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Cross-Cultural Analysis and Systematization of the Physical Education Models

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The paper looks into some possible ways of reconstructing the current physical education on the basis of a favorable balance between traditional and innovative approaches to educational activity as well as digesting the interpretation of the previous experience. The research purposes are to analyze and systematize PE models by employing the methods of idealization, extrapolation and vector models. As a result therapeutic-adaptive, socially-oriented, person-centered and athletic-recreative models have been found and investigated with the focus on their peculiarities, benefits and limitations. It is proved that everybody should be educated differently according to individual abilities and characteristics and through harmonization of individual, community and state interests and preferences.

Keywords: physical education, background and the present status, PE models, psychological basis, goals and realization mechanisms, PE model advantages and limitation.

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Introduction

The striking changes in science methodology caused by undermining the stable positions and principles of classical rationalism, especially mono-approaches and the finality of truism, have given rise to reinterpreting the historical experience as well as new trends in education, including physical education, so that the traditional, unified and inefficient system can be improved.

Moreover, due to the popularity of the person-centered approach in the education at the beginning of the 21st century the world

scientific and teaching communities have become overexcited about previously discussed (1) issues, such as:

1. Does PE presume physical development or personal enhancement through physicality?
2. What should attention be focused on – morphosis or internalization?
3. What should be targeted in PE – energizing fitness or sports?

Methods

Guided by the ideas expressed by L.A. Beliaeva (2), P.S. Gurevich (3) and

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I.G. Fomicheva (4) we made a cross-cultural analysis and organized PE models by employing a vector method.

According to P.S. Gurevich, any phenomenon can be comprehended and interpreted either through comparison with others or through the discovery of its unique nature. An internal study of human beings is attended with learning about their relationships and attitudes to the culture and the world around, which suggests approaching a person’s mystery from the outside and perceiving the modes of being (bodily and spiritual existence).

Discussion

The modes and the medium of a human being’s existence (B.G. Anan’ev, A.N. Leont’ev, V.I. Slobodchikov) analyses as well as the study of the advent and multiformity of physical culture (L. Kun, G.G. Natalov, N.I. Ponomarev) enabled us to conclude that an objective variety of PE models is predetermined by their anthropological and ontological components, specifically by

a particular combination of two interrelated and interdependent vectors:”body – spirit” and “nature – culture” (5, 6, 7).

The foregoing made it possible to distinguish four models of PE, extreme in their manifestations and differing in target orientations. The four models observed are: therapeutic-adaptive, socially-oriented, person-centered and athletic-recreative (Fig. 1).

The therapeutic-adaptive PE model in its essence fits the naturocentric model of educational work (L.A. Beliaeva, I.G. Fomicheva) and corresponds to the so called biological concept of personal development (Hamilton, Kretchmer, Sheldon, et al.) which states that a person gets some innate qualities that are revealed in the process of his or her biosocial development. Therefore, educators should “follow the person’s nature”.

In the frame of this model the aims of physical education are to strengthen health, to promote normal physical growth and development as well as physical fitness of students, to create

