

***Sports and Exercise Psychology*, by D.F.Shaw, T.Gorley and R.M.Corban, published by BIOS Scientific Publishers Taylor and Francis Group, UK. ISBN 1 85996 2947, 2005, Pages-286, Price: 295.**

**Abrangshu Sarkar** is an Assistant Professor in Department of Commerce, Salesian College, Siliguri. He is a gold medallist in M. Com from University of North Bengal. He has qualified U.G.C. NET for Lecturership in Commerce.

Given the growth of sports and exercise psychology as a subject at the undergraduate level, the authors attempt in this book to provide a study guide and revision aid for students and new entrants into the field. The manner in which facts and theories relating to sports and exercise psychology are deployed, it is evident that the scope of the book is to enable better understanding by the students on the verge of facing tests and examinations.

There are 13 sections in the book containing 66 topics. These sections have been clustered under four main themes viz. introductory issues, sports psychology, exercise psychology and interventions. Each section has been discussed briefly below.

Section A deals with introduction to psychology, sports and exercise covering seven topics viz. Definitions, psychology and common sense, the scientific approach, research methods, introduction to psychology, sport and exercise, the history of psychology and the theoretical perspectives. Definitions relating to key terms have been provided along with various sub-disciplines or branches of psychology. The facets of considering psychology as a common sense have also been analysed to a considerable extent. The issue of scientific approach, the employability of different research methods, the interdependence and conflicts between qualitative and quantitative approaches have also been brought to light.

Section B deals with cognition and motor behaviour covering six topics viz. Vision, indirect and direct theories of motor control, motor learning, attention and concentration in sports, memory and decision making in sports and imagery. This section stresses the importance of visual abilities in sports for successful performance. Regarding the theories of motor control the combination of both indirect theories (relying heavily on cognitive psychology) and direct theories (relying heavily on J.J.Gibson's ecological psychology) to have a successful control of actions have been emphasised along with highlighting the fact that there exists a positive correlation between learning and performance and the importance of feedback in learning. Distinctions have also been made between concentration and attention though in sports psychology literature they can be used interchangeably. The fact that ability to anticipate events is relevant compared to better reaction time for quick reaction is justified.

Section C deals with Motivation, covering six topics viz. introduction to motivation, cognitive evaluation theory, achievement goal theory, attribution theory, confidence

and goal setting theory. The authors point to the limitations of instinct theory for the birth of drive reduction theory, yet difficulties remain in the drive reduction theory to address the higher order needs. The various motivational theories viz. Maslow's Need Hierarchy, Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory, Cognitive Evaluation Theory, Achievement Goal Theory and Goal Setting Theory have been discussed in details.

Section D deals with moods and emotions covering seven topics viz. Definition, mood and performance, the basics of anxiety, multidimensional anxiety theory, catastrophe theory, reversal theory and other theories. Affect is an umbrella term in psychology used to cover all types of feelings including moods and emotions. In psychology the two terms do not carry the same meaning as per the authors. According to meta-analysis there is an extremely small relationship between mood and performance. Mood can be measured by Profile of Moods State (POMS) and Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS). The section further goes into categorising anxieties into trait and state anxieties on which depends their measurement techniques. The various other theories viz. Multidimensional anxiety theory, catastrophe theory and reversal theories have been discussed in details.

Section E deals with Individual differences covering 3 topics viz. introduction to individual differences, personality and sport and problematic issues. Individual differences based on cognitive ability (i.e. intelligence) and character (i.e. personality) have been emphasised. The credulous-skeptical debate remains inconclusive since there is no definite relationship between personality and success in sports. However the book points to a thin correlation between personality and sports participation.

Section F deals with the interpersonal processes covering five topics viz. social cognition, conformity and compliance, obedience to authority, pro-social behaviour and anti social behaviour. The way in which people perceive things about the social world and organise their understanding refers to social cognition. The book also distinguishes between conformity, compliance and obedience to authority. While conformity is confirming to norms, compliance is replying to the request of others and obedience is doing what is ordered. The effect of pro-social and anti social behaviour on interpersonal processes in sports is also analysed to a considerable extent.

Section G deals with Group processes covering 9 topics viz. groups and teams, social facilitation, social loafing, leadership, cohesiveness, group decision making, deindividuation, home advantage and intergroup processes. Two or more people sharing common goal is said to have formed a group. In this section discussion about two concepts i.e. social facilitation and social loafing is made, where the former refers to the effect on performance in the presence of others and the latter leads to process loss in a group (can be regarded as opposite of synergy). The influence of leadership, cohesiveness and group decision making on the performance of sports is also analysed in details. The concept of deindividuation which refers to aggressive reactions staying in a group is also highlighted.

Section H deals with psychological effects of physical activity covering 3 topics viz. psychological well being, mental health and negative outcomes. It brings out a positive correlation between physical exercise and psychological well being as well as the negative outcomes of excess physical exercise on the mental health of an individual.

Section I deals with the motivation for physical activity covering two topics viz. determinants of exercise and participation motivation. Determinants of exercise in adults and in children and adolescent have been discussed highlighting both positive and negative associations and also the participation motivation i.e. an approach examining reasons for starting, maintaining or quitting participation in physical activity.

Section J discusses about the theories and models of exercise behaviour covering cognitive behavioural theories, process models of exercise and ecological models. The last three sections are regarding Interventions enumerating the various processes used in consultancy in sport and exercise psychology and performance enhancement. Special issues relating to stress injury, burnouts and drugs in sports which are the interventions in smooth sporting exercise have also been discussed in details.

The book is rich in its psychological content with a desperate urge by the authors to link psychology with sports and exercise. Quite successfully the authors of the book have brought out interesting researches done in the past regarding psychological influences in the performance of sports and exercise. But owing to the fact that various technical terms have been deployed, it is quite difficult for a novice to understand the subject matter, rather it is best suited for a student of psychology interested in sports. A lay person who wants to quench his/her inquisitiveness about sports psychology will however benefit in being acquainted with an emerging field of applied knowledge. Overall the value addition the book will provide in the world of sports psychology is definitely going to outweigh its limitation of being a summary digest of relevant facts and theories and processes intended for the undergraduate students.