

The Realistic Dilemma and Optimization Strategy of the Reform of Physical Education Secondary School Examination--A Comparative Study Based on the Policy Practices of Multiple Provinces in Southwest China

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Abstract: As a unified examination system implemented by the state, the Physical Education Secondary School Examination (SSPE) has significant results in enhancing students' physical fitness and health and promoting the reform of physical education teaching in schools. This paper adopts the literature method and policy analysis method. Taking Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan and other southwestern provinces as samples, it systematically examines the current situation of the implementation of the reform of the physical education secondary school examination. The study found that there are four major problems: the tendency of test-taking is prominent, and the test content is single; the evaluation system is not scientific enough, and the difference between urban and rural standards is significant; there is a lack of resources in rural areas, and there is a shortage of teachers and facilities; and there is a lack of adaptive assessment for special groups. To address these problems, the study proposes a multiple evaluation system of "physical fitness+skills+health knowledge", dynamic scoring criteria, synergistic allocation of urban and rural resources, and classified assessment of special groups, and other optimization strategies, which will provide practical references to promote the reform of the physical education secondary school examination.

Keywords: Physical Education Secondary Examination Reform; Realistic Dilemma; Evaluation System; Optimization Strategy

1. Introduction

Under the strategy of Healthy China and the reform of education evaluation, the physical health of young people has attracted much attention, and the importance of physical education in the school education system has become increasingly prominent^[1]. As a key link in school physical education, the physical education examination is crucial to improving the physical fitness of young people and realizing the goal of "sports people". In October 2020, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Work of School Sports in the New Era. It points out the direction for the reform of the physical education examination, proposes to improve the content, mode and scoring method of the test, and gradually increases the score value^[2]. However, in reality, the problem of the decline of youth physical fitness is still prominent, and there are drawbacks such as testification and utilitarianism in the physical education secondary school examination, which seriously affects its function of educating people. Southwest China has a diverse geographical environment and unbalanced economic development, and the reform of physical education secondary school examination faces special challenges. Studying the reform practice in this region, analyzing the difficulties and finding optimization strategies will not only help to promote the reform of physical education secondary school examination in Southwest China, but also provide experience for the whole country, improve the system of physical education secondary school examination, and promote the all-round development of young people.

2. Analysis of the current situation of the physical education secondary examination in Southwest China

Through the comparative analysis of the physical education secondary examination policy in Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan provinces, it is found that there are both commonalities and distinctive features in the examination content and evaluation methods in each province:

2.1 Examination content

Yunnan Province innovatively adopted the “physical + skills + characteristics” of the three-dimensional model, the mandatory items include long-distance running, long jump and other basic physical fitness test, while the martial arts, wrestling and other traditional ethnic sports into the scope of the optional test, fully reflecting the characteristics of regional culture^[3]. Guizhou Province, the implementation of the sports examination “a year a test”. The structure of the examination and scoring system has been adjusted, the total score is set at 50 points, by the field unified examination (40 points) and sports comprehensive literacy assessment (10 points) two parts. The unified field examination adopts the “1 + N” assessment mode: “1” refers to the mandatory long-distance running project (1000 meters for boys/800 meters for girls), which runs through the three years of junior high school, arranged in the second semester of grades 7, 8 and 9, respectively, for assessment; “N” refers to other compulsory items, including standing long jump, one-minute rope skipping and soccer/volleyball (choose one out of three), which cannot be changed by the candidates after selecting the ball games. This reform program aims to comprehensively assess students' physical literacy and athletic ability^[4]. Sichuan Province adopts the “3+X” model, i.e. three compulsory sports + one optional sport. In addition to the basic physical fitness test, a number of optional tests for basketball, soccer and other skills are provided to give students more options^[5].

2.2 Aspects of evaluation methods

All three provinces try to break through the single summative evaluation. Yunnan Province took the lead in implementing the “percentage system” reform, in which process evaluation accounted for 40%, including classroom performance, physical education homework and other daily assessment; Sichuan Province implemented the dual-track system of “daily assessment + unified test”, with the daily assessment focusing on recording the degree of students' participation and progress; Guizhou Province retained the traditional test mode, but it has been implemented in some pilot schools^[5]. Guizhou Province retains the traditional testing model, but has introduced smart devices such as sports bracelets in some pilot schools to try to quantify process data. It is worth noting that there are significant implementation differences between urban and rural areas in the three provinces: urban schools are generally able to implement the requirement of multiple assessment, while rural schools are still relatively homogenous due to resource constraints.