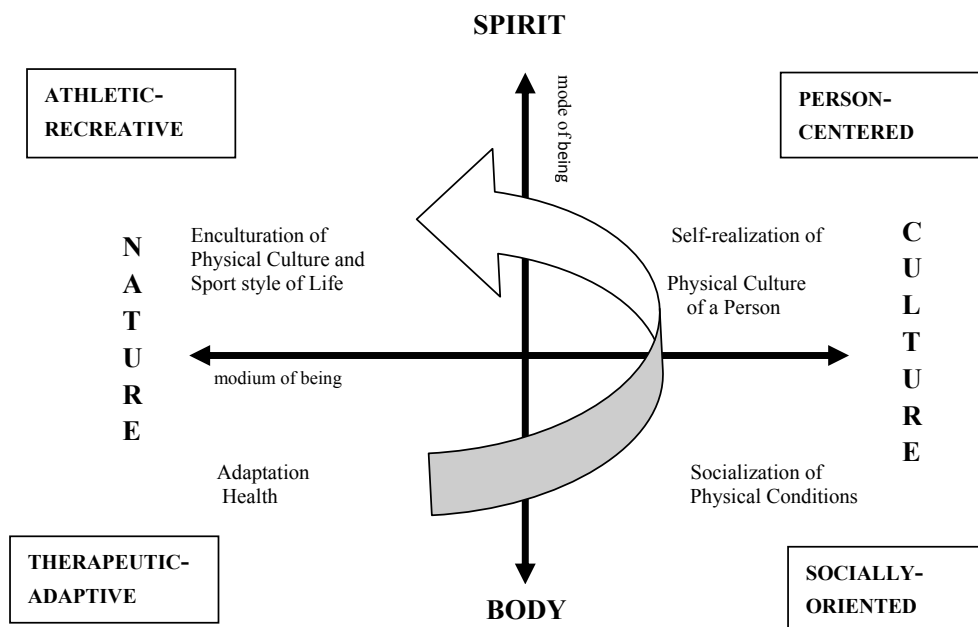


Fig. 1. Physical Education Models

individual morphofunctional and motor bases necessary for the students' to be able to adapt to the natural and social conditions of life. The role of the medium in this model is connected with the educator's therapeutic-adaptive influence on the student's body-motor potential with an allowance for his/her individual peculiarities and through exercising and natural factors (the sun, air and water)

The therapeutic-adaptive PE model is realized in conformity with nature on the basis of an individual approach (predominantly selective) to the educational process and optimization of interaction.

In this connection, the criteria for the model realization will be a student's homeostasis, physical development, gained knowledge and skills in body revitalization issues.

Oriental traditions in therapeutic-adaptive PE originated from Ayurvedic doctrine and Taoistic ways of preventive treatment based on the cosmocentric philosophical views. India and China make a shining example as countries with continuous and successive development of the therapeutic-adaptive PE. For instance, in the squares and parks of modern China people of all ages and professions daily practice Chi Kung, wushu and do other health giving exercises.

In the West the naturocentric and conformity-with-nature ideas are associated with the names of Aristotle, Democritus, Plato and, later on, with Jean Jacques Rousseau. However, Ya. A. Komensky is believed to have formulated the principle of conformity-with-nature in pedagogic science. He stated that "the exact order of school must be taken from nature"

At the beginning of the XX century sanitary ideas were developed by O. Decroly who wrote about "protecting" students and by G. Hebert in his Natural Method. The latter, following Rousseau,

Amoros and G. Demeny, made "naturalness" the basic principle of his classes (8).

Nowadays this type of sanitary and correcting model is utilized in the system of national education in special medical support groups. Adaptive and stimulating principles are connected with acquiring motor skills and physical conditions allowing for the student's somatotype (V.V. Zaitseva, A.G. Trushkin, et al.) and basic physique (G.D. Babushkin, I.I. Suleimanov, V.V. Miakotnykh, et al.).

The therapeutic-adaptive PE model should be used to form axiological, conative, informative and operational components of recreational activities both at the beginning of a child's entry into the world of culture, including physical culture (at preschool and primary school ages) and in the teaching situation while working with teenagers and youth having health problems. Besides, the model is a must in further and self-education, as it allows forming a methodical and conditional basis necessary for regular health improving exercising, physique corrections, a better working and intellectual capacity and longer life span.

The limitations of the model are connected with the situations when a person has to achieve a near-optimal level of physical conditions in a short period. However, socially oriented educational process makes it possible.

The socially-oriented PE model is based on the sociological trend in the theory of personal enhancement (social learning theory; I.P. Pavlov, J.B. Watson, B.F. Skinner, et al.) It states that organized educational activities have a great impact on molding a personality regardless of the inborn qualities.

The objectives of the socially-oriented physical education are predetermined by the needs of the society and its views. In this context the educational process framed by the model takes the form of a general (for life) and special

(professionally or military applied, etc.) fitness training. Moreover, in this case educational work constitutes the most influential medium for acquiring physical education knowledge and skills through the intensified teaching process. The latter is stimulated by a specially chosen set of didactic strategies and directives aimed at socialization of the younger generation.

In the process of the model implementation the following principles become important: the unification of the content, intensification of the process and perspective interaction of its subjects.

The criteria for the socially-oriented PE model are knowledge, skills and physical fitness which in actual practice reduce to a “chase” for the normative level of physical fitness of children and adolescents in accordance with the syllabus requirements.

In the frame of both socially-oriented and therapeutic-adaptive PE models special emphasis is placed on the development of the person’s bodily-motor potential. The difference is that in the therapeutic-adaptive model the priorities lie in a careful development of a person’s nature “in the name of man”, while in the socially-oriented model they are set by the society’s demands to the nature of man “in the name of the society”.

