RESILIENCE AND SPORTS

ACHIEVEMENT



**SUBMITTED BY,**

**BINU SUSAN PAUL**

**II MPEd**

**DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

**SREE SANKARACHARYA UNIVERSITY**

**OF SANSKRIT, KALADY, KERALA**

**ABSTRACT**

Being involved in sports activities benefits a person in many ways. It does not provide only physical strength however it increases mental power too. Exercise increases the flow of oxygen, which has a direct impact the brain, Feelings of anger, tension, anxiety and even depression can diminish while mental clarity and memory can improve with regular physical activity. The ability to bounce back from adversity and keep going when things get tough are just two of the traits of highly successful individuals. These traits are more commonly known as grit and resilience. Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviours, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone. The overall concept of resilience is quite broad. Masten (2007) described it as the capacity of dynamic systems to withstand or recover from significant disturbances. Masten et al. (1990) defined resilience as “the capacity, processes, or outcomes of successful adaptation in the context of significant threats to function or development”. Rutter (2012) defined resilience as “reduced vulnerability to environmental risk experiences, the overcoming of a stress or adversity, or a relatively good outcome despite risk experiences. The Psychological resilience will improve an individuals’ ability to positively overcome or recover from adversity or stress. Resilience is one of the most important traits that an athlete can possess. Resilience is positively bound with sports achievement. The ability to respond positively to setbacks, obstacles, and failures is essential for any successful athlete. Resilience is the ability to adapt, recover, adjust or change in order to achieve some end. The resilient athlete can, not only handle injury, misfortune, mistakes and losses more effectively, but can also use these instances as learning lessons and fuel to fan their desire to succeed.

Key words: Resilience, Sports Achievement

**INTRODUCTION**

Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviours, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone. Grit is the perseverance and passion for long-term goals. Resilience, or “mental toughness,” is a key psychological aspect of sport. The ability to bounce back from a poor performance or a detrimental mistake is crucial to an athlete's success. Developing “mental toughness” or resilience will help an athlete perform well in the face of adversity. Resilience is a very important skill in all sports. Athletes have to deal with the stress of competitions and the pressure of being the best in their respective fields. “Resilience is the ability to face life’s adversities, transform pain into a driving force in order to overcome and become strengthened by them. A resilient person understands that they are the architect of their own joy and their own destiny.” Resilience in sports can turn into an excellent tool in order to successfully overcome life’s difficulties and issues. This applies to things from everyday issues to the rarest problems and the ones which produce the greatest emotional impact. Learning to manage these circumstances correctly allows us to recover from them more quickly. Most athletes will encounter one or more major setbacks or adversities during their sporting career. An elite athlete may, for example, experience a career-threatening injury, garner demotion from a top-tier team because of poor performance, or need to relocate to another country to continue competing in their sport. Despite the potential for setbacks and adversities to negatively influence one’s developmental trajectories, in some cases, and for some athletes, exposure to major assaults on one’s typical level of functioning or performance does not always result in negative outcomes. The concept of resilience is central to coping with such demands and challenges. Although there remains considerable debate regarding a formal definition, common themes among most contemporary conceptualizations reveal that resilience encapsulates one’s capacity to regain or sustain relatively stable, healthy levels of psychological and physical functioning.

**Historical Perspectives**

The scientific study of resilience emerged about 40 years ago from research on children “at risk” (i.e., increased probability of a negative outcome) for psychopathology, often due to environmental factors such as psychiatric history in the family or poverty. Within this line of investigation, researchers observed a significant degree of variability in impairment to normal levels of functioning ranging from maladaptive outcomes to instances of positive adjustment or adaptation. Intrigued by cases of positive outcomes despite risk or adversity, researchers subsequently advanced the study of resilience in four major waves:

(1) identifying protective factors within individuals (e.g., optimism, self-efficacy), the family (e.g., socioeconomic status, parenting style), and communities (e.g., neighbourhood qualities, public health system) that contribute to positive adaptation in the face of risk or adversity;

(2) understanding the processes by which positive adaptation occurs across the life span; (3) evaluating the effectiveness and efficacy of interventions designed to protect or promote positive functioning among individuals, groups, or communities;

(4) integrating the first three waves of research across multiple levels of analysis and across disciplines including genetics, neurobiology, sociology, and cultures.

