

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION  
FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING  
DEPARTMENT: SPORTS SCIENCE  
MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN SPORTS SCIENCE  
SS501 SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY AND MOTOR LEARNING

**DURATION: 3 HOURS**

**TOTAL MARKS: 100**

**(Plus 15 Minutes for Practical Preparation/Case Reading)**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Section A is **compulsory**.

NOV 2022

Answer **three** questions from Section B.

---

**Section A**

Rukudzo is a talented high school baseball player who seems to be his own worst enemy. Rukudzo is a perfectionist, and whenever he makes a mistake or performs poorly, he gets down on himself and begins to focus on all his faults and puts himself down for not being able to eliminate these silly mistakes. Unfortunately, when Rukudzo gets down on himself, he cannot let go and keeps running these negative thoughts and personal putdowns over and over in his head. This negative attitude affects his confidence and concentration, and his performance suffers. Rukudzo has had several slumps during the season that seem to be brought on by his inability to deal constructively with his flaws and mistakes. Rukudzo's coach, wants to help him deal with his negative attitude because he is the team's most talented player and the key to their success this season. The coach thinks he needs to work on his self-talk, so he can maintain a more positive attitude and develop a better approach toward mistakes. Rukudzo does not know much about self-talk.

**Task:**

Based on your knowledge of self-talk, answer the following questions that relate to what the coach can tell Rukudzo about self-talk to sell him on trying it and strategies that he can use to improve Rukudzo's attitude and ability to deal with mistakes better.

1. After your assessment what do you think are the causes of Rukudzo's negative attitude and difficulty in dealing with mistakes?

Suggest how a coach could help Rukudzo maintain a more positive and constructive attitude.

As a team psychologist, suggest how Rukudzo can "reframe" his remaining negative thoughts. (40 marks)

**Section B**

2. Competitors are under immense physical and emotional stress. They feel the pressure of coaches and their teams and the pressure they put on themselves. This can distract competitors from their goals.

**Task:** You have been tasked to help athletes in this situation. Suggest two goals that you may help them set in this situation. What guidelines can you come up with to assist them.

(20 marks)

3. It was explained to the team that their performance would be more consistent if the team's pre-match routine was consistent. Furthermore, if the routine helped each player to find her individual zone of optimal functioning (IZOF) and be mentally prepared, the pre-match routine would also improve performance too.

**Task:** Suggest a team's pre-match routine that you will use for this team. How would you ensure that each team member finds her IZOF.

(20 marks)

4. As a youth sports leader you discover that your athletes suffer from burnout in competitive sports. They show signs of physical and emotional exhaustion due to excessive levels of stress on them. You discover that your emphasis is on win at all cost and overtraining. Parents also place a lot of pressure on them.

**Task:** As a sports psychologist what would you do to help curb burnout for youth athletes. How would you bring in parents to help youth athletes in this scenario.

(20 marks)

5. A basketball coach phones, concerned about a young player Nyasha who has all the physical attributes but lacks confidence. The confidence problem is not specific to basketball but seems to be affecting many areas of the player's life at school, socially and coping with problems.

**Task:** Given this scenario as a sports psychologist how would you help Nyasha achieve all round personal success.

(20 marks)

6. In a baseball team, Zenzo is the person everyone seems to like. Dumi is isolated from the team and is disliked by several members so there is a problem that the coach should address. Sheu and Kudzo form a closed unit and not really involved with the rest of the team.

**Task:** How can a coach help with interpersonal problems within the team before they become disruptive. How best can you come up with a cohesive team.

(20 marks)

**END OF PAPER**