The systems of physical education in Sparta and Ancient Rome make an impressive example of the socially-oriented model. The systems aimed to improve military and physical fitness. European chivalric education of military patriotic character in the XII century can be another example.

The idea of the physical education utilitarian and compensatory roles is clearly seen in the national bourgeois gymnastic systems of the Modern Age represented by German (F. Jahn, E. Eiselen), Swedish (P. Ling) and Czech (M. Tyrsh) schools (8).

Besides the mentioned above, the Soviet system of physical education for children and adolescents had a clear social orientation, as according to the syllabus valid till the early 90s, the athletic complex called “Ready for Labour and Defense of the USSR” was the regulatory framework. Moreover, the USSR socially-oriented PE model was not only successful because of its powerful ideology but also due to its centralized and conservative ways. Its unified, authoritarian and technocratic character helped to move gradually from “mass-individual PE revanchism” of the 30-50-ies, when the idea of superiority of the Soviet ways was advocated in all the spheres of life, towards the “individual-mass PE nihilism”. The latter appeared in the 80-ies and revealed itself in the denial of everything which was compulsory, unified and related to rule making.

Nowadays the most successful socially-oriented PE models appear to be the systems and methods aimed at developing physical (V.I. Liakh, H.B. Maikson) and professionally-applied fitness (V.P. Zhidkikh).

There are both pros and cons in any socially-oriented PE model. The advantages of the model above are connected with a good organization of the teaching process which allows achieving a positive dynamics of a student’s physical fitness within the shortest possible time due to prescriptive strategies of pedagogic guidance. The model is especially applicable in specialized educational institutions such as military schools, institutions for children with developmental delays and others. It is also efficient in nurturing a child’s socially acceptable behaviour at some particular ages, and, which is especially important, it is effective in improving physical fitness for general, special and professional purposes, including work in extreme conditions.

On the other hand, the utilitarian character of the educational process and prescriptive ways

of guiding educational activities may have a negative impact on the students' motivation as they suppress their independence, activity and creativity, for developing which special conditions are needed in the frames of the person-oriented model of physical education.

The person-centered PE model is based on humanistic ideas of the theory of personality development (A. Maslow, C. Rogers, et al.) It is also conformable to the anthropocentric model of educational activities by L. A. Beliaeva and I.G. Fomicheva, within which the personality development becomes the target of the process of self-improvement through inner activities, emotional wellbeing, motivation and creativity.

In this PE model the accent is placed on forming an integral person through developing his/her personality and abilities in order to set and achieve goals and harmonization of spiritual and bodily capacities. The model aims to form the physical culture of a person by creating favorable conditions for acquiring its values with the help of an elective trajectory for self education, pedagogic support and guidance.

While implementing the person-centered PE model the educational work should be culturally appropriate, electively differentiable and based on teacher/student cooperation.

The criteria of the model efficiency are the motivation to exercise, the students' good psychophysical condition, their independence in creative attitudes towards physical training permitting to enrich the subjective experience in self improvement and development of volitional and moral qualities of the individual.

The origin of the person-centered physical education relates to Ancient Hellas where physical education was highly developed due to holistic understanding of the human world as a "combination of bodily and physical beauty with spiritual and intellectual inner content" (8).

However, P.F. Lesgaft is believed to have been the founder of the anthropological approach to physical education. Lesgaft and his successor V.V. Gorinevskii stated that "true education aims to educate the whole person with no separation of mind, body and soul". Warning against coaching a future expert in standard labour activities, P.F. Lesgaft pointed out that "the broader a person's education is the better he/she understands the life phenomena and the more aware of general ways they are the better they will cope with the private issues assigned to them and the more capable they will be to change them, putting their heart into them. If they get acquainted with just particular ways, they will never achieve the level corresponding to their temperament, abilities and other qualities" (9).

The scientists who contributed to the development of some aspects of the person-centered approach in physical education are as follows: N.V. Barysheva, S.V. Barbashov, M.Ya. Vilenskii, V.I. Il'inich, I.G. Kholkin, A.V. Lotonenko, V.A. Strel'tsov, et al.

The described model proves to be efficient at any stage of a child's development but is especially effective in the senior school. At this stage it is particularly significant to create the atmosphere stimulating physical self determination and reflexively creative attitudes to practicing. It concerns both elite specialized schools for gifted children and institutions for vocational training whose graduates deal with creative work (belles lettres, educational research, etc.)

