

Research on the Necessity and Feasibility of Introducing Tai Ji Softball into Physical Education in Colleges and Universities

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Keywords: Tai Ji Softball; Colleges and Universities; Research

Abstract: Tai Ji softball is introduced into colleges and universities, It is popular among college students, with the reasonable curriculum, the unified teaching content, the tremendous social impact, and certain feasibility, so it is worthy of being popularized in colleges and universities.

1 The Current Status of Tai Ji Softball at Home and Abroad

Tai Ji softball originated in China in 1991. As the event was vigorously popularized and promoted among the middle-aged and elderly people at the initial stage, it has achieved remarkable social effects. At present, sports associations for the elderly in more than 30 provinces, cities and autonomous regions across the country have actively promoted the popularization of Tai Ji softball, and nearly 2 million middle-aged and elderly people have participated in Tai Ji softball activities, which has formed a considerable scale(1).

In recent years, according to incomplete statistics, there are nearly a hundred universities in China (such as Wuhan University of Science and Technology, Huazhong Normal University, Zhejiang University of Technology, Shenyang Institute of Physical Education, Beijing Sport University, Wuhan University of Technology, Huazhong Agricultural University, Shanxi University, etc.) that have successively introduced Tai Ji softball into the physical education classes, which has been loved by college students. Tai Ji softball were successively introduced into primary and secondary school classes in Beijing, Xi'an, Wuhan, Nanjing and other regions ,which is quite popular among primary and secondary school students. With the students' participation, the sustainable and healthy development of softball has brought the dawn of a bright future.

The development of softball in foreign countries mainly focuses on more than 20 countries in Europe, Asia, Oceania, and Australia and so on, and the establishment of softball associations, among which Japan and Europe have a large scale and audience. Germany and Japan have hosted the Softball International Invitational Tournament for many times, which is deeply loved by the local government and people, and has also strengthened the friendship between the Chinese and the people of the world. (2)

At present, Tai Ji softball is popularized among middle-aged and elderly people in China, but it is still at the initial stage as part of school physical education content. The popularization of Tai Ji softball sports in colleges and universities is not strong enough, the developing speed is slowing down, and it falls into development dilemma and leads to people's misunderstandings. In 1995, the Tai Ji softball sport passed the assessments of National Primary and Secondary School Physical Education Reform Steering Group of the State Education Commission and National College Physical Education Steering Committee. "It is recommended that it be carried out in extracurricular sports activities in universities, middle and primary schools. Schools with facilities can take Tai Ji softball as partial teaching materials for the National Traditional Physical Education in nine-year compulsory education, and gradually develop it into the school sports events .(3) Since then, Tai Ji softball has been gradually developed among the youth, but the developing rate is quit slowly. According to this situation, based on investigation and study of the factors hindering the promotion of the softball in colleges and universities, this paper takes the universities as the breakthrough point,

designs countermeasures and verifies its effectiveness and feasibility through the teaching practice of Tai Ji softball.

2 Research Objects and Methods

2.1 Research Objects

Research objects are students taking softball optional and elective courses, and softball teachers from 19 colleges and universities in Hubei Province.

2.2 Research Methods

2.2.1 Access Method

In the research process, the head of the Social Sports Center of State Physical Culture Administration, the head of the Social Sports Center of Hubei Province, the head of Obolon Softball Company, the inventor of Softball, Associate Professor Bai Rong, and the chairman of the Japanese Softball League Associate Professor Li, many softball experts and professors who participated in the International Softball exchange conference in Jinzhong, Shanxi Province, and students who participated in softball training in Hubei Province are interviewed.

2.2.2 Literature Method

The literature on Tai Ji softball has been consulted, which provides theoretical basis and reference for this thesis.

