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## Contribution of sports activities in personality development

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#### Abstract

There have been numerous studies to study the personality of successful sports persons. But the impact of indulging in sports activities on overall development have been done sparingly. However with our aim to make India a sports superpower and to attract the right talent towards the field, it's impact needs to be analyzed thoroughly. Most of the studies conducted in the field of physical education and sports have tried to link personality of sports persons to fit on various team and non-team sports and also different disciplines within these categories. However, there has been little or less research on how participating in sports activities helps building the character and improving personality. As sports activities are a part of learning process and they do influence the personality of people who takes part in these physical activities. Here we are trying to access the impact of sports activity on personality and character.

**Keywords:** Sports activities, personality, mental health, anxiety.

#### 1. Introduction

The value of games is now being increasingly recognized in India from personal, social, educational and national points of view. Games and sports are essential for the all round development of a personality. It is by playing games and sports that we can develop and maintain our health. Games keep our body alert, active, youthful and energetic in activities involving games and sports, blood-circulation increases and there is an increased supply of oxygen. Only a healthy person can work long, hard and cheerfully. An unhealthy person may not take as much interest in work as a healthy one. Health can be maintained by exercise alone. But games and sports have some additional benefits as they are played in groups and in healthy competitive spirit. Among many other things, they help develop cooperation, quality of leadership, team spirit and a willingness to submit to, and further, the rule of law. Games instill in the players the spirit of self-reliance, justice, fair play and sporting spirit. They make people bold, adventurous, social, disciplined and more conscious of their responsibilities towards society and nation. Players have been found better equipped to fight superstitions, communalism, obscurantism and narrow approach to issues of national interest. Games also help in overcoming the sense of violence, arrogance and superiority as these are purged by providing them sufficient outlet. A sports person may not lose his or her temper and morale even in the face of defeat because he/she would take it coolly, calmly and then would try to perform better the next time. Players know that victory and defeat are the two aspects of the same coin. There is more joy in playing than in its end result.

#### 2. Human

Human excellence is the product of physical fitness, physique, technical and tactical training, along with psychic state of the individual. Sports psychology is an innovative field which brought many innovations in the performance of the sportsmen. The sports achievement is the product of various qualities of the athletes includes psychological makeup.

#### 3. Mental Health

Mental Health is the state of personal mental well-being in which individuals feel basically satisfied with themselves, their role in life and their relationship with others (Mangal.S.K., 1984) Sonia Kanwar and Rajinder Bishnoi (2007) found that the champion Judokas are higher in mental health than the non-champion Judokas. Improvements in quality of life and emotional well-being, due to physical activity,

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have been reported even in the absence of objective diagnostic improvement (Faulkner & Biddle, 1999). In personality, extraversion and introversion are among the variables which influence sports performance in addition to many other personality variables.

Extraversion has been found to be highly related or supportive to dominance sociality in athletes and supportive participants (Alderman, 1974). Mental health means harmony between values, attitudes and interest with the scope of action of the individuals and consequently realistic life planning and purposeful implementation of life concepts (Divine & Stillian, 1989). "Mental Health is very much related physical fitness and mental fitness" (Milton G. Thakerey, 1979). The relationship between physical activity and mental health! - Outcomes motivate people to persist in; physical activity while also having a potentially positive impact on well-being (Biddle & Mutric, 2001). Improved mental health and psychological well-being are used for the reduction of anxiety and stress (Biddle, S., 2000). A good mental health is essential for leading a good life.

#### 4. Personality

Personality is the totality of his being and includes his physical, mental, emotional, and temperamental makeup. The modern life is full of stress and tension, which might change the personality of the individual. The personality of the individual is determined by their activities. Hence, the personality of the sportsman and non-sportsman differs in some extent. Mohan *et al* (1979) found that the players were more extraverted than the non-players and low on neuroticism implying more stability of emotionality. Researches have found that the higher level of performance group was more extravert than low performance group, and non-sportsmen are more neurotic than the higher performance group (Singh, 1979; Thakur & Thakur, 1980; Lajj Mohan & Bhupinder, 2008).

