



*Original Contribution*

**INVESTIGATION OF SOME ASPECTS OF THE ADMITTANCE AND MOTIVATION OF CANDIDATE STUDENTS IN VETERINARY FACULTY**

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**ABSTRACT**

In this work we made an investigation of the admittance of candidate students in The Veterinary Faculty in Trakia University from 2003/04 till 2007/08. The type of the high schools the candidates had graduated from was analyzed and also the percentage of the successful candidates from the professional high schools for veterinary medicine was analyzed. We tried to back up with arguments the motivation of the candidate students, concerning their choice to apply for The Veterinary Faculty. An emphasis was made on the necessity of strengthening the professional and administrative contacts between The Veterinary Faculty and The High schools for Veterinary medicine with an aim to synchronize their curricula and stimulate the graduates to apply to The Veterinary Faculty.

**Key words:** high schools, motives, candidates.

**INTRODUCTION**

The interest in the admittance of students for veterinary medicine in Trakia University is provoked by different professional and social factors. Before introducing and strengthening the international standards and democracy in our country at all and in the sphere of education as well, the selection and admittance of students in the conditions of central planning were made administratively, based on the necessity of staff in the corresponding regions. As a result of the social, political and economic changes and the aim of Bulgaria to equality with the other European countries, the admittance of the students in the universities in the country is based on the results of competitive examination and the motivation of each candidate.

Investigations of the admittance of students for veterinary medicine in Bulgaria were made mainly in the period of central-planned economy – [1], [2], [3] and less for the next period – [4].

In the new conditions in the sphere of higher education, more concrete the veterinary medicine discipline, there aroused certain questions about the motivation of the candidates for choosing the profession of a veterinary surgeon and also about the measures necessary for encouraging their choice. Thus why with this work we aimed: To trace the tendency in a five-year period (school year 2003/04 – 2007/08) regarding the interest in “Veterinary medicine” discipline – total number of candidates, number of successful candidates, potential chance of a candidate.

1. To analyze and determine the relative part of the admitted in The Veterinary Faculty students, based on the type of the high schools they had graduated from.
2. To determine the relative part of the successful candidates in relation to the total number of graduates from The Professional High schools for Veterinary Medicine (PHSVM) for the corresponding period.
3. To give proof of the necessity of strengthening the contacts between The Veterinary Faculty and The Professional High schools of Veterinary Medicine, with the purpose to synchronize their curricula

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and stimulate the motivation of the graduates to apply for VF.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

To determine the tendency in the number of applicants for veterinary medicine for the relevant period, we made an investigation of archives from the Department “Education and methodology” in Trakia University about the candidate-students campaign. We analyzed as well data from the Main Books of the Veterinary Faculty (VF) and data from reports of the heads of the University and VF. On this basis we determined the type of the high schools and grouped the admitted students in the corresponding categories. The number of the foreign students of veterinary medicine also is mentioned in the results but only for

authenticity of the work (the profile of their high schools and the percentage of the foreign students based on this profile were not investigated in this work).

After grouping the collected information it was mathematically and statistically processed. The determined values were presented in tables and figures.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Every year during each candidate-students campaign of the corresponding period, it is estimated that 2 300 graduates on the average apply to all the disciplines in Trakia University. Of this number, applications to the Veterinary Faculty are as follows (see **Table 1**).

*Table 1. Number and percentage of the participants in the biology exam for “Veterinary medicine” subject*

Year	Total	First wish		Only for the subject		Women		Men	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2004	678	388	57,23%	76	11,21%	325	47,94%	353	52,06%
2005	724	356	49,17%	65	8,98%	403	55,66%	321	44,34%
2006	642	310	48,29%	91	14,17%	346	53,89%	296	46,11%
2007	641	303	47,27%	90	14,04%	390	60,84%	251	39,16%
Total:	2685	1357	50,54%	322	11,99%	1464	54,53%	1221	45,47%

It is obvious that the number of participants in the biology exam for veterinary medicine subject is relatively constant. Average of 671 per year had applied. The number of girls exceeded the number of boys excluding the year 2004. That fact could be explained with elimination of the sex-quota principle and admittance of candidates, based on the final results from the exam marks and the

secondary education total marks.

