

Research on a three self mode of teaching physical education in independent colleges

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ABSTRACT: Through the research methods of a questionnaire survey, document literature search, expert interviews and other means, information was gathered at the Institute of Information Technology of Guilin University of Electronic Technology on the *Three Principles of Independence* mode of teaching in terms of its implementation in university physical education. The author of this article believes this mode meets the requirements for independent institutes, but problems still exist. Three suggestions aimed at solving these problems are presented in this article. The author believes these may offer valuable experience to institutes in practising the mode of *Three Principles of Independence* in physical education.

INTRODUCTION

National sports are supported and lifelong sports habits are formed through physical education (PE) at college. The physical education provided by a college is an important criterion by which to measure the quality of higher education. The independent institute is a new type school. To gain a foothold among the universities of the whole country, the characteristics of an independent institute must be combined with efforts directed toward the development of higher education. Meanwhile, it should reform its unique methods of teaching to ensure uniform quality.

The reform of physical education is one of the important factors in higher education. Suggestions by autonomous regional committees and the people's government of autonomous regions on the development of physical education and on improving the health of young people, explicitly require that each college pay attention and reform physical education [1-4]. In particular, each institute is required to vigorously implement the model of the *Three Principles of Independence* in physical education. In this article, through research on the model of teaching the *Three Principles of Independence* in the Guilin school, the author has obtained results and experience that provide relevant reference points for further research [5].

These days, there is much reform of the teaching of physical education and, hence, there is need for a teaching mode for physical education that is suitable for independent colleges in Guangxi Province. There is no doubt that the *Three Self-Teaching* mode is very popular among college students because of its scientific nature. This mode makes use of the main role of students in learning, along with the time and space given to classes. This study takes freshmen and sophomores at the Institute of Information and Technology at the Guilin University of Electronic Technology as the research object and, then, investigations were carried out as to how the *Three Self-Teaching* mode has been put into practice. Advice is also offered through comparisons with the current teaching of physical education in other colleges around the country.

THE METHODS OF RESEARCH

Literature Search

By reviewing independent college sports' teaching research books and papers, it is possible to determine current mainstream trends and developments in teaching college physical education. This then provides the theoretical foundation and basis for this investigation. There are several types of literature:

- Analysis of the PE teaching by the *Three Principles of Independence* in common institutes;

- Analysis of structure in the *triple independent* course selection mode for physical education courses in common institutes. Note that *triple independent* courses basically boost development through people-orientated education;
- The report on the current situation of Jiangsu independent colleges;
- Current physical education strategies and the development of independent colleges in Fujian province;
- The current physical education situation and developmental strategy of independent colleges in Hubei province.

These writings discuss the current teaching of physical education in colleges, and analyse the difficulties, from various perspectives, that independent colleges may confront [6]. Also offered in these sources are suggestions and strategies which can be put into practice. These all provide the research carried out with a theoretical foundation and materials.

Empirical Research

From the first semester of 2009, the Institute of Information and Technology at Guilin University of Electronic Technology (also GUET) began to implement the *Three Self-Teaching* mode for physical education for freshmen. The primary parameters of that mode, implemented by the university physical education management for the independent college mode, were adjusted to reflect the number of participants in the original placement; project details, teacher resources and the condition of physical resources [7].

In the first half of 2010, the Institute began to implement the *Three Self-Teaching* physical education mode for freshmen and sophomores. The number of placements was limited to 30; there were 15 sports subjects and more than 30 PE teachers. At the same time, transformations and re-planning of the sports field and stadiums greatly improved the physical teaching efficiency.

During the six semesters of the three years from 2009 to 2012, through practical research on the *Three Self-Teaching* physical education mode at the Institute, the author has drawn conclusions about the relevant parameters and experience of this mode as implemented in the Institute, and offers the theoretical foundation and practical experience to further improve this mode in the Institute, and perhaps extend it throughout all of the Guangxi institutes.

