The activity approach as a part of a socializing process in adaptive sports activities

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ABSTRACT

The study and development of the socialization process is a topical problem for science and practice nowadays. The authors present in the article the analysis results of the activity approach as a part of the socializing process in adaptive sports activities. The material is addressed to the factors of social upbringing and the implementation of the goals and objectives of socialization in adaptive sports activities. The paper also contains the study results of socialization of schoolchildren with limited abilities in adaptive sports activities. In addition, the possibilities of sports and the negative impact of sports models on the socialization of children with limited abilities have been analysed in this paper. An integrated model of adaptive-sports extracurricular activities for students with limited abilities, its organization technology has been presented. As a result of the study, it has been proved that adaptive sports activities as an area of self-expression, manifestation and formation of certain abilities, gifts and talent, is an important part of socialization of the student which helps prepare students with limited abilities for life.

Keywords: Activity approach; Adaptive-sports activities; Activity theory; Socialization; Socially significant activity.

INTRODUCTION

The study and development of the socialization process is of great interest to scientists and practitioners today. Socialization is the process and the result of learning and active reproduction of social experience by an individual, carried out in communication and activity, it is one of the primary goals of the education of the younger generation. In the concept of child development proposed by L.S. Vygotsky (1983), the socialization features of children with limited abilities should be based on the assumption that these individuals are viewed as normal, able to adopt socialization, but in other ways than typical individuals. The ultimate goal of the entire system of pedagogical work is the social adaptation of children with limited abilities. However, at present there is a situation where only a small part of children with limited abilities can more or less successfully integrated into society (Ekzhanova, 2003; Kalenik, 2015).

Improper (inadequate) socialization or a disorder of socialization is a phenomenon that not only leads to personality problems, but also creates crisis tension in society. Socialization of young people with limited abilities through physical education and sports is a modern, innovative and adaptive area that provides enormous potential and new opportunities for every child. The role of adaptive physical culture and sports is expressed in the fact that they have a profound and many-sided impact on the essential aspects of a person with limited abilities, developing him spiritually and physically. In the process of fulfilling the needs for physical (first of all) and spiritual development through physical culture and sport, socialization of a person with limited abilities takes place (Babieva et al., 2018; Kalinina et al., 2016; Lvova et al., 2018; Salakhova et al., 2018; Shumova, Babieva & Baykovskiy, 2018; Mukhametshin et al., 2019; Lekareva et al., 2018; Kalenik, 2015).

The teaching staff members of special schools (remedial or alternative) are beginning to take the importance of sports for the development of their special needs students seriously, striving to make children’s sports a priority in upbringing, education, development and rehabilitation of the youth with limited abilities. But, despite the pedagogical enthusiasm, one cannot manage to solve this problem completely. This is due to both internal factors (lack of innovative ideas; sport is perceived as rivalry, and not all forms of competition are suitable for children with limited abilities; lack of qualified personnel; there is no sufficient number of attractive incentives developed for children with special needs) and external factors (isolation of such children from “healthy” sports, underdevelopment of regional sports programs for this category of the youth, etc.).

P.F. Lesgaft (1990), the founder of the scientific system of physical education in Russia expressed a negative attitude to competitions (including sport ones) in the system of children’s upbringing. His approach to this issue in general is reduced to the following main points: “1) sport, as a competition between two parties, always contributes to the development of a sense of the primacy; 2) school-age children should not be offered sensual amusements, therefore, those that are related to the development of the desire for superiority; 3) sport with competitions should not be allowed neither at school nor at the family age of the child.”

Proceeding from these viewpoints, P.F. Lesgaft (1990) repeatedly paid attention to the fact that when organizing games for children and adolescents, it is necessary “that the established rules in no case allow any competition, encouragement or punishment.” He believed that “in games, any competition between those involved should be excluded, just like differences and persecution, since truly educated young people should not be encouraged to pursue activities not by personal gain or fear of persecution, but by a sincere desire to improve their qualities and approach the ideal of a person which they have developed for themselves” (Lesgaft, 1990). There is a reference, for example, to the fact that “real competitions, where the opponents struggle for points, for places, are an unbearable psychological burden for a child” (Adashkevichene, 1992; Hassan et al., 2019).
It is also noted that the inclusion of children and youth in rivalry, including sports, negatively affects morality, leads to the development of personality traits such as selfishness, aggressiveness, envy, hatred of rivals, as well as stress, conflict, etc.

