

Gender approach at physical culture lessons at the second stage of basic high education

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ABSTRACT

Gender approach in education is a specific impact on the development of boys and girls by the set of factors of education and training process. The objective of this research is the reasoning of applying gender approach at physical culture lessons and creating comfortable environment taking into account the psychophysiological differences of the pupils. For the implementation of the said objective, pedagogical and educational tasks were assigned to be solved using various means and methods. The study of the dynamics of physical activity and physical health development is monitored via testing techniques. The obtained data are processed using mathematical statistics methods. Also, interviews and questionnaires were used to identify the issues arising in co-education classes. The level of training program acquisition was identified using the expert assessment method. The analysis of the obtained data makes it possible to conclude that there is an urgent need for separate training of 10-15 year old boys and girls at physical culture lessons as their periods of physiological and physical maturity do not coincide. Gender approach strategy allows various gender pupils to realize their potential in creative cognition, relying on their abilities, inclinations and value orientations, not only at physical culture lessons but in various educational activities.

KEYWORDS

gender approach, lesson, separate education

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The beginning of the 21st century is marked by the further development of the theory of physical culture in compliance with the contemporary sociocultural requests of the Russian society. The scientific community more and more often addresses the gender issues in sports, education and other public aspects in light of development issues in general. Knowledge on gender relations in the society allowed the emergence of a new scientific area— gender research which is successfully developing abroad and in Russia. Researches in gender pedagogics appear more frequently in the scientific community (Rozova, 2004; Shustova, 2006; Zagainov, 2007, etc.). Gender pedagogics is a set of approaches aimed at assisting children to feel

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comfortable at school and manage the socialization matters. The objective of gender pedagogics is the correction of the influence of gender stereotypes in such a way so that to manifest and develop personal inclinations of an individual.

1.1 Review of scientific and pedagogical literature. The analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature shows that gender aspects in education are of interest for many Russian scholars: V.D. Yeremeyeva, S.N. Zhdanova, I.S. Kletsina, L.V. Popova, L.I. Stolyarchuk, L.V. Shtyleva and others. Gender relationships issues are included in the curricula of Russian humanitarian higher schools (Resolution of the Ministry of Education of the RF No. 480-15 of April 22, 2003). Developing and studying gender pedagogics, the researchers came to a conclusion on the need to use gender approach in education. The basis of gender approach in education is specific influence on the development of boys and girls by the set of educational and training process factors (everyday school life and its arrangement, educational and training methods, pedagogical education, etc.). Analyzing physiological and psychic specifics of both genders, great differences are observed in intellectual abilities and ways of information processing thus suggesting separate approaches to education and training. Therefore, the use of traditional teaching forms and methods in educational and training process ignoring the gender specifics is a great disadvantage of the educational process.

1.2 Analysis of the contemporary educational programs in physical culture. Physical culture lessons due to their specifics are specially fit for applying gender approach and solution of socio-psychological problems of the educational and training process. A teacher faces not a simple task to use individual and age-related specifics regardless from gender. Paradoxically, the specifics of the national education in essence have *masculine nature* while forms and methods are mainly *feminine* by their psychophysiological parameters (Federal state educational standards, 2010). The current educational programs in physical culture are not differentiated in high school (original physical education program by V.I. Lyakh, physical culture program by P.R. Matveyev). Girls and boys perform the same exercises aimed to develop motion skills which, in turn, don't contribute to the development of elegance and femininity in girls. Besides, for girls a strong anti-motivation factor in connection with physical culture is shyness caused by the aspects related to figures and bodies, inability to do some motion exercises, fear of jokes.

Studying the loss of interest to physical culture lessons at the second stage of high school, a few reasons may be specified: first, great discrepancy in prep and basic school programs both in the content and the methodology. Physical culture programs for prep school are based on playing activities while basic school program is oriented at sports; second, the programs of the basic school do not account much for differentiation and gender/age specifics (Kletsina,

2009). Meantime, in teen age both boys and girls prefer various motion activities, exercises, games, etc. Boys like the exercises aimed at strength and endurance as at this age they wish to look more physically developed and strong. Girls, in turn, prefer to do exercises to the music, aerobics and fitness workout, enabling to correct bodies, control weight and develop flexibility and coordination. All that complicates the organization of the educational and training process for schoolchildren, deforms the development process and often negatively affects their health. The solution of the existing problems is possible if a health-related approach with regard to the gender is applied in physical culture (Kletsina, 2009). Gender differentiation at physical culture lessons occurs only in senior high school (Vorotilkina, Anokhina, 2012 No. 5), as it is deemed that for prep school and middle school children it is not principal.

