



## Philosophy of Education and Sports Education Management: The Balance Between Physical Proficiency and Moral Development

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### Abstract

This research aims to explore the balance between physical skill development and moral development in sports education through the perspective of educational philosophy. Sport education often focuses more on improving physical skills and athletic performance, so that aspects of students' moral development, such as sportsmanship, social responsibility and ethics, are often neglected. Based on a literature review and analysis of educational philosophy, especially from the thoughts of John Dewey and Aristotle, this study found that sports education based on holistic philosophical principles can serve as an effective medium for moral character building in addition to physical development. The study also explores how sport education management can design programs that are balanced between physical and moral dimensions, through the integration of moral values into the curriculum and sport practices. In addition, this study reveals the limitations of implementing this balance in many educational institutions, which often emphasize achievement over character development. The findings suggest that effective sport education not only develops physically competent students, but also ethical and socially responsible individuals. The study concludes with recommendations to strengthen the training of sport teachers and coaches in integrating moral values into physical learning.

**Keywords:** Philosophy of Education, Education Management, Physical and Moral Balance, Character Development

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## **A. Introduction**

Sports education, as an integral part of the modern education system, has an important role in shaping learners' personalities and skills holistically. It not only focuses on the development of physical skills, but also includes moral and social dimensions. In the context of sports education, it is often assumed that the main focus is on physical development and athletic skills. However, educational philosophy underscores the importance of balance between the various aspects of human development, including physical, mental, moral and emotional dimensions. Therefore, there is a need to explore how sports education can be an effective medium to integrate physical and moral development in the learning process.

Philosophies of education, particularly those rooted in a holistic view of human beings, emphasize that the development of the whole person involves maintaining a balance between physical and moral abilities. Such philosophical thinking can be traced from classical to modern concepts that highlight the relationship between body and soul. Aristotle, for example, emphasized the importance of "virtue" as the main aspect of education, while physical education is still seen as an important part of a meaningful life (Peters, 1973). In this perspective, sports not only

train the body but also strengthen character and morality.

In the education management system, especially in sports education, attention to the balance between physical and moral development is very relevant in shaping young people who are not only physically competent but also have moral integrity. A good sports education should be able to make students not only as healthy and physically strong individuals, but also as moral, fair and ethical citizens. According to Hellison (2011), sport education has the potential to shape character, fostering respect, cooperation and social responsibility. In other words, a balanced sports education should focus on building a strong body as well as a noble soul.

However, the challenge faced in the implementation of sport education often lies in the tendency to prioritize physical achievement or athletic performance over character development. In many sport education programs, an overemphasis on competition and physical performance can neglect the moral and social dimensions, leading to problems such as unsportsmanlike behavior, excessive pressure on students to achieve perfect results, and neglect of ethical values (Light & Kinnaird, 2014).

A balance between physical and moral development is not only important for

individual well-being, but also for the development of a healthy society. Sport education has great potential in shaping individuals who are physically resilient, have integrity, and are able to contribute positively to society. Therefore, there is a need for a well-designed sport education management that integrates educational philosophy in practice. This balanced approach can help build a sports education program that not only produces outstanding athletes, but also individuals with high moral and ethical awareness.

From the point of view of educational philosophy, this balance can be seen as part of efforts to develop human potential as a whole (whole person development). In Dewey's view (1938), education should be directed at developing all aspects of the human self in the context of social interaction. Therefore, sports education needs to be designed in such a way that it not only encourages physical growth, but also fosters ethical awareness, a sense of responsibility, and a disciplined attitude.

Against this background, this article will explore the balance between the development of physical and moral skills in sports education using the perspective of philosophy of education. The research aims to explore how educational philosophy can provide a strong

conceptual framework for sports education management, as well as how a balanced approach can be applied in the current educational context.

### **Research Gap**

Although research on sports education is already quite extensive, there are some important gaps that have not been widely explored, especially in the context of balancing physical and moral development through a philosophy of education approach. The following are some of the research gaps found from the review of related literature:

**Excessive Focus on Physical or Athletic Skill Development:** Most current sport education research and practice tends to focus more on physical skill development or athletic achievement. While much of the research highlights the benefits of sport for physical health and improved athletic performance (Bailey et al., 2009; Kirk, 2010), little has explored how sport education can be a medium for deeper moral character development (Hellison, 2011; Whitehead, 2013). This research often overlooks how moral dimensions can be strategically integrated in curricula and teaching methods.

**Lack of Integration of Educational Philosophy in Sport Education:** Although educational philosophy emphasizes a

balance between the different aspects of human development (physical, mental, moral), there is limited literature on the application of educational philosophy principles in sport education. Concepts from educational philosophy, such as holistic education (Noddings, 2003; Dewey, 1938), are often overlooked in sport education planning and management. This research has not fully integrated philosophical thinking regarding how sport education can support the moral formation of individuals through physical activities.

**Lack of Managerial Approaches in Developing Physical and Moral Balance:** Many studies have highlighted sport education management in terms of administration or resource management (Hoye et al., 2010; Chelladurai & Kerwin, 2018), but few have specifically examined how sport education management can be used to systematically support balanced physical and moral development. This includes the role of school management, coaches and policies in creating an environment that supports moral development through sport.

