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# Effect of Learning Environment and Tobacco Consumption on the Formation of Students' Motivation in Basketball Classes

Qiuju LIN<sup>1</sup>, Milan KUBIATKO<sup>2</sup>, Muhammet USAK<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

We can define three main factors that become an obstacle on the way of the development of new basketball professionals: insufficient development of certain educational factors; tobacco consumption and the decrease of health quality and activity that is associated with it; engagement with Internet activities. The absence of at least one of these factors would help to effectively influence the young people's interest in basketball and further development in this field. The participants of the research experiment were 46 teachers of physical education from three Chinese institutes and 765 students (both local and international) from the same institutes. Three surveys were conducted within the course of the research – diagnostic control and additional. Between the diagnostic and control stages, the coaches-participants visited a set of lectures on the formation of the students' motivation and on the smoking dangers for sportsmen. As a result of the anti-tobacco lectures that were conducted at the end of classes by the coaches-participants of the experiment, the percentage of those students who were ready to give up smoking grew from 9% to 23%.

*Keywords:* basketball, students, sport pedagogy, tobacco consumption control, basketball, motivation, social network, social groups.

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## Introduction

Basketball is still one of the most popular sports in the world. Each year a lot of national and international championships take place, that allow the basketball players to climb the sport career ladder. Besides, this sport is also included in the Olympic games. There are 200 million of officially registered basketball players in the world, whereas the International Basketball Federation includes 173 countries (Xue, 2002). The salary of basketball players from various leagues ranges from 1 to 25 million dollars per season (Weiss *et al.*, 2017). That is why it is no surprise that a lot of young people around the world associate their further life with sport after having started to play basketball in school or university. Within this context, the sport education of future basketball players plays the most important role. All around the world, it has a scheme that is similar in general aspects and differs in details due to the differences of the educational systems (Chen, & Xiao, 2017; Wang, & Hu, 2017; Zhang, & Zhang, 2017; Jiang, & Jia, 2018; Erofeeva, *et al.*, 2019)

The future basketball players come to the academies of prestigious clubs only by virtue of educational grants or being selected after ordinary sport schools and colleges (Butler & Dzikus, 2015). In other words, all the future players have common sport base – basketball classes in educational schools and/or colleges as a general or elective subject (Abdelkrim *et al.*, 2007). Thus, from the very beginning, the majority of young people are limited in the development of their potential due to several factors: the facility and resources of the educational institution (equipment); the quality of playgrounds; the trainers' qualification; the formation of psychological readiness for the development. In contrast to the specialized sport schools, general educational institutions rarely focus upon the development of potential basketball players. This is especially evident in the fact that basketball classes are taught by the same coaches who conduct general physical education lessons. In most cases, it is financially impossible for the schools and colleges to involve professional basketball coaches. Besides, due to the uncompetitive salary, the majority of young teachers who specialize in this sport prefer to develop rather in a professional league than in teaching. Though, the most active influence upon the prospective basketball players' motivation is exerted by the teacher.

Despite of all the above-mentioned problems, the basketball classes are still one of the most demanded among the students around the world. For example, in the USA 36% of students choose basketball as a sport class (football occupies the second place, it is chosen by 29% of the students) (Dacica, 2014). In the schools and universities in the east of Britain even the pupils and students with disabilities play basketball (in wheelchairs). Such classes are organized within the program "The Wheelchair Sports Project", that provide professional coaches and funding in order to equip special grounds for general educational institutions. In China, the basketball reached the peak of its popularity among other sports as

