

# Assessing the current status of extracurricular sports activities of male students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology

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**ABSTRACT:** Through the use of conventional scientific research methods in physical education and sports, this study assessed the current status of extracurricular sports activities of male students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology across the following areas: Current status of the level of extracurricular sports participation; motives for extracurricular physical activity; content, forms, and needs for participating in extracurricular sports training; and factors hindering extracurricular sports training. The research results serve as a practical basis for establishing sports clubs within the university and for developing the extracurricular physical activity movement for students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology.

**Keywords:** Current status, extracurricular, students, Thai Nguyen University of Technology.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Extracurricular activities are an urgent need for students today, contributing to the comprehensive development of their abilities and physical fitness, while also improving students' sports achievements. These activities aim to consolidate and perfect the lessons learned in the main curriculum and are conducted during students' self-study time under the guidance of physical education (PE) instructors. Consequently, students can train in sports clubs (clubs), participate in internal and external sports competitions organized annually. This aims to attract and encourage widespread participation in favorite sports, contributing to improving health for academic studies and daily life activities.

However, the organization and guidance of extracurricular training for students to complement the main curriculum at the university still have many limitations. It has not successfully launched a movement of voluntary training among students. The organization of sports club activities has not been prioritized, and the number of participating students remains limited. According to the training program of Thai Nguyen University of Technology, students only take the Physical Education (PE) subject in the first three semesters. In the remaining semesters, students have few opportunities to participate in physical training, indirectly affecting their physical development within the university. Therefore, enhancing the organization of extracurricular sports activities for students is of particular importance.

Arising from practical needs and the current limitations in PE activities at the university, this article investigates the issue: "Assessing the current status of extracurricular sports activities of male students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology." To address these issues, the study used the following research methods: document analysis and synthesis, interviews, pedagogical observation, and statistical mathematics.

## II. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 2.1. Current Status of Extracurricular Sports Activities of Male Students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology

To objectively and accurately assess the current status of extracurricular sports activities of male students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology, the study conducted random interviews with students currently studying at the university. Through the questionnaire, the study explored the frequency of participation in extracurricular sports, offering three response levels: Regular (2-3 sessions/week); Irregular; and No participation. The results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Level of Extracurricular Sports Training of Male Students at TNUT (n=575)

Training level	n	%
Regular (2-3 sessions/week or more)	106	18.44
Irregular (2-3 sessions some weeks, none other weeks)	243	42.26
No training (not participating in any sports activity)	226	39.3

(TNUT: Thai Nguyen University of Technology – note: this is the same as Thai Nguyen University of Technology used in the original translation)

Table 1 shows that out of 575 surveyed students, only 106 (18.44%) regularly participate in extracurricular sports. According to the survey, these are usually students involved in informal university clubs for sports like football, volleyball, basketball, martial arts, pickleball, badminton, swimming, etc. The number of students who do not train regularly is quite high (42.26%). Investigation shows that most of these students only train occasionally due to weather, a heavy academic schedule, health issues, lack of a trainer, or not being part of a club. With 226 out of 575 students (39.30%) reporting no sports participation, this is a worrying reality for maintaining and improving student health. Various reasons contribute to this, but mainly include lack of spare time, lack of interest, and no obligation.

### 2.2. Motives for Extracurricular Sports Training of Male Students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology

The study interviewed 349 students participating in extracurricular sports through university clubs about their motives for participation. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Motives for Extracurricular Sports Training of Male Students at TNUT (n=349)

No	Motivates for extracurricular Sports Training	n	%
1	Health enhancement	112	32.17
2	Improving sports performance	79	22.61
3	Stress reduction, recreation, entertainment	106	30.44
4	Passion and understanding of the benefits of training	52	14.78
	Total	349	100

Table 2 shows that students' motives for extracurricular sports are diverse, with various purposes, leading to different choices. Currently, most motives had relatively low percentages in responses: Health enhancement accounted for only 32.17%; Improving sports performance, 22.61%; Stress reduction and entertainment, 30.44%; and the motive of passion and understanding the benefits had the lowest rate at only 14.78%.

