

## Research on the Reform of College Public Physical Education Curriculum From the Perspective of Curriculum Ideology and Politics

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**Abstract:** School physical education is an important part of the talent training system; it is related to the overall development of students and is an important way to fulfill the fundamental task of “strengthening moral education and cultivating people”. At present, the public physical education curriculum is faced with some problems. The curriculum goal setting focuses on skill acquisition and fitness exercise; the curriculum content does not include new sports culture and spirit. The curriculum management only focuses on “physical education”. The main reason lies in unbalanced attention to moral education, intellectual education and physical education in the curriculum reform. The countermeasure is to carry out the educational idea of “five education at the same time and moral education first”, integrate the ideological and political education with the public physical education course organically, and build a team of high-quality physical education teachers with high political levels, professional skills and education abilities, so as to break the bottleneck in the development “physical education” and “moral education” in public physical education course.

### 1. Introduction

“High quality education can build a strong country”. General Secretary Xi pointed out in the report of the 19th National Congress that “building a powerful country in education is the basic project for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”<sup>[1]</sup>. At the 2018 National Education Conference, he also gave instructions on the national education, requiring “accelerating the modernization of education and building a powerful country in education”. At present, China has the largest number of people receiving higher education in the world, and it is recognized as a large country of higher education. But we are “big but not strong”, which is still the current situation of China's education development. The key to transform from a big country of education to a powerful country of education is to speed up the construction of educational modernization. The core is focusing on students and their all-round development. In the new era, the Party and the state put forward new requirements and expectations. General Secretary Xi pointed out that higher education should “cultivate socialist builders and successors with all-round abilities in areas such as morals, intelligence, physical fitness, work and aesthetics”, which in fact answered three fundamental questions of personnel training in education, namely, “what kind of talent to cultivate”, “how to cultivate talents”, and “cultivate talents for whom”. Baosheng Chen, the Minister of the Ministry of Education, pointed out at the National Undergraduate Education Conference held in June 2018 that “colleges and universities should clarify the education elements and responsibilities of all courses” and upgrade the “curriculum ideology and politics” to the level of “higher education system with Chinese characteristics”. School physical education is an important part of the talent training system. It is an important way for students to develop in an all-round way, and for educators to fulfill the fundamental task of “strengthening moral education and cultivating people”. It carries out the future of the country and the expectations of people.<sup>[2]</sup> At present, the old problem that the physical health level of college students continues to decline<sup>[3]</sup> has not been completely solved. Based on the central link of “strengthening moral education and cultivating people”, a new challenge is put in front of physical education workers in colleges and universities: in the process of public physical education curriculum reform, ideological and political work should run through the whole process of physical education.

## **2. Difficulties in the Development of Public Physical Education Curriculum**

### **2.1 Curriculum Objective**

The curriculum objective is a task index which is put forward based on the educational law and the purpose of personnel training. In 2002, the Ministry of Education issued Guidelines for General College Physical Education Curriculum which has clear provisions on the objectives of college public physical education curriculum. According to the training level, the outline classify curriculum objectives into two levels: basic objectives and development objectives. They include five aspects: sports participation, sports skills, physical health, mental health and social adaptation. Among them, the goal of mental health is to help students develop positive attitudes towards life, as well as correct cognitive ability and good psychological adjustment ability; the goal of social adaptation is to train students to have a good performance in sports ethics and cooperation spirit, and to have the ability to correctly treat and properly deal with competition and cooperation. These two goals are not only the needs of students' development, but also the requirements and expectations of the society for students' growth. They are also two elements to ensure the balanced development of the physical education curriculum. Mental health and social adaptation are important indicators to evaluate the cultivation of talents in colleges and universities. The implementation of public physical education is the main channel to improve the mental health and social adaptation of college students. However, through the investigation of websites of physical education departments and syllabus of public physical education in some colleges and universities, it is found that some colleges and universities pay more attention to the training of practical skills and exercises of body-building. There is little embodiment of psychological health and social adaptation; only vague and general expressions can be found. No one explores the education function of physical education courses from the perspective of fully educating people.

### **2.2 Curriculum Content**

From the perspective of subject, the content of public physical education curriculum is generally composed of six parts: special sports theory, special sports skills, special physical qualities, general sports theory, general sports skills and general physical qualities. The part of sports theory is an important way to spread physical culture and cultivate the physical spirit of students, and it is one of the main components of exerting the value of “educating people” in physical education. After new sports entering the classroom of college physical education, the content of public physical education curriculum can basically meet the needs of students after a period of explosive growth. However, because of the rapid growth, many contents do not have selected and processed teaching materials. In the practice of classroom teaching, some teachers simply copy the content of competitive sports and mass sports. Therefore, the arrangement and research of the theoretical content of new sports lag behind the introduction of technical teaching and quality practice content. Some physical education courses lay too much emphasis on the improvement of sports level and the acquisition of skills; they become professional and skill training courses or physical quality training courses. Some teachers cater to students' interest in entertainment and pursuit of personality without any principle; courses become sports game courses or leisure and entertainment courses. New sports culture and sports spirit have not been penetrated into classroom teaching; physical education courses fail to give full play to the “education” value.

