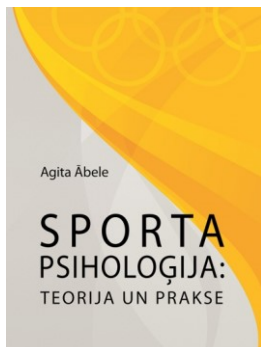


SHORT COMMUNICATION

Review of Agita Ābele's book "SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY: THEORY AND PRACTICE"



Sports Psychology: Theory and Practice by Agita Abele is a complete and exhaustive monograph which summarizes in its four parts all main current issues on significant topics within the field of psychology applied to sport and physical activity. The four parts of the book and its chapters are very provocative and capable of setting an agenda for future work in the scientific domain.

The author uses both an effective informative and educational style which makes the book an easy-to-read textbook for sports coaches, physical education teachers, sports science students and athletes. The manual aims to couple theory and practice. The theoretical background of the first part and chapters of the book, in which the author presents the critical issues of sports psychology, are integrated step by step with practices, experiences and case studies. The monograph develops as an excellently-structured and coherent set of chapters which examine the issues of sports psychology by focusing on the key factors of sports education. Among these factors, the coach and the physical education teacher deserve special attention.

The author is a psychologist and educationist, who has been serving as a Professor and scholar in the reputable LASE (Latvian Academy for Sports Education) for more than 17 years, and also works as an International Judge in figure skating. Also, her previous backgrounds as an athlete in national and international competitions and as a coach have helped Agita Abele to write a book which is not the mere result of investigations from an academic scholar. It is a practical guide providing a broad framework for theorizing, exploring and applying the psychological knowledge to the sport as a human practice, which implies several levels of interpretation and analysis.

Together, the chapters of Abele's book reflect the broad range of theoretical perspectives and interpretations at distinctly different, but complementary approaches to analysis, which characterize the complex and interdisciplinary domain of sports psychology.

Due to the scientific background of the author, the psycho-social perspective and methodology in the interpretation of sports issues appear as the dominant one. This is, in my opinion, an added value of the book. The author provides not only the foundational material on the main topics of sports psychology (motivation, aggression, anxiety, self-control, leadership, resilience, just to mention a few examples) but also discusses the significant issues and bones of contention they imply, and the possible ways forward to resolve them.

In conclusion, I recommend this book to all people – and not only to scholars or sport science students – who are interested in exploring the broad and complex domain of sports science by using psychology as an interpretation view. For sure, its reading will reinforce in them the psychological knowledge which is nowadays essential to interpret and understand that outstanding phenomenon that we call “SPORT.”

Emanuele Isidori

Ph.D. Phys. Activity and Health, Ph.D. Educ.Sc.

Professor in General and Sports Pedagogy

Vice-Rector for International Relations and Cooperation

Director of the General Pedagogy Laboratory

University of Rome Foro Italico, Italy