

GENDER-SPECIFIC FEATURES OF TEACHING BASKETBALL TO GIRLS TEAMS

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Abstract: This research article analyzes the biological, psychological, and socio-gender factors that must be taken into account when teaching basketball in girls' teams. Based on the differences between girls and boys in terms of functional capacities, level of motor activity, sources of motivation, and acceptance of teaching styles, the authors develop methodological recommendations for adapting lessons to girls' needs.

Keywords: basketball, girls' team, gender approach, technical and tactical training, psychophysiological characteristics, sports pedagogy.

In recent years, the issue of teaching basketball in girls' teams has gained particular relevance, since the number of girls involved in the education system, in sports clubs, and in higher education institutions is steadily increasing, whereas teaching technologies are still often oriented toward the boys' model. This, in turn, leads to a decrease in girls' activity in class and, in some cases, to their complete withdrawal from sports activities. Because basketball is a team sport that requires quick decision-making and is partly based on strength and jumping ability, teaching it without considering the specifics of the female body, their typical psychological traits, and the social environment inevitably reduces its effectiveness. A gender-sensitive approach, therefore, implies that the content of the lesson, the volume of the load, the sequence of exercises, and even the assessment criteria should be adapted to the needs of girls. The ultimate goal of teaching is not only to achieve a competition result, but also to attract girls to sport, to cultivate in them an appreciation of health, teamwork, self-confidence, aesthetic movement, and healthy competition. [1]

Girls' bodies during adolescence and early university age are more sensitive to hormonal changes; therefore, the training load given in lessons should be slightly milder than that for boys and built on the principle of intervals. For example, multi-set running, continuous jumping, or exercises that create excessive load on body weight at the very beginning of the class may cause girls to get tired quickly, to refuse subsequent tasks, and to develop the psychological barrier of "I can't do it." Consequently, the structure of the session should progress step by step from simple to complex, from low to high load, with short recovery breaks, light game-based tasks, or breathing exercises after each stage. This is primarily due to the physiological fact that in girls the cardiovascular and respiratory systems respond to load more quickly, but the recovery phase is somewhat slower. Therefore, when teaching dribbling, instead of immediately demanding "change-of-pace dribbling" or "fake-and-pass dribbling," it is more reasonable to organize the sequence as follows: low dribbling → stationary dribbling → dribbling in pairs while moving → using dribbling in a small-sided game. [2]

It should also be remembered that girls often come to sport under the influence of aesthetic and social factors. The condition of the gym, sports uniform and footwear, the style of communication during the class, and even the music used in the lesson can become sources of



motivation for them. Therefore, the teacher should not explain technical actions only in the format “you did it correctly – you got a mark,” but also through aesthetic-normative expressions such as “a graceful shot,” “movement harmony,” “playing in the same rhythm with the team.” For example, when teaching shooting, many girls find it difficult to jump high, but they pay greater attention to the beauty of movement, the line of the elbow, and the trajectory of the ball. At this point, if the teacher introduces such concepts as “smooth, soft shot,” “attacking the free zone,” “finishing the combination to the end,” and links scoring not only to power but also to technical accuracy, girls perceive the lesson more positively. Likewise, at the end of the class, determining the winners not only by the number of points scored, but also by such indicators as number of assists, correct defensive positioning, and helping teammates creates a social and motivational environment that is more suitable for girls. [3]

Passing is one of the basketball techniques that girls usually master better than others. This is because most girls tend to be more socially compliant with the task given by the teacher, are open to cooperation with teammates, and clearly feel the principle of “being useful to the team.” However, they often execute passes accurately but with insufficient force. Therefore, the teacher should first ensure high-quality mastery of two-hand chest pass and bounce pass, and only then move on to passing on the move. The key methodological requirement here is to organize passing exercises in pairs or small groups at all times. This, on the one hand, strengthens social interaction; on the other hand, gives the feeling “I am not alone”; and on the third hand, helps them to accept the teacher’s subtle corrections more easily within the group. At the same time, the teacher’s communication style is very important: girls usually dislike being criticized publicly or being told “that’s wrong” in a harsh tone. Gentle, short, and positive-oriented comments such as “this part was good, now keep your elbow in this position too” are much more effective.