### **2.3 Curriculum Management**

The Ministry of Education has the right of managing public physical education curriculum. It manages curriculum through promulgating various policies, standards and systems. Colleges and universities usually manage public physical education courses through their understanding and implementation of the spirit of relevant documents. In the new century, the Ministry of Education has promulgated two documents, Guidelines for General College Physical Education Curriculum and Basic Standards of College Physical Education, to adjust the overall planning of public physical education curriculum. Since the beginning of this century, a large number of studies have shown that in China, the physical health level of college students has generally declined; in colleges and

universities, the contents of public physical education courses are single and boring. The classroom atmosphere is dull, and students' requirement of personality development cannot be satisfied. To solve these prominent problems, colleges and universities generally adopt the method of "interest first and skill oriented". Some colleges and universities do not have deep understanding on the spirit of relevant documents, which leads to some over ideal exploration or "restoration" in curriculum design, implementation, evaluation and other aspects.

From May 4, 2014, General Secretary Xi proposed that "young students should button up the first button in their life" during the inspection at Peking University. In 2018, the Ministry of Education issued the Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of High-Level Undergraduate Education and Comprehensively Improving the Ability of Personnel Training, requiring colleges and universities to "integrate ideological and political education elements into every course, and strengthen the ideological and political construction of the course". In recent years, the Party and the state constantly emphasizes that colleges and universities should fulfil the basic task of "strengthening moral education and cultivating people", which puts forward new contents and requirements for curriculum management in colleges and universities. In view of this situation, the understanding of public physical education courses cannot only stay at the level of solving students' problems of "physical education". Some so-called "reform" which is full of pretentious plays should also be abandoned.

### **3. Cause Analysis: the Unclear Understanding of Moral, Intelligent and Physical Education**

"The neglect of moral education, intellectual education and physical education" is a hot topic in the field of education in China. It has been warmly discussed by the whole society, including students, parents, schools, education authorities and so on. In recent years, with the continuous decline of students' physical health and the increasing rates of overweight, obesity and myopia of teenagers, the "problem" of school physical education has reached the peak of hot discussion. The state has issued a number of documents and opinions to emphasize and protect the significance and status of physical education, and even issued a special document to include the physical health level of students into the hard conditions for the examination of their graduation qualifications, which is extremely rare in the history of the development of higher education in the world. In this context, public physical education and students' physical health have attracted more and more attention; public physical education has gradually developed into a curriculum system with physical education as the main body, as well as students' physical health guidance, extracurricular physical exercises, physical competition and training as the supplement. With "mastering physical skills, improving physical quality and cultivating physical awareness" as the main goal of the curriculum, schools rapidly introduce new sports events. The content of public physical education curriculum expands; the full exploitation of off campus curriculum resources improves the quality of public physical education, enhance students' sense of gain, and achieve some results in teaching efficiency. However, we must admit that the fruits do not obscure the problems. While emphasizing the reform of "physical education", the public physical education curriculum ignores the construction of "moral education". In teaching objectives, teaching contents and teaching design, there are only contents of "physical education"; "moral education" contents are missing. Because of the low utilization rate of teaching materials, the "moral education" content has become a piece of paper. In teaching management and teaching evaluation, "physical education is emphasized, but moral education is ignored". The effect of physical training is emphasized, and the influence of ideology and morality is ignored. The reasons behind are not hard to find. First, from the perspective of students' training, "physical education" is easy while "moral education" is difficult. "Sports" are explicit and intuitive process. Under the guarantee of various basic conditions such as contents, teachers, facilities and media, the growth of sports knowledge, the acquisition of sports skills and the improvement of physical quality are all "traceable" and relatively easy. "Moral education" is an implicit and penetrating process. In the pluralistic, changeable and complex social environment, the transformation of moral cognition from external cognition to internal identification, from perceptual acceptance to rational insistence, and from object education to subject consciousness is a

complicated and tortuous process. Second, from the perspective of curriculum teaching, it is easy to teach skills and difficult to preach. There is a saying in Shi Shuo: “teachers, preaching, teaching and solving puzzles”. However, the difficulties of the three tasks are different. “Teaching” depends on academic ability. Teachers spread knowledge and teach skills in their own professional fields. What they do is their own work. They can do it easily. “Preaching” is the spreading of faith and truth, relying on teachers' virtue and integrity. Moreover, “skills” can be evaluated quantitatively and continuously, while “faith and truth” can only be measured qualitatively. In this way, it is easy to understand and difficult to carry out “moral education”. Therefore, it is a new problem to be solved urgently that we should integrate moral education into physical education and try our best to create a new situation for the development of public physical education.