Questionnaire Survey

The author sent out questionnaires to all of the physical education teachers at the Guilin University of Electronic Technology's Institute of Information Technology (including external teachers) and students (selective examination sample) to obtain their comparative experience about the traditional teaching mode and the *Three Self-Teaching* mode. The object also was to obtain relevant data on the level of satisfaction of the current implementation of the *Three-Self Teaching* mode. Finally, the data obtained by the questionnaire was input into an Excel spreadsheet for a statistical analysis of the results.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Developing Trends of the Physical Education Teaching in Chinese Colleges

Over the past few years, the reform of Chinese higher education has been intensive, especially reform of physical training at colleges, following the new ideological line and direction of *health first and lifelong physical training*. Since the 1980s, the sports club model in colleges has become prominent through traditional teaching. This new model is better suited to modern college students' physiological and psychological characteristics; it is also beneficial to their health and helps to form a lifelong habit of physical training.

In 2007, the educational institution published the 17th document called *The Advice Given by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council on Strengthening the Youth Sports and Building up the Youth Body*, which pointed out that every college should intensify reform of PE and improve the quality of its teaching, and try to establish a system that inseparably links college PE with a lifelong habit of physical training. Recently, at all Chinese colleges, reforms of physical training were under way and the guiding model for the mainstream is the *Three Principles of Independence*. In Chinese colleges, including independent institutes, the physical teaching model is becoming more widely available and is better for both teachers and students.

Present Physical Teaching Model at the Institute

In 2004, the Institute began to recruit students independently. The Institute's PE division adopted the traditional teaching model as being most appropriate for the teaching staff. In 2007, the Institute launched a new physical teaching method which had limited scope. Although limited to some degree, it has had the embryonic form of the *Three Principles of Independence*. In 2009, the Institute moved to a new campus with a more attractive environment. Then, the Institute's PE division began to implement the *Three Principles of Independence* in grade one following a neighbouring institute's experience. Students are freer to select physical courses in grade two. The *Three Principles of Independence* was then implemented throughout the Institute.

Implementation and Excellence of the *Three Principles of Independence*

1. The model of the *Three Principles of Independence* is better suited to students' physiological characteristics. The *Three Principles of Independence* allows students to choose physical courses, teachers and times. Under this model, students can express their subjective needs and choose the physical activities appropriate to their physiological characteristics. For example, tall students are prone to choose basketball and volleyball. This model is without the disadvantages of the traditional model. It takes students' physiological characteristics into account, especially in classes featuring more female students. The female students can choose physical items appropriate for them without all being arranged to play volleyball or Taijiquan. During the investigation and study on the implementation of the model of the *Three Principles of Independence*, most students evaluated the model highly. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Survey on the degree of satisfaction of the projects.

| | Not satisfied | Very satisfied | Satisfied generally | The projects should be improved |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Number of people | 97 | 201 | 102 | 85 |
| Percentage | 20 | 41.4 | 21 | 17.5 |

2. The model of *Three Principles of Independence* is better suited to students' psychological characteristics. This kind of model allows students to choose physical items freely and, thus, satisfied different students' psychological needs. The Giulini Institute has opened 13 physical courses, such as Taijiquan, basketball, volleyball, badminton. These courses make different demands on students' psychological temperaments. For example, the demands of learning Taijiquan differ substantially from that of learning basketball. The *Three Principles of Independence* can distinguish very well between different demands resulting from different psychological temperaments. So, different students have autonomy in choosing or attending classes.
3. The mode of the *Three Principles of Independence* in physical education is evident in advancing the quality of physical education. After fully implementing the mode of the *Three Principles of Independence* in grade one physical education, and since the second half of 2009, through investigation and teacher/student feedback, the degree of approval among teachers and students has risen greatly. On the one hand, and due to students being able to choose the physical items they like, their study attitude has much improved and the effect on their studies is very positive. On the other hand, the interaction with students through this mode of teaching results in a big improvement in the course teachers' educational *spirit*. Consequently, there has been a positive effect on education in general. The result of combining these two aspects is that the quality of physical education has advanced. Through research by questionnaire, students' different attitudes to the two educational models tested are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: The difference between *Three Principles of Independence* and traditional physical education.

