



# **Psychology in Physical Education and Sports**

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**METROPOLITAN**

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**PSYCHOLOGY IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION  
AND SPORTS**

## Foreword

Recreation and competition in sports go hand in hand and it is the latter which has become the focus of attention of every nation in the world. More scientific ways and means are being applied everywhere not only to win "Medals", but also to test the human efficiency, both physical and mental. More important than physical fitness is the psychological conditioning of the sportsmen so that they can generate in themselves "a will to fight." It is here that a Coach, or a physical education teacher, must understand and also guide the psychological nature of sportsmen.

Sports literature helps to create sports-consciousness in the common people on the one hand, and on the other, it assists the teachers and the coaches to introduce new techniques in teaching and training sportsmen. "Psychology of Physical Education and Sports", written by Dr. Kamlesh, is an extremely good venture in this realm. The author's experience in the field of physical education and sports evidently has added a distinctive richness to the book. Some of the chapters in the book are so deftly written that one feels reading them again and again.

RAJA BHALENDRA SINGH  
*Formerly President*  
*Indian Olympic Association*

# Preface

(To the Second Edition)

Ever since the publication of *Psychology of Physical Education and Sports* in 1983, much water has flown in the stream of sports psychology in India. Two extremely important landmarks deserve special mention; (i) greater interaction of the physical educators and sports scientists of India with the out-side world and the inflow of sports literature in quantity to the country enabled building up a much wider scope for the conduct of research studies in the virtually 'virgin' field of sports psychology; and (ii) the founding of the Indian Association of Sports Scientists and Physical Educationists (1984) and the Sports Psychology Association of India (1985). Frequent meetings of the sports scholars and physical educators and the men from allied fields at conferences, seminars and symposia at regional as well as national level have gone a long way in creating an awareness in the researchers about the importance of psychological studies on the athletic populations of India in various settings. At the global level, the emerging discipline of sports psychology has made tremendous progress during the first half of the nineth decade of the present century. This phenomenon could not let Indian sports psychologists uninfluenced.

Sports Psychology Association of India has now a substantive cadre strength of over one hundred members. Although all of them could not be termed as potential researchers, they are atleast conscious of the subject matter of sports psychology and know fairly well how efficacious has this subject become in the context of country's quest for improvement in athletic standards. The awareness has come and it is bound to bring rich dividends in the times to come. Publication of a greater

number of research papers on various aspects of sports psychology in Indian scientific journals is a testimony to expanding horizons of this subject, even though much is needed to be done quality-wise. The over-all impact is that psychology is gradually penetrating into the nerve-fibre of athletic milieu in the country. That sports psychology is inching towards a brighter future, is undeniable.

*Psychology of Physical Education and Sports* was received with open arms by the physical educators all over the country. This being a maiden effort by the author, invoked mixed reaction: the quantum of encomium was much more than the wanton criticism. The verbal compliments and written comments received over a period of time, have gone to convince me that the effort was not at all "a venture in the waste land". The greatest satisfaction was that the book "helped the professional students in understanding psychology in the context of physical education and sports". One of the nostalgic reactions was that the volume contained more of general psychology and educational psychology as such. In fact, it had been made clear in the Preface to the First Edition that the work was meant for the physical educators in the schools and the professional colleges/university departments of physical education where students are trained to take up professional work after passing out from there. All of us are well aware that ever since the inception of the scientific physical education, educational psychology, as an adjunct of teachers' training programme, has occupied a place of pride in the curricula of the professional institutions of physical education in India. The book was not meant exclusively for researchers and coaches who handle their respective athletic squads and are specific in their objectives. The subject matter of the book was organised in such a manner that the coaches also could understand and utilize basic tenets of psychology as applied to teaching, training and practising of athletic activities and preparing the athletes for the serious sports competitions. It should, then, be borne in mind that from the neonate's reflexive motor movements to the complex acrobatics of an Olympic gymnast, physical activity presents a sort of kaleidoscopic spectrum with a thread of continuity running through out. The physical educator has to work in a school at a

more generalized level whereas a coach of a national team at a more specific and specialised level. The work might be the same, the difference lies in degree and complexity. Both utilize the knowledge of psychology in the context of physical activity but in different settings. There are, besides this, two main reasons for giving emphasis on the basics of general as well as educational psychology: (i) prior to their joining the teaching training course, the physical educators know nothing about psychology; and (ii) understanding sports psychology—which, apart from philosophy of sports, draws quite a lot from various branches of psychology—is not possible without the knowledge of the principles of physical activity and the psychology in general.

