ENHANCING STUDENT-ATHLETE’S COMPETITIVENESS

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Coaches’ guidance is an important element in the success of an athlete. Their expertise and knowledge that are gained from through trainings and encounter, gear up athletes to be better and exceptional among other athletes in their own sport event. It is tantamount to say that training focuses only on the physical rather then holistic development – body and mind. It is undeniable that this results to continuous failure caused by Spartan training that does not suit the athletes.

The introduction of sport psychology in the professional athletic world, it has earned so many compliments from coaches and athletes because it helps in the development of skills and enhancement of sport strategies. However, even though many coaches in amateur sports events have applied this, the concept is still remote to the majority of coaches. This is highlighted by Bali (2015), hence the component that is often neglected. Nevertheless, how can this help increase athletes’ performance?

According to Weinberg and Gould (2010), sport psychology is an interdisciplinary science that draws knowledge from different fields like biomechanics, physiology, kinesiology and psychology. Likewise, it examines how psychological factors affects performance and physical factors. In general, this emphasizes the mind and body of athletic success (Golding & Lippert, 2017). This addresses the interaction between psychology and sport performance, including the psychological care and well-being of athletes, coaches, and sport organization.

Integration of sport psychology on the training program of the athletes will facilitate help them learn about their skill. Furthermore, it helps them to understand more
their behavior during preparation, competition and post-competition. At the same time, it prepares them psychologically and logically during the competition. Lastly, it helps them prepare on the emotional aspect of the competition.

Sport psychology strengthens the physical ability of the athlete. Motivation plays an important role in the enhancement of the physical ability of the athlete. This concept is primarily psychological in nature. Therefore, to increase the level of motivation of the athletes, it is important to touch the psychological side of the athlete. This can be done through motivational words, forms of encouragement, counseling, and uplifting the morale of the athlete before, during and after each competition. It was asserted by Landers (Landers, 1995), that it helps to set goals in sports and exercises.

Sport psychology helps athletes learn motor skill. According to Adling (2017), this plays a major role in learning motor skills. This stresses the wrong perception about physical training: the only way to the mastery of the skill is through repetitive execution. This brings about the readiness on both physiological and psychological aspects. Moreover, proper motivation on the part of the athlete may increase the desire for learning more. The use of sport psychology brings a clear understanding of the why, how, and in what manner it is being executed. Furthermore, it tries to identify what the best skill is in a certain scenario.

Sport Psychology aids coaches in understanding athletes’ behavior. Athletes’ behavior is a significant factor before and during sport competition. Likewise, the post-competition behavior of the athlete shows different elements needed to be identified, reflected and acted upon. These kinds or behaviors can be evaluated only on the realm of psychology. Psychology as a discipline about human behavior can give proper action and recommendation to address problems and to difficulties experienced by the athlete. This discipline designed to understand the athlete’s behavior in sport, can come up with proper and contextualized action towards behavioral problems among them.
Sport Psychology enables athletes to control their emotion. Emotion is a natural phenomenon continuously experienced by human beings. During preparation and even on the competition, athletes’ emotion is triggered and influenced by different factors. It is important for athletes to control ones emotion. It might affect their performance and competitiveness. Through sport psychology, athletes will be empowered and will not be affected by different emotion-provoking instances. Therefore, negative emotions such as anger, disgust, gear, negative self-thinking, and feelings are controlled. With the skill on controlling one’s emotion, leads to better performance and proper sport composure.

Lastly, sport psychology prepares psychologically and physiologically the athletes. One of the common practice among coaches in the amateur level is to give technical tips during competition. However, sport psychology, it not only focuses only on the technical execution of strategies learned during the training but also on the “will to win”. Psychologically, conditioning the mind of the athlete to win highly influences performance (Weinberg, 2008). Therefore, this kind of practice empowers athlete to have smooth execution of sport plans through technique and strategies.

Sport psychology as a discipline in behavioral sciences is indeed a great help for coaches on both professional and amateur level. It is undeniable that psychology has a major role in sports training and competition. Its application and integration in sports empower sport coaches broaden their knowledge on the holistic aspect of sport and their athletes. Furthermore, it results to a better athletic performance and sportsmanship.

References:


