



Psychophysical preparation in physical education as a factor in reducing personal anxiety of students

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Abstract. The study of leading scientists' research on the issues of psychophysical training in physical education in higher educational institutions has shown its insufficient professional direction. This has actualised the issue of scientific substantiation of the concept of psychophysical training of students, which is aimed at improving their level of readiness for professional function. The goal of the study was to investigate the influence of psychophysical training in physical education on the level of personal anxiety of students at the Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport of the Ukrainian State University of Science and Technologies. During the experiment, such research methods were used: literature review, pedagogical experiment, testing of personal anxiety level. In order to process the received data, mathematical and statistical methods were used. It was established that the higher education applicants of Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport had a low and moderate level of personal anxiety, 14% had a high level. The level of personal anxiety among female students was much higher: 49% had high indicators of personal anxiety. To find out the influence of physical culture and sports activities on the level of students' personal anxiety, a pedagogical experiment was conducted. The content of physical education classes included the mastering of a psychophysical training block aimed at reducing personal anxiety, specific for individuals of each gender. The selection of means took place considering the specifics of the future professional function. The conducted studies proved that under the influence of purposeful psychophysical training, the level of personal anxiety among students decreased statistically significantly ($p < 0.01$). Teachers can consider the obtained results during the organisation of physical education classes

Keywords: higher education students; psychomotor skills; Spielberger-Khanin test; young men; girls

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Introduction

One of the serious components of the training of higher education applicants is professionally-applied physical preparation. This contributes to the modelling of physical and mental qualities, motor abilities that are required for the future profession. A detailed study of investigations in this area shows that the main focus in scientific researches was on the applied (relative to the profession) orientation of the physical preparedness of future specialist. Besides, the significant potential of physical education in increasing the psychophysical readiness of students, which involves the formation of professionally significant personality traits, mental processes and psychomotor skills, was not taken into account at all. Ukraine has an unfavourable situation, when the health status and the level of preparedness of higher education applicants is very low. At the same time, students are not very interested in physical education, which is why there is a large number of missed classes. According to K.V. Prontenko *et al.* (2020), one of the approaches to improve their health and increase interest in physical education is the implementation of sports-oriented physical education. Considering the above, it should be noted that under such circumstances, the necessarily for the formation of professionally important personal psychophysical qualities of future specialists through their studying at higher education institutions is growing. The importance of professionally-applied physical preparation in institutions of higher education was indicated by I. Asauliuk (2020) and V. Pichurin (2021). The analysis of studies on the formation of the basis of students' professionally-applied physical training proved that it was carried out in the most detailed way. At the same time, it was found that the most developed issue was the one that related to professionally-applied physical preparation in certain specialties, such as technical, economic, artistic, maritime, railway, and sometimes humanitarian.

L. Tsareva *et al.* (2020) claimed that the current conditions for performing any professional activity are characterised by a high level of professional risks, the impact of which may have negative consequences for health in the future; the emergence of a state of constant anxiety, professional burnout; loss of control, violation of labour and technological discipline; occurrence of emergency situations; financial losses for the industry. P. Tkachenko (2016) emphasised that modern requirements for higher education and, subsequently, mastering the necessary professional skills, require a high level of physical fitness indicators from students. In this regard, A. Andres (2021) noted that higher education institutions are responsible for promoting the quality preparation of future highly qualified specialists who must be competitive in the modern labour market. V.V. Zayka (2024) pointed out that, at the same time, the training method of modern specialists in higher educational institutions is characterised by high intensification of the educational process. This determines the pronounced hypodynamic and hypokinetic nature of the educational activity of students against the background of high neuropsychological tension. That is why the issue of researching the impact of psychophysical preparation in physical education on the degree of personal anxiety of higher education applicants is becoming relevant now. The above determined the chosen goal of

the study: to investigate the influence of psychophysical preparation in physical education on the level of personal anxiety of students at the Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport of the Ukrainian State University of Science and Technologies (Dnipro, Ukraine). 120 students of higher education ($N = 120$), including 60 girls and 60 boys, who are studying engineering specialties, took part in the research. The aim of the pedagogical experiment was to determine the impact of physical culture and sports activities on the components of psychophysical readiness of students, in particular on the degree of their personal anxiety. The duration of the experiment was one academic year (2018-2019). Before the start of the study, the students were acquainted with the research methodology and indicators reflecting the level of psychophysical preparedness. A description of the testing methodology, its evaluation criteria and formulas were provided. The research was conducted in compliance with ethical norms when working with people, all survey participants were acquainted with the purpose of using their data, informed about anonymity and the existing risks (Declaration of Helsinki, 2013). Indicators of personal anxiety were determined according to Spielberger-Khanin test (n.d.). For this, students were offered the second part of the self-assessment scale, statements from 21 to 40. After filling out the answer sheets, they were sent to e-mail, with further processing of the results. To process the obtained results, the methods of mathematical statistics were applied using the Excel 2018 package. The use of descriptive statistics involved finding the arithmetic mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. The Student's *t* test for dependent samples was used for statistical finishing of the obtained data.