2.3 Aspects of score value

Currently, there are significant differences in the score values set for the physical education midterm in the southwest region, and there is still room for optimization in terms of score value uniformity and regional coordination among the provinces. Yunnan Province and Guizhou Province have gradually realized the unified score value of the whole province, and the full score is 100 points, reflecting the consistency of the policy. However, the score setting in Sichuan Province shows significant regional differences, for example, 60 points in Chengdu City, 80 points in Mianyang City and 100 points in Panzhihua City.

3. The reality of the dilemma of the reform of the physical education secondary school examination

3.1 Serious tendency to test-oriented

In school physical education teaching, too much attention is paid to the examination program training, “what to teach what” phenomenon prevails. Some schools, in order to improve students' physical education examination results, do not attach great importance to physical education. They ignore the nature of physical education and the cultivation of students' interests. As a result, physical education becomes a single test - training class. The classroom activities are just a simple roll - call,

running laps for warming up, and then free activities, which leads to students' lack of enthusiasm for learning physical education. Parents and students have a biased understanding of the physical education examination, and do not realize its importance, but only regard it as a tool for further studies, rather than a way to promote health^[6]. This utilitarian concept makes students often give up physical exercise after the examination, which is not conducive to the cultivation of lifelong sports awareness. At present, most regions adopt the mode of "field test + mandatory items", which leads to excessive physical education teaching centered on the test items. In Sichuan, although the program of the examination advocates diversified development by students and parents independent selection, but in the implementation process is the school selection, contrary to the original purpose^[7]. In Chengdu, Sichuan Province, for example, standing long jump and middle-distance running accounted for a disproportionately high percentage of points in the physical education midterm examination, and schools reduced the teaching time of basketball, soccer and other ball sports in order to allow students to achieve high scores, so physical education classes were all about running and jumping, and the teaching content was homogenized. This test-oriented, greatly weakened students' interest in sports.

3.2 Lack of scientific evaluation system

The current evaluation system of physical education examination has problems such as structural imbalance and inconsistent standards, which makes it difficult to objectively reflect students' physical education quality. First of all, some provinces and cities focus excessively on summative evaluation, and this imbalance leads to a lack of investigation of the whole process of students' physical education learning, which can't comprehensively and objectively reflect students' physical education quality and progress trajectory. Second, some regions have dramatically increased the value of physical education scores, such as Yunnan Province, which raised the value of physical education scores to 100 points in an attempt to emphasize the importance of physical education. However, in contradiction to this, the scoring criteria are relatively loose, which makes the high score fail to truly reflect students' physical education ability and effort, and reduces the differentiation and credibility of the evaluation. Finally, the test content is out of touch with teaching^[8]. On the one hand, some of the programs have high requirements for venues, equipment and teachers, making it difficult to popularize them in daily teaching. On the other hand, the difference in scoring standards between regions is too large, which seriously affects the fairness of evaluation. Take standing long jump as an example, the passing line for girls is 164cm in Chengdu and 141cm in Dazhou, with a difference of 23cm; the difference between the passing standards for boys is 29cm; in the middle and long-distance running (male 1000m/female 800m), Chengdu has the most stringent requirements, with a passing line of 4 minutes and 15 seconds for girls and 4 minutes and 25 seconds for boys, and the standards in Dazhou are the most lenient (4 minutes and 55 seconds for girls and 5 minutes and 15 seconds for boys), with a difference of 29cm between the two regions. Dazhou has the most lenient standard (4:55 for girls and 5:15 for boys), with a difference of 40 seconds. In addition, in the scoring standard of the seated forward bending program, Ziyang set the passing line and full mark line as the lowest level in the province. These differences reflect the obvious regional imbalance in the current evaluation system of the physical education middle school examination^[9]. Although the scoring standards may vary to some extent in different regions, if the differences in the evaluation standards are too large for the principle of fairness and impartiality of the physical education secondary school examination, it will also hinder the enthusiasm of students to participate in physical exercise.

