

The Practice Trends of the "U-G-S" Talent Cultivation Model in University Physical Education Programs



Liqi Liang^{1,*}

¹ School of Physical Education, Lingnan Normal University, Guangdong, China

Abstract: Universities, local governments, and primary and secondary schools are jointly committed to building a "trinity" professional talent training quality assurance system, providing a good platform for the cultivation of physical education professionals. However, issues such as low identification with roles among entities in the "trinity" model, lack of unified organizational management, insufficient perspective-taking among entities, and conflicting work objectives have affected the effectiveness of the "trinity" model in nurturing talents. There is an urgent need to enhance communication and cooperation among entities, establish and improve the organizational management system, set up a responsibility implementation mechanism, and build a professional development community, so as to form a stable "trinity" physical education professional talent training model, promoting high-quality development of school physical education.

Keywords: physical education major; talent cultivation; "U-G-S" model

Introduction

In recent years, universities, local governments, and primary and secondary schools have jointly planned the educational blueprint, coordinated the allocation of educational resources, and continuously promoted educational innovation, aiming to achieve high-quality development in basic education. By focusing on the cultivation of talents in teacher training programs, they have gradually established a "trinity" educational quality assurance system. How to better leverage the initiative of universities, local governments, and primary and secondary schools to cultivate physical education teachers with high professional competence has become a topic of concern in the field of sports science. This study starts by examining the development and platform construction of the "U-G-S" model, exploring the practical mechanisms of talent cultivation in university physical education programs under the "U-G-S" model, and providing theoretical references for innovative approaches to talent cultivation in university physical education programs.

1. Generation and Development of the "U-G-S" Model

The "U-G-S" (university-government-school)

model originates from the American "Professional Development School (PDS)" model for teacher education (Men, 2016), with the core emphasis on leading with professionalism to promote school development (Research Group of Hefei Normal University, 2015). In 2012, the State Council released the "Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of Teacher Teams", explicitly stating that it was necessary to "innovate the mode of teacher training and establish a new mechanism for joint teacher cultivation involving higher education institutions, local governments, and primary and secondary schools (kindergartens, vocational schools)." This new mechanism is known as the "U-G-S" model.

On September 9, 2014, during a discussion with representatives of Beijing Normal University's faculty and students, The president of China emphasized the need to "explore the establishment of a new 'trinity' mechanism for the joint cultivation of teachers by higher education institutions, local governments, and primary and secondary schools kindergartens," aiming to enhance the level of professional talent cultivation through this new path.

In November 2017, the Ministry of Education issued the "Interim Measures for the Accreditation of Normal Programs in General Higher Education Institutions", indicating that normal programs should establish a clear, stable, and cooperative "trinity"

Corresponding Author: Liqi Liang
Lingnan Normal University, China
Email: 394941968@qq.com

©The Author(s) 2024. Published by BONI FUTURE DIGITAL PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED This is an open access article under the CC BY License(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

joint cultivation mechanism with local education administrative departments and primary and secondary schools, fostering an integrated cooperative community for teacher training, research, and service. Clear evaluation indicators were also established.

2. Value of the "U-G-S" Model

2.1. Promoting balanced development of physical education in regional primary and secondary schools

The physical education major in higher normal universities aims to cultivate specialized physical education professionals serving the foundational education sector. Most of these professionals are oriented towards serving their local communities, driving reform and development in regional foundational education. The "U-G-S" model establishes a platform for higher education institutions to serve the physical education work of local foundational schools. It utilizes human resources such as education administrators, experts, and college students from higher education institutions, integrating and optimizing various resources available within the university to provide comprehensive support for the development of physical education in primary and secondary schools. This includes teaching, research, information technology, management, and more. Through this model, universities can "transmit a sense of social care and service through sports" (Yu & Zhang, 2021), fulfilling their role in serving society by providing targeted and precise assistance and volunteer services to improve the level of physical education in schools, promoting the daily, diversified, and characteristic development of physical education in primary and secondary schools, ensuring that students receive fair and quality physical education, and contributing to the balanced development of regional foundational education.

