

Exploring the Path of Connotation Construction for Ideological and Political Education in University Physical Education Curriculum Guided by the New Era Physical Education

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ABSTRACT

The new era entrusts university physical education with the fundamental task and mission of fostering virtue through education. This paper focuses on the new era physical education outlook of "health first, enjoying fun, enhancing physique, improving personality, and tempering will," deeply analyzing its core connotations and guiding value for the ideological and political (I&P) construction of university physical education courses. The study reveals the current practical difficulties in the I&P construction of university physical education courses regarding top-level design, content integration, faculty capabilities, and evaluation mechanisms. Based on this, it proposes a systematic construction of practical pathways for the connotation development of I&P in university physical education, guided by the new era physical education outlook. This aims to provide theoretical support and practical reference for university physical education in the new era to fulfill the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education.

KEYWORDS

New era physical education outlook; University physical education; Curriculum-based ideological and political education; Connotation construction.

1 Introduction

Entering the new era, "to help students enjoy fun, enhance physique, improve personality, and temper will through physical exercise"^[1], explicitly stated the need to "establish the educational concept of 'health first,' offer sufficient physical education classes, and help students enjoy fun, enhance physique, improve personality, and temper will through physical exercise"^[2]. this paper summarizes the core connotations of the "New Era Physical Education Outlook," providing the fundamental basis and directional guidance for I&P construction in physical education curricula.

2 Core connotations of the new era physical education outlook and its I&P guiding value

2.1 "Health first"

Its core connotation emphasizes that physical and mental health are the prerequisites and foundation for students' growth and development, thus establishing the life foundation for I&P education. The phrase "Work healthily for the motherland for fifty years," coined by the people's physical educator Ma John, which encapsulates Tsinghua's sports spirit, has resonated at Tsinghua for over half a century^[3]. This also illustrates that the "health first" guiding principle necessitates that physical education I&P must focus on students' life value, health responsibility, and the cultivation of a positive lifestyle. It connects the future of the nation with the healthy development of individual lives, motivating students to cherish health and build physical fitness for the construction of a strong nation and national rejuvenation.

2.2 "Enjoying fun"

Its core connotation emphasizes allowing students to experience success, pleasure, and satisfaction in sports, thereby stimulating emotional identification with I&P education. In recent years, the intensity of sports enjoyment among Chinese youth has shown an overall declining trend^[4]. Therefore, this requires that I&P in physical education cannot be dull preaching. Instead, it should be achieved through well-designed, engaging physical activities. While enjoying the fun of sports, students should subtly experience the beauty of rules, the joy of cooperation, the glory of striving, and the warmth of the collective, thereby enhancing their emotional identification with the core socialist values.

2.3 "Enhancing physique"

Its core connotation emphasizes that the essential function of physical education is to enhance physique. Enhancing physique is the material foundation for students' bodily growth and their very being. Only with a healthy physique and healthy psychology can students have the condition to participate in physical education classes and the desire to like and play sports^[5]. This provides the most direct and vivid practical carrier for I&P education. In the process of improving physical fitness, students personally practice spiritual qualities such as overcoming difficulties, challenging themselves, and perseverance, transforming abstract I&P requirements into embodied action experiences.

2.4 "Improving personality"

Its core connotation emphasizes the unique role of physical education in shaping character, will, emotions, and sociality. Mr. Cai Yuanpei once stated: "For a sound personality, physical education comes first"^[6]. This requires that I&P in physical education curricula must deeply explore the characteristics of different sports, such as cooperation in ball games, striving in athletics, and etiquette in martial arts. It should focus on cultivating sound personality traits like honesty, trustworthiness, fair competition, unity and cooperation, respect for opponents, perseverance, and responsibility.

2.5 "Tempering will"

Its core connotation emphasizes that physical training and competition are crucibles for forging willpower. Haruki Murakami once said, "It's precisely because we deliberately experience pain in sports that we can discover the feeling of being alive in this process"^[7]. This guides I&P in physical education curricula to fully utilize the challenging and competitive nature of sports, consciously designing situations to guide students to learn self-regulation, tenacious struggle, and never giving up when facing fatigue, setbacks, and pressure. It tempers willpower qualities like endurance and courage, fostering a vigorous and proactive spirit.

3 Current practical difficulties in I&P construction of university physical education courses

3.1 Insufficient systemic top-level design, blurred goals

Some universities lack overall planning and systematic design for I&P construction in physical education curricula, failing to effectively translate the core requirements of the new era physical education outlook into specific I&P goals for physical education courses. Goal setting is often vague and general, not closely integrated with the characteristics of sports disciplines or student realities, making I&P requirements difficult to implement.

3.2 Superficial content integration, pronounced "labeling" tendency

Integrating I&P elements into physical education teaching often involves forced grafting or "labeling." For example, simply mentioning the "spirit of the Chinese Women's Volleyball Team" before a basketball class, or emphasizing "patriotism" in martial arts classes without deeply exploring the connotations of etiquette, virtue, and self-cultivation within martial arts culture. There is a lack of deep mining and organic integration of the inherent I&P values in sports themselves, failing to achieve the effect of "dissolving salt in water."

