustment is usually associated with the absence of satisfaction. Which constitutes a state of psychological tension and the absence of psychological and physiological balance for the individual, which may later cause a state of depression with the development of this condition, the individual enters the spiral of psychological disorders.

Personal adjustment can be achieved from the individual's satisfaction with and confidence in himself, as in this case his psychological life is characterized by the absence of tensions and psychological conflicts that are associated with feelings of guilt, anxiety... Etc. (Abdelkader, Sadik, 2009, p. 42)

Psychological Adjustment is one of the central concepts in general psychology because of its prevalence in psychological studies to the extent that some scientists have defined psychology as a science that is concerned with the processes of general compatibility of the organism in the environment. (Mairead, 2018, p. 15)

It can also be said that psychological compatibility is: “the ability of an individual to change his behavior according to environmental conditions, to be satisfied with himself and have the ability to face situations positively and change his behavior to suit these new conditions and thus be free from psychological pressures and conflicts.” (Benjaffan, Charaf, 2017, p. 137)

It does not mean that the individual is free of psychological conflicts, as humans are never free of these conflicts, but it means the ability to resolve and control these conflicts in a satisfactory manner and the ability to solve problems in a positive constructive manner instead of running away from them and camouflaging them. (Benyahya, 2017, p. 69)

1.3 Characteristics of psychological adjustment:

-The individual is responsible for adjustment with himself and his environment.

-The individual can change the process of adjustment with himself by changing his bad behavior patterns, or modifying his motives and goals, and he can change the external physical and social environment.

-Genetic factors affect the adjustment process, as genetic factors related to mental and physical characteristics have a great impact on the psychological adjustment of the individual.

-Adjustment is a continuous process from cradle to grave, because man is in constant motion in satisfying his needs, and his multiple motives.

-The degree to which a person enjoys good mental health depends on the extent of his ability to adjustment in various fields, because adjustment is a sign of good mental health.

-The degree to which a person enjoys good mental health depends on the extent of his or her ability to compatibility in different areas, because compatibility is a sign of good mental health.

1.4 Functions of the psychological adjustment process:

- **Fulfillment of primary needs:**

A vital function as it is related to the physiological composition of the individual, such as food, water, housing, and sexuality ... etc. These needs are necessary for life, as the level of satisfaction of these needs is an indicator of the process of psychological compatibility. If they are not satisfied, the individual suffers from tension and sadness. (Hamdi, 2011, p. 33).

- **Satisfying secondary needs:**

They regulate and control the **satisfaction** of biological needs, such as the need for security and **stability, success and love...** These psychological needs are necessary for the individual to complete his balance and psychological maturity, as they generate a state of psychological tension



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that pushes him to try to satisfy himself, as they are linked to the desire for **pleasure** with continuity. (Hamdi, 2011, p. 34)

- **Acceptance and self-satisfaction:**

It is considered one of the most important factors that affect individual behavior, as self-satisfaction is a **motivation** for the individual towards work, compatibility with others. Also, the individual who does not love himself and who does not feel satisfied is prone to frustrating situations and during which he feels failure and psychological and social incompatibility and this pushes him to withdrawal and aggression. (Attia, 2001, p. 30)

- **Adapting to society and conforming to its values and norms:**

Conformity is obedience, and an often unintentional tendency to **accept** certain social ideas and standards, and conformity may be required in certain situations, but the social environment may include some corrupt standards and wrong principles. Moreover, conformity is by trying to change the environment, and this is called heterogeneity, which refers to a behavior that contradicts and violates the group's standards.

2. Sports Psychology:

2.1 The concept of sports psychology:

Sports psychology is a branch of sport and training, it is the study that includes the explanation of behavior in psychology of movement. A comprehensive view of the study of behavior in sports.

Sports psychology is the science that studies the impact of psychological factors on sports performance; some scientists specialized in this field are interested in improving sports performance by modifying these factors, while others exploit the practice of sports to improve people's lives in general and in the long term.

2.2 The history of sport psychology:

In the point of view of (Asil, 2018) sports psychology is a modern science that emerged in the early last century by Coleman Griffiths, who began his studies in 1918, while he was still a student. These studies were concerned with the role of vision and attention in predicting the performance of basketball and soccer players.

