



REDUCING STUDENT ANXIETY THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF SPECIALIZED METHODOLOGY IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

Anxiety is a common negative mental state. A major factor in its induction is high mental strain (distress). Students' learning activities are associated with varying degrees of tension, which in certain cases manifest as anxiety. It negatively affects their health and performance. One of the most effective means of reducing anxiety and limiting its negative impact is physical activity. Physical qualities are developed in physical education classes and physical exercise can have a positive impact on the psyche. Aim: to reduce students' anxiety by applying specialised methodology in physical education classes. Methods: Literature review, discussion, pedagogical experiment by applying complex impact methodology. The results were processed by variance analysis. Results: In the process of conducting regular physical education classes with the application of a specialized impact methodology, significantly decreased anxiety in students. Conclusions: Conditions are created to improve health and increase student success.

Keywords: anxiety, physical education, students, specialized methodology, psychophysical exercises.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic development of modern civilization has positively affected the life of people, but at the same time it can have negatively affect their psyche. Recently, the number of people suffering from depression and anxiety has significantly increased. Many people suffering from these disorders do not seek help, others seek help when the symptoms become very severe.

Anxiety is characterized by emotional tension, fear, insecurity, restlessness, sleep disorder, etc. Anxiety experiences are accompanied by stomach pain, sweating, dizziness, trembling, rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, etc. (1, 2). One of the main causes of anxiety is lack of security and control over the present and future. Anxious experience is associated with negative thoughts and negative emotions mainly about the future. Fear is a core feature

of anxiety. Most often anxiety is associated with acts of procrastination, denial, avoidance, and escape. Escape as a defensive response contributes to lower anxiety in the short term, and actually contributes to an increase in anxiety in the long term (2). Anxiety is most often triggered by discrepancies between expectation and reality.

Depending on the intensity, anxiety manifests itself in two forms - ordinary (normal) and neurotic. Normal anxiety proceeds with less intensity and it can occur more often. On the other hand, neurotic anxiety is of high intensity and is regarded as a mental disorder.

Anxiety has two main types – situational (or state) anxiety and trait anxiety. The theory of state-trait anxiety was created by Ch. Spielberger (1983). State anxiety is a dynamic mental state and occurs in a specific situation. Trait anxiety is a persistent personality trait in which objectively safe stimuli are perceived as negative and dangerous, threatening the security of the individual (3).

The rapid changes that occur independently of us in the environment in which we live

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continually confront us with new situations and new demands for adaptation. Anxiety is an emotion that signals possible, anticipated, undifferentiated, unclear threat. (4).

As anxiety decreases, emotional resilience increases, willpower increases, and attentional qualities improve (5). As anxiety increases, the adaptation to the increased demands of an activity in extreme situations is limited.

Physical training of students is an important component of building their personality for their future profession and the challenges of modern society. Sports can develop valuable mental, moral and physical qualities of a person. "When the conditions of the living environment change, a person understands that he needs to quickly adapt to the new conditions, which can be a reason for action in order to- reduce tension and restore mental and physiological balance" (6).

Learners acquire knowledge and skills to respond to situations related to their future professional activity. Their physical fitness and mental performance are also improved.

Increasing physical and mental activity has been found to improve health. In most cases, such improvements have a greater effect than taking medication (7).

Physical activity is also a highly reliable preventive measure against the various adverse effects of natural and social factors, and is a means of building better self-esteem, satisfaction and individuality (8). Furthermore, it has a positive impact on the mental state of a person. The effectiveness of the positive influence of physical activity on the psyche is determined by the relationship between the mental and physical activity in people (9-10). Physical activity has a positive influence on lowering the level of situational and personal anxiety.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Based on the theoretical analysis, the following hypothesis is derived: applying a specialized physical training methodology will decrease anxiety. Therefore, the aim of the study is to lower students' anxiety by applying such specialized methodology. In order to achieve the goal, the following tasks are solved:

- Develop the theoretical foundations of the problem.
- Design of a specialized methodology.

