

# Exploring the Physical Education Practices Across the Oriental Asian Context: A Systematic Review

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## Abstract

This study presents a systematic review of the published literature exploring the Physical Education practices across Oriental Asian countries. The purpose of the study was to explore the historical, cultural and philosophical influences that have shaped the evolution of physical education in Oriental Asia. The review utilized literature search of published studies, articles, journals and books that have examined or investigated the development of physical education in terms of practices, philosophies, policies and influences of other countries in Oriental Asia. The literature search yielded to 25 potentially relevant publications. Fifteen published studies met the inclusion criteria established for this review. The review's findings highlighted the complex nature of physical education in oriental Asia, revealing the ongoing changes and enduring traditions that influence this crucial element of educational growth. Progressive Pedagogical Evolution in Oriental Asian physical education denotes a dynamic journey marked by significant shifts in paradigms and instructional methodologies. Historically, physical education in this region has evolved from traditional practices deeply rooted in cultural and societal norms to embracing more modern approaches. Resilient Evolution in Oriental Asian physical education signifies adaptation to challenges while preserving the cultural heritage embedded in traditional physical activities and sports. Amidst the evolution towards modern physical education programs, there is a recognition of the enduring relevance of traditional practices, not only for their cultural significance but also for their profound benefits.

**Keywords:** Evolution, Pedagogy, resilience, tradition, modern approaches

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## 1. Introduction

A distinct feature of physical education in Oriental Asia is its strong ties on cultural heritage. Traditional physical activities such as martial arts, dances and indigenous sports are integral to the physical education programs in this region (Asia: Human Geography, 2020; Liu et al., 2023). Examining these practices provides insight into the diverse cultural, societal, and institutional factors influencing physical education in Oriental Asia (Yan et al., 2021;

Hamanda, 2018). Despite the global recognition of physical education's importance, the methods and practices in Oriental Asian countries differ greatly due to their unique historical, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. However, a major issue persists: the region lacks a comprehensive understanding and thorough documentation of its physical education practices.

In contrast to Western context, where physical education often centers on structured sports and fitness activities (Introduction to Physical Education, Fitness and Sports, 2022), Oriental Asian countries present a diverse array of traditions, philosophies, and practices that shape their approach to physical education. This region's physical education methods often reflect deep-rooted cultural customs and values, which are essential to its identity (Ma, 2019). The international community recognizes the importance of preserving and promoting cultural diversity in education, including physical education, as a means to foster mutual understanding, acceptance and respect among different cultures (UNESCO, 2018). The unique challenges and disparities faced by Oriental Asian countries in offering comprehensive and culturally sensitive physical education programs are significant concerns globally, as they can affect international efforts to promote mutual respect among nations.

In the Philippines, the context of physical education practices across the Oriental Asia is viewed through a unique lens shaped by the country's cultural, historical and socio-economic context. Physical education holds significant importance in the Philippine education system, with mandates for its inclusion in school curricula at all levels as mentioned in Article XIV Section 19 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution. However, despite its formal inclusion, there are notable challenges and disparities in the provision of physical education across different regions and schools in the Philippines. One of those is the tension between traditional and modern approaches to physical education. While Filipino games and martial arts hold cultural significance and are integrated into physical education curricula, there is also a growing influence of westernized sports and fitness trends. Balancing the preservation of cultural heritage with the adoption of modern practice poses a challenge for educators and policymakers, as they navigate the complexities of cultural identity and globalization in shaping physical education programs.

Although existing research addresses specific aspects of physical education in Oriental Asian countries, there is a notable lack of comprehensive studies examining the intricate relationship between cultural norms, societal expectations, government policies, and institutional practices within the field. This gap highlights the need for interdisciplinary research that considers the broader socio-cultural context in which physical education operates in these countries. By investigating how cultural values, societal norms and institutional frameworks influence the implementation and perception of physical education, the research aims to provide valuable insights into the diverse challenges and approaches to promoting physical activity and well-being in various cultural settings. To address this

research gap, an ethnographic qualitative study will be conducted, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the experiences of students, teachers, policymakers and other stakeholders. Additionally, a comparative analysis across different Oriental Asian countries will help uncover variations in practices and identify common themes or challenges that extend beyond specific locations.

## **2. Theory Base**

The study was anchored on the Cultural Contextualization Theory based from the Leininger's Sunrise Model created in 1991, a theoretical base to understand the complex cultural and contextual factors that influence physical activity. Beliefs and practices surrounding physical activity are influenced by a variety of cultural and contextual factors. Providing culturally relevant contexts to the meaning of physical activity allows opportunities for improving policies or programs that would engage individuals and communities in physical activity in culturally meaningful ways (Carielle Joy Rio & Saligan, 2023).

