

Research on Issues and Development Strategies of Home-School-Community Integrated Physical Education Under the Educational Alliance Framework in China

Jingjing Zhou¹

¹ School of Physical Education, Shenzhen University, Shenzhen, Guangdong, China

Correspondence: Jingjing Zhou, School of Physical Education, Shenzhen University, Shenzhen, Guangdong, China.

doi:10.56397/RAE.2024.12.04

Abstract

Against the backdrop of China's current educational reform and the rapid development of its sports sector, the integrated development of "home-school-community" physical education within the framework of the "educational alliance" offers a new pathway for enhancing the quality of sports education and improving national physical fitness. Using literature review and logical analysis as research methods, this study identifies the existing issues in the integrated development of "home-school-community" physical education, including imbalanced resource allocation, incomplete collaboration mechanisms, insufficient awareness of physical education. Development strategies are proposed, such as Integrating Multi-Party Sports Resources, Establishing a Robust Collaborative Mechanism, and Enhancing Awareness of Home-School-Community Integrated Development in Physical Education.

Keywords: educational alliance, home-school-community sports integration, physical education, development strategies, resource integration

1. Introduction

In recent years, China has been steadily advancing educational reform, aiming to comprehensively promote the holistic development of students and improve educational quality. Within this framework, quality-oriented education has emerged as the mainstream direction of reform, with physical education, as a crucial component of quality-oriented education, receiving increasing attention. Against this backdrop, the concept of home-school-community collaboration in education has gained momentum, fostering closer partnerships among families, schools, and communities in the educational process.

The collaborative approach to youth physical education involving "home-school-community" aims to achieve the holistic development of young people by using physical exercise as the primary means. It seeks to coordinate all available physical education resources from families, schools, and communities to implement comprehensive, multi-actor, and multi-form sports activities.

In September 2024, China's Ministry of Education, in collaboration with seventeen other departments, jointly issued the "Educational Alliance" Work Plan for Home-School-Community Collaborative Education. This plan provides guidelines for the comprehensive establishment of an educational alliance that promotes collaboration between families, schools, and communities. The plan emphasizes government oversight, departmental coordination, school leadership, family responsibility, and societal participation to enhance the collaborative education system, fostering a stronger atmosphere for the holistic development and healthy growth of students.

As a new organizational form in education, the educational alliance model has become an essential platform for

delivering quality-oriented education in the new era. However, in advancing home-school-community collaboration for physical education, numerous challenges persist. This study systematically examines and categorizes the issues encountered in China's practice of collaborative physical education, summarizes relevant practical experiences, and proposes targeted strategies. The goal is to provide insights and recommendations for the high-quality development of youth physical education in China.

2. Conceptual Definitions

2.1 Educational Alliance

The educational alliance is a collaborative working approach aimed at fostering the healthy and happy growth of primary and secondary school students. It places schools at the center, regions as the main organizational units, and resources as the connecting link to promote effective collaboration among families, schools, and communities. In September 2024, the Ministry of Education, together with the Central Publicity Department, the Central Cyberspace Administration, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the National Health Commission, the State Administration for Market Regulation, the National Cultural Heritage Administration, the National Fire and Rescue Administration, the State Council Working Committee on Women and Children, the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, the All-China Women's Federation, the China Care for the Next Generation Working Committee, and the China Association for Science and Technology, jointly issued the Work Plan for the Educational Alliance of Home-School-Community Collaborative Education. This plan guides regions across China to comprehensively establish educational alliances, ensuring improved coordination mechanisms involving government oversight, departmental collaboration, school leadership, family responsibility, and societal participation. The aim is to create a more conducive atmosphere for the holistic development and healthy growth of students. By 2025, 50% of counties are expected to establish educational alliances, with full implementation across all counties by 2027.

2.2 Home-School-Community Collaborative Education Mechanism

The United States has been a pioneer in promoting home-school-community collaborative education. Over the past 30 years, American research and practical efforts have focused on uniting families, schools, and communities to collectively support the health and well-being of youth. ¹Families and communities possess abundant human and material resources that can enhance and extend the functions of school-based physical education, thereby supporting the achievement of overall educational goals. China's home-school-community collaborative education mechanism highlights the active role of all participating entities in system building and service provision. It emphasizes shifting family education from a private domain to a public one, integrating multi-actor resources, and ensuring service equality, public welfare, and accessibility. As an innovative educational mechanism, the home-school-community collaborative approach provides a clear developmental direction for youth physical education in China.

2.3 The Relationship Between the "Educational Alliance" and Home-School-Community Sports Integration

The educational alliance, as a new educational organizational form and developmental model, injects fresh vitality and momentum into the advancement of physical education. Within the framework of the educational alliance, the integrated development of home-school-community sports will emerge as a critical trend and direction for the future of physical education. By deeply exploring and integrating educational resources from families, schools, and society, a more comprehensive and efficient physical education system can be established, laying a solid foundation for the sustained and healthy development of physical education. The relationship between the educational alliance and home-school-community sports integration is profound and multidimensional. These two concepts not only complement each other in principle but also exhibit significant synergistic effects in practice.

At the conceptual level, the educational alliance advocates for resource sharing, complementary strengths, and collaborative development, aligning closely with the principles of home-school-community sports integration, which emphasizes close cooperation and mutual promotion. Both approaches aim to break the constraints of traditional educational models, seeking more open and diversified educational pathways. In the field of physical education, both recognize that a single educational entity cannot fully shoulder the responsibility of comprehensively cultivating students' physical literacy. Therefore, the active participation and collaboration of families, schools, and society are necessary.

At the practical level, the educational alliance provides robust platform support for home-school-community sports integration. Through the alliance, schools and educational institutions can more efficiently share resources, including sports facilities, teaching materials, and professional teaching staff. The optimized allocation of these resources not only enhances the quality and effectiveness of school-based physical education but also creates more opportunities and conveniences for families and communities to participate in physical

education.

3. Identification of Issues in the Development of Home-School-Community Integrated Physical Education

3.1 Imbalanced Resource Allocation

In the current process of advancing home-school-community integrated physical education in China, imbalanced resource allocation remains a central issue that urgently needs to be addressed.

At the school level, the gap in sports resources between urban and rural areas is particularly pronounced. Urban schools benefit from significant advantages in terms of sports facilities, venues, and teaching staff, while rural schools often face a shortage of sports venues, outdated facilities, and insufficient physical education teachers. These limitations severely restrict students' opportunities for comprehensive participation in physical activities.²

At the family level, traditional perceptions of physical education remain deeply rooted, and parental support for sports is relatively low. Many parents' support for physical activities is largely conceptual, lacking the motivation and enthusiasm for active participation. Additionally, most parents lack basic sports skills, making it difficult for them to provide guidance or training in physical activities, resulting in insufficient practical support for the home-school-community integration of physical education. Moreover, disparities arise due to factors such as family economic conditions, parental awareness, and educational levels. While some families can provide their children with abundant extracurricular sports resources, others are unable to actively participate due to constraints in time, finances, or understanding.

At the community level, slow progress in constructing community sports facilities, insufficient sports equipment, and low utilization rates of existing sports spaces continue to constrain the scale of home-school-community physical education integration. These challenges fail to meet the growing demand for post-school sports services. Furthermore, the persistent illegal occupation and misuse of public sports venues result in the waste and underutilization of these resources, exacerbating the conflict between the availability of sports facilities and the increasing demand for exercise spaces.

Thus, the lack of accessible sports venues remains the primary constraint on the development of home-school-community integrated physical education.

3.2 Inadequate Collaboration Mechanism

School-based physical education, family-based physical education, and community-based physical education are closely interconnected and indispensable. School physical education serves as the core, family physical education acts as a necessary supplement, and community physical education functions as an effective extension. However, the current educational resources of schools, families, and communities remain relatively fragmented, often operating independently in a "single-combat" mode. This fragmentation leads to resource dispersion and redundancy, hindering the deep integration of educational resources.

First, at the level of collaborative goals, schools, families, and communities lack unified objectives in physical education. Each entity operates independently, failing to form a cohesive synergy. As a result, the roles of these three entities in physical education are not fully realized, leading to resource fragmentation and low efficiency.

Second, there is a lack of a coordination structure. Under the educational alliance framework, effective collaboration among schools, families, and communities requires a dedicated coordination body to oversee overall planning, resource allocation, and supervision. However, these entities belong to different administrative systems, with unclear relationships and boundaries of responsibilities. This ambiguity makes it difficult to establish a collaborative model of home-school-community physical education.

Without a robust collaboration mechanism, the integration of resources and the formation of a comprehensive physical education system are constrained, limiting the effectiveness of home-school-community cooperation in school physical education.