early as at the end of 1990s. It is associated with globalization of sport in general in DPRK and with NBA campaign that is aimed at conquering of the Chinese market. Nevertheless, the history of the Chinese basketball in international context is a struggle for TV viewers. The appearance of the Chinese teams and players on the international arena (especially, the participation of the legendary Chinese Yao Ming in NBA) brought 700 million of new watchers for the NBA matches. There are 650 000 basketball courts and 300 active basketball players (mainly amateurs) in China. 83% of men aged between 5 and 24 years are basketball fans, 45% of them play basketball in school, university or during their leisure time on the publicly available courts (Huang & Hong, 2015). 38% of the Chinese students aged between 14 and 22 years choose basketball as a sport class in their educational institutions. The main DPRK basketball leagues include: The Chinese Basketball Association, The National Basketball League, The Chinese University Basketball Association, The Chinese school basketball league. In total, there are 18 active teams in the professional league. However, in China it is easier to watch basketball than to play it, because here this sport is elevated to the commercial and image-related level. As long as all the efforts are aimed at achieving the the victory on the international arena which is supposed to raise China's external status, the basketball culture is absent, its entertaining component is ignored. Thus, on the level of the state, a vast amount of funds is invested in the professional teams, with no support for the beginning talented players.

Besides, the education of the prospective basketball players rarely becomes the focus of attention (Lun *et al.*, 2017). There are no efforts to create the conditions in the schools and universities that would favor the future players. There is no program of psychological motivation with the help of mentors or coaches. As a rule, the coaches in general educational institutions are the teachers of physical culture who do not specialize in basketball, or young graduates of the physical education faculties with no sufficient experience in this field (DeCorby *et al.*, 2005). 83% of physical culture faculty graduates in China associate their further career with professional sport. However, only 19% succeed. Another 41% of graduates become the teachers of physical culture in general educational schools and universities. Less than 15% of students manage to become the teachers of specialized sport schools.

As a rule, the chance to enter specialized educational institutions where the labor conditions and salary level is higher is given by virtue of relevant achievements in university competitions. Even if a student who likes basketball fails to enter the academy in the national league or does not pass the draft in order to enter the major leagues, but he was a member of the university team and demonstrated good results, he still has a chance to occupy the coach position in a sport school (Huang & Hong, 2015). However, the knowledge level that a graduate acquires in university is simply insufficient. For example, there is no course of psychological mentoring and motivation of the students. Thus, a vicious circle is evident where the students do not become professionals due to the absence of support and

motivation on the part of the coach. As a result, they become the same coaches without needed qualification.

The lack of basketball players' education is the reason why the defense and attack of the Chinese university students are on C and D level (according to RSR gradation) accordingly in comparison with university players in other countries (the three leaders are the USA, Germany and Russia) (Wenqian & Zhu, 2017). However, another reason for the absence of positive dynamics in the appearing of the new professional basketball players is the problem of tobacco consumption. During 2010-2017, the number of smokers in China grew from 300 to 316 million. These figures continue to grow even despite of the ban on smoking in public places in China.

The biggest proportion of smokers among men is represented by school and university students: 36.6% of male smokers are aged between 14 and 18 years, 37.9% - between 18-22 years. Each year the number of smokers within the age group of 14-18 years constantly grows. At the same time, we observe the growth of the number of the Chinese who suffer from health problems that are associated with tobacco consumption. In 2017, there were 200 million of complaints that were associated with illnesses as a result of tobacco consumption. In this context, the health promotion in educational institutions plays a significant role. After all, the students' health deterioration leads to the decrease in their ability, interest and motivation to go in for sport.

The issue of tobacco consumption popularization is inseparably connected with basketball: 89% of the Chinese viewers note that they remember a cigarette brand from a sponsor advertisement that precedes the broadcasting of basketball matches (Yang *et al.*, 2010). 12% of the Chinese smokers who view themselves as situational smokers (they smoke just once a week) start to smoke when viewing sport events. The analogy is possible to find in the work of Tanriverdi *et al.* (2015), Pirlog *et al.* (2017), Trandafir *et al.* (2018), Mohammadi *et al.* (2018), and Mejia *et al.* (2019). It is paradoxical that, while the tobacco companies sponsor the National Chinese leagues, the local school and university leagues in distant Chinese provinces (such as Yunan) are conducted under the slogan "Away tobacco" (Xiaoliang, 2006).

