



The current contents and approaches to conduct extracurricular physical activities for lower secondary school students in Can Tho city

Tran Quang Nhut¹, Nguyen Quang Vinh²

¹ Thoi Lai Junior High School, Can Tho, Vietnam

² Ho Chi Minh City University of Physical Education and Sport, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam

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Abstract

In order to present reliable, scientific, and comprehensive information regarding the current contents and approaches of conducting extracurricular physical activities (EPA) for lower secondary school students in Can Tho City, the authors employed several methods including synthesizing documents, interviewing students, and evaluating gathered data. The findings revealed that students enjoy a wide range of extracurricular sports related to volleyball, athletics, football, badminton, shuttlecock kicking, chess, and table tennis; but dislike martial arts and basketball. Moreover, most of their extracurricular sports practice are now held in sports clubs without instructors, lasting 30 minutes to 1 hour (equal to 1 training session), taking place at schools, with training periods in the afternoon and monthly expenses ranging from 50,000VND to 100,000VND.

Keywords: contents, approaches, extracurricular physical activities (EPA), lower secondary school students, Can Tho city

Introduction

Physical education (PE) and physical training activities in secondary schools have gained much importance in recent years, contributing to the achievement of the goal of raising people's knowledge, fostering human resources, and training talents for the country to meet the needs of innovation in socio-economic development. It is needless to say that the young generation is the country's future owners, shouldering the Fatherland's fate and always doing their best to achieve a high level of political and cultural education, higher mental and physical strength, higher moral qualities with a desire to contribute to the nation's construction and defense. Thus, the purpose of PE in schools is to help students accomplish their physical development goals, enhance their fitness, and contribute to the improvement of the training and education process in which one of the main factors contributing to the consolidation and growth of physical education's performance is the organization of extracurricular activities.

The Ministry of Education and Training has regulated extracurricular physical education and sports activities for lower secondary school pupils, which must run concurrently with the main physical education curriculum. This effort, however, is mainly focused on schools in Ho Chi Minh City. Can Tho province, on the other hand, has received little attention, funding, and promotion. Recognizing the significance of PE curriculum in Can Tho City's secondary schools, particularly the contents and approaches to extracurricular sports, the authors decided to write this paper with the hope to provide comprehensive information about the aforesaid issues:

"The current contents and approaches of conducting extracurricular physical activities for lower secondary school students in Can Tho City"

The research is written to give accurate, scientific, and thorough information on the current contents and manners of conducting EPA for Can Tho City's seventh-grade students. The methodology includes document synthesis and analysis, questionnaires, interviews, and statistical analysis.

Participants

- 15 experts, specialists, lecturers, and administrators; 07 PE teachers;
- 491 students (256 schoolboys and 235 schoolgirls) at the seventh grade of Thoi Lai secondary school, Thoi Lai district, Can Tho City

Research Results and Discussions

Determining the assessment criteria

A scientific and thorough assessment criterion is necessary to appropriately analyze the existing status of contents and approaches to EPA for lower secondary school students in Can Tho City. The following processes were employed to derive the assessment criteria in the article:

Step 1: Consult with specialists and choose the assessment criteria based on the authors' own expertise and experience.

Step 2: Prepare a questionnaire and interview 15 persons in Can Tho, including 04 administrators, 09 specialists, and 02 PE experts, with two options for agreeing or disagreeing, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of the interview regarding the assessment criteria of the current contents and approaches to EPA for lower secondary school students in Can Tho City

Number	Criteria	Result	
		Votes of agreement	%age
1	Evaluate students' fitness in accordance with Ministry of Education and Training norms (Decision 53/2008/BGDĐT)	15	100
2	Number of students participating in school extracurricular activities	15	100
3	Number of students participating in school sports tournaments	14	93.33
4	Number of school sports teams and extracurricular sports clubs	15	100
5	Achievements of school sports teams	13	86.67

According to Table 1, the authors decided to select the criterion that had gained above 80% agreement of experts. Hence, five criteria were chosen to evaluate the current contents and approaches to conduct EPA for lower high school students in Can Tho City.

Criterion 1: Evaluate students' fitness in accordance with Ministry of Education and Training norms (Decision 53/2008/BGDĐT)

Criterion 2: Number of students participating in school extracurricular activities

Criterion 3: Number of students participating in school sports tournaments

Criterion 4: Number of school sports teams and extracurricular sports clubs

Criterion 5: Achievements of school sports teams

Evaluation of the contents and approaches to EPA for lower secondary school students in Can Tho City

To have a precise view of the contents and ways of arranging EPA, the article used the 05 criteria described above and the questionnaire interview technique to conduct a survey of 491 students and referred to the fitness assessment tests at the end of the school year (according to regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training). Table 2 shows statistics about the genders of 491 seventh-grade students and their frequency of attending EPA.