The Cultural Contextualization Theory suggests that physical education practices are not merely the result of universal educational principles but are significantly shaped by the unique cultural, societal and historical influences of a region. In the context of Oriental Asia, this theory explains how traditional physical activities, societal values and global trends shape the evolution and current practice of physical education. It involves analyzing the integration of traditional practices into modern curricula, examining societal influences on educational goals and methods, assessing the impact of Westernization and globalization and identifying adaptation strategies used by Oriental Asian countries to maintain effective physical education programs despite the challenges of time.

### **Research Questions**

The study focused on understanding and exploring how educational practices and physical education programs in Oriental Asia have adopted and transformed in response to cultural shifts and global influences.

## **3. Methods**

The study employs a systematic review as its research design to rigorously analyze and synthesize existing literature, thereby uncovering key trends, cultural influences and gaps in the current understanding of physical education practices in the Oriental Asia. A systematic review aims to uncover patterns or trends within relevant studies and gather and analyze empirical research findings systematically to guide policy decisions. Unlike traditional

narratives reviews, systematic reviews utilize a transparent approach to finding, locating and evaluating empirical data in a scientific and reproducible manner (Maeda et al., 2022).

In the initial phase of literature search, the researcher conducted a manual search of published studies, articles, journals and books that have examined or investigated the development of physical education in terms of practices, philosophies, policies and influences of other countries in Oriental Asia. The researcher was able to gather 15 studies that were published from 2014 to 2023.

The criteria for inclusion in this systematic review were studies: (a) examined the development, practices, philosophies and policies related to physical education in Oriental Asia; (b) investigated various physical activities, training methods, curriculum designs and educational systems with Oriental Asian Countries; (c) examined the historical, cultural and philosophical influences that have shaped the evolution of physical education in Oriental Asia; (d) explored similarities and differences in physical education practices across different Oriental Asian countries or regions and different time periods but not limited to ancient, medieval, renaissance, enlightenment and modern eras; and (e) comparatively analyzed between Oriental Asian physical education practices and those of other regions or civilization to identify cross-cultural influences and exchanges. Studies were excluded if they were studies not directly related to the study of physical education practices, such as studies focusing solely on sports performance and recreational activities.

Table 1. Significant Statements and Formulated Meanings

Significant Result	Codes	Formulated Meanings
The physical education program has evolved from basic skill development to a comprehensive improvement on young people's growth from multiple perspectives.	R1	evolved from basic skills to comprehensive improvement
Japanese school physical education from a militaristic to a democratic mindset.	R2	Militaristic to democratic mindset
The South Korean curriculum prefers to advocate learning the value of physical activity to achieve core competencies, while the Chinese curriculum prefers to focus on acquiring athletic skills and health knowledge for achieving core competencies.	R3	learning core competencies
Physical education was established as a subject and not as a means of military training and made physical education a requirement in elementary and secondary schools	R4	Established as a subject not military training
The 2015 revised ROK's national PE curriculum seems to be more consistent because it specifies an achievement standard and revises the content structure.	R5	Achievement of standards

Taiiku is a general term for physical activity that contributes to the creation of physical and social foundations for human well-being.	R6	creation of physical and social foundations
The lesson study approach in Physical Education is an effective way for teachers to reflect on their instruction and promote instructional change.	R7	promote instructional change
Teachers therefore still do not have culturally appropriate resources to support their inclusive practice.	R8	do not have appropriate resources
The physical education teaching mode was varied from the original single model to multiple modes, and colleges and universities can combine these different teaching modes according to their own teaching conditions.	R9	from single model to multiple models
Physical Education has become one of the key learning areas in millennium year education reform which promoted the generic skills of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity.	R10	promote generic skills
Professional knowledge they have learned is not very useful for future entrepreneurship.	R11	Not useful for future entrepreneurship
The relationship between sports and education has evolved from separation to combination and progressive integration.	R12	Evolved from separation to combination and progressive integration
Technology began to be used in the test battery, resulting in the philosophical change of youth fitness testing, and different test implementation procedures.	R13	Philosophical change of youth fitness testing
The institution allowed its members to exercise and define the content and methods of training within the broadly defined scope and context.	R14	Exercise and define the content and methods of training
The natural feet generation arose, Taiwanese women started participating in physical activities and competitive sports	R15	Participating in physical activities and competitive sport