2.2.3 Questionnaire Survey Method

A questionnaire survey was conducted among students taking softball optional and elective courses, and softball teachers from 19 colleges and universities in Hubei Province. The questionnaire is either sent to research objects, or answered in person. A total of 900 questionnaires have been distributed, and 889 questionnaires have been recovered. The recovery rate is 98.78% and 881 questionnaires are valid. The effective recovery rate is 97.89%. The specific questionnaire recovery is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire recovery

Questionnaire	Distribution time	Distribution (samples)	Recovery (samples)	Recovery rate (%)	Effective (samples)	Effective rate (%)
1	2019.10	900	889	98.78	881	97.89

3 Research on Introduction of Tai Ji Softball into Public Physical Education in Colleges and Universities

Tai Ji softball courses offered by colleges and universities are in line with the spirit of the new "Outline" of the physical education curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education in August 2002, meet the needs of the modern education development, and are in line with the development trend of physical education curriculum reform in colleges and universities, conform to college students' sports values "fitness, fashion, practicality and passion", and also have practical significance for enriching physical education courses in colleges and universities.

3.1 Investigation and Analysis on Tai Ji Softball Courses offered by Colleges and Universities in Hubei Province

According to the questionnaire results: (in Table 2), colleges and universities in Wuhan, Hubei where softball courses have been provided are Wuhan University of Science and Technology, Wuhan University of Technology, Huazhong Agricultural University, Huazhong Normal University, Wuhan Institute of Physical Education, Wuhan Polytechnic University, Jiangnan University, Wuhan Vocational College, Zhongnan University of Economics and Law, Wuhan Electric Power

Vocational and Technical College, Wuhan Railway Vocational College, Wuhan Urban Construction College, Yangtze University, accounting for 68.42% of the total surveyed schools; There are 6 universities preparing to offer softball courses, including Naval University of Engineering, Wuhan University, China University of Geosciences, South-Central University for Nationalities, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, and Hankou College, accounting for 31.58% of the surveyed schools; according to the questionnaire, there are no schools that do not plan to offer softball courses. According to the questionnaire results, the sufficient conditions have been met to offer Tai Ji softball courses in colleges and universities in Hubei province. Therefore, this opportunity should be seized to vigorously publicize, promote, and develop Tai Ji softball sports to make it possible to introduce softball sports, which is typical of national characteristics and fun, into the colleges and universities' classes as soon as possible so as to enrich the physical education teaching content of colleges and universities, update and make up for the former single teaching material system (4) .

Table 2. The survey of Tai Ji softball courses offered by colleges and universities in Hubei Province

Serial number	Schools	Schools that have already offered courses	Schools that already softball	Schools ready to offer softball courses	Schools not ready to offer softball courses
1	Wuhan University of Science and Technology	★			
2	Central South University for Nationalities			●	
3	Naval Engineering University			●	
4	Huazhong University of Science and Technology			●	
5	Jiangnan University	★			
6	Wuhan Railway Vocational College	★			
7	Wuhan Institute of Physical Education	★			
8	Huazhong Normal University	★			
9	Zhongnan University of Economics and Law	★			
10	WuHan University			●	
11	Wuhan Vocational College	★			
12	Wuhan University of Technology	★			
13	Wuhan Electric Power Vocational College	★			
14	Huazhong Agricultural University	★			
15	China University of Geosciences			●	
16	Wuhan Urban Construction College	★			
17	Hankou University			●	
18	Wuhan Polytechnic University	★			
19	Yangtze University	★			
Total	19 Colleges and Universities	13 Colleges and Universities		6 Colleges and Universities	

Note: Schools that have offered softball courses are indicated by ★; schools that are going to offer softball courses are indicated by ●; schools not planning to offer softball courses are indicated by ×;

3.2 Investigation and Analysis of the Starting Time, the Number of Classes and the Number of Students taking Softball Courses in Colleges and Universities in Hubei Province

There are 12 colleges and universities in Wuhan that have offered softball elective and optional courses; the softball courses' starting time range from September 2003 to September 2019. In September 2003, Huazhong Normal University was the first university to offer Taiji softball optional course, which started the promotion and development of Taiji softball in Hubei Province. There are in total 1472 colleges and universities classes offering the elective and optional softball courses in Hubei Province and the number of students taking the softball courses is 36,800 from September 2003 to September 2019(Table 3).

Table 3. Survey of starting time of softball course, the number of softball courses, and the number of students taking softball courses in colleges and universities in Hubei Province

Serial number	School	Starting time of softball course (year / month)	The number of softball courses	The number of students taking softball courses
1	Wuhan University of Science and Technology	2006/9	256	7680
2	Wuhan University of Technology	2007/9	128	5120
3	Central China Normal University	2003/9	128	2048
4	Huazhong Agricultural University	2007/9	192	3072
5	Jiangnan University	2007/9	112	1792
6	Wuhan Electric Power Vocational College	2006/9	96	2784
7	Zhongnan University of Economics and Law	2007/9	80	2400
8	Yangtze University	2007/9	96	2304
9	Wuhan Railway Vocational College	2007/9	96	2880
10	Wuhan Polytechnic University	2009/9	80	2240
11	Wuhan Institute of Physical Education	2007/9	64	480
12	Wuhan Urban Construction College	2007/9	64	1920
13	Wenhua College	2007/9	80	2080
Total	13 Colleges and Universities	2003/9-2019/9	1472	36800

CCNU(Central China Normal University) was the first university to offer the Taiji Softball optional course in Hubei in September 2003. Up to now, Huazhong Normal University has offered 128 softball teaching classes with a total of about 2048 students, and has established the Softball Association for college students, with 687 members. Wuhan University of Science and Technology offered the Taiji softball optional and elective course in September 2006, and established the Wuhan University of Technology Taiji Softball Association in September 2007. There are currently 480 members. Since the first softball competition was held in 2007, 13 softball competitions have been successfully hosted. At present, it is the only university in China that keeps hosting softball competition for college students. So far, Wuhan University of Science and Technology has offered 256 teaching classes with a total of about 7680 students. The universities that offered softball courses in September 2007 are: Wuhan University of Technology with 128 teaching classes and 2048 students in three teaching areas ; Wuhan Institute of Physical Education with 64 teaching classes and 480 students; Yangtze University with 96 teaching classes and 2304 students; Jiangnan University with 112 teaching classes and 1792 students, Wuhan University of Urban Construction with 64 teaching classes and 1920 students, Wenhua University with 80 teaching classes and 2080 students, Wuhan Railway Vocational and Technical Colleges with 96 teaching classes and nearly 2880 students, Wuhan University of Electric Power with 96 teaching classes of and nearly 2784 students, Zhongnan University of Economics and Law with 80 teaching classes, 2,400 students in 2

teaching areas, Huazhong Agricultural University with 192 teaching classes and 3072 students, Wuhan University of Technology with 80 teaching classes and 2,240 students. According to incomplete statistics, there are currently more than 36,800 colleges and universities' students directly participating in softball courses in Hubei Province. The number of college students indirectly influenced by softball is up to 100,000, which already has formed quite a large group and scale.

Wuhan University of Science and Technology, offering the softball course at an earlier time, has the largest number of college students' participation and the largest number of softball competitions; Wuhan University of Technology and Huazhong Agricultural University, although offered softball courses later, have gained a very fast expanding speed; other colleges and universities differ greatly from these universities in numbers and class sizes, and are generally in a starting line, but with a phenomenal rising rate. This also fully shows that softball sports, although it is a new sports event, has been loved by college and university students in Hubei Province, and has also been valued by the college sports department. For colleges and universities across the country, the promotion and development of Tai Ji softball in Hubei province has taken the lead and still maintains the developing trend.

3.3 Investigation and Analysis of Softball Course Content in Colleges and Universities in Hubei Province

According to the questionnaire results, the setting of the softball courses in 13 colleges and universities in Wuhan is generally unified. The content of the softball beginners in the first and second grade mainly includes the required routines, Feilong 2 and elementary competition. At the stage of elective or optional courses, the content mainly includes the required routines, Feilong 1 and optional routine, advanced competition(in Table 4).

