



# Social Identity and Innovative Behavior towards a Relevant Development Program for PE Teachers

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**How to cite this paper:** Yuanyuan Liu, Erlinda D. Serrano. (2023). Social Identity and Innovative Behavior towards a Relevant Development Program for PE Teachers. *The Educational Review, USA, 7(4)*, 500-504.

DOI: 10.26855/er.2023.04.020

**Received:** March 31, 2023

**Accepted:** April 30, 2023

**Published:** May 30, 2023

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## Abstract

Teachers in colleges and universities are the main force for the development of colleges and universities, and their innovation is to serve the basic functions of colleges and universities. First of all, colleges and universities should be committed to improving the quality of talent training and actively cultivating innovative and outstanding talents, which is about the strategic choice and the necessary way of national higher education development. Innovation is both an important mission of higher education career and a competence quality that university teachers should possess. The purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between social identity and innovative behavior of university physical education teachers. The study specifically examined the links between physical education teacher respondents' emotional commitment, work values, and team identity. The findings revealed that physical education teachers demonstrated a strong commitment to building their social identity through emotional commitment, work values, and team identity, which is needed to affirm a strong faculty in the profession.

## Keywords

Affective Commitment, Work Value, Team Identity, Teaching Flexibility

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## Introduction

As an important part of college teachers, college physical education teachers are responsible for the important mission of promoting the development of education and sports in China, and their professional identity has a positive effect on the career choice, career exploration, career success and career development of college physical education teachers. Therefore, focusing on the innovation ability of physical education teachers is an indispensable part of the development of China's sports career and the improvement of physical education.

The current emphasis on physical education teachers in colleges and universities falls far short of teachers' expectations, and even with the support of relevant policies, the status of physical education teachers in the public mind is far less than that of teachers of other disciplines. As a result, the innovative ability of physical education teachers is often ignored by the world. In fact, some universities have realized the importance of teachers' innovative behaviors and have introduced many relevant incentive mechanism policies for improving teachers' innovative performance, but due to the special nature of PE teachers' group, this community has certain disadvantages compared with other university teacher communities, so to improve the overall performance, it is necessary to link all the teachers in the university community, among which the most important thing to focus on is the university PE teachers. This community needs to improve the performance of teachers by improving their social recognition and enhancing their innovation ability.

## 1. The scope of application of social identity localization

Social identity theory arises from ethnocentrism, which believes that social identity has an important role in explaining group behavior and is an important part of a person's self-concept, which affects their social attitudes and behaviors. When individuals adopt membership in a social group to define their social identity, their attributes may show the same relationship with the common attributes of members within that community and will thus have a profound effect on their social behavior; therefore, an individual's identification with a group is the basis of group behavior (S. Y. Wang, 2021). The stronger a person's identification with the group he or she is a part of, the more his or her attitudes and behaviors are controlled by membership in that group. Physical education teacher professional identity is an individual teacher's positive cognitive evaluation, emotional experience, and value commitment to the group qualification or category qualification of the physical education teaching profession. Its essence is social identity, which is an individual teacher's identification with the specific social category and social status of the physical education teaching profession, and is a reflection about one's belonging to this social category of the physical education teaching profession. In addition to physical education activities, university physical education teachers also undertake physical education academic research and social service activities, and their role functions have a very positive impact on the transmission of physical education and sports culture. As an important group of university teachers, physical education teachers are "neglected" and "unnoticed" in physical education in schools. And the development of university physical education teachers is relatively late and less demanding than the professional development of other professional teachers. Therefore, physical education teachers have been easily neglected for a long time. Since the improvement of education quality depends on the improvement of teachers' level, promoting the positive development of physical education teachers and improving the status of physical education teachers are important means to build innovative universities and improve the innovation ability and even the level of social innovation (Yu Mengmeng, 2021). In this study, the organizational management behaviors of universities, individual psychological perceptions of physical education teachers and individual innovation behaviors are studied at the micro level, and then scientific and reasonable management methods and incentives are adopted to effectively stimulate the innovation enthusiasm of physical education teachers, continuously improve their innovation ability and enhance their innovation performance, which undoubtedly have important theoretical and practical significance for the reform of higher education and the promotion of innovative nation building in China.

## 2. Analysis of the relationship between social identity and innovative behavior of physical education teachers

According to the social identity theory, social identity is the psychological expression and process by which a society defines itself as a member of a certain social type and attributes typical characteristics of this type to itself. Thus, through social identity, individuals in society are able to perceive themselves not only in terms of their own unique characteristics (social comparison), but also share common characteristics of group members to define themselves (self-categorization), which in turn provides individuals with group membership to perceive social distinctions) and further influences individuals' attitudes and behaviors. In addition, each individual's group membership is multiple in nature; therefore, individuals attribute themselves to an occupational group or an organizational group for multiple psychological reasons and define themselves through the characteristics of the occupational group or organizational group, which creates an occupational identity or organizational identity and influences the individual's attitudes and behaviors (Xu Jian, 2021).

### 2.1 Interpersonal relationships and physical education teachers' innovative behavior

Social awareness has some influence on the existence of teachers' innovative behaviors. Social identity theory suggests that only when individuals hold a strong sense of identity and belonging to the organization are they likely to engage in more extra-role behaviors that benefit the organization. The core of identity and belongingness is the individual's emotional investment in the organization, which can largely determine the individual's willingness to perform innovatively (Liu Lige, 2021). Therefore, to enhance the innovative behaviors of college teachers, we should seek to enhance teachers' emotional commitment to the school. According to the survey analysis, the social identity of physical education teachers has a very high level of assessment of emotional commitment, which indicates the affirmation that the teachers have a strong emotional bond, loyalty and dedication to the school. They feel at home, are comfortable and enjoy doing things at school. Teachers are more likely to want to stay in their positions if they are able to do their jobs in a way that makes them happy, comfortable and fulfilled. Therefore, teachers will be more effective if their experience at the school meets their expectations and meets their basic needs, such as camaraderie, work climate, or culture, comfort in accomplishing tasks and also if the experience helps determine the degree of teacher identification and engage-

ment in the school. At the same time, physical education teachers are committed to improving their academic department or university through collaboration with faculty. Teaching can be an emotionally exhausting profession, and the most supportive colleagues can be of great help. Connections made with colleagues are not only good for mental health, they are also the basis for collaboration that, if done effectively, may improve student learning outcomes.

