Research on the Current Situation of Leadership Skills of Students Majoring in Physical Education—Take Yingtan City, Jiangxi Province as an Example

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Abstract

Leadership refers to the ability of individuals to fully tap available resources, lead others or cooperate with them to achieve their own or organizational common goals or visions. It is a combination of individual cognition, personality and social abilities, and a very important ability for individuals to develop themselves and adapt to the needs of society and life. It belongs to the discipline category of management, and has always been the research focus of organizational behavior, leadership and related disciplines. After in the college, students majoring in physical education have more free time and are more energetic than they did in middle school, which will lay a foundation for colleges and universities to carry out leadership training. As a national task and mission to cultivate high-quality social talents, colleges and universities also have this extremely important practical sense to improve their leadership of college students. This paper will through investigation and research to analyze the current situation of leadership skill of students majoring in physical education and provides reference for training and improving their leadership.

Keywords

Physical education, students, leadership, current situation

1. Literature Review

At present, there are many studies on leadership abroad, and the research theories and methods are relatively mature. Some foreign schools have carried out the training of students' leadership in teaching, and have made some achievements, such as the Research on the Leadership Training of Gifted Students in American Primary and Secondary Schools (Sui Minfang, 2007), the Development of Leaders in the Classroom (Owen, 2007), the Development of Leadership in Routine Classroom Activities (Hay & Dumpsters, 2006), etc. These studies show that class training can help students understand and improve leadership.

In China, the research on leadership is still in its infancy, but many researchers have realized the possibility of cultivating adolescent leadership through education and training and began to carry out leadership education with college students as the main body. Some scholars have studied the feasibility of integrating leadership development into curriculum teaching. Owen, Sui Minfang and other scholars believe that teachers can help students understand and strengthen their leadership potential in any form of courses by means of service learning, group cooperative learning and instilling leadership knowledge in teaching. That is to say, students can understand and master certain leadership skills.
and knowledge in course teaching.

Some studies believe that physical education in colleges and universities can improve students' learning ability and educational ability, shape students' decision-making ability and action ability, and cultivate students' organizational ability and charisma (Yu Wen, 2017). Physical education in colleges and universities is an effective way for students' leadership education and training (Carlsonh & Hastie, 1997; Winther, 1988; Gerdes, 2001; Lu Deping, 2008).

2. Significance of the Study

The early leadership theory believed that leaders were born and leadership was innate, ignoring the impact of environment, family, society, education level, economic income and other factors on it. With the deepening of discipline research, more and more scholars put forward that "leadership is not the patent of a few leaders, but everyone has it" (Kouzes & Ponser, 1998), which can be obtained through training and learning.

The development of leadership is a long-term and gradual process, which should be carried out as soon as possible, but the adolescence is a formative period. To help young people have a better future, leadership must become the core of developing their competence (Ricketts & Rudd, 2002). For college students, this stage is a "transition period" from immature to mature. Their body and mind begin to develop rapidly and fluctuate greatly, especially in emotion, attitude, behavior, self-employment, interpersonal relationship and sense of responsibility. It is undoubtedly the best and key time for leadership development that they begin to form their personality and are willing to try new things and learn skills (Martinek & Hellison, 2006). Weng Wenyan believes that the cultivation of college students' leadership is of great significance to the national cultural construction and the construction of a positive social civilization; Taosiliang believes that leadership, as the core of students' comprehensive quality, has been a high-profile issue, so the university has the mission and responsibility to cultivate students' leadership; Lixiujuan believes that the fundamental purpose of leadership education for college students is to arouse the awareness of active leadership among college students. By encouraging college students to participate in social and public affairs, they can lead the society to make positive changes, so that students can feel the value of their own existence in the process of participating in service and dedication. According to the above theory, the university stage is the key period to cultivate and improve the leadership of students majoring in physical education. This study provides decision-making reference by analyzing and research their existing leadership level and ability.

3. Objects and methods of the study

3.1 Research Design

This paper utilized the descriptive comparative type of research. According to Jackson (2019), this type of research describes and interprets the conditions that exists, the practices that prevail, the processes that are going on, the effects that are being felt or the trends that are developing in a particular setting.