Another aspect that decreases the interest to sport activities on the part of the Chinese youth aged between 14 and 22 years is the popularization of informational technologies (Huang & Hong, 2015). Whereas in 2005, 64% of young people aged between 14 and 22 years played sport games during their leisure time, in 2015 this figure had dropped to 39%. Nowadays, 47% of pupils and students spend their time playing computer or mobile phone games, communicating in social networks and engaging in other Internet-activities. Thus, we can define three main factors that nowadays become an obstacle on the way of developing of the new basketball professionals in China: insufficient development of certain educational factors; tobacco consumption and the decrease of health quality and activity that

is associated with it; engagement with Internet activities. The absence of at least one of these factors would help to effectively influence the young people's interest in basketball and further development in this field. First of all, we speak about the formation of motivation with the help of a coach.

## Methodology

### *Participants*

The participants of the research experiment were 46 teachers of physical education from three Chinese institutes and 765 students from the same institutes (both local and international – from South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Russian Federation, United States). The main criterion for the selection of teachers was their experience in teaching basketball. Whereas the main criterion for the selection of the students-participants was their age ranging between 18 to 22 years (because this age group includes the most active smokers in China, which is important for the research context) and participation in basketball classes for at least two times a week.

The researches were curated by the representatives of the teaching and educational part of the corresponding universities administration.

The group of teachers included 46 teachers of physical education from the following universities: Peking University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Nanjing University. Their age ranges between 26 and 57 years (*Table 1*).

*Table 1: Participants distribution*

	Number in figures	Number in %	Number in figures	Number in %	Number in figures	Number in %
25-29 years old	3	6.52%	2	4.35%	3	6.52%
30-35 years old	4	8.7%	3	6.52%	4	8.7%
35-45 years old	6	13.04%	5	10.87%	5	10.87%
45-57 years old	4	8.7%	4	8.7%	3	6.52%
	17	36.96%	14	30.43%	15	32.61%

The teaching experience of the participants ranges between 2 and 21 years (*Table 2*).

Table 2: Participants teaching experience

Teaching experience	Number in figures	Number in %
2-5 years	8	17.39%
5-10 years	12	26.09%
10-15 years	16	34.78%
15-21 years	10	21.74%

The group of students included 765 participants from the following universities: Peking University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Nanjing University. The amount of international students was 273 (almost 35,7%). Their age ranges between 18 to 22 years (Table 2).

Table 3: Participants age

	Number in figures	Number in %	Number in figures	Number in %	Number in figures	Number in %
18 years old	46	6.01%	50	6.54%	48	6.27%
19 years old	50	6.54%	53	6.93%	47	6.14%
20 years old	52	6.8%	56	7.32%	50	6.54%
21 years old	54	7.06%	54	7.06%	50	6.54%
22 years old	60	7.84%	52	6.8%	43	5.62%
	262	34.25%	265	34.64%	238	31.11%

The participation of the students in the experiment was sanctioned by the institution administration. The participants gave their consent for further use of the research data.

### Research design and survey

During the course of experiment, three surveys were conducted – diagnostic, control, and additional. All the surveys were carried out by the teachers-participants who conducted basketball classes within the profile focus-groups of students. The first diagnostic stage of experiment implied the analysis of the existing situation among the students in relation to their motivation to play basketball and the influence of smoking upon their activity.

For this purpose, a questionnaire was composed. The next stage of the experiment was the work with teachers-participants. On the basis of their universities, they were offered three elective lectures on the students’ motivation and psychological

readiness formation. These lectures were conducted by three professors in this field according to the methodical programs of the psychological faculty of their institutions. Besides, all the teachers-participants visited a lecture on smoking dangers and its influence upon the sportsmen's physical activity. It was conducted in all three universities by the invited lecturer from the World Health Organization office in China.

