

Emotional self-control skills in chess players in the 11-12 year old category
Las habilidades de autocontrol emocional en los ajedrecistas de la categoría
11-12 años

Gianni Columbié-Cala¹, Yanet Durand-Nistal²

¹Univ. Instructor Professor. Guantanamo University. Physical Culture Faculty, Guantanamo. Cuba.

²Ph.D. Full Professor. Guantanamo University. Physical Culture Faculty, Guantanamo. Cuba.

Email:

giannis@cug.co.cu

yanetdn@cug.co.cu

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ABSTRACT

A psychological strategy is presented to develop emotional self-control skills in chess players aged 11-12 years at the School for Gifted Children in the Guantanamo municipality. The nine students are physically and mentally fit for the study. The current state of the group is diagnosed through different psychodiagnostic techniques that allow us to know the causes of a high state of anxiety in some of its subjects. It is a descriptive field study that seeks to solve practical problems. The results were evaluated by specialist criteria, endorsing the quality and viability of the theoretical conception of the psychopedagogical strategy to develop emotional self-control skills in the study group.

Keywords

Skills; Self-control; Emotional; Strategy; Psychopedagogical.

RESUMEN

Se presente una estrategia psicológica para desarrollar habilidades de autocontrol emocional en los ajedrecistas de 11-12 años de la Escuela para niños talentos del municipio Guantánamo. Los nueve alumnos estan aptos físicos y mentalmente para el estudio. Se diagnostica el estado actual del grupo, a través de diferentes técnicas de psicodiagnóstico que permiten conocer las causas de una elevada ansiedad estado en algunos de sus sujetos. Es un estudio con carácter descriptivo en campo que busca solucionar problemas prácticos. Los resultados se evaluaron por criterio de especialistas, avalando la calidad y viabilidad de la concepción teórica de la estrategia psicopedagógica para desarrollar habilidades de autocontrol emocional en el grupo de estudio.

Palabras clave

Habilidades; Autocontrol; Emocional; Estrategia; Psicopedagógicas.

INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times there has been much discussion about whether Chess was a board game or a sport, even today some underestimate it or are detractors of its inclusion as a sporting activity, precisely because we are in the presence of a discipline that usually seems sedentary when seen in its “essence” by two seated people who mainly use their intellect.

It may be believed that it is not a sport, when “seen” from the outside by its non-sympathizers as diminished physical activity, associated in this case diminutively with the fine movements of the hand when moving the pieces and pressing the clock in the development of the activity. However, there are many elements that support Chess to be considered a sport. Blanco, U. (1988). Dr. Uvencio goes on to say: “A sport must be fun, accessible to all, apply the principle of performance, must be governed by rules so it takes the form of competition, must have an international character and finally associated with physical activity.”

The pre-competitive situation where there is an expectation of a result, whether by the student, teammates, family members or coaches, constitutes a high social commitment for the student who still does not have the necessary tools, and lacks skills in the use of self-control techniques that help him to attenuate his state of anxiety.

In this sense, actions have been outlined that have the following goals: focusing on the pedagogical tasks of the activity, achieving cohesion and identity, following and affiliating the author with the sociopsychological research studies of Cañizares in her book *Psychology and Sports Team*. Cañizares, M. (2004).

Initially, it should be noted that Goleman (1996), cited in Medina & Mejía, 2018), asserts that emotion is the manifestation of an individual's desires, which responds to their needs. Based on the above, it can be argued that emotions are determined to some extent by the requirements and demands that human beings experience and whose manifestation is externalized in different ways.

For their part, Torres & Lenis (2020) have pointed out that:

Emotions are associated with the reflection of what human beings experience and live in a given period of time, whose manifestation can be evidenced in any context. In accordance with this idea, it should be noted that emotions are comprised of those manifestations that human beings make.

