WELLNESS PROFILE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN SPORTS: IMPLICATIONS TO ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST ATHLETES

Luzviminda S. Macalimbon, Ph.D. Pscychology (Cand.)*

INTRODUCTION

Athletes are rare group of individuals who possess God-given GIFTS in the world of sports. Their dynamism and vitality are characteristics that make them unique from the rest, gifted or non-gifted. Moreover, the modern-day trend in their field of endeavor has even made them more great performers as they face the day-to-day real world of sports. This is the subject of investigation in this study, in an effort to understand their endurance as people who never cease to LOVE the WORLD of SPORTS.

Sports are fun. Sports provide a setting for people to develop their own identity by learning about their capabilities and their limitations. The potential or value development is present, while overly competitive and over commercialized sports undermine this.

Objective of the Study:

This study determined the variables that predict athletic performance of the University of the East athletes. The variables include the socio - demographic variables: age, gender, course, parent's occupation, type of sports, and kind of sports; wellness profile of athletes, and their attitudes towards information technology in sports.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following problems:

1. What is the socio – demographic profile of the respondents as to :1.1 age; 1.2 gender; 1.3 course; 1.4 parent's occupation; 1.5 type of sports; and 1.6 kind of sports?
2. What is the level of athletic performance of the athletes?
3. What is the wellness profile of the athletes as revealed by their wellness test in terms of : 3.1 spiritual; 3.2 social; 3.3 emotional; 3.4 intellectual: and 3.5 physical?
4. What are the attitudes towards information technology in sports of the athletes?
5. Singly or in combination, which of the following independent variable significantly predict athletic performance of the respondents of the study: 5.1 Socio-demographic profile; 5.2 Wellness profile; and 5.3 Attitudes towards information technology in sports ?

***Luzviminda S. Macalimbon, Ph.D in Psychology**
College Professor in Psychology & Guidance Counselor
UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST - CALOOCAN, Caloocan City, Philippines

Summary of Findings

1. Profile of the Athletes. The athletes were young belonging to the adolescent's stage (16-23 years old). It is the stage where the individual seeks to find out their talents and skills that he can improve and contribute to the society. At this stage, he tends to discover his weaknesses and strengths, He learns to accept himself.

Majority of the respondents were females, about 55 percent and 45 percent males. This is a good indicator for women. There are sports that a woman can excel too.

Majority of the athletes were taking Business Administration course (58 %). The least among the courses are engineering and Arts and Sciences which obtained a rating of 6 percent respectively. The athletes had mothers and fathers who were jobless (48 % and 32 % respectively). The study also indicates that the educational orientation of parents allows them to let their children obtain a college degree, which they were not able to attain. Some parents were engaged in business, which accounts for 6 and 3 percent of the mothers and fathers respectively.

Majority of them were local players (69 %); who played nine kinds of sports: Soft Ball, Fencing, Taekwando, Table Tennis, Basket Ball, Track and Field, Chess, Soccer, and Athletics. This means that majority of the respondents are exposed to local sport competitions. This is a good training ground in order for them to compete in national and International competitions.

Level of Athletic Performance

The athletes of the University of the East performed satisfactorily in sports; majority or 56 percent did receive awards. Minor awards vary from 0 to 20 awards; and major awards range from 0 to 25 awards.

Wellness Profile of the Athletes

The overall wellness profile of the athletes was Above Average (mean = 2.03): Spiritual (Mean = 1.78); Emotional (Mean = 2.07); Social (Mean = 2.13); Intellectual (Mean = 2.06); and Physical (Mean = 2.13). According to Heath (cited by Donatelle et al. (1991) wellness in spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual, and physical aspect is a way of life characterized by an individual to adapt to an ever-changing movement towards optimal well–being.

The above average wellness profile of the athletes of the University of the East reflects their determination and effort to be healthy; flexibility and adaptability to a variety of circumstances, developing a sense of meaning and affirmation in life; understanding that self is not the center of the universe; compassion for others; the ability to be unselfish in serving or relating to others; depth and satisfaction in intimate relationship. These are the traits that characterize the athletes involved in the study.

Attitudes Towards Information Technology in Sports

The attitudes towards information technology in sports of the athletes is generally "moderately positive" (Mean = 3.13).

A major advancement in man's history, information technology is a relative new in-thing in the Philippines (Mangundayao, 1998). The athletes in an effort to possess superb ability, considers information technology phenomenon a less important tool in athletic performance; despite the fact that it has altered the way the workers in business and economics, psychology, medicine, sociology, and education, among others, live and interact with each other and the ways and means in which they do things.

The U.E. athletes had moderately engaged themselves in the use of Information technology, like the computer-based or INTERNET-based games of basketball, chess, among others to enhance their athletic performance.

Predictors of Athletic Performance

The predictors of athletic performance are: type of player (Beta = .607, t= 3.815, p = .000); information technology in sports (Beta= .331, t = 3.036, p = .004; and course (Beta = .240, t = 2.236, p = .029). The positive Betas of the three predictors suggest that national and international players who have positive attitudes towards information technology in sports, and are enrolled in Arts and Sciences, Computer, and Education courses have high athletic performance.

The adjusted R square value of .301 suggests that 30.1 percent of the variance in the athletic performance of the respondents could be due to the three predictors.

Type of player is the best predictor; which means that national and international players tend to be high performer athletes than the local players.

The predictive ability of attitudes towards information technology in sports is an assertion of Mangundayao's (1998) finding that in the 21st century learning environment CAI prepares the student in meeting the challenges of the time; of Karagiannidis and Tarabania's (1999) contention that that the rapid evolution of information telecommunication technologies (IT&T) offers new opportunities for the improvement of educational process. The adoption and exploitation of the emerging IT&T application and services is expected to have significant impact on the quality of education (in this study, athletics) and life-long learning offered to the citizens of information society.

Course taken by the athletes could not be undermined. It is a predictor of athletic performance. Ones course develops the player's personality especially in proving oneself in the sports arena.

Recommendations

1. Information Technology (IT) integration in the athletics curriculum should be implemented. This is a vital force in improving athletic performance. IT has so much to offer in the world of sports; which may provide athletes exposure and experiences, in playing one-on-one with international player via the Internet (Chess playing with other competitors in other parts of the globe) which would enhance their athletic performance. (Assessing later the effect of IT exposure in sports of the athletes).

2. National and international players should be accorded full support in all aspects like rigid training, education, and moral and financial etc.; since most of them have jobless parents, to highly enhance their athletic performance and prepare them for Olympic competition, here and abroad.

3. Further research should be done to examine athletes' Physical Fitness and Wellness.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Donatelle, Rebecca; Davis, J.D; Hoover, Lorraine G. F.H. Carolyn. Access to Health. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991.

Karagiannidis, Charalampos and Tarabanis, Konstantinos. **Introducing Computer-Based Learning into Existing "Traditional" Classes**. The Sixteenth International Conference on Technology and Education Proceedings, Edinburgh Scotland, March 28-31, 1999.

Mangundayao, Andrea B. **Sustaining Catholic Education in A High-Tech Age.** The Fifteenth International Conference on Technology and Education Proceedings, Santa Fe, New Mexico, U.S.A. March 8-11, 1998.