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Understanding the category of volitional qualities in the context of running activity of athletes

Cherevko Svitlana¹,

Dorosh Vira²,

Lutaeva Nadia³

¹ Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Docent at the Department
of Physical Education and Sport
Oles Honchar Dnipro National University; Ukraine

² Senior Lecturer at the Department of Physical Education and Sport;
Ukrainian State University of Science and Technologies; Ukraine

³ Senior Lecturer at the Department of Physical Education and Sport;
Ukrainian State University of Science and Technologies; Ukraine

Abstract.

The authors of this article consider the concept of will as a factor that determines the realization of human capabilities in physical activities. Given the fact that the best results in running disciplines are incredibly high, the problem of will as a manifestation of volitional qualities and issues related to its function are relevant in the field of research in modern sports psychology and are important for understanding and use in practical work. The desire of athletes to win competitions by displaying volitional qualities becomes a stronger motive than the desire to win by displaying physical qualities.

Keywords:

*will
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The concept of will was introduced as an explanatory concept, the main point of which is the understanding of will as a mental phenomenon. I.M. Sechenov defined the category under study in the following way: "...the will is the active side of the mind and moral sense that controls movement for one reason or another, and often even contrary to the sense of self-preservation." The will is a product of conditioned reflex systemic activity of the brain, where "second-signal" control impulses play a crucial role. The manifestation and development of the will are deterministic, i.e. causally determined by specific features of people's life and activities, and in sports - by specific conditions of the sport. Given that the volitional sphere of a person covers a wide range of mental processes and properties, the question of what characteristics of volitional activity ensure the achievement of high results is relevant.

The most researched qualities of will are purposefulness, determination, perseverance, endurance, independence, and initiative. Will is an internal activity of the psyche and is associated with the choice of motives. A change in motivation leads to a change in the effectiveness of volitional actions. A person can consider an activity, such as science or sports, as a way of life, as a source of prestige, as a means of self-expression, as a means of satisfying any of the many existing needs. According to A. Maslow, human activity is caused by a combination of a large number of diverse motives that exist simultaneously. The will as a choice of one of several motives or as a resolution of a conflict of motives was considered by G. I. Chelpanov [1926], F. Lersch [Lersch, 1956], V. E. Frankl [1990] and others.

Modern psychology recognizes the issue of the functional relationship between motive and will as insufficiently researched. It is most appropriate to consider the motive as a motivating determinant of the will, which embodies its content, and the will itself as a function of organizing activity. Thus, V. I. Selivanov distinguished, along with the motivational, the regulatory function of the will. For him, the will is the ability of a person to consciously regulate his or her behavior. "...the will is a regulatory function of the brain, which is expressed in the ability of a person to

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consciously control his or her activities in accordance with certain motives and goals"[1]. R. May characterized will as a category that defines the ability of an individual to organize his or her behavior in such a way as to ensure movement towards a given goal. Unlike desire, will implies the possibility of choice, reflects the features of personal maturity and requires developed self-awareness. Studying sports activities, A. Puni found that the development of certain volitional qualities of an athlete depends on the specific requirements of a particular sport. Some sports require courage and determination, others - endurance and strength, and almost all - perseverance. The author assigned a special role to purposefulness, a quality that, in his opinion, combines almost all volitional properties into a single system of human life goals and motives [2].

The above definition is a starting point for understanding the fact that purposefulness is inextricably linked to active human actions. R. S. Nemov's reference dictionary defines "activity" as a general concept that refers to various processes that occur in living organisms, including in their mental sphere and behavior. Active actions are characterized by arbitrariness (the presence of a defined goal and persistence in relation to the adopted goal. In other words, the will is a conscious active action of a person aimed at achieving goals in the external world [3]. In the characteristics of activity, the integrity of an individual is formed by the internal and external conditions of his/her existence, the individual modelling and structuring his/her living space. On this basis, active actions acquire the status of a qualitative aspect - a functional and dynamic feature of activity or behavior [4].

As part of solving the problem of managing human actions and their regulation in various types of activity (activity, behavior), it is necessary to consider the relationship between volitional qualities and activity. The will is not a separate quality; probably, from the point of view of the theory of the psychological field, the will is a force that holds the vector of directed action relevant at a given moment in time. Since the second half of the twentieth century, various aspects of the complex problem of will have been the

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subject of special research in the psychology of sport. It is difficult to agree with the proposal A. Puni on the formation of will as a general category, since most authors speak about its separate and specific manifestations - volitional qualities.

Such authors as B. Smirnov, E. Ilyin, A. Vysotsky studied the development of certain volitional qualities in the process of educational and sports activities. The development of will as an integral part of conscious activity is carried out through education and training. The necessary volitional qualities are not given to a person from birth, they are formed in situations that require their manifestation. According to

E.P. Shcherbakov, the will is a mental formation that is activated as soon as obstacles appear and which is on a par with thinking and emotions in terms of its complexity. According to P.A. Rudyk, A.B. Voronin, R.Z. Shaykhidinov, the volitional component is activated at the moment of encountering obstacles and determines effective self-regulation and mobilization of human capabilities. Thus, it is possible to assume that the manifestation of volitional qualities is a reserve energy and regulatory factor for any sphere of human activity, including sports. Extreme conditions (extreme physical and mental stress, risk, hypoxia, lack of time) pose significant difficulties for a person, the effective overcoming of which is impossible without volitional efforts.