### 2.3. Content, Forms, and Needs for Participating in Extracurricular Sports Training of Male Students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology

The study surveyed the current status regarding the content, forms, and needs for participation in extracurricular sports training among 349 male students who regularly train at TNUT. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Current Status of Content, Forms, and Needs for Extracurricular Sports Participation of Male Students at TNUT (n=349)

No	Current	n	%
<b>I</b>	<b>Content of extra-curricular Sports Training</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100</b>
1	Football	124	35.53
2	Volleyball	82	23.5
3	Basketball	21	6.02
4	Badminton	67	19.2
5	Aerobic	1	0.29
6	Swimming	9	2.58
7	Athletics	3	0.86
8	Martial Arts	6	1.72
9	Table Tennis	3	0.86
10	Pickle Ball	33	9.46
<b>II</b>	<b>Forms of Extracurricular Sports Training</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100</b>
1	Self-Training	41	11.75
2	Training in groups/classes	178	51
3	Training in the varsity team	27	7.74
4	Training in talent classes	3	0.86
5	Training in the sports clubs	100	28.65
<b>III</b>	<b>Needs for Extracurricular Sports Training</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100</b>
1	Very eager to participate	273	78.22
2	Neutral	66	18.91
3	Unnecessary	10	2.87

Table 3 show:

+ Regarding the content of extracurricular sports training: The content is diverse. Students participate in a relatively high number of sports (09 disciplines), but the participation rates differ significantly. Overall, the most preferred and practiced sports among male students at TNUT are Football (35.53%), Volleyball (23.5%), and Badminton (19.2%). These are highly appealing, popular, easy-to-practice sports with favorable facility conditions and are also taught in the main curriculum. Other sports were less chosen due to various reasons like facilities, time, appeal, needs, preferences, or gender.

+ Regarding the forms of extracurricular sports training: Students participate in various forms, with group/class training being the most popular (51%), mainly consisting of informal groups without instructor guidance. Self-training accounted for 11.75%, offering flexibility but relying on individual motivation for activities like running or badminton. Training in clubs accounted for 28.65%, a relatively new form for many students, with clubs like Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Pickle ball, Martial Arts (Vovinam, Taekwondo, Karatedo) available on campus, and private centers for swimming, bodybuilding, etc. Varsity team training accounted for 7.74%, often seasonal and informal, preparing for annual competitions. Talent classes accounted for only 0.86%.

In summary, group/class training dominates, but club-based training is seen as most effective for physical development, although it currently attracts few students. This is a key factor for the study to consider when selecting appropriate extracurricular training content. Regarding the need for extracurricular training, a significant majority of students (78.26%) expressed a strong desire to participate, while only 2.87% considered it unnecessary.

#### **2.4. Factors Hindering Extracurricular Sports Training of Male Students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology**

Extracurricular sports training among male students at TNUT is currently very limited. To understand the reasons for this low quality, the study interviewed 10 lecturers/teachers and 575 male students. The results are in Table 4.

*Table 4. Factors Affecting Extracurricular Sports Activities of Male Students at TNUT*

No	Factors	Lecturers(n=10)		Students(n=575)	
		n	%	n	%
1	Insufficient sports fields and equipment	3	30	220	38.26
2	Lack of instructor guidance	10	100	540	93.91
3	Heavy workload from other academic subjects	7	70	445	77.39
4	Lack of confidence when participating in sports	5	50	195	33.91
5	Insufficient funds for sports activities	6	60	295	51.3
6	Unfavorable weather (heavy rain)	3	30	160	27.82
7	Students do not fully recognize the role of sports	10	100	535	93.04
8	Lack of genuine concern from management levels	6	60	320	55.65

The data presented in Table 4 provides a comprehensive overview of the multifaceted barriers that impede the participation and effectiveness of extracurricular sports activities among male students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology. A detailed analysis of these responses, collected from both lecturers and students, reveals significant discrepancies in perception and highlights the most critical areas requiring intervention.

Regarding the factor of inadequate facilities, sports fields, and training equipment, along with unfavorable weather conditions (specifically, frequent heavy rain), these were identified as the least significant obstacles among the options provided. Only 30% of the lecturer respondents considered these as primary hindrances. Similarly, a minority of students attributed their lack of participation to these issues, with 38.26% citing facility and equipment shortcomings, and 27.82% pointing to adverse weather. This relatively low percentage suggests that while infrastructure and weather are considerations, they are not the primary deterrents for the majority of students, who may be able to adapt to or work around these limitations.

