Spiritual-moral education of students by means of physical culture

Marina A. Solomchenko, Olga A. Gorbacheva, Elena V. Sorokina, Mikhail P. hekotikhin, Dmitry S. Uchasov and Valery V. Boyko

Orel State University named after I.S. Turgenev, Orel, Russian Federation

ARTICLE INFORMATION
Original Research Paper
Doi:
Received November. 2018
Accepted April. 2019
Keywords: education, physical culture, spiritual sphere, moral qualities, students

ABSTRACT
The problem topicality is due to the fact that the use of physical education methods for forming the spiritual-moral and moral-will qualities in university students increases the efficiency of learning and the preparedness for future life and professional activity. The research objective is to elaborate the pedagogical system of forming the spiritual-moral values in students by means of physical culture. The key research method was individual approach which allows forming the spiritual-moral values in students and promoting their achievement of goals in life. The research results are: the conditions of forming spiritual-moral values in students by means of physical culture are revealed; a program of “Physical Training” academic course is proposed, including physical training and health-improving lessons and mass sport events. The material will be useful for teachers of physical culture, university tutors, trainers and specialists in the sphere of physical culture and sport.

Introduction
Education is one of the aspects of a multilateral process of socialization, which helps an individual to acquire the behavior models necessary for effective participation in public life. Under the modern conditions, education determines the intellectual image of the present and future, living standards, level of humanism and democracy, and greatly influences the material and political factors of progress (Belon et al., 2016; Koca, 2009). Spirituality and morals become important in the life of a young person.

Spirituality is striving of a person towards higher values and meanings, towards the ideal; it is an effort of a person to transform oneself, to bring one’s life closer to the ideal and to spiritually get free from the routine. Spirituality is manifested in striving of a person towards building their relations with the world on the basis of good, truth, beauty, and harmony with the environment. One of the most powerful sources of spirituality is conscience, and revelation of spirituality is love.

Morality is a component of culture, the content of which are ethical values comprising the basis of consciousness. Morality is the ability of a person to act, think and feel in accordance with their spirituality; it is the means and ways of transferring their inner spiritual world outwards.

Topicality of spiritual-moral education of university students is due to the numerous crisis phenomena of contemporary life: drug addiction, criminal involvement of the youth, low level of public morals, lack of family values, decline of patriotic education, low level of physical training.
The word “spirituality” is widely used in everyday life, but it is wrong to apply it to just one sphere of human life – the religious one. Religiousness is a certain belief, while spirituality is implementation of spiritual truths: ability to be kind and merciful, morally balanced, cultural, to be able to forgive, etc. This is a property of the whole human activity, everything which can elevate us above the past achievements. Spirituality and morals are the notions existing in inseparable unity. Under their lacking, personality and culture start decaying. The main objective of spiritual-moral education is to form personality of a student capable of making responsible decisions, of manifesting moral behavior in any life situation. Many teachers of physical training form this ability at their lessons. Interaction of the professors of philosophy, general pedagogy, social psychology and applied physical culture form a structure for upbringing of certain qualities.

The issues of spiritual-moral upbringing of youth were studied by the philosophers of Antiquity (Aristotle, Plato, Heraclitus, Democritus, Epicurus, etc.), the Middle Ages (St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas), Enlightenment (F. Voltaire, J.-J. Rousseau, etc.), and the modern era (G. Hegel, I. Kant, C. Marx, F. Nietzsche, L. Feuerbach, F. Schelling, J. Fichte). In Russia, the aspects of spiritual-moral education of youth were studied by many scholars, such as Yu.V. Aleksandrova, E.E. Vahromov, A.N. Leontyev, V.I. Slobodchikov, V.V. Stolin (Keteli and Sidorov, 1996, p. 192).

In the modern society, physical culture is the medium of specific attitudes. Using the means of physical education for forming the spiritual-moral and moral-will qualities is one of the most effective ways of training students for further life and professional activity (Belon et al., 2016; Thind et al., 2015). The research topicality is due to the fact that secondary school graduates have low level of such important personality qualities as initiative, self-control, independence, mercy, kindness, ability to forgive, courage, persistence, team spirit, etc. This shows that physical culture teachers should pay more attention to the moral aspect of upbringing. The arsenal of physical training has many means and methods promoting the spiritual-moral and moral-will qualities of a personality, which can be efficiently applied in the course of physical training.

