

Sport Education at Russian High Schools (from 18th to 21st century)¹

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to trace the origin of Sport Education in Russian secondary educational establishments from its beginning to the present day. Sport Education in Russia was closely connected with the state demands in the various fields, especially in health protection, military and naval. It developed in accordance with the mainstream of education in Russia attracting the European achievements in this sphere. In modern Russia a great attention is paid to school sport on the governmental level. Different sport competitions for minor and senior students are held with the aim of students' health protection.

Keywords: Sport Education, School sports, Educational methods, the Students' health, Russian governmental programs for youth sport, School sport competitions

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Introduction

18th century

The system of Sport Education in Russia started to be established in the middle 18th century although its elements could be traced from the end of 17th century. Under the conditions of reforms that were undertaken in Russia during the reign of Peter the First a great demand for skilled personnel was extremely needed. First secular specialized schools started to be established that trained specialists for the national industry, army, navy and state service.

The School for Mathematical and Navigation Sciences was set up in Moscow in 1701 where Physical Education was one of the compulsory subject. The following years PE should have been provided at some other educational establishment of State importance - Gluck gymnasium, Naval Academy, Cadet Corps.

The military reforms of the end 17th - beginning 18th centuries produced a decisive impact on the creation of the military and physical education in the Russian Army. Peter the Great organized Semyonovsky and Preobrazhensky detachments where soldiers' battle training as well as quickness, agility, endurance, and rapidity were perfected.

Considerable time was devoted to mastering bayonet attack since during the battle soldiers had to enter hand-to-hand fighting.

Peter the laid the foundation of the Russian Navy. The first exercises in sailing and rowing were performed on the Yauza River.

The origin of the system of personnel training in PE goes back to the middle of 18th century. The first Russian teachers of fencing had a 4-year course from the French fencing teachers invited from France. Thus the base for Russian PE training system was laid. The gentry educational establishments had fencing (the Science of Foil), riding, rowing, sailing, pistol fire, dancing and games in their curricula. For example, Land gentry cadet corps the students were taught "arithmetic, geometry, drawing, fortification, artillery, sword science, horse riding and other required in military art of war sciences". Fencing school under St Petersburg cadet corps century that trained fencing teachers' assistants was established in the beginning of the 19th century.

19th century

The experience of Western countries in PE was also used. In 1840 at military schools a 3-year course of pedagogical gymnastics on mixed German-Swedish system was introduced.

The first Manuals on PE appear in the middle of the 19th century. Among them are "A Guide to Learning Rules of Foil and Backsword Fencing" and "Directions for military educational education students".

In parish and city schools PE wasn't even specified, as for universities and gymnasiums PE was considered as an optional subject and was recommended to be introduced provided there existed appropriate conditions for corporal exercises. But such conditions as financial opportunities, premises, PE teachers were not available in overwhelming majority of educational establishments. From the second half of the 19th century more efficient organization of PE teachers training can be traced. The time for gymnastics exercises was increased, learning of mobile games was introduced. The students started to be given some

knowledge in anatomy and physiology, more serious attention was paid to physical exercises methods teaching. During this period some important manuals on PE were designed and published. Among them are "Guidance to Pedagogical Gymnastics" by Biberghile" (1866) and "Directions for Gymnastics Exercises" by J.V. Poire (1876). The second half of the 19th century one can trace the trend in the development of skilled personnel in PE. Their refreshment training is connected with the increasing of their own sport mastership not only because increasing the time they spend for it but also because of the strengthening of general theoretical and pedagogical training. The composition of kinds of sport and physical exercises are broadened. Besides fencing and gymnastics swimming is introduced as well as the general developing exercises like free and serial lopes, swarming up and the games that in the beginning of the 20th century would have taken shape of the discipline known as track and field.