Table 2: Students' frequency of attending EPA by gender (n = 491)

Frequency	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Often	39	7.94	12	2.44	51	10.39
Sometimes	65	13.24	62	12.63	127	25.87
Total	104	21.18	74	15.07	178	36.25
Never	152	30.96	161	32.79	313	63.75
Total	256	52.14	235	47.86	491	100

The data in Table 2 shows

Overall, 491 students participated in the survey; in which there are 256 schoolboys, accounting for 52.14%, and 235 schoolgirls, accounting for 47.86%.

Table 3: Statistics of the number of students participating in groups, sports clubs, teams, sports, and physical fitness tournaments of lower secondary school students in Can Tho City

Criterion		Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Teams	Sports	(5) Athletics, shuttlecock kicking, table tennis, chess, volleyball	
	N of students	59	12.02
Clubs	Sports	(4) Volleyball, football, track and field, badminton	
	N of students	49	9.98
School sports teams	Sports	(5) Football, athletics, badminton, shuttlecock kicking, table tennis	
	N of students	45	9.16

Among 491 students, 178 students (36.25%) participate in extracurricular sports (104 male students account for 21.18% and 74 female students account for 15.07%), whereas 313 students (63.75%) do not. Frequent participation in extracurricular sports has 51 students, accounting for 10.39% (39 male students account for 7.94% and 12 female ones account for 2.44%); Sometimes participating in extracurricular sports has 127 students, accounting for 25.87% (152 male students account for 30.96% and 161 female students account for 32.79% (65 boys accounted for 13.24% and 62 girls accounted for 12.63%). Figure 1 depicts the percentage of students who participate in extracurricular sports.

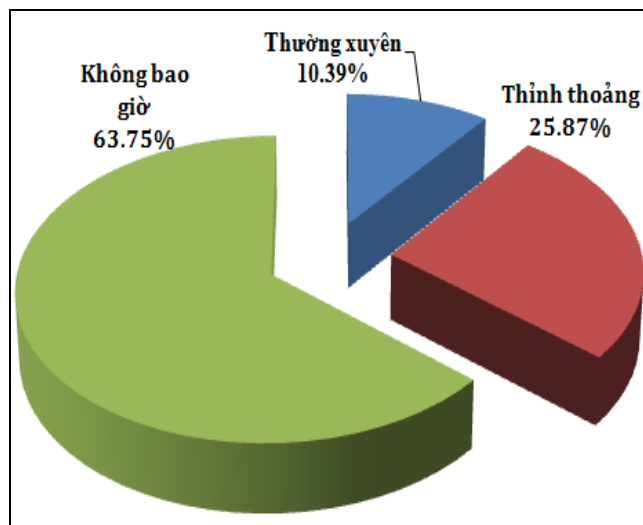


Fig 1: Percentage of students participating in extracurricular sports

Table 3 shows statistics on the number of students participating in extracurricular activities, participating in school sports tournaments, the number of sports teams, extracurricular sports clubs, and assessing students' physical fitness in accordance with Ministry of Education and Training regulations (Decision 53/2008/BGDĐT).

Self-trained	N of students	25	5.09
Total of students participating in extracurricular sports	N of students	178	36.25
Sports award of the year	Sports	(5) Football, athletics, badminton, table tennis, shuttlecock kicking	
	N of students	91	18.53
Physical fitness assessment of students participating in extracurricular sports	Good	24	13.48
	Fair/Acceptable	71	39.89
	Poor	83	46.63

Table 3 indicates

In one year, Thoi Lai secondary school is reported to have 05 sports teams (athletics, shuttlecock kicking, table tennis, chess, volleyball), 04 sports clubs (Volleyball, ball) football, athletics, badminton) and 05 school sports teams (soccer, track and field, badminton, shuttlecock kicking, table tennis). 178 students participating in extracurricular sports (36.25%) include 59 people engaging in sports teams (12.02%), 49 ones participating in clubs (9.98%), and 45 ones selected for the school sports teams (9.98%). During a school year, the school

organizers 05 sports tournaments of football, track and field, badminton, and badminton with 91 students involved. Referred to the Ministry of Education and Training standards, the results of physical fitness evaluation of lower secondary school students in Can Tho who do participate in extracurricular sports are reported as follows: 24 people (13.48%) reaching the good level, 71 people (39.89%) at a fair level, and surprisingly 83 people (46.63%) with a poor health condition.