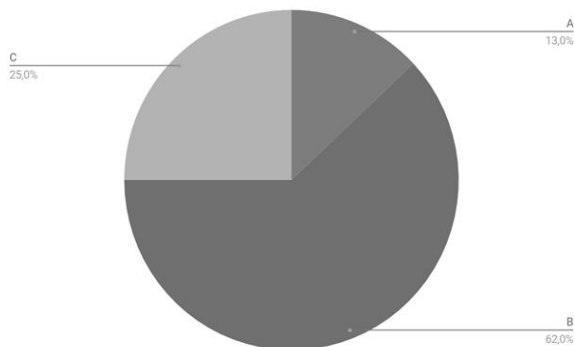
After that, over a month, the coaches-participants applied the new knowledge during their classes with students-participants of the experiment. At the beginning of the 80-minute class, each teacher devoted 10 minutes to the formation of the students' motivation, whereas 10 minutes at the end of the class were used to tell about smoking dangers for sportsmen. A month later, the control survey was conducted at the end of the next class by the coaches in their focus-groups.

### *Research limitations*

The main limitation of the research was the lack of desire to admit their smoking addiction on the part of the students. More than 40% of the them left the answer 3 in the questionnaire 1 and the question 4 in the questionnaire 2 without answers. Besides, 8% of the participants left the experiment between the first and the second stage due to the low attendance of classes (1 (or less) out of 4 during the experiment). Thus, the statistical error of the research is 2.3%.

## **Results**

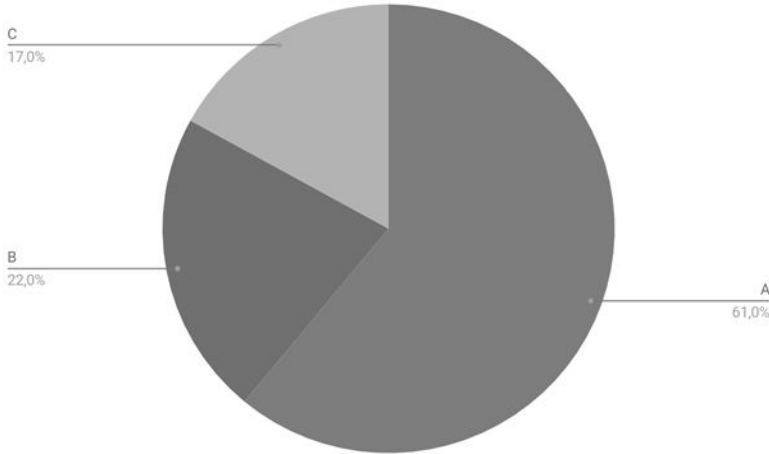
The diagnostic stage of experiment revealed a low level of the students' interest in professional basketball. Only 13% out of 765 participants associate their future with professional basketball, whereas 62% of the students do not view themselves as future basketball players (*Figure 1*).



*Figure 1:* Distribution of results on the question - Do you associate your future career with basketball?

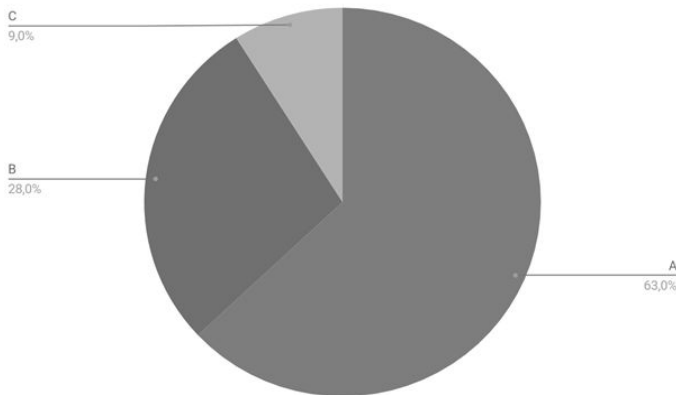


22% respondents view basketball as a professional occupation, whereas more than a half of the respondents go in for basketball as a hobby. However, such indicators point to the positive image of basketball classes among the students, because only a small part of the participants demonstrates an inert position by viewing basketball as only a university course (*Figure 2*).