Currently, new content programs were introduced (physical culture program based on I.A. Viner's gymnastics, physical culture program for pupils of years 8-11 based on O.S. Slutsker's fitness, etc.). Yet they cannot solve the problem of the unwillingness to train because of co-education which keeps the psychological aspect. Nevertheless, the main task of a teacher is to give good general physical development to each pupil, cultivate love of a healthy lifestyle and desire to train both at physical culture lessons and in their free time. Federal state educational standards in *Physical culture* stress the need to improve skills and abilities of physical development and enhancement of motivation to physical culture and sports. Classes accounting for gender specifics of pupils are compliant with the objectives set.

Enhancement of the gender role in the educational process requires from a teacher to create new educational environment to facilitate the masculine/feminine behavior stereotypes aggravation of schoolchildren (Vorotilkina, Anokhina, 2012 No. 11). Based on gender approach, physical culture lessons should be planned accounting for gender specifics of pupils, creating in them the understanding of man's and woman's roles in society. Such arrangement of the educational and training process requires from any physical culture teacher not only the knowledge of anatomy, physiology and age psychology, but also that of schoolchildren's gender specifics.

1.3 Specifics of psychophysical needs. Psychological studies show that the need for motion activities in 10-15 year old boys is much higher than in girls (Allensworth, 1987). Boys strive to be courageous, strong, enduring. They prefer the exercises enhancing and developing their skills and abilities and having a specific focus. Initially, boys act selectively choosing the exercises compliant with the sphere of their interests. As to girls, they are more emotional. They express their demand in esthetics at physical culture lessons. They choose the kinds of activities compliant with their personal interests and needs at this moment. Girls are mostly capable to get involved in the activity process trying to perceive anything they are trained if possible. Planning the educational process, based on the available programs on

physical culture of the second stage of the basic high education, it is very hard to apply gender approach in class. The difficulty is that school programs are aimed at an average schoolchild ignoring individual gender specifics, thus complicating the arrangement of educational and training process, negatively affecting the quality of education (Gådin,, 2000). As a result, the need to use gender approach at physical culture lessons for schoolchildren of years 5-9 has emerged to improve motion activities training, motivation for physical exercises and creative self-realization of the pupils.

2. Methodology, objectives, tasks and principles of this research. To identify the efficiency of gender approach at physical culture lessons at the second stage of high education we conducted an experimental study. The objective of that study was to rationalize gender approach at physical culture lessons and to create comfortable environment accounting for psychophysiological specifics of pupils. The implementation of that objective was contributed by the solution of the following tasks:

- studying and analyzing the nature of psychophysiological specifics of pupils;
- identifying a teacher's activities in connection with that matter;
- adjusting calendar and topic-based schedule accounting for gender approach;
- carrying out control monitoring of motion training level and creative self-realization of pupils.

In solving the above tasks we relied on the following principles:

1. Humanization principle, a typical feature of which is accounting for biological and psychophysiological specifics and distinctions between boys and girls, facilitating more full realization of their abilities.
2. Democratization principle, pursuant to which boys and girls have equal rights to obtain skills of motion behavior and participate in school sport activities.
3. Availability principle covering on optimal compliance of pupils' abilities with the tasks put and means/methods applied.
4. Visibility principle allowing structuring classes using a wide range of visualization via viewing, hearing and moving.
5. Variability principle including the conditions for doing motion exercises and their content to achieve maximal result.
6. Developing effect principle based on gradual and repeated pedagogical influence along with the growth of functional abilities of a pupil's body.

3. Basic part. Arrangement and methods of research. The experimental study was carried out in high school No. 10 of Korolyov city (Moscow region) in 2014-2015. The study covered 116 persons of years 5-8 (one class of each year). The study of the dynamics in the development of physical fitness was carried out using test methods. The data obtained were processed via mathematical statistics methods. In the course of work, interviewing/questionnaires were also used to identify the problems arising

during joint classes, and expert assessment method was used to identify the level of school program acquisition.

Identifying the directions of the work, it was decided to apply gender approach in A classes of each year (5A, 6A, 7A, 8A classes). Physical culture lessons in those classes were given by two teachers: one for boys and one for girls. Based on psychological studies, for boys the following exercises were chosen: strength-forming; speed and speed-and-strength; endurance enhancement and sport games by choice. For girls, flexibility and coordination development exercises were chosen together with dancing and elements of aerobics, general endurance and sport games by choice. In compliance with the directions chosen, calendar and topic-based schedule was adjusted for each separate category. All sections of the training program in physical culture were preserved.

