

УДК 159.9.07

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PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS OF SELF- REALIZATION IN SPORTS OF PARALIMPIC ATHLETS

Забезпечення повноцінного інтегрування у різні суспільні інституції людей, в яких це інтегрування суттєво ускладнено внаслідок інвалідності, можна вважати однією з найбільш пріоритетних проблем сучасного суспільства. У вирішенні цієї проблеми беруть активну участь фахівці таких наукових та науково-практичних галузей як психологія, соціальна робота, фізична культура та спорт тощо. Однак, відчувається й нестача досліджень, покликаних створити необхідне наукове забезпечення не тільки повноцінного тренувально-змагального процесу паралімпійця, але й, що надзвичайно важливо, забезпечення засобами паралімпійського спорту повноцінного інтегрування паралімпійця до суспільства.

Статтю присвячено аналізу результатів досліджень, спрямованих на визначення психологічних передумов спортивної самореалізації паралімпійців. У дослідженнях, що проводилися впродовж 2015–2017 рр., взяло участь 106 членів паралімпійської та дефлімпійської збірних команд України з різних видів спорту (віком 16–53 роки; 84 чоловіки та 22 жінки). У них використано розроблений нами опитувальник (за яким визначалися чинники спортивної самореалізації паралімпійців) та шість психодіагностичних методик.

Встановлено, що найбільш істотними психологічними передумовами спортивної самореалізації паралімпійців є рівні їхньої самоефективності та життєстійкості, міра осмисленості життя та життєвих цілей, відкритість новому досвіду, переживання власного життя як такого, що відповідає бажанням, потребам і цінностям, цілеспрямованістю, усвідомленням власних прагнень та напрямку руху до реалізації своїх цілей.

Отримані результати можуть бути використані з метою підвищення ефективності тренувально-змагального процесу паралімпійців, а також для сприяння їхній особистісній самореалізації.

Ключові слова: *паралімпійці, психологічні особливості, сприяння самореалізації, чинники самореалізації.*

Introduction. Full integration into various social institutions of people whose integration is essentially complicated due to their disabilities can be considered as one of the highest priority problems of modern society. Specialists of such scientific and scientific-practical branches as psychology, social work, physical education and sports participate actively in this problem solving. Today, it has been convincingly proved that engaging of people with disabilities in adaptive physical education and sports gives such people opportunities for their full-fledged self-fulfilment and socialization, creates prerequisites for their effective physical and mental adaptation, neutralises negative changes in their psychological-emotional states. These facts have been substantiated by researches conducted by scientists from different countries [1, 2, 7].

However, there are not enough research projects aimed at creating of the necessary scientific support for not only of a full-fledged Paralympic training, but also, for full integration of Paralympic athletes into society with help of Paralympic sports, which is extremely important. Therefore, psychological and socio-psychological researches, in particular, aimed at revealing of psychological features, indicators and preconditions of self-fulfilment in sports of Paralympic athletes are definitely relevant.

Background. Paralympic sports have become a powerful stimulus mobilizing the body reserves and helping people with major disorders or injuries to understand the prospect of overcoming their disorders for their full integration into society. Such sports play an important socializing and informing role, draw public attention to the issues of disability, barrier-free environment, and support dignity, rights and well-being of disabled people. The humanistic value of the various sporting events with participation of disabled people is priceless because they allow such people to «return to society» [4, 6]. For Paralympic athletes, sports become a vital source of self-fulfilment and existence, an important means of post-traumatic recovery, adaptation, integration and social inclusion. Creation of kind, friendly and meaningful interpersonal relationships in sports helps them to overcome social, religious and racial biases. Through close interactions with healthy athletes, opportunities are created to find new friends, improve life satisfaction and compensate consequences of disabilities [7].

Due to the expressed organizational and psychological specificity, trainings and preparations to competitions put forward special requirements to the personality of Paralympic athletes. Since disabilities limit their ability

to perform physical exercises, achievement of high results requires from Paralympic athletes to keep up with regulations of both sporting and other activities, to manifest continuously volitional efforts, to abide constantly a whole range of restrictions and prohibitions [7, 8].