Table 4. Investigation and analysis of the softball course content in colleges and universities in Hubei Province

Serial number	School	The grade	Softball course content	Term arrangement of softball course content
1	Wuhan University of Science and Technology	grade 2,3,4	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 2: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines; grade3,4: competitive events, optional routines
2	Huazhong Agricultural University	grade 2	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 1and 2: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines
3	Wuhan Polytechnic University	grade 2	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 2: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines;
4	Wuhan University of Technology	grade 2	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 1,2: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines
5	Zhongnan University of Economics and Law	grade 1	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 1: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines
6	Wuhan Urban Construction	grade 1	required routine1, Feilong2,	grade 1: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines

	College		competitive events, optional routines	
7	Jiangnan University	grade 1	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 1: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines
8	Huazhong Normal University	grade 2, 3 and 4	required routine1and 2, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade1and2: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines; grade3and4: required routine3,competitive events, optional routines
9	Wenhua College	grade 1	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 1: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines
10	Wuhan Railway Vocational College	grade 1	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 1: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines
11	Yangtze University	grade 2	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade1 and 2: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines
12	Wuhan Electric Power Vocational College	grade 1	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade 1: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines
13	Wuhan Institute of Physical Education	grade4	required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines	grade3 and 4: required routine1, Feilong2, competitive events, optional routines

The number of colleges and universities in Hubei Province offering softball courses is increasing, the number of college students participating in softball sports is expanding, the contents of softball courses are unified, and the softball social influence is intensifying, which will be conducive to the healthy and sustainable development of softball in colleges and universities.

3.4 Investigation and Analysis of the Softball Content Selected by College students in Hubei Province

Table 5. A survey of college students' choice of softball practice in Hubei Province

Gender	Number	Competitive events	Individual optional routines	Collective optional routines	Required routines
male	451	421	321	258	234
female	430	224	345	411	395
total	881	645	666	669	629
% of males		93.35	71.18	57.21	51.88
% of females		52.09	80.23	95.58	91.86
males' % of the total number	51.19	47.79	36.44	29.28	26.56
females' % of the total number	48.81	25.43	39.16	46.65	44.84

According to the questionnaire results, there were 881 valid questionnaires, 451 males, accounting for 51.19%, 430 females, accounting for 48.81%. There are 421 male choosing the softball competitive events, accounting for 93.35% of the total number of 451 boys and 47.79% of the total number of 881 candidates. There are 321 males choosing individual optional routines, accounting for 71.18% of the number of male students, and 36.44% of the total number of 881 candidates. There are 258 males choosing collective optional routines, accounting for 57.21% of the number of boys and 29.28% of the total number of 881 candidates. There are 234 male choosing the required routines, accounting for 51.88% of the number of boys and 26.56% of the total number of 881 candidates. There are 224 females choosing the competitive events, accounting for 52.09% of the total number of females, and 25.43% of the total number 881 candidates. There are 345 females choosing individual optional routines, accounting for 80.23% of the number of girls and 39.16% of the total number 881 candidates. There are 411 females choosing collective optional routines, accounting for 95.58% of the number of girls and 46.65% of the total number of 881 candidates. There are 395 females choosing the required routines, accounting for 91.868% of the number of girls and 44.84% of the total number of 881 candidates. There are great differences in the selection of softball practice content between males and females. There are more boys liking competitive routines than girls, and more girls liking optional routines than boys. This also shows that boys like intense formal sports that fully express themselves, while girls like gentle and collective sports.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 The introduction of a new type of sports event Tai Ji softball which is featured with buffer catch and national characteristics into physical education classes in colleges and universities, can enrich college physical education teaching content, update and makes up for the former single teaching material system, and form a diversified and personalized, characteristic and flexible teaching material system, which is the current demand for the reform of physical education curriculum in colleges and universities.

4.2 The curriculum being unified, the teaching content being consistent, college and university students being fond of the softball sports, more and more colleges and universities offering the softball courses, the social influence being significant, show that Tai Ji softball has met the requirements of being introduced into physical education in colleges and universities

4.3 Introducing the softball sport into colleges and universities will help enrich college students' extra-curricular cultural life, spread and popularize national sports, promote and develop the national sports spirit.

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