The university program of physical training is based on forming the physical abilities and moral-will qualities necessary for the future professional activity. As for the spiritual-moral education and methodology, they are not mentioned in the program. The highly demanding work of a physical training teacher forming the spiritual-moral and moral-will qualities of students requires special way of thinking and specific knowledge.

Physical exercise is the key method of forming skills and habits of disciplined behavior, diligence, persistence, courage and other will qualities. Upbringing of will qualities is especially important as these qualities are one of the most significant aspects of a personality. If an athlete is physically well-developed but weak in spirit, they will not achieve high results in sports or in life. And vice versa, an athlete with rather low abilities may achieve high result due to strong character (Anshel, 1990).

Thus, the following contradictions can be highlighted:
- between requirements of the society in the sphere of forming the spiritual-moral values of a personality and insufficient activities of universities in that direction;
- between the society demands for a spiritual-moral personality and insufficient use of the means of physical education.

The research topicality is determined by the need to search for ways to promote spiritual-moral values of students by means of physical culture, determining their future professional activity and active participation in society creation (Rottmann and Ratto, 2018; Llamas and Mayhew, 2018).
The research objective is to elaborate the pedagogical system of forming the spiritual-moral values in students by means of physical culture.

The tasks are: to comprehend the pedagogical nature and specific orientation of physical culture as a factor of forming the spiritual-moral values of students and forming a healthy personality; to reveal the pedagogical conditions of forming the spiritual-moral values of students through the academic subject “Physical Training” and to elaborate a pedagogical system of spiritual-moral education of a student’s personality by means of physical culture; to perform an experimental testing of the elaborated pedagogical system of forming the spiritual-moral values of students by means of physical culture.

The research hypothesis is the following. The process of forming the spiritual-moral values of students will be effective if:

- physical training is combined with the student’s comprehension of philosophical-theoretical conceptions about a human personality and socio-cultural essence, which would help them to deeper understand the nature of the studied phenomena and processes;

- during educational activity, the pedagogical attitude is formed aimed at forming the students’ ability to comprehend the moral meaning of categories of physical culture and, as a result, the content of lessons promotes coordination between the formed spiritual-moral values and the character of future professional activity.

The novelty of the research consists in the following: the conditions of forming spiritual-moral values in students by means of physical culture are revealed; a program of “Physical Training” academic course is proposed, including physical training and health-improving lessons and mass sport events.

The practical significance is due to the possibility for the teachers of physical culture to use the elaborated pedagogical system in upbringing the spiritual-moral qualities of students’ personality, as well as in improving their health and training them for various sports events.

Materials and Methods

A complex of pedagogical research methods was used, adequate to the object and tasks of the study: theoretical analysis of psychological-pedagogical literature, which allowed revealing the essence of forming activities of the pedagogical process subjects and define the theoretical and practical significance of the new qualities of a student’s personality appearing during formation of spiritual-moral values; theoretical modeling, which allowed elaborating the pedagogical system of forming the spiritual-moral values of students. The research included a pedagogical experiment with quantitative and qualitative analysis of intermediate and final results of forming the spiritual-moral values in students. To check the hypothesis and solve the tasks set during the research, the authors applied methods of testing and questioning, as well as statistical processing of the obtained data.

The research was carried out at Orel State University named after I.S. Turgenev. Over 120 students took part in the research, divided into a control and an experimental group.

Results and Discussion

The fact was proved that spiritual-moral values, as well as conscience, are not inborn. They are acquired as a result of social communication, life experience and internal work. It is the task of a physical training teacher to help their correct forming in a student. Spiritual-moral issues inevitably rose during the periods of devaluation of cultural traditions and discrediting of spiritual bases of a society. Such period is being endured by our society.
today; that is why, the educational programs implemented by pedagogues should emphasize the issues of forming spirituality in the new generation. Physical education should retain certain features of pedagogically targeted process. It means that the process of physical education, including self-education, should always be aimed at implementing the tasks most significant from the educational viewpoint and be built in accordance with pedagogical principles, rules, and provisions. The features of physical education, which distinguish it from other kinds of education, are that it is the process ensuring regular formation of motor skills and abilities of a person and optimizing the physical qualities of a person, which mainly determine the physical activity. In other words, physical education is a process of training motor actions and physical qualities, inherent in a person, that guarantees targeted development of abilities based on the said actions and qualities.