#### 5. Anxiety

Anxiety is "an uneasiness and feeling of foreboding often found when a person is about to embark on a hazardous venture; it is often accompanied by a strong desire to excel" (Frost, 1971). Anxiety is likely to be greater in higher competitive sports than in relatively noncompetitive sports because, in the competitive sports, participants are expected to win and great demands are made upon them to win (Agyajit Singh, 2008). Anxiety is having cognitive aspect of mental component of fear of negative social evaluation, fear of failure, loss of self-esteem and somatic components such as physiological responses as increased heart rate, respiration, and muscular tension and known as somatic anxiety (Richard H. Cox, 2002).

Research studies related to anxiety and sports performance indicated that optimum amount of anxiety heightened the athletic performance. Exercise improves mental health by reducing anxiety, depression, and negative mood and by improving self-esteem and cognitive function (Richardson TCR., 2005). The ability to deal with anxiety is an integral part of sports training. Athletes, who are able to overcome their anxiety, perform much better than some of the strongest contenders of the sports and games.

Dr Hari Singh and Sunil in their study about emotional intelligence among team and individuals sportsmen has concluded that there is a significant difference between emotional intelligence of individual sportsmen and team sportsmen.

P. Gopinath *et al* (2013) in their study of comparative analysis

of mental health, personality traits and anxiety of sportsmen and non-sportsmen has concluded Sportsmen are having higher mental health status as compared to non-sportsmen. It will make them into high achievers in both academic as well as their entire endeavor. This study indicated that the students should take up sports activities in order to develop their mental health which will provide the pleasurable and enjoyable life. Mental health is as equaling to physical health. The sportsmen are more extraverts in comparison with non-sports. It is because the sportspersons are more exposed in the outer world. The sportspersons are less neurotic than non-sportspersons. There will be a significant difference in both extraversion and neurotic between sportsmen and non-sportsmen. It indicates that the sports activities are made available to mould the students to make them a higher personality person, the sportsmen have less anxiety than non-sportsmen. Non-sportspersons generally will not face many challenges in the life and there for their anxiety level much higher than sportspersons.

A paper published in 2006 concludes that though there are ethical problems in the world of sports in which cheating, hurting an opponent, arguing with sports officials have happened but also admitted that though sports helps building character and improving personality, the main onus is on coaches, trainers and counselors to mould the behavior of a child to build a strong character.

Larson (2003) asked various sports persons on various variables like teamwork leadership, honesty, responsibility, accepting mistake, appreciating different level of achievement, self-confidence, tranquility, respect for team mates etc. in which most of the players have admitted that they gained positively on these variables though in different degrees.

However, one other perspective is that while taking parts in sports we see players indulging in unethical practices like hurting an opponent, cheating, taking advantage of loopholes, more importance to winning, doping, foul play etc. But as everything has two sides attached to it one can take either way he wants. Most importantly it is the responsibility of coaches, teachers, trainers, counselors to show the right path to their trainees so that taking part in sports activity does not lead to wrong ways but build a more refined person with character who can contribute to nation building in real sense. There are ethical problems in the world of sports that need to be addressed. For example, in a recent investigation of youth sports (Shields, Bredemeier, LaVoi, & Power, 2005), it was found that nine percent of the fifth through eighth grade athletes acknowledged cheating. Thirteen percent said that they had tried to hurt an opponent; nearly a third acknowledged having argued with a sport official, and 27% said that they had acted like a "bad sport." Problems were also identified with the behavior of coaches and spectators. Despite reports such as these, many sport enthusiasts maintain that sport builds character.

#### 6. Conclusion

Thus, it is very much important that we recognize the potential of taking part in sports activities not only for winning medals but also to lay foundations of healthy India. This is all the more important taking into consideration our demography and our aspirations to reap the demographic dividend. Special responsibility is on coaches, trainers, physical educationists, teachers, government as well as society to make sports attractive to young minds because being a sports superpower is also an important and very much achievable aspirations of our nation.

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