The experimental and control groups contained equal number of girls and boys. Students of control groups ($n = 60$) were engaged in the physical education curriculum for higher education institutions of the third and fourth levels of accreditation. The content of the educational activity of experimental groups' participants ($n = 60$) additionally included the mastering of psychophysical training block aimed at reducing personal anxiety, specific for individuals of each gender. The grade for this section affected the overall grade for the academic discipline "Physical Education". Thus, the final assessment was given taking into account all sections: theoretical, methodical, physical and psychophysical training. During the experiment there were offered the following blocks of psychophysical training: a block of psychological knowledge, a block of professionally significant sports, special physical exercises for vestibular stability, exercises for self-regulation skills and reducing the consequences of stress (autogenic training) and sports competitions in professionally significant sports (as a form of organising classes). If an unsatisfactory grade was obtained for one of the specified sections, the overall final grade for the discipline "Physical Education" was also "unsatisfactory". Necessity to achieve a certain result in the chosen sport was emphasised separately: for boys – the performance of the third sports category in powerlifting and sports games;

for girls – participation in university gymnastics and aerobics competitions. The selection of means took place considering the specifics of the future professional function. The proposed means were implemented in educational forms of classes and divided into four blocks: a block of psychological education, professionally significant sports, special physical exercises for the development of psychomotor skills and the formation of professionally important motor abilities, exercises for mastering the facilities of self-regulation of mental state and reducing the effects of stress (autogenic training).

Results and Discussion

Preliminary testing of personal anxiety was conducted at the beginning of the academic year to reach the goal of the study. Experimental and control groups were formed. It was established that before the beginning of the pedagogical experiment, higher education students of experimental and control groups were very close in indicators of personal anxiety level. A final testing was conducted at the end of the second year of the study. The dynamics of changes in personal anxiety during the experiment in both groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Statistical values of personal anxiety indicators of experimental and control groups of students before and after the experiment, number of points, $N = 120$

Indicator	Sex	Experimental group, $n = 60$ (30 males, 30 females)		Control group, $n = 60$ (30 males, 30 females)	
		Before the experiment	After the experiment	Before the experiment	After the experiment
\bar{x}	Males, $n = 60$	49.60	48.20**	49.46	49.43
	Females, $n = 60$	53.10	52.23**	52.96	53.13
Me	Males, $n = 60$	48.5	48.0	48.5	48.5
	Females, $n = 60$	52	52	52	52
Mo	Males, $n = 60$	46	46	46	46
	Females, $n = 60$	61	60	61	61
SD	Males, $n = 60$	3.69	3.94	3.62	3.69
	Females, $n = 60$	5.34	5.99	5.49	5.61

Notes: \bar{x} – mean; Me – median; Mo – mode; ** – statistically significant differences, $p < 0.01$

Source: calculated by the authors

Analysing the obtained results, attention was drawn to the decrease in statistical indicators of personal anxiety among students of the experimental group. Thus, among young men in the experimental group, the arithmetic means of the level of personal anxiety decreased by 2.82% (from 49.6 to 48.2 points). While the boys of the control group remained almost unchanged (0.06%). The indicators of personal anxiety in the girls of the experimental group decreased by an average of 1.64% (from 53.1 to 52.23 points). This can be qualified as significant changes. In the control group of girls, there was an increase in the average indicator of the level of personal anxiety by 0.32% (from 52.96 to 53.13). It should be noted, that the students of control groups who attended ordinary physical education classes did not experience a statistically significant decrease in their level of personal anxiety. The obtained data were consistent with the conclusions of K. Kravchenko (2024), might be associated with insufficient use of physical, and sports activities, which are effective for reducing personal anxiety in the process of traditional physical education classes in a higher education institution.