Comparisons of disabled peoples engaged and not engaged in sports have revealed that disabled peoples doing sports have higher the following psychological characteristics: altruism, willingness to help others, a desire for cooperation, a sense of responsibility, a friendly attitude to others, self-attitude, independence from others' opinions, self-actualization, sociability, constructive approaches, purposefulness, self-confidence, self-esteem, quality of life and psychosocial adaptation [2, 3].

Athletes with disabilities, in comparison with healthy athletes, are characterized by the following psychological traits: they are more willing to accept risk; more constructively perceive their failures and mistakes; more open for supervision; also have a dominant orientation to the present; significantly higher estimate quality of their lives and satisfaction; are characterized by a higher vivacity and lower anxiousness and depression; show a higher need for cohesiveness [2].

The article purpose is: to determine empirically the psychological preconditions for self-fulfilment in sports of Paralympic athletes.

Research methods and results. The research was carried out during 2015–2017, 106 members of the Paralympic and Deaflympic national teams of Ukraine in different sports (16–53 years old, 84 men and 22 women) participated in the research. The questionnaire developed by us for determining the factors of self-fulfilment in sports of Paralympic athletes were used together with six psychological diagnostic techniques: Self-Efficacy Scale of R. Schwarzier and M. Jerusalem, Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-being (adaptation of T. D. Shevelenkova and T. P. Fesenko), Self-Determination Scale (E. M. Osin), S. Muddy test of psychological hardiness (translation and adaptation of D. O. Leontiev, O. I. Rasskazova), the Questionnaire of Self-Organization of Activities developed by O. Y. Mandrykova, Purpose-in-Life Test (PIL) of J. Krambo, L. Maholik (adaptation of D. A. Leontiev).

Psychological preconditions for self-fulfilment in sports of Paralympic athletes were defined by analysis of correlations between such indicators of self-fulfilment in sports of Paralympic athletes as relations with members of their sport teams, coaches and auxiliary personnel, interest in sports engagement and psycho-diagnostic indicators.

It has been found that sportive self-efficacy is a sufficiently informative diagnostic indicator (Table 1).

There is a positive correlation between sportive self-efficacy and such indicators of self-fulfilment of Paralympic athletes as relations with members

Table 1

Correlations between the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports and sportive self-efficacy of Paralympic athletes

Indicators of self-fulfilment in sports	Sportive self-efficacy
Relations with members of own sport team	,27**
Relations with coaches	,32***
Relations with auxiliary staff	,31***
Interests in sports engagement	,25**

Notes: *** – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,001$; ** – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,01$

of their sport team, coaches and support staff, as well as interest in sports engagement (correlations are at the level $r = 0,25 - 0,32$; $p \leq 0,01 - 0,001$).

It has turned out that only two indicators of self-fulfilment in sports – relations with auxiliary staff and interest in sports engagement – of Paralympic athletes have moderate, but reliable correlations ($r = 0,21-0,3$; $p \leq 0,05-0,01$) with a number of psychological well-being scales (Table 2)

As for self-determination level, reliable correlations with the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports exist only for one scale – self-expression (Table 3).

Table 2

Correlations between the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports and psychological well-being

Scales of psychological well-being	Indicators of self-fulfilment in sports	
	Relations with auxiliary staff	Interests in sports engagement
Positive relations with others	,22*	,14
Personal growth	,21*	,18
Purpose in life	,30**	,23*
Balance of affect	-,22*	,01
Meaningfulness of life	,26**	,29**
Environmental mastery	,21*	,29**
Psychological well-being in general	,23*	,10

Notes: *** – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,001$; ** – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,01$; * – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,05$

Table 3

Correlations between the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports and self-determination of Paralympic athletes

Indicators of self-fulfilment in sports	Self-expression
Relations with members of own sport team	,08
Relations with coaches	,19*
Relations with auxiliary staff	,25**
Interests in sports engagement	,24*

Notes: ** – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,01$; * – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,05$

Table 4

Correlations between the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports and psychological hardiness of Paralympic athletes