3.3 Shortcomings in teachers' I&P educational ability and awareness

Some university physical education teachers have an insufficient understanding of the new era physical education outlook and hold biased views towards curriculum I&P. They lack the ability and methods to proactively explore, design, and implement I&P education. How to naturally and effectively integrate I&P elements into skills teaching, training, and competition poses a significant challenge for teachers.

3.4 Insufficient teaching model innovation, inadequate experience internalization

Teaching methods still primarily rely on traditional skill instruction and physical training. Methods conducive to value internalization, such as scenario creation, problem guidance, reflective discussion, and value clarification, are underutilized. The spiritual values students experience in physical activities often lack timely and effective guidance, refinement, and sublimation, making it difficult to achieve deep transformation from perceptual experience to rational

cognition and then to behavioral habits.

3.5 Weakened evaluation mechanism orientation, lack of support systems

Evaluation of students in university physical education courses still focuses heavily on explicit indicators like skill mastery and physical fitness standards. There is a lack of scientific and effective observation points and evaluation methods for implicit I&P qualities demonstrated by students in sports activities, such as willpower, team spirit, rule awareness, and moral behavior. Specialized assessments and incentive mechanisms for the effectiveness of curriculum I&P construction are also lacking.

4 Exploring connotation construction paths guided by the new era physical education outlook

4.1 Strengthen top-level design, construct an I&P goal system governed by the new era outlook

Based on the five core connotations of the new era physical education outlook, and integrating the university's overall talent training objectives, characteristics of physical education as a discipline, and the specific traits of different sports, establish a clear, specific, and observable hierarchical and categorized I&P goal system for physical education courses. Furthermore, I&P goals must be explicitly written into the syllabus, teaching plan, and lesson plans of each physical education course as core elements, ensuring I&P requirements run through the entire teaching process.

4.2 Deeply explore sports elements, achieve organic integration of I&P content and physical education teaching

Systematically analyze the inherent I&P "genes" within various sports. For instance: Ball games should deeply integrate elements like rule awareness, fair competition, teamwork, communication, respect for referees and opponents, humility in victory, and grace in defeat. Athletics should highlight qualities like perseverance, self-challenge, surpassing limits, and never giving up.

4.3 Empower university physical education teachers, enhance I&P educational competency

Organize in-depth study for university physical education teachers on the new era physical education outlook, curriculum I&P concepts, pedagogy, educational psychology, etc., deepening their understanding of the educational essence and I&P value of physical education, and strengthening their sense of mission and initiative in fostering virtue. Conduct regular thematic training and teaching seminars on topics to enhance teachers' abilities in mining, integrating, and guiding. Additionally, establish a repository of excellent I&P teaching cases in physical education to promote experience sharing and dissemination. Incorporate the effectiveness of teachers' I&P efforts into teaching evaluations, awards, promotions, and professional title assessments to stimulate their intrinsic motivation.

4.4 Innovate teaching models, promote experience internalization and unity of knowledge & action in I&P values

Carefully design scenarios such as simulated competitions, difficult challenges, and team tasks, allowing students to "learn by doing" and "comprehend through competition," experiencing and understanding I&P values in authentic experiences. Timely pose questions during teaching, guiding students to think, discuss, and share feelings to promote value clarification and internalization. Teachers should also lead by example, demonstrating good sportsmanship and ethics, and identify and promote sports role models among students to leverage peer influence.

4.5 Improve evaluation mechanisms, ensure sustainable deepening of I&P construction

Establish a multi-dimensional evaluation system covering knowledge and skills, physical health, and I&P literacy performance. I&P literacy evaluation indicators could include: compliance with class discipline and sports rules; awareness and behavior in teamwork; willpower when facing difficulties; attitude towards respecting teachers and peers; sense of collective honor; enthusiasm and responsibility in participating in sports activities. Employ a combination of teacher evaluation, student self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and team evaluation to comprehensively and objectively reflect students' I&P literacy development. Teachers should also provide timely feedback on I&P evaluation results to students to

guide behavioral improvement. Simultaneously, incorporate the effectiveness of curriculum I&P construction into physical education course quality assessments and department performance evaluation systems, forming a closed-loop management and continuous improvement mechanism.

5 Conclusion

The New Era Physical Education Outlook, with its distinct educational orientation and rich value connotations, injects powerful ideological impetus and practical guidance into the I&P construction of university physical education courses. The key to advancing university physical education I&P from "formal coverage" to "connotation construction" lies in using this new outlook as the soul to systematically address the challenges in core areas like goal guidance, content integration, faculty capability, teaching models, and evaluation mechanisms. By strengthening top-level design to clarify direction, deeply exploring sports elements for organic integration, empowering physical education teachers to enhance their educational capacity, innovating teaching models to promote value internalization, and improving evaluation mechanisms to ensure sustainable deepening, can the physical education classroom truly become a high ground for education where value shaping, ability cultivation, and knowledge transmission are organically integrated. This enables students to enjoy the fun of sports and enhance their physique while achieving personality improvement and willpower tempering, growing into new-era individuals with well-rounded development in morality, intellect, physique, aesthetics, and labor, laying a solid physical, mental, and spiritual foundation for the great cause of building a strong nation and achieving national rejuvenation.

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