

Enhancing extracurricular sports activities for students of Thai Nguyen University of Technology

Nguyen Thi Ly

Thai Nguyen University of Technology, Vietnam¹

Abstract: *The writing analyzes the concept, forms and benefits of extracurricular sports activities for students in general and students of Thai Nguyen University of Technology (TNUT) in particular. From these theoretical bases, the author analyzes the achieved results and some limitations and difficulties; at the same time, proposes some measures to enhance extracurricular sports activities for students of TNUT.*

Key words: sports, extracurricular activities, students

1. Introduction

Participating in extracurricular sports activities is one of the ways and methods that each student can apply to develop himself/herself comprehensively on the aspects of virtue – mind – body - beauty. For students, extracurricular sports activities not only bring about physical and intellectual benefits but this is also the obligation and responsibility of students. In the Appeal to all people to exercise, President Ho Chi Minh once wrote: "When preserving new democracy; building a country, creating a new life, everything needs strengths to be successful. If each of us is weak, that means the whole country is weak, if everyone is healthy, that means the whole country is healthy. So exercising, fostering health is the obligation of a patriot... If the people are strong, then the country will prosper" [3, p.212]. In parallel with the remarkable achievements, extracurricular sports activities of TNUT students still meet certain limitations and difficulties. This has a significant impact on the health training movement, as well as students' learning results and the overall quality of the school. This fact requires the simultaneous implementation of measures to enhance the extracurricular sports activities for students in the future.

2. Benefits and status of extracurricular sports activities of TNUT students

Before exploring the benefits of extracurricular sports activity for students, we need to have an overview of the concept and forms of this activity. Along with curricular physical education, extracurricular sports activities are the two components making up the sports in schools. From a scientific perspective, extracurricular sports activities are understood as

¹ This research is funded by Thai Nguyen University of Technology, Vietnam

"voluntary training to strengthen the health, maintain and improve the capacity of physical activity, physical training and healing, educate physical and willpower characteristics, acquire motive skills and techniques" [6, p.173]. According to another study by Nguyen Duc Thanh, extracurricular sports activities "are voluntary, and take place in the form of an instructed or self-practiced organization, usually conducted over class time, consistent with interests, genders, ages and health of students" [4, p.2]. The above concepts point out the following characteristics of extracurricular sports activities: (i) voluntary activities of students; (ii) the scope of activities outside of curricular physical education; (iii) for the purpose of physical exercise and health training. Due to the above characteristics, extracurricular sports activities of students take place in many different forms such as self-training according to interests; practicing under the guidance of a professional; joining sports clubs; participating in competitions.

In the concept and proven reality, the first and most practical benefit of sports in general, including extracurricular activities for humans, is to maintain, exercise body and train health. The benefits on health that we can easily see from sports activity are maintaining a reasonable weight, creating a balanced body, reducing stress, combating dementia and depression, keeping cardiovascular system healthy. When exercising regularly and properly, it will increase the calorie burning process, reduce the amount of cholesterol and excessive fat in the body, help students reduce stress, especially reduce the pressure of learning and examination. In addition, through forms of exercising body, it will help students increase the amount of oxygen to the brain, blood circulation, increase neuro-transmittability that increase memory with higher concentration levels. Secondly, sports activities help students form and develop their personalities. Because sports activities are usually conducted by many people, and they are organized. Therefore, when participating in extracurricular sports activities, students must be highly disciplined, conscious, responsible in front of the collective, agile, energetic, honest and truthful. These requirements will facilitate students to increase their ability to interact, integrate with the collective, and improve their personality better.

The actual state of extracurricular sports activities of TNUT students over the past time has gained remarkable achievements. In 2019, the team of TNUT was honored to win the runner-up of Futsal Tournament in Thai Nguyen province, taking place from 10th – 15th of August at Thai Nguyen Sports Service and Competition Center. By December, the school's team participated in Karate, Taekwondo, Traditional Martial Arts, and Vovinam competitions and won 5 gold medals, 6 silver medals and 5 bronze medals. It can be

mentioned many subjective and objective reasons for the above achievements, such as: timely attention and guidance of TNUT's Party Committee, the Board of Administrators, the Management board of the Department of Basic Science and physical education section; technical and professional guidance from the staff of physical coaching staff; the youth and enthusiasm for training of the students' teams participating in the competitions.

