

# ***Practical Research on Stimulating Sports Interest and Cultivating Long-term Exercise Habits in Physical Education***

**Li Qinghua**

*Sports and Military Teaching Department, Hainan Vocational University of Science and Technology,  
Haikou, Hainan, 571126, China*

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**Abstract:** In the context of declining public health levels and the continuous deterioration of adolescents' physical fitness, the mission of physical education is not only to teach sports skills but also to stimulate students' interest in sports, encouraging them to develop lifelong exercise habits. This paper systematically explores how to stimulate students' interest in sports through effective physical education strategies and promote the development of long-term exercise habits. By analyzing the influence of various factors such as students, teachers, and the environment, the paper proposes effective measures such as personalized teaching, innovative teaching methods, and exercise planning. These measures are validated through practical case studies. The research shows that well-designed and scientifically guided physical education can significantly enhance students' interest in sports, thereby providing a solid foundation for establishing long-term exercise habits.

Adolescence is a critical period for the formation of sports interest and the cultivation of long-term exercise habits, and physical education plays an essential role in this process. Currently, many students participate in sports activities during physical education classes, but they lack sustained interest and motivation, making it difficult to maintain regular exercise habits. This not only affects their physical health but also has far-reaching implications for their future lifestyle and overall well-being. Various factors influence students' interest in sports, including individual differences, teaching methods employed by teachers, and external support and encouragement from the environment. Effective physical education must not only cater to individual needs but also stimulate students' intrinsic motivation. Through proper guidance and scientific planning, students can develop a long-term interest and passion for sports, eventually forming exercise habits that benefit them throughout their lives. This requires the joint efforts of teachers, schools, and families to create a positive sports environment and culture for students.

## **1. The Importance of Stimulating Interest in Sports in Physical Education**

### **1.1 The Impact of Sports Interest on Students' Participation in Physical Activities**

Sports interest is the intrinsic driving force behind students' participation in physical activities,

directly affecting their level of participation and enthusiasm. The stimulation of interest allows students to experience fun and a sense of accomplishment during sports, thereby enhancing their initiative and self-participation awareness. At the same time, sports interest helps students overcome challenges and difficulties encountered during physical activity, maintain continuous motivation, and avoid giving up due to boredom or difficulty. Therefore, stimulating students' interest in sports in physical education is a key factor in enhancing their participation and improving the effectiveness of sports activities.

## **1.2 The Role of Sports Interest in the Formation of Long-term Exercise Habits**

Sports interest is not only a motivator for short-term sports participation but also the foundation for cultivating long-term exercise habits. Interest can encourage students to spontaneously engage in daily exercise, turning sports from a task into a self-chosen lifestyle. Maintaining long-term interest enhances students' self-discipline and perseverance, gradually developing the habit of regular exercise and ultimately achieving the goal of a healthy life. Therefore, physical education should focus on fostering students' long-term interest in sports to help them build lifelong exercise awareness and habits.

## **2. Factors Influencing Students' Interest in Sports**

### **2.1 Student Factors**

Individual differences among students, such as personality, interests, physical fitness, and athletic abilities, directly affect their interest in sports activities. Students who are extroverted or confident are generally more willing to participate in sports, while those who are introverted or lacking in athletic ability may develop feelings of reluctance toward physical activities. Additionally, students' previous experiences with sports and their perceptions of it also influence their level of interest. If they have positive experiences early on, they are more likely to maintain interest in sports<sup>[1]</sup>.

### **2.2 Teacher Factors**

The teaching methods, attitude, and interactions between teachers and students play a crucial role in influencing students' interest in sports. Teachers who use diverse teaching methods, offer appropriate encouragement and support, and engage in positive emotional interaction can effectively stimulate students' interest in physical activities. The teacher's own enthusiasm for sports and professional knowledge can also subtly influence students, making them more willing to actively participate and perform in physical education classes.

### **2.3 Environmental Factors**

The availability of school sports facilities, the sports atmosphere, and support from families and society are important external factors that influence students' interest in sports. Well-equipped sports facilities and a conducive environment can inspire students to engage in physical activities, creating a positive and encouraging atmosphere for sports. Additionally, parental support and encouragement, along with societal emphasis on sports, significantly affect students' attitudes toward physical activities. An environment rich in sports culture allows students to internalize the value of sports, leading to voluntary participation and sustained interest in sports.