A qualitative method will also be utilized by conducting a one-on-one interview with selected physical education teachers who are directly connected to the student respondents.

3.2 Research Participants

100 college students studying in Yingtan city, Jiangxi province, China will be chosen using the purposive sampling method to get the representatives of the cross sections of the student population. And 30 physical education teachers will answer the survey questionnaire prepared for them. Out of these 30 teachers, the researcher will select 10 for the focus group discussion.

3.3 Research Instrument

This paper will be using two sets of researcher-made questionnaires modified from the Leadership Styles Questionnaire developed by Centenary College of Louisiana, a private liberal arts college in Louisiana USA. And the Leadership Skills Questionnaire from the book Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and Practice by Peter G. Northouse. The questionnaire includes four parts: Profile, decision making skills, interpersonal skills, and conceptual skills. It purposes to seek the self-assessment of the students' leadership skills and the assessment of the physical education teachers on their leadership capabilities.

4. Questionnaire results

4.1 Student Questionnaire Results

In this study, 100 student questionnaires were distributed, and 100 valid questionnaires recovered. Among these in-
terviewed students, 3 were 16-18 years old, accounting for 3%; 90 were aged 19-21, accounting for 90%; seven were aged 22-24, accounting for 7%. There are 78 males, accounting for 78% of the total number, and 22 females, accounting for 22%. One student is on grade 1, accounting for 1%, 82 on second grade, accounting for 82%, and 17 on third grade, accounting for 17% of the total.

From the questionnaire results, young students are confident at their leadership skills, in terms of decision making skills, 99% of respondents strongly agree or agree they can remain calm when they have to make decisions very quickly; All interviewed students strongly agree or agree they can give decisions governed by their ideas regardless of practical difficulties, considered various options in terms of a specified goal, double check their information sources to be sure that they have the right facts before making decisions, look for something better even if have found a course of action that is just about OK, and work out all the pros and cons before making a decision.

In terms of personal skills, 92% of the surveyed students strongly agree or agree they can usually know ahead of time how people will respond to a new idea or proposal. 96% respondents strongly agree or agree they understand that the social fabric of the organization is very important, and believe the key to successful conflict resolution is affecting my counterpart. 99% of respondents strongly agree or agree they can sense the emotional undercurrents in my group. 98% of students strongly agree or agree they can use their emotional energy to motivate others, and can work hard to find complaints in conflict situations.

In terms of conceptual skills, 98% of respondents strongly agree or agree they are effective at problem solving, and they can flexibly about making changes in our organization. 95% of people strongly agree or agree they are immediately responding to address problems when they are agree. 97% of students strongly agree or agree they see the big pictures come easily for them, and enjoy discussing organizational values and philosophy. 96% strongly agree or agree they happy making strategic plans for my organization.

### 4.2 Teacher Questionnaire Results

A total of 30 teacher questionnaires were distributed and 30 valid questionnaires had being recovered. Among the teachers’ respondents, there are 21 male, accounting for 70% of the total number, and 9 female, accounting for 30%. Among them, 6 people are aged 20-29, accounting for 20% of the total. 12 are aged 30-39, accounting for 40, 10 are aged 40-49, accounting for 33.33%, and 2 are aged over 50, accounting for 6.67% of the total.

In general, teachers also evaluated students positively, but there are still some differences compared with students' self evaluation. Strongly Agree (which represents a higher score) and Agree, are between 80% and 95%, and even Strongly Disagree, which represents a negative score, appears. This shows that, on the one hand, our students major in PE already have a high level on leadership skills, on the other hand, their leadership level has room for further improvement.

In terms of decision making, 93.33% of respondents strongly agree or agree their PE students can remain calm when they have to make decisions very quickly, and will double check their information sources to be sure they have the right facts before making decisions. 86.67% strongly agree or agree students could give decisions governed by their ideas regulations of practical difficulties, and can union considered variety options in terms of a specified goal. 96.67% strongly agree or agree their students will look for something better even if they have found a course of action that is just about OK. 90% of the teachers interviewed strongly agree or agree students will work out all the pros and cons before making a decision.

