

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS, CHALLENGES, AND STRATEGIES OF HOLISTIC UNIT TEACHING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNDER THE NEW CURRICULUM STANDARDS

ZiYue Guo, XiaoHong Zhao*, PengLong Shi
Hebei Normal University Of Science & Technology, Qinhuangdao 066004, Hebei, China.
Corresponding Author: XiaoHong Zhao, Email: 2425483556@qq.com

Abstract: The "Compulsory Education Physical Education and Health Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition)" outlines recommendations for implementing large unit teaching in physical education, emphasizing the cultivation of students' comprehensive qualities and sports skills to develop core competencies. Large unit instructional design has become a crucial direction in physical education reform, aiming to promote multi-dimensional student development through structured teaching approaches. However, despite this concept being proposed, current research on large unit instructional design remains at an early stage. Challenges such as difficulty in grasping teaching content systems, limitations in teaching resources, and insufficient theoretical knowledge among teachers persist in practice. To address these issues, this paper proposes a series of strategies: enhancing teacher training and professional development, refining teaching content, innovating teaching methods to stimulate student interest, and strengthening pedagogical reflection. These measures are expected to improve the implementation of large unit teaching in physical education, thereby promoting students' well-rounded development.

Keywords: New curriculum standard; Large unit teaching; Core literacy

1 INTRODUCTION

The large unit teaching method in physical education enables students to delve deeply into specific sports or combined activities, fostering comprehensive development. Through extended instructional periods, learners can maintain sustained engagement in sports, cultivating perseverance, patience, and persistent learning attitudes—key components of core competencies. This approach also enhances students' enjoyment of sports, ignites their interest, and nurtures positive attitudes toward health and life. Aligning with the "teach, practice, compete" philosophy, systematic instruction allows students to apply knowledge through real competitions and athletic activities. Additionally, the flexibility of large unit teaching facilitates adaptive learning designs that meet individual needs, enabling each student to grow within contexts tailored to their aptitude.

1.1 Teachers Have a High Degree of Recognition for the Teaching of Sports Unit and are Willing to Carry out Teaching Practice

The integrated sports unit teaching model encourages the organic combination of diverse athletic disciplines and skills in instruction, emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary integration. Educators recognize this approach as fostering students' comprehensive application of acquired knowledge and competencies. This pedagogical method effectively stimulates learning interest while cultivating students' holistic development, practical abilities, innovative thinking, and collaborative spirit. By connecting curriculum content with students' real-life experiences and practical scenarios, teachers can make learning more relevant to learners' interests and needs. Such an approach enhances student engagement and sense of investment, thereby improving instructional effectiveness. Furthermore, this teaching methodology requires educators to continuously learn and innovate, offering opportunities for professional growth and development. Consequently, teachers actively embrace the practice of integrated sports unit teaching.

1.2 The Activities are Designed to Be Rich and Varied, Emphasizing the Learning and Thinking of Students in Practice

The core strength of large unit teaching design in physical education lies in its rich diversity. This approach encompasses both traditional and innovative sports like track and field, basketball, soccer, table tennis, and swimming. Such varied selection caters to students' diverse interests and strengths, encouraging active participation and fostering lasting exercise habits. Through hands-on activities, students experience the essence of sports techniques while continuously refining their performance through reflection. This integration of practice and critical thinking enhances self-directed learning and problem-solving skills. For example, in basketball units, students not only master basic skills like shooting, passing, and dribbling but also develop tactical awareness and teamwork through competitive matches and collaborative activities. Students may assume roles such as players, referees, or coaches, engaging in scenario-based sports experiences. These role transitions and contextual learning help students understand sports from multiple perspectives, strengthen their overall competencies, and cultivate creativity, communication skills, and team spirit.

1.3 It is Helpful to Implement "Teaching, Practicing and Regular Competition" and Improve Students' Subject Association and Sports Coordination Ability

If daily classroom instruction focuses solely on fragmented sports knowledge and skills through isolated skill drills, students struggle to establish connections between these competencies. By implementing large unit teaching frameworks, we can overcome common issues in current K-12 physical education curricula such as superficial coverage, half-hearted efforts, premature abandonment, and repetitive elementary-level content [1]. In this approach, PE teachers not only teach foundational knowledge and skills but also design authentic practice tasks tailored to students' learning needs, enhancing their problem-solving abilities. Simultaneously, large unit teaching activities integrate interdisciplinary elements like mathematics, science, and history, fostering cross-disciplinary connections. For example, during basketball units, math can be used to analyze game statistics, biology to explore human movement mechanisms, and history to trace basketball's origins and evolution. These interdisciplinary connections help students gain comprehensive understanding of sports and apply knowledge in real-life scenarios, laying a solid foundation for well-rounded development.