While planning the Second Edition of the book, appraisal and criticism from the readers, students of physical education, researchers, coaches and others have been well taken care of. For instance, as a result of a suggestion which is very genuine, the book has been now named as “Psychology in Physical Education and Sports” and not Psychology of Physical Education and Sports. A few chapters being irrelevant in the light of the latest knowledge, have been deleted while others have been recast by incorporating new facts and theories where ever needed. An effort has also been made to simplify language by altering syntactical arrangement here and there so as to make the reading an easy as well as a pleasureable affair.

I am really grateful to the students of physical education and my colleagues for taking to the book so kindly, thereby encouraging me to write for them more ardently and earnestly. I owe my gratitude to the Dean, Laxmibai National College of Physical Education and the Society for the National Institutes of Physical Education and Sports for purchasing 250 copies of the first impression of the book as an incentive to me. In fact, this gesture has gone a long way in popularizing the book amongst the physical education individuals and the institutions.

**M.L. KAMLESH**



# Preface

*(To the First Edition)*

Within a short span of time, sports Psychology has taken giant strides. Now it does claim to be a full-fledged discipline in the sense that no training of sportsmen is considered complete without adequate emphasis on "psychological conditioning" which plays an extremely important role in competitive sports. Competitive sports reflect cultural aspirations of a people and they have now become an inextricable part of all civilizations. Recreative sports are mainly concerned with man's well-being whereas competitive sports aim to measure and enhance human 'potentiality and performance'. All other things being equal in two opponents in sports, the one with better 'psychological training or mental conditioning, will always have an upper edge over the other.

Psychology, in one form or the other, has been an essential ingredient of teacher's training curricula and every teacher—may be physical educationist or academician—is supposed to know the basic tenets of psychology so that he can, like a skilful artist, bring about desired modifications in the behaviour of his trainees. The present book "Psychology of Physical Education and Sports" was conceived with a view to cater to the needs of physical educationists, trainees at the institutes of physical education and coaches of respective sports disciplines. The basic idea was to help the professional people in physical education and sports to comprehend 'the underlying springs of behaviour of sportsmen on and off the field' and to interpolate changes in behaviour where necessary. Physical education and sports are two ends of a continuum and not two poles apart. Similarly education and physical educa-

tion have much common in themselves. The book has been written with a comprehensive outlook on these sister disciplines.

My two earlier books viz. Principles and History of Physical Education and Methods in Physical Education have been received with great warmth by the students and teachers of physical education throughout the country and I am sure this book on 'psychology' will meet the long-cherished desire of the physical educationist and the coach.

IX Asian Games, with which I have been associated as Deputy Director (Publicity), have ended with all their glory sounding a prophetic note as to the capability and organizational efficiency of our people. I am extremely grateful to Sardar Buta Singh, Minister for Sports and Chairman, AGSOC for giving me pat on the back; to Raja Bhalendra Singh, President, I.O.A. for writing 'Foreword' to this book; to the publishers, in particular Sarvshri B.V. Gupta and Vivek Gupta for ensuring quality production and bringing out the book in record time; to Sh. H.C. Vasishtha for paying special attention to its proof reading; to Dr. and Prof. T.R. Sharma, Punjabi University, Patiala, S. Amarjit Singh, President, Punjab Cyclepolo Association and S. Tarlochan, Director (Publicity) IX Asian Games for guidance, inspiration and encouragement and finally to my friends and colleagues who were instruments of motivation for this venture.

**M.L. KAMLESH**

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# 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 What is Psychology ?