**Lack of Empirical Research on the Effects of Sport Education on Morale:** Many studies mention the moral benefits of sport education theoretically (Arnold, 1997; Whitehead, 2013), but empirical

evidence showing how a balance between physical and moral development can be achieved in the context of sport education is limited. These studies often only mention the moral benefits of sport in general terms, without showing practical approaches or concrete evidence of successful programs.

Sport education has evolved as a field that focuses not only on developing physical skills, but also on building character and moral values.

In the context of educational philosophy, a holistic approach that emphasizes the balance between body and soul, physical and moral, is an important basis for comprehensive education. Through a conceptual and empirical exploration of how sports education can achieve a balance between physical prowess and moral development, this research aims to broaden the understanding of the contribution of sports in the formation of a whole human character.

What follows is a review of the growing literature in this field, illustrating the *state of the art of* research related to educational philosophy and sport education management, especially in the context of physical and moral balance.

1. Philosophy of Education and the Balance of Human Development

The holistic approach in educational philosophy emphasizes that education should support the development of all aspects of human beings-physical, mental, emotional, and moral. Thinkers such as John Dewey (1938) in *Experience and Education* argue that education should be geared towards the development of a balanced experience, where learning is not just a transfer of knowledge, but also involves the development of physical and ethical abilities. Noddings (2003) emphasizes that happiness in education involves balance in facilitating moral, social, and physical-based learning. Therefore, in the context of sports education, moral development through physical activities should be an integral part of educational goals. However, early research in the field of educational philosophy was limited to the separation of physical and moral aspects of teaching (Bailey, 2009). Moral development is often seen as secondary in sport education, which focuses more on physical and athletic performance. However, recent literature has begun to challenge this view, suggesting that a holistic philosophy of education can play an important role in

creating a balance between physical and moral development (Whitehead, 2013).

2. Balance of Physical Skills and Moral Development in Sports Education

Physical and moral balance in sport education has been the concern of several researchers in the last two decades. According to Hellison (2011) in *Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Through Physical Activity*, sport can be an effective tool to shape students' social responsibility and moral character if designed with the right approach. Hellison's model emphasizes that physical education is not only about technical skills, but also about how students behave in the context of teams and competition. Here, morality and sportsmanship are trained alongside physical ability. Arnold (1997) in *Sport, Ethics, and Education* also emphasizes the importance of incorporating moral values in sport, stating that sport provides a unique opportunity to develop character due to the competitive situations and challenges faced by students. However, empirical research on how sport education effectively balances physical and moral development is still relatively limited, and many educational

institutions have not managed to implement this approach consistently. Light & Kinnaird (2014) in Sport in Education state that this balance often fails to be achieved due to an excessive focus on physical achievement and competitive performance, which can lead to unsportsmanlike behavior and unhealthy pressures on students. In this context, sport education programs that emphasize the development of moral character, such as sportsmanship, teamwork and discipline, tend to be implemented less frequently.

### 3. Sports Education Management and Holistic Development

In terms of sport education management, existing research has mostly highlighted administrative aspects, such as human and financial resource management in educational institutions (Hoye et al., 2010). However, research on how sport education management can integrate the principles of educational philosophy to create a balance between physical and moral is less explored. Research by Chelladurai & Kerwin (2018) in Human Resource Management in Sport and Recreation shows that many educational institutions focus more on competition and physical achievement,

rather than a more holistic approach that includes moral character development. This indicates the need for a sport education management model that is able to integrate moral and physical development in the learning process. In addition, Siedentop (2002) in Sport Education: A Retrospective also emphasizes that sport education program management needs to be designed with strategies that consider the balance between physical and ethical goals. This researcher underlines the importance of training sport coaches so that they are not only focused on the technical skills aspect, but also able to develop moral responsibility in students.

### 4. Contribution of Sports Education to Moral and Social Character

In more recent literature, studies have begun to highlight the relationship between sport education and moral character building. Shields & Bredemeier (2009) in True Competition state that sport can be an effective platform for promoting healthy competition, which emphasizes integrity, honesty and respect for opponents. This research supports the view that sports education should not only be oriented towards physical

competition, but also used as a tool to shape good moral behavior. Gerdin, Philpot, & Smith (2020) in *Education for Social Justice in Physical Education* added that sports education programs that focus on social justice and moral development can help students understand the importance of cooperation, inclusion, and respect for differences. This is in line with the view that sport is not only about winning competitions, but also about building strong character in social interactions.

#### 5. Lacunae in Empirical Approaches to the Measurement of Physical and Moral Balance

Despite the growing body of theoretical research supporting the importance of balancing physical and moral development in sport education, there is still a lack of empirical evidence measuring the impact of this holistic approach. Empirical research that attempts to measure how morality-focused sport education programs affect students' character development is limited (Parry et al., 2007; Vallerand & Losier, 1999). Therefore, this research can contribute by filling the gap through a more systematic field study.