The number of places from the state order for veterinary medicine discipline was constant for the corresponding period – 160 places. After making a comparison between this number and the number of candidates, we determined how many candidates had applied for one place (**Table 2**).

*Table 2. Number of candidates applying for one place of the state order*

Subject	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Veterinary medicine	3,70	4,20	4,00	4,00	4,00

It is important to note that the annually granted places from the state order for veterinary medicine subject had been completely filled. The only exclusion was after the campaign in 2007 when 151 students were admitted and 9 places remained unfilled. This was not a result from decreasing interest in veterinary medicine but a result from the higher criteria of the exam commission and the lower exam marks of the candidates. This was the reason why the heads of the VF could not make a compromise for the rest unfilled places.

To explain some of the reasons stimulating the graduates to choose the profession of a veterinary surgeon, we made

an analysis of the type of the high schools they had graduated from. The admitted freshers for each of the investigated school year were grouped as follows: graduates from Professional High Schools for Veterinary Medicine (PHSVM), High Schools for Natural-Mathematical Sciences (HSNMS), Language High Schools (LHS), Secondary High Schools (SHS), Professional High Schools for Husbandry (PHSH) and Other High Schools (OHS). In the group “Other” we placed professional high schools that could not be placed in another category.

After processing the data, we determined that the highest relative part in the admittance of students was for the graduates

from SHS – 295 of the total number of the students. On the second place with 195 students were HSNMS where graduates received a specialized biology training. On the third place with 182 students were PHSVM which were the basic educational level for training middle veterinary specialists. This was a clear reason for their willingness to study in the VF and become veterinary surgeons. With 90 students on the next place were LHS, followed by OHS with 66 and at the bottom were PSHH with 23 students for the whole period (Figure 1).

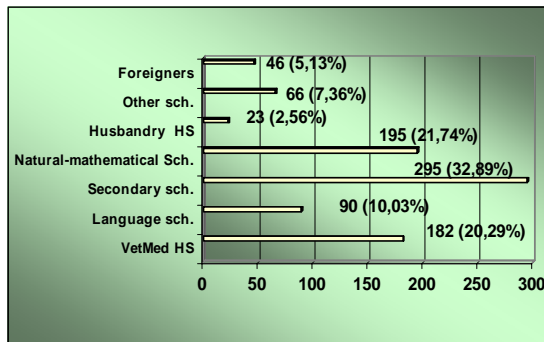


Figure 1. Number and percentage of the students based on the profile of the high schools they have graduated from, 2003/04 – 2007/08