Countless authors offer, from different study perspectives, the work with emotions, directing it towards self-esteem, self-knowledge, self-realization, the fulfillment of goals as a source of

motivation, self-confidence and tolerance to frustrations. In this regard, the work with emotions through psychological preparation stands out from Psychology and Physical Culture. It is reflected in the works of Puni (1969), Matvieev (1972), Roudick (1974), Dzhamgarov (1979), García (1988 - 2004), González, (2003), Sánchez (2005), Pérez (2007) Cañizares (2008), Mercadet and Lima, (2014), Sánchez D (2017) and others, who have directed their main ideas towards psychological interventions, training, methodologies, strategies or programs that have facilitated the work of coaches and psychologists. In the Comprehensive Program for the Preparation of Athletes, in the Psychological Preparation Plans and other documents, intrapersonal intelligence is not included as content, however, there is a great demand from coaches for work with self-control and the adequate management of emotions both in training and in sports competitions.

This was confirmed in a diagnostic study carried out by the author, based on the application of a survey to psychologists of the School for talented children of the Guantánamo municipality, the observation of diagnoses and interventions and the analysis of documents of psychological preparations, clinical histories and reports of psychological evaluations given to coaches and filed in the center. The **deficiencies** found, in the case of coaches, are manifested mainly in:

1. Lack of knowledge of emotional self-control and how to develop it in chess players through psychological preparation.

In the case of chess players, this is mainly manifested in:

1. difficulties with self-control
2. problems with self-regulation
3. they do not show commitment and efforts are not maintained to achieve the established goals

Taking into account these deficiencies, the objective of the research is to develop a psychopedagogical strategy to develop emotional self-control skills in chess players in the 11-12 year-old category of the school for talented children in the Guantánamo municipality.

DEVELOPMENT

Emotional self-control is one of the essential elements in the psychological base of an athlete who aspires to reach a high level. Emotional responses correspond to the characteristics of the athlete, the discipline he practices and the different situations that may occur during training and competition. Therefore, emotional states have a permanent relationship with the experiences of success and failure of the athlete.

Among the tasks of sports psychology are the improvement and updating of psychological preparation procedures and systems, which include two important aspects worldwide: psychological control of sports training and intervention systems (psychological training of athletes). The classics of sports training are represented by Verjoshansky (1982); Ozolin (1983); Harre (1983); Matviev (1983); Platonov (1988), and Forteza (1997) are of the opinion that the process of sports training is, in essence, pedagogical and its fundamental purpose is sports preparation.

Regarding the concepts about psychological preparation developed by Puni (1974); Roudick (1974) and continued by Gorbunov (1988) & Rodionov (1990), although with some differential nuances, they revolve around the formation of the state of "psychological predisposition" for competition, which originates in the system that structures psychological preparation in three basic types: general, special and direct.

Roudick (1974, p. 406), regarding emotions, stated that "Education of the psychic stability of the athlete is structured from the formation of the ability to maintain and even raise, in extreme conditions, the level of his emotional state, his work capacity and the effectiveness of motor actions."

The author considers that Valdés (1993) has points in common with Puni (1969), related to his profound pedagogical character, as the latter considers that psychological preparation is psychological and pedagogical at the same time. The first because it leads to the creation in the process of sports training together with the physical, technical, tactical and theoretical preparation and to the psychic predisposition of the athlete to act in each competition. The second, because it goes in search of ways and means that ensure the psychic predisposition for competitions in the process of learning and preparation of the athlete.

In the study of the different trends that have guided psychological preparation, the former Soviet Union stands out with an integrationist stance. Authors such as Matviev (1966), Puni (1969), Roudick (1974), Gorbunov (1988) considered the constant use of psychodiagnosis, the research of the athlete's personality, promoting an optimal emotional state for competition focusing on moral and volitional preparation, with constant treatment of stress, negative emotions (fear) and pre-starts.

According to Pagés (2020), self-control is the emotional capacity that a person has to manage feelings appropriately, or, in other words, the ability to manage responses that originate within

the cognitive, experimental, behavioral, physical expression and biochemical components in people.

Sports researchers emphasize the teaching of self-control to ensure the psychological preparation of athletes. Thus, we have the psychological preparation schemes of Loehr (1982) and Garfield (1984), which rest on a conception that considers the athlete as an active entity immersed in training and competitions, who must achieve the desired behavior by learning a series of mental abilities and skills that allow him to control emotions, an aspect that we consider must be integrated with the demands of the activity, the needs of the subject and the team, as well as his personal characteristics.