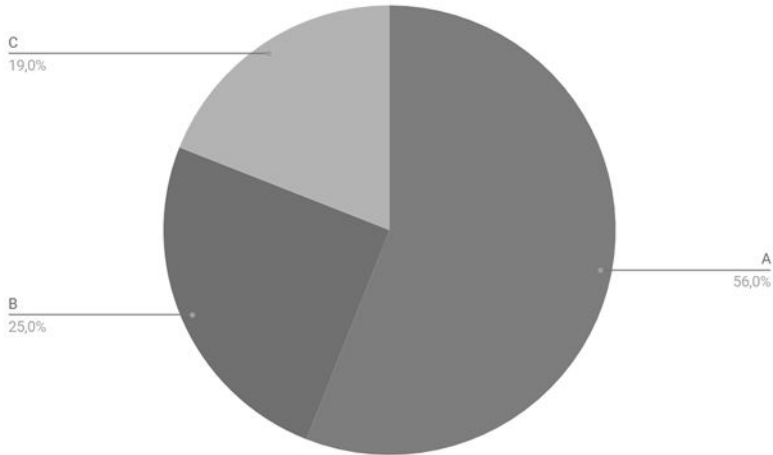
*Figure 2:* Distribution of results on the question - For you basketball is...

The identification of smokers within the focus-groups was the most difficult task. More than 40% of the students left the question 3 from the questionnaire 1 without answer. Out of 53% of the students who answered the question 3 from the questionnaire 1, 63% evaluated themselves as smokers, 28% gave negative answer, the rest of them refused to answer (*Figure 3*).

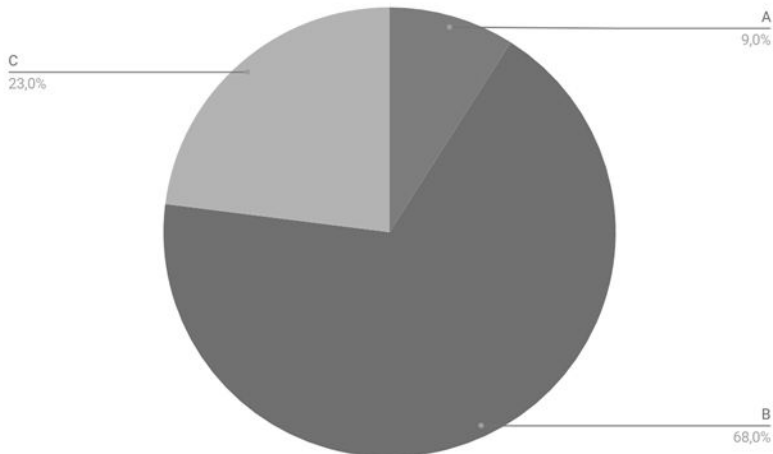


*Figure 3:* Distribution of results on the question - Do you smoke?

Thus, the results of the second part of the questionnaire may be insufficiently valid. However, they demonstrate that the participants are aware of the smoking dangers. However, they do not view sport as a sufficient motivation for giving up smoking (*Figure 4, Figure 5*).



*Figure 4:* Distribution of results on the question - Do you think that smoking influences your physical activity during going in for sport?



*Figure 5:* Distribution of results on the question - Is it possible for you to give up smoking as a result of a potential possibility of engaging into professional sport?

However, only a month of weekly motivational conversations with their coaches and explanations of the smoking dangers, some students changed their minds. When analyzing the results, it is important to remind that 8% of the participants left the experiment between the first and the second stage due to the low attendance of the classes (1 (or less) out of 4 during the experiment). Thus, the number of the participants dropped to 704.

The first striking difference is the reevaluation of their career chances in basketball on the part of the students. This indicator grew from 13% to 35%. However, the number of the undecided students remained the same (Figure 6). It is interesting to note that this indicator significantly grew among the students aged between 21 and 22 years. It may point to a higher potential of the motivational lectures among the students who will soon have to choose their profession. The dynamics of growth among younger students is significantly lower, because they: a) may go through the stage of adaptation to university; 2) may not feel an urgent need to soon choose their profession.