The task of the theoretical section of the programme was to form a system of knowledge in the area of physical culture among students. The main task of methodological training was to master the methodology for determining and individually dosing the level of physical activity during physical exercises, to gain experience in using physical culture and sports activities to achieve set life and professional goals. The practical section was directly related to the psychophysical training of students. For example, activities in such sports as football, volleyball, basketball, handball and futsal can be psychologically and professionally significant for students of technical specialities. Track and field

(middle- and long-distance running) are an effective means of forming the majority of strong-willed personality qualities – perseverance, resilience, independence, purposefulness, discipline, endurance, energy, patience, etc. Since the development of these qualities is important for students of technical specialities, the above-mentioned sports should be considered professionally significant for them. Special physical exercises in gymnastics, fitness, yoga, etc. are also effective means of psychophysical training of students. With their help, students can evaluate or develop the characteristics of attention, speed of actions, stability of vestibular reactions, accuracy of muscle sensations, working memory.

A detailed analysis of the results of participants of both sexes of the experimental groups revealed a statistically significant decrease in the indicators of the level of personal anxiety according to the Student's t test for dependent samples: t empirical in male students of the experimental group was 4.4; in female students it was 3.2. This might be explained by the different effectiveness of means that were used during the training sessions for representatives of both sexes. This gave a reason to assert that the use of athletics and powerlifting in boys, and aerobics in girls, in the process of psychophysical training in physical education classes had a statistically significant effect on reducing their level of personal anxiety. Well-developed muscles help to increase the sense of self-confidence for boys. In turn, it was very important for girls to acquire slimness and dexterity. This was capable to increase self-confidence, which directly contributed to reducing the degree of personal anxiety.

Therefore, in order to reduce the level of personal anxiety, it is recommended to introduce special psychophysical training in the process of physical education. Having considered the number of sources of scientific and methodical

literature that was available, it can be argued that there is currently tendency to level up of personal anxiety of students in the process of studying in institutions of higher education. As a result of filling in the self-assessment scale, it was found that 86% of male students had a low and moderate level of personal anxiety; 14% had a high level. Thus, it was these students who needed special preventive work in the process of their psychophysical training. It was established that the level of personal anxiety among female students is much higher: 49% of girls had high indexes of personal anxiety; low level was not recorded. Under the influence of purposeful psychophysical training, the level of personal anxiety among students of Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport decreased statistically significantly ($p < 0.01$). In the experimental group of male students who had a high degree of personal anxiety, powerlifting and athletic gymnastics proved their effectiveness. They were the main block of the psychophysical training programme for this category of students. In the experimental group of girls, who also had a high level of personal anxiety, aerobics proved to be effective. In this regard, there is a need to further decrease their level of personal anxiety by perfecting the process of psychophysical training in physical education.

Conducted research proved that the majority of students had a high level of personal anxiety. The obtained data confirmed the results of previous studies by N. Dakal *et al.* (2021) and K. Kravchenko (2024), which revealed that 55% of first-year higher education students had a high degree of personal anxiety, and 45% had a moderate degree of personal anxiety. Considering the fact that anxiety could be changed in the process of professional formation of an individual, A. Mahindru *et al.* (2023) indicated that the process of physical education in institutions of higher education should be aimed at improving the psychophysical condition of students with its subsequent preservation over a long period. The given data should encourage teachers of educational institutions to timely assess the level of personal anxiety among students in order to correct it.

The results of this research have been confirmed in comparison with the opinion of scientists O. Plyeshakova (2020) and G.P. Griban *et al.* (2022), who claimed that physical education in a higher education institution should be personally oriented, especially now when the extremely low level of physical activity is noted among higher education students. Researchers A. Mahindru *et al.* (2023) noted that depression and anxiety can be influenced by physical exercise that specified in this study. The obtained data are also consistent with the conclusions of A. Kovalenko (2024). The researcher proved that an effective process of physical education and specially organised motor activity of higher education applicants were positively correlated with well-being, mood and activity of students. Physical activity improves intellectual functions: it increases memory, mental performance and cognitive flexibility. Targeted sports can enhance the psychological state of students, reduce the symptoms of depression, ensure a positive mood, improve self-esteem and develop social skills. Moreover, scientists A. Tri Wibowo *et al.* (2023) in their study concluded that professionally oriented physical training contributes to increasing the attention concentration of students and strengthening of emotional control and intelligence.

