

Managerial Techniques Applicable in Physical Education

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Abstract

The paper I propose is based on the hypothesis that some managerial techniques applied in physical education classes, on higher education level, could increase the teaching quality and efficiency with positive effects on student's results. The improvement of working relationship and emotional environment between students and professor during the classes through communication, motivation and authority delegation techniques brings, on the students' side, a positive perception about practice and commitment in reaching physical education goals.

The managerial plan has effects not just concerning the students as an experiment subjects, but also regarding their perception like beneficiaries and partners in the educational process. The double sense assessment: on one way the teacher's assessment, mirrored in the tests results and on the other way the students' teaching assessment through opinion questionnaires fulfills an educational management process applied in physical education domain.

Keywords: Authority delegation, communication, higher education, motivation, quality.

JEL classification: M10, M19, I25.

Introduction

The main arguments that justify the managerial approach in the educational system at all its levels can be:

- ✓ the priority orientation to quality and performance,
- ✓ the fundraising and the efficient use of resources (in many cases insufficient),
- ✓ the motivation of all stockholders,
- ✓ to develop a clear strategy with realistic objectives in a difficult and changeable environment (political, economical, demographical),
- ✓ a new human relationship dimension.

In the competitive conditions which in the universities are functioning and the internal competition for resources, the physical education department's strategy must be more aggressive and oriented toward student's recruitment, as the most important resource for any teacher work. In this struggle for winning the student's interest in our subject, the efforts must be synergic and the goals must be well

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known and accepted by everyone involved in this mission. The PE departments' action and communication strategy will be based on the management principles of highest efficiency and effectiveness.

1. Hypothesis, methods and experiment

The paper I present is verifying, together with the students, subjects of an experiment, a number of assumptions:

- ✓ the relationship between students and teacher has effects upon the working environment and as a consequence, upon the results;
- ✓ it is verifying the student's perception of teaching and learning during the physical education classes;
- ✓ how the student's perception is mirrored in their performances, given that the main variable was a qualitative one?

The variable in this experiment was a managerial plan containing techniques related with motivation for physical effort, team activity, authority delegation, all this mediated through an effective communication, appropriate to the proposed goals.

The managerial plan I applied in physical education activities in economical higher education, has three main directions: motivation, communication and authority delegation, each one having a particular set of requirements.

2. Motivation

Motivating students for physical effort is not quite an easy task nowadays, when the lack of time and the possibilities of spending free time are various and tempting as well. The teacher's motivation skills can make the difference between the student formal presence and an enthusiastic participation. Satisfaction of exercising can become, in time, a motivation by itself.

I considered useful to apply in my work the Locke theory of objectives, which asserts that "a man efficiency and behavior are influenced by his goals" (Johns, 1998). In this matter I encouraged the students to fix realistic and assumed goals regarding the physical tests and to take responsibilities about the own progress and the team results.

On my part I give periodical feed-back related with tasks, recognition of accomplishments, encouragement and support in moments of intensive effort, appreciating in the same time the high standards of performance and progress.

In physical education classes personal example is always an important issue in the motivational process. The principle is simple, but not so easy to follow: to behave like you want your students to behave. A teacher is anyway an example for his students, important is that the message you send by your behavior to be positive and reliable (Bush, 1994).

The teacher in his formal role must give proof himself of the enthusiasm, initiative, energy, trust, care, competence, confidence and fair play he expects from his students. Francis Bacon said in sec. XVI: "He that gives good advice, builds with one hand; he that gives good counsel and example, builds with both; but he that gives good admonition and bad example, builds with one hand and pulls down with the other".⁹

3. Communication

The educational communication is a complex relationship which is operating changes in the student personality. These changes can have different intensities and could be cognitive, affective or behavioral. There for communication can be considerate as the most privileged instrument of teaching.

Physical education defines its essence by action, by exercises, there for the verbal message must be clear, brief, affirmative and in a positive note. I oriented my communication style to keep a good working climate trying to show consideration for students, and active listening, inspiring confidence and removing communication barriers (Pâinișoară, 2004). An open work climate inspires trust, a pleasant training and involves the students to contribute in maintaining a good atmosphere. A rigid attitude, always bossy or a suspicious and critic conduct will result an oppressive climate and a defensive students attitude.

The teacher's communication skills are important, but more important is that the discours to have a good fundation in his profesional competence. „The trust in leaders doesn't come only from the verbal messages that they convey, but it has been building in time and requires a sustainable effort from their part" (Năstase, 2011).

Studies proved that "in a positive emotional situation, information are easier memorized and on the contrary: a stressful situation (fear, excessive effort, tension) gets along inhibition and forgetfulness" (Dragon, 1984).

4. Authority delegation

In the university segment of education the students have an appropriate age for authority delegation. The stage of psychological development allows them to assume responsibilities and organize their knowledge and competences. Also it helps them to develop theirs leader qualities and it offers them the authority, opportunity and motivation for assertion, initiative and creativity.

There is a certain interconnection among the three managerial techniques I present because:

- ✓ In a motivated team, communication and delegation will be relieved and
- ✓ Effective communication and delegation are efficient instruments of motivation (Roebuck, 2001).

The experiment was developed in usual conditions of time and space of a regular PE class and it was dedicated to women students, because they represent de majority in our university (around 70%).

I chose volleyball, a team sport, as an appropriate frame to reach the targets I set forth. A team is different from a group because each team member has a position and a specific task. Also in a team there are preset rules and each one's qualities and skills are used in the purpose the team is gathered for. The time work and the competition release energies which usually an individual student is not willing to spent. That is to say that the physical effort is naturally increased as a part of a team against to exercise individually.

In the same time the control group performed in PE classes fitness and aerobics activities, an individual effort in personal benefits.

The two groups, the experimental and the control one, enveloped 21 students each. Their age was between 19 and 21 years old, grown up and living especially in cities, having a good health. They passed an initial set of physical tests, which provide the reference data for the next results. I aimed the progress of each group. The students in the experimental group were informed about the range and the analysis of their physical test results and they assessed their personal target of progress.

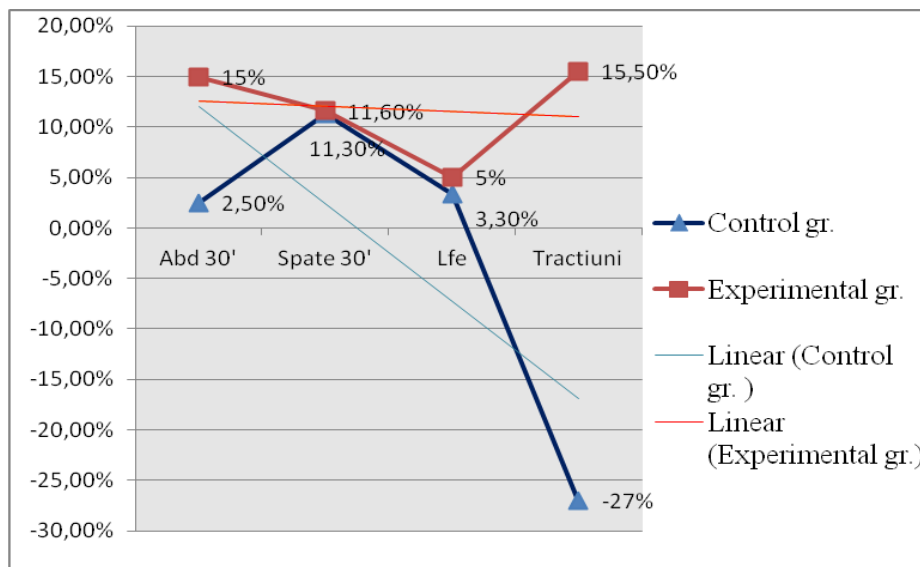


Figure 1. The progress in physical tests

The experimental group progress has always been higher, but the most significant differences were recorded on the 4-th item (pull ups from standing in a 30°). The experimental group progressed with 15,5% in average, while the control group regressed with 27% average. On this particular test of strength endurance the

results could be control more easily by activating the willing resources, which have a significant role comparing with the previous items.

I explain this important difference with the different motivation of the two groups. For the experimental group has worked the technique of fixing individual performance targets and the team psychological support.

The opposite evolution of the two groups confirms that “the physical act cannot be detached of its volitional, emotional and motivational support” (Nicu A., 1993).

Following the educational service orientation towards the students’ satisfaction, the experiment results target also the teaching quality. The managerial plan has effects not just concerning the students as an experiment subjects, but also regarding their perception like beneficiaries and partners in the educational process. The double sense assessment: on one way the teacher’s assessment, mirrored in the tests results and on the other way the students’ teaching assessment through opinion questionnaires fulfills an educational management process applied in physical education domain.

I work out a 14 items questionnaire regarding some aspects of managing physical education classes in higher education: organizing activity, effort extend, time using, PE necessity, exercising availability, new achievements, students opinions, work climate, communication, teacher’s interest, competence, teaching style, results. By comparison with other department colleagues, I verified in which extend the changes I made were seen as positive of our students.

The questionnaires were applied to a larger number of students regarding to assure the representativity of the samples an a better confidence in collected data. Thus, 120 students from various faculties, who worked in the PE classes with 5 different teachers (including me), answered to a 14 items questionnaire. The average scores given by the experimental group, the control and the groups of the other 4 colleagues of mine, from the same department, have been graphic represented for a better analysis (following graph).

After data the processing I get knowledge that the experimental group gave the highest scores at 10 items related with:

- ✓ A good organized activity which involved the students (item 1);
- ✓ The pleasure of physical activity and the satisfaction on exercise (item 4);
- ✓ The willing to prolong this physical activity after the classes and to practice independently in future (item 5);
- ✓ The confidence they have learned something new, they have improved their skills and abilities and they could use them in new or different situations (6);
- ✓ The communication between teacher and students through their involvement in the decision-making and the possibility to express their opinions regarding some aspects of teaching (7);

- ✓ The teacher interest about the students practice, how they fulfill the tasks, about their adaptation to each activity requirements and also about the individual and group progress (item 10);
- ✓ The professional competence and the teacher's enthusiasm displayed and inspired throw keeping a true sportive spirit during the classes and other competitive activities (11);
- ✓ The teaching style with theoretical roots in management science and effects on how to solve practical problems, without altering the working momentum (12);
- ✓ The interest that teacher gives to each student and her executions, progress and particular needs during the PE classes (13);
- ✓ How the students perceive the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired and how the individual progress is assessed and valued on the beneficiary level (14). (Pop, 2007).

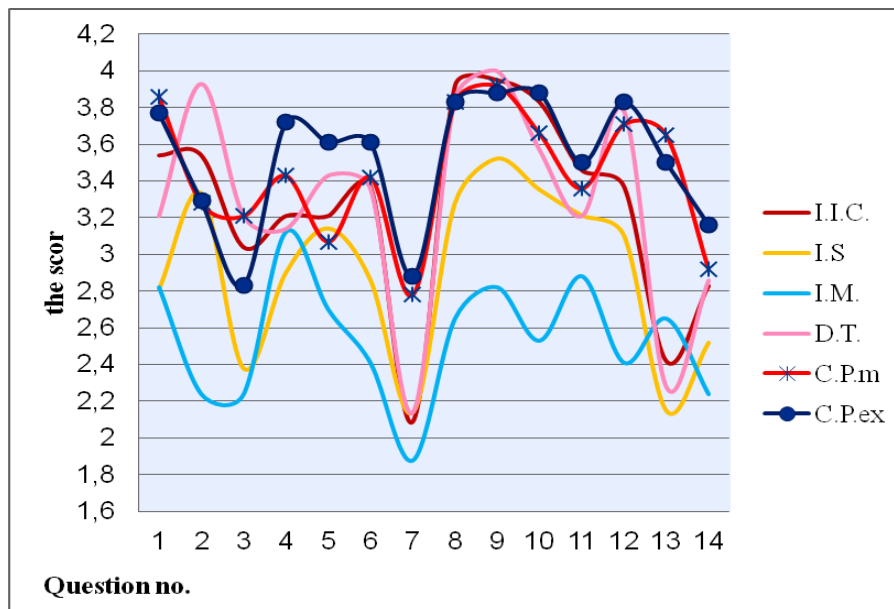


Figure 2. The graph of the assessment questionnaire scores

Conclusions

✓ Finally, I did obtain the best scores on 10 items of 14, on 2 of them I received very good scores, very close of the maximum (items 8 and 9) and on 2 items - average results. In percentage it means that I got the most favorable opinions in proportion of 71,4%. The difference between the average score given by the experimental group and the other groups is statistically significant 99%.

✓ Is hopeful that also the control group answer positively to the questionnaire and my attitude towards students and teaching was perceived similarly by all students surveyed, no matter which physical activity they choose or which group they formally belong.

✓ These positive results verified the study's hypothesis and recommend the managerial techniques that I proposed, as successful in higher education teaching process.

✓ Most convincing for physical education is that the management techniques contained in this paper have resulted in significant progress on physical tests, especially for the experimental group students.

✓ The most important conclusion for me is that in PE and (sports also) is not only about physic, technique and tactics, is also about the energy, the interest and the heart you invest in reaching the performance. The teaching art is to use the subtle power and the synergy of a team to reach common goals.

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