In stark contrast, the factors identified as the most substantial barriers were the absence of qualified instructor guidance and the students' own insufficient awareness of the role and benefits of extracurricular physical activities. These two elements received the highest level of consensus among both groups. Notably, 100% of the lecturers surveyed identified the lack of instructor supervision as a critical issue, emphasizing its paramount importance in their view. From the student perspective, these factors were almost equally critical, with a staggering 93.91% of students acknowledging the lack of a dedicated coach or teacher as a major obstacle, and 93.04% admitting they do not fully grasp the importance of extracurricular sports for their overall development. This high level of agreement underscores a fundamental gap in the current system: students are willing to participate but lack both the professional guidance to do so effectively and the motivational understanding to initiate and sustain regular training independently.

Furthermore, the demanding academic workload from other subjects was recognized as another significant impediment. A substantial 70% of lecturers and 77.39% of students confirmed that the heavy time commitment required for their core academic courses leaves students with insufficient spare time to dedicate to physical activities. This highlights a critical conflict between academic pressures and physical well-being, suggesting that students often prioritize their studies out of necessity, inadvertently neglecting their physical health.

Other notable, though slightly less prominent, factors include a lack of self-confidence when participating in sports activities, which was reported by 50% of lecturers and 33.91% of students. This indicates that a portion of the student body may feel intimidated or unskilled, preventing them from joining group activities or clubs. Additionally, insufficient financial resources to cover the costs associated with sports (such as equipment, club fees, or travel to facilities) was cited by 60% of lecturers and 51.3% of students, highlighting a socio-economic barrier that limits access for some. Finally, the lack of genuine concern and proactive support from university management and administrative levels was identified by 60% of lecturers and 55.65% of students as a contributing factor, suggesting that a top-down initiative and resource allocation are necessary to foster a more vibrant sports culture.

+ Incorporate movement-based games to create interest and increase physical activity, thereby improving students' physical fitness.

+ Integrate health education content into the curriculum.

+ Enhance the capacity of Physical Education lecturers: Encourage PE lecturers to participate in professional development and training programs to improve their expertise, enabling them to apply diverse teaching methods, increase actual movement time, and regularly monitor and assess students' activity density during class.

Based on these comprehensive findings, we can draw several critical conclusions regarding the current state of extracurricular sports at the university:

1. High Latent Demand: There is a clear and substantial desire among a large segment of the student population to participate in extracurricular sports training. This is not a case of general apathy, but rather a situation where structural and motivational barriers prevent students from acting on their interest. The high percentage of students expressing a need for instructor guidance confirms this latent demand.

2. Lack of Effective Methodology: While a portion of students have historically engaged in some form of extracurricular training, their efforts have often been unproductive. This is largely because students have been attempting to train without a proper, scientifically-based methodology or a structured training plan. As a result, their independent training sessions have not yielded the significant health or performance

### **III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The research findings reveal a concerning picture regarding extracurricular sports participation among male students at Thai Nguyen University of Technology. As shown in Table 1, only 18.44% of students engage in regular training, while a substantial 81.56% participate either irregularly (42.26%) or not at all (39.30%). This low participation rate is alarming, as it indicates that the majority of students are failing to meet the World Health Organization's recommended levels of physical activity, placing them at increased risk for various health issues including cardiovascular disease, obesity, and reduced cognitive function (World Health Organization, 2020; Osipov et al., 2018). The primary barriers identified include the lack of qualified instructor guidance (cited by 93.91% of students and 100% of lecturers), limited student awareness of the benefits of physical activity (93.04% of students), and heavy academic workloads that leave insufficient time for exercise (77.39% of students). These findings underscore that the problem is not a lack of interest—indeed, 78.22% of students expressed a strong desire to participate—but rather a combination of organizational, motivational, and structural obstacles that prevent students from translating their interest into consistent practice.

Despite these challenges, the study also reveals significant opportunities for improvement. Students' motives for participation are diverse, encompassing health enhancement (32.17%), stress reduction (30.44%), and performance improvement (22.61%), suggesting that multiple pathways can be employed to attract different student segments. Furthermore, the preference for group-based activities (51%) and the high demand for structured programs indicate that students are receptive to organized extracurricular initiatives. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the university take proactive measures to address the identified barriers, including establishing structured programs with professional instructor guidance, launching awareness campaigns to educate students about the benefits of physical activity, diversifying sports offerings, and demonstrating stronger institutional commitment through adequate resource allocation and facility improvements. By implementing these targeted interventions, the university can effectively harness existing student demand, overcome current limitations, and foster a sustainable culture of physical activity that enhances both students' health and their academic performance.

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