3.3 Insufficient Awareness of Physical Education

At the family level, families play a critical role in cultivating youth sports talent. However, misconceptions about physical education are prevalent among parents. Many parents place excessive emphasis on academic achievement while neglecting the physical and mental health development of adolescents. Their understanding of physical education remains fragmented, often viewing it as a mere supplement to school curricula rather than as an integral component of students' holistic development. This cognitive bias leads to a lack of sufficient attention and support for children's participation in sports, hindering the in-depth development of school-based physical education. Consequently, the crucial role of physical education in improving students' mental health, social skills, and overall competencies is often overlooked.

At the school level, despite being a formal part of the curriculum, physical education has long held a marginal status. This has directly contributed to its devaluation, exclusion, and encroachment by various stakeholders.

Although physical education has been incorporated into the high school entrance exam (Zhongkao) and is expected to play a role in the college entrance exam (Gaokao), entrenched traditional views on physical education persist. As a result, the replacement or marginalization of physical education classes remains a frequent occurrence.

At the community level, the role of physical education is often unclear. As an important extension and complement to school-based physical education, the scientific organization and effectiveness of community sports activities directly influence the outcomes of school physical education.³ However, community sports programs often offer limited activities, and there is a notable lack of professional sports instructors. Furthermore, public understanding of physical education varies significantly, with sports stigmatization occasionally emerging.

These cognitive biases among families, schools, and communities create significant barriers to fostering home-school-community collaboration in physical education. Insufficient awareness directly impacts the quality of organized sports activities and reduces student participation and engagement outcomes.

4. Development Strategies

4.1 Integrating Multi-Party Sports Resources

The ultimate goal of developing home-school-community sports integration is to establish a comprehensive sports development model centered on school-based physical education, supplemented by family-based physical activities, and extended through community sports. This integrated approach aims to address the practical issues among various entities in building a cohesive sports community. To tackle the issue of imbalanced resource allocation, efforts must be made to enhance the integration and sharing of sports resources across families, schools, and communities.

Theoretically, integrating and promoting the interconnection and combined utilization of sports resources within families, schools, and communities would create a well-functioning sports environment system. However, in practice, the sports environment is complex, with challenges such as resource shortages and systemic disconnections. These issues hinder the formation of a resource aggregation platform, leading to fragmentation.

To address this, it is recommended to establish a resource integration platform and innovate the supply model of sports resources. By developing a regional sports resource information-sharing platform, the physical education facilities, teaching staff, and activity information from schools, families, and communities can be integrated to facilitate resource interconnectivity.⁴ Additionally, a specialized “Educational Alliance” coordination agency should be established to conduct unified planning and management of resources, avoiding resource waste and redundant construction.

Through this platform, sports service resources can be systematically coordinated and allocated. The service targets, content areas, implementation carriers, and applicable scopes of various resources should be clearly defined. A comprehensive sports resource inventory involving families, schools, and communities should be developed to enhance accessibility and the rational distribution of resources.

Efforts should also focus on balancing regional resources by prioritizing support for rural areas and resource-deficient schools, particularly in facility construction and equipment upgrades, to narrow the urban-rural gap. Furthermore, the development of digital platforms should be accelerated to empower resource sharing through technology. Leveraging Internet of Things and big data technologies, the usage of resources can be monitored and managed in real time, improving allocation efficiency. This includes enabling the reservation of sports facilities, the deployment of teaching staff, and the sharing of activity information, ensuring precise resource matching to meet actual needs.

4.2 Establishing a Robust Collaborative Mechanism

At present, there is a power-responsibility imbalance among the governing entities. Schools continue to bear the majority of educational responsibilities, while community sports face a “high responsibility but low authority” dilemma between supply and demand. Issues such as unclear responsibility boundaries, uneven distribution of rights and benefits, and limited participation of families, communities, and other social organizations have hindered the formation of a cohesive educational force, ultimately impacting the effectiveness of holistic education. To address this, it is necessary to clarify the power-responsibility relationships among families, schools, and communities to enhance the overall effectiveness of collaborative education.⁵

First, the roles, goals, and responsibilities of the three entities must be clearly defined within the educational alliance framework. It is recommended that a collaborative division of labor be refined through consultation: schools should focus on teaching and organizing activities, families should emphasize cultivating exercise habits, and communities should enhance resource investment and provide opportunities for practical sports activities. This will establish a harmonious, complementary, and interactive relationship among the three entities.

Second, a three-party coordination platform should be developed. Under the educational alliance framework, establishing regional sports development coordination centers is suggested. These centers would take charge of planning key responsibilities for collaborative physical education, resource allocation, and supervision.

Third, a long-term communication mechanism must be constructed. Regular joint meetings should be held to provide a platform for schools, families, and communities to exchange ideas. Discussions should focus on the progress of physical education implementation, existing problems, and directions for improvement.