### **3. Measures to Stimulate Students' Interest in Sports and Cultivate Long-term Exercise Habits in Physical Education**

#### **3.1 Understanding Students' Needs and Teaching According to Their Abilities**

In physical education, understanding students' needs is the foundation for stimulating their interest in sports and cultivating long-term exercise habits. Students have varying interests, abilities, personalities, and experiences with sports. Teachers need to conduct research, observe, and interact to fully understand each student's athletic preferences and individual differences. Based on this information, teachers should adopt the strategy of "teaching according to their abilities" and develop teaching plans that match each student's capabilities and interests. For example, for students with stronger athletic abilities, more challenging sports activities can be designed to stimulate their potential and interest. For students with weaker abilities or less interest in sports, a gradual approach with lower difficulty and increased fun can help them build confidence and gradually develop an interest in sports. Additionally, personalized guidance and feedback can make students feel cared for and valued, thereby increasing their enthusiasm and participation in physical activities<sup>[2]</sup>.

#### **3.2 Innovative Teaching Methods to Improve Teaching Quality**

Innovative teaching methods are key to stimulating students' interest in sports and enhancing the effectiveness of physical education. Traditional physical education is often too monotonous and dull, making it difficult to engage students. Therefore, teachers should incorporate modern educational concepts and adopt diverse, highly interactive teaching methods. For example, game-based teaching can stimulate students' desire to participate by establishing interesting game rules. Team cooperation and competition mechanisms, through group activities, can boost students' sense of collective honor and motivation for sports. Additionally, modern technological tools, such as virtual reality technology and smart sports equipment, can enhance the interactivity and appeal of physical education, helping students experience the fun and sense of achievement through the assistance of technology. Innovative teaching also requires teachers to be flexible in meeting the diverse needs of students, adjusting the teaching pace and difficulty to ensure every student has a positive experience and maintains their interest in sports.

#### **3.3 Guiding Students to Develop Exercise Plans and Cultivate Self-discipline**

Guiding students to develop exercise plans is an important measure in cultivating self-discipline and long-term exercise habits. By setting clear exercise goals, students can gradually establish a well-defined path for physical activities and develop strong planning and execution skills. Teachers should help students create short-term and long-term exercise plans based on their fitness levels, interests, and schedules. These plans should be practical and phased, encouraging students to challenge themselves gradually and feel a sense of accomplishment upon completing each stage. Moreover, teachers should regularly provide feedback and make adjustments to students' exercise plans, helping them overcome difficulties encountered during implementation and maintain motivation for progress. By setting plans, students not only clarify the purpose of exercise but also gradually develop a spirit of self-discipline, making exercise a part of their daily lives and ultimately forming a long-term commitment to regular physical activity<sup>[3]</sup>.

### **3.4 Creating a Positive Sports Environment to Stimulate Students' Enthusiasm**

A positive sports environment is a key factor in stimulating students' enthusiasm for sports and increasing participation. Schools should provide ample sports venues, modern facilities, and a variety of extracurricular activities to create comfortable and diverse conditions for students to engage in sports. At the same time, teachers should focus on fostering a positive sports atmosphere both inside and outside the classroom, encouraging students to support and cooperate with each other, and enhancing their sense of collective honor. Additionally, schools can regularly organize various sports competitions and sports festivals to stimulate students' sense of competition and interest in participation, helping them build confidence and a sense of achievement in sports. Support from families and society is also crucial. Parents should actively collaborate with schools' physical education programs to encourage their children to participate in sports. By creating such a well-rounded positive sports environment, students' interest and enthusiasm for sports will continue to increase, laying a solid foundation for the development of long-term exercise habits<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **3.5 Teachers as Role Models to Establish Long-term Exercise Awareness**

As direct guides for students, teachers' behavior and attitude have a profound influence on students' interest in sports and their awareness of long-term exercise. Teachers should participate actively and enthusiastically in sports themselves, serving as role models for students, demonstrating the value and enjoyment of sports. When teachers lead by example, actively engage in sports, and share their personal experiences with exercise and a healthy lifestyle, they can subtly influence students and foster their recognition of the importance of sports. Furthermore, the role of teachers as role models extends beyond physical participation. It includes their attitude toward exercise and their sense of responsibility, encouraging students to persevere and face challenges. This helps students understand the positive impact of long-term exercise on health and quality of life. Through constant guidance and leading by example, teachers can gradually cultivate students' self-discipline and exercise habits, enabling them to independently choose sports as part of their lives and instill in them the awareness of maintaining long-term exercise habits. The role of teachers as role models is an important guarantee for stimulating students' intrinsic motivation and developing lasting exercise habits.