2 PROBLEMS EXISTING IN SPORTS TEACHING BY LARGE UNITS UNDER THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEW CURRICULUM STANDARDS

2.1 The Status Quo Caused by the Long-Term Traditional Physical Education Teaching Mode is Difficult to Change

Traditional physical education models exhibit inherent limitations in fostering comprehensive athletic literacy, promoting interdisciplinary integration, and stimulating student engagement. Firstly, these approaches often emphasize fragmented skill acquisition and repetitive movements, resulting in disjointed learning experiences that hinder the development of holistic athletic competence. The excessive focus on memorizing prescribed techniques neglects the cultivation of creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. Evaluation systems predominantly rely on standardized tests, prioritizing mastery of specific skills over comprehensive assessments of overall athletic proficiency. Furthermore, traditional pedagogy risks marginalizing students who struggle with particular sports, limiting their participation opportunities and undermining inclusive sports engagement. The difficulty in integrating physical education with other academic disciplines restricts cross-disciplinary interaction, while outdated curricula fail to meet modern societal demands for updated athletic literacy. Additionally, insufficient teacher-student interaction and low student engagement diminish instructional effectiveness. Overemphasis on competitive pressure may ultimately cause some students to lose interest in sports due to performance anxiety.

2.2 Teaching Content System is Difficult to Grasp

The curriculum framework for Physical Education and Health is structured into two core components: sports and health knowledge, and the acquisition of athletic techniques. A dedicated module should be established to teach sports and health knowledge, which should address themes such as students' physical development, adolescent education, challenges in sports participation, fitness standards, and enhancing educational outcomes. However, it's not advisable to use large teaching units for these topics, as this could reduce physical education classes to mere "theoretical lectures," hindering students' ability to integrate sports knowledge with practical application [2]. The suitability of large units should be determined based on curriculum content, sport-specific characteristics, learning duration, and difficulty levels. Some topics that don't qualify as standalone modules require careful consideration. We must thoroughly study curriculum standards, clarify the textbook's content structure, and adopt the instructional framework proposed by American curriculum theorist Ralph Tyler to establish clear teaching objectives, methodologies, and progression criteria [3].

2.3 Limitations of the Curriculum and Conditions

Quality teaching conditions provide students with more practice opportunities and higher practice density, enabling them to absorb and apply knowledge more effectively. The better the school's sports teaching facilities—such as field size and equipment availability—the faster students can learn sports knowledge and skills. They can master required techniques and tactical knowledge more efficiently, thereby shortening their learning cycle. Conversely, poor teaching conditions may require longer time for students to acquire the same skills and tactics, resulting in extended instructional units. For instance, limited space or inadequate equipment might restrict sufficient practice, limiting skill development. Additionally, students may have to take turns using limited resources, leading to wasted time spent waiting for opportunities rather than practicing. Teachers also need to spend extra time adjusting lessons to accommodate existing teaching conditions.

2.4 Insufficient Specialized Teaching Ability of Teachers

The comprehensive unit teaching model in physical education requires dedicating at least 18 instructional hours to individual sports disciplines, emphasizing holistic continuity through extended learning cycles. When designing such

units, instructors must consider both the unique characteristics of different sports and students' individual needs, while developing comprehensive plans that integrate objectives, content, and methodologies. They should also understand core principles like comprehensiveness, practicality, and personalization, along with applying these concepts to classroom practice. Without this theoretical foundation, teachers may struggle with methodological choices and instructional design. In daily teaching, many educators fail to fully implement curriculum concepts, often neglecting specialized instruction. Instead, they tend to rely on fragmented small units and repetitive content, causing students to endlessly repeat basic knowledge without developing competitive skills. This approach diminishes student engagement and hinders the development of problem-solving abilities. Therefore, enhancing teachers' specialized instructional capabilities and adopting systematic, in-depth teaching methods have become urgent priorities for improving physical education quality.

3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF SPORTS TEACHING IN LARGE UNITS UNDER THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEW CURRICULUM STANDARDS

3.1 Adhere to the Goal of Core Physical Education Literacy, and Implement the Concept of Comprehensive Education in Sports Units

Teachers must clarify the core competencies in physical education, including physical fitness, skill proficiency, athletic skills, sports awareness, and athletic ability. This ensures students develop these essential qualities while learning sports knowledge and skills. For instance, through targeted physical training, skill practice, and tactical application, we can comprehensively enhance students' physical fitness and athletic capabilities. Cultivating comprehensive abilities such as teamwork, communication, and leadership is equally important. Activities like team sports, cooperative games, and role-playing help foster students' holistic development and interpersonal skills. Under the guidance of big concepts, major tasks, and new frameworks, teachers should focus on nurturing students' humanistic literacy and sportsmanship. By engaging them in complex real-world sports scenarios, students experience the joy of sports, inspiring competitive spirit, team collaboration, and problem-solving skills [4].

