

SPORTS Psychology

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Introduction

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Sports psychology is a branch of psychology that investigates and applies psychological and physiological principles relating to athletic activity. As the field grows, the literature on sports psychology will expand in PsycINFO.

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Search

Abstracts

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Unique Identifier

2006-03841-001

Title

Understanding sport behavior: A cognitive-affective processing systems approach.

Publication Year

2006

Language

English

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Source

Journal of Applied Sport Psychology. 18(1), Mar 2006, 1-27.

Publisher

Taylor & Francis, United Kingdom

ISSN/ISBN

1041-3200 (Print); 1533-1571 (Electronic)

Format Availability

Electronic; Print

Format Covered

Print

Publication Type

Journal; Peer Reviewed Journal

Document Type

Original Journal Article

Abstract

Recent developments in social-cognitive personality theory have promising applications to sport psychology. Of special significance is Mischel and Shoda's (1995) description of the Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS), a dynamic network of cognitive, affective, motivational, and behavior-generation units that interacts with situational factors to produce both coherence and cross-situational

variability in behavior. Consistency in situation-behavior relations are demonstrated in individualized "behavioral signatures" of athletic coaches. The CAPS model has promise as a theoretical template within which domain-specific theoretical frameworks in sport psychology can be incorporated and expanded. To illustrate the potential utility of the CAPS model for construct elaboration, assessment of individual differences, and interventions in sport psychology, I apply it to an analysis of mental toughness and to performance anxiety, achievement goal theory, idiographic assessment, and psychological skills training. Finally, I suggest that "bottom-up" approaches to identifying causal mechanisms, exemplified by the CAPS and other social-cognitive models, can have considerable potential for theoretical, empirical, and applied advances in sport psychology. (PsycINFO Database Record © 2006 APA, all rights reserved)

DOI

10.1080/10413200500471293

Keywords

sport behavior; cognitive affective processing system; situational factors; sport psychology

Index Terms

*Cognitive Processes; *Emotional States; *Sport Psychology; *Sports

Classification Code

3720 Sports

Population

Human

Grant/Sponsorship

Preparation of this article and some of the research reported therein were supported by Grant #2297 from the William T. Grant Foundation.

Conference

Meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology, 2002, . This article is based in part on the Coleman Roberts Griffith Lecture delivered at the aforementioned conference.

Release Date

20060410

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