

COMPETITION AND COOPERATION

- Roger Staubach: “Because of athletics and my experiences in sport, I learned to handle things in business and life.”
- Tom House: “The longer the exposure to the professional sport environment, the further athletes drift from an ability to understand and cope with the demands of the real world.”
- Competition
 - a social process that occurs when rewards are given to people for how their performance compares with the performances of others during the same task or when participating in the same event (Coakley)
 - has a reward structure in which success of one person or team automatically causes failure of others (Coakley)
- Co-operation
 - a social process through which performance is evaluated and rewarded in terms of the collective achievement of a group of people working together to reach a particular goal
 - rewards are shared equally
- Martens (1975) model: Competition is a process
 - in sport psychology, we’re not so interested in examining competition as an event or as an end-point, we are interested in it as a process – this helps us to determine the factors associated with competitive environments
 - experienced differently by individuals – the person can influence the relationships among the various stages e.g., motivation, attitudes, ability, previous experience can influence responses to competition.
- 1. Objective competitive situation
 - a situation in which performance is compared with some standard of excellence in the presence of at least one other person who is aware of the comparison
 - Coakley and Martens both agree that competition is a social process (requires more than one person)
 - Coakley’s definition involves comparison with people doing same task or same event
 - Martens’ definition involves evaluation that another person is aware of.
- 2. Subjective competitive situation
 - how the person perceives, accepts, and appraises the objective competitive situation (influenced by personality factors and situational factors such as family)
 - Gill and Deeter (1988) found three types of competitive orientations:
 - Competitiveness – enjoyment of competition
 - Win orientation – focus on beating other competitors (interpersonal comparison)
 - Goal orientation – focus on improving own performance, not beating others
 - athletes score higher than nonathletes on all three subscales, but especially on the competitive orientation (Gill, 1993)
- 3. Response
 - whether a person approaches or avoids an objective competitive situation
 - behavioural – who do you choose to match up on? how will you play? / strategy
 - physiological – increased activation of the sympathetic nervous system
 - psychological – anxiety, negative self-talk
- 4. Consequences
 - an evaluation (usually plus or minus) of one’s response to the standards of the performance comparison