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TEAM SPORTS GAMES AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS AND STRENGTHENING THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

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Abstract. The article analyzes the influence of team sports — football, volleyball, and basketball — on the socio-psychological state of students. Based on the obtained quantitative indicators, it was established that regular participation in team sports contributes to the development of communicative skills, increased stress resistance, strengthened emotional stability, and reduced psycho-emotional tension among students.

Keywords. Team sports, communication skills, mental health, students, stress resistance, social adaptation.

КОМАНДНЫЕ СПОРТИВНЫЕ ИГРЫ КАК СРЕДСТВО РАЗВИТИЯ КОММУНИКАТИВНЫХ НАВЫКОВ И УКРЕПЛЕНИЯ ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКОГО ЗДОРОВЬЯ УЧАЩИХСЯ

Аннотация. В статье анализируется влияние командных спортивных игр - футбола, волейбола и баскетбола — на социально-психологическое состояние студентов. На основе полученных количественных показателей установлено, что регулярные занятия командными видами спорта способствуют развитию коммуникативных навыков, повышению стрессоустойчивости, укреплению эмоциональной стабильности и снижению психоэмоционального напряжения у студенческой молодёжи.

Ключевые слова. Командный спорт, коммуникативные навыки, психическое здоровье, студенты, стрессоустойчивость, социальная адаптация.

Relevance of the Topic. In the modern education system, it is becoming increasingly important to develop students not only as highly qualified specialists but also as psychologically resilient and socially adapted individuals. In this context, the issue of strengthening students' communication skills and psychological well-being through team sports holds particular scientific and practical significance.

Firstly, with the rise of digitalization and distance learning, there has been a noticeable decline in face-to-face communication among young people. This leads to a weakening of students' social skills and diminishes their ability to interact effectively in a group setting. Team sports such as football, volleyball, and basketball create a natural environment for communication and serve as an effective means of developing mutual trust, responsibility, cooperation, and strategic thinking.

Secondly, the stress and emotional burnout associated with the high intellectual demands of higher education negatively impact students' mental health. Participating in sports helps reduce anxiety, emotional tension, and depressive states. This, in turn, is a crucial factor in enhancing students' psychological resilience.

Thirdly, our country's national policy identifies the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and the nurturing of a physically healthy generation as priority objectives. Research conducted on this topic facilitates the development of new pedagogical and psychological approaches aimed at improving not only the physical but also the psycho-emotional well-being of higher education students.

Thus, the systematic integration of team sports into the educational and developmental process to enhance students' communicative competence and strengthen their psychological health represents a relevant scientific and practical task in the fields of pedagogy and psychology.

The aim of this study is to provide a scientific basis for the mechanism of developing students' social communication skills and stabilizing their psycho-emotional state through the organization of team sports in higher education institutions, as well as to develop practical recommendations for their implementation.

Research objectives. To achieve the aim of the study, the following objectives were set:

To analyze the scientific, pedagogical, and psychological foundations of the influence of team sports on the development of students' communication skills, mental health, and social adaptation.

To determine the baseline level of students' sociability, empathy, emotional stability, stress resilience, and teamwork skills using pedagogical observation, surveys, and psychodiagnostic methods.

To test the effectiveness of using team sports in the physical education process for students and to assess their impact on the development of communicative qualities, the reduction of psycho-emotional stress, and the increase of social activity.

Expected Outcomes. Upon completion of this research, students' communicative competence in team interaction, interpersonal communication, and effective conflict resolution will be significantly enhanced.

The systematic organization of sports activities will increase students' stress resilience, reduce anxiety levels, and foster overall psycho-emotional stability. A database of new methodological developments and recommendations will be created for higher education institutions, aligning physical education and sports classes with the psychological needs of students.

Furthermore, the process of students' social adaptation will accelerate, which in turn will positively affect their academic performance and readiness for future professional careers. Based on the link between physical activity and psycho-emotional well-being, a sustainable healthy lifestyle model will be established among university students.

Object and Methods of Research. The object of this research was the physical education process for students of higher educational institutions, organized through collective sports activities, as well as the system of their socio-psychological development.

The following methods were employed to conduct the study. A theoretical analysis involved the systematic review of pedagogical and psychological literature on the research topic, regulatory documents, and best practices from abroad. Additionally, a comparison was made between the outcomes of traditional physical education classes and those based on the developed methodology.