The ideas about the formation of mental characteristics in physical culture activities were further developed. The results obtained by the authors confirm the conclusions V. Chernii *et al.* (2020) about the importance of physical education in preparing specialists for professional activities, namely: designation of professionally weighty physical qualities of engineers, experimental checking of the effectiveness of the author's programme of complex development of professionally important physical qualities in future specialists of technical profile. This becomes even more urgent due to the fact that the physical condition of student youth is rapidly deteriorating. This leads to growth in morbidity and lowering in the level of physical activity, as noted by V. Bondarenko (2022) and C. Dell'Acqua *et al.* (2024). Regarding the process of physical education in a higher education institution, I. Stepanova *et al.* (2022) emphasised the fact that it is a leading mean of improving the psychophysical state and, in particular, restoring mental performance. This position was confirmed by this research. Since psychological well-being was determined by numerous external and internal factors, as O. Kozub (2020) insists, the opinion of W. Stadnik (2022) is valid, indicating that in order to realise the goal of physical education of students in current conditions, it is mandatory ensuring compliance of training content and methods with the needs of preserving and strengthening health, protection from threats, as well as overcoming stress.

The study conducted on the example of students of the Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport of the Ukrainian State University of Applied Sciences proved the effectiveness of the use of psychophysical training in order to reduce the level of personal anxiety of students of higher education, as one of the indicators of effective stress management. The study of psychophysical training in physical education of students of the Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport of the Ukrainian State University of Science and Technology has demonstrated its effectiveness and positive impact on the degree of personal anxiety, as one of the indicators of effective stress management.

Conclusions

During the pedagogical experiment, the goal of the study concerning the determination of the influence of psychophysical training in physical education on the level of personal anxiety of students of the Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport of the Ukrainian State University of Science and Technology was achieved. It was settled that at the beginning of the study, students of higher educational institutions of the Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport mostly had a low and moderate level of personal anxiety, but 14% had a high level of anxiety. The obtained data confirmed the positive influence of physical culture and sports activities on the components of psychophysical readiness of students, in particular on the level of their personal anxiety. Additional use of psychophysical training blocks contributed to the reduction of personal anxiety, specific for individuals of each gender. The use of developed blocks had its own features and advantages. The average indicator of the level of personal anxiety in male students of the experimental group decreased statistically significantly by 2.82%, and in female students – by 1.64%.

The means used during the training sessions for both sexes had different effectiveness. For instance, use of athleticism and powerlifting for boys, and aerobics for girls had a statistically significant effect on reducing their level of personal anxiety. Teachers organising physical education in higher education institutions can consider the obtained results. The research, conducted on the example of students of the Dnipro Institute of Infrastructure and Transport of the Ukrainian State University, proved the effectiveness of using psychophysical training to reduce the level of personal anxiety of students of higher educational institutions, as one of the indicators of effective stress management. Further research can be devoted to identifying changes in the level of concentration and attention stability of students in

the process of their psychophysical training as a component of physical education.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Психофізична підготовка у фізичному вихованні як фактор зниження особистісної тривожності в студентів

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Анотація. Дослідження праць провідних науковців із питань психофізичної підготовки у фізичному вихованні закладів вищої освіти засвідчило наявність її недостатньої професійної спрямованості. Це актуалізує питання наукового обґрунтування концепції психофізичної підготовки здобувачів вищої освіти, яка спрямована на підвищення рівня їх готовності до професійної діяльності. Метою дослідження було дослідити вплив психофізичної підготовки у фізичному вихованні на рівень особистісної тривожності здобувачів вищої освіти в Дніпровському інституті інфраструктури і транспорту Українського державного університету науки і технологій. У ході експерименту застосовувалися наступні методи дослідження: аналіз та узагальнення літературних джерел, педагогічний експеримент, тестування рівня особистісної тривожності. З метою обробки отриманих даних використано методи математичної статистики. Встановлено, що в здобувачів першого рівня вищої освіти, які навчаються у Дніпровському інституті інфраструктури і транспорту, переважає низький і помірний рівень особистісної тривожності, 14 % мають високий рівень. Рівень особистісної тривожності студенток є набагато вищим: 49 % мають високі показники особистісної тривожності. З метою з'ясування впливу фізкультурної і спортивної діяльності на рівень особистісної тривожності здобувачів вищої освіти було проведено педагогічний експеримент. До змісту занять із фізичного виховання було включено освоєння зорієнтованого на зниження особистісної тривожності, специфічного для осіб кожної статі, блоку психофізичної підготовки. Підбір засобів відбувався з урахуванням особливостей майбутньої професійної діяльності. Проведені дослідження довели, що під впливом цілеспрямованої психофізичної підготовки рівень особистісної тривожності в здобувачів вищої освіти статистично достовірно ($p < 0,01$) знизився. Отримані результати можуть бути враховані викладачами під час організації занять з фізичного виховання

Ключові слова: здобувачі вищої освіти; психомоторика; тест Спілберґера-Ханіна; юнаки; дівчата