

Study of Opinions of Teachers and Students on the Status and Ways of Improving the Higher Professional Physical Education

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Abstract: This study deals with the problems of improvement of higher professional physical education. The research methodology is based on the analysis of special literature and the questionnaire survey of students and teachers of two Russian universities. Total 235 students of the 3rd and 4th year of study of Faculty of Physical Education and 106 teachers working in these departments of Shuya Branch of Ivanovo State University and Belgorod State National Research University were surveyed. The study was conducted in 2013-2015. The results of the study revealed that the opinions of students and teachers on the state and development of professional physical education concur to a lesser extent and differ significantly. Students consider the shortcomings and prospects of higher professional physical education mainly in the framework of the curriculum and its implementation. While the teachers see both deficiencies and prospects of higher professional physical education more fundamentally, relying upon its cultural-edifying function. The theoretical value of this study is the creation of prerequisites for the development of new concepts of development of higher professional physical education. The practical value of the material is that it can be used in the content of educational, methodical, educational and research work in training the specialists for the sphere of physical culture.

Key words: Motivation, students, teachers, faculty of physical education, professional physical education

INTRODUCTION

The development of scientific and technological progress, the emergence of new technologies, a dramatically increasing flow of information have an impact on the process of education at higher education institutions. The development of higher education is influenced by many other objective and subjective factors (geopolitical situation, relations between countries, the level of development of science in a certain country, the level of economic development, etc.).

Many countries, due to the processes occurring in the world today, are changing their view of the near and distant future of their country, for which the level of higher education is very important. New concepts, strategies and theories of higher education require their justification (Department of Education, 2001).

Production of specialists with university degree in physical education is particularly important for the preservation of biological potential of the population, preparation for socially necessary activities, sports development and engagement of young people to live a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, studying the opinions of teachers and students on the status and prospects for improvement of the higher professional physical

education is highly relevant in nowadays. Objective of research is to identify the opinions of students and university teachers on the current state of higher professional physical education and ways of their improvement in the short term.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

During the research, we studied the special scientific literature (380 sources), used a questionnaire survey of students and teachers of the Departments of Physical Education of Belgorod National Research University (Russia, Belgorod), a Shuya Branch of Ivanovo State University (Russia, Shuya). Total 235 students of the 3rd and 4th year of study and 139 teachers were surveyed. The study was conducted in 2013-2015. The questionnaire included open, semi-closed and closed questions. Data obtained by the survey were further compared in percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Literature study showed that the development of higher professional education in different countries involves particular problems. For example, features of

upbringing, education and training of students (Iermakov *et al.*, 2016). There are publications which deal with global theories, concepts and prospects of higher education (Banks, 2001; Flach *et al.*, 1995; Bazelon, 2013). In recent years, there have been rare publications concerning the prospects of higher professional physical education (Sobyenin and Lotonenko 2006; Tailor, 1990; Kovac *et al.*, 2013) which now require both pedagogical analysis and sociological study, philosophical understanding in the current context (Sobyenin *et al* Scherbin 2012; Bizet *et al.*, 2010)

According to the survey, 75% of the students believe the system of professional training of sports specialists to be outdated. The >30% of students note the introduction of unnecessary disciplines to the curricula as a shortcoming. At the same time, they regret about poor expansion of the educational process with new specialties and fields of study (up to 44%), new sports disciplines (25%) and about insufficiently profound training in the selected specialties and education areas (16%).

The students note the continued authoritarianism in the relationship with the teachers (28%), lack of opportunities to show independence and to develop creative skills at the universities (14%).

The most important issues they name are resignation of qualified teachers from the education sector (67%) and the consequences of this process such as decline in the quality of education and deterioration of the physical well-being of the population (30%).

In order to improve higher professional physical education, the students offer to carefully conduct the admission to universities (24%), increase funding for higher education institutions (56%) and include new subjects in the chosen specialty (26%). As well as add economic subjects (23%), pay greater attention to individualized approach in teaching (15%) and to democracy in the relationships with the teachers (25%). About 90% of the students stand for the new assessment system of their activities, including the rating and testing. At the same time, the students are generally satisfied with the quality of teaching (78% of respondents).

Students are focused on traditional, in their view, values in education: 39% think a high level of knowledge and skills to be the new requirement; 24% specify that the knowledge of social, medical, legal, economic sciences and foreign language is of particular importance; 20% believe that a modern specialist in physical education should combine the pedagogical, business and juridical qualities; 55% placed a priority on high professionalism as the integration of all the components necessary to the modern specialist in the field of physical culture.

The 46% of respondents consider the graduates with degree in physical education to be “well-educated

people” while 80% of respondents think that the level of culture of future graduates must be substantially increased.

The main purpose of higher professional physical education, according to the students is the provision with specialists able to improve physical fitness of the population (68% of respondents).

The teachers have expressed a more categorical and solid opinion. The 56.5% of them believe that there is a great discrepancy between the education system and educational reality and 52% see the current system of physical education to be conservative.

According to teachers, the current production of graduates with university degree in physical education exceeds the real needs of society. The deterioration of the socio-economic situation in the country has caused a decrease in the prestige of the teaching profession, a lack of qualified teachers at the universities, the limitation of real advanced training, reduction in the level of requirements to the level of education (about 3-5% of respondents insist on each of these provisions). It is noted that the training process of sports staff is focused on the “average student”, does not reflect the specificity of work and inadequately implements the function of development of a specialist’s culture.