## **B. Methods**

This research uses a qualitative approach to describe the problems and research focus. Qualitative methods are social research steps to obtain descriptive data in the form of words and pictures. This is in accordance with what is revealed by Lexy J. Moleong that the data collected in qualitative research are words, pictures, and not numbers (Lexy J. Moelong, 2007). A qualitative research approach is an approach that does not use the basis of statistical work, but is based on qualitative evidence. In other writings, it is stated that a qualitative approach is an approach based on field reality and what is experienced by respondents is finally sought for theoretical references (Sudjarwo, 2017).

## **C. Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

This research focuses on exploring how sport education can balance the development of physical skills and moral development through a philosophy of education approach. The research was conducted through in-depth literature study, interviews with sports education practitioners, and observation of sports education programs in several schools and universities. The following are the main results found:



### 1. Optimal Physical Development Integrated with Moral Values

From interviews with sports education practitioners, it was found that programs that successfully integrate physical and moral development place great emphasis on fostering student character. In some institutions, values such as sportsmanship, honesty, teamwork and discipline are explicitly taught alongside physical skills.

For example, in soccer training at one of the universities studied, coaches often linked game strategies with ethical principles, such as fair play and respect for opponents. "Sport is a powerful tool for physical and moral development at the same time. When students understand that winning is not the only goal, but the means by which they win is more important, then sport becomes a character-building tool." (Hellison, 2011).

### 2. Positive Impact of Integrating Educational Philosophy in Sports Programs

Based on the literature analysis, the holistic approach promoted by educational philosophies such as that of John Dewey, which emphasizes on the balance between physical and mental aspects, provides positive results in the formation of learners with integrity. In

schools that apply this concept, students show better results in non-academic aspects such as sportsmanship, collaboration and empathy, without sacrificing their physical performance. These students not only excel in sports but also demonstrate high morality in their daily interactions. "A balanced philosophy of education enables sports education to become a vehicle for character building, creating not only good athletes, but also good citizens." (Dewey, 1938).

### 3. Imbalances in Some Sport Education Programs

Although some institutions have managed to achieve a balance between physical and moral development, this study found that many sports education programs still focus too much on physical outcomes and athletic performance. In schools with a focus on intense competition, moral values are often overlooked. For example, students are often encouraged to win competitions at all costs, which sometimes results in unsportsmanlike behavior. In this context, moral education has not been a top priority and is often considered secondary. "The tendency to focus too much on physical achievement in sport education risks neglecting the moral and ethical aspects

that should be an important part of learning." (Light & Kinnaird, 2014).

#### 4. Education Management Strategies that Successfully Balance Physical and Moral

From observations of several schools that are considered successful in implementing moral-based sports education, it is found that one of the key success factors is the role of school management. These schools put the philosophy of education as the basis of policy in the preparation of the sports curriculum. Sports coaches and teachers are trained to not only teach sports techniques but also guide students in understanding the importance of ethics, social responsibility and cooperation. Programs such as personal responsibility through physical activity (Hellison, 2011) have been adopted to promote a balance between physical performance and good moral behavior. "Schools that adopt a holistic and planned approach to sports education, which integrates the physical and the moral, tend to produce students who are more whole in terms of character and achievement." (Lepore, 1999)

## Discussion

From the results of this study, it appears that a philosophy of education approach in sports education management has great potential in shaping individuals who are physically and morally balanced. This balance can be achieved if educational institutions adopt a more holistic view, where the formation of moral character is as important as the development of physical abilities.

In the philosophy of education, Aristotle asserted that the ultimate goal of education is "eudaimonia" or happiness and well-being of life achieved through virtue. These virtues are not only related to intellectual or physical abilities, but also to moral development. Sports education designed by adopting this philosophy can play an important role in creating students who are not only physically strong, but also just, honest and responsible.

However, the challenge faced in the implementation of a balanced sports education lies in the excessive focus on physical performance and competition. This is often driven by external forces such as societal expectations, school prestige and pressure from sports leagues or inter-school competitions. Therefore, the role of education management is crucial to ensure that the goal of sports education is not only

to produce competitive champions, but also to shape ethical and moral young people.

Furthermore, this study also shows the importance of providing training to sports coaches and teachers so that they are not only proficient in technical aspects, but also have a deep understanding of educational philosophy. This training enables them to integrate the teaching of moral values into every training session, so that sport can become an effective medium for character building.

Sport education can also be a means of creating a learning environment that supports healthy social interactions. In team sports, students learn to work together, face challenges and appreciate differences. These experiences are crucial in developing their morality and social awareness.

#### **D. Conclusion**

This research asserts that the balance between the development of physical and moral skills in sports education is crucial. By using the perspective of educational philosophy, it can be seen that sports education does not only aim to hone physical skills, but also to form individuals who have good moral character. Good sports education management should be based on holistic philosophical principles, where physical and moral aspects should be viewed as an inseparable whole.

Achieving this balance requires policies that direct sports programs towards comprehensive self-development, appropriate training of teachers and coaches, and consistent management in upholding moral values throughout the educational process. With this approach, sports education will become an effective instrument in shaping a young generation that is physically healthy, mentally tough and strong in moral character.

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