Finally, a supervision and evaluation mechanism needs to be established to foster strong partnerships among families, schools, and communities.⁶ To measure the effectiveness of collaboration, the comprehensive development of youth should serve as a key criterion. A scientific and holistic evaluation system should be constructed based on policy implementation, resource utilization, participation levels in activities, and educational outcomes.

Dynamic evaluation and adjustment mechanisms should also be introduced. Policies should be regularly assessed, and adjustments to priorities and directions should be made based on evaluation results. Third-party institutions should be encouraged to conduct independent supervision, fulfilling their role in monitoring, evaluating, and providing diagnostic feedback to optimize the collaborative education mechanism.

4.3 Enhancing Awareness of Home-School-Community Integrated Development in Physical Education

Due to the limited awareness of home-school-community collaborative education among parents and community members, coupled with long-standing misconceptions about school-based physical education, challenges such as the marginalization of physical education by schoolteachers, parental focus on children's intellectual development, and community administrators' neglect of family-based physical activities have arisen.

At the parental level, raising awareness of the importance of physical education is crucial. Schools can organize parent-teacher meetings, specialized lectures, and workshops to emphasize the significance of physical education. These efforts can help parents establish a scientific understanding of physical education and recognize its role as a fundamental component of their children's holistic development.

At the school level, ensuring the high-quality delivery of physical education classes is essential. Schools should address and shift traditional attitudes toward physical education among principals and teachers, reinforcing the importance of physical education as an integral part of school curricula rather than a marginal subject.

At the community level, the role of the community in physical education must be clearly defined. Under the educational alliance framework, communities should formulate clear development plans for sports education. These plans should effectively align community sports activities with school physical education goals. Additionally, communities need to balance the relationship between the broader "community collective" and the "individual family unit", understanding the physical education needs of families and providing better infrastructure and services for family-based physical activities.

Efforts should also be made to integrate community spaces and resources that can be utilized for sports and exercise. Facilities suitable for both adolescents and families should be developed, considering the physical development needs of young people. Moreover, communities should strengthen the promotion of sports awareness and actively encourage family participation in physical activities, fostering a supportive environment for physical education.

References

- EPSTEIN JL, SHELDON S B., (2019). The importance of evaluating programs of school, family and community partnerships. *Aula Abierta*, 48(1), 31-4.
- Joyce L. Epstein, (2010, Summer). Teamwork is the key: The National Network of Partnership Schools. *National Civic Review*, 99(2), 21-29. Available from: Business Source Complete.
- KEHM R, DAVEY C S, NANNEY M S., (2015). The Role of Family and Community Involvement in the Development and Implementation of School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy. *J Sch Health*, 85(2), 90-99.
- REN T, YAN J, SUN Q., (2021). Sociodemographic Correlates of Organized Sports Participation in a Sample of Middle School Students in China. *Front Public Health*, 9.
- TITIZ H, TOKEL A., (2015). Parents' expectations from teachers and school administrators regarding school-family cooperation development. *International Journal on New Trends in Education & Their Implications (IJONTE)*, 6(2), 172-186.
- WANG J, WU S, CHEN X, et al., (2024). Impact of awareness of sports policies, school, family, and community environmental on physical activity and fitness among children and adolescents: a structural equation modeling study. *Bmc Public Health*, 24(1).

-
- ¹ Joyce L. Epstein, (2010, Summer). Teamwork is the key: The National Network of Partnership Schools. *National Civic Review*, 99(2), 21-29. Available from: Business Source Complete.
- ² REN T, YAN J, SUN Q., (2021). Sociodemographic Correlates of Organized Sports Participation in a Sample of Middle School Students in China. *Front Public Health*, 9.
- ³ TITIZ H, TOKEL A., (2015). Parents' expectations from teachers and school administrators regarding school-family cooperation development. *International Journal on New Trends in Education & Their Implications (IJONTE)*, 6(2), 172-186.
- ⁴ KEHM R, DAVEY C S, NANNEY M S., (2015). The Role of Family and Community Involvement in the Development and Implementation of School Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy. *J Sch Health*, 85(2), 90-99.
- ⁵ WANG J, WU S, CHEN X, et al., (2024). Impact of awareness of sports policies, school, family, and community environmental on physical activity and fitness among children and adolescents: a structural equation modeling study. *Bmc Public Health*, 24(1).
- ⁶ EPSTEIN JL, SHELDON S B., (2019). The importance of evaluating programs of school, family and community partnerships. *Aula Abierta*, 48(1), 31-4.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).