Some of the essential elements related to self-control have been defined in the work of Vygotsky, when he states: "...we cannot control our behavior in any other way than through the corresponding stimulation. The key to achieving adequate control over performance is given by control over stimuli. In this way, the control of behavior represents a mediated process, which is always carried out by means of known auxiliary stimuli: signs..." (Vygotsky, 1987: 24)

In this sense, the author recognizes the importance of stimulation for the self-regulation of the individual's behavior through signs and expresses it in a particular way in self-stimulation, as "the creation of conventional stimuli-instruments and the determination –with their help- of one's own behavior." (L.S. Vygotsky, 1987: 89).

At the base of self-control is the individual's capacity to consciously self-regulate the emotional process, which does not imply repressing his emotions but rather their evaluation, confrontation and expression according to the significance that the situation has for the subject in the most constructive and healthy way, which enables a better adaptation of the individual to the environment. Vygotsky recognizes the influence of psychology on our body when he points out: "...the organization of higher nervous activity (ANS) creates the necessary premise for this, creates the possibility of regulation of behavior from outside. ... This is the principle of signification, which consists in man, from outside, creating connections in the brain, directing the brain and, through it, his body." (Vygotsky, 1987: 24)

As a theoretical need for research, emotional self-control is assumed to be a dynamic, interactive process, where the athlete is able to consciously regulate his emotional responses, allowing a personalized adaptation to the psychological demands imposed by the situation,

linked to the athlete's personal physical, psychological, social and cultural history in which his personality plays a determining mediating and self-regulating role.

Self-control of emotions in training and competition takes on great importance.

“Many times, psychological training must focus on this area, evaluating to what extent and how athletes control the most relevant issues of their sport, and then modifying those habits that are not appropriate or that, if they are, can be optimized.” (Garcés de los Fayos, 2004: 19)

This is also expressed by García (1993) when he states that the guarantee of sporting success in competition conditions is related to the athlete's capacity for emotional self-control. González, L. G. (2001) places the athlete at the centre of this assertion and the recognition of the active role that his personality has in regulating his behaviour and achieving his goals, which is why a reflective attitude is necessary.

Therefore, psychological preparation work, according to González, L. G. (2001), must be directed towards an orientation that develops these self-control capacities in the process of sports training and within this, Sports Psychology is vital in the athlete's preparation process; its study and practical application seek to understand and optimise the athlete's internal conditions with the aim of achieving the expression of the physical, technical and tactical potential acquired in the preparation process.

In this concept, elements such as self-control by the subject of his emotions, responsibility in decision-making based on reasoning, and objective judgements are distinguished, which enables flexibility in thought. From this perspective, the author considers that these elements constitute a tool to explain the self-regulation of the athlete from a theoretical perspective. Despite this, in sport it is also necessary to consider the recognition of difficulties and the search for new ways of solving them with flexibility through control to prevent the negative consequences that failure brings to the personality of the athlete.

This category finds its maximum explanation in the conceptualizations offered by different authors on personality, among which stand out (Fernández, L. 2005 and González, F. 1989), those who consider that self-regulation is the stable and systemic organization of the psychological contents and functions that characterize the integral expression of the subject, in its regulatory and self-regulatory functions of behavior.

The author considers that self-regulation of behavior in any area of life implies that the person has control over his or her own conduct and the ability to influence his or her performance. In this process, it is necessary to take into account the internalization that each individual makes

of the events and experiences of his or her life. In sports activity, this is essential because to the extent that the athlete is capable of self-regulation, he or she will have tools that allow him or her to achieve the proposed objectives by dominating the impulses that arise in the activity through interaction with the opponent, the decisions of the referees, the demands of the public in the process, and the internal pressures of his or her own thinking, all of which avoid failure.

CONCLUSIONS

The initial diagnosis allowed us to know that there really are deficiencies in the knowledge of emotional self-control and how to develop it in chess players from psychological preparation.

The current state of the development of emotional self-control skills was characterized, as well as the stage of progress in which the group in question is, taking into account its characteristics.

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