

Integrative Role of Awareness Levels of Athletes of their Individual Gender Characteristics

N.V. Uvarina, A.V. Vorogejkina, N.V. Mamylyna, A.A. Semchenko, A.A. Podgorbunskikh
FGBOU VO "South Ural State Humanitarian Pedagogical University",
Russia, 454080, Chelyabinsk, Lenin prospect 69

Abstract.

The purpose of this paper is to identify the integrative role of awareness of individual gender characteristics of the athletes that specialized mainly in masculine, feminine or androgynous sports. The author uses the following material such as a diagnostics complex program of individual gender characteristics of athletes. Athletes specializing in calisthenics, boxing and athletics took place in our investigation. As a result we have found that most of the athletes of each group who took part in the experiment have an intuitive awareness level of individual gender characteristics. A slight predominance of the heuristic level is observed in the group of male boxers that can be explained by the fact that this kind of sport traditionally brings up qualities which can be stereotypically understood as masculine. We can make the following conclusions. The obtained data about the complex integrative role of awareness of individual gender characteristics in athletes allow to identify the gender characteristics of athletes specializing primarily in masculine, feminine or mixed (androgynous) sports. The knowledge of their own gender peculiarities will help them expand the boundaries of self-identity of the athlete and will open up opportunities for self-realization and self-actualization not only in sports but also in everyday life.

Keywords: gender, athletes, masculinity, femininity, androgyny.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, gender approach is an integral part of the science. Nowadays the most important problems are the development of gender studies in psychology and physiology, the identification of effective training methods of athletes in accordance with their gender aspects, the development of specialized gender-training programs, the development of specialized gender-training programs. The introduction of gender aspects in training of athletes of all sport activities is the most actual scientific problem nowadays. The gender approach is aimed at achieving women and men equality. It focuses on overcoming manifestations of discrimination based on gender, aimed at creating the necessary social conditions for the most complete realization of the natural abilities of women and men in all spheres of employment, social, sport and private life.

The term "gender" means a system of social and cultural principles of the behavior that the society dictates to follow the person, according to his or her biological sex. Therefore, socio-cultural norms affect psychological qualities, behavior and activities, sports preferences of women and men but not a biological sex. To be a man or a woman in a society means not just to have certain specific morphological features, but also to follow the expected gender roles [7].

The term gender is understood as the "social sex" which is formed in a society and it is inspired as a behavior stereotype of representatives of the biological sexes. Every member of the society since his/her birth is involved in the process of gender socialization according to the cultural ideas about the purpose of women and men in society [10].

However, nowadays studies of gender specific sports tell that it is often that women go in for masculine sports. These women have masculine features as in somatic symptoms and in nature. These women often choose boxing, football, wrestling, weightlifting. These types of

sports are understood to be for men according to stereotypes. Thus, stereotypes of conduct of men and women in the sports activity, formed during many centuries, assimilated in the course of gender socialization. The knowledge of the gender characteristics will expand the boundaries of self-identity. It will open opportunities of self-actualization.

We understand standardized ideas about the behavior and traits of athletes, corresponding to the "male" and "female" concepts under gender stereotypes in sports.

In our opinion, gender is a social status that determines the individual sport training abilities and professional sport activities.

Every person has given a gender role in the process of gender socialization. Under gender role we understand social expectations arising from the notions surrounding gender, and behavior in speech, manners, clothes and gestures. The behavior prescriptions which associate with gender roles are especially obvious in sport activities.

Professional and amateur sports are the most important institution of socialization in general and gender socialization in particular. In the process of training and competitive activities athletes gain their experience of gender relations. Sport and the dominant gender roles effect a personal model of life and dictate the identification of female and male status positions.

Gender aspects (A. V. Vorozheykina, T. V. Bendas, E. P. Ilyin, I. S. Kletsina, I. S. Kon, etc.) as a scientific methodology for the analysis of psychological aspects of interpersonal and intergroup relations offer a new way of understanding reality. It effects the disparity of male and female personality traits, the way of thinking, his/her behavior of a fixed relationship between biological sex and social achievements of life [3, 5, 6].