When designing large physical education units, clear teaching objectives should be established, covering aspects like physical fitness, athletic skills, emotional attitudes, and teamwork. Integrate diverse sports knowledge, skills, and abilities organically into unit content while connecting it with other disciplines. This interdisciplinary approach broadens students' knowledge horizons, enabling them to combine sports with other academic subjects. Through diversified content design, students receive holistic development throughout the unit process—not just focusing on specific skills, but achieving comprehensive quality enhancement through multidimensional learning experiences. In addition, personalized teaching services are provided according to students' interests, abilities and learning styles to ensure that each student can play to their strengths in an environment suitable for them.

3.2 Deepen the Reorganization of Teaching Content to Ensure Students' Complete Experience

Under the big unit model in physical education, students' central role should be fully realized. This requires PE teachers to evolve beyond mere knowledge transmitters into activity designers and learning guides. In this new paradigm, educators must go beyond simple information delivery, instead guiding students through carefully designed sports activities that encourage active participation, exploration, and learning.

First, teachers' professional competence is crucial for instructional effectiveness. Enhancing overall quality through specialized training programs for big unit content and recruiting top talent ensures sustainable implementation of big unit teaching. Second, diverse curriculum design is essential. When structuring big unit content, comprehensive consideration should be given to mastering sports skills, strengthening athletic awareness, and cultivating disciplinary literacy, ensuring systematic and holistic content design. Finally, students' roles in teaching processes need transformation. By assigning them roles like referees, coaches, or recorders during games or competitions, students gain full engagement in sports activities. This approach guarantees complete teaching processes while enhancing students' comprehensive competencies.

3.3 Improve Teachers' Specialized Teaching Ability

Implementing large unit teaching in physical education requires teachers to possess strong theoretical and practical capabilities. Therefore, continuously enhancing teachers' specialized teaching abilities becomes crucial during the implementation of large unit instruction. Teachers can explore the humanistic spirit, sports philosophy, cultural characteristics, and humanistic values of sports, making them the core of teacher education [5]. Firstly, during pre-service teacher training, on one hand, prospective teachers should undergo systematic learning of sports theories covering the origin, development characteristics, historical evolution, competition rules, and refereeing methods of specific sports. On the other hand, they should strengthen practical exercises, teaching, and standardized guidance for specialized sports. This includes training in curriculum design, teaching methods, and assessment techniques for large unit instruction, helping teachers continuously update their knowledge and skills to improve teaching quality. By adopting motivational and exploratory teaching methods, teachers can actively explore and encourage the development of stable technical and tactical awareness by connecting skills and tactics, transitioning from individual technique instruction to competitive scenarios. This facilitates the transformation from single-skill teaching to structured

instruction [6]. Additionally, establishing a case study and sharing platform for physical education teachers allows educators to exchange experiences and lessons learned in large unit teaching. Through case analysis and experience sharing, teachers can gain deeper understanding of the core concepts and implementation methods of large unit instruction[7]. This approach also encourages interdisciplinary collaboration between physical education teachers and those from other disciplines to jointly design and implement cross-disciplinary large unit teaching projects, identify issues, summarize experiences, and continuously enhance teaching proficiency.

3.4 Strengthen Teaching Evaluation and Reflection to Ensure Reasonable and Effective Teaching

Any teaching model, particularly during its initial implementation phase, requires continuous refinement and adaptation to real-world conditions. As schools widely adopt large unit teaching in physical education, various challenges inevitably emerge in practice. Educators must conduct timely and thorough analyses to address these issues, making targeted adjustments to optimize teaching strategies and enhance the quality of large unit instruction.

When initiating large unit teaching, clearly defined evaluation criteria should be established—covering students' athletic skill levels, sports awareness development, and subject literacy cultivation—to enable teachers to provide focused assessments and concrete feedback for reflection. Throughout implementation, regular teaching evaluations should collect student learning outcomes and instructional effectiveness data[8]. This allows for prompt issue identification and strategy adjustments, ensuring teaching remains flexible and responsive. Establishing a real-time feedback mechanism between teachers and students helps educators promptly understand student perspectives while providing immediate instructional feedback, enabling continuous improvements tailored to learners' needs and feedback.

4 CONCLUSION

Under the framework of the new curriculum standards, the implementation of large-unit teaching in physical education should strictly adhere to established objectives and requirements. We need to thoroughly analyze various issues arising during the process of large-unit teaching in sports, effectively integrate teaching scenarios, and propose corresponding strategies from the perspective of comprehensively enhancing students' overall competencies. In practical teaching, individual differences should be emphasized to ensure every student can find a development path suitable for themselves within the large-unit teaching framework, achieving personalized learning experiences. When advancing large-unit teaching in physical education, special attention must be paid to cultivating core competencies. This involves designing large-unit teaching programs centered around six specialized sports categories that meet students' learning needs. The curriculum should deeply integrate six aspects: foundational knowledge, basic skills, tactical application, physical fitness, performance or competition, rules and refereeing methods, as well as appreciation and evaluation. Through this approach, students' learning interest can be fully stimulated, promoting their all-round development and truly realizing the educational goals advocated by the new curriculum standards.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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