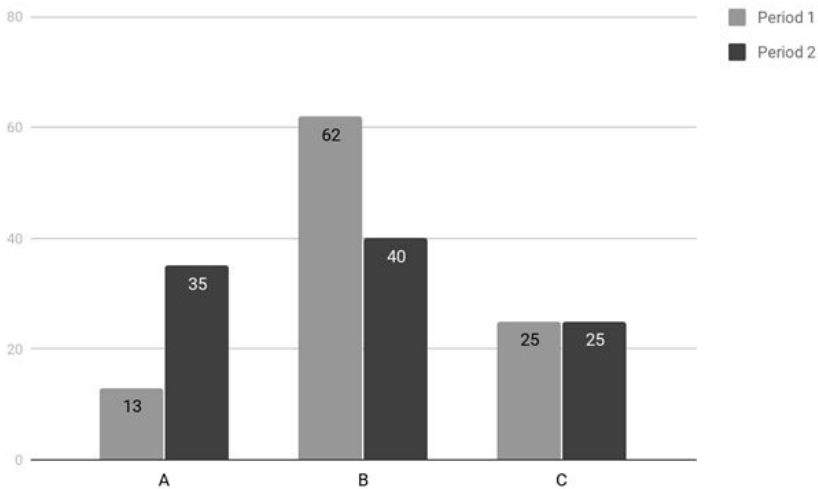


Figure 6: Distribution of post-test results on the question - Do you associate your future career with basketball?

However, the number of the students who view basketball as a professional occupation has grown, though only by 5%. The number of indifferent participants remained the same only thanks to those who viewed it as hobby (Figure 7).

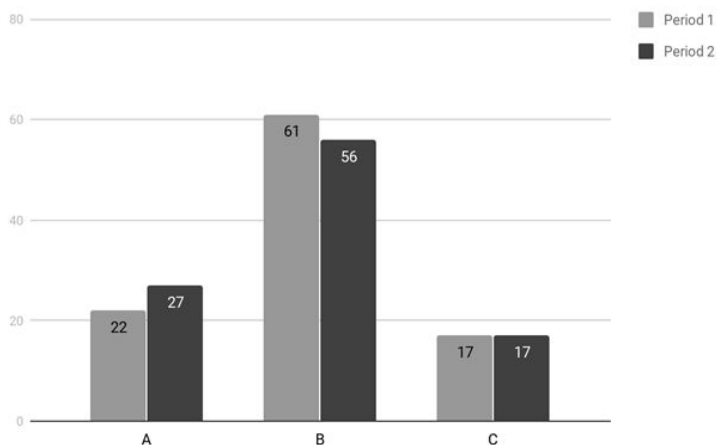


Figure 7: Distribution of post-test results on the question - For you basketball is...

The majority of the students also pointed to the usefulness of the motivational lectures that were carried out by their coaches at the beginning of each class. Besides, 62% of the smokers among the students were confident in the effectiveness of the anti-tobacco lectures at the end of the classes (Figure 8).

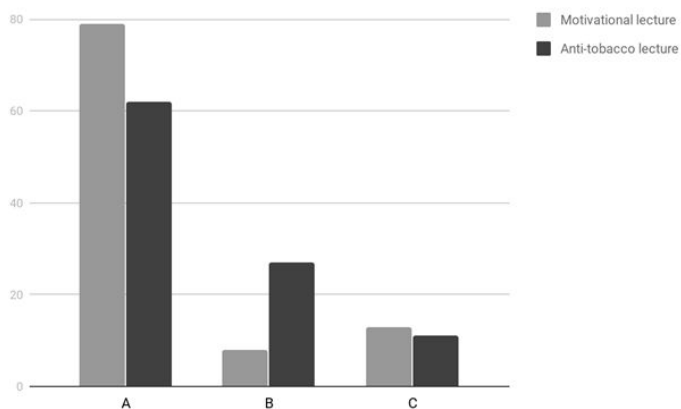


Figure 8: Pre- and post-test results regarding the effectiveness of the anti-tobacco lectures.

The percentage of those students who were ready to give up smoking has also grown (Figure 9). This evidences to the high importance of the anti-tobacco lectures among the students who play basketball.