| Research Results | Satisfied | Somewhat Satisfied | Do not care |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------------|-------------|
| The number of people | 312 | 105 | 68 |
| Percentage | 64.3 | 21.9 | 13.8 |

Existing Problems in Realising this Mode

1. Some contradictions do exist in the free choice of time and items. In the *Three Principles of Independence* mode in physical education, educational administrators no longer arrange physical classes during set time periods because students are free to arrange their classes in their spare time. In practice, many students are choosing to attend classes during certain time periods, with the consequence that other classes in other time periods have fewer students attending. According to the research results, there are two causes for this: one is that students are not satisfied with courses in a particular time period, and the other is that students have other courses in a particular time period or the courses are full when students have spare time. This problem was resolved, with good effect, by working with the educational administrators.
2. The lack of physical playing fields and equipment limits sport choices. But the *Three Principles of Independence* mode in PE not only gives students more opportunities and freedom, but also emphasises a greater requirement for the school's physical equipment. Due to the Institute's re-location, with some construction not yet begun, there are restrictions on the availability of physical equipment. So, it is critical that the sports field use is well organised. However, students are not satisfied with some aspects of existing courses. For example, many students like tennis, and although the Institute has a tennis teacher, it does not yet have a tennis court and equipment. So, the start of this course has been delayed.

3. The lack of physical education teachers is the most difficult problem inhibiting the development of the *Three Principles of Independence* mode in physical education. Students can choose the physical training teachers they prefer under the mode of *Three Principles of Independence* in PE. Schools logically should possess more physical training teachers. Otherwise, the development of a variety of kinds of physical sports rests on a limited supply of adequate teachers. The lack of physical items, be it sports fields or equipment, to a great extent will limit students' free time under the *Three Principles of Independence* mode in PE. Therefore, whether students are satisfied or not with the *Three Principles of Independence* mode in PE, will depend on the available number of PE teachers to support it. If there are not enough teachers, the students cannot choose the equipment, sports or teachers they prefer as required under the *Three Principles of Independence* mode in PE. At present, there are not enough physical education teachers at independent institutes in the country. The number of staff teachers in the School, as with the majority of independent institutes, is fewer than the quantity of external teachers. In fact, only if the number of teachers increases steadily, can the Institute realise better the *Three Principles of Independence* mode in PE.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

From the survey, it can be seen that the *Three Principles of Independence* mode in Physical Education is popular among teachers and students. Not only do students achieve better learning outcomes, teachers also can teach better. There is no doubt that this mode is more suitable for present students than is the traditional mode.

The *Three Principles of Independence* mode is worth implementing and developing. However, some problems do exist in implementing this mode at the author's School, and accordingly suggestions follow as to how to deal with these types of issue:

1. Keep hiring good quality PE teachers and build up a strong teacher team. A strong teacher team is at the heart of a university and is the basis for practising the *Three Principles of Independence* teaching mode. The author suggests that the Institute hire four to six gym teachers in addition to the teachers it already has. In other words, the Institute should hire more professionals. Another suggestion the author would make is to put more funds toward training teachers. In both ways, the teacher foundation of physical education can be strengthened, so that more sports projects can be developed. Students will have more options, the Institute's revolution in physical education will turn a new *page*, and the overall level of education at the university will be improved.
2. Make an effort to construct tennis courts and other physical facilities. If it is said that a group of teachers is the software in a college, then, the presence of facilities is the hardware. To make the whole system operate well, both the software and the hardware should be in accord. Up until now, the sports facilities at the Institute have been deficient, especially for the basketball court. The author suggests that between six and nine more basketball and tennis courts should be built during the second-phase construction. In such a case, the physical education courses would be better resourced. It would ensure students could choose the classes they want to take and the time periods they prefer.
3. Complete the management system of the *Three Principles of Independence* teaching mode. While enhancing the overall level of the hardware and software, the management system of the teaching mode of *Three Principles of Independence* should be improved at the same time. The management system should be developed taking account of the actual situation at the author's school. Teachers ought to choose the teaching content and evaluation system that are fit for the school, and especially to strengthen the teaching in various departments of physical education, as well as the research systems.

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