In 1925, Griffiths established the first sports research lab at the University of Illinois, where he began his research on sports performance, and in the same year, he published his famous article “Psychology and its Relationship to Athletic Competition,” which addressed the value of psychology to sports performance.

Sports psychology evolved at the hands of researchers after its importance in improving the performance of players and achieving **great success**. Sports psychologists have many tasks to perform towards players, such as providing psychological counseling, providing assistance to sports teams, and conducting research related to sports psychology to develop athletes' skills and improve their performance.

2.3 The importance of sports psychology:

We cannot deny the importance of this branch of psychology; thanks to it, many sports talents have continued and increased their success. This importance is summarized in several points:

- ✓ **Improving player performance:** The sports psychologist relies on the use of several techniques such as visualization, self-talk, and relaxation techniques to reach normal psychological stability, without which the player cannot reach success and achievements.
- ✓ **Helping players overcome intimidation or fear:** Unfortunately, many promising talents wither away due to fear or dread, whether of failure or of facing the public; this is what sports psychologists are very interested in, which is to try to reassure the player and help him face his fears.
- ✓ **Reducing psychological pressure on players:** Players are constantly exposed to psychological and physical pressures, whether from coaches, parents, or fans, because all these people are waiting for him to succeed regardless of his psychological or physical condition. Here comes the role of sports psychology in alleviating these pressures that the player is



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exposed to, and its role is not limited to the player only, but extends to talking with coaches and parents.

- ✓ **Recovering from injuries:** Although most people believe that physical injuries have nothing to do with people's mental health, this is not true. Among the tasks that the sports psychologist specializes in is helping the player after the injury to endure the pain, adhere to his treatment, and accept being away from matches or competitions during his treatment period until complete recovery.
- ✓ **Keeping up with workouts:** Although most, if not all, players keep up with their workouts with their coaches, some players are still unable to achieve the desired goals. In this case, a sports psychologist intervenes to motivate the player and try to solve any issues the player is experiencing, whether psychological or organic.
- ✓ **Enjoying sports:** The role of sports psychology is not limited to dealing with professional athletes, but also extends to dealing with children or amateurs; by motivating them to play sports and creating the right environment to enjoy it.

Physical exercise alone is not enough to make a player successful; sports psychology is equally important as physical exercise because it is what shows the athlete's skill and talent, and without it, that talent can be extinguished and cannot be utilized.

2.4 Interests of sports psychology:

Sports psychology is concerned with the study of many concepts and theories, the most important of which are:

- Issues and techniques related to the psychological assessment and mental skills of athletes.
- Medical issues and counseling for players.
- Developmental and social issues related to sports participation.
- Behavioral rules for sports and exercises.
- The study of the science of training and the technical requirements of sports competitions. (Asil, 2018)

2.5 Sports Psychology Topics:

Topics in Sport Psychology: Sports psychology is the study of the behavior of athletes through the study of:

- **Intelligence, mental processes and activities:** dominate the athlete's mental activity, as humans differ in their abilities such as linguistic and mathematical ability ... and others, just as they differ in IQ.
- **The psychology of sports activities:** In this topic, the nature of sports practice, their physical, mental and emotional requirements, the impact of activities in general and the impact of each activity in particular on psychological and other motivations and skills that contribute to improving the performance of sports activities. Personality, practice is categorized according to the type of activity and the requirements and nature of each activity.
- **Psychology of motor learning and sports training:** the psychological bases for teaching motor skills and game plans, and how to maximize athletic performance. In addition to studying the most important variables that contribute to the athlete's arousal during training to achieve the best possible level of achievement, to acquire information and knowledge, and to develop tendencies, attitudes, mental skills, and emotional traits.
- **The psychology of sports competition and psychological preparation:** In this type, sports competition is categorized into individual or social, friendly or official, local or international, indoor or outdoor, preliminary or final, in order to determine the nature of each competition.
- **Sports group psychology:** The study of the basic axes of building a sports group and the factors that help cohesion or fracture it, leadership styles and their impact on the group, methods of measuring relationships between its members, the phenomena of conflict and intolerance. As well as competition between members of the group or between several groups, not to mention the temporary groups that gather to cheer for their teams. It is not limited to sports teams, but extends to the relationships between different teams.
- **Psychology of Sports Motivation:** This topic is concerned with the study of the direct and indirect causes that underlie the various patterns



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of sports behavior in school, in leisure time, in level sports, and other disparate patterns of behavior in sports. (Boutalbi, 2021)

3. Children's psychological Adjustment from a sport psychology perspective:

Sports psychology is considered one of the most important areas of sports psychology in building a child's personality, as it studies human behavior and it helps in explaining external and internal behavior, the first of which includes responses and actions that can be observed and recorded, the second includes internal responses such as emotions, thinking.