We consider the gender as the social sex that has not lost the connection with the biological sex because the

physiological characteristics of men and women involved in one kind of sports definitely will be different.

The understanding of gender aspects in sports is oriented on neutralization and mitigation of the differences between the sexes. It brings up the spirit of free choice of a gender identity and it encourages sports activities corresponding to the interests of the individual. The choice of behavior is based on the specific situation. It gives the definition to the unreasonableness of the separate gender and a physical education and a training process.

We can understand that it is silly to make boundaries based on the sex in a sport education. And it suggests the possibility of derogations from traditional patriarchal models of the sports community [4].

The purpose of our study is to identify the integrative role of awareness of individual gender characteristics of athletes that specialized mainly in masculine, feminine or androgynous sports.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study of individual gender characteristics of athletes was made on the base of the Department of pedagogics and psychology of the South Ural State Humanitarian Pedagogical University (Chelyabinsk). Athletes, specializing in rhythmic gymnastics (n=32), boxing (n=28) and athletics (n=46), who according to the generally accepted differentiation, relate to a purely "female", purely "male" and "mixed" sports took part in the study on a voluntary basis. The average age was 19.8 ± 0.13 , the average length of sports specialization was 7.4 ± 0.8 years. Mathematical and statistical analysis of study results was performed using software *Statistica 10.0*, in connection with a normal distribution of results in groups, the determination of the reliability of differences was performed according to a table of probabilities $P(t)3(t1)$.

We examined the above-mentioned groups of athletes by our comprehensive diagnosis of individual gender characteristics (table 1).

The development of indicators for the athletes' awareness levels of individual gender characteristics was based on analysis of practice and research.

We distinguish the following levels of awareness: low was intuitive; middle level was heuristic; high level was gender and activity.

The first (intuitive level) is characterized by the fact that the athlete is not always aware of the value of gender aspects in sports. The athlete is not aware of the significance of the gender characteristics of a subject of sports activity. He doubts the significance of preferred sport as a method of a personal self-realization [11]. The sportsmen do not adequately understand his own achievement. The athlete does not associate their plans with the selected sport, sports activity does not cause positive emotions, the athlete is often in a rut, he cannot rebuild the communication with the athletes of different gender. Interiorization of the values of sports activities in personal qualities is missing, the athlete does not think about the impact of his/her activities, he/she is not critical in relation to own abilities, cannot predict the results of sports activities, the behavior often being impulsive.

The second (heuristic level) is characterized by the following: the athlete is aware of the value of gender aspects in sports activities, he is tolerant to gender differences of subjects of sports activity, he understands the importance of the chosen sport as a way of his self-realization. The athlete seeks to improve own achievements in sports activities. He has some knowledge in communication with colleagues of other gender position but he faces specific problems in conflict situations. Sports activities are accepted on the emotional level. He adequately assesses the results of his activities. He is quite critical in relation to his abilities, personal and sports-important qualities. He can predict the results of his sports activity and correct it partly.

Table 1. The program of diagnostics of the individual gender characteristics of athletes

Purpose	Aims	Method and methodology
Diagnosis of the level of awareness by athletes of individual gender characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diagnosis of optimality of the choice of sport activity. 2. Emotional acceptance of the sport activity. 3. Determination of the adequacy of self-esteem achievements. 4. Diagnosis of thinking about their own gender. 5. Determination of orientation of athletes to self-realization in sport. 	The technique of "Masculinity-femininity" by S. Bem [2]; Differential-diagnostic questionnaire (DDQ) E. A. Klimov [8]; the Map of interests [8]; the Technique of diagnostics of social and psychological installations of the personality in the requirement of motivational sphere O. F. Potemkina [1]; Value orientation M. Rokich [1]; the Technique of diagnostics of self-assessment Charles D. Spielberger and Y. L. Hanin [1]; Diagnostics of orientation of the individual B. Bass [1]; methods of determining the levels of aspirations of the person [1]; The technique of diagnostics of personality on motivation to success by T. Ehlers