Aristotle's treatise 'De anima' (on the soul) is considered to be the beginning of psychology. It was Rudolf Goeckel who, in 1590 for the first time, used the word 'psychology'—denoting the study of the mind. The term psychology is a derivation from the synthesis of 'psyche' meaning 'soul', and 'logos' meaning 'talk about or science'. Since then, despite scathing criticism and counter-criticism, psychology has lost neither essence nor originality. The ancient Greeks considered 'soul' to be the 'essence or true being of an organism, the cause and principle of its life'. They, then, took up the study of psychology i.e. soul alongwith philosophy. In due course of time, as more and more awareness came to the human mind, the mental and the metaphysical aspects of the 'soul' became two separate domains. Dr. Radha Krishnan observes. "Our mental states, ideas, impressions and feelings are the subject matter of psychology but what we think is not a matter of what takes place in our minds... A psychologist may be interested in the private experiences of individuals but a philosopher is investigating what our experiences mean... Psychology is a factual enquiry and philosophy is a conceptual analysis" The emphasis on the observable aspect of soul made psychology the study of "mind". Descartes (1590-1650) was neither convinced nor satisfied with this. He considered that the "matter and mind were both substances but between them there was no natural connection". He contended that "consciousness" was the "essence of mind" and so psychology, from his time onwards, came to be regarded as the 'study of consciousness'. Conscious-

ness is awareness, a private domain of the individual into which none else could dare penetrate. Consciousness, in fact, is a subjective experience which cannot be studied and dealt with objective and extraneous standards and measures. The subject himself may be able to know about it through introspection to some extent. However, the inner feelings are so fluid and subtle that even the subject—the knowing self—himself fails to understand and record their true nature at a given moment. Words betray him in telling as to, for example, what happens to him when he is in love with some one or what his internal reactions are when he is extremely angry. Yet many feel that the observable behaviour of an individual is also an index of his consciousness *i.e.* an indirect way of knowing one's own feelings.

Before this tricky tangle could be resolved, Sigmund Freud appeared on the scene with his theory of 'psycho-analysis' which clearly points out that there is an "unconscious" as well as a "subconscious" aspect of behaviour such as in sleep. During the state of drowsiness and deep sleep, the organism behaves in a way, How some people walk in sleep? Why some people blubber when asleep? How a sub-conscious state intervenes between the conscious and the unconscious? etc. were some of the questions which Descartes' followers never took into account. As a result the definition of psychology given by Descartes came to be treated as lop-sided and receded into the background. Freudians stressed that psychology was the study of the mental processes—both conscious and unconscious. Rather they held the view that the observable behaviour of an individual could not be properly understood without the study of his 'inner self' *i.e.* the unconscious part of his being.

With the advent of Watsonian theory, psychology became an objective science and came to be defined as the "study of behaviour". Watson was quite emphatic that an individual's behaviour could be studied both objectively and subjectively. Even experiments could be conducted to explain and interpret behaviour, both conscious or unconscious. The basic hypothesis here is that the "inner" reflects itself in the observable activities of the individual.

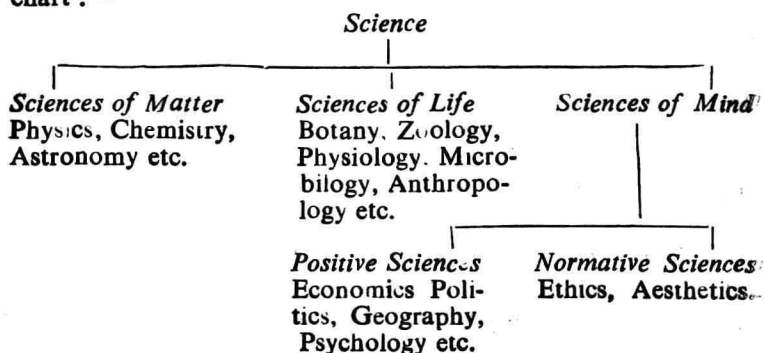
Finally, Woodworth carved out a clear profile of psychology. Tracing the developments in the field of psychology, he re-

marked, "First psychology lost its soul, then it lost its mind, then it lost consciousness, it still has a behaviour of a kind". Woodworth says, "Psychology is the science of the activities of an individual in relation to his environment". The activity of the soul or the mind—in other words, the internal behaviour—is manifested through the physical or the 'outer', for 'thinking' and 'doing' are the points on the same stretch and are inseparable. In the struggle for existence, the organism acts, reacts and interacts as a whole. Separating, the 'inner' from the 'outer' or 'unconscious' from the 'conscious' is simply preposterous and unwarranted.

