

Science, Movement and Health, Vol. XIX, ISSUE 2, 2019
June 2019, 19 (2): 94-99
Original article

THE ROLE OF FREESTYLE WRESTLING IN SHAPING THE PERSONALITY OF THE HIGH-PERFORMANCE ATHLETE

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Abstract

Problem Statement. The contemporary stage of the technological and informational leap submits the Romanian educational system to modern conceptual reformulations and actions, which should contribute to the conscious development of the bio mental potential of the individual and to shaping a type of personality required by current and future conditions of society. The state of physical and mental balance is a priority of the teacher and a permanent link between sportsman and coach. Each training lesson and each athlete has specific learning, correction or refinement tasks, and all must be well programmed and tracked by the coach.

Methods. To carry out the proposed research, we have used several methods and procedures of collecting the necessary data.

The study of the specialised literature, the observation method, the method of testing and measuring the motor ability, the statistical mathematical method, the graphical and tabular method, the questionnaire method have been employed.

Two motor endurance tests were applied: Exercise in 4 beats/seconds, Applicative track.

Results. The first stage was the bibliographical study which allowed us to deepen our theoretical knowledge required by the study. The questionnaire was applied to a number of 12 female sports students enrolled in the freestyle wrestling department.

In the second stage, two motor tests were applied in order to highlight the athletes' resistance to stress and great effort. In the third stage, the collected data were centralised, analysed and interpreted and the general conclusions were formulated.

Conclusions. It is important to support the children doing sport. It is also important to participate in various competitions, cups or artistic events, to leave children out of everyday activities, to be admired, appreciated or to be able to see the level of other children. These competitive elements are important motivating factors for participants in sports activities.

This creates confidence in the children both on our part, from the outside as well as increasing confidence in our own forces. Moral and financial support has a major impact on children in the relationship with society.

Key words: freestyle wrestling, personality, performance.

Problem Statement

The contemporary stage of the technological and informational leap submits the Romanian educational system to modern conceptual reformulations and actions, which should contribute to the conscious development of the biamental potential of the individual and to shaping a type of personality required by current and future conditions of society. (Craciun M., 2005)

The means of freestyle wrestling, whose structures and methodologies aim to influence and educate the athletes' mental training (i.e. psychomotor, cognitive, affective, personality means), will certainly entail, if well-chosen and properly portioned, the achievement of motor performances. [Cismas Gh.,1987]

The topicality of this issue is emphasised by the need to know and study the manifestation of female athletes' personality in performing motor actions.

The coach should also take into account the hormonal disturbances occurring at certain times and adapt the training and these particularities.

The state of physical and mental balance is a priority of the teacher and a permanent link between sportsman and coach. (Scarlat E., Scarlat M B.,2003)

Each training lesson and each athlete has specific learning, correction or refinement tasks, and all must be well programmed and tracked by the coach. (Vieru N.,1997)

In sports activities, one encounters situations in which athletes combine several skills in an original and personalised manner. We call this talent.

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Received 1.05.2019 / Accepted 7.06. 2019

E. Golu (2000) distinguishes between skills and abilities, in that skills represent the qualities that a person makes the most of given certain conditions, while abilities are skills that are reinforced and transposed through knowledge, competences and capabilities. (Golu E., 2000)

Character – refers to the set of mental attributes that regard a person's relationships with other individuals and the values according to which he/she leads his/her life.

The sentimental side of a young person's life is not calm, therefore the teacher/coach must act, in their turn, with much calm and discernment in order to ensure the athlete's success.

There is no great athlete without a good mentor as there is no good coach without a talented and motivating athlete. (6)

The role of freestyle wrestling in developing and shaping the personality of the high-performance athlete

M. Epuran et al. (2001) define the psychological training of athletes as "the set of strategies and techniques of instruction and education used with a view to increasing the mental capacity and developing the personality of athletes, appropriate to the test/sport, in order to obtain superior effects and results in practice and competition". [Epuran M. et al., 2001]

Freestyle wrestling, more than any other sports discipline, has many dynamic and difficult, still accessible exercises that lead to the increase of the trainee's desire to practise them, the development of courage, will, self-possession, the overcoming of difficulties and fear of failure, to inner discipline, perseverance, responsibility, ability of self-control and self-appreciation, etc. [Siclován I., 1990]

Freestyle wrestling, as an individual sport calling for great efforts in training, requires traits that influence the decision to practise this sport.