The third level(gender-and activity) is characterized by the following:

It is an adequate awareness of the gender orientation of the athletes of the chosen sports activity. The athlete is aware of the value of gender aspects in sport. He is aware of the significance of the gender characteristics of his partners in the sport cooperation. He steady needs different aspects of sport activities. He understands them as a method of his self-realization. He is active in the process of training activities. He has a high career aspirations in sport activities. The athlete has an awareness on a wide range of gender issues. The athlete owns the methods of diagnosis and self-test of gender differences. He has well-developed gender-oriented communication skills, organizational skills. The athlete often takes the role of the leader in sport teams. He has good emotions from sport activity. He conscientiously performs his duties, he is disciplined. He can rebuild the ways of behavior in conflict situations, he is tolerant of gender characteristics of the other subjects of sport. And he adequately understands the results of his sports activity and can predict the results of his sports activity and adjusts it in accordance with gender roles of the subjects of sport activities [5].

The above-mentioned levels are interconnected with each other. Individual gender characteristics of athletes increase in the transition from a low level to a high level of the awareness of athletes.

For the quantitative determination of the level of awareness of athletes of individual gender characteristics we have used the following assessment of each indicator, criteria and scores for expression: we gave "2" if the indicator corresponds to a high level of development of the criterion. We gave "1" if it corresponds to the average level and "0" if it corresponds to a low level. The mechanism for assessing a particular score of each indicator is presented in table 2.

Table 2. The mechanism of appraisal of athletes awareness of individual gender characteristics

Indicators	The levels and scores for each indicator		
	intuitive (0 scores)	heuristic (1 scores)	active (2 scores)
The optimality of the choice of sports activity	0	1	2
Emotional acceptance of the sports activity	0	1	2
The adequacy of the self-assessment of achievements	0	1	2
The awareness of own gender characteristics	0	1	2
Athletes focus on self-realization in sports	0	1	2

The choice of intervals for grouping the data of population distribution of athletes by levels of perception of individual gender characteristics is based on the methodology of A. A. Kyveralga (1980) [9]. According to this method the average level is set at 25% deviation scores from the average range of estimates points. So the estimate

of the range from R (min) to 0.25 R (max) can show the low level of awareness of individual gender characteristics. On a high level, according to estimates, more than 75% of the maximum possible [5, 6].

The levels of awareness of individual gender characteristics based on this methodology. The results are presented in table 3.

Table 3. The technique of defining the awareness of athletes of individual gender characteristics

Level	intuitive	heuristic	gender-active
Scores	0–8	9–24	25–34

We bring the results of each athlete in summary table 4.

Table 4. Summary table assessment of the level of awareness of athletes of the individual gender characteristics

No.	Sportsman name	Scores according to indicators					Scores summary	Level
		1	2	3	4	5		
1.	Anton	1	1	2	1	0	16	heuristic
2.	Natalya	1	0	1	0	1	5	Intuitive

Note: the numbers indicate selected and the above-described indicators of the level of awareness of athletes of individual gender characteristics in the table.

RESULTS

The diagnostic results of individual awareness of gender characteristics are depicted in figure 1.

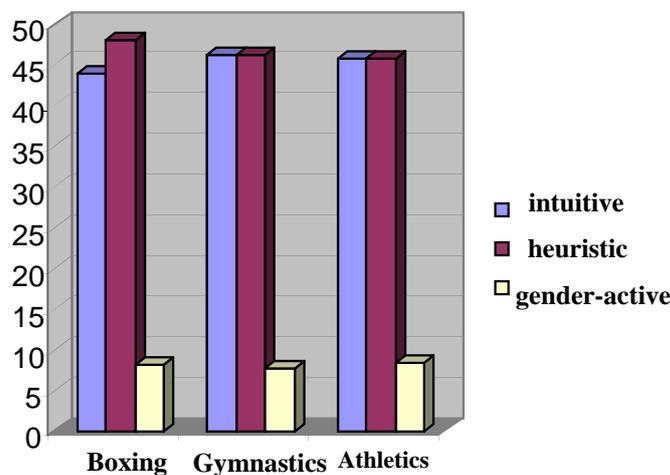


Figure 1. The levels of awareness of athletes of the individual gender characteristics in different sports