When conducting and organizing sports competitions among people with limited abilities, as a rule, the model of sport is used that we call traditional. This model is competitive. In the competition itself, fierce rivalry and fierce competition of the participants come to the fore. The objective is to compare their results on the basis of extremely accurate measurements and, taking account of the difference in some indicators, to find out whose result is better and whose is worse. In the course of this evaluation, only compliance with the rules adopted in this sport is taken into account, and moral and other aspects of their behaviour are not taken into account. To create equal conditions, participants in the competition are divided into different groups (in view of gender, age, level of skills, disease, etc.), and competitions are held separately in these groups (in particular, disabled people compete separately from others). Another specific feature of the traditional model is that it involves only sports competitions. This model isolates sports competition from art and other creative contests (Salakhova et al., 2016b; Kalenik, 2015).

The search for mechanisms and ways of sports activity of the individual, that helps its socially progressive self-realization in society, is becoming important. One of such mechanisms, in our opinion, is socialization of special school students by means of adaptive-sports extracurricular activities.

Unfortunately, in those few works that are devoted to the problems of organizing physical education of schoolchildren outside the basic curriculum of school, the majority of the authors remain in the standpoint of a traditionally formed educational system, where various forms of physical education practice are considered mainly from the standpoint of physical training of children and adolescents and only in some cases as a means of generating interest, needs and motivation in physical perfection (Akkuzova et al., 2018; Kalenik, 2015).

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The main emphasis in the activity approach is placed on the social essence of a person. A person’s personality is considered as a set of social characteristics that young people acquire in objective activity, performing useful social activity. The social environment in which a person lives, engaged in socially useful activity, entering business and interpersonal relationships with other people through communication, is the formation source of his personality.

The standpoint and ideas of the theory of activity have been developed in science by many authors (Ananyev, 2007; Bodalyov, 1998; Leontiev, 1997). The idea of activity analysis as a method of scientific human psychology was laid down in the early works of L.S. Vygotsky (1983). He identified two main interconnected points - this is the tool ("instrumental") structure of human activity and its inclusion in the system of relationships with other people. An implement defines an activity that connects a person not only with the world of things, but also with other people. Owing to this, his activity absorbs the experience of mankind. “Higher specific human mental processes can be born only in the interaction of a person with a person ... and only then they start to be carried out by the individual independently”.

Activity is the various types and methods of the process of mastering the world, its transformation, change to meet the needs of man and society. At the same time, man mastering the world around him, every time fills it with meaning, gives it a new, value and meaning dimension, each time as if regenerates it and thereby
generates himself, finds himself in this humanized world (Erofeeva et al., 2019; Kalenik et al., 2018; Makarova et al., 2019; Salakhova & Oschepkov, 2017; Masalimova et al., 2019; Goloshumova et al., 2019; Kovaleva, 2016).

S.L. Rubinstein (1976) thought that “personality is not formed first, and then begins to act: it is formed, acting, in the course of its activity”. Psychic properties of personality are formed and developed in the process of activity. S.L. Rubinstein (1976) says that personality manifests itself in activity.

The formation and existence of a person who is always male or female is impossible beyond social activity, which at all times has somehow guided the formation of men and women’s personality in a certain direction. Understanding these processes in historical retrospective is important for understanding the current and future problems of gender role socialization (Mitin, 2016; Salakhova et al., 2015; Kovaleva, 2015).

The value of the activity approach is reasonably proved in the works of A.N. Leontiev (1997). “In order to assimilate the achievements of human culture,” he wrote, “each new generation must carry out the activity similar to (although not identical) the one behind these achievements.” That is why, in order to prepare students with limited abilities for independent life and diverse activities, it is necessary to involve them in various types of activities to the extent of their resources, that is, “organize life activity full in social and moral aspects” (Leontiev, 1997).

A.N. Leontyev’s (1997) psychological views on activity are considered as a psychological theory of activity, which formed the foundation of many psychological and pedagogical studies on the problem of socialization of children.

Special pedagogical conditions facilitate the formation of the structural components of hardiness of a student’s personality with limited abilities:
- Purposeful involvement of students in various types of activities (sports, labour, games, etc.), that require overcoming difficulties and developing the qualities of strong will and charisma;
- The development of social competence;
- The formation of an active life position and life-affirming ideals, etc.

In a general form, the activity approach represents the organization and management of the student’s educational activity in the general understanding of his life - the guidance on his interests, life plans, value orientations, understanding the meaning of education and upbringing, personal experience in the interests of forming the student’s self-agency.