At the preparatory stage, in the beginning of the academic year, oral surveys were conducted in experimental classes. The survey included the issues related to motion activity and choice of sport games. Then, questionnaires were offered for pupils. Questionnaires enabled to identify the opinions of respondents on separate physical culture lessons, inclinations for various exercises, mutual relationships between boys and girls at those lessons and opportunity to improve motion training. Upon the results of the questionnaire, the following conclusions have been obtained:

- 65% of boys and 78% of girls think that physical culture lessons will be more efficient if they are separate;
- 35% of boys and 22% of girls do not care how lessons will be passing;
- 52% of boys and 71% of girls are interfered by the opinions of the opposite gender in class;
- 85% of boys and 18% of girls prefer exercises on strength and endurance development;
- 5% of boys and 82% of girls prefer dancing exercises;
- 73% of boys and 75% of girls think that the level of motion training will be increasing if classes are separate;
- 84% of boys and 77% of girls think that playing chosen sport games will be more efficient if classes are separate.

At the next stage, physical training was initially tested and the sport games were chosen pursuant to the results of questionnaire for each group of boys and girls. Sport games of the experimental classes are as follows:

- 5A – volleyball (boys and girls);
- 6A – basketball (boys), volleyball (girls);
- 7A – soccer (boys), volleyball (girls);
- 8A – volleyball (boys), cheerleading (girls).

To identify the level of physical fitness the following tests were conducted:

- running 30 m (s);
- long jump (cm);
- chin-ups (times), boys;



- push-ups (times), girls;
- sit-ups (times/30 s);
- running 1000 m (s).

Test results were recorded and processed via mathematical statistics methods (Student's t-criterion, White's T-criterion, etc.) for further monitoring required at this stage. It solves a number of comprehensive pedagogical issues: assists to watch the dynamics of growing development of motion training, to assess technical and tactical training in sport games study. To do a comparative analysis, tests were repeated in the end of the academic year.

4. Results. Analyzing the data of comparative monitoring as in the beginning and end of the experimental study, the level of physical activity improved: in boys of 5A class by 28%, of 6A class by 24%, of 7A class by 32%, of 8A class by 34%; in girls of 5A class by 34%, of 6A class by 28%, in 7A class by 22%, in 8A class by 30%. Within separate training in the studied area, the experimental classes achieved certain progress. Namely, volleyball teams of five-graders demonstrated ball possession while playing at school Welcome Day. A team of sixth grade girls played with parents' team. Although the girls lost they showed tough resistance. Parents and physical culture teachers stressed on rather high technics and tactics. Gender approach in 7 year allowed boys to have a better command of soccer technics and tactics. They won the municipal mini-soccer cups and *Leather Ball* cup. Boys from 8A class going in for volleyball were invited in school team and took a prize in a municipal cup. Girls participated in an open regional cheerleading cup *I love you, Russia!* and took the second prize; then their cheerleading team was invited for exhibition shows at municipal sports competitions.

5. Conclusions. Analyzing the work done, it may be stressed that there is an urgent need for separate education of 10-15 year old girls and boys at physical culture lessons, as their periods of physiological and physical growth do not match. During that period, they exhibit differences in development of physical abilities. Boys are more inclined to strength-forming exercises and endurance development while girls tend to develop flexibility and coordination (Gordiyash, 2009). Separate lessons also solve the psychological aspect playing a significant role in the desire to go in for physical culture and enhance motivation for a healthy lifestyle. At such lessons, both boys and girls feel more comfortable. They are relaxed, are not shy of their physical form, do exercises depending on their individual abilities. Planning such lessons should more attentively consider the psychological and social specifics of girls and boys, choose the exercises developing various physical qualities and creating a particular attitude to behavior style (figure, walking, motion dynamics). Gender approach may in qualitatively improve the teaching methodology (Kemper, 1994), use the means, methods and organizational forms of physical education in class which are specific for boys and girls. For instance, for boys competition

method is more efficient. The striving to be the first or the best contributes to the creation of personal qualities like purposefulness, leadership which in turn contributes to the socialization in the society. When working with girls, personality-oriented approach is preferable. For girls, it is very important to know that their personalities are seen accounting for individual merits and weaknesses. Correctly chosen exercises accounting for the individual specifics allow for more complete exposure and development of physical abilities (Kolbe 1986, Nader 1990), . They also help girls to develop their feminine nature. Gender approach strategy ensures self-realization in boys and girls based on their abilities, inclinations, interests and values not only at physical culture lessons but also in various learning activities.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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