Experts in sports psychology are concerned with how participation in sports competitions, physical exercises and activities influence personal development and well-being throughout one's life. [Craciun M., 2005]

Furthermore, sports psychologists assist trainers in their interactions with the athletes and try to find methods that should optimise the athletes' motivation". [Siclován I., 1990]

Research methods

To carry out the proposed research, we have used several methods and procedures of collecting the necessary data.

The study of the specialised literature, the observation method, the method of testing and measuring the motor ability, the statistical mathematical method, the graphical and tabular method, the questionnaire method have been employed.

Two motor endurance tests were applied:

✓ **Exercise in 4 beats/seconds.** It is performed from the standing position with hands on hips: T1 squatting to supported squat, T2 leap in supported prone position, T3 leap in supported squat, T4 returning to the standing position followed by a vertical leap.

It is performed 15 times and the time is recorded.

✓ **Applicative track** consisted of: performing two consecutive jumps – throwing the *oina* ball over a 10-m distance at a fixed point – 10-metre running followed by the performance of 8 supported prone push-ups – climbing an inclined gymnastics bench, balanced walk on the gymnastics bench suspended 1-metre high, dismounting by running from the inclined gymnastics bench – performing two forward rolls – climbing over the gymnastics vaulting box – jumps with two feet landing on two in a 3x3 m square, in a random order (1-9), 25-m speed run. The test is performed once and the time is recorded in seconds.

For each unfulfilled task a 2-second penalty is applied.

The questionnaire comprises 4 questions and has been applied to a representative sample of 27 female students practising freestyle wrestling.

We selected a group of 12 female sports students aged 14-16 training at C.S. Petrolul Ploiești, the freestyle wrestling department.

The activity carried out during practice sessions has been watched in order to observe the use of freestyle wrestling means for the mental training and shaping of their personality.

Results: 1. Analysis of personality questionnaire answers.

In the current stage, in the sport activity, a number of actions are carried out with a view to tracing personality traits and knowing interpersonal relationships, the ability of sports students to integrate into a competitive group, their training in order to achieve great performances.

This questionnaire aimed to clarify some issues regarding the students' psychological training, the personality development level and the manifestation of behavioural attitudes as well as the place and role of freestyle wrestling means in the instructive educational process.

Table 1. Results obtained after applying the sociological survey

No	Question	Answer options	Number of respondents	%
1	How do you deal with competition?	a. They are part of life and I am ready to fight	7	58 %
		b. I give in rather quickly to the stress caused by them	3	25 %
		c. With a level of maturity higher than my age	2	16 %
		d. With a level of maturity lower than my age	0	-
2	What is the impression you make on your teammates?	a. A person who knows what to do	3	25 %
		b. A person with a sense of humour	6	50 %
		c. I do not get the attention of my colleagues	2	16 %
		d. I do not know	1	8 %
3	Are you sensitive to the observations and criticisms of the coach?	a. No, I accept them	6	50 %
		b. I ignore them	2	16 %
		c. Yes, I am against	4	33 %
4	Do you give up supporting your own opinions even if they are correct and accept the others'?	a. Yes, always	5	41%
		b. Almost always	3	25 %
		c. Only if it is for the good of the team	3	25 %
		d. No, I always impose my opinion	1	8 %

they are on guard and are ready to fight with all their forces, due to the complex training they take part in.

These children are stronger than they realize and will cope with daily quests much easier than other children.

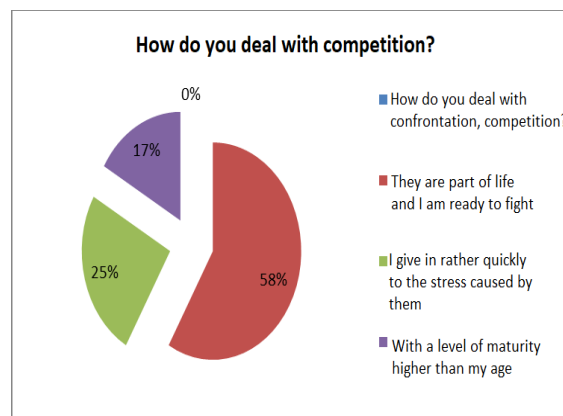
From the second point we note that 50% of the girls have a positive and optimistic attitude within the team, which is a fighter's attitude.

The third question shows us that the girls are realistic and realize when they are wrong, take the coach's corrections and are ready to improve their training program.

The fourth question shows that 41.67% of the girls' team take into account the opinions and advices of the others, some more and more when it is in the benefit of the team.