Indicators of self-fulfilment in sports	Psychological hardiness		
	Commitment	Control	Hardiness in general
Relations with members of own sport team	,09	,02	,06
Relations with coaches	,20*	,19*	,18
Relations with auxiliary staff	,19*	,10	,17
Interests in sports engagement	,25**	,21*	,23*

Notes: ** – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,01$; * – $p \leq 0,05$

Table 5

Correlations between the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports and self-organization of activities

Indicators of self-fulfilment in sports	Scale	
	Purposefulness	Self-organization
Relations with members of own sport team	,24*	,20*
Relations with coaches	,29**	,04
Relations with auxiliary staff	,29**	,03
Interests in sports engagement	,27**	-,063

Notes: ** – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,01$; * – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,05$

According to the content of this scale, experience of one's own life as meeting own desires, needs and values correlates moderately with the quality of relations with coaches and auxiliary staff and interest in sports engagement.

Indicators of psychological hardiness also moderately correlate with the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports (Table 4).

As in the previous case, reliable correlations exist with the same three of the four indicators (the quality of relations with coaches and auxiliary staff and the interest in sports engagement).

Only two out of seven indicators of self-organization of activities shown by Paralympic athletes correlate reliably with the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports (Table 5).

According to the meaning of the «purposefulness» scale (since, in this case, it influence significantly on self-organization), the examined indicators of self-fulfilment in sports of Paralympic athletes are moderately dependent on their purposefulness, awareness of their aspirations and ways of achievement of their goals.

Meanwhile, the examined self-fulfilment indicators correlate moderately with three of the five indicators of the meaningful life orientations of Paralympic athletes (Table 6).

Additionally, we can see that only one indicator, «Purpose in life», has a positive, reliable correlation with interest in sports engagement. And all of these three indicators of meaningful life orientations («Purpose in life», «Life results» and «Locus of control – life») are moderately negatively correlates with the quality of Paralympic athletes' relations with members of their sports teams. That is, it can be assumed that the increase of the named

Table 6

Correlations between the indicators of self-fulfilment in sports and meaningful life orientations of Paralympic athletes

Indicators of self-fulfilment in sports	Scales		
	Purpose in life	Life results	Locus of control - life
Relations with members of own sport team	-,19*	-,23*	-,20*
Relations with coaches	,11	,02	-,03
Relations with auxiliary staff	,08	,11	,11
Interests in sports engagement	,21*	,12	,13

Notes: * – correlation is reliable at $p \leq 0,05$

indicators of meaningful life orientations leads to a certain tendency for Paralympian athletes to perceive members of their sports team as competitors, which can lead to appearance of competitive relations.

Conclusion. The results show that the most significant psychological preconditions for self-realization in sports of Paralympic athletes are: their self-efficacy and hardiness, life meaningfulness and existence of life goals, openness to new experiences, experience of their own lives as ones meeting their needs, desires and values, purposefulness, understanding of own aspirations and movement toward realization of own goals.

Prospects for further research are to develop a system of measures promoting personal self-fulfilment of Paralympic athletes.

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A b s t r a c t

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The article analyses the results of the research project determining the psychological conditions of self-realization in sports of Paralympic athletes. 106 members of the Paralympic and Deaflympic teams of Ukraine

from different sports (ages 16–53, 84 men and 22 women) participated in the studies carried out during 2015–2017. The questionnaire developed by us (which determined the factors of self-realization in sports of Paralympic athletes) and six psycho-diagnostic techniques were used.

The results show that the most significant psychological preconditions for self-realization in sports of Paralympic athletes are: their self-efficacy and hardiness, life meaningfulness and existence of life goals, openness to new experiences, experience of their own lives as ones meeting their needs, desires and values, purposefulness, understanding of own aspirations and movement toward realization of own goals.

The obtained results can be used to increase effectiveness of Paralympic training and, as well as, to promote personal self-realization of Paralympic athletes.

Key words: *paralympic athletes, psychological peculiarities, promotion of self-realization, factors of self-realization.*

Отримано – 12 червня 2018

Рецензовано – 14 червня 2018

Прийнято – 18 червня 2018

Received – June 12, 2018

Revision – June 14, 2018

Accepted – June 18, 2018