20th century

At the end of 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries in Russia there existed a great number of courses and schools that prepared PE specialists for military schools. But there was no single methodical and research centre for preparing PE specialists for the Army and Navy. Such centre was created in 1909 under the name of the Main Gymnastics and Fencing School. The program of the course included two parts - a theoretical and a practical one. Within the frames of the theoretical course the students learnt anatomy, physiology, hygiene, history and methods of physical exercises, especially gymnastics and fencing. The practical part included gymnastics, mobile games, foil and rifle fencing.

The beginning of the civilian system of preparation PE specialists took place in 1896 when a famous Russian scientist P.F. Lesgaft established the first special education establishment dedicated to this goal. It was known under the name of the courses for PE governesses and supervisors. The education lasted three years and was divided in two parts - the main or basic stage and the special stage (Special departments)" the curriculum had more than 20 compulsory and optional subjects. The main course included physics, mathematics, chemistry, mechanics, biology, psychology, philosophy, history etc.

Special departments - natural, history and physical education provided a major in freely chosen branch of knowledge. This first professional educational establishment laid the foundation the base for the national system of PE. It prepared not only qualified teachers in the field of physical education for schools and higher educational establishments but also scholars in the field of PE.

After the revolution of 1917 PE was included into curricula of secondary schools. 2 hours per week pupils performed physical exercises during the lessons, after the lessons all those who wanted could attend PE circles or play different games, grew stronger running, swimming and sunbathing. In 1939 school programs on PE were revised, initial and pre-conscription training was included. Physical education was getting one of the main school work characteristics. The young people acquired military order skills, learned shooting, anti-aircraft and anti-gas defense rules, got good physical training and hardening.

21st century

After the USSR has been crashed the old system of Soviet sport has also disappeared. At present it has been developed a new structure which is still in progress. For the school sport structure now we have three main bodies: Ministry of Sport, Tourism and Youth Policy; Ministry of Education and Science; President Council on developing of Physical Education and Sport.

Our government goal is to introduce the possibility to take up sport to every district.

Nevertheless it has been noticed a significant lowering of the state of health among children and teenagers for the last decades. The important factors that negatively influencing formation of children' health and disease growth are low physical activity and inefficient physical training of children, including children with deviations in their health.

Unfortunately, PE lessons do not compensate insufficiency of physical activity of school students. The parameter of physical readiness of modern school students reaches only 60 % out of results of their peers of 1960-70-s. In many respects these negative consequences can be avoided, if effectively and purposefully to carry out introduction of physical education and sport in a way of life of children, teenagers and youth.

The aim of this study is to look at the present situation of Russian school sport development analyzing some previous experience in such area.

Materials and Methods

Information has been obtained through literature survey, analysis of government documents and programs. This study is a descriptive study mostly. But we have conducted interview with officials and used questionnaire for school students to find out their attitude to PE Olympiad.

Our research was conducted in Moscow. Municipal stage of PE Olympiad for school students of 7-11-th grades was held November, 2014. Combined school teams of all administrative districts of Moscow took part in this event. Students were offered questioner of 4 parts and 10 questions (7-, 2- half-open, 2 – open questions), (Zizikova,2007). There were 1664 surveyed. The results have showed that Moscow school students of different age groups took part in PE Olympiad with pleasure. They have been satisfied with their results and organization of such event and plan to keep mastering their skills and knowledge in the sphere of PE and sport. Many of them are going to connect their future with PE and sport. They have showed their interest in improving of organization and holding such event.

Discussion

As the Department of Health and Human Services research shows a moderate daily activity can reduce substantially the risk or dying from cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes; daily activity helps to lower blood pressure and cholesterol, prevent or retard osteoporosis, reduce obesity and symptoms of arthritis (The Federation Council report of Federal Assembly, 2006).

Physical activity among children and adolescents is important because of the related health benefits, cardio-respiratory function, blood pressure control, weight's management, cognitive and emotional benefits. Children and teens need at least 60 minutes of activity a day for their health.