Table 2 – How do you deal with confrontation, competition

1. How do you deal with confrontation, competition?	
a. They are part of life and I am ready to fight	58 %
b. I give in rather quickly to the stress caused by them	25 %
c. With a level of maturity higher than my age	16%
d. With a level of maturity lower than my age	0 %



Graphic 1 - Question 1

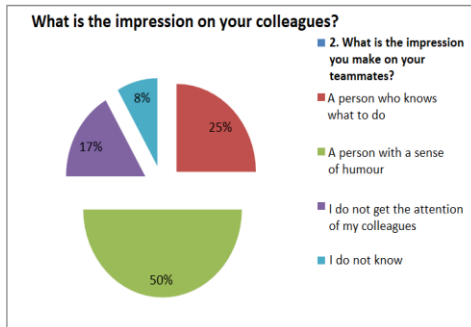
The results show that 58% of the children are morally and mentally trained for the competition;

The analysis of answers to question 1, “How do you deal with confrontation, competition?”, which refers to the athletes’ attitude of coping with the stress caused by competing against opponents, has emphasised scattered opinions related to the four answer options. The 58.33% points to the fact that most of the female athletes are prepared to face difficulties. It is to be noticed that 25% of the athletes admit and are aware of the fact that they break down when faced with competition.

Table 3 - What is the impression you make on your teammates?

2. What is the impression you make on your teammates?	
a. A person who knows what to do	25 %
b. A person with a sense of humour	50 %
c. I do not get the attention of my colleagues	16 %
d. I do not know	8 %

Graphic 2 - Question 2

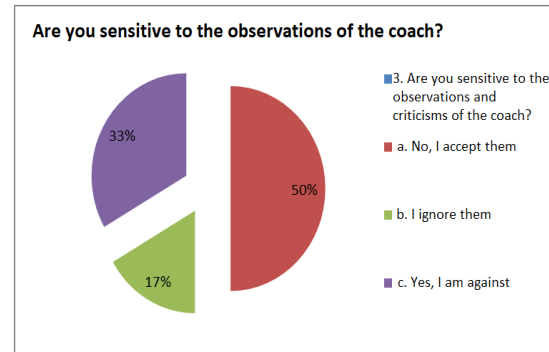


One of the key questions of the questionnaire was that regarding the self-assessment of one’s leadership qualities within the team.

The answers were relevant, some (25%) considering themselves as being good, cooperative team leaders (captains), taking into account their colleagues’ opinions and supporting each other in solving the tasks together. 50% believe they have a sense of humour, but are hesitant as regards the position of leader, 16.67% are not active individuals and let themselves be dictated to, while 8.33% do not know themselves very well.

Table 4 - Are you sensitive to the observations and criticisms of the coach?

3. Are you sensitive to the observations and criticisms of the coach?	
a. No, I accept them	50 %
b. I ignore them	16.67 %
c. Yes, I am against	33.33 %



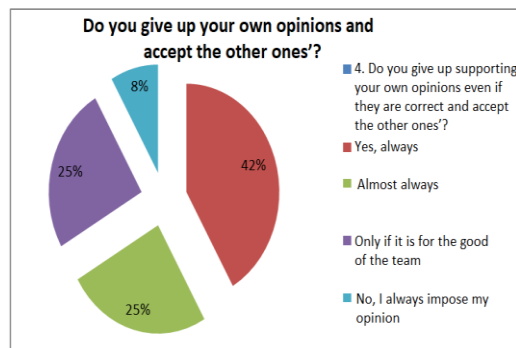
Graphic 3 - Question 3

The above results show that 50% of the athletes take into account the corrections and suggestions of the coach, but these have to be positive. 16.67% ignore the coach’s corrections and 33.33% do not accept them at all and even display a contradictory attitude.

The conclusion is that it is very important that coaches should transmit positive corrections and encouragements.

Table 5 - Do you give up supporting your own opinions even if they are correct and accept the other ones’?

4. Do you give up supporting your own opinions even if they are correct and accept the others’?	
a. Yes, always	41.67 %
b. Almost always	25 %
c. Only if it is for the good of the team	25 %
d. No, I always impose my opinion	8.33 %



Graphic 4 - Question 4

It is to be noticed that 41.67% of the athletes give up their own opinions in favour of the others' suggestions. This points to the ability of being flexible within a team. There are 25% of athletes who always comply with the coach's view. There is a 25% group that weigh the others' opinions and then decide how to act, them being more analytical. We also have 8.33% of students that are more ambitious, more resolute and always impose their own views.

It may be stated that now more than ever one has to deeply know the needs and opinions of the athletes one works with, to know each one's aptitude, attitude, personality and character.

