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**THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE:
THE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**

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Abstract

The aim of this work is the consideration of effective ways of implementation and substantiation of personalized approach for physical activities and sports among the students of different age. The presented paper demonstrates that physical training and sport loads in student environment define the opportunity of not only successful educational or scientific progress, but also of a positive social integration. The authors see the sport's social meaning in higher education institution as a function of carrying out an applied activity with correlation into the successful professional medium. The relevance of the paper is due to the general acknowledgement that physical culture and sports in educational institution is perceived as not only a part of academic load by the subjects of general professional cycle, but also as a mean of students' socialization.

Keywords

Students – health – Physical activity

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Introduction

It is known that continuous mental stress and excessive working hours without physical relaxation provoke hard functional disorders, degradation and approach of premature old age. It was determined by many scientists¹ that regular physical exercises reduce the amount of blood cholesterol, which promotes the development of atherosclerosis. Simultaneously, the activation of anti-coagulation system preventing thrombus appearance in blood vessels occurs. Myocardium contractile function is normalized at the expense of moderate increase of total number of potassium ions and decrease of sodium ions in blood. Taking this fact into consideration it is no wonder that, for example, in Switzerland, in small towns situated in mountains where citizens are somewhat limited in sports availabilities (except for jogging and running), no cases of cardiovascular diseases are observed. Such a long flat physical activity as running strengthens immune system at the expense of activation, renovation and increasing of white corpuscles' composition and stimulates increase of hemoglobin in blood formation. Medical observations demonstrated that regular running can influence the renovation of digestive cells, inhibit the process of muscular tissue substitution by adipose one and normalize the blood cholesterol amount, protecting from both atherosclerosis and cancer development. Physical exercises also represent the important means of carbohydrate metabolism disturbance protection. During physical activity it could open 2500 capillaries on 1 mm of muscle cross section against 30-80 ones in the state of rest. The greatest increase of capillaries amount occurs in the cortex of frontal lobe. Simultaneously, the increase of capillaries' length and density of capillary network occurs. The urgency of the research of designated problem is becoming greater from year to year as it has tremendous importance in the development of global science and improvement of public health.

Materials and Methods

The efficiency of the impact of guided physical exercises (depending on the aims and objectives) is determined mainly by motivation, which provides optimal level of kinesiological potential development and improvement. Experimental program of physical culture and the technology of its implementation has been developed on the base of carried out research. The goal of experimental program was the strengthening of educational function and rebuilding of organizational forms of physical training both at sessions and during students' independent activities. Corresponding research work was organized with the aim to achieve this goal. The control group (45 participants) included the first year students trained according to the traditional form of education. Another control group consisted of 45 students who were trained according to the experimental program. The experiment was conducted during the academic year. At the end of the year all the participants were required to take control tests.

An analysis of the global socio-cultural and educational trends demonstrated that different aspects of human behavior in respect of personal health became the object of great attention of society and the subject of interdisciplinary research in many developed countries within the last years. Different systems of healthy lifestyle education were tested recently.²

¹ M.Y. Vilensky, Physical education and healthy lifestyles of student: textbook. M.J. Vilensky, A.G. Pots (Eds). (Moscow: Garuariki, 2007).

² M. Y. Vilensky, Physical education and healthy lifestyles of student: textbook. M.J. Vilensky, A.G. Pots (Eds) (Moscow: Garuariki, 2007); V. I. Bondin, "School health teacher in higher education", Theory and Practice of Physical Culture, num 10 (2004); N. A. Aghajanian, Health of students

The commonly accepted opinion of specialists in the field of physical culture consists in the necessity of students' physical culture system reformation on the base of the principles of humanistic pedagogy, ethics and psychology aimed at self-development of the trained individuals. The analysis of students' physical culture system allows stating the number of its main contradictions which are characterized by:

- The presence of physical culture innovative programs and lack of adequate technologies of their implementation;
- The necessity of maintaining of decent students' physical culture level during the scholarship and the lack of teachers' preparedness for its development;
- The importance of manifestation of students' subjective position in physical culture educational process and poor utilization of pedagogical technologies developing individuality and providing such manifestation and formation;
- Determination of educational process to the formation of physical culture and utilitarian-applied orientation of estimation criteria of success in mastering of educational material stipulated by the physical culture program.