2.2. Enhancing the quality of talents cultivated in physical education majors

Through the "U-G-S" model, a platform for cultivating physical education professionals is constructed, transforming primary and secondary schools into a "garden for growth" for students specializing in physical education. This platform interconnects with classroom theoretical teaching in higher education institutions, effectively addressing the shortcomings of insufficient practical experience in university classrooms. Students specializing in physical education can gain practical experience by observing, interning, and conducting surveys in

primary and secondary school physical education classes. They familiarize themselves with the physical activity preferences of young students, understand the developmental characteristics of students' physical and mental health, and learn about the laws governing the formation of motor skills and cognitive development. Through a deep understanding of the environment of physical education teaching in primary and secondary schools, they explore the content and methods of physical education teaching. Engaging in teaching practice platforms, students integrate knowledge of physical education and health, educational theory, and teaching practice, learning how to design lessons, implement teaching, manage and guide classes, evaluate teaching and learning, communicate and collaborate, reflect and develop. Through cycles of practice, reflection, re-practice, and re-reflection, they gradually improve their ability to apply professional knowledge and skills, control classroom teaching, and effectively use teaching methods and strategies.

2.3. Promoting exchange and cooperation between universities and local communities

Cooperation between universities and local communities involves mutual complementarity and mutual benefit. Guided by the concept of win-win cooperation, higher education institutions can hire physical education teachers from primary and secondary schools to teach courses or collaborate with physical education faculty members to offer courses in subject matter and pedagogy. They can actively participate in the construction of physical education curricula, planning for majors, and formulation of talent cultivation plans in higher education institutions, providing professional guidance for the practical training of physical education students, and assisting in organizing and guiding student teaching practices. On the platform of university-community cooperation, higher education institutions can dispatch physical education faculty members to engage in teaching and administrative work in foundational educational settings, enhancing their growth through practical experience; send physical education faculty members to guide primary and secondary schools in reforming their physical education teaching, providing theoretical or technical guidance; and dispatch physical education faculty members and students to assist in physical education teaching in primary and secondary schools, helping them to fully implement physical education classes, improving the level of physical education teaching in primary and

secondary schools; and send experienced faculty members to participate in teacher training organized by local educational administrative departments and primary and secondary schools, promoting the professional growth of full-time and part-time physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools. Through mutual support and complementation, "U-G-S" partners achieve mutual benefits and create a mutually beneficial situation of shared growth.

2.4. Promoting professional growth of physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools

Relying on the advantages of the "U-G-S" model platform, particularly the concentrated teaching resources of higher education institutions specializing in physical education, physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools can join high-quality teacher training platforms. These platforms support primary and secondary school physical education teachers in improving their academic qualifications through various means such as online education, full-time study, and on-the-job training. They organize stratified, graded, and categorized training and seminars focused on enhancing the capabilities of physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools. Additionally, they support research activities aimed at revealing the essence and laws of physical education teaching and solving practical problems in school physical education. Through this platform, physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools share and utilize the high-quality resources of higher education institutions, engaging in teaching practice activities such as lesson planning, delivering lessons, observing classes, evaluating lessons, and conducting teaching reflection activities that promote interactive learning and improvement through practice and reflection, and dual enhancement through practice and theory. These activities aim to update concepts, raise professional awareness, accept new knowledge, develop new skills, increase genuine abilities, improve teaching levels, and enhance educational research capabilities, promoting the professional growth of physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools according to a "four-in-one model of integration into education, teaching, research, and learning"(He & Tan, 2011).