2. Analysis of the results of motor tests applied in the paper

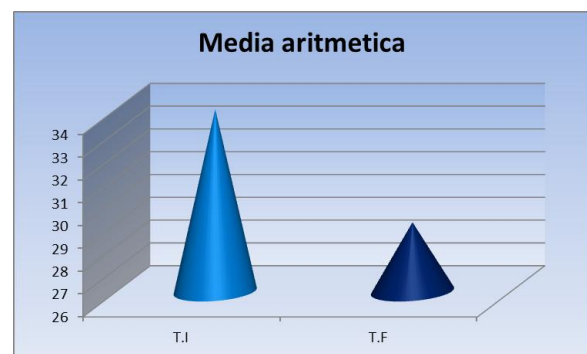
The tests carried out as part of the study and the comparison of results show that the level of general motor training is influenced by the personality of female athletes who are in a period of psychomotor growth and development; the results obtained at the end of the study are higher than those obtained in the initial stage.

The recorded results are centralised and statistically processed in Table 6.

Table 6. Results obtained after applying motor tests

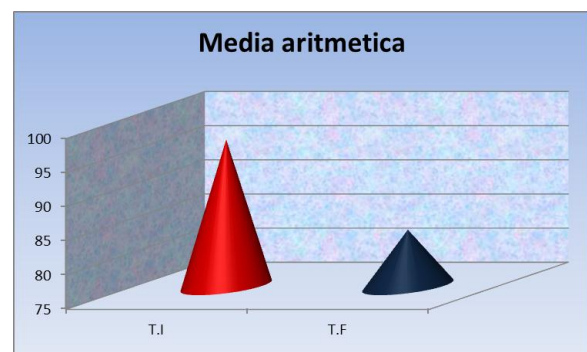
Initial	Date of birth	Exercise in 4 beats (Korean)/sec		Applicative track/sec	
		INITIAL TEST	FINAL TEST	INITIAL TEST	FINAL TEST
A.C	2001	33.45	32.48	98.2	89.3
C.C	1999	34.58	31.09	92.3	84.5
C.G	2000	35.52	32.31	99.4	91.2
D.D.	1999	36.48	33.01	97.5	93.5

F.C	2000	35.41	30.2	84.7	80.7
G.A	2000	34.23	32.12	90.2	98.5
I.I	2001	33.45	34.39	112.3	95.3
I.E	1999	32.26	33.34	93.2	88.6
M.G	2001	34.26	30	94.7	86.7
M.O	2000	33.35	34	113.9	104.5
N.Ş.	2000	34.12	29.48	88.4	85.2
V. A	2001	32.36	30.47	95.3	88.3
T.R.	1999	32.5	31.39	93.6	86.7
	X	33.99	31.86	96.43	90.23
	Difference	2.13		5.20	



Graphic. 5. Dynamics of averages of the two tests

Data in Table 6 show that the average values of the 4-beat exercise, a physical endurance exercise requiring not only a correct and forceful execution but also an increased will to perform it, rose from 33.99 seconds in the initial testing to 29.03 seconds in the final testing. This demonstrates that through repeated exercise, coordinate speed evolves on an ascending line.



Graphic. 6 - Dynamics of averages of the two tests, initial and final

For the applicative track, an average value of 96.43 seconds was recorded at the beginning of the study and 83.22 at the final test.

In the final test, they improved due also to the success of executions (small number of penalties), so there is a significant increase of 13.21 seconds.

From the averages recorded in the physical events, we may conclude that the exercises and means specific to freestyle wrestling used in sports training contribute to the general motor improvement of high-performance athletes, in general, and of their personality, in particular.

Following this study, some conclusions may be drawn:

- Freestyle wrestling discipline, through its dynamic, accessible nature, through the high complexity degree and diversity of exercises, occupies a well-defined place within the sports training, regardless of the sport practised, and has an important role in the general psychomotor training and in the development of the athletes' personality, in particular.

- The introduction of exercises with a high degree of difficulty that this discipline employs in athletes' training contributes, to a great extent, to shaping attitudes and character traits needed to obtain sport performances: self-control in tense situations and certain moments of turbulence, desire to triumph, initiative in solving tasks, ambition to win.

- The tests performed and the analysis of results prove a better motor and mental ability in the final testing as compared to the initial.

The achievement and attainment of sports mastery are conditioned by social, organisational, material, methodical and technical factors.

One should also note the constant development of the athletes' training, in terms of the contents and structure of practice lessons and of the formation and efficient growth of the mental, biological and technical-tactic level of sportspeople.

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