On the other hand, the implementation of the model appears to be labor consuming and costly as it requires creating various elective trajectories suitable for each child's physical development. However, the athletic recreative PE model makes differentiation according to interests possible.

The athletic-recreative PE model is based on the ideas introduced by ecological psychology or rather by eco-behavioral research carried out

by R. Barker and R.Villems (10) who proved the existence of “behavioral settings» and stable behavioral patterns related to them depending on the physical environment (a gym, stadium, swimming pool and others). The model also relies on J. Gibson’s theory of affordance (10) which marks out the active beginning of a subject exploring his/her inhabitable environment (ecological environment, according to Gibson) where an opportunity is a bridge between the subject and the environment, which is defined by both its properties (or stimuli) and the properties of the subject (the activity to meet the stimuli).

According to the adherents of the ecological psychology, a short term success is easily achieved by changing a person’s behaviour and individuality, leaving the environment untouched. Thus the problem will remain unsolved, unless the interaction between the person and the environment becomes the focus of educational work.

Therefore, the semantic nucleus of the model is built by various athletic recreative activities which, on the one hand, operate within the behavioral settings prompted by the physical environment and regulated by the rules of sports. On the other hand, the activities provide a range of opportunities for a free choice of motor recreation types, places, modes of practice and social environments depending on a subject’s athletic and physical preferences and needs.

By speaking about athletic recreative activities we mean the integration of grassroots sport and physical recreation which are generally voluntarily chosen to meet the goals of physical and spiritual perfection of a person.

The athletic recreative model aims to make sport a way of life and develop competence of the younger generation as a way of enculturation in the contemporary socio-cultural environment. The model helps to have an indirect control over the physical education of children and adolescents

by forming and enriching the sports environment which provides opportunities and conditions for self-expression.

The guiding principles for the athletic recreative model will be openness and coherence of the athletic environment, variability of the educational process and constructibility of the subjects’ cooperative work.

The implementation criteria for the athletic recreative PE model will be values and motivationally significant attitudes of the students towards physical culture and sports, fitness and sport competence, independence and active creation of the life style, sociability and tolerance.

In the framework of the athletic recreative PE model as well as in the person-centered one the emphasis is placed on the harmonization of spiritual and physical development of a person. The difference is that the first model favours sport games and competitions which reflect the social nature of a human being and have a great educational value based on cooperation and rivalry at the agreed rules. Whereas the second one advocates any system of individually chosen exercises, including fitness training, jogging and others constructed on the alternative basis, i.e. without competition, rivalry and confrontation.

First, historically, the athletic recreative model of physical education developed due to the enculturation of people’s motor activity in the sense of its intrinsic value not only for the somatic skills but for the spiritual and aesthetic self-help (11) through exercising sensation and its perfection when “a person creates something by the beauty law”. Secondly, the development of athletic recreative type of PE was caused by an increase in industrial production, automation of labour and consequently the usage of games as a means for an active rest, illness prevention and restoration of working capacity of workers and

employees. Finally, the PE model evolved due to constantly changing living conditions which required alertness, sociability and mobility from a person. The development of the model was also connected with the use of games as a method of joining the culture of a certain community.

The origin of sport games goes back to folk games, rituals and traditional holidays. In Ancient Greece during the period V-IV BC the most important role in physical education was played by *palestrika* (all-around), *orhestrika* (dance and acrobatics) and *agonistics* (games).

The history of Middle Ages PE shows that even religions of different nations, e.g. Christianity, were forced to allow exercising and games though they were considered to provoke Seven Deadly Sins. Ch. Montesquieu wrote to statesmen, "You may change the law of any nation and abridge its freedom but don't you dare to touch its games" (8).

During the period of the New Age British educators R. Mulcaster, T. Arnold, Ch. Kingsley and T. Hughes were able to observe that sport games held according to the rules of a "fair play" made a wonderful method of bringing up a gentleman. Besides, the athletic recreative physical activities developed due to religious beliefs (Protestant, Hebrew and Catholic organizations), paramilitary youth organizations (the Boy Scouts), local and factory communities and movements (R. Owen's factory, "Social Quarters" in London, "Jordan Gardens" in Krakow, "Bogatyr" founded by K.G. Alekseyev and others).

At present, according to V.V. Prikhod'ko, A.V. Tsarik and others, the athletic recreative approach is considered to be the most prospective direction for physical education in the USA. In Russia a group of children and adolescents have successfully been educated in the framework of athletic-like physical activities by a team of scientist headed by V.K. Bal'sevich and L.I. Lubysheva for the past decade.