Involvement as a process cannot be chaotic and left to itself; it requires organization, consistency, management. The school, which organizes the process of involving students in useful activities, takes on additional managerial functions that monitor, influence, control and correct this process. Managing the process of involving schoolchildren in socially significant activities ensures the preservation of the structure that supports the system’s life mode (Grinenko et al., 2019; Kozyreva et al., 2019; Masalimova & Chibakov, 2016; Oschepkov & Salakhova, 2016; Sokolovskaya et al., 2019; Shmeleva et al., 2017; Shukshina et al., 2015; Kovaleva, 2014).

The activity approach is effective if potential of the team is used in social and educational work. Teachers rely on the phenomenon of leadership, realize the formative potential of the subject components of activity related to mastering new knowledge, skills, and abilities in the process of its implementation; subjective
components that make it possible to make a system of interpersonal interactions and relationships based on the activity as a factor of social education; organizational components of the activity process that help to shape such qualities as discipline, responsibility, commitment, ability to productive cooperation (Salakhova et al., 2016c).

Starting to organize the process of involving schoolchildren in socially significant activity the school solves a number of complex and important issues: Who, where, etc., to involve, with what resources, ways, methods? What will it give the school, students, parents, what result will it bring? How will “engagement” have influence on the educational process? The school organizes the educational process, realizing its goals (long-term or short-term). Proceeding from these goals, both the entire educational system and its individual components are constructed. In this case, these are the forms of out-of-school adaptive-sports activities, combined into a system that ensure the mass involvement of schoolchildren in guided activities to achieve the goal.

The activity approach in its line is focused on the student’s self-agency and, as it were, compares functionally both areas of education - training and upbringing. At the same time, the activity approach, implemented in the context of the life of a student with limited abilities, taking into account his life plans, value orientations, the realization of his saved and acquired capabilities and other parameters of his subjective world, is a personality-activity approach in essence.

The essence of the activity approach in relation to a student with limited abilities is that the centre is not just activity, but the joint activity of children with adults in the implementation of the goals and objectives for socialization. The teacher develops, along with students with limited abilities, samples of spiritual, moral and physical culture in the process of activity and makes up the content of the educational process implemented in the context of the activity approach. The activity approach allows one to design the technology of adaptive sports activity as a part of the socializing process and the implementation of the life activity of a school student with limited abilities, social life in general and is characterized by the unity of activity of specialists and students (Salakhova et al., 2016a; Kuznetsova et al., 2018; Shukshina, Mizonova & Katainen, 2017).

The activity approach allows one to include a student with limited abilities in the adaptive-sports process, when the components of the activity are guided and controlled by him. At the same time, favourable conditions are created to increase his physical, functional, general cultural training, and the development of his creative potential. The activity approach focuses on the sensitive periods of development of schoolchildren as the periods in which they are most “sensitive” to learning communication and activity ways, object and mental actions. This orientation necessitates a continuous search for the appropriate content of training and education, both subject and of the similar, symbolic nature, as well as appropriate teaching and upbringing methods.

Extracurricular activities are by no means a mechanical complement to basic general special education, designed to compensate for the shortcomings of working with schoolchildren. The main goal of extracurricular activities in a special school will be the creation, expansion and enrichment of the educational space in micro-society, the closest environment for the life of a special child and ensuring its successful adaptation to modern sociocultural conditions.

Adaptive sports activity is a specially organized environment that is based on socially significant activities. In a broader sense, adaptive-sports activity is a specially developed variative technology, programs coordinated with it directed towards socialization, improving vital functions, quality of life, communicative and emotional
fullness, the development of mental, functional and physical potential of a student with limited abilities (Salakhova et al., 2016b; Kalenik, 2015).

Adaptive sports extracurricular activities, in which we involve students with limited abilities, in our opinion, are a specific process of the extracurricular system of a special school. Adaptive-sports extracurricular activities are carried out on the basis of the adaptive-sports approach in an adapted environment, using the adaptive-sports technology aimed at optimizing the state of health, development, upbringing and education, taking account of the factors of socialization of students with limited abilities (Kalenik et.al, 2018; Kalenik, 2015).

