

# 11 Psychology and Sports

Read this new topic after Sub-topic "Types of Personality" on page 221 of the main book.

## Sheldon and Jung's Classification and Big Five Theory

Classification by William Herbert Sheldon

In fact, the success of an athlete or sportsperson comes from a combination of athletic ability and physique of body build. W H Sheldon classified personality of individuals into the following categories which are stated subsequently.

1. **Endomorph:** These individuals have short arms and legs. They have rounded physique. Their limbs seem to be shorter because of excessive deposits of adipose tissues. The upper parts of arms and legs are significantly thicker than the lower parts. It is hard for them to lose weight. They have soft body. They have underdeveloped muscles. They have a capacity for high fat storage and become fat easily.

In fact, they are more inclined to become obese. They have pear shaped body. Their excessive mass hinders their ability to compete in sports. In fact, sports require high level of agility or speed. Sports and games, which require strength like weightlifting and power-lifting are most suitable for endomorphs.

2. **Mesomorph:** Mesomorphs are categorised as in-between the other two body types and are generally described as muscular. They have athletic physique and balanced body composition. They are able to increase their muscle size quickly and easily. They have well-developed rectangular shaped body. They have thick bones and muscles. Their chest and shoulders are larger and broader in comparison to their waistline. They are physically capable of doing a lot of activities and tend to be athletically aggressive. Generally, they store fat evenly all over their bodies but they can become overweight if they lead sedentary lifestyle and take high calorie diet. They can excel in such sports which require great strength, short bursts of energy and lots of power because they have enough strength, agility and speed. These characteristics make them strong contenders to be the top sportspersons in any sports.

3. **Ectomorph:** The individuals who have an ectomorph body are usually referred to as slim persons because their muscles and limbs are elongated. They have weak

constitution of body and usually face great difficulties in gaining weight. They have flat chests and have less muscle mass. The lack of muscle mass creates the impression that they are taller than they really are. They do not have a lot of strength but they dominate the endurance sports because their body type is naturally suited to perform wonderfully in endurance activities. They have a quick metabolism to burn fat. They also have a tendency to stick with what they do best. Their light body constitution makes them suited for aerobic activities like gymnastics.

## Jung's Classification

Jung has classified personality on the basis of sociability character as introverts, extroverts and ambiverts. These are described below:

1. **Introverts:** These are the persons who share characteristics such as shyness, social withdrawal and tendency to talk less. Owing to these characteristics such persons seem to be self-centered, unable to adjust easily in society or social situations. They are very sensible, rigid in ideas and future oriented.
2. **Extroverts:** Extroverts have a tendency to be friendly, outgoing, talkative and social in nature. They usually prefer social contacts. They are generous, supportive and courageous. They may be called happy, go, lucky persons. They show interest in present reality than future. They do not have hesitation. They express their feelings openly. They take decision quickly and act upon quickly. They are not affected easily by difficulties and troubles.
3. **Ambiverts:** There are only few persons who are pure introverts or pure extroverts. The remaining majority of persons possess both the qualities or traits of introverts and extroverts such persons are called as ambiverts.

## Big Five Personality Theory

It is a well known fact that persons give different response to the same situations. Indeed, the big five factors of personality are the five main domains which define human personality and account for individual differences. These five domains or dimensions of personality are considered to be the fundamental traits that make up an individual's overall personality. The big five traits of personality are described below:

1. **Openness:** Persons who like to learn new things, new concepts and enjoy new experiences usually remain on the top in openness. Openness includes traits like being imaginative, insightful and having a variety of interests.
2. **Conscientiousness:** Persons who have a high degree of conscientiousness are reliable and prompt. Such persons remain organised, systematic, laborious and complete in all respects.
3. **Extroversion:** Extroverts get their energy from interacting with other individuals, whereas introverts get their energy from within themselves. Extroversion includes the traits of being energetic, talkative and assertive.
4. **Agreeableness:** Such individuals are friendly, cooperative, compatible, kind and gentle. Persons with too agreeableness may be more distant or aloof. They are usually kind, generous, affectionate and sympathetic.

5. **Neuroticism:** Neuroticism is also called emotional stability. This domain or dimension relates to one's emotional stability and the degree of negative emotions. Persons who have high neuroticism usually experience emotional instability and negative emotions. Such individuals remain moody and tense.