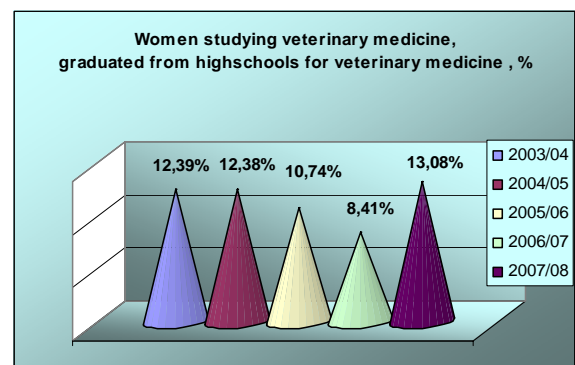
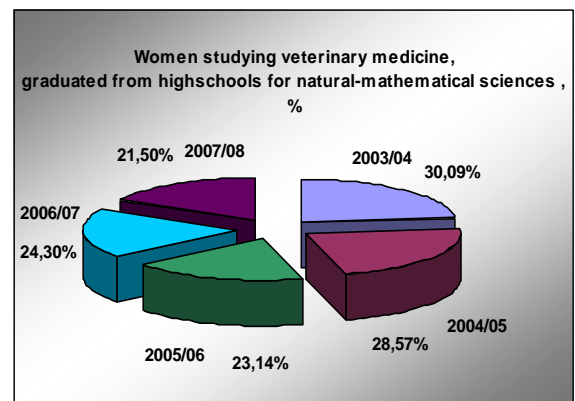
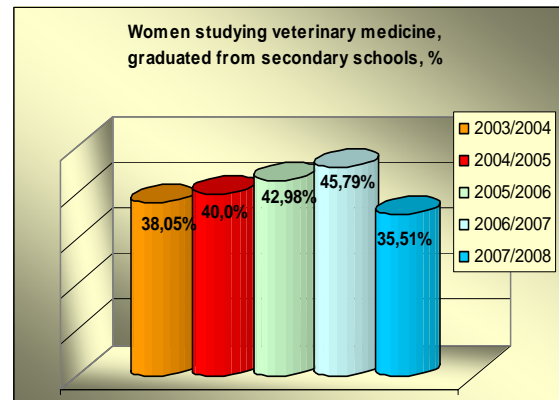
The analysis of the different groups of students based on the type of the high schools and the sex of the candidates, showed that for the women the highest relative part is taken by the graduates from SHS (224 students), followed by HSNMS (141) and with equal number of students (63) were PHSVM and LHS. PSHH were on the last place (10 students) after the OHS which had given 41 women-students (Figures 2, 3, 4).

After grouping the men-students according to the type of the high schools, we found a change in the proportions. The highest part in the admittance was for PHSVM with 119 veterinary technicians, willing to continue their professional training in VF. The next places were the same as the total admittance of the students – SHS (71 men-students), HSNMS (54), LHS (27), OHS (25) and PSHH (13 students), (Figures 5, 6, 7).

The results for women and men-students are presented on Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5, 6, 7 for each of the two categories. The mentioned high schools on the Figures are the first three types with the greatest percentage of admitted students.

In the attempt to reveal some sides of the motivation of the candidates in the VF, we established very high percentage of graduates from HSNMS and PHSVM. This could be

explained with their deeper biological knowledge and for the veterinary technicians – with their initial professional training, which reasons were the main factors for the choice to apply for the veterinary medicine discipline.

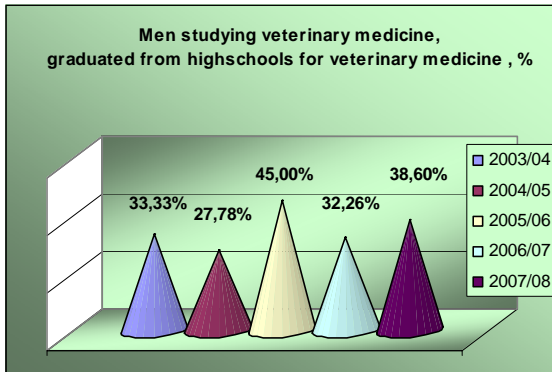
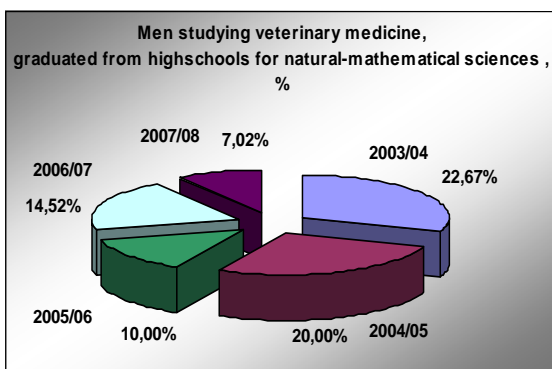
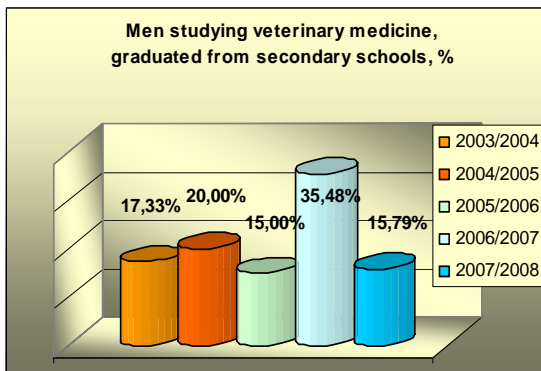