In opinion of methodologists, a 45-minute PE lesson compensates only about 11 % of a necessary physical load for a school student. And at the maximal physical activity there is only 40 % of necessary volume of movements. It speaks what even daily PE lessons are not capable to liquidate deficiency of movements. In opinion of experts, just PE lessons are not able to fulfill all students' needs in terms of physical activity. It is necessary to compensate a lack of motor activity by additional types of physical training which should be daily, mass and mandatory for all healthy children, (Matveyev, 2005).

The federal government bodies' reorganization has excluded from their structure some divisions which carried out activity in the field of school sport development. It has caused a number of negative consequences, such as reduction of financing of the given area, reduction of quantity of sports objects at schools and poor equipment of schools' sport facilities.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Russia marks, that lessons only in a small degree (on 10-18 %) compensate deficiency of movements that is obviously not enough for preventive maintenance of deviations in health.

Also the issue of PE classes for children with deviations of health and children-invalids still exists. It has proved to be true the absence of uniform system management and the lack of actions coordination of the state structures, various public associations and organizations.

Summing up our brief analysis, it is necessary to note, that in Russian school physical education there is an issue of system character with a high level of the public importance which should be solved by complex system approach.

And it is necessary to use a state approach while developing a uniform all-Russian system of physical education «Sport at school». For the last years the Russian Federation has carried out the state actions on correction of such situation and creation some conditions of effective PE system development in general and in schools particularly.

A new Federal program "Physical education and sport development in RF for the period of 2016-2020" states that 80% of school students should be engaged in systematic PE classes and encouraged to take up sports. Officials at the highest levels of government recognize the importance of youth in Russia's regions to build healthy lifestyle skills. This program completely satisfies modern requirements and can be recommended to youth education specialists for work in schools and non-academic institutions throughout the Russian Federation".

For meeting the requirements of fully satisfaction of children, teenagers and youth demands and interests in physical activity and of strengthening their health it is necessary:

- to keep on teaching a subject "PE" not less than 3 hours per week, according to the basic curriculum, caused by the state educational standard;

- to increase volume of sports work in schools during after-hour time, having expanded a content of additional education;

- to create system of school and interschool competitions for all categories trained according to age and level of readiness;

- to raise efficiency of PE compulsory lessons, having given them a target orientation of training process such as mastering elements of technique for sport games, physical skills development and preparation for competitions;

to create children and youth clubs at educational establishments if suitable conditions and financing exist;

to provide teachers and coaches' retraining every 5 years for keeping them a necessary professional level;

to strengthen material base, to provide educational establishments with modern equipment and to reconstruct stadiums and sport halls.

In accordance of Federal Law "About physical education and sport" the organizational process of PE in educational establishments in our country consists of:

- conducting compulsory lessons;
- involving students in PE lessons;
- developing skills;
- organizing PE events and competitions;
- conducting additional lessons;
- providing conditions for students complex preparation
- providing medical testing;
- involving parents to be responsible for their children's health;
- monitoring of physical preparedness and fitness;
- cooperation in organization and holding sport events.

Additional education establishments, such as sport schools, sport sections, clubs, where kids can choose to go after compulsory school are very important. They try to compensate the deficit of school students' physical activity.

After the USSR joined the Olympic Movement in 1951, specialized Children and Youth Sport Schools of the Olympic Reserve, appeared to prepare young athletes for the sport of highest achievements or elite sport. The number of such sport schools has grown, as has the number of sport disciplines within sport schools. They include not only Olympic Sports, but also national sport disciplines as well as tourism, orienteering, and other sports.

In our system of sport reserve preparation it is totaled about 4500 sport educational establishments where 3,2 million students on 104 sports including 50 Olympic sports are engaged nearby. More than 102 thousand coaches are involved in their training.

Sport section (Russian term means different sports for children from the age of 3 for decent price, sometimes for free) is a very popular form of taking up sport and now 1.2 million children and young people are involved in practicing there.

Annually about 100 All-Russia competitions among children and youth are held and more than 4 million school students are involved.