Table 4: Sports achievements of Can Tho City lower secondary school students throughout a school year

Types of competitions	Sports achievements
District merit competitions	7 medals, including 3 gold (1 boys' singles badminton, 1 boys' 100m track, and 1 boys' singles table tennis), 3 silver (1 girls' singles badminton, 1 boys' singles table tennis, and 1 chess,) 1 bronze (1 girls' shuttlecock kicking)
Provincial merit competitions	4 medals, including 1 gold (1 boys' singles track and field), 2 silver (1 boys' singles badminton, 1 girls' singles table tennis), 1 bronze medal (1 boys' singles table tennis)
National merit competitions	N/A

The data in Table 4 shows that: 7 medals from district merit contests, comprising 3 gold (1 boys' singles badminton, 1 boys' 100m track, and 1 boys' singles table tennis), 3 silver (1 girls' singles badminton, 1 boys' singles table tennis, and 1 chess,) 1 bronze (1 girls' shuttlecock kicking) 4 medals from provincial merit contests, comprising 1 gold (1 boys' singles track and field), 2 silver (1 boys' singles badminton, 1 girls' singles table tennis), 1 bronze medal (1 boys' singles table tennis). Conclusively, it is clear at Thoi Lai Secondary School that individual sports such as table tennis, badminton, and athletics, shuttlecock kicking have received much attention

and achieved great success, whilst team sports such as football and volleyball have not.

The EPA contents for lower secondary school students in Can Tho City

After conducting a questionnaire of 491 seventh-grade students in Can Tho City, 178 students who confirmed to have participated in extracurricular activities were asked to attend the follow-up survey about the EPA contents they like to engage in.

The results were displayed in Table 5.

Table 5: The EPA contents in which Can Tho lower secondary school pupils engage

N	EPA Contents	Male		Female		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Football	18	10.11	10	5.62	28	15.73
2	Basketball	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
3	Martial Art	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
4	Volleyball	23	12.92	18	10.11	41	23.03
5	Badminton	13	7.30	14	7.87	27	15.17
6	Shuttlecock kicking	13	7.30	9	5.06	22	12.36
7	Table tennis	9	5.06	1	0.56	10	5.62
8	Track and field	16	8.99	13	7.30	29	16.29
9	Chess	12	6.74	9	5.06	21	11.80
10	Other	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Total	104	58.43	74	41.57	178	100.00

Table 5 demonstrates that there is a considerable variation in the number and proportion of students engaged in each sport. More specially, volleyball (41 votes, 23.03%), track and field (29 votes, 16.29%), soccer (28 votes, 15.73%), badminton (27 votes, 15.17%), shuttlecock kicking (22 votes, 12.36%), chess (21 votes, 11.80%), and table tennis (10 votes, 5.62%) are

considered as the most popular sports. On the other hand, martial art, basketball, and other sports appear to be unpopular, as they received no vote. In most sports content, boys' sports are performed more than girls' sports, which is understandable given the higher number of schoolboys involved in sports. Badminton, however, has a higher

proportion of females, indicating that schoolgirls enjoy it than boys do. Figure 2 depicts the percentage of Thoi Lai lower

secondary school pupils participating in different extracurricular sports.

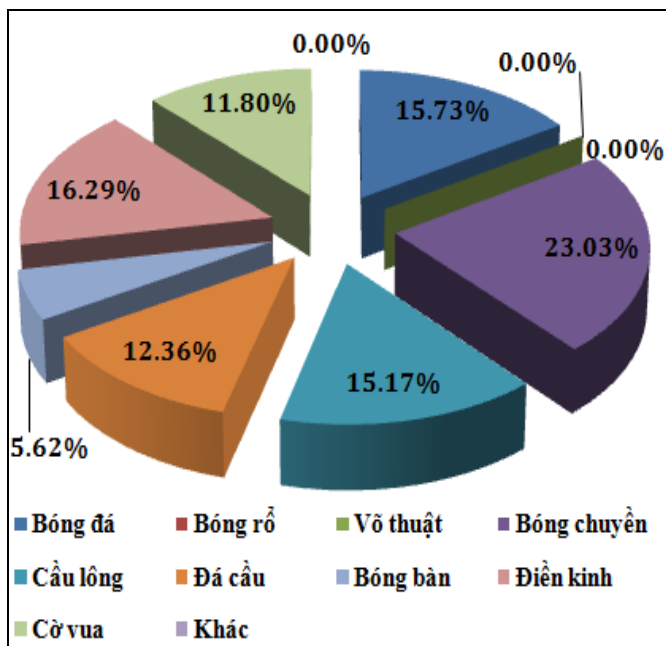


Fig 2: Percentage of Thoi Lai lower secondary school pupils participating in different extracurricular sports