The researchers R.O. Genov and A.S. Egorov identified a large number of obstacles and difficulties that occur in the sports activity of long and ultra-long runners. K.N. Kornilov and A. Puni classified the obstacles into internal and external ones. For the purposes of systematization, it is advisable to consider obstacles as an external correlation of interacting systems, and difficulties as a degree of athlete's experience caused by the process of overcoming difficult obstacles. Thus, P.A. Rudyk, based on the determination of the athlete's experiences, proposed to distinguish two groups of difficulties characteristic of any activity, including sports: objective and subjective difficulties.

Objective obstacles are those that are caused by obstacles

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specific to a given sport, without overcoming which an athlete cannot master a given sport. An example of this is the requirement to continue muscle work in a state of fatigue in the face of oxygen deprivation when running long and ultra-long distances. The distinctive feature of objective difficulties is that they are the same in their content for all people who improve in their chosen sport. but each athlete finds his or her own solution. Scott Jurek, an American super marathon star, discovered that you should not submit to fatigue, you should accept it without fear, and not let fatigue "run wild". By accepting this state, the athlete felt that fear had left him. Lisa Smith-Betchen, a friendly super marathoner who trained during dusty storms to win a six-day race in the Sahara, has this to say about fatigue: "I love it. I'm always waiting for it to appear, and I'm getting better at controlling it every time. You can't hate fatigue and hope to overcome it, the only way to tame anything is to love it"[5].

P.A. Rudyk referred to subjective difficulties as those based on the athlete's personal attitude to the objective features of the sport sports, mental training, and sports competitions. These difficulties are usually of an individual nature and can vary from one sport to another. This can be fear of injury, embarrassment at the reaction of spectators, low self-esteem, uncertainty that the training programme is completed to the best of its ability, etc. In this context, the sporting career of Portuguese runner Fernando Mamede, who has repeatedly surprised the world with high results - twice setting European records for 10,000 meters and the world record for the same distance with a time of 27.13.81, seems interesting. Having had the opportunity to compete at the World Championships and the Olympic Games since the age of 19, this athlete has never come close to the podium. At the World Championships in Athletics at a distance of 10,000 meters, F. Mamede took 18th place, and at the Olympic Games he withdrew from the race, unable to withstand the psycho-emotional stress. Thus, internal and external obstacles create subjective and objective difficulties for athletes, and their sports careers are constant experiments in which everyone is looking for the best way to improve

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themselves.

V.M. Platonov (1997) drew attention to the fact that volitional qualities are formed and developed successfully if the process of will education is organically combined with the improvement of technical and tactical skills, development of physical qualities and integral training (sometimes called special or specific). The authors S.M. Vaytsekhovskiy and V.M. Platonov believe that there is a need to distinguish the so-called integral preparedness as an independent type of preparedness, which is characterized by the ability to coordinate and implement all components of sportsmanship in a comprehensive manner. An indicator of the level of integral readiness of an athlete is the level of compensatory capabilities, which are manifested in the ability to ensure the level of competitive activity[6]. Many athletes have a desire to be a winner, but not everyone can realize their willpower. The best results in long and ultra-long-distance running are achieved by those athletes who have the most pronounced willpower quality - patience. In any book on the history of marathon running, you can find at least two classic episodes that confirm Platonov's opinion. The first occurred in 1908, when at the London Olympics, the Italian Dorando Petri ran onto the stadium track in a state of near shock and, after being shown the direction to the finish line, fainted. He was disqualified, and the American runner who came second won the race. Another case occurred in 1952 at the Helsinki Olympics. Emil Zatopek was running behind the English champion Jim Peterson, who was the leader for almost the entire distance, and two miles before the finish line he fell down because he no longer had any resources to finish the race. Despite all the obstacles, the athletes consider long-distance running a source of pleasure, and it helps to identify and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. "...We put ourselves in a situation where no one can help us, we can only rely on our own determination, ingenuity and strength. We are fighting to the limit of our capabilities, during the race we are all rivals, but the main competition is unfolding within us"[7]. P.A. Rudyk [1967] has an excerpt in essence means the ability to endure, and the author defines it as the ability to withstand extreme stress, to overcome

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feelings of fatigue and physical pain. In the textbook

"In Psychology of High-Performance Sports" (1967), V.K. Kalin defined endurance as the ability to restrain and suppress emotional reactions that are not relevant at the moment by volitional efforts.

The different understanding of the essence of volitional qualities is due to the fact that different authors identify different components of these qualities. E.P. Ilyin considers any quality, including volitional, as a phenotypic characteristic of a person's existing capabilities, as a combination of innate and acquired. As an innate component, he considers the ability due to the typological features of the nervous system, and as an acquired one - experience: knowledge and skills related to self-stimulation, a formed motive, a formed volitional attitude to overcome obstacles. The manifestation of each volitional quality depends on both components, i.e., it is both the realization of the ability to make a volitional effort and the ability to manifest it.

Considering the category of will according to E. Maiman, one can trace the chain of conscious actions of a person from the moment of decision-making to its implementation. He considered the main feature of a volitional action to be a previously made decision about such an action, but this was preceded by a full-fledged mental act of imagining the goal and obtaining consent to the goal. Obtaining consent to any particular action begins with the selection and consideration of goals, analysis of their value, and analysis of the consequences of actions. E. Maiman considered reasoning to be the cause of volitional actions, since it is through reasoning that the understanding of the value and meaning of the goal is achieved. The reached agreement forms a set of means and methods adequate to the defined goals. A programme (a training program for runners for a specific distance) is formed, the main competitions and auxiliary competitions are determined, as they provide information about the current state of the athlete. The result of a running competition reflects the degree of readiness to fully mobilize one's own capabilities in a particular activity.

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