



Personality

Personality can be described as the unique pattern of behaviour and characteristics an athlete displays. The main theories relevant to sport and personality are **Trait Theory (Eysenck)** and **Social Learning Theory (Bandura)**.

Interactionist approach: personality is a result of inherited traits and learned experiences. It is widely agreed that a combination of both theories mentioned above explains behaviour. Hollander (1967) used the concentric ring theory to explain this approach.

Psychological profiling can be achieved through **interviews, questionnaires** (e.g. Cattell's 16PF questionnaire and the Sport Competition Anxiety Test) or **coach observations**.

Goal setting

Having help allows participants of all abilities to stay **focused** and **maintain motivation** and helps with **exercise adherence**. To make an athlete's goals achievable, targets need to be **SMART (specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time-phased)**.

Training cycles

Microcycle: between 1 and 14 days (**short-term goals**).

Mesocycle: between 2 weeks and 6 months (**medium-term goals**).

Macrocycle: between 1 and 4 years (**long-term goals**).

Arousal in sport

This is a psychological state of alertness and anticipation that prepares the body for action. Several theories exist, including **Drive Theory, Inverted U Hypothesis, Catastrophe Theory** and the **Zone of Optimal Functioning (ZOF) Theory**.

If the performer perceives arousal levels to be positive, it will have a positive impact on performance. However, if the changes are viewed as negative, it will increase both somatic and cognitive state anxiety.

Attitudes

This is a learned behavioural predisposition, which is linked to personality. Attitudes are unstable and learned and can be changed or controlled. There are three **components of attitude: cognitive, affective** and **behavioural**. **Motivation, personality** and **all aspects of how a skill is acquired** have an impact on these components. Attitudes can be measured **directly** or **indirectly: directly** by using **Likert scales, semantic differential scales** or **Thurstone scales**; and **indirectly** by **observing behaviour** or measuring physiological changes/responses.

Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger) states that if a person holds two ideas that oppose and conflict each other, an element of discomfort arises (**dissonance**).

Stress and anxiety in sport

Stress is a stimulus resulting in a positive or negative response to a specific situation. Stress has two forms, **eustress (positive stress)** and **distress (negative stress)**, and can have a positive or negative effect on performance. **Causes of stress** are **internal** or **external**.

Anxiety is a negative emotional state associated with stress and apprehension. There are **two types of anxiety: trait** and **state**.

There are three types of **questionnaires** used to **measure anxiety levels:** the **SCAT**, the **STAI** and the **CSAI**. **Observation** can also be used.

Cognitive anxiety consists of the **psychological thoughts** and **nerves** a performer has about completing a task. This can be reduced by **progressive muscular relaxation, imagery, self-talk** and **self-confidence**.

Somatic anxiety is the **physiological response** to a situation the performer thinks they may not cope with. It can be managed by using **biofeedback** or **progressive muscular relaxation**.

Motivation

This is the drive to take part in and persist with an activity; it is a significant factor related to sports adherence. The **two** types of motivation are **intrinsic (internal)** and **extrinsic (external)**.

Achievement motivation is the concept that personality is linked to competitiveness.

High achievement personality traits: risk-taking, persistence and perseverance, success attributed to internal factors, failure seen as a route to success.

Low achievement personality traits: low levels of risk-taking, declining challenges, success attributed to external factors, simple tasks for success, failure attributed to internal factors, learned helplessness.

Achievement motivation theory helps to explain performers' behaviour.

Competitiveness: sports-specific achievement motivation means the motivation to achieve in sport.



Social facilitation

The **presence of an audience** will have an impact on **arousal levels**, which will in turn affect performance. Sometimes, the positive effect is called **social facilitation** and the negative effect is called **social inhibition**. There are **four** theories covering this area: **drive theory, evaluation apprehension theory, distraction/conflict theory** and **home-field advantage**.

Strategies to overcome social inhibition include **selective attention practice** (focusing on the most appropriate cues), **mental rehearsal** and **imagery** to block out audience, **autonomous skillset, zone of optional functioning (ZOF) awareness** and **appropriate use of attribution**.

Group dynamics

For a group of people to become a team, they must go through four stages (Tuckman, 1965): **forming, storming, norming** and **performing**.

Group cohesion is the extent to which a group pursues a common goal together. Cohesion can be divided into two aspects: **task cohesion** and **social cohesion**.

Sports groups who interact with one another will have **three common characteristics: a collective identity, a sense of shared purpose** and **a clear structure for communication**.

The Ringelmann effect is the tendency for individual members of a group to become increasingly less productive as the size of their group increases. **Social loafing** refers to a group member who is not giving 100% effort in a team/group situation; this is generally due to a loss of motivation.

Carron's theoretical model of cohesiveness in sport groups (1982) outlines four factors that affect team cohesion: **environmental factors, personal factors, leadership factors** and **team factors**. Group cohesion can be increased by a wide range of methods.

Aggression

Assertion can be described as any behaviour that is intentional but not violent; it is controlled behaviour that remains within the rules/laws of the sport.

Aggression can be described as 'any behaviour that is intended to harm another individual'. Aggression can be classified into three different forms: **aggression, instrumental/channelled aggression** and **assertive behaviour**.

Many factors contribute towards aggressive behaviour in sport, including **the nature of the game, the crowd, frustration caused by poor performance, refereeing decisions** and the **current score**.

There are **four main theories of aggression**:

1. **Instinct theory of aggression** (Lorenz)
2. **Social learning theory of aggression** (Bandura 1966)
3. **Frustration-aggression hypothesis**
4. **Aggression cue hypothesis**

Internal strategies to manage/control aggression: a change in attitude, use of performance goals, stress management techniques, withdrawing from the situation.

External strategies to manage/control aggression: an emphasis on positive role models, punishment, reinforcement of non-aggressive behaviour, withdrawing the player from the situation.

Another factor that can impact aggression, arousal and therefore performance is the **presence of an audience**.

Leadership

The best leaders can match their **styles, behaviours** and **qualities** to different situations. **Vision, communication, decision making, passion, patience, experience, persistence** and **perseverance** affect leadership. Leaders are either prescribed or emergent.

Theories of leadership: **trait theory, social learning theory** and **interactional theory**.

Styles of leadership include **autocratic, democratic** and **laissez-faire**.

Fiedler's contingency model states that the correct style of leadership is dependent on how favourable the situation is.

Chelladurai's multidimensional model states that a team's performance and satisfaction with their leader will be highest if the leader's required behaviours, preferred behaviours and actual behaviours all agree with each other.



Attribution, self-efficacy and confidence

Attribution theory looks at the common reasons coaches and players give for their success or failure. Attributions are important because of the way in which they **affect motivation**, which in turn affects future performances.

Weiner's attribution model uses a two-dimensional model to outline factors that can be attributed to sporting success or failure.

		Locus of causality	
		Internal Control of performer	External Beyond control
Stability	Stable Fixed - don't change	Ability 'We were more skilful'	Task difficulty 'Opposition better standard'
	Unstable Vary with time	Effort 'We tried hard'	Luck 'Pitch didn't suit us'

Learned helplessness is the belief that over time, one has no control over the events and therefore failure is inevitable.

Self-confidence is defined as a person's belief in their own ability to meet the demands of the sport/activity.

Self-efficacy refers to confidence that is specific to a situation and is therefore variable. Self-efficacy will determine the choice of activity, level of effort and degree of persistence. It can be developed and changed through four major types of information:

1. **Performance accomplishments**
2. **Vicarious experiences**
3. **Verbal persuasion**
4. **Emotional arousal**

Effective goal setting can also increase self-efficacy as long as the goals are SMART and individual.