Approaches to hold EPA for lower secondary school students in Can Tho City

To assess the approaches being used to organize extracurricular activities for students, the writers surveyed 491

seventh-grade students in Can Tho City to collect information about the format, practice time, attendance, Number of training sessions, duration, and locations for extracurricular sports practices. Statistics were shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Approaches to hold EPA for lower secondary school students in Can Tho City

N	Setting		Male		Female		Total	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Practice format	School teams	25	14.04	20	11.24	45	25.28
		Groups/teams	30	16.85	19	10.67	49	27.53
		Clubs	35	19.66	24	13.48	59	33.15
		Self-train	14	7.87	11	6.18	25	14.04
2	Training format	With one instructor	16	8.99	16	8.99	32	17.98
		Without instructors	88	49.44	58	32.58	146	82.02
		Both	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
3	Duration for one session	Below 30 minutes	5	2.81	1	0.56	6	3.37
		30 minutes - 1 hour	68	38.20	41	23.03	109	61.24
		1 hour - 2 hours	30	16.85	31	17.42	61	34.27
		Above 2 hours	1	0.56	1	0.56	2	1.12
4	Number of sessions per week	1 session	82	46.07	53	29.78	135	75.84
		2 sessions	22	12.36	19	10.67	41	23.03
		3 sessions	0	0.00	2	1.12	2	1.12
		Above 3 sessions	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
5	Location	At school	81	45.51	59	33.15	140	78.65
		At home	8	4.49	4	2.25	12	6.74
		Other	15	8.43	11	6.18	26	14.61
6	Practice time	Morning	34	19.10	25	14.04	59	33.15
		At midday	1	0.56	1	0.56	2	1.12
		Afternoon	54	30.34	40	22.47	94	52.81
		Leisure time	15	8.43	8	4.49	23	12.92
7	Training expenses	Below 50,000VND	12	6.74	10	5.62	22	12.36
		50,000VND – 100,000VND	74	41.57	59	33.15	133	74.72
		100,000VND – 200,000VND	17	9.55	4	2.25	21	11.80
		Above 200,000VND	1	0.56	1	0.56	2	1.12

Statistics of Table 6 illustrate:

About the training location, school fields are selected as the most popular with 140 votes (78.65%), whereas the least popular is practicing at home with 12 votes (6.74%) and 26 left students choose other places, accounting for 14.61%.

About the practice time, the majority of the students choose to practice in the afternoon (94 votes, 52.81%), while the minority choose midday (2 votes, 1.12%); besides, 59 votes for training in the morning (33.15%) and 23 votes for the leisure time (12.92%).

About the training expenses, 133 students affirm to pay between 50,000VND to 100,000VND per month, accounting for 74.72%, whereas 2 students (1.12%) affirm to spend over 200,000VND per month; 22 students (12.36%) spend less than 50,000VND and 21 students (11.80%) spend from 100,000VND to 200,000VND each month.

The above results show that whether male or female, the most common ways and formats of organizing extracurricular activities for lower secondary school students at Can Tho City are: sports clubs (33.15%), without an instructor (82.02%), 30 minutes to 1 hour long (61.24%), equivalent to 1 session (75.84%), practicing at school (78.65%), in the afternoon (52.81%), training expenses between 50,000VND to 100,000VND per month (74.72%).

Conclusion

Five criteria have been developed through the synthesis of documents and expert interviews to evaluate the current contents and approaches to conduct EPA for seventh-grade students in Can Tho City. According to the results, 36.25% of students (21.18% male and 15.07% female) participate in extracurricular sports; there are 05 physical training and sports teams, 04 physical training clubs, and 05 sports teams; and 05 sports tournaments of football, badminton, track and field, badminton with a total of 91 students enrollment. Based on the Ministry of Education and Training standard, statistics on the current health status of seventh-grade students are as follows: 13.48% good, 39.89% acceptable, and 46.63% failed/poor. About achievements in one school year, Thoi Lai secondary schools have gained seven medals (3 gold, 3 silver, and 1 bronze) from district merit competitions and four medals at the city-level contests (1 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze).

The EPA contents that lower secondary school students prefer to engage in are following volleyball (23.03%), track and field (16.29%), football (15.73%), badminton (15.17%), shuttlecock kicking (12.36%), chess (11.80%) and table tennis (5.62%), whereas martial arts and basketball have no preference.

About the approaches to EPA, lower secondary school students in Can Tho City are expected to perform in sports clubs (33.15%), without an instructor (82.02%), spend 30 minutes to 1 hour on practicing (61.24%) in 1 training session (75.84%), practice at school (78.65%), in the afternoon (52.81%), and spend between 50,000VND to 100,000VND per month (74.72%) for training expenses.

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