Figures 2, 3, 4. High schools with the highest part of admitted students-women for 2003/04 – 2007/08

As an unsatisfactory we could point out the fact of very big difference between the number of graduates from PHSVM for the corresponding period (PHSVM in Lovech, Dobrich, Kostinbrod, Stara Zagora) and the real number of the admitted from PHSVM students in the Veterinary Faculty (Figure 8).

The great differences in this proportion showed that a huge part of the middle veterinary specialists sought realization in the other universities and professions but not in the VF in Trakia University. Attention must be paid to this fact from the heads of the

University and the VF in order to take certain measures for stimulating the graduates from PHSVM to apply to our faculty.



Figures 5, 6, 7. High schools with the highest part of admitted students-men for 2003/04 – 2007/08

Whole-year organized candidate-students campaign which must start in February – March.

Organizing permanently preliminary exams in the University.

Organizing informative and educational presentations and meetings between the head of the VF and the graduates from the PHSVM.

Holding meetings between veterinary surgeons and graduates from PHSVM for stimulating their professional choice.

Creating programs based on the curricula, adapted for middle veterinary specialists – chance to receive extra credits to the classes,

different types of out-class activities, etc.

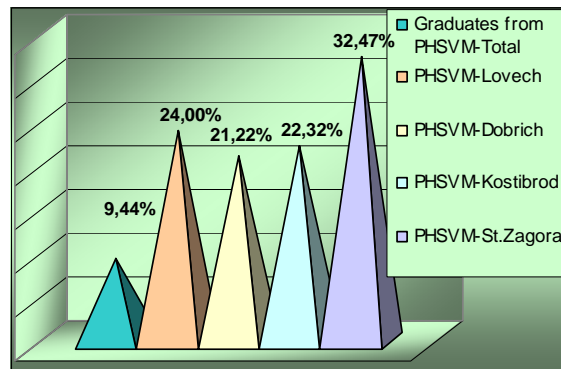


Figure 8. Percentage proportion between the admitted in VF middle veterinary specialists and the graduates from the PHSVM, 2003/04 – 2006/07

Active cooperation between the heads of the VF and the PHSVM in order to create appropriate curricula for all boys and girls studying in PHSVM, which have to be based on the European and international standards.

### CONCLUSIONS

A permanent tendency in the interest of the candidate-students was determined – relatively constant number of candidates for one place – 4:1.

The high schools the successful candidates had graduated from could be grouped according to their relative part in the admittance of students: SHS – 32,89%; HSNMS – 21,74%; PHSVM – 20,29%; LHS – 10,03%; OHS – 7,36%; PHSV – 2,56%.

The graduates from PHSVM admitted in VF were very small part of the total number of all the graduates from PHSVM for the correspondent period.

It is necessary while planning the candidate-students campaign in the VF, to pay attention to the graduates from LHS. The aim should be admitting students with great language culture who could successfully represent the profession of Bulgarian veterinary surgeons to our European colleagues.

It would be useful to create a plan for whole-year organized candidate-students campaign and providing informative materials for making veterinary medicine popular among the graduates. These could be presentations of some sides of the clinical work in the faculty, some sides of the scientific work, promotions of the young veterinary surgeons, etc.

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