The athletic-recreative PE model is appropriate for any age, though it works best at senior specialized and professional schools, because the students have already acquired vital motor skills; they have become interested in particular sports and exercises. Moreover, if the students of the stage when life values and professional preferences are formed miss an opportunity to go in for sports they prefer, they may completely lose motivation to exercising on their own.

The limitations of the model are put by material and technical support necessary for the model implementation. We obviously need modern facilities meeting the present architectural, aesthetic and hygienic requirements, high quality equipment, adequate funding of sports activities and specially trained educators motivated to interact with students, support them and get to a constructive dialogue with them, capable of using the educational potential of a minor social (sport) group.

Apparently, the models discussed above, don't exist ideally, they interact, add and compensate the specific disadvantages and limitations of one another, which proves to be even necessary under the conditions of variable education types. However, the process of their integration demands special rules and principles.

Following multi-paradigmatic approach (I.G. Fomicheva) the interaction of pedagogic models is based on such principles as combination, compensation, conformity and balance (4).

In our opinion, the differences in peoples' physical state as well as factors, conditions and opportunities of the educational work are of utmost importance while organizing the physical education process. It suggests that the principles of adaptability and cumulativeness should be adhered to.

The adaptability principle dictates that the pedagogic models must be, first, adjusted to the internal and external conditions of upbringing as a “here and now”; secondly, they must anticipate what will be necessary for individual and sociocultural development of a person in the future.

The principle of cumulateness presumes accumulative and praxeological results from the used models, the effect of which can be both positive and negative. It is like this because in an ideal educational system adapted to a variety of its internal and external conditions there is a balance between ideology landmarks and development, i.e. spirit (freedom) – body (compulsion) and nature (natural) – culture (artificial) in the terms of spatio temporal and energetic aspects.

Conclusion

Thus the present cross-cultural analysis and systematization of PE models allowed us to draw the following major conclusions:

1. It is the contradictions between actual and potential bodily-spiritual possibilities and human needs as well as the conflict of the social demands to bodily-spiritual state of humans and their actual physical conditions that make the main developmental factors of physical education. These factors help people to adapt, socialize, and develop a good personality and to get enculturated in the natural socio-cultural environment. They also answer the question “what to educate for?” – So that to survive in this constantly changing world.

2. Physical education should rely on all the natural and socio-cultural factors, conditions and opportunities that can have both an accidental and organized impact on the development of a person. It should also make use of flexible forms, means and methods of recovery and upbringing to raise an active, competent, mobile and tolerant personality, to advance health value awareness of children and youth and to build evolutive environment for self determination in this constantly changing world. In connection with this, the question “who and how to educate and raise?” can be answered – “Everyone, but differently! It depends on individual characteristics and there must be a balance between individual and societal interests”.

3. In relation to physical education of a particular person, every one should go through the individual, social and cultural development which suggests adaptation, socialization, self-realization and enculturation. So the leading modality of physical education in primary school will be the therapeutic – adaptive one while in junior – socially-oriented. In senior (including vocational) school it should be person-centered or athletic recreative.

4. In real life the characterized PE models rarely occur in isolation. They interpenetrate one another compensating for the drawbacks and limitations of each one. The process is justified and even necessary under the conditions of variable education types but it requires certain rules or principles of their agreement.

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Кросс-культурный анализ и систематизация моделей физического воспитания

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Проблема исследования связана с поиском путей реконструкции современного физического воспитания на основе осмысления богатейшего опыта его развития и нахождения разумного соотношения традиций и инноваций. Целью работы стал кросс-культурный анализ и систематизация моделей физического воспитания. Автором использованы методы идеализации, экстраполяции, векторного моделирования. В ходе исследования выделены и проанализированы оздоровительно-адаптивная, социально ориентированная, личностно ориентированная и спортивно-рекреативная модели физического воспитания. Показана их специфика, преимущества и ограничения для применения в практике современного физического воспитания. Автором показано, что воспитывать нужно всех по-разному, учитывая индивидуальные особенности обучающихся и находя разумный баланс между интересами личности, общества и государства.

Ключевые слова: физическое воспитание, истоки и современное состояние, модели физического воспитания, психологические основания, целевые ориентиры и механизмы реализации, преимущества и ограничения моделей физического воспитания.

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