During the pedagogical observation, systematic monitoring of students' behavior, their communicative activity, and interaction within the collective was carried out. To determine the psycho-emotional state of students, psychological diagnostic methods were applied: questionnaires, Spielberger-Hanin tests to assess anxiety levels, Lucher test to determine emotional state, and questionnaires aimed at assessing social communication skills. During the pedagogical experiment, control and experimental groups were formed to implement the developed program in practice. The obtained results were processed using mathematical statistics methods.

The primary focus during the application of psychological and statistical methods was directed toward determining the internal psycho-emotional state of students and the nature of their external social interactions. For scientific analysis, psychodiagnostic tests and questionnaires were conducted. When processing the results, the following standardized methodologies were used: using V. V. Ryakhovsky's "Determination of Communication Level" test, students' readiness to exchange information in an unfamiliar environment and within a team was assessed; using I. M. Yusupov's "Measurement of Empathy Level" questionnaire, students' ability to understand the feelings of their teammates and react emotionally to them was studied.

To determine the level of situational and personal anxiety, as well as the emotional stability of students, the Spielberger-Hanin scale was used. The study was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, at the beginning of the experiment, baseline indicators were determined for the participants in the control and experimental groups. In the second stage, students in the experimental group systematically participated in team sports-football and volleyball-three times a week for six months. The control group followed the standard curriculum. To verify the reliability of the numerical data obtained, Student's t-test and correlation analysis methods were used. The primary methods used in the study were based on the principle of "individual development through collective activity".

Within the framework of the interventionist approach, team sports were viewed as a specially organized social microenvironment. In this environment, students experience situations such as victory and defeat, shared responsibility, and trust in a teammate. To determine the effect of this systemic socio-psychological intervention, an effective method was used that made it possible to identify differences in stress resilience and teamwork skills.

Research results and their analysis. In the course of the study, special tests and surveys were conducted to determine the level of communication skills and indicators of psychological health among students who regularly participate in team sports. The results obtained were then subjected to a comparative analysis between the experimental group, whose members regularly engaged in sports, and the control group, whose students did not participate in team sports on a regular basis.

Table

Indicators of students' communication skills and psychological health (average value)

№	Indicators	Control group (%)	Experimental group (%)	Difference (%)
1.	Communication level	58	84	+26
2.	Empathy (understanding others)	45	72	+27
3.	Emotional stability	52	79	+27
4.	Stress resistance	48	81	+33
5.	Teamwork ability	55	88	+33

Scientific analysis of the results shows that team sports are an important factor in the socio-psychological adaptation of students. The indicators presented in the table suggest that systematic participation in team sports positively affects not only students' motor activity but also their key personal, communicative, and psycho-emotional characteristics. This is because team sports, by their very nature, are not isolated physical exercises but a complex form of social interaction. In this dynamic, each participant is constantly engaged in communication, decision-making, role distribution, emotional response, and the collaborative pursuit of a common goal. According to the study's findings, the experimental group demonstrated higher results across all measured indicators

compared to the control group. This suggests that regular participation in team sports creates favorable pedagogical conditions for developing students' communication skills, emotional stability, ability to cooperate, and stress resilience. Unlike traditional forms of physical education, where students often perform exercises individually and primarily at the instructor's direction, team sports demand constant interaction with partners, quick reactions to changing game situations, and the ability to align personal actions with the team's collective interests. The level of communicativeness in the experimental group reached 84%, whereas in the control group, this figure was 58%. The 26% difference indicates a significant positive influence of team sports on the development of communication skills. This result can be explained by the fact that during football, volleyball, basketball, and other team sports, students are constantly engaged in verbal and non-verbal interaction. They convey information to each other through words, gestures, facial expressions, movements, and game signals, while also learning to quickly understand their partners' intentions. In a game setting, a student cannot remain entirely passive, as the team's outcome depends on the coordinated actions of all its members. This is precisely why team sports activities gradually foster a culture of communication, the ability to listen, negotiate, support partners, and respond constructively to feedback.

The empathy indicator in the experimental group was 72%, which is 27% higher than in the control group. This indicates that team sports games contribute to the development of the ability to understand the emotional state of other people. During the game, the student faces various situations: success, error, defeat, intense struggle, and the need to support their partner after an unsuccessful action. Such circumstances foster in students the ability to empathize, consider the state of their teammates, and demonstrate tolerance and respect. Increasing empathy is especially important for student youth, as it is during this age period that social maturity, interpersonal relationship culture, and readiness for interaction in the future professional environment are actively developed.