3. Issues with the "U-G-S" Model for Talent Cultivation in Physical Education Majors

3.1. Need for enhanced role identification

The role is the distribution and realization of

social responsibility, the handover and inheritance of social responsibility among individuals (Cui, 2021). Within the actual environment of the "U-G-S" model, higher education institutions (normal universities), local governments, and primary and secondary schools each play distinct roles that should be clearly defined, with responsibilities clearly delineated, shared resources, synchronized actions, mutual assistance, and mutual benefit. However, the short-term nature of goals, the randomness of tasks, and the temporality of assignments frequently test the cooperative relationships among the three parties. Surveys reveal that when practical aspects of the physical education talent cultivation program in higher education institutions arise, when the professional growth of physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools is needed, or when local educational administrative departments are available and willing to intervene, only then do the higher education institutions, local governments, and primary and secondary schools begin to assume different roles and undertake different tasks. Such "partnership-style" behaviors formed to complete temporary tasks lack effective communication and mutual trust among the three parties, resulting in everyone acting independently, engaging superficially in work that is essentially perfunctory, and cooperating only nominally while operating independently in reality.

3.2. Lack of organizational leadership

Investigations into the current state of "U-G-S" model collaborations indicate that most partnerships are established through "personal introductions" or "academic connections," rather than following standardized institutional designs and fair distribution of benefits. Due to the lack of organizational structures, the rights and responsibilities within the collaborative body are difficult to define clearly. The parties involved often rely on long-term accumulated experiences rather than collaboratively established rules, leaving room for opportunistic behavior and leading to the distortion of the collaborative model (Cheng, 2007). Some higher education institutions select internship units where alumni are concentrated, raising doubts about whether these "academic connection"-based partnerships effectively enhance the teaching abilities of intern students. Each party—the higher education institution, the local educational administrative department, and the primary and secondary schools — has its own primary responsibilities. The cooperative bodies formed to address urgent, necessary temporary tasks often lack a dedicated

liaison mechanism responsible for coordinating the efforts of the three parties. This results in ambiguity regarding who leads, who speaks, and who decides, undermining the effectiveness of the "on-call" style of collaboration. With unclear objectives, responsibilities, and simplistic work methods, the impact is diminished, and the parties tend to shirk responsibility when faced with difficulties, disbanding once the temporary task is completed. This is detrimental to establishing a long-term "U-G-S" cooperative mechanism and hindering the stable and continuous progress of all works.

3.3. Insufficient perspective switching among stakeholders

The cooperation purposes of the stakeholders in the "U-G-S" model are not identical. While they share the mission of seeking greater development space, they also bear the responsibility of serving the development needs of others. In practice, however, stakeholders often lack perspective switching, seeking to satisfy their own needs without providing sufficient resources to meet the needs of others. For example, the internship platform built by higher education institutions through primary and secondary schools sees interns come and go quickly without considering how their internship work could contribute to the improvement and development of physical education in the schools. Local educational administrative departments formulate policies without thorough research, lacking insight into the needs of higher education institutions and primary and secondary schools, leading to policies that are disconnected from reality, rigid administrative directives, and a lack of personal touch. Physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools desire shortcuts in teaching and research but lack proactive learning attitudes, effort, and theoretical foundations, issues that require prompt resolution.

3.4. Obvious conflicts in work objectives

The "U-G-S" model is a typical interaction among stakeholders, and the differences in organizational culture and mechanisms inevitably lead to misalignment of objectives, trust crises, communication barriers, and disputes over rights and interests at varying levels and degrees (Yu, 2015). During the implementation process, there are frequent misalignments in cooperation objectives, lack of mechanisms for balancing interests and responsibilities, unequal status, and significant differences in management cultures, leading to unsatisfactory actual cooperative relationships between local higher normal universities and primary and secondary schools (Chen & Liu, 2021). Even

more problematic are the issues of the distortion of cooperative mechanisms, deviation of cooperative values, and separation of cooperative discourses (Cai et al., 2021). Local educational administrative departments focus primarily on the standardization and enforceability of their own regulations and policies, relying on administrative orders to ensure the orderly operation of daily teaching activities in primary and secondary schools within their jurisdictions. However, the local educational administrative departments and provincial universities have unequal status, with neither being able to command the other. This conflict in authority creates ambiguity in relationships, making it difficult to ensure sufficient personnel engagement through the "U-G-S" platform for exchanges.