**Resilience in sports**

The ability to respond positively to setbacks, obstacles, and failures is essential for any successful athlete. Although resilience has been studied in general psychology for several decades, it is only recently that researchers and practitioners have begun to explore the construct within the sport context. In recent years, there has been an increased scrutiny over the “winning at all costs” culture of Olympic, Paralympic and professional sports with particular concerns over athlete welfare. This has led to the publication of an independent report by Baroness Grey-Thompson in to the issues surrounding the Duty of Care that sports have towards their participants. Interestingly, in the section on mental welfare, the report states that, “The routine element of elite sport, where the regime is one of continuous training, performance, and selection, brings significant mental resilience challenges for both participants and coaches” and for those on a high performance pathway, “Mental resilience is not something that all participants and coaches automatically have and this should be developed with the same consideration that physical resilience is built”

Performance and sport achievement are affected by usual stressor factors like perpetration a psychological and bodily errors, endurance of pain and ailment, viewing the fraud or rivals achievement, receipting fine from arbiter and punishment from mentor. Inability to effective encountering to sport stress is harmful for performance and personal pleasant. One of the theories in study about the strategies for encounter to stress is the approach of positive psychology which the resilience is one of its concepts. Resilience is the dynamic process of positive adaptiveness with horrible experiences (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Masten, 2000; Masten, 2001 ). Resilience is on a continuum with different degrees of resistance versus psychological pathologies. It is concordant with positive development; adaptiveness and reaching the level of equilibrium after developing disorder in precede equilibrium status. Primary theories about resilience were focused on the characteristics related with positive results in encountering with disasters. After a while they focused on external protective factors. Today's theories know resilience as a multidimensional factor include constitutional variables, like temperament and personality, with special skills, such as problem solving skill. Overcoming adversity, rebounding and bouncing back are all phrases which have been used previously (and still are) within the coaching and psychology domain, with close relation to resilience. In positive psychology and mental toughness, all these phrases and terms could now be considered to come under the umbrella of resilience. Resilience has been defined as “a protective mechanism thought to emerge from specific personality features, such as self-esteem, or from aspects of social support and adaptive coping resources and strategies” (Mummery, Schofield & Perry, 2004). In essence, resilient individuals possess the ability to overcome adversity, bounce back and rebound. Resilience is a process which is built up by an individual over time through situations and scenarios which encourage them to overcome adversity, through developing coping strategies to deal with these situations and become a mentally stronger individual. As the individual experiences these situations, it is an opportunity for them to build on enhancing self-esteem and determination (internal factors; Richardson, 2002), while also building up a “repertoire” of strategies (Block and Block, 1980) to deal with adverse scenarios. By producing a portfolio of these skills, the individual gives themselves the best chance of a flexible approach to such situations, as they will have an array of options to choose from, best suited to overcoming adversity. In turn, this will install a resilient nature within the individual.

The coaches must recognise the talent an individual possesses in order to improve performance levels, providing pressurised situations in training to help them develop their skills for when they are performing in a match. The psychologist’s role is to assist the players in understanding their emotion levels during specific situations within a match, and assist them with building up coping strategies to overcome any pitfalls they may encounter. Furthermore the two examples show the benefits for an individual possessing this attribute, specifically, overcoming adverse and tricky situations and being able to maintain high performance levels. This can be related back to Seligman’s resilience training which includes understanding emotions and the regulation of emotions, personal strengths and the mental agility of the individuals. From my experience, resilience is regarded as an extremely important quality for elite sports people to possess; therefore it would make sense to offer training scenarios and the support of a psychologist to assist with enhancing this within individuals. Athletes need to remain in the present moment and focus on the task at hand. It is difficult to focus on the present when the mind is occupied with an error that occurred three plays ago.