At Russian universities, the “Physical Training” discipline is one of the constituents of molding a student’s personality and an obligatory course in the system of education (Solomchenko, 2017). It was proved that the level of physical training influences the formation of professional skills and abilities of students. Physical training directly influences many aspects of the spiritual world of students, their moral qualities. However, these values can be only formed in the correctly organized environment, based on using the possibilities of physical culture as an academic subject. Such system can be shown as follows (Fig. 1).

![Diagram](image)

**Fig. 1.** System of forming the spiritual-moral values of students by means of physical culture

In the course of studies, a student is formed as a personality, and the means of physical culture are involved in formation of their spiritual-moral qualities. Such formation takes place within a pedagogical system, which gives an opportunity to measure their level in order to make managerial decisions and regulate activity of its
participants (Solomchenko, 2009). Interaction between a teacher and a student during lessons creates interaction between all components of the pedagogical system and forms the spiritual-moral values of a personality through the means of physical culture and managerial influence.

The important qualities of spiritual-moral culture of students are: general culture and rich spiritual world; comprehension and ability to combine the general human and specific-public (national) values; respect for traditions; honesty and decency as the main moral basis of professional activity; knowledge of the bases of future practical professional activity and the ethic and moral orientations inherent in it. These are the criteria by which one may judge about achieving a certain level of spiritual-moral values in students. In this research, we distinguish three levels of spiritual-moral values in students – high, intermediate, and low.

High level is characteristic for students who deeply comprehend the interconnection between the general human and specific-public norms. Such students have comprehensive knowledge of moral orientations and traditions of social values, inherent in the content of the studied academic subject (including physical culture). They have experience of implementing the said interaction in the process of communication and will be able to implement it in their future professional activity. Taking the ethical norms into account, they are able to establish contacts with other people, understand the significance of spiritual-moral norms at all levels, and can set priorities between them in a specific situation. They have a conscious need for self-education and self-improvement and actively implement their experience in everyday life.

Intermediate level is characteristic for students who understand the need for interconnection between the general human and specific-public norms, but cannot fully implement it in practice, although understanding the significance of spiritual-moral values for their professional activity and future life. They are not always active during lesson and trainings due to various reasons: lack of will, experience, knowledge, etc. Nevertheless, they possess good foundation for further development, on which a teacher should build interaction with such students. They are inclined to thorough cultural activity, determined to achieve better results at physical culture lessons and at sports competitions, and strive to more completely implement their spiritual-moral experience in practical activity.

Low level of spiritual culture in students presents the greatest problem. Such students have poor knowledge of the content of spiritual culture, the interaction between the general human and specific-public values, while the knowledge they possess is often implemented in an inadequate way. They occasionally manifest interest to spiritual activity, and are not interested in self-improvement in this direction. They study just to get a diploma, while doing physical training just to pass a test; they often display negative motivations in their behavior, trying to avoid problems or solve them by wrong means.

At the beginning of the academic year, the students of both the experimental and the control group were offered a questionnaire. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparative data of spiritual-moral values in the students of the experimental and the control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Experimental group</th>
<th>Control group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proneness to conflict</td>
<td>Low level. When disagreements occur, the students did not start an explicit dialogue but discussed the problem in a hostile manner. Conflicts between leaders often occurred.</td>
<td>Intermediate level. Conflicts occur mainly between leaders of subgroups and between subgroups per se. Thus, a steady conflict between two subgroups was revealed, which usually bore latent character and sometimes was manifested explicitly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communication skills | Intermediate level. There is a gap between the “cultural” part of the group and those students who allow rudeness, tactlessness, humiliating jokes towards others. | Intermediate level. The students solve minor conflicts by various means (joking, compromising, etc.).

Strive for self-improvement | The majority of students lack this quality. It is considered less prestigious to be “cultural”, i.e. spiritually rich, intellectual, etc., than to be materially well-to-do. | Rather well-expressed. The group members appreciate reasonableness, knowledge, spirituality. Material well-being is usually connected with fulfilling moral duties.