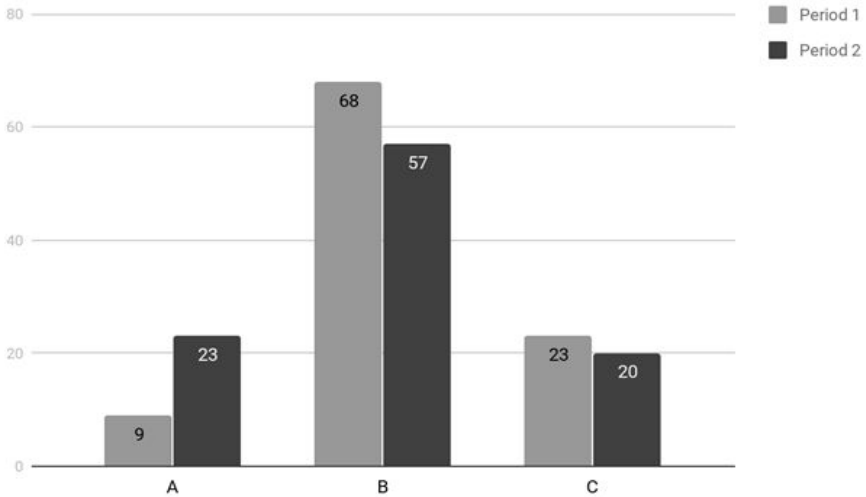


Figure 9: Pre- and post-test results regarding the readiness to give up smoking

In their turn, the coaches-participants also point to the importance of lectures that enhance the motivation and explain the smoking dangers. Besides, the majority of basketball teachers share the opinion as for the need for the psychological education elements for the effective interaction with students (Figure 10).

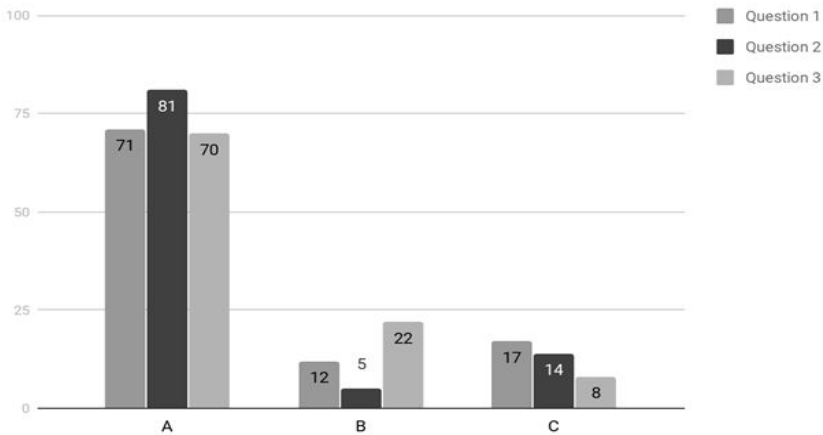


Figure 10: Results of diagnostic control and additional stages of survey

The research results point to the need of an urgent introduction of the students' motivation formation course into the coaches' training. Besides, they evidence to the need for using it as a basis of a regular work with basketball sportsmen. A regular work that is associated with explanation of smoking dangers to the students is needed as preventive measure.

## Discussions

Motivation is one of the most important elements in basketball classes. The students describe their ideal coach in the following way: the coach describes the team's future perspectives after each successful competition; he is open for the new ideas and propositions that come from the students; he patiently teaches the players and responds to all their questions; he regularly increases his skills and abilities level (Su & Han, 2017). The need for the knowledge improvement among the practicing coaches and making the corrections in the future coaches' training program are the compulsory elements of the professional basketball players' effective training system organization (Layne & Yli-Piipari, 2015).