The goal behind the study of individual behavior in sports is to try to discover the causes or psychological factors that affect the behavior of the athlete. On the one hand, and to understand and predict behavior in order to find practical solutions to various issues and work to develop and upgrade it on the other hand, as sports psychology aims to understand and explain the behavior of The athletic child. In addition to predicting the potential of the athletic child in the future, as it determines how to control, modify and direct the behavior and work to achieve psychological health that reflects on the physical health of the child. As sport psychology contributes in showing how to build personality and improve the reputation of the athlete.

Also, according to sport psychology, sports and physical education plays a fundamental role in the life of the individual, as it is of great importance given his interest in this subject and his urgent need to practice motor activity at the level of successive stages of his life. As each stage is characterized by a set of psychological, mental and social characteristic and each stage provides a set of skills that enable the individual to move to the next stage. As the practice of sports exercises improves the general health status and increases the feeling of wellness, which adds more vitality to every step taken by the individual every day, and among the benefits of sports we find the following:

- It pumps up endorphins: Physical activity can help pump up the brain's feel-good neurotransmitters called endorphins, and while this function is often referred to as the runner's high, any aerobic activity - such as an exciting game of tennis or a stroll through the landscape - can also contribute to the same feeling.



- **Reduces the negative effects of stress:** Exercise may relieve stress by mimicking the effects of stress, as in the body's stress response known as the “fight-or-flight response,” thereby helping the body and its systems practice working together in the presence of such effects. This may also positively affect body systems such as the cardiovascular, digestive, and immune systems by helping to protect the body from the harmful effects of stress.

- **Meditation in motion:** After a quick game of racquetball, a long walk or run, or a few laps in the pool, one often finds oneself focused solely on the movements of one's body. As you begin to release daily stress through movement and physical activity, and the resulting energy and optimism can help to stay calm, clear-headed, and focused in everything.

- **Improved mood:** Regular exercise can increase self-confidence, improve mood, help to relax and reduce symptoms of mild depression and anxiety, daily exercise can improve the quality of sleep that is often disrupted by stress, depression and anxiety, and all of these benefits help reduce stress and give a sense of control over the body.

Many researchers have considered that adjustment in its various dimensions is one of the important processes in human life, childhood, youth, adulthood; the practice of sports activities is of great importance in achieving mental health in the practitioner, which helps to form a sound concept of the self.

Sports psychology is also concerned with the impact of psychological factors on the psychological well-being of child athletes by studying the impact of psychological factors on the performance of players. Psychological stability and emotional control are an essential part of achieving success in the sports field, in addition to adopting techniques such as visualization, self-talk, and relaxation techniques that help athletes improve their performance and overcome psychological pressure and fear, whether of failure or of facing the public. Sports psychologists work to reassure players and help them face their fears.

In addition to improving social relationships and self-confidence, successful athletes have good social relationships and self-confidence. Sports psychology helps develop these aspects of personality with psychological research and counseling, as sports psychologists provide psychological counseling to



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athletes and work to improve their performance. They also conduct research related to sports psychology to develop the skills of athletes. (Abid, 2024)

The American Association for Health and Physical Education has pointed out its contributions, especially in modern life, to freedom from pressures and stress through the satisfaction of needs and achieving psychological rebalancing for the individual participating in sports activities, which is considered the sum of pedagogical processes and scientific, medical, health, and sports methods. Moreover, the practice of sport helps to achieve psychological harmony by achieving self-love.

4. Conclusion:

According to sports psychology, psychological adjustment plays a role in building a strong personality and self-confidence that allows the athletic child to maintain the same pace in his sports career. Sport also plays a role in promoting mental health in addition to improving his behavior with his family members and his society, which allows him to accept himself and interact positively with the environment. Thus, the relationship between sport and psychological adjustment is a reciprocal relationship and contribute to building the individual physically and psychologically so that he becomes creative and productive.

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