Attitude to the older generation | Intermediate level. The majority of students have even attitude without manifestations of sympathy or antipathy. | Above intermediate level. The majority of students are interested in the opinion of the older generation, ask for their advice, and try to gain their praise.

Intellectual qualities | Intermediate level. Alongside with apparent leaders, who often push others into the background, there are many students who do not attempt to improve their intellectual abilities or do so only to the extent necessary for satisfactory study at university. | Intermediate level. There are students with high level of intellect but they are not always leaders in their subgroups. The majority of students strive to deepen their knowledge and develop intellectual abilities.

Team spirit | Intermediate level. There are leaders in the group who may suppress the opinion of other students. | Above intermediate level. Leaders are respected, they help others and reveal their positive qualities.

Social activity | Below intermediate level. Some students are generally active, some are passive. | Intermediate level. The students have different attitudes to activity in the group. There are leaders.

Self-discipline | Intermediate level. Sometimes actions are disorganized, responsibilities are poorly distributed. | Intermediate level. Some students are better disciplined, and there are students who do not help in mutual activities.

Attitude to physical culture | Intermediate level. The majority of students consider the subject as an applied one. Only a few students are interested in it. | Above intermediate level. Many students are interested in physical training lessons and their physical abilities.

Moral-will qualities | Intermediate level. Only leaders reveal their strong features. | Intermediate level. Students try to copy their leaders.

Based on the data of Table 1, the experts (a group of teachers, including psychologists) determined that in the control group the spiritual-moral values of students were formed better than in the experimental group. Further, physical training lessons were conducted in both groups during an academic year. Pedagogical observation was carried out during the whole research period. We studied the features of the students’ behavior, way of living, interests, studies and active recreation.

The results of questioning of both groups at the beginning of the academic year are shown in Table 2. The students were offered four types of questionnaires for testing the moral qualities, responsibility and dedication, proneness to conflict, and spiritual sphere (Hannon et al., 2017). The ranking was carried out by a ten-point system. The high level was indicated by ten to eight points, intermediate level – by seven to five points, and low level – from four to one point. The minimal number of points, registered according to the questionnaires, was from five to ten. The majority of students in experimental groups showed intermediate level of spiritual-moral values development, which confirms the experts’ opinions (Table 1). This testifies to the necessity of the research and implementation of an experimental program in one of the groups.
Table 2. Level of spiritual-moral values of students at the beginning of the academic year (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of spiritual-moral qualities development</th>
<th>Control group</th>
<th>Experimental group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spiritual-moral qualities</td>
<td>Moral qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>% 2 5 10 7 2 4 4 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>% 96 95 90 92 96 94 94 95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>% 2 0 0 1 2 2 2 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A program of “Physical Training” course was elaborated, including health-improving lessons and mass sport events. It should be noted that many students expressed interest in active participation in the experimental group.

In the control group, the lessons were arranged according to traditional program, including general physical training, athletic, sport games, gymnastics, testing of physical training, participation in sports competitions, etc.

In the experimental group, managerial interaction between a teacher and students was implemented. Without mutual efforts of the managing (a teacher) and subject (students) parties, it is impossible to solve the problems of management in the theory and practice of physical culture. On the one hand, there is a need to elaborate an efficient system of pedagogical impacts; on the other hand, there is a need to study the mechanisms of their implementation. As a result, one could observe the cooperative advancing towards the goal, which demanded multiple solving of many various functional tasks, including their formulation, analysis and solving. This is a mutual process, reflecting the informational-energetic dependence of the managing and the subject parties. In sports training and in the sphere of physical education, managing of a group activity turns unorganized forms of behavior into effective, purposeful and productive forms of motor activity. Correct organization of physical training is a structure, in which certain activities are applied to achieve the goals of physical training and health improving (Solomchenko, 2009). In the present research, we elaborated pedagogical conditions for the formation of spiritual-moral values in students by means of physical culture: forming the personality qualities during physical training, health-improving and mass sports events; program of physical training lessons, including forming moral values in students; team game tasks, involving mutual help and support of teammates.