During the analysis of the organization of physical culture studies at universities in general (as well as of the students' attitude to those studies) the following trends should be mentioned:

- The lack of students' interest to physical culture studies, especially to those conducted in traditional form; poor account of needs, motives and value orientations of students in the course of transformation of their physical nature;
- The lack of willingness in students (especially, the first year students) to turn to the organization of independent forms of physical culture activity for the purposes of improvement of their general state of health;
- The lack of correspondence between the competence level of physical culture teacher and modern requirements; this discrepancy manifests itself in insufficient professional readiness to master new forms of knowledge of physical exercises, modern technologies demanding the mastering of individual systems, and means, methods and forms of their organization;
- The lack of teaching and methodological literature on students' individual self-development by means of physical culture.

All these facts supported the development of sociological analysis of students by means of physical culture.

Objective: examination of the implementation and efficiency of personalized approach during physical and sport activities of students. The purpose of the study: familiarization of students with regular exercises, motion activities, and consequential improvement of body's functional abilities by means of introduction of innovative pedagogical system aimed at individual development of students' educational process. In the process of educational work and functioning of pedagogical system at postsecondary institution the solution of the following problems is to be carried out: improvement of

(Moscow: Rund, 1997); R. I. Iseman, Russia's health crisis: medical, social, psychological and pedagogical principles for its formation (Novosibirsk: NGPU, 1997); T. M. Kazin, "Scientific-methodical and organizational approaches to the creation of a regional program of education and health", N.E. Kasatkin (Ed.). Valeology, num 4 (2004) y O. Vasilyeva, Psychology of human health: standards of presentation of the students (Moscow: Academia, 2001).

students' physical development, achievement of high training level and functional state of the body; teaching of moral, esthetic and motion culture of aspiration for health, beauty, love and harmony; development of need for individual self-realization and self-development, breeding of self-respect and sense of respect to other people, formation of willingness for self-development and objective self-appraisal; development of moral and priority values; formation of prospective visions and ideas. It is well-known that oxygen feeding of brain cells promotes improvement both of physical and mental efficiency; in other words, the mental activity is substantially assisted by physical culture. That coincides with Aristotle's affirmation of the fact that thoughts flow quicker when the body is warmed up by the walk; noteworthy is that he conducted lessons while walking with his students. And on the contrary, the lack of muscular movements makes human muscles weak and gets brain open to cerebral affection.

In the present-day nuclear and cybernetics era the actual intellectual work more and more displaces physical one or become closely intertwined with it. However, many scientists believe that hard mental work demands intensive physical training. Some foreign scientists³ also believe that special 'mental gymnastics' helps to support high intellectual efficiency. Such gym includes the so called headstand; this exercise along with legs bending and working out the knee and hip joints not only intensifies brain cells blood supply and reinforces vessels, but also promotes venous blood outflow from lower extremities and pelvic organs, i.e. represents the important means of varicose, piles and lithonephria prevention. In order to avoid the illnesses and suffering it is necessary to modify one's own individuality. Simple exercise like running strengthens immune system at the expense of activation, renewing and increasing the number of white blood cells. Running is one of the most efficient means for good health, and it is also one of the human body's necessities. All organs of human body were formed in conditions of constant motion during millions of years. When the motion is restricted the functions of organs are getting violated. Despite the usefulness of running it should be performed under proper supervision and in accordance with the recommendations developed by specialists. Otherwise the result could be quite sad. For example, James Fix, the torch-bearer of total infatuation of running in the USA, died suddenly at the age of 52 during the regular jogging. According to doctors' opinion, the cause of his death was the inherited propensity for myocardial infarction in combination with other risk factors such as smoking and overweight, however, according to pathologists his heart and blood vessels were in excellent condition. Thus, movement is the essence of life and the base of wellbeing. It must be emphasized that neither morning exercises nor even sport sessions several times a week but constant round-the-clock culture of positive attitude to oneself and optimal active lifestyle makes human existence of full-value.

Qualitative professional training of students at the higher educational establishment is impossible without their energetic educational and labour activity. The general academic period cannot be extended due to the economic and social reasons; therefore, such reasons are enforcing the intensification of the educational time. This process requires students to mobilize their will and psychophysical, moral and physical powers. However, nowadays it is not realistic to restrict the increasing tension and stress of the educational process. So, if it is impossible to free students from psycho emotional and physical tension (while it is probably worth trying to), then it is necessary to increase resistance of adaptive body mechanisms to emotional stresses and to streamline students' educational activity. It is essential to teach students about healthy lifestyle for which the unity and reasonability of

³ N. A. Bezrykhih, "Formation of setting students on a healthy lifestyle in the educational process of professional schools" Dissertation of candidate of pedagogical sciences (Saratov: 2006).

self-organization, self-discipline, self-regulation and self-development processes are typical. These processes are oriented to full-fledge realization of one's own essential forces, gifts and abilities.