In terms of interpersonal skills, 85.33% of teachers strongly agree or agree their students have known ahead of time how people will respond to a new idea or proposal. 76.67% strongly agree or agree their students are the one who understand that the social fabric of the organization is very important. 86.67% of respondents strongly agree or agree their students can sense the emotional undercurrents in their organization, and would use emotional energy to motivate others. 90% of teachers strongly agree or agree their students know the key to successful conflict resolution is reviewing counterpart, and can work hard to find concerns in conflict situations.

In terms of conceptual skills, 86.67 respondents strongly agree or agree their students were effective at problem solving, enjoy making strategic plans for their organization, and happy to discuss organizational values and philosophy. 90% of teachers strongly agree or agree their students can respond to address problems when they come, and can flexibly about making changes in their organization. 80% strongly agree or agree their students can see the big pictures come easily for them.

In addition, through interviews, researcher found that students be willing actively improve their leadership level by taking part in community activities, class cadres and social practice activities, but they rarely received systematic support, such as systematic leadership courses, leadership training and providing more practical opportunities from school administrators and teachers.
5. Recommendations

Studies by many scholars have shown that structured curriculum and experiential learning are effective ways to improve students' leadership, provide adolescents with situational support that endows them with real leadership roles or opportunities, can effectively develop students' leadership. In addition, the effect of cultivating students' leadership in collective activities is better. Guiding students to reflect and review after the event can help teenagers conduct self-assessment and enhance their perception and transfer of learned skills. Although there are few studies and papers on cultivating students' leadership in physical education, but combine the questionnaire results and interview records, this study believes Embed the following activities into the class of students majoring in physical education, providing them some experience and situational experience of being a leader and being led in physical education undoubtedly has a strong positive effect on the cultivation of students' leadership.

5.1 Sports games

Playing games in the physical education class can improve students' interest and activate the class atmosphere. It is a good platform to cultivate students' abilities. The competitive nature of the game and the mode of punishment for losers will force students to unite, communicate, exchange and discuss skills, and imperceptibly improve students' abilities of organization, communication, decision-making and team awareness. These abilities are exactly important factors in leadership development.

5.2 Acting as teaching assistants in turn

Leaders' practical experience is an effective means to cultivate students' leadership. In physical education, teachers can completely complete non-professional teaching links by students themselves, provide students with situational experience of being a leader and being led, and let students practice their leadership skills and strategies in group interaction. In addition, the object of the task assignment should not be fixed but should take turns to practice so as to involve as many students as possible. These activities include but are not limited to gathering, forming teams, helping teachers manage equipment, serving as the group leader of group exercises, and even leading students to carry out warm-up exercises and relaxation activities. In order to improve the effectiveness of these activities on students' leadership training, teachers should also guide students to make teaching plans and carry out simulations one week in advance, and organize students to review and reflect after class.

5.3 Set an example

On the one hand, teenagers are in the stage of building self-awareness through observing, imitating and learning from others. As student leaders, teachers should pay attention to their quality construction, improve their leadership ability, and become an example for students to learn and imitate. On the other hand, teachers should be good at discovering the advantages and brilliant performances of different students, timely praise and encourage them to enhance their courage and self-confidence. These two points are also important factors affecting the level of individual leadership.

5.4 Timely evaluation and positive reflection

It is very important to obtain feedback from the facilitator for the consolidation of leadership behavior and the improvement of leadership skills. As a teacher, we should timely evaluate students' performance in classroom activities and encourage them to show leadership skills and abilities, which can play a positive role in strengthening and improving the possibility of repeated sending of these behaviors; by criticizing misconduct, students can correct their mistakes. In addition, due to the limitations of students' understanding, they are not always able to correctly evaluate their own performance, which requires teachers to lead these students to review and reflect after class, point out their deficiencies in organization and management, and help them improve their leadership skills and abilities.

References