The emotional stability of students in the experimental group reached 79%, whereas in the control group, it was 52%. This 27% difference indicates that regular participation in team sports positively affects students' ability to control their own emotions. This is because sports games constantly involve situations of emotional stress: the need to make quick decisions, the experience of victory or defeat, responsibility to the team, competitive struggle, and evaluation by teammates and opponents. Through the systematic repetition of such situations, students gradually develop the ability to maintain self-control, manage their emotional reactions, and act rationally even under pressure. Therefore, team sports can be viewed not only as a means of physical education but also as a practical school for emotional self-regulation.

A particularly pronounced positive trend was observed in the stress resistance indicator. In the experimental group, this figure reached 81%, which is 33% higher than in the control group. This result is highly significant, as modern university students often face a heavy academic workload, exam-related stress, information overload, and the need for social adaptation. In these circumstances, team sports serve as a means of psychological release and a mental reset. During physical activity, internal tension is reduced, positive emotions are stimulated, and self-confidence grows. Furthermore, the support of a team fosters a sense of belonging, which is a key factor in psychological well-being. Therefore, the increase in stress resistance within the experimental group can be attributed to the combined physical, emotional, and social effects of team sports.

The teamwork ability metric in the experimental group was 88%, compared to 55% in the control group. This 33% difference confirms that team sports are an effective means of fostering collective responsibility and collaboration skills. In the course of a game, students learn to

subordinate their personal actions to a common goal, consider their teammates' perspectives, distribute roles, make collective decisions, and take responsibility for the team's outcome. It is important to note that teamwork is built not only through victories but also through jointly overcoming setbacks. A loss, a mistake, or a difficult in-game situation requires students to support one another, analyze their actions, and find a common solution. This is precisely why the sense of "we," mutual trust, willingness to cooperate, and collective discipline were more pronounced in the experimental group.

A comparison of the control and experimental groups shows that the standard physical education curriculum does not always fully foster the development of students' communicative and socio-psychological qualities. The control group demonstrated lower levels of sociability, empathy, emotional stability, stress resistance, and teamwork ability. This may be because traditional classes are often focused primarily on performing physical exercises, developing general physical fitness, and meeting academic standards. In contrast, specially organized team sports create a richer socio-pedagogical environment where physical activity is combined with communication, emotional interaction, collective responsibility, and personal development.

Thus, the research findings suggest that team sports play a comprehensive developmental role within the higher education system. They not only help strengthen students' physical health but also foster important social qualities such as sociability, empathy, responsibility, leadership, mutual support, and teamwork. Simultaneously, team sports have a positive impact on mental health by helping to reduce anxiety levels, increase emotional stability, and build stress resilience.

The data obtained confirm the value of more broadly incorporating team sports, small-sided games, practice competitions, and group physical challenges into physical education curricula and students' extracurricular sports activities. From a pedagogical standpoint, these forms of activity make physical education more engaging, emotionally enriching, and socially significant. From a psychological perspective, they create conditions for strengthening interpersonal relationships, alleviating internal tension, and boosting students' self-confidence. Consequently, team sports can be regarded as an effective tool for comprehensively influencing the physical, mental, and social development of university students.

Conclusion. Based on the results of the conducted research and their scientific analysis, the following conclusions were drawn.

Team sports, particularly soccer, volleyball, and basketball, have a positive impact on the development of students' communication skills. In the experimental group, the level of sociability was 26% higher and the ability to work in a team was 33% higher compared to the control group. This is because, during team play, students are constantly engaged in verbal and non-verbal interaction, joint decision-making, the distribution of roles, and the pursuit of a common goal.

Regular participation in team sports helps strengthen students' psycho-emotional state. The stress resistance indicator in the experimental group was 33% higher, and emotional stability was 27% higher than in the control group. This suggests that physical activity, emotional engagement in the game, and team support contribute to reducing psycho-emotional tension, increasing self-confidence, and fostering a more stable emotional state. The principle of "individual development through collective activity" used in the study proved effective in fostering a sense of collective responsibility, mutual support, and social inclusion among students. In the experimental group, the indicator for empathy and understanding others was 27% higher than in the control group, which confirms the positive impact of team sports on students' socio-psychological adaptation. Therefore, it is advisable to more widely integrate team sports, including soccer, volleyball, and basketball, into the curricula of higher educational institutions, not only as a means of physical development

but also as an effective pedagogical and psychological tool for strengthening mental health, developing communication skills, and fostering social engagement among students.

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