The term “human factor” is often used in the sphere of physical culture and sport. It comprises everything that depends on a person, his/her abilities, desires, skills, and personality qualities. It is important that the role of students in the process of physical education increases. Also, the higher level of physical training, the more important is the role of a student and their capabilities in managing their physical training. Physical training lessons under supervision of a pedagogue perform the function of harmonious development of a personality and emotional and social involvement of a person into the system of social relations and active interaction with other people (Toner, 2004). In the experimental group, certain actions were implemented during physical training, which were aimed at team building: identifying the common goals and tasks when doing physical exercises; identifying motivation to lessons in each participant of the process of physical education; maintaining the team spirit by means...
of physical and health-improving activities; establishing a system of control in cooperation with teachers, encouraging self-control, etc.

Friendly and business-like atmosphere during the lessons promotes interpersonal relations and forms the culture of cooperation through active and sport games, relay races and other means of physical culture. Due to constant shifting of partners in teams, communicative culture of students increases. In their work, the teachers take into account which teaching methods create favorable and positive atmosphere of collective activity, collective effort and emotions. The favorable atmosphere increases the efficiency of such methods. Such lessons also favorably influence leisure activities of the youth. In the spare time, the students come to sport facilities of the university for additional training, play table tennis or go to the gym, etc. Besides obligatory “Physical Training” lessons, students underwent personality trainings and participated in sports groups. The teachers tried to include such exercises into the content of academic and health-improving lessons, which would not only train the students but also influences their appearance and harmonious development of personality (Frolova et al., 2018). Having a trained body and being physically fit make the student self-confident and provide stable motivation for physical education and participation in group events.

The majority of students of the experimental group started to assist the teachers in conducting various physical and health-improving activities; their motivation to physical culture lessons increased.

In the end of the academic year, questioning in both groups was carried out. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Level of spiritual-moral values of students at the end of the academic year (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of spiritual-moral qualities development</th>
<th>Control group</th>
<th>Experimental group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual-moral qualities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral qualities</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proneness to conflict</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility and dedication</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual sphere</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral qualities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proneness to conflict</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility and dedication</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual sphere</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that the level of spiritual-moral values increased during the process of their targeted formation. Hence, it is possible to form these values in students by means of physical culture. The results improved in both groups, but in the experimental group the increase was significantly higher. This proves that the proposed experimental method is efficient.

Physical abilities of the students of both groups were checked with the following tests: 60 meters run; Cooper test; stretch test; long jump; rope jump; coordination test, etc. The results improved in both groups. In the control group, the level of physical training increased by 11%, in the experimental group – by 29%, which also proves the efficiency of the proposed technique.
Thus, an indispensable condition of the efficiency of forming the spiritual-moral values in students is creating of a pedagogical system which would take into account both the goals of the subjects of educational process and the means of their interaction. It was found that the process of physical training may contribute to upbringing will and other positive features of character, form positive emotions and esthetic needs of a personality. The spiritual-moral values expressed not only in words but in deeds too are most stable. Thus, it is possible to form the stable attitudes of a student’s personality, which serve as the basic components of further professional activity.

Conclusion

The carried out research allowed making the following conclusions:

The students’ environment should be friendly and emotional during the physical training lessons. The brightest and most continuous impressions, positive mood and desire to communicate are provided by joint training for sports competitions and participation in them. The positive emotions experienced together stimulate the whole educational process. Personality formation implies implementing individual differences, reflected in the actual and potential abilities. In the process of activity, the abilities acquire a special character, if the personality development orientation is driven by specific effective activity.

The research revealed conditions for forming the spiritual-moral values in students by means of physical culture: forming personality qualities during health-improving lessons and mass sport events; program of physical training lessons, including forming moral values in students; team game tasks, involving mutual help and support of teammates.

Relying on the conception of “human relations”, it is essential to encourage self-government to train will qualities and, particularly, self-confidence as one of the key means of increasing the efficiency of physical culture and health-improving activities.

Under modern conditions, physical culture and sport, healthy lifestyle have great social-economic value for the society as a whole and for any individual student, as they develop and improve many important social and biological qualities of people and have a progressive influence on education and harmonious development of youth. This is taken into account by the society when planning leisure activities, as spare time should be used rationally and effectively for the whole society. In turn, every student should use their spare time with maximal benefit for their comprehensive and harmonious development, for constant improvement of spiritual and moral qualities of a personality.

References