Table 2. Formulated Meanings and Clustered Themes

Formulated Meanings	Clustered Themes
Evolved from basic skills to comprehensive improvement, Militaristic to democratic mindset, established as a subject not military training, from single model to multiple models, evolved from separation to combination and progressive integration, Philosophical change of youth fitness testing, Participating in physical activities and competitive sport.	Transformation in Paradigms
Learning core competencies, Achievement of standards, promote instructional change, promote generic skills.	Instructional innovation
Creation of physical and social foundations, Exercise and define the content and methods of training.	Establish Methodologies
Do not have appropriate resources, Not useful for future entrepreneurship	Resource Constraints and Relevance

Table 3. Clustered Themes and Emergent Themes

Clustered Themes	Emergent Themes
Transformation in Paradigms, Instructional innovation, Establish Methodologies	Progressive Pedagogical Evolution
Resource Constraints and Relevance	Resilient Evolution of Physical Education in Oriental Asia

#### 4. Results and Discussions

In the educational landscapes of Oriental Asia, physical education exemplifies the complex interplay between tradition and innovation, resilience, and adaptation. As societies evolve and culture merge, the practices within physical education experience dynamic changes that reflect shifts in teaching approaches while preserving traditional values. This study explores the diverse aspects of physical education in Oriental Asia, focusing on two main themes: progressive pedagogical evolution, which promotes new teaching methods, and resilient resolution, which preserves traditional practices. By examining these themes, the research highlights the tangled complexities of physical education in the region, revealing the pathways of change and continuity that shape this crucial educational component. The aim is to uncover insights at the intersection of tradition and modernity, providing a deeper understanding of the transformative forces influencing physical education practice in Oriental Asia.

##### 4.1 Progressive Pedagogical Evolution.

Progressive Pedagogical Evolution in Oriental Asian physical education denotes a dynamic journey marked by significant shifts in paradigms and instructional methodologies. Historically, physical education in this region has evolved from traditional practices deeply rooted in cultural and societal norms to embracing more modern approaches. This evolution reflects not only changes in educational philosophy and goals but also the broader influences of globalization and Western ideologies. The result of this study is supported with the study of Yan et al. (2021) “how each country has developed its physical education system for young people, the process is evidently to have a close association with the historical context and political revolution of the country.”

Cultural and societal shifts have played a pivotal role in shaping the philosophy and goals of physical education in Oriental Asia. As societies transitioned, so did the emphasis within physical education, expanding from mere skill acquisition to encompass holistic development, including physical fitness, mental well-being, and social integration. This is in consonance with An et al. (2022) “School PE has upheld the guiding ideology of ‘health first’ and continuously enhanced PE development in China. The guiding ideology of ‘health first’ has involved three stages: (1) improving students’ physical conditions; (2) enhancing students’ physical health, mental health and ability to

socially adapt; and (3) promoting students' all-round human development." These changes reflect a broader recognition of the interconnectedness between physical health and overall well-being.

The impact of globalization and western influences on oriental asian physical education cannot be overstated. The introduction of western sports, training methods and educational philosophies has led to a reevaluation of traditional practices and the adoption of innovative approaches. This is supported by the findings of *The Routledge Handbook of Sport in Asia* (2020) "Modern Sports were adopted in the subsequent assimilation of western culture. Educators hired from abroad to teach western knowledge and skills in many newly established modern schools introduced western sports and games." While globalization offers opportunities for cross-cultural exchange, it also challenges educators to balance the preservation of indigenous practices with the integration of global trends.

There has been a notable innovation in teaching methods and pedagogical approaches aimed at enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes in physical education. Educators in Oriental Asian countries are increasingly adopting learner-centered approaches, integrating technology, and promoting experiential learning to cater to diverse student needs and preferences. This is supported by the study of Zhou et al. (2021) "The new educational technology in modern PE is analyzed first. Specifically, the motion sensing technology based on human-computer natural interaction can be used for training, so that learners can effectively improve their physical skills." These innovations reflect a commitment to adaptability and continuous improvement in educational practices.

Progressive Pedagogical Evolution in oriental asia represents a journey of adoption and transformation, driven by cultural shifts, globalization and a commitment to enhancing student learning experiences in physical education. Embracing innovative approaches while respecting traditional values, educators can navigate this evolution to promote holistic development and well-being in students across the region.