Formation of citizens' healthy life-style (HLS) as the matter of national importance and security was specially denoted by modern global practices; as by 2018 it was declared necessary to provide 'mortality reduction' at the expense of 'arrangements for healthy lifestyle formation'. Different approaches to the implementation of HLS principle allows concluding that it unites all the components of promoting the fulfillment of professional, social and everyday functions in the optimal men's health conditions and guides individual activity to forming, keeping and strengthening both personal and public health. The carried out sociological research of Students' Healthy Lifestyle demonstrated young people's attitude to themselves and the mode of their life and health in whole.

The greater attention to the students' HLS is quite a recent achievement. The very fact of its occurrence manifests the government and society concerns in graduates' health, incidence rate in the process of professional training and labour activity reduction. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the state of health and HLS as one of the important educational values for society⁴.

Studying at the university is a long and complicated process with the number of characteristic features posting high demands for psyche and physiological functions flexibility of young people. The very admission to the higher educational institution represents the distraction of vital stereotypes of yesterday's schoolchildren. The initial period of training plays sufficient role in the development of adaptive and compensatory mechanisms. Student's state of health depends to a great extent on this period. On the base of neurologic status and cardiovascular screening the participating 2,142 first year students were divided into 4 groups: practically healthy students - 1,509 participants (70%), students with elevated blood pressure - 254 participants (11%), students with condition of hypotension - 90 participants (4%) and 289 students with functional neural disorder (13%). The second, third and fourth groups totaled in 29% of the first year students exhibiting health problems. An analysis of patients' files showed that most students taking the academic leave (83%) began to feel sick during the first or second academic year. The causes of their illness appeared to be the excessive psychological pressure and academic overload during the educational process⁵. The diagnostics carried out on campus showed that only 7% of tested students had good locomotive system (LMS), 28% exhibited functional disorders and 64% of students were in pre- and pathological state. Only 7% of tested students had normal functioning digestive system, 85% of students exhibited functional disorders and 6% of students were in pre- or pathological state. The study at large showed the presence of subjective complaints and objectively confirmed pathologies in one or several systems and organs in majority of tested students. None of the tested students received 'absolutely healthy' clearance and only 15% of participants could be characterized as 'relatively healthy' (i.e. they only had functional disorders)⁶. Study of psyche component of students' health revealed considerable cases of asthenia, depression and a great number of functional

⁴ T. N. Malyarenko, "Valeological aspects of higher education", *Valeology*, num 2 (1996).

⁵ Bogna Grygiel-Górniak, et al. "Physical Activity, Nutritional Status, and Dietary Habits of Students of a Medical University", *Sport Sciences for Health*, num 12(2) (2016): 261–267. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11332-016-0285-x>

⁶ Lisa M. Quintiliani and Jessica A. Whiteley, "Results of a Nutrition and Physical Activity Peer Counseling Intervention among Nontraditional College Students", *Journal of Cancer Education*, num 31(2) (2016): 366–74. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13187-015-0858-4>.

neuropsychic disorders. Only 21% of 312 students of natural sciences and humanities appeared with stable mentality. The growth of students' nervous system functional disorders was noted already in the 1980s - the so called in-between mental state. The number of nervous system disorders among students increased from the first to the third academic year; male students of technical universities were subjected to poor health condition more often than any others. Nervous breakdowns and psych disorders developed against the background of social anxiety disorder (SAD) and mental overloading during the term exams turned out to be based on the inter-personal conflicts⁷.

Comparing the results of studies conducted in different regions of the country the stereotyped picture of students' health conditions decline during the academic period was observed; this trend was subjected to ecological situation and climatic and geographical conditions. Altogether, the attitude towards one's health is provided by objective conditions including educational environment. It becomes apparent in actions, emotional experiences and verbally expressed opinions and judgments of people with respect to the factors influencing and defining their mental and physical condition. The degree of conformity between individual's actions and requirements of healthy lifestyle as well as standard requirements of medicine, sanitation and hygiene can serve as empirical criteria in relation to the state of health. The level of personal awareness and competence is typically presented in advanced opinions and judgments. The attitude towards one's health includes self-appraisal of own physical and mental state, which is the indicator and regulator of individual's behavior.

The conducted analysis of literature proved that students consider health condition to be the top priority within their hierarchy of values. Thus, according to different sources of information (average indicators were taken) state of health as universal value was highly ranked by 75% (± 5 , 0) of female and male students (female students' assessment was even higher in ranks). Meanwhile, the state of health was correlated with the other universal values: happy family life, comprehensive and balanced development, mental ability, etc. At the same time, noteworthy is the fact that the value of health as the mean of other goals achievement (financial well-being, career, etc.) appeared to be more important for students than the value of health as the mean of long and successful life.