3.3 Unbalanced educational resources

The imbalance of educational resources between urban and rural areas in Southwest China has seriously constrained the implementation effect of the reform of the physical education examination, and it is necessary to optimize the allocation of resources and policy synergy to narrow the gap and promote educational equity. In remote mountainous areas such as Bijie, Guizhou and Zhaotong, Yunnan, for example, many schools have a serious shortage of sports venues and a lack of equipment. Mountain secondary schools have only a broken basketball court and a small number of skipping ropes and shuttlecocks, making it difficult to carry out examination programs such as basketball and volleyball, and students' daily training is limited to simple running or free activities. Due to the lack of standard athletic fields, some schools even allow students to train for long-distance running on concrete roads, which not only affects performance improvement, but also poses safety risks. In terms of teachers, the number of physical education teachers in rural areas of Southwest China is seriously insufficient, the proportion of professional teachers is low, and some schools are taught by main subject teachers who also teach physical education, resulting in the two physical education classes per week are often

crowded, and even if the classes are held, they are only organized for free activities^[10]. In addition, there are also differences in policy implementation within the Southwest region. For example, although the value of the physical education examination in Yunnan Province has been increased to 100 points, the actual teaching in remote areas is still based on the basic physical fitness program due to the limitation of the conditions, which is difficult to adapt to the requirements of the examination. In contrast, some areas in neighboring Sichuan Province focus on ball sports, resulting in adaptation difficulties for students studying across regions^[11]. This mismatch between resources and policies further exacerbates educational inequity and restricts the balanced development of physical education in Southwest China.

3.4 Insufficient attention to special groups

The current evaluation system of the physical education secondary examination pays insufficient attention to the differentiated needs of special student groups such as obesity and disability, and lacks targeted adjustment measures, which undermines educational equity and is not conducive to the physical and mental health development of special groups. Further highlights the evaluation system's fairness flaws. Obesity, thinness, shortness and disability and other special student groups in the sports examination in the protection of the rights and interests of the problem, has not yet received sufficient attention. For obese students, the current sports intermediate examination program and scoring standards may put them at an obvious disadvantage in endurance and strength programs, but lack targeted adjustment measures. For example, obese students in the middle-distance running program, due to their greater body weight and rapid physical exertion, even if they train hard, it is difficult to meet the passing standard. For students with disabilities, the exemption policy in some districts is not detailed enough and lacks a scientific assessment process. Students with disabilities are unable to take the physical education test because of their physical disabilities, but schools fail to make reference to the students' rehabilitation and daily sports performance when assessing their exemption scores, resulting in low sports scores for the student, which affects their advancement to higher education. Such neglect of special groups not only violates the principle of educational equity, but may also have a negative impact on the physical and mental health of special groups of students.

4. Optimization strategies for the reform of physical education secondary school examination

4.1 Renew the education concept, focus on comprehensive human development

The reform of physical education examination should first start from the education concept, through the propaganda guidance, interest cultivation and examination content optimization, to realize the transformation from test-oriented to comprehensive education. First, strengthen the publicity of physical education. Educational authorities and schools should use social media to publish popular science content and hold thematic lectures to reverse the misconception that the physical education secondary school exam is only a means of promotion, and emphasize the importance of physical education to students' physical and mental health and overall development. Secondly, cultivate sports interest and awareness. In teaching, teachers should innovate teaching methods and adopt game - based and contextualized teaching. For example, the school can organize standing long jump relay races and group competitions, which can inspire students' enthusiasm for physical practice and cultivate their teamwork spirit; the school can create a "national sports festival situation" and guide students to experience the characteristics of sports in the southwest region. Finally, the school can optimize the test content design. The school can adopt the examination mode of "basic physical fitness + special skills + health knowledge" [12]. Combined with the actual situation in the southwest region, the school can add the option of traditional ethnic sports, such as shooting activities in Yunnan and the putter sport of the Qiang people in Sichuan, to enrich the examination content. According to the urban and rural differences, the school can dynamically adjust the proportion of compulsory and optional examination marks. For instance, the school can increase the number of easy-to-implement projects like rope skipping and shuttlecock kicking in rural areas, thus ensuring the fairness and operability of the examination.

4.2 Improve the evaluation system to ensure fairness and justice

In order to build a scientific and fair evaluation system for the physical education examination, it is necessary to focus on three aspects, namely, diversified evaluation, content optimization and technical

