

# Academic physical education benefits for faculty/ research/ management personnel's progress agendas: survey and analysis

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## Abstract

**Objective of the study** was to survey and analyze the academic physical education service benefits for the faculty/ research/ management staff.

**Methods and structure of the study.** We run a questionnaire survey of the academic faculty and research personnel (n = 300) and management staff (n = 140) in the Belgorod, Kursk and Lipetsk Oblast universities to profile the individual progress agendas; with the questionnaire survey data and analyses additionally verified by interviews of academic physical education experts (n = 20). The experts were requested to verify, among other things the questionnaire survey data and findings and contribute to the interpretations and resultant practical recommendations. We used for the purpose of the study combinations of the following theoretical research methods: analyses, comparisons, data generalization, systematization and modeling. The questionnaire survey was designed to profile the faculty/ research/ management staff attitudes to the progress opportunities offered by the academic physical education system classified into: leisure-time trainings in gyms; university mass physical education events; and the GTO Complex tests.

**Results and conclusion.** The questionnaire survey data and analyses made it possible to profile the faculty/ research/ management staff attitudes to the progress opportunities offered by the academic physical education system classified into: leisure-time trainings in gyms; university mass physical education events; and the GTO Complex tests. The study found the faculty/ research/ management staff engaged in the academic physical education mostly on an occasional basis, with a special preference for the GTO trainings and tests and some mass physical education events.

**Keywords:** *academic physical education system, individual progress agenda, faculty, research personnel, university management.*

**Background.** Modern academic physical education service system may be described as the system of interrelated and interdependent institutions providing health and physical development services to students, faculty and management [2]. Its key mission is to encourage and facilitate the individual physical and professional progress agendas; with the university physical education system development projects always geared to improve health and physical fitness standards [3].

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physical education experts (n = 20). The experts were expected to verify, among other things the questionnaire survey data and findings and contribute to the interpretations and resultant practical recommendations. The expert team was composed of the most experienced and knowledgeable academic physical education specialists at active service in the academic research and teaching groups. In addition, the questionnaire survey findings were discussed, verified and analyzed by a designated focus group composed of the Belgorod State National Research University faculty, researchers and management (n = 12).

**Results and discussion.** The questionnaire survey data made it possible to analyze how the faculty/ research/ management staff's progress agendas are facilitated by the academic physical education system. The respondents were found to benefit from the academic physical education by (1) leisure-time university gym workouts; (2) joining the university physical education events; and (3) joining the GTO Complex trainings and tests.

(1) Leisure-time university gym workouts were found differently opted for by the sample, with only half of the sample reporting attending gyms 2-3 times a week for the following reasons: health agenda; physical fitness; body shaping for it is fashionable etc. Therefore, the sample's motivations for the academic physical education were found dominated by the professional service performance facilitating ones. Almost half of the sample reported seldom (once a week at most) visits to the gyms due to not only the low motivations, but also the time constraints and heavy academic workloads. Therefore, there is a contradiction between the group physical progress and health agendas and unhealthy working conditions with the constantly increasing job intensity due to, among other things, growing formalization of the educational process.

(2) University physical education events were found joined by the sample on an occasional basis, with their motivations dominated by the physical education events facilitating their personality/ professional progress agendas and desire to communicate with professional athletes. It should be noted that the management staff was found determined in their health agendas although mostly keeping beyond the mass university physical education events at the same time.

(3) The GTO Complex tests were reported joined by 75% of the sample and rated highly positive, with no one of the focus group members reporting any negative aspect of the events. The focus group emphasized excellent organization, friendly service staff, physical fitness test opportunities, and contributions of the tests to the own self-esteem.

It should be noted that the GTO Complex tests and university sports festivals were ranked on top among the academic physical education elements by the sample due to the excellent organization and traditional festive climate. The latter aspect may be considered significant in the context of the growing festive tendency in the modern lifestyles as a sublimation form i.e. defensive response to the social instability and crises. Thus the typical responses of the focus group members on the GTO trainings and tests were as follows: "Trainings for the GTO tests are highly beneficial to my mind as they advance both health and patriotism" (44 years old male BSU teacher); "My whole family always joins the GTO tests for they contribute to the athletic and competitive spirit and bring people together" (42 years old female BSU manager); and "GTO tests contribute to my self-confidence and self-esteem" (39 years old female BSU manager).

**Conclusion.** The questionnaire survey found the faculty/ research/ management personnel appreciating mostly the GTO Complex trainings and tests in the academic physical education system for their popularity, festive atmosphere, physical fitness test opportunities, communication and socializing aspects, plus they were found equally popular in every age group. Faculty and management staff reported appreciating the university sports festivals and swimming pool services. It should be emphasized that the physical progress agendas of these groups were found complemented by the socialization needs with the friends-making opportunities, plus master classes from the sports celebrities. The communicative/ socialization aspect of the academic physical education system for the faculty and management staff was reportedly appreciated, among other things, due to the festive climate that eases pressures of the formal academic lifestyles. We would recommend this finding being seriously taken into account by the academic physical education system designers and managers.



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