As we can see from the table and figure most of the athletes of each group who have participated in the experiment have an intuitive level (boxers have 44,0 %; gymnasts – 46,15 %, athletes – 45,83 %). If we speak about a heuristic level we can see the following data (boxers – 48,0 %, gymnast – 46,15 %, athletes – 45,83 %). If we speak about the gender and activity level of awareness of athletes of the individual gender characteristics (boxers – 8,0 %, gymnasts, and 7.7 %, athletes – 8,33%.

It is normal for representatives of the group in rhythmic gymnastics to have an equal percentage ratio of intuitive and heuristic level of awareness of individual gender characteristics. We think that the high inertia of the excitatory and inhibitory processes in the Central nervous system, which is typical for athletes who prefer traditionally feminine sports [11].

This explanation, however, cannot be found in the "mixed" group of representatives of athletics. Their picture of the realization of the gender preferences is similar to gymnasts. We think that in this case, we can assume that this pattern relates to the lack of a certain variability in the parameters of psychophysiological adaptation (an emotional stability, an emotional comfort, aggressiveness, internality, etc.) between athletes (men) and athletes (women). The basis of this moment perhaps lies in the normal character of locomotions. They are the components of any competitive exercise in the disciplines of athletics. It makes this sport universal in matters of sexual differentiation.

SUMMARY

So, we can come to the conclusion that the majority of athletes demonstrate an intuitive level of the awareness of individual gender characteristics. We note a small predominance of a heuristic level in the group of boxers. This group consists of men and it can be explained by the fact that this kind of sport traditionally brings up qualities which can be stereotypically understood as masculine. It is popular with men.

However, the knowledge of their own gender peculiarities will expand the boundaries of the athlete self-

identity and will open up opportunities for self-realization and self-actualization not only in sports but also in everyday life.

This diagnostic program for assessment of levels of the awareness of athletes of individual gender characteristics is the basis for the automated gender-oriented technology. It can support athletes in the process of their training and their competitive preparation.

REFERENCES

1. Batarshev V. A. (2006). Diagnostics of the ability to communicate. St. Petersburg: PETER, pp. 176
2. BEM S. L. (2004). The Lenses of gender. Transforming the debate on sexual inequality. Moscow: ROSSPEN, pp. 336.
3. Bendas T. V. (2006). Gender psychology. St. Petersburg: Peter, pp. 431.
4. Vorozhbitova A. L. (2010). Gender in sport activity : textbook. Moscow: Flinta: Nauka, pp. 216.
5. Vorozheykina A.V. (2007). The Formation of a gender-oriented style of pedagogical activity of students of pedagogical universities: PhD thesis. Ekaterinburg, pp. 186.
6. Zdravomyslova O. M. (1999). Society through the prism of gender representations. Woman. Gender. Culture. Moscow, pp. 184-192.
7. Ilyin, E. P. (2003). Differential psychophysiology of man and woman. St. Petersburg: Peter, pp. 544.
8. Klimov E. A. (1969). Individual style of activity depending on typological properties of the nervous system. Kazan: publishing house of Kazan. University press, pp. 278.
9. Kyveryalg A. A. (1998). Research Methods in vocational pedagogy. Tallin: Valgus, pp. 334.
10. Kletsina I. S. (1998). Self-personality and gender stereotypes. Psychological problems of self-personality, 2, 188-202.
11. Lovyagina, A. E. (2016). Psychology of physical culture and sport: tutorial and workshop for the act. Moscow: Urait, pp. 338.
12. Maslow A. H. (1987). Motivation and personality. (3rd ed.). New York: Harper and Row.