The goal of adaptive-sports extracurricular activities is socialization of a school student with limited abilities, the essence of which consists in combining adaptation (adaptation and coordination of self-esteem and aspirations of a school student with limited abilities in an adaptive-sports environment), integration (adaptive-sports social inclusion in integrated programs, unified-sports), isolation (achieving sustainable development of all personal skills, a high level of achievement motivation, physical fitness, high appraisal of quality of life) and self-realization in conditions of adaptive-sports activity and life. Despite the fact that adaptive-sports extracurricular activities are mostly focused on sports movement, integrated technologies are offered in the technology of adaptive-sports activities. The integration of sporting events and culture promotes physical, cultural and spiritual improvement, focus on self-improvement, the identification, development and manifestation of multifaceted abilities, the development of diverse knowledge in the field of art, familiarity with national sports and art, with folk games, etc. A wide range of artistic, social and cultural programs, such as dancing, art exhibitions, concerts, visiting historical places, thematic conferences, theatre performances, films and other activities, enrich adaptive sports activities. This diversity expands the assessment of students’ life experiences, the possibilities of upbringing, development, and education of students with limited abilities (Kalenik et.al, 2018; Kalenik, 2015).

In adaptive-sports extracurricular activities, the integration of “healthy” people with sports and various forms of contacts, friendship, elements of trust, empathy, cooperation, social inclusion through adaptive sports is also offered, the so-called “social capital, which sets the participants of the process being creative and participating in emotionally - positive interaction” (Hassan, McConkey & Dowling, 2010).

The experience of social interaction in adaptive-sports extracurricular activities will integrate children with limited abilities into society, ultimately socialize, improve their ability to orient themselves in a changing society and successfully solve problems of social interaction (Kalenik et.al, 2018; Kalenik, 2015).

In special remedial schools, conducting adaptive-sports extracurricular activities, specialists adhere to generally accepted international rules: “All games and competitions of the Special Olympics at the school, local, regional, national and international levels must reflect values, standards, traditions, ceremonies and types of sports activities, embodied in the ancient and contemporary Olympic movement. “The purpose of adaptive sports activities supporting the mission of the international movement is to help people with intellectual disabilities become full members of society who are productively involved in public life by providing these people with fair opportunities to demonstrate their skills and talents in sports and by informing the public about their capabilities and needs” (Zivanovic & Dragutinovic, 1992). In a specially organized sports-adaptive environment, conditions have been created for expanding, enriching and developing the physical and mental qualities of people with developmental impairments, to increase their sense of self-confidence and self-esteem. Social norms, common standards and rules of human behaviour, means of regulating their interaction are studied in adaptive sports activities. In the technology of adaptive sports activities, programs
are proposed in which students with limited abilities can show social qualities: partnership, respect for the elders, kindness and responsiveness, hard work, discipline, the desire for self-realization. A student with limited abilities will form a base of knowledge about his own health (Kalenik et.al., 2018; Kalenik, 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a result of the work done, we designed an integrated model of adaptive sports extracurricular activities for students with limited abilities. An integrated model of adaptive-sports extracurricular activities for students with limited abilities its organization technology is presented below (Figure1).
The study of the influence of adaptive-sports activity has allowed us to obtain data that indicates that by the age of 10-11, when the brain reaches the physiological development of an adult, the results of students with limited abilities are close to normal. Schoolchildren have mastered the methods of motor activity, increased physical fitness and functionality, achieved a positive evolutionary dynamic by means of adaptive sports activities. It is quite natural, such an improvement is limited by the depth of mental and physical underdevelopment and it is pronounced the less, the greater the lag in development is. Favourable dynamics is possible with limited opportunities, when the corrective action is taken in view of the peculiarities of the sensitive development of schoolchildren, with appropriate techniques and methods of the activity approach in adaptive sports activities.

CONCLUSION

The activity approach to upbringing takes account of the nature and laws of changing types of the leading activity in the formation of the child’s personality as the basis for the child development stages. The approach, in its theoretical and practical grounds, takes account of scientifically substantiated ideas that all psychological constructs are determined by the child’s leading activity and the need to change this activity. The game method is widely used in physical education of children of all age groups. Outdoor games, especially with equipment, have such a wide range of effects on the child’s body and personality that unlimited possibilities are created for influencing all spheres of the life of children and teenagers. The game is a leading activity. Based on the game method and using the entire arsenal of the activity approach, we have the following research results: indicators obtained with the Wechsler test aimed at studying the development of the non-verbal and verbal side of thinking in students with limited abilities, an order of magnitude higher in those who studied adaptive sports activities. The data obtained can only indicate that schoolchildren undergo a process of socialization more successfully, since, being engaged in the adaptive sports technology, they can interact more with their normally developing peers.

REFERENCES