In parallel with the resounding achievements, extracurricular sports activities of TNUT students still have limitations and difficulties from students, facilities for training conditions or instructors, nature of the competitions... which need to be overcome. Specifically:

Firstly, regarding the students of TNUT, the number of students participating in clubs is quite modest compared to the total of over 6,000 students over the whole school; the number of practical sessions is small, not balanced in terms of schedule with study and personal work; a number of students still rely on their youth and health, so they have little or no participation in extracurricular sports activities.

Secondly, the conditions of facilities to ensure extracurricular sports activities for students are still limited. Currently, the facilities for the school's sports activities include: "10,000m² of stadium, 2,464m² of gymnasium, artificial grass soccer field, 2,300m² of tennis court and 4,793 m² including volleyball court, basketball court, badminton court and athletics yard" [5, p.97]. These facilities meet a part of training needs for all officials, employees, laborers and students of the school. However, in relation to the growth in student size, these conditions do not really meet the demand for extracurricular sports activities. In addition, some training courses require high investment costs such as swimming, practicing in water.

Thirdly, regarding the lecturers, instructors of extracurricular sports activities, there are limitations in both number and working mode. About the number of lecturers of the Physical Education Subject, there are currently 12 people, of which there are 11 Masters, accounting for 91.7%, 01 person is attending Master's degree, accounting for 8.3%. According to the applicable regulations, "the average ratio of students to lecturers over one whole higher education institution shall not exceed 25" [1]. This figure is not sufficient for the average ratio of students to teachers. This makes it difficult for teachers to balance the time of professional teaching with the guidance of extracurricular activities, and students are also less instructed. On the other hand, according to the regulations on working mode for physical education lecturers in the conversion of standard hours, practical training activities are only calculated in class [2], i.e. only counted in formal teaching. This provision leads to the fact that the physical education lecturers when conducting extracurricular sports activities will not be allowed to

convert to standard hours, indirectly affecting the instruction of extracurricular sports activities to students.

Fourthly, the nature of sports competitions is not regular and often interrupted. This affects the frequency of training, the ability to adapt to the pitch conditions, the training environment and the purpose of training. The above difficulties and limitations need to be evaluated seriously and objectively, thereby offering measures to enhance extracurricular sports activities for TNUT students to gain the benefits of these activities.

3. Some measures to enhance extracurricular sports activities for the students of TNUT

3.1. Propagating, educating the awareness of related subjects about the positions and benefits of extracurricular sports activities

The subjects are obliged to promote the propaganda and education of awareness about the position, role and benefits of quite diverse extracurricular sports activities to the Party Committee, the Board of Administrators, the Youth Union, the Students' Association, Physical Education Subject, teaching staff and all students of the school. Each subject, depending on their duties and functions, shall carry out the propaganda and education about the position and benefits of different extracurricular sports activities. For the Party Committee, and the Board of Administrators - the management subject, they need to be more and more regular in providing guidelines and action programs to raise the awareness about the benefits of extracurricular sports activities. These orientations and programs are the foundation for the forms and ways of extracurricular sports activities to develop in accordance with the situation of the school, especially of the students. Organizations such as the Youth Union, the Students' Association of the school should thoroughly implement the resolutions and instructions of the Party Committee, the school's Board of Administrators on extracurricular sports education activities. In addition, these subjects need to organize more in number and variety of competition subjects, thereby propagating the benefits of extracurricular sports activities to all students of the school. For the Physical Education Subject and all the lecturers of the subject, it is necessary to arrange and organize appropriate resources to implement the awareness education for students about the benefits of extracurricular sports activities. Especially, physical education lecturers need to improve their skills and expertise, be a good example for students to follow. For students, they need to learn actively, self-cultivate knowledge through various channels like lecturers, friends,

the internet, social gatherings ... thereby change the awareness about the position, benefits of extracurricular sports activity.