Read this new topic after Article 11.6 on page 231 of the main book.

#### 11.6 A MEANING, CONCEPT AND TYPES OF AGGRESSION IN SPORTS

##### Meaning and Concept of Aggression

In psychology, the term aggression refers to a range of behaviours that can result in both physical and psychological harm to oneself, others or objects in the environment. This type of social interaction centers on harming another individual either physically or mentally. As a matter of fact, most of the persons view aggression as a negative psychological characteristic, however some sports psychologists agree that aggression can enhance sports performance. In fact, aggression in the field of sports and games comes out of frustration, which arises due to goal blockage. Along with this, situational and personal factors play a vital role in causing a person to behave aggressively. It can be seen that aggression comes from a number of sources but first of all it is more essential for us to understand the clear-cut meaning of aggression. The following definitions and phrases may be helpful to know the exact meaning of aggression:

1. "Aggression is a behaviour with a goal harming or injuring another being motivated to avoid such treatment."

This definition raises certain points:

- (i) Aggression is behaviour. Thinking negative thoughts being angry is not aggression.
  - (ii) Aggression is intentional behaviour. Accidental harm is not aggression.
  - (iii) Aggression involves harm or injury.
  - (iv) Aggression involves living beings.
2. Aggression is defined as "any form of behaviour directed towards the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment." (Baron and Richardson)
  3. "Aggression is noun that is generally defined as an act of aggressive behaviour."
  4. Berkowitz summarised that two factors are required to classify a behaviour as showing aggression.
    - (i) The behaviour must be directed at another human being with the goal of causing some form of physical harm.
    - (ii) The behaviour must show a reasonable expectation that the attempt to inflict harm will be successful.
  5. **Connelly** states that competition usually requires some sort of behaviour that is intense and requires a forceful effort to participate, however when this forcefulness goes too far, it becomes aggression.
  6. **Gill** mentions three factors for an act to be aggressive these are:
    - The act must actually happen either physically or verbally, the act of thinking an aggressive action is not enough.

- It must harm another person either physically or emotionally.
- It must be an intentional action.

However, there are various definitions and phrases about aggression but one generally accepted within sports psychology is **Baron and Richardson** who define form of behaviour towards the goal of harming or injuring another living being motivated to avoid such treatment."

##### Types of Aggression in Sports

These are the following types of aggression in sports:

1. **Hostile Aggression:** Hostile aggression is inflicting or causing harm whether it is physical or psychological on someone else. It is sometimes referred as reactive aggression and can be accompanied by anger. In hostile aggression, the main aim is to cause injury to other sportsperson. The intention is on causing pain and suffering. In simple words, hostile aggression is when the primary aim is to cause physical harm or injury to your opponent. A good example of hostile aggression is a bowler throwing a bouncer to deliberately shake up the concentration of a batsman. Some cricketers have deliberately done this in the with the intent towards causing injury.



Hostile aggression

2. **Instrumental Aggression:** Instrumental aggression is displaying aggressive behaviour in the pursuit of a non-aggressive goal. It is also known as channel aggression and is not accompanied by anger. This type of aggression comes in common sports. In other words, instrumental aggression is behaviour that has the intention to hurt in order to achieve money, praise or victory. In case of instrumental aggression, athletes may intend to injure the opponent, but the most important goal to be achieved by the aggressive act is to win the competition. For example, a rugby player's aggression to tackle his opponent to win the ball. Actually the player is not using aggression to hurt the opponent but rather to win the ball back.

3. **Assertive Behaviour:** Assertive behaviour is different type of aggression/aggressive behaviour. This is defined as behaviour that involves the use of legitimate physical or verbal force to achieve one's purpose. For example, sledging in cricket to cause psychological discomfort for the batsman. For an act to be assertive it must be directed with no specific intention to harm with the use of legitimate force no rules broken. In assertive aggression or assertive behaviour, the intention is to establish dominance rather than to harm the opponent. Any physical injury that occurs through assertive behaviour is accidental and unintentional. In fact, assertive behaviour is related to four main criteria i.e., it is goal oriented, not intended to harm, uses only legitimate force and does not break any rule of the game or sport. Even when coaches say to their players to be aggressive they mean to say that they be assertive.