Choosing defensive actions that are adequate to girls’ teams also requires separate attention. Practice shows that aggressive, highly contact man-to-man defense may create an additional psychological barrier for girls: they may hesitate to get too close to the opponent, to raise their arm to steal the ball, or to make body contact during screening. Therefore, at the initial stages it is advisable to teach zone defenses such as 2–3 or 3–2, and only later introduce 1v1 ball-winning situations and pressing elements. Zone defense is convenient for girls in that it emphasizes dividing the court, knowing responsibility zones, helping teammates - that is, it reinforces teamwork. Moreover, zone defense does not require very high jumps or powerful collisions, which helps to prevent injuries. Here too, the same methodological principle applies: first practice the action on a line, then on a half-court, and finally in a full game. [4]

Another important social factor that can reduce girls’ activity in training is the insufficiency of hygienic and organizational conditions. A separate changing room, the possibility to take a shower if necessary, adequate air temperature in the gym, compliance of sportswear with hygienic requirements, and footwear that prevents injury - all of these create in girls the inner conviction that “this is a place worth coming back to.” Unfortunately, in some educational institutions such conditions are not fully provided, and girls start to look for excuses to skip classes. Therefore, before starting to work with girls, the coach or teacher should at least ensure a safe running area, a non-slippery floor, baskets at a height suitable for girls, and should give explanatory information to parents regarding sports uniform and footwear. In jumping exercises aimed at developing explosiveness, the use of knee pads, ankle supports, or elastic bandages is recommended, since girls’ foot and ankle joints are softer and more sensitive to sports loads. From a psychological perspective, girls are more sensitive to social reinforcement - praise, recognition, and comments such as “you played well today.” Therefore, encouragement in basketball lessons should not be limited to the final score. The teacher has to highlight even small achievements



during the class: who made the best pass, who backed up her teammate in defense, who kept ball control, who took the correct position. Such an evaluation system increases the motivation to act for the team and, at the same time, allows a less gifted but disciplined student to feel successful. In addition, it is sometimes advisable to organize competitions only among girls - for example, a "girls' league" or a "faculty girls' cup," since in mixed teams girls may feel shy about making mistakes in front of boys or being compared to them. [5]

When organizing basketball classes for girls in the context of Uzbekistan, another crucial factor is the attitude of parents and society. In some families, girls' participation in sport - especially in contact, running, and jumping sports - is not fully supported. Here explanatory and advocacy work by the teacher is of great importance: basketball does not harm girls' posture or figure; on the contrary, with a properly dosed load, it strengthens the spinal and gluteal muscles, teaches correct breathing, and fosters proper body alignment. Moreover, basketball teaches girls to think collectively, to anticipate a teammate, to make quick decisions, and to display leadership - abilities that will later be useful in social adaptation, career development, and family life. Thus, a gender-adapted basketball lesson serves not only sporting, but also educational and social purposes

To sum up, the gender-specific features of teaching basketball to girls' teams are manifested in three main directions:

1. **Biological and physiological adaptation** – giving a dosed load, increasing the share of interval exercises, preventing injuries, and taking into account mobilization and recovery periods;
2. **Psychological and pedagogical adaptation** – basing the lesson on positive reinforcement, minimizing harsh public criticism, increasing the number of cooperative small-sided games and pair exercises, and making assessment closer to individual achievements;
3. **Socio-organizational adaptation** – creating safe and comfortable conditions for girls, making lessons aesthetically attractive, and conducting explanatory work with parents.

Only when these three blocks function in harmony can girls' interest in basketball become stable, attendance remain regular, and talented girls be directed to the next levels - sports schools, university teams, and even professional clubs. Therefore, a gender approach does not mean "simplifying" basketball for girls; rather, it means bringing the sport itself closer to girls by taking into account their natural capabilities and, through didactic modeling, achieving higher educational and training results

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