## 1.2 Psychology : A Science

While defining psychology, Woodworth took full cognizance of four issues—Science, Activities, Individual and Environment—the first one as a process of investigation into and the rest of the three as the determinants of behaviour.

(1) *Science*. Woodworth considers psychology as a science rather than an art in the hierarchy of disciplines. Huxley says, "Science is nothing but trained and organised common sense". Science, as opposed to philosophy, is a systematic approach towards the solution of problems confronting humanity; an analytic way of understanding the nature of things in the universe; an objective and verifiable study of cause-and-effect principle. Psychology began as an art but over the years, its nature, scope and purpose have undergone transformation in such a manner that it has become a science. The status of psychology, as a science, may be determined from the following chart :—



Psychology finds its berth under positive sciences. Like Economics, Political Science, Public Administration etc, psychology is not concerned with what is good or bad but with 'what it is' and as it appears to be. All normative sciences lay down certain norms and standards. Aesthetics denotes standards for the appreciation of beauty while Ethics connotes rules, norms and codes of conduct in society. Modern psychology, in contrast with its early status, is an 'objective rather than subjective; experimental rather than speculative' science. Psychology, as an objective study of behaviour, does not lay down norms for behaviour; it simply explains how under such and such circumstances would an animal or a human being characteristically behave. "What should be" is no concern of psychology. No branch of this science talks of any norms and standards; it explains how and why the things happen, the way they do so far as behaviour is concerned. In its extreme form, psychology enters physiology and this suffices to prove Woodworth's thesis that psychology is a science—positive and objective. Thus, as a science, it aims to understand, to get an insight into, to interpret and throw light on the mind, its processes and procedures—implicit and explicit.

(2) *Activities*. Activities are referred to as normal powers of mind or body. More specifically they are observable forms of action or motion. The 'inner', it is claimed, reveals and expresses itself through the 'outer'—the visible part of movement—in such a way as to what one does mentally is reflected in one's physical movements. 'The face is the index of mind' is often quoted to emphasise the unity of the "inner" and the "outer" actions which are not just mechanical movements. Systematic study of the activities of an individual again involves scientific study. Psycho-physiologically, each activity of the organism has three phases.

#### (i) *Cognitive phase*

(Knowing experience). Acts of seeing, feeling, hearing, smelling, tasting etc. are preliminary stages of an activity i.e. input level. In other words, stimuli arising out of the environ-



ment enter the organism through the sense organs—each one of them specialized to receive a particular stimulus. The process by which the organism receives the stimulus is known as the cognitive stage. Sense organs are the main source of 'knowing experience'. Unless they receive some information from the environment, the complex activity known as behaviour would not be initiated. Better cognition enables the organism to act and react more quickly and precisely. Deficiency in one sense organ is compensated by the proficiency in the other.

(ii) *Affective phase*

(Feeling experience). During this phase, the stimulus enters the higher centres of the brain. It is analysed and interpreted in relation to the previous experience. The quickest possible decisions are taken and the typical "affective" states produced which are mainly of neuro-physiological nature. Emotional responses such as laughing, weeping etc. fall under the orbit of affective phase of activity.

(iii) *Canative phase*

(Striving experience. At this stage marked bodily changes, reactions and actions become observable. Motor activities such as locomotion, walking, running, fighting etc. fall within the purview of this stage.

The entire activity-pattern of the organism is beautifully woven into the web of these stages. For instance, we see a lion (cognitive); feel we are in danger (affective) and strive to run for safety (conative). Almost all observable activities of the organism are initiated by a chain of stimuli acting upon the organism from the environment. The ever-changing situations, in fact, are responsible for making the organism act, react and interact so as to struggle to adjust for survival. The total process, comprising these three stages, is so fast and sudden that it can hardly be guessed as to how one activity succeeds or precedes the other. So psychology aims to analyze and understand the internal as well as the external aspects of organismic activities. In all forms of behaviour—from the simplest reflex action of blinking of the eye to the highly complex gymnastic acrobatic—the organism