4. Measures for Effective Operation of the "U-G-S" Model in Talent Cultivation for Physical Education Majors

4.1. Enhance communication and cooperation among stakeholders

Improving the overall level of physical education in schools is not achieved overnight but requires a sustained effort from all actors over the long term. Therefore, it is essential to develop short-term, medium-term, and long-term work plans, defining specific tasks for each phase and setting long-term goals. Focusing on a semester-by-semester basis, the efforts should center on enhancing the practical abilities of physical education majors, improving the teaching and research capabilities of physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools, developing the physical fitness and health levels of students, and fostering core competencies in the discipline. To achieve an overall improvement in school physical education, it is necessary to leverage the functions of all stakeholders, pooling their high-quality resources. Higher education institutions should capitalize on their strengths in teaching, research, and talent cultivation, government should provide policy support and institutional frameworks, and primary and secondary schools should offer practical platforms. Together, these entities can promote the development of physical education work.

4.2. Vigorously promote platform construction

Physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools are the backbone of the high-quality development of physical education in these schools. Through the "U-G-S" model, it is significant to build a professional development platform for physical education teachers in primary

and secondary schools based on higher education institutions (normal universities). This platform can leverage the strengths of higher education institutions in teacher training, focusing on the cultivation of "four-good" teachers, promoting exchange and interaction between university faculty and physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools, enhancing the teaching and research capabilities of physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools, and improving the quality of physical education teaching through the front-line work of these teachers. Based on this, higher education institutions should take the initiative to undertake the task of rotating training for physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools, using methods such as expert lectures, case analysis, participatory discussions, and sending training to rural areas, serving the high-quality development of physical education work in local primary and secondary schools and improving the level of physical education teachers in the region.

4.3. Establish and improve the organizational management system

The management body should be led by the local educational administrative department, with participation from the physical education colleges (departments) of higher education institutions and local primary and secondary schools. This organization should have an official nature and can be officially named the Regional School Physical Education "U-G-S" Collaborative Education Center or the "U-G-S" School Physical Education Strategic Development Guidance Center. This center would be responsible for planning, managing, coordinating, and overseeing all aspects of the "U-G-S" model, establishing relevant rules and regulations, leveraging the advantages of higher education institutions in teacher education resources, participating in the formulation of talent cultivation plans for physical education majors in higher education institutions, jointly establishing "integrated" rules and regulations for pre-service training and post-service cultivation of physical education teachers, promoting the integration of physical education teacher training, education scientific research, and service to foundational education within the region, fostering the professional growth of physical education teachers, and improving their professional standards, thereby promoting the scientific, diverse, and distinctive development of physical education in primary and secondary schools.

4.4. Build a professional development community

For the smooth operation of the "U-G-S" model, it is necessary for a professional team to act as a bridge, tapping into and integrating human resources. A professional team should be formed, led by outstanding teachers in the physical education majors of higher education institutions, physical education researchers from local teaching research offices, and distinguished physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools, forming a professional development community that integrates teaching practice and research centered around physical education and health disciplines. Once established, this professional development community will break down the boundaries between institutions, enabling the free flow of excellent teachers within the "U-G-S" model. Higher education institutions can employ physical education researchers and distinguished physical education teachers from primary and secondary schools on a short-term or long-term basis through external hiring, mutual appointments, or part-time positions, engaging them in the construction of physical education majors and collaborating with university faculty on teaching and research. They can also guide physical education majors in their internships, thesis work, career planning, etc., while higher education institutions can systematically organize physical education faculty to conduct teaching exchanges in primary and secondary schools, enhancing their awareness of connecting with foundational education and serving the reform of physical education and health courses in primary and secondary schools, improving the practical operational skills of university faculty, and feeding back into the construction of physical education majors.

