
Peculiarities Of Socialization In Sport

Introduction

Socialization involves acquisition of skills both physical and social, traits values, knowledge, attitudes norms and depositions that can be learnt in one or more social institutions. Socialization can occur In a variety of social institutions, a variety of social environments, and throughout the life cycle.

Socialization process may vary by gender, social class, ethnic background and even nationally. Specific sport roles can be learnt in more than one institutional setting. According to Bandura (1969) and Walters(1969) they proposed that most social behaviour is learnt by observing and internalizing the behaviour of others.

There are three elements of socialization process and they include

- Personal attributes
- Significant others
- Socialization situations

The process whereby elite athletes becomes interested and involved on sports indicates that interest and participation is aroused early in life, often before the age of six or seven. This initial interest is stimulated in the home,neighbourhood,and school and normally involves exposure to one of the traditional tram sports such as baseball,basketball or football. Later either through the school or voluntary associations, interest and participation in other sports such as gymnastics, tennis or even wrestling.

Most elite athletes participated in a number of sports before they began to specialize,and often their early experience often their early experiences result in a high level of success.

Provided with a favourable opportunity set such as living near the sport facility, the specific stages in the life cycle they receive positive sanctions from a variety of significant others, to whom the family, peer group, coaches appear to be the most influential. Many of the role models stoll compete or did compete in one or more of the sports being learned by the role aspirant.

For the general population studies suggest that early socialisation is a major factor in involving young adults in sport during the college years or during the early years of adulthood.Those that are socialised early and receive reinforcement from significant others are more likely to continue to be involved in later adulthood.

Primary sport role socialization, occurs during childhood, adolescence, or early adulthood.

Secondary roles can occur at any stage of the life cycle.

Socialization into Secondary sport involvement at one stage in the life cycle appears to be

highly dependent on the degree of specialisation that has occurred at early stages, there appears to be greater continuity /stability in the consumption of sports than in the degree of involvement in active sport roles.

Being socialized and involved at one stage in the life cycle appears to account for much of the involvement at the next stage, more so than current situational correlates that may be operating at that point in time.

Factors affecting socialization in sports

FAMILY AND KINSHIP SYSTEMS

The nuclear family and the extended family are most responsible for the socialization process in the early years. At the childhood years the nuclear family serves as the major socializing institution by providing economic and emotional support.

The family provides a basic frame of reference from which to view social reality. Positive evaluation of sport by parents is likely to give rise to sports interests among the offspring.

Children are often likely to consume and participate if the parents presently participate in sports or attend sport events, if the parents have expectations for their children in sports.

Sibling interaction also facilitates or inhibits socialization into sports roles.

Birth order, family size, sex and age differences, the systematic differences in the parental interaction with different siblings are some of the factors that influence patterns of sibling interaction.

Studies have shown that birth order creates a particular kind of social structure within the family that may influence psychological and social development patterns. For example theories have shown that parents are often overprotective, anxious and indulgent with their first child and thus the child is more independent.

The peer group and community agencies have increased their interest over the child, thus parents institutionalise their children's free time activities especially sports.

SCHOOL AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

The education system is functional in socializing individuals into sports roles. Sports is functional for raising educational aspirations, encouraging academic achievement, fostering social integration.

At the secondary school level, sports becomes an integral part of the youth subculture and tends to be highly valued in most secondary school. Research has shown that non athletes perform better than athletes. More over, they noticed that athletes performed get better grades after the end of the sport season.

Values that students acquire in sports are applied in the academic domain. Superior physical conditions improves mental performance in students. Athletes make good use of their of their

limited study time. Athletes are motivated by scholarships. They obtain additional tutoring and advice from peers, coaches and teachers.

Students participating in sports may acquire interpersonal skills, that can be utilized outside athletics.

PEER GROUPS AND VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

The sooner a child is given freedom to venture from home and its immediate environment, he or she begins to participate in peer groups then voluntary associations.

Peer groups and voluntary associations influential socializing institutions throughout the life cycle

Lack of sport oriented peers often leads individuals to reduce their involvement in sports.

Entering a new peer group at work can suddenly revive an earlier interest or stimulate a new interest.

Sports in voluntary associations has been promoted as a mechanism by which children can be socialized into the values and characteristics deemed desirable to the community.

Summary

Play and games are important element of childhood socialisation. Social learning may result from participations in institutionalized sport, both within and outside school. Participation in sports is an element of the socialisation process that contributes to mental and social development. Early socialisation is a major factor in involving young adults in sports.

References

1. Adams, B 1972 birth order:a critical review
2. Bandura, N1969 social learning theory of identificatory process