#### 4.2 Resilient Evolution

Resilient Evolution in Oriental Asian physical education signifies adaptation to challenges while preserving the cultural heritage embedded in traditional physical activities and sports. Amidst the evolution towards modern physical education programs, there is a recognition of the enduring relevance of traditional practices, not only for their cultural significance but also for their profound health benefits. The result of this study is in consonance with the study of Hamada (2018) "Despite the influx of Westernized curriculum innovations, the martial arts were hardly influenced... Post War reforms were, thus, instrumental in providing options, opportunities, and diversities for new

purposes. Despite postwar radical reforms, the institution allowed its members to exercise and define the content and methods of training within the broadly defined scope and context.

Traditional physical activities and sports hold a deep-seated cultural significance in Oriental Asian societies, reflecting historical traditions and communal values. These activities are not merely exercising but expressions of identity, unity, and resilience. Integrating them into modern physical education programs acknowledges their importance and ensures that students connect with their cultural heritage while reaping the physical and mental health benefits they offer.

A significant challenge in this evolution is the scarcity of qualified physical education instructors. Despite the importance placed on physical education, there is often a shortage of trained professionals to deliver quality instruction. To address this human resource constraint, innovative strategies are being employed. These include training programs to upskill existing educators, leveraging technology for remote teaching and learning, and fostering collaborations with community coaches and mentors. This is supported with the study of Oksana Klochko et al. (2020) “the digital skills and critical thinking of a Physical Education teacher are relevant components of the 21st century skills system and are components of the health competence of a Physical Education teacher whose improvement is an important educational condition for the implementation of the sustainable development concept.”

Resilient evolution in physical education in Oriental Asia involves carefully balancing the respect for tradition with the adoption of new approaches. By valuing traditional physical activities and sports while tackling human resource-challenges through strategic measures, educators can ensure that physical education continues to be a cornerstone of health and a reflection of cultural resilience and continuity.

## **5. Implication and Future Direction**

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the researchers. The researchers summarized the findings to answer the problems regarding the study while recommendations are for the development of the present status about the topic presented by the researchers. The primary data were collected by distributing online survey questionnaires to 40 respondents. The results of the survey provided answers to problems stated in the previous chapter.

### *5.1 Implication*

The following implications were drawn: Evolution is defined as a gradual process of change and development over time, often characterized by the accumulation of small, incremental modification. Evolution, in the context of



physical education, refers to the gradual development and transformation of instructional methodologies, curriculum design, teaching practices and overall approaches to promoting physical activity, fitness and well-being. From a historical perspective, evolution in physical education can be observed in the transition from traditional, discipline-oriented approaches to more modern, student-centered methods. This evolution has been driven by research finding, changing societal attitudes towards health and fitness and innovations in teaching and learning strategies.

Coming up with essential themes of Progressive Pedagogical Evolution and Resilient Evolution after reviewing the evolution of physical education in Oriental Asia holds significant importance for several reasons. Firstly, understanding the progressive pedagogical evolution of physical education in oriental asia allows me to trace the historical development of physical education paradigms and instructional methodologies in oriental asian countries particularly, China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. By examining how educational practices have evolved over time, I was able to identify trends, innovations and best practices that have contributed to the improvement of physical education programs. This understanding is crucial for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders as they strive to enhance the quality and effectiveness of physical education instruction to meet the evolving needs of students.

Secondly, exploring the concept of resilient evolution within the context of physical education in oriental asia highlights the ability of educational systems to adapt and overcome challenges. By reviewing instances of resilience, such as the preservation of cultural traditions, the utilization of limited resources and the implementation of innovative teaching methods, I was able to identify strategies and approaches that have proven effective in promoting the sustainability and success of physical education programs. This understanding of resilience can inspire stakeholders to continue innovating and adapting in the face of adversity ensuring the continued growth and improvement of physical education in the region.

## *5.2 Future Direction*

The result of the study of the Evolution of Physical Education in Oriental Asia can provide a rich source of knowledge and inspiration for educators in the field of physical education. By integrating lessons learned from progressive pedagogical evolution provides educators with historical perspectives and contemporary trends in instructional methodologies. By examining past practices and identifying successful innovations, educators can incorporate effective teaching strategies that cater to diverse learning needs and promote student engagement. This can also empower educators to adapt their teaching approaches to align with modern educational philosophies and enhance the overall effectiveness of physical education programs.

Moreover, educators can draw inspiration from examples of resilience in oriental asian physical education systems, making use of strategies such as community partnership, creative resource management and flexible instructional approaches. On the other hand, stakeholders can develop more policies that integrate traditional activities with contemporary sports, creating a balanced physical education curriculum that honors cultural heritage and embraces modern fitness trends. Continuous research is vital for the ongoing adaptation and improvement of physical education practices. Stakeholders should support studies that evaluate and refine teaching methods and curricula.

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