## **2.2 Organizational climate and individual physical education teachers' innovative behavior**

The special nature of its occupation is bound to have certain innovative requirements for college physical education teachers, which is especially important for college physical education teachers' awareness of their profession. At the same time, as an organization, the survival and development of the university cannot be achieved without the teachers' efforts and innovation. Therefore, it is necessary to make "benefit the development of the university" and "innovation for the university" become the source and motivation for the individual physical education teachers to implement innovative behaviors, once the individual teachers have a high sense of coherence and belonging to the organization and social recognition of the PE teaching profession, they will consciously take the best possible psychological motivation to improve their work in the interest of the organization and take pride in innovation. Research has shown that teachers view their team identity as part of their social identity. They understand that the most common challenge facing individuals is how to function as a team. An individual may have a fantastic concept, but if an individual cannot function as a team, any concept will collapse. They value teamwork, working together as a collection of individuals to collaborate in order to achieve a common goal. It is the combination of information and experience of each team member. This information is then used to distribute and assign tasks among team members so that they can work independently.

## **2.3 Social Identity and Individual Creative Behavior of Physical Education Teachers**

Chinese social identity research lacks some systematization and specialization compared to Western social identity theory. The concept of "social identity" can be understood as "social identity" or "group identity", which means that a member of society realizes and acknowledges that he or she is a member of a social group or a social category, that is, he or she realizes that he or she has the same identity as some people and can be classified as a category of people to distinguish from another category of people. For this study, the sense of identity that physical education teachers have developed in their group will help to enhance their self-identity and thus motivate their ability to innovate. The talent to innovate is driven solely by one's creativity, not by anything else, including social identity. One or no one can innovate creativity in many special ways, regardless of their status. It requires a complete and excellent management system with a high level of creativity, and a good social environment. In other words, it can also be understood that physical education teachers have a high level of social awareness, value the professional value and meaning of altruistic dedication and the prestige status of physical education teachers to some extent, and believe that engaging in the physical education profession can satisfy their pursuit of altruistic dedication and social value (Wei Lina, Zhang Wei, & Lin Chenghua, 2020). In this way, even if the link between social identity and innovative behavior is small, a good environment with a high level of identity is more conducive for physical education teachers to develop their innovative abilities.

## **3. Strategies to enhance the innovative behavior of physical education teachers**

### **3.1 Enhance their own awareness and strengthen the use of physical education teachers' innovative abilities**

Innovation is the fundamental driving force for the continuous development of human society, a constant source of motivation for the development of human society, and an important asset for human beings to be able to continue to dominate all things on earth. Physical education teachers should be fully aware of the importance of innovative behavior, which plays a crucial role in training students to become high-quality innovative talents, improving teachers' own abilities and even the development of the whole school. By promoting a full understanding of the importance of innovation and providing some support and guidance, physical education teachers will be able to engage in innovative teaching with greater enthusiasm and actively capture the innovative moves of their students, continuously improving their own innovative abilities and, in turn, developing the innovative abilities of their students. This requires that physical education teachers must be constantly exposed to training and professional functions that are designed to harness and enhance their skills and creativity in handling physical education subjects in order to ensure student interest and engagement in the curriculum. Secondly, they must assume significant responsibilities or deal with major events to develop their leadership and responsibility, while developing their creative behaviors and even social and self-efficacy.

### 3.2 Emphasis on the intra-organizational environment of the university to shape a culture and environment that respects innovation

In terms of the intra-organizational environment of universities, the hardware environment of most universities has been sufficiently improved, and this paper will not discuss too much here, but this study believes that more attention should be paid to the construction of the psychological environment and the construction of the organizational cultural environment. They will internalize their own attitudes and behaviors, enhance their identification with the university, actively participate in the organizational activities, and also show more innovative behaviors. The environment within the organization is mainly reflected in whether the culture of the organization is tolerant and free, how the promotion space and development expectations are, how internal fairness is, as well as the access to external resources, quality of living environment, and family social security. As far as the construction of intra-organizational innovation environment is concerned, it includes: intra-organizational policy support, personal development and expectation, organizational culture, intra-organizational innovation infrastructure, leadership support and colleague support, etc. First of all, universities should build disciplinary organizations, construct disciplinary platforms, strive to create a good situation of "everyone has disciplinary affiliation and direction", and provide excellent research conditions and supporting support. As for the organization, the educational institution will ensure that the physical education teachers are physically, mentally and socially well behaved and set a good example for the students in terms of living a healthy life. Secondly, educational institutions begin to continue training and forming the social identity of physical education teachers regardless of their age and years of experience to ensure that they are on the right track. Further, educational institutions, especially physical education departments, must develop activities and programs to strengthen the team identity and pedagogical flexibility of physical education teachers as a way to enhance their innovative abilities.

### 3.3 Strengthening teachers' professional awareness and focusing on scientific and humanistic management to enhance the professional identity of university teachers

The stigmatization of physical education teachers in the media has become more and more intense, which to a certain extent has caused the "collapse of confidence" of physical education teachers and increased the tension between physical education teