

Original Article

Interpersonal communication of students and mental health data

A. EGANOV¹, E. CHEREPOV², L. ROMANOVA³, V. BYKOV⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Institute of Sport, Tourism and Service, South Ural State University (National Research University), Chelyabinsk, RUSSIA

^{1,2}Ural State University of Physical Culture, Chelyabinsk, RUSSIA

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Abstract.

Introduction. Interpersonal communication is considered as a complex social process both in psychology and pedagogy. Communication in general requires more in-depth study, especially in correlation with mental health data. The data were obtained in the period from 2015 to 2020 in Chelyabinsk. The sample included students of the Institute of Sport, Tourism and Service of the South Ural State University at the age of 20.85 ± 0.21 years and sports experience of 6.21 ± 0.59 years. The sample composed of female students involved in various sports: gymnastics, hiking, athletics, aerobics, shaping, step aerobics, dancing, skiing, as well as sambo, judo, karate. Two groups of female students with a high and low level of communication skills were tested. Diagnostics of mental health and interpersonal communication was carried out using the self-assessment test on a ten-point scale. **Result.** Significant differences in the group of students with a high level of communication abilities in comparison with a group of students with a low level of communication abilities were identified by the following mental health data: well-being, mood in ordinary life, adaptation to various stimuli, emotional status, adaptation to social conditions, the ability to control emotional and volitional spheres, the ability to develop and maintain one's opinion, the desire to study and engage in sports, work, knowledge of one's inner world and the ability to manage it, the ability to optimize one's mental health under stress and the level of one's mental health status. At the same time, in the group of students with a low level of communication skills, there is a higher and significant difference in two parameters of mental health: mental stress and mental fatigue in ordinary life. **Conclusion.** It was revealed that interpersonal communication of students involved in sports is determined by the manifestation of certain mental health components.

Keywords. Interpersonal communication, mental health, athletes, students.

Introduction.

The relevance of the research topic is determined by the need to solve the issue of interpersonal communication of students in society. From a pedagogical point of view, interpersonal communication of students was considered in the works (Varaksin, 2015, Dvortsevaya, Volkova, 2019, Eganov, Romanova, Bykov, 2006).

Fitness-related communication is one of the important types of human activity that affect social adaptation (Cherepov, Eganov, Aminova, Savinykh, 2019, Yarmak, Galan, Hakman, Dotdyuk, Blagii, Teslitskiy, 2017, Eganov, Bykov, 2012, Eganov, Romanova, Bykov, 2006; Badiu, Mereuță, Talaghir, 2000). It should be noted that in psychology and pedagogy there are few studies about the correlations between communicative abilities. In many cases, influence can be directed toward satisfying personal needs and the benefit of society and other people (Kim, LaRose, Peng, 2009). Negative relationships in the group contribute to increased anxiety and provoke interpersonal conflicts. As a result, a complex system of social connections and psychosocial problems arises (Bashir, Bhat, 2016, Kim, LaRose, Peng, 2009).

A person is subjected to the psychophysical influences of the environment, which forms a biosocial personality and methods of communication. Physical education and sports activities contribute to the development of relations with fellow students and preservation of humanistic interpersonal relationships (Tsos, Hylchuk, Andreichuk, Pantik, Tsymbaliuk, 2017; Talaghir, Mocanu, Iconomescu, Mîndrescu, 2018). However, human interaction does not always end with the satisfaction of human needs. The lack of self-confidence occurs periodically in each person. If it is repeated, then it can be fixed already as a property of a person (Krylov, 2005). Any communication-related activity imposes high demands on the psychological preparation and mental health of people. Communication, especially business, requires certain skills and abilities, which are acquired through life experience. However, there are many examples of the so-called communicative inability. The reasons may be: low emotional stability, health status, psychological discomfort, ignorance of the methods of mental self-regulation, stress factors, increased anxiety (Eganov, Bykov, Romanova, Kokin, 2020), depression, (Andersen, Thielen, Bech, 2011), loneliness, social networks (Kim, LaRose, Peng, 2009). For example, virtual life isolates a

person from others, thereby exerting positive and negative effects on his social, mental, physical health (Timnea, Potop, Jurat, 2018), psychological well-being (Bashir, Bhat, 2016, Kim, LaRose, Peng, 2009).

V. Varaksin considers interpersonal communication as a tool for solving psychosocial problems and a rather complicated process, since one cannot thoughtlessly take the position of a speaker or a listener, it is necessary to do everything so that the next communication would be better compared to the previous one (Varaksin, 2015). Communication cannot be analyzed separately from a person, since they are closely connected with each other. The development of these relations consists in changing the personality through the transformation of its internal properties. The personality appears as an original synthesis of personal qualities and the internalized subjective-intentional qualities of others. Interpersonal communication is manifested in sport, training, and work. There are two types of communication: business (formal, cognitive) and personal (informal, emotional). For example, the gender-related features of athletes play an important role in informal communication: communicative behavior, temperament, tolerance to working conditions (Kanatev, 2015). The system of interpersonal communication has its own characteristics in every social environment. For example, Yu. Kolomeyev mentions the following psychological qualities that influence intrateam communication: misunderstanding of the other's inner world, lack of sympathy and empathy, selfishness, unkind attitude, insincerity, deceit, aggressiveness. Timely, correct and confidential communication is the main factor that contributes to the stimulation of optimal emotional mood and the maximum manifestation of socially approved inclinations and abilities necessary for the formation of socially desired personality. Interpersonal communication is also necessary because it is perceived as a certain norm in the system of social values (Varaksin, 2015). People with mental disorders live in their own world but often have a delicate sense of those around them, as well as they have intuition and extraordinary creative abilities, while being vulnerable to the effects of the social environment. In case of certain mental illnesses peculiar involuntary gestures are observed. Patients with aggressive conditions are characterized by short, rhythmic pauses when moving their heads (Dittmann, 1972). Interpersonal communication may be determined by the level of mental health. Signs of mental health include: activity, focus, success in interpersonal relations, the ability to resolve conflicts and adequately perceive what is happening in the social environment. A mentally healthy person usually shows decency and, in most cases, does not use immoral acts (Krylov, 2005). The mental health of young people in a changing world was studied in the work of A. Dvortseva and E.V. Volkova. Mental health is formed under the influence of many psychological factors, the main of which are: self-awareness, communication with peers and various social groups (Dvortseva, Volkova, 2019). The influence of the educational environment on the mental health of students is considered in the works of E. Dyachkova and M. Khvatova. The authors reveal that the fourth-year students, compared with the first-year students, have significantly higher levels of self-control and self-management in terms of the expression of their emotions (Dyachkova, Khvatova, 2006).

Thus, the problem of interpersonal communication is one of the most significant areas of pedagogy and psychology and is considered as one of the tasks of modern theoretical and experimental psychology of communication. The knowledge of the features caused by the level of mental health is the result and condition of effective communication.

The purpose of the paper is to study the effect of parameters of mental health on communication and group interaction of students involved in physical education and sports.

Hypothesis: a different level of mental health parameters in students affects interpersonal communication.

Materials and methods.

The results were obtained from 2015 to 2020 in the city of Chelyabinsk. The sample included students of the Institute of Sport, Tourism and Service (South Ural State University) at the age of 20.85 ± 0.21 years and with the sport experience of 6.21 ± 0.59 years. Diagnostics of mental health and interpersonal communication was carried out in the laboratory using mental health self-assessment with a ten-point scale (Eganov, Erlikh, Bykov, 2013). 108 students were tested and divided into two subgroups with a high and low level of interpersonal communication skills. The first group included students with a high level of communication skills, $n = 45$. The second group included students with a low level of communication skills, $n = 29$. The average level of interpersonal communication skills ($n = 34$) estimated at 8 points was not taken into account. The results of the experiment were processed using the two-sample t-test for an independent sample with the number of degrees of freedom - $f = 79$. The selection of subjects by gender was homogeneous and included students engaged in various sports: gymnastics, hiking, athletics, aerobics, shaping, step aerobics, dancing, skiing, sambo, judo, karate. Calculations of the primary data were carried out using the Microsoft Excel program.

Results.

The following concepts should be defined that are directly related to the purpose of the study.

Mental health is a holistic entity that has a complex, multi-component and multi-level structure of the mental sphere based on general mental comfort, which ensures the body's resistance to adverse external and internal environmental factors, including educational activity (Eganov, Bykov, 2012).

Interpersonal communication is a type of activity, which implies simultaneous interaction, information exchange, and impact on each other in direct contact between two or more individuals caused by the

needs of joint activities in a social group. Interpersonal communication is based on communicative abilities, including the psychological characteristics of a person. Interpersonal communication is influenced by age, gender, personality traits, temperament, attitude, mental fatigue, health status, etc. (Bogdanov, Rychkova, 2019). Communication acts as a system of actions for each of its participants. The interaction is associated with a psychological analysis of communication, as well as with emotional and personal characteristics of a person, his/her knowledge of the object of communication, including character traits, that is, what are called communicative abilities. Communication serves as a binding mechanism for people in groups and a condition for the socialization of the individual. Communication takes part in human mental organization, determines the nature of individual development, and personal relations with the immediate social environment. Communication provokes emotions in a communication partner and some kind of emotion from a person. The issue of interpersonal communication implies the identification of certain patterns. Table 1 shows the results of the study with a two-sample paired t-test for two groups of female students with a high and low level of communication abilities.

Table 1

Statistical comparison of two groups of female students with a high and low level of communication abilities based on mental health data

Mental health data	Communication abilities		t	P
	High n=45, $\bar{x}\pm m$	Low n=29, $\bar{x}\pm m$		
1. The ability to communicate with other people	9,41±0,07	6,24±0,18	18,3	≤0,001
2. Anxiety in ordinary life	5,14±0,45	6,21±0,37	-1,82	≥0,073
3. Nervous tension, anger	7,00±0,41	7,80±0,34	-1,49	≥0,140
4. Mental stress	6,28±0,34	7,49±0,28	-2,73	≤0,010
5. Anxious stomach, hands sweating	7,01±0,49	7,47±0,35	-0,79	≥0,436
6. Aggressiveness in ordinary life	7,14±0,38	7,76±0,31	-1,27	≥0,218
7. Well-being in ordinary life	7,77±0,31	6,76±0,34	2,03	≤0,050
8. Mood in ordinary life	8,40±0,23	7,31±0,33	2,97	≤0,001
9. Adaptation to various stimuli	7,31±0,28	6,00±0,41	2,75	≤0,010
10. Emotional status	8,16±0,24	6,91±0,35	3,03	≤0,001
11. Mental fatigue	5,76±0,31	6,82±0,33	-2,19	≤0,030
12. Adaptation to social conditions	8,51±0,19	7,03±0,36	3,88	≤0,001
13. Adequacy of the assessment of emotional experience in a stressful situation	8,18±0,25	7,52±0,35	1,55	≥0,129
14. The ability to control emotional and volitional spheres	8,44±0,22	6,93±0,29	4,12	≤0,001
15. The ability to develop and maintain one's opinion	8,47±0,15	7,59±0,25	3,22	≤0,001
16. The desire to study, engage in sports, work	8,70±0,22	7,55±0,37	2,96	≤0,001
17. Knowledge of one's inner world, ability to manage it	8,63±0,19	7,91±0,32	2,14	≤0,04
18. The ability to optimize the mental state of stress	7,97±0,18	6,69±0,31	3,88	≤0,001
19. The level of mental health	7,73±0,27	6,03±0,37	3,74	≤0,001

Note: $\bar{x} \pm m$ is the average value; \pm standard error of the average value; t - two-sided t-test; P - confidence level between groups; \leq - differences between groups are statistically significant; \geq - differences between groups are not statistically significant; f is the number of degrees of freedom ($45 + 29 = 74$), with $f = 79$; at $t = 1.98$, $P \leq 0.05$; at $t = 2.62$, $P \leq 0.01$

Table shows that significant differences in the group of students with a high level of communication abilities in comparison with a group of students with a low level of communication abilities were identified by the following mental health data: well-being, mood in ordinary life, adaptation to various stimuli, emotional status, adaptation to social conditions, the ability to control emotional and volitional spheres, the ability to develop and maintain one's opinion, the desire to study and engage in sports, work, knowledge of one's inner world and the ability to manage it, the ability to optimize one's mental health under stress and the level of one's mental health status. At the same time, in the group of students with a low level of communication skills, there is a higher and significant difference in two parameters of mental health: mental stress and mental fatigue in ordinary life. In the group of students with a low level of communication skills, there is a tendency to higher values of anxiety in ordinary life, nervous tension, anger, anxious stomach, hands sweating, aggressiveness in ordinary life. In the same group, there is also a lower adequacy of the assessment of emotional experience. Thus, it was revealed that interpersonal communication between students was determined by a number of internal factors associated with mental health and its deviations.

Conclusion.

Communication abilities depend on certain mental health data. The following parameters of mental health are characteristic for students with a high level of communication abilities: well-being, mood in ordinary life, adaptation to various stimuli, emotional status, adaptation to social

conditions, the ability to regulate emotional and volitional spheres, the ability to develop and to defend one's opinion, the desire to study and engage in sports, work, knowledge of one's inner world and the ability to manage it, the ability to optimize one's mental status and the level of mental health.

In the group of students with a low level of communication abilities, higher and significant differences were revealed in terms of the following data: mental stress and mental fatigue in ordinary life.

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