Moreover, motivation is a driving force for young basketball players whose anthropometrical characteristics are below the standards in this sport. Due to this fact, they have to make more efforts than the players with "ideal parameters" (Sallet *et al.*, 2005). Among other factors, 63% of basketball players who participate in the US National League admit that they became professionals by virtue of their coaches' support in school or university (Harrison *et al.*, 2006). Only 23% of the Chinese professional basketball players viewed their coach as a mentor and inspiration source for their further career in sport (Li *et al.*, 2017). However, a relatively low salary of coaches in the Chinese general educational schools and universities may evidence to the fact that no additional special knowledge is required from the teachers of physical education. Whereas the work that is associated with the students' motivation formation may be perceived by the teachers as an additional duty that is worth of additional payment.

The coach's influence is not the only possible source of the students' motivation. For example, joint classes for disabled and ordinary school pupils are organized in Britain. It functions as a powerful emotional trigger for the pupils who think that they do not have any chances in basketball and in sport in general due to the subjective reasons. Whereas in Russia the education of basketball players is more hierarchical in its character, where the development direction is defined by the Russian Basketball Federation. It accredits the institutions that specialize in the professional training of basketball players. It is also important that RBF organizes special educational events that are aimed at the basketball coaches' advanced training (Zavertiaeva *et al.*, 2017).

Almost similar scheme functions both in Germany and in the United States. However, in these countries the selection methods of basketball players for

professional leagues are stricter. As a rule, the students in general educational institutions that have their own basketball team are trained by the former professional basketball players (Li *et al.*, 2017). However, the problems that are viewed as youth issues rarely focus solely upon young basketball players. For example, the problem of tobacco consumption is usually considered in global context through dividing the youth into social groups only on the basis of the healthy family environment, wealth and locality criteria (Tworek *et al.*, 2014).

The prospective basketball players (like any other sportsmen) deserve a special approach in searching of the ways to solve this problem (Brook *et al.*, 2008). In the context of explanatory anti-tobacco work with young people, the way how the information is conveyed and its source are of equal importance. The person who enjoys the authority in each single social group has a greater chance to effectively convey this information (Horn *et al.*, 2008). For the young basketball players such an authority is embodied in the coach who is able to form their sport motivation (Smith & Smoll, 2006).

That is why, it is logical to create a separate methodical program of work with smoking sportsmen on the basis of universities. It would function as a preventive measure for non-smoking students. A successful form of its implementation (with the aim of saving of teaching hours) is a combined approach that is based on the coach's oral lectures and interactive software for smart phones (Sanders *et al.*, 2017).

## Conclusions

The diagnostic stage of experiment revealed a low level of the students' interest in the professional basketball. According to the data that were obtained during the survey, only 13% of the students associated their future with professional basketball, whereas 62% of the participants did not see themselves as future basketball players. During the control stage of experiment, these indicators improved by virtue of the motivational lectures that were conducted by the coaches in their groups at the beginning of each basketball class. The number of the students who associated their future with professional basketball has grown from 13% to 35%. It is interesting to note that this figure has significantly grown among the students aged between 21 and 22 years. It may point to a higher potential of the motivational lectures among the students who will soon have to choose their profession. The dynamics of growth among younger students is significantly lower, because they: a) may go through the stage of adaptation to university; 2) may not feel an urgent need to soon choose their profession.

The majority of the students also noted the usefulness of motivational lectures that were conducted by their coach at the beginning of the class. Besides, 62% of smoking students also viewed the anti-tobacco lectures as useful. As a result of the lectures after each basketball class that were conducted by the coaches-participants,

the percentage of the students who were ready to give up smoking has grown from 9% to 23 %. This evidences to the high importance of the anti-tobacco lectures among the students who play basketball. The coaches' awareness of the need for such explanatory lectures with students and for motivating them for sport is also important. 71% of the coaches-participants pointed to the need for the elements of psychological education in their work, 80% coaches viewed the formation of the students' motivation as their task, whereas 70% coaches emphasized the usefulness of the anti-tobacco lectures within the basketball classes.

The practical use of the research results is possible within the modernization of the professional basketball players' training in general and specialized educational institutions and in the coaches' training and skills development. The effectiveness of tobacco consumption control within the course of physical education and the ways of motivation of the students-basketball players' need further research.

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