

THE MODERNIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION OF PHYSICAL CULTURE FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY

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Abstract: The fundamental feature of the contemporary world economy is the rapid evolution towards globalization and use of information technologies and communication. In this context, knowledge policies – research, innovation, education and training – are of exceptional importance during the period of transition towards a Europe of knowledge. The new millennium raise towards the education a multitude of problems and very few solutions, fact that actually requires specialists to address an innovative and optimistic attitude, so that in perspective, to be highlighted the challenges of this period, not the threats germinated by the problems without solutions. Increasing the intellectual potential of society is the strategic objective of the contemporary era. Starting from this fact the twenty-first century draws a priority to create a modern industry education, particularly a higher one, which will become an important area of investment because there is no more valuable and more favorable investment than that in developing a society of science, knowledge and education.

Keywords: Higher Education, Globalization, Knowledge, Competitiveness, Quality of Service

An expressive peculiarity of globalization is reliance on knowledge, which is concretized on: boosting the role of human capital; focusing effective increases on highly educated and specialized human resources; allocation of development benefits to those who are capable and trained; the growing connection between knowledge and competitiveness. It is preferable to focus on: the formative aspect of learning, creativity cultivation, and thinking stimulation. An educational system that pays special attention to: student development, constructive critique, exploration, understanding, and its deepening, creates only perfect individuals that are able to adapt to constantly changing modern world [11]. Initially in the special literature was theorized the concept of "knowledge based economy", using its definition by P. Drucker, 1969 [3]. The knowledge economy or knowledge based economy is a concept that refers to using knowledge to produce benefits. Benefits can have a strictly economic dimension or a strong symbolic dimension. An important component of the knowledge economy is innovation. Through its involvement in innovative processes, contemporary university must respond to these realities by increasing emphasis on technological innovation and immediate applicability of the research.

The concept of "knowledge society" is currently used all around the world. This name is a contraction of the term "knowledge based society" (Knowledge-based Society) which involves [1,2]:

- broadening and thoroughness of scientific knowledge and truth about existence;

- use and management of existing knowledge in the form of technological and organizational knowledge;
- knowledge production through technological innovation;
- an unprecedented dissemination of knowledge to all citizens through new methods, using mainly the Internet, eBook and methods of learning through electronic methods (e-learning);
- knowledge society represents a new economy, in which the innovation process (the ability to assimilate and convert new knowledge to create new products and services) is crucial and that, unlike the old economy where tangible goods were primordial, in the new economy matters, primarily intangible assets, immaterial, difficult to describe and especially to quantify and measure but have value and generates value [7].

In light of these realities, the current society requires an education system that contributes significantly to the development of knowledge and skills. University graduates should be formed for jobs, which rapidly change due to the dynamic developments in technology and work organization. University academic environment, including physical culture and sport, has to solve important issues such as: increasing the involvement of the business community in the activities and processes of defining competences and study programs; adapting higher education for physical culture and sports to labour market needs by increasing communication between university students and employers [4,9]; improving university management in order to increase university capacity to link its offer according to requirements of those interested; development of ICT tools for managing the process of communication between university-students-graduates-employers; training of personnel involved in activities to increase the relevance of university education offer to labour market demand. State University of Physical Education and Sport aims to adapt to the social dynamics, the rapid change of skilled labour market context and social and individual expectations of university education beneficiaries.

Modernization of higher education of physical culture from Republic of Moldova is performed in conditions of unprecedented transformations caused by three factors:

- 1) development of information and communication technologies;
- 2) increase of the individual higher education demand (more and more people aspire to obtain a university degree);
- 3) increasing competition in the higher education market - institutional diversification and individual increased demand for higher education have generated competition between universities and expanding the number of taxpayers for educational services has led to apparition of trade with such services.

Having three fundamental functions – research, teaching / learning and community service – University provides training that must anticipate and respond to social needs and to produce that mass communicators and receivers that define an open society. This process involves the research for the development and use of new technologies and providing mechanisms for vocational training, entrepreneurship education or training. The University has a greater role than that to produce and establish social status for graduate students and members of the academic community, contributing to the configuration of individual personalities, strengthening qualifications and professions, improving and codifying knowledge.