#### **4. Countermeasures: Carrying out the Educational Idea of “Five Education At the Same Time and Moral Education First”**

“Curriculum ideology and politics” originated from the Chinese nation's unremitting pursuit of “morality”. According to Zuo Zhuan, “the Supreme Master has morality, followed by achievements, and followed by speeches, which are immortal for a long time.” “Morality first” is an excellent cultural tradition of the Chinese nation. A gentleman should keep on striving for self-improvement, as heaven maintains vigour through movements. A gentle man should hold the outer world with broad mind, as earth's condition is receptive devotion. Seeing another better than oneself, one tries to equal him... Since ancient times, the pursuit of “morality” by the Chinese nation has been internalized as a national characteristic, which promotes the continuous development of Chinese civilization in value orientation, ideological system and cultural concept. It is the eternal spiritual backbone of the Chinese nation for thousands of years.

Confucius said, “if you can spare no effort, you can learn from literature”. Confucius put forward his views on the understanding of “morality” from the perspective of education, which has an important impact on the development of education in China. At the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Comrade Zedong Mao put forward that “education should make the educatee develop morally, intellectually and physically in an all-round way; moral education should put the firm and correct political direction in the first place. Students should not only study the major, but also establish the world outlook of communism, train the thought of serving the people and develop the style of hard work and plain living”<sup>[4]</sup> In 2012, the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China established “strengthen moral education and cultivate people” as the fundamental task of China's education, emphasizing that education should have a clear political position, strive to practice the socialist core values, actively cultivate the social morality, professional morality, family virtue and personal morality of students, encourage integrity and build new atmosphere, serve the people and realize socialist modernization. “What kind of talent to cultivate”? “How to cultivate talents”? “Cultivate talents for whom”? After the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi put forward requirements for the cultivation of talents in colleges and universities. On different occasions, he repeatedly stressed the principle of “five education at the same time and moral education first”, and to cultivate “socialist builders and successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, work and aesthetics”. He demanded that political work should run through the education in colleges and universities. The “political work system” should run through the whole talent training system, which can lead to the in-depth thinking and curriculum reform of “curriculum ideology and politics” in colleges and universities.

To carry out the thought of curriculum ideology and politics in public physical does not mean to turn the physical education course into the ideological and political course, nor to copy the ideological and political content mechanically. It means to use the physical education class, physical education knowledge and physical culture to promote the truth, goodness and beauty purposefully and teach students the basic principle of getting on in the world on the basis of the unchanged basic goal and essential attribute of the physical education course. It points out the right way to realize the value for students, and organically integrates the socialist core values into

physical education.

In addition, we need to cultivate high-quality P.E. teachers who have high professional and educational levels and faithful political status. It is also an important guarantee for the implementation of the curriculum ideology and politics. Since the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi has repeatedly mentioned in many occasions that “educators should receive education first” in order to become good guide for students. The results of the curriculum ideological and political reform should be implemented by teachers. As the leading role of teaching, teachers should first improve their own ideological understanding. On September 2, 2019, the General Office of the State Council issued the Outline of Building a Sports Power, pointing out the strategic value of sports for the realization of the Chinese dream. This requires colleges and universities to stand on the political height, give full play to the leading role of teachers' Party organizations in curriculum reform, and guide physical education teachers to improve their ideology levels. They should teach students with the purpose of cultivating socialist builders and successors. Teachers should also standardize teaching behaviors and improve students' physical abilities on the premise of consciously improving their own political accomplishment and moral qualities. The second is to improve the level of physical education teachers. Physical education teachers often face students of different levels, from specialties and with characteristics. When planning the overall design of talent training, colleges and universities should pay attention to the coordination of disciplines. They should tap more resources outside the physical education course, enrich the angles of integrating curriculum ideology and politics with physical education, improve the education level, and break through the dilemma of “easy physical education and difficult moral education” in the development of public physical education curriculum.

## 5. Conclusion

From the perspective of curriculum ideology and politics, this study analyzes the difficulties, causes and countermeasures in the development of public physical education curriculum, and explores new paths for the reform of public physical education curriculum in colleges and universities. Actually, physical education itself is an excellent carrier of integrating curriculum ideology and politics. Physical education is rich in ideological and political elements. The lofty spirit of unity and cooperation, indomitable, hard-working, positive and enterprising displayed in physical education should be fully explored, refined and exerted. Through physical education, spiritual monuments which have rich connotation and profound significance like the “Spirit of Chinese Women Volleyball Team” can always stand in the students' mind.

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