adaptation. First of all, the establishment of the “process + summative” multiple evaluation mechanism, the attendance rate, classroom performance, progress, etc. into the assessment, and according to local conditions, the inclusion of Dada dance, Lusheng dance and other traditional national sports, not only reflect the regional characteristics, but also fully reflect the students' physical education. Second, optimize the test content design, combined with the actual southwest region, mountainous schools can set up mountaineering, weight walking and other projects, water-rich areas can be added to swimming, rowing and other tests, to ensure that the content of the examination matches the actual teaching conditions. At the same time, the development of uniform scoring standards to reduce subjective differences. For the status quo of remote areas with limited resources, low-cost solutions can be adopted: first, using a combination of paper records and teacher observation to track progress through student growth files; second, utilizing basic tools such as jump-rope counters and stopwatches to quantify exercise data; third, implementing a home-school collaborative exercise punch card system; and fourth, coordinating the equipping of basic assessment equipment by the county-level education departments. These initiatives not only avoid the high cost threshold of intelligent equipment, but also guarantee the objectivity of evaluation, especially suitable for the characteristics of the uneven economic development of the southwest region, and truly realize the transformation of the evaluation system from a “result-oriented” to a “process-oriented” system, and provide a fair path of implementation for schools with different conditions. These initiatives provide a fair implementation path for schools with different conditions.

4.3 Optimize resource allocation and promote balanced development

In order to solve the problem of uneven resources in the reform of the physical education examination, it is necessary to coordinate and promote the three aspects of teacher construction, facility investment and regional collaboration. First, strengthen the construction of physical education teachers and increase the training for physical education teachers in rural and remote areas. By combining online and offline training methods, such as offering online physical education teaching skills training courses and organizing offline centralized training and teaching seminars, we can improve teachers' professionalism and teaching ability. Moreover, we should improve the teacher recruitment and incentive mechanism to attract outstanding sports talents to teach in areas with a shortage of teachers and optimize the teaching force structure. Second, increase investment in areas with weak physical education resources and upgrade school sports venues, equipment. The government should set up special funds for the construction and updating of school sports facilities to ensure that schools have the conditions to carry out diversified sports teaching activities^[13]. At the same time, through the integration of social resources and the establishment of the East, Central and Western counterpart support mechanism, social forces are encouraged to participate in the construction of school sports and carry out regional collaboration to promote the balanced development of educational resources. For example, Shanghai's counterpart support to Yunnan promotes the balanced distribution of educational resources through the sharing of high-quality curriculum resources and teacher exchange and training. We should improve the examination program for special groups, formulate scientific and reasonable examination standards for obese and disabled students, and develop nationally standardized physical fitness test standards for disabled students to ensure the inclusiveness and fairness of the reform.

4.4 Pay attention to special groups and guarantee fair rights and interests

The reform of the physical education examination should establish a differentiated evaluation system to fully protect the equal participation rights of special student groups such as obese and disabled students^[14]. First of all, the physical characteristics and athletic ability of special student groups should be studied in depth to develop classification evaluation and assessment standards. For obese students, the difficulty requirements of endurance programs can be appropriately reduced, or additional strength and skill programs suitable for their characteristics, such as shot put, taijiquan, etc., so that they can play to their strengths in the physical education examination. Secondly, for students with disabilities, individualized assessment programs should be designed according to the type and degree of disability. For example, students with visual disabilities should be provided with sports programs based on hearing and touch, such as simplified version of soccer for the blind and orientation walking, etc. For students with physical disabilities, the examination programs and scoring standards should be adjusted according to their physical functioning, or assistive devices should be provided to ensure their equal participation. Due to injury (illness) long-term students who do not take physical education classes, by the county level and above, can apply for exemption after the hospital issued a

certificate. In addition, the school should be equipped with professional physical education teachers for special students, to develop individualized teaching and training programs. Teachers need to take into account the physical condition and needs of students, design a step-by-step teaching plan, and adopt targeted teaching methods to help them improve their physical education ability. Finally, we should strengthen the cooperation between home, school and society, and establish a cooperation mechanism with parents and rehabilitation organizations to pay attention to the physical education and physical and mental health development of students with special needs, and ensure that the evaluation process is scientific and fair, so as to effectively protect their educational rights and interests.

5. Conclusion

The reform of physical education secondary school examination is an important initiative to practice the strategy of Healthy China, which is still facing challenges such as the tendency of test-taking, insufficient evaluation science, and imbalance of resource allocation. In the future, the reform needs to be promoted systematically: take conceptual updating as a guide to build a diversified evaluation system of “basic physical fitness+specialized skills+health knowledge”; take resource optimization as a guarantee to strengthen the construction of teachers and regional collaboration; take care of special groups as a breakthrough to improve the classification evaluation mechanism. Through institutional innovation and practical exploration, the physical education examination will be transformed from a “score-oriented” to a “people-oriented” system, providing strong support for the cultivation of all-rounded talents.

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