Teachers also note the obsolete targets of physical education (14%), the lack of evidence-based concept of the nation's health improvement (4%). They see the purpose of physical culture as a sphere of professional activity, in the improvement of the national health, organization of proper healthy leisure of the population (39%), development of all components of physical culture (27%), increased motor activity of the population (18%), improvement of personal physical culture (10 %) and in the harmonious development of people (6%). At the same time, many see the main goal of professional physical education in the production of staff able to provide physical and spiritual development of the people and therefore, the social welfare of the population (44%).

The education system has to produce specialists with a wide range of knowledge, skills and competencies (16%), teaching the professionals to study continuously (4%), promote a commitment to a healthy lifestyle and propagate it actively (6%) and form a harmonious personality with high level of culture (19%).

According to teachers, a modern sports specialist must be highly professional (12%), interested in the outcome of his/her work (6%) and show creative attitude to the profession (4%). Modern specialist must have clear apprehension of the new developing areas of knowledge (5%), be independent in their work (8%), lead a healthy lifestyle (9%), be good at modern sports and wellness

Table 1: Individualities of the students' and teachers' answers to the main questions

Questions	Students' dominating answers	Teachers' dominating answers
How do you assess the state of professional physical education?	Obsolete	Conservative
What are the main shortcomings of the academic program of the modern higher professional physical education?	Unnecess ary courses in the curricula A short of new specialties and field of study A short of new courses in physical education Not enough profound training in the chosen specialty or field of study Authoritative relations with teaching staff Resignation of high-qualified teachers from the universities	There is a great discrepancy between the education system and educational reality The production of graduates exceeds the real needs of society Decreasing occupational prestige Lack of high-qualified teachers at the universities Reduced requirements for the level of education Focus on the production of an "average student" The obsolete targets of physical education Lack of evidence-based concept of the nation's health improvement
What do you think to be the main objective of the professional physical education?	Provision with specialists able to improve physical fitness of the population	Production of staff able to provide physical and spiritual development of the people and therefore, the social welfare of the population
What are the new requirements to be implemented in the professional physical education?	Improve the level of knowledge and skills More thoroughly implement the enrollment at universities Increase funding of universities Include new subjects Apply more the individualized approach Ensure democratic relations with teaching staff Implement new methodologies of assessment of students' activity Raise the level of the specialists' culture	Produce specialists with a wide range of knowledge, skills and competencies Teach them to study continuously Promote a commitment to a healthy lifestyle of the population Produce specialists for promotion of a healthy lifestyle Improve the professionalism of sports staff Raise an interest in the results of their work Develop a creative attitude to their profession Change the teaching and research style of work with students Activate educational work with students Teach students to show independence in their work Consider the interests and values of the modern youth Establish democratic relations with students Improve the process of enrollment at and selection to the universities, etc.

techniques (12%), be able to take into account the changing interests and values among young people (7%), be able to adapt to the new conditions of life and work (6%) and be a cultured person (16%).

To train the new-type specialists it is necessary, according to teachers, to improve not only the enrollment process, but also the selection to the universities (36%), the methodology of assessment of students' activity (28%), to change the teaching and research style of work with students (20%), to activate educational work (12%) and establish democratic relations with students.

In terms of education content, it is proposed to remove unnecessary disciplines, establish interdisciplinary communications, organize continuous practice of students, consistently make the transition from general to particular areas of expertise and give preference to humanities during the first years of education and to teaching practice for senior students.

However, according to teachers, these recommendations are poorly translated into reality by the teachers themselves, since 68% of them work according to traditional methods and only 24% try to create their own education system and the rest cannot formulate their answer.

The survey has established the differences in almost all the issues between students and teachers (Table 1). The concurrence of views is in bold.

The analysis of the responses of students and teachers shows that teachers' answers are deeper and more diverse. Comparison of answers has revealed that the expressed opinions concur to a lesser extent and differ significantly. For example, a concurrence of views concerns the discussion on the assessment of the status of higher professional physical education. It is also concerns the lack of high-qualified teachers at the universities. The greatest number of convergences has been found in the consideration of new requirements for the improvement of higher professional physical education. Here, the opinions concur in the outcomes of educational process, enrollment at universities, nature of relations between the students and the teaching staff.

Divergence of views of all questions is naturally caused by higher qualification of the teachers and their extensive experience as compared with the students. They also gave more variable answers in the survey. Teachers more fundamentally formulate the

objective of the professional physical education, see deeper the shortcomings of modern education and its prospects expressed in the demands of the society.

CONCLUSION

Thus, students of the departments of physical education suppose the system of higher education to be obsolete and requiring renovation. They narrowly, in utilitarian manner, formulate the goal of improving the professional physical education, considering only physical fitness of the population. They propose to reform the content of education by introducing new special subjects, new methods of assessment with inclusion of ratings and testing, as well as by changing the relations between students and teachers to a democratic format.

Teachers see the objective of higher professional physical education differently than the students. They find it more multi-faceted, integral (bio-social) and cultural-edifying. They criticize the modern system of education for the gap between the reality and specificity of labor. The main innovations to be implemented according to their views are the elimination of unnecessary subjects, introduction of new courses to meet modern demands of society, the continuous practice, a new approach to the teaching and research work with students, improvement of educational work at universities and new methods of students' assessment.

The opinions of students and teachers on the state and development of higher professional physical education concur to a lesser extent and differ significantly.

The results of the survey may be useful for the educational activities of universities, departments and graduate chairs which train specialists in the sphere of physical culture, in the correction of curricula, introduction or elimination of academic courses, in the development and planning of educational, training, scientific work of students, improvement of the

assessment of students' activity monitoring methods and in the quality control of the educational activities of specialists, bachelors and masters.

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