4.5. Improve responsibility supervision mechanisms

The ultimate goal of all work under the "U-G-S" model is to promote the high-quality development of school physical education. There are many measurable indicators to evaluate the success of these efforts, such as improvements in physical education infrastructure, the adequacy and completeness of physical education classes, the uniqueness of extracurricular physical activities, the enhancement of students' physical fitness and health levels, the supplementation of physical education faculty, the improvement of teaching practice capabilities of physical education majors, the enhancement of teaching and research capabilities of physical education teachers, and the satisfaction of students and parents with school physical education work. These should be used as evaluation metrics and

broken down into specific tasks for each stakeholder, thereby compelling pragmatic collaboration among "U-G-S" stakeholders. The evaluation team can consist of university teaching supervisors, full-time teaching supervisors from local educational administrative departments, and distinguished teachers from local primary and secondary schools, conducting evaluations through inspections of the extent to which each stakeholder fulfills their responsibilities, promoting cooperation among departments through results-oriented accountability, and collectively improving the level of work.

Conclusion

The "U-G-S" model for cultivating talents in physical education majors in higher education institutions is an innovative measure to promote the high-quality development of physical education in basic education schools. It can effectively solve the long-existing connection problems in school physical education and maximize the integration of various high-quality advantages. On the basis of previous cooperation, this model should be further improved, enhanced, and developed to form an entity-based institution for the symbiotic development of the "trinity", becoming an integrated training base for physical education teachers in primary and secondary schools. It should also make full use of existing resources, refine the cultural characteristics of the institution, create a cooperative education brand, and establish a long-term mechanism for the cultivation of physical education talents, social services, and the development of the sports cause. As the main body of cultivating physical education teachers for primary and secondary schools, higher education institutions' physical education majors should first strengthen their positioning, hone their internal skills, and improve the quality of talent cultivation. They should also keep pace with the new era's educational trends, innovate, and consolidate the foundation for the sustainable development of the "U-G-S" model.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that he has no conflicts of interest to this work.

Acknowledgement

The research was funded by:
(LSJJ2304) Guangdong Education Society 2022 Annual Scientific Research Project (GDES14312); 2023 School-level Educational Teaching Achievement Award Cultivation Project (LSJJ2304)

References

- Cai, H., Zhang, X., & Cao, H. (2021). Implementation dilemmas and path breakthroughs of U-G-S cooperation in teacher education — An analysis based on stakeholder theory. *Shanghai Educational Research*, 2021(10), 80-85.
- Chen, L., & Liu, Y. (2021). Cooperation, service, and leadership: Reflection and reconstruction of practice paths in the new era's 'U-G-S' tripartite relationship. *Theory and Practice of Education*, 41(13), 27-33.
- Cheng, D. (2007). Role theory — The logical starting point of responsibility ethics. *Journal of West Anhui University*, 23(4), 1-7.
- Cui, S. (2021). Research on middle school Chinese teaching under the U-G-S teacher education model — A case study of Chinese reading and speaking classes at Boluo High School in Huizhou City, Guangdong Province. *Journal of Jia Ying University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 39(5), 89-93.
- He, G., & Tan, J. (2011). Reform and practice of applied undergraduate talent training based on university-local cooperation. *China Higher Education Research*, 2011(4), 61-63.
- Research Group of Hefei Normal University. (2015). Survey report on the U-G-S tripartite cooperation training model. *Regional Studies*, 2015(2), 14-45.
- Men, Y. (2016). Interpretation of the "U-G-S tripartite integration" teacher education talent training model. *Tianjin Education*, 2016(4), 5-7.
- Yu, Y. (2015). Institutional innovation and synergistic effects of government-university co-construction of new think tanks. *China Higher Education*, 2015(7), 17-20.
- Yu, X., & Zhang, Q. (2021). Multilateral cooperation models and sustainability analysis in public sports service delivery — Based on observations from the "Fuel Up — Grow Through Sports" youth assistance project. *Journal of Chengdu Sport University*, 37(1), 24-27.

How to Cite: Liang, L. (2024). The Practice Trends of the "U-G-S" Talent Cultivation Model in University Physical Education Programs. *Journal of Global Humanities and Social Sciences*, 05(11), 395-400.
<https://doi.org/10.61360/BoniGHSS242017081101>