Performance errors may cause an athlete to lose control of their emotions as well as diminish their confidence. The whirlwind of negative emotions coupled with reduced confidence only leads to more errors and further deterioration of performance. Developing “mental toughness” or resilience will help an athlete perform well in the face of adversity. A resilient athlete is one who is able to overcome setbacks, remain confident, and focus on the present. Performance and sport achievement are affected by usual stressor factors like perpetration a psychological and bodily errors, endurance of pain and ailment, viewing the fraud or rivals achievement, receipting fine from arbiter and punishment from mentor. Inability to effective encountering to sport stress is harmful for performance and personal pleasant. One of the theories in study about the strategies for encounter to stress is the approach of positive psychology which the resilience is one of its concepts. Resilience is the dynamic process of positive adaptiveness with horrible experiences (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Masten, 2000; Masten, 2001). Resilience is on a continuum with different degrees of resistance versus psychological pathologies. It is concordant with positive development; adaptiveness and reaching the level of equilibrium after developing disorder in precede equilibrium status. Primary theories about resilience were focused on the characteristics related with positive results in encountering with disasters. After a while they focused on external protective factors. Today's theories know resilience as a multidimensional factor include constitutional variables, like temperament and personality, with special skills, such as problem solving skill.

Ways to improve resilience:

* Develop a positive personality
* View your decisions as active choices not sacrifices
* Use support available to you from other people
* Identify your motivation for succeeding
* Focus on personal development
* View setbacks as opportunities for growth
* Strengthen your confidence from a range of sources
* Take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and behaviours
* Concentrate on what you can control

The ability to respond positively to setbacks, obstacles, and failures is essential for any successful athlete. Although resilience has been studied in general psychology for several decades, it is only recently that researchers and practitioners have begun to explore the construct within the sport context. Resilience is not about responding to a one time crisis. It’s not about rebounding from a setback. It’s about having the capacity to change before the case for change becomes desperately obvious. Resilience have an important role in the field of sports.

**CONCLUSION**

Psychological resilience is important in sport because athletes must utilise and optimise a range of mental qualities to withstand the pressures that they experience. The process of obtaining resilient qualities begins at a point in time when individuals are in a state of biopsychospiritual homeostasis, or a comfort zone in which one has adapted physically, mentally, and spiritually to a set of good or bad circumstances (Richardson et al., 1990). Individuals are frequently attacked by stressors and adverse events that knock them out of their comfort zone. Disruption will occur if they lack sufficient protective factors (i.e., resilient qualities such as self-efficacy, self-esteem, problem solving ability) to buffer them from a given adverse event. In summary, resilient individuals display a variety of personal assets and are protected from the negative appraisal of stressors by the moderating effects of a wide range of personal and situational variables. Hence, resilience is conceptualized as the interactive influence of psychological characteristics within the context of the stress process. . Resilience is a very important skill in all sports. Athletes have to deal with the stress of competitions and the pressure of being the best in their respective fields. “Resilience is the ability to face life’s adversities, transform pain into a driving force in order to overcome and become strengthened by them. A resilient person understands that they are the architect of their own joy and their own destiny

**REFERENCES**

Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York, NY: Freeman.

Solomon, G., & Becker, A. (2004). Focused for fast pitch: 80 drills to play and stay sharp.

Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Schinke, R. J., Peterson, C., & Couture, R. (2004). A protocol for teaching resilience to high

performance athletes. Journal of Excellence, 9, 9-18.

Fletcher, D., & Sarkar, M. (2012). A grounded theory of psychological resilience

In Olympic champions. Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 13, 669-678.

Morgan, P. B. C., Fletcher, D., & Sarkar, M. (2013). Defining and characterizing

team resilience in elite sport. Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 14, 549-559.