## **4. Case Study Analysis**

### **4.1 Background Introduction**

This study selected two parallel classes from a middle school as research subjects, with one being the experimental group and the other the control group, each consisting of 50 students. Before the experiment, the students in both classes had similar physical fitness levels and interest in sports, as they were all regular middle school students with no significant differences in physical education performance or participation. The goal of the study was to observe the impact of targeted measures to stimulate sports interest in the experimental group on their sports interest and the development of long-term exercise habits. The research period was one semester, and assessments and data collection were conducted for both classes at the beginning and end to ensure the scientific validity and comparability of the results<sup>[5]</sup>.

## **4.2 Practical Measures**

### **4.2.1 Personalized Sports Course Design**

First, the teachers conducted surveys and classroom observations to thoroughly understand each student's interest in sports, physical fitness level, and previous sports experience. Based on this information, teachers developed personalized sports programs and goals for each student. For example, students who preferred team sports were assigned to activities like basketball or soccer, while those who preferred individual sports participated in activities like running or badminton. This approach not only increased student participation but also allowed them to find a sense of achievement in the activities they enjoyed, enhancing their enjoyment of sports.

### **4.2.2 Game-based and Team Competition Teaching**

The experimental group adopted game-based teaching methods, designing various sports games and team competitions to enhance students' participation and sense of competition. During physical education classes, teachers organized a range of fun competition activities, such as relay races and dodgeball, which helped strengthen students' team spirit and made the activities more enjoyable, sparking students' competitive drive and sense of accomplishment.

### **4.2.3 Developing Personal Exercise Plans and Providing Regular Feedback**

Teachers helped each student create short-term and long-term exercise plans tailored to their fitness level. For example, students set goals for the number of exercise sessions, duration, and intensity to achieve each week. Through regular tracking of performance and feedback, teachers adjusted the plans based on the students' progress, helping them overcome challenges. Regular feedback on progress not only allowed students to see their improvement but also enhanced their self-discipline and confidence, encouraging them to stick to their established goals.

### **4.2.4 Optimizing Sports Facilities and Extracurricular Activities**

To create a positive sports environment, the school provided the experimental group with more sports equipment and extracurricular activity opportunities, encouraging them to actively participate in physical exercise after school as well. Additionally, small-scale sports competitions were regularly held within the class, using team honors to stimulate students' interest in sports and strengthen the class's cohesion.

### **4.2.5 Teachers' Active Guidance and Role Model Effect**

Teachers in the experimental group led by example, actively participating in every class activity and demonstrating a positive attitude toward exercise and a healthy lifestyle. Teachers not only demonstrated various sports in class but also regularly shared their own exercise experiences with the students, helping them better understand the importance of long-term exercise. This role modeling had a profound impact on the students, motivating them to develop an awareness of maintaining long-term exercise habits.

## **4.3 Practical Results**

After one semester of practice, a comparative evaluation of the development of sports interest and habits was conducted for students in both the experimental group and the control group. The results showed that the indicators for the experimental group were significantly better than those of

the control group. The specific data are shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Comparison of Sports Interest and Habit Development between Experimental Group and Control Group

Group	Increase in Sports Interest (%)	Frequency of Extracurricular Sports Participation (times/week)	Long-term Exercise Habit Formation Rate (%)
Experimental Group	90	4.5	80
Control Group	50	3.0	40

As shown in Table 1, the experimental group outperformed the control group across all indicators. The increase in sports interest for the experimental group was 90%, significantly higher than the control group's 50%, indicating that personalized teaching strategies effectively stimulated students' interest in sports. In terms of extracurricular sports participation, the experimental group averaged 4.5 times per week, compared to 3 times for the control group, demonstrating that students in the experimental group were more active in sports outside of class. The long-term exercise habit formation rate reached 80% in the experimental group, while it was only 40% in the control group, indicating that the strategies implemented in the experimental group effectively encouraged students to develop long-term exercise habits.

## 5. Conclusion

In physical education, stimulating students' interest in sports and cultivating long-term exercise habits are crucial to the physical and mental health of adolescents and their quality of life. By applying individualized teaching, innovative methods, and scientific planning, students' interest in sports can be significantly enhanced, enabling them to gradually develop long-term exercise habits through enjoyable physical experiences. In addition to physical fitness, students also develop self-discipline, teamwork, and perseverance through sports, which will have a profound impact on their future lifestyle and overall health. As guides and role models, physical education teachers can play a key role by actively participating and providing scientific guidance, helping students understand the value of sports and incorporate it into their daily lives. Furthermore, by creating a positive sports environment and integrating resources from schools, families, and society, students can maintain long-term enthusiasm and motivation for sports in a collaborative atmosphere, thereby achieving lifelong fitness goals. Promoting the reform of physical education is not only necessary for improving students' physical health but also for shaping their positive outlook on life and healthy lifestyle choices.

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