- Experimentation and implementation of the methodology.

The subject of the study is the effectiveness of this specialized methodology and its impact. The object of the study is 67 students of UASG participating in regular classes of physical education and sports. The students were divided into two groups- control and experimental. The study was conducted for one academic year.

To prove the hypothesis and solve the problems, a methodology of literature review, observation, and discussion was applied. With the control group, regular classes in physical education and sports were conducted according to the regular university program. On the other hand, in the experimental group, to the classes is applied the specialized methodology, which aims to increase physical activity and a system of psychophysical techniques - regulation of breathing, regulation of muscle tension, psychophysical relaxation. The anxiety indicators were measured with Ch. Spielberger's test for situational and personal anxiety. The obtained results were processed by variational and comparative analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In analyzing the results of the study, certain patterns emerged. At the beginning of the experiment, it was found that the difference between the values of situational and trait anxiety between the control group and the experimental groups was not significant enough ($P=28\%$). This is a reason to continue the study with the application of the specialized methodology. In the second study, after applying the specialized methodology, it was found that the indicators of situational and personality anxiety in the control group did not change significantly ($P=65\%$). However, significant changes ($P=99\%$) occurred in the experimental group (**Figure 1**).

At the beginning of the experiment, their average scores of trait anxiety were $X_p=51$ points ($S=8.2$) and situational anxiety $X_p=43.8$ points ($S=11.1$). Trait anxiety at the end of the study ($X_{sr}=42$ points) was found to be 9 points (18%) lower compared to the beginning of the experiment ($P=99\%$). This significant difference of 18% is an indication of the positive impact of the applied specialized methodology.

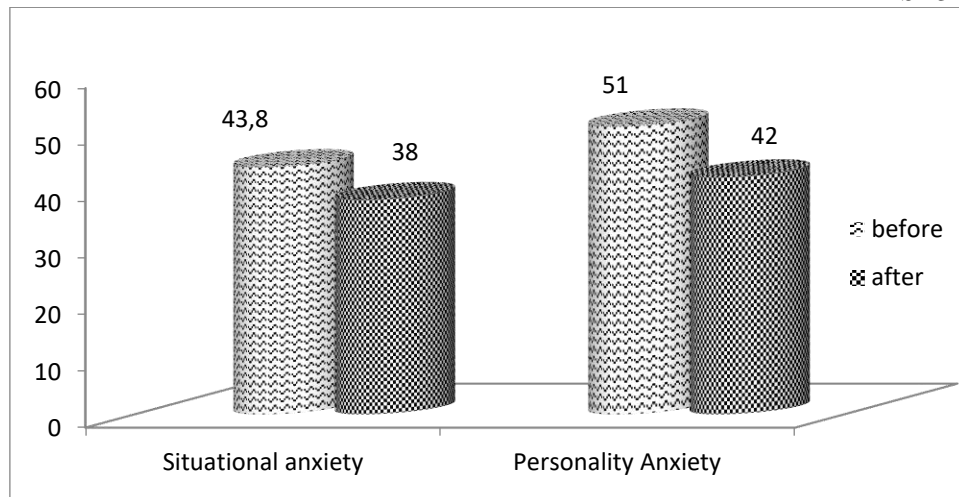


Figure 1. Situational and trait anxiety of the students of the experimental group

At the end of the study, there was also a decrease in situational anxiety with a difference of $d=5.8$ points (12%) from $X_p=43.8$ points to $X_p=38$ points, with a probability of $P=99\%$.

The differences between the averages of trait and situational anxiety between the control and the experimental groups had a high probability of guarantee ($P=99\%$), confirming the hypothesis of the study. It was found that the students of the experimental group were sick less often and had higher grades than the students of the control group after the application of the methodology.

CONCLUSION

With purposeful physical activity, by means of selected psychophysical exercises, complete as an impact methodology, applied in regular physical education classes, anxiety is significantly reduced. As a result, students' health and performance is greatly improved.

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