For example, soccer "The leather ball" collects over 500 000 participants; hockey "The golden puck" - over 200 000 participants; mini-football - over 400 000.

We have many examples when amateur sport sections and clubs helped to find and open a great talent of our outstanding athletes.

Great attention is also paid at organizing game competitions among district or community children teams and family sport participation. As a result last year more than 9 million children and young people were involved in sport competition activity.

Among the numerous sport events there are four the most famous in Russia. In 2010 we revived the Games (Spartakiad) of school students of RF. It is an annual complex All-Russia competition that takes place every second year. It usually takes up to eight months and includes 41 sports (Spartakiadas (2007-2010) staging results).

1 stage – January-March – local level Spartakiad – educational establishments, towns, public organizations

2 stage – March-May – Spartakiad of -town, city, district combined teams

3 stage – April-June – Spartakiad of Federal regions – combined teams of Subjects of Russian Federation

4 stage – July-August – finals – combined teams of Subjects of Russian Federation, Moscow and St. Petersburg

Table 1. Sport Disciplines

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|---|---------------|----|-----------------------|
| 1 | Rowing | 22 | Swimming |
| 2 | Badminton | 23 | Diving |
| 3 | Basketball | 24 | Trampoline Tumbling |
| 4 | Baseball | 25 | Shooting |
| 5 | Boxing | 26 | Synchronized Swimming |
| 6 | BMX | 27 | Modern Pentathlon |
| 7 | Mountain Bike | 28 | Softball |
| 8 | Track Cycling | 29 | Artistic Gymnastics |
| 9 | Road Racing | 30 | Clay-pigeon Shooting |

| | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----|---------------------|
| 10 | Water Polo | 31 | Archery |
| 11 | Volleyball | 32 | Tennis |
| 12 | Freestyle wrestling | 33 | Triathlon |
| 13 | Handball | 34 | Tkhe Kwan Do |
| 14 | Canoe-kayak | 35 | Weightlifting |
| 15 | Whitewater | 36 | Fencing |
| 16 | Greco-Roman wrestling | 37 | Football |
| 17 | Judo | 38 | Field hockey |
| 18 | Equestrian Sport | 39 | Rhythmic Gymnastics |
| 19 | Track and Field | 40 | Sambo |
| 20 | Table tennis | 41 | Chess |
| 21 | Sailing | | |

The second big competition is “President Contest”.

“President Contest” is held every year in more than 60 subjects of RF. The main goal is availability, physical condition development and complex activity.

All-Russia PE Festival “DROSD” is the third one. It goes every year. The goal is to create and implement the effective system of PE in educational academic process. It is a model of educational centre, combining kindergarten, ordinary school and sport school.

The fourth one is winter and summer Spartakiad among orphan and boarding schools children. It takes place every year. Usually about 1000 members from more than 40 regions of our country take part in track and field, boxing and skiing competitions.

Recently it has been introduced one more form of involving school students into PE and sport. It is PE school Olympiad. It consists of theoretical and practical parts and involves senior students, from 7th to 11th grades.

Conclusion

We have assumed that mentioned above forms of young generation engagement in physical activities promotes interest's raising to PE subject that directly connected with health improvement, physical skills development, level of physical preparedness, fitness and sport mastery; motivation forming towards systematic physical activity and promoting healthy life style among school students. Such kind of analysis and research will help to trace specific actions for further comprehensive progression of organization of students' attraction to physical activity.

Educational reforms have been undergone all over the world trough the time. Such changes and reforms have caused new directions and development trends to schools. Physical education as an activity and a subject has been restructured a lot. The federal government bodies' reorganization in Russia has excluded from their structure some divisions which carried out activity in the field of school sport development. It has caused a number of consequences, which was not always positive. There is an issue of system character with a high level of the public importance which should be solved by complex system approach. And it is necessary to use a state approach while developing a uniform system of physical education « Sport at school».

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