3.2. Investing, developing conditions to ensure extracurricular sports activities suitable to the school situation

Conditions to ensure extracurricular sports activities include playground, equipment, training support facilities and financial regime, remuneration for instructors, students participating in competitions with high achievements. Regarding courts, equipment and means of training support, it is necessary to be reviewed, checked for quality, renovated and upgraded with the contents which do not meet the quality. In addition, the school needs to invest in expanding and diversifying types of training grounds on the basis of balance of financial resources and the size of students' quantity as well as training needs. On the other hand, the school should have a detailed plan of using and assign management responsibilities to the appropriate subjects towards the courts, equipment, and training aids. This plan of using is managed to design by the responsible subjects on the basis of a balance between teaching or working time of lecturers, employees and learning time of students. The plan of using must not be overlapping, avoiding the lack of court conditions for many objects wishing to use, ensuring the practice activities to be carried out smoothly and regularly.

Regarding the condition of the financial regime, the remuneration for instructors and students with high achievements in competitions should be implemented quickly, promptly and properly. The remuneration, especially the "on the spot rewards", will be the motivation to urge the lecturers to be more enthusiastic in the guidance on professional skills. Especially for students participating in the competition, this mode will be a catalyst for students to contribute their youth, enthusiasm for the colors, and the general movements of the school.

3.3. Training and cultivating to improve professional qualifications, and recruiting additional staff for physical education

The team of physical education lecturers is the core force guiding specialty and skills for the students to practice extracurricular sports activities. In the immediate future, the school should have a plan for rational and effective use of existing physical education lecturers. In order for this plan to be effective, the school needs to allot and assign the physical education lecturers to study and foster to improve their professional qualifications. In addition, lecturers need to actively learn knowledge as well as participate in sports competitions to improve practical experience, helping the training process for students to be more comprehensive.

Along with that, the Administration - Organization Department should advise the Party Committee, the school's Board of Administrators to recruit personnel as physical education lecturers. This plan should ensure compliance with such criteria as job positions, qualifications, health status, and level of experience... Especially, there is a priority policy for lecturers with doctoral degrees and lecturers who have high achievements in physical training and sports competitions. The elements of professional knowledge and competitions' achievements on the one hand are examples for students to follow, on the other hand, the University and the Department can exploit the ability of faculty members to enhance and promote extracurricular sports activities for students.

3.4. Promoting the role of self-training extracurricular sports activities of the students

Each individual student of TNUT themselves should take the initiative in promoting the spirit of self-discipline, be active not only in studying specialized subjects and main courses, but also train and actively participate in extracurricular sports movements and activities. Students should not be too dependent on the plans, programs from the school or the guidance from the lecturers. Currently, with the development of science and technology, especially the internet, it is possible to help the students to self-study and train themselves through the ability of transmitting information quickly and effectively. In addition, students can register themselves to participate in sports competitions of the province, the region and the country for the purpose of exchanging, rubbing to learn experience and especially to train health.

4. Conclusion

Extracurricular sports activities are an integral part of sports in schools. This activity not only brings about health benefits for students, but also helps students to form and develop their personalities, thereby perfecting themselves in the aspects of virtue, mind, body and beauty. Over time, extracurricular sports activities of TNUT students have achieved resounding, remarkable and praised achievements. Along with that, this activity of TNUT students also encountered certain limitations and difficulties. In order to further enhance extracurricular sports activities in reality, promote the benefits that it brings, it is necessary to simultaneously implement measures such as propaganda, awareness education, measures to invest in facilities, the reward regime and measures for fostering and recruiting a team of physical education lecturers.

References

1. Point d, Clause 3, Article 4, Decree No. 73/2015/ND-CP of the Government dated September 8, 2015, specifying stratification standards, grading frameworks and classifying standards of higher education institutions.
2. Point c, Clause 2, Article 5, Circular No. 47/2014/TT-BGDĐT of the Ministry of Education and Training dated January 31, 2014 stipulating the working regime for lecturers.
3. Ho Chi Minh (1995), Completed work, volume 4, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi
4. Nguyen Duc Thanh (2013), *Developing content and form of organization of extracurricular sports activities of the students in some universities in Ho Chi Minh City*, Doctoral thesis in educational science, Hanoi.
5. Thai Nguyen University of Technology (2018), *Public Report for the 2017-2018 academic year, form 22*.
6. Nguyen Toan - Nguyen Ha (2004), *Curriculum of exercise theories and methods*, (for internal circulation only), Ho Chi Minh City University of Education.