Another opinion, supported by Weber and Bergan [8,10], concerning the mission of higher education, suggests that universities should prepare students for life as active citizens of a democratic society; offering degree programs related to career development; generating opportunities for personal development [6]; to provide a broad and advanced knowledge base.

In a society with a competitive market, in order to survive in the marketplace and to be prosperous, the university should be competitive, to meet customer requirements, refer to the highest standards and produce quality, since no one buys products or lacking quality service, no matter how attractive it may be their price. Competitiveness is indeed, the fundamental requirement for the success of any university that aims to gain and maintain market segment to which addresses with offered services. Thus, diversification of universities on the national market requires their constant competition, with ascending character, and can not afford to abandon it, whereas loss of competitiveness would surely mean its bankruptcy and disappearance from the market.

Modernization of higher education of physical culture in the context of a knowledge-based society has as primordial priority the quality assurance, reflected in the dimensions [5]:

- 1) **international** – dimension that lies in the requirements of European community regarding the integration in the European Higher Education Area :
 - compliance with the standards and practices of European universities in quality assurance;
 - increased confidence in the capabilities of the university to provide quality services and products;
 - adapting university curricula to the requirements of the European area in order to secure mobility of students and teachers.
- 2) **national** – dimension expressing society imperatives:
 - generating confidence in the ability and university performances in meeting the implicit and explicit expectations of society;
 - assumption of responsibilities by the university for the proposed services;
 - increase the contribution of the education system to the country's economic and social development by providing graduates with job performance;
 - convergence of educational services markets and human resources.
- 3) **institutional** – this dimension contains requirements relating to increasing the competitiveness of universities, their national and international recognition:
 - orientation towards performance and competitiveness of higher education institutions in the educational services market and graduates in the labour market resources;
 - rapid insertion of graduates in the labour market resources;
 - European market recognition of qualifications (degrees and diplomas) given by institutions in the country;
 - development of an institutional culture of quality, fully involved in obtaining staff performance, responsibility increase for quality.

In this context, a particular importance has the establishment of a National Agency for Quality Assurance in Professional education (Government Decision no. 191 of 22 April 2015), which has the following strategic objectives:

- 1) to contribute to the development and promotion of quality culture in technical professional education, higher and continuing education;
- 2) to evaluate curricula and capacity of organizations providing technical professional, higher and continuing education in order to achieve quality standards;
- 3) to enforce the technical professional education, higher and continuing education from Republic of Moldova of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area;
- 4) to provide the access to public information about the quality of technical professional education, higher and continuing education in Moldova;
- 5) to propose strategies and policies to partners in order to ensure and develop the quality in the technical, higher education and continuous professional training;

6) to promote professionalism and competitiveness of technical, higher education and continuous professional training in the Republic of Moldova, etc.

Being responsible, therefore, for preparing young generations of graduates in various fields of knowledge, the university is also responsible for the future of society and of the future state of the nation. Quality of education and training is therefore an essential process of maximum importance for the becoming, progress of learners and society at the same time.

In this context, State University of Physical Education and Sport implements European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions, as follows:

- developing policy in quality field;
- developing specific procedures of the Quality Management System (QMS) and their implementation at the university level;
- periodic evaluation of curricula and certification;
- assessing students' degree of satisfaction;
- quality assurance of teaching staff;
- providing the necessary resources for learning process and students support;
- development of an efficient information system of the university.

In conclusion, we mention that the process of higher education modernization of physical culture from the Republic of Moldova should be based on the following principles: achieving a balanced educational profile through decentralization; correlation of physical culture education system from the Republic of Moldova with European education system; harmonization, adjustment of qualifications / powers conferred / formed with national and global market requirements; development of relations between universities and economic, cultural, sports agents of civil society; planning the changes and granting of a long enough time answer, so that the university could react to the interventions determined by the implementation of new policies; encouraging partnerships between the components of higher education and / or those of the scientific research system, ranging from simple cooperation, established in order to achieve limited objectives, by merging to complete high education and research institutions, able to compete the stronger and stronger concurrence in European or global educational market.

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