Discussion

According to the results obtained (380 students of different grades were tested within a framework of the study) the majority of youngsters did not take their health issues seriously. The following answers were given to the question whether the students monitor their health indicators: 'routinely observe' - 13% of male and 23% of female students; 'time to time' - 37% of male and 39% of female students; 'begin monitoring only in case if feel unwell' - 50% of male and 38% of female students. Students were not familiar with the readings of their own blood pressure and normal resting heart rate. Other researchers noted similar students' attitude towards state of health. As it was mentioned above, most students realized that their health is the necessary condition for the good living, but only a small part of them considerably attended their health issues. This fact leads to the appearance of one more contradiction between the verbal awareness of the value of health and active conscious HLS strengthening and preservation. Thus, E.A. Zhitnitskaya et.al mentioned that many students with chronic pathologies of respiratory apparatus remained smokers and

⁷ S. A. Ovchinnikov. "Physical culture identity as a leading factor in the formation of a healthy lifestyle". Dissertation of candidate of pedagogical sciences (Novgorod: 2006)

were not going to quit; students with chronic conditions of gastrointestinal tract broke the diet; and those who suffered from locomotor apparatus diseases neglected exercise therapy.

The necessary and main precondition for health maintenance is the HLS accepted as the standard model: the system of common conditions and arrangements promoting health preservation and strengthening. Numerous researches made it possible to conclude in theory and in practice that the lifestyle has a significant 50% influence on physical and mental health of human being, environment influence draws up another 25%, heredity conditions - 15%, and only 10% belongs to actual medicine. Students have highest regard for the healthy lifestyle, but their real behavior contradicts with the expressed opinions and judgments on HLS value. The following answers were received on the question whether the students maintain a healthy lifestyle: 'yes, at most' - 24%, 'rather yes than no' -18%, 'rather no than yes' -38%, 'cannot say' -18%. The results demonstrated that more than 50% of students did not fully accept the main elements of active living regime; they also had no formed purpose of rational time planning. Students violated the norms of mental activity, as well as other standards of positive living such nutrition, physical exercises or simple outdoor activities. It remains without saying that modern system of education demands considerable mental activity, but the testing results demonstrated that only 42% of students learned systematically and independently, while all the rest studied from time to time. Physiologists determined that the best time for independent learning is 4 PM; it was revealed during the study that only 35% of students fulfill their tasks in definite time, all the rest were performing their academic studies any time of a day. Considerable part of tested students - 55% - started to study the required academic materials from 20 to 22 PM, some of them did that even later which led to the poor results.

In order to support the mental activity on the decent level and maintain the state of health it is necessary to alternate the training and the time off correctly. The best rest is a sleep for no less than 7-8 hours; however, the 40% of students did keep proper hours, many of them felt 'sleep hunger' as they went to bed after midnight or even later, what negatively influenced their mental efficiency. Numerous scientific researches by physiologists, psychologists, hygienists and educators proved that the mode of motion activities considerably influences the quality of students' education. It has been stated that the most suitable motion regimen requires 6-8 hours a week; however, such mode was maintained only by 26% of tested students while most of young people (75%) performed physical exercises for 2 - 4 hours a week including gym sessions at the university. Physical culture sessions were attended regularly by 43% of students, the rest 56% attended those sessions time to time. And only a small part of students performed physical exercises independently. In order to answer the main question, namely, what can be done to achieve the objective – the efficiency growth of students' HLS formation process – the analysis of already available information on this problem both in theory and in practice is required. Without this knowledge it is impossible to define the mechanism of the given process control, and to establish the choice of means and methods for the target-oriented actions. Theoretical foundation for this problem solution has been given by sociological, medico-biological, psychological and pedagogical research. Scientists have discussed the general issues of students' health and mode of life; studied the influence of different factors affecting students' HLS formation and the level of students' awareness in this matter.

The tendency of reconsideration of this problem solution, the ways of its solving reflecting the shifting of the emphasis from the sphere of medicine to pedagogics has been outlined. Such tendency is related to the fact that the main risk factors have behavioral basis,

so the mode of individual's lifestyle plays an important role in keeping and strengthening of personal health. Education and physical culture has the sufficient importance in rationally managing of such lifestyle.

Many experts say the theory and practice of public health will inevitably follow to the concept of lifestyle of active physical culture. According to the forecasts of representatives of medical sciences the most important element will become the target-oriented growth of human body systems and functions efficiency by means of physical culture⁸. Physical culture combines many components: culture of motion activities and fitness, breathing exercises and meditation, massage and natural healing. Just in this respect it deserves a special attention, since it is obvious that physical culture is the basis and driving force of healthy lifestyle formation. It is also essential to mention that implementation of physical culture role as one of the leading factors of students' HLS formation serves the tendency of insistent search for efficient educational activity, approaches and technologies of students' HLS formation by means of physical culture. Monographs, teaching aids and methodological materials are being published; doctors' and candidates' theses devoted to the subject are being presented and defended. All these materials contain theoretical and practical prerequisites for successful solution of the given problem⁹.

It is specially mentioned in the papers devoted to the different aspects of this problem that the attempts to revive the physical culture, health improving and mass sports works at the higher educational establishments by means of the old organizational forms and methods as a rule may not bring the results necessary. Experts state that, unfortunately, physical culture studies at the universities are aimed at the problems related to the indicators of physical training and credit standards of educational program. This is why so many publications contain the idea of necessity to develop such programs and technological models of students' HLS formation by means of physical culture, which can substantially improve the situation and change the students' attitude to the health and mode of life. The second reason consists in the fact that our country is entering the system of competence education and in order to keep up to the times of higher education modernization it is essential to reform the teaching process of the discipline named 'Physical culture' and its didactic 'Foundations of healthy life-style' component on the base of competence approach. The question naturally arises of what should be done in order to utilize the competence approach (in coordination with the existing innovative concepts and models of students' physical training proved their practical reasonability) in practices of the departments of

⁸ N. A. Aghajanian, *Health of students* (Moscow: Rund, 1997); R. I. Iseman, *Russia's health crisis: medical, social, psychological and pedagogical principles for its formation* (Novosibirsk: NGPU, 1997); G. L. Apanasenko, "Valueology: First Results and Future Prospects", *The Theory and Practice of Physical Culture*, num 6 (2001) y Tom Deliens; Benedicte Deforche; Ilse De Bourdeaudhuij and Peter Clarys, "Determinants of Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour in University Students: A Qualitative Study Using Focus Group Discussions", *BMC Public Health*, num 15(1) (2015): 201. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-015-1553-4>

⁹ O. A. Valiulina, "Healthy lifestyle of students in the studying process by means of adaptive physical education". Dissertation of candidate of pedagogical sciences. Ufa. 2006; S. A. Ovchinnikov, "Physical culture identity as a leading factor in the formation of a healthy lifestyle". Dissertation of candidate of pedagogical sciences (Novgorod: 2006); V. Y. Salov, "Theoretical and methodological foundations of a healthy lifestyle for students through physical training". Dissertation of doctor of pedagogical sciences (SPb: 2001) y Lisa M. Quintiliani and Jessica A. Whiteley, "Results of a Nutrition and Physical Activity Peer Counseling Intervention among Nontraditional College Students", *Journal of Cancer Education*, num 31(2) (2016): 366–74. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13187-015-0858-4>.

physical culture along with other approaches (personality-oriented, differentiated, action, etc.). While developing this innovative direction of students HLS formation by means of physical culture it is necessary to utilize the resources of university's educational environment: administrative resource (development of corresponding university programs, health planning support, HLS brand building, financing, control, etc.); resources of educational process (introduction of special HLS course, interdisciplinary relations, organization of physical culture and health-improving arrangements, moral support and volunteer's activities); utilization of regulated (academic studies) and non-regulated (different forms of self-instructed studies) educational environment potential; resources of public organizations (trade unions, sport clubs, youth associations, etc.); medical services (periodical medical inspections and health level diagnostics, preventive measures, medical support, etc.).

68 groups of additional health studies have been established in our university only this year. Moreover, two times a week students attended physical culture sessions; they were also able voluntarily select the type of sport to be trained according to the chosen system of exercises. These studies were conducted under teaching and medical personnel supervision. The new policy has been successfully established: 'we do not only talk HLS, we provide it in practice'.

Conclusion

The results of educational experiment demonstrated that the means and opportunities of physical culture and sports were not utilized enough within the complex solution of educational, upbringing and health-improving objectives. Research results showed modern students aspiration to support their state of health. Most tested students considered HLS as proper nutrition and sleeping habits, sports and denial of unhealthy habits. However, young people did not always follow those simple rules. Therefore, it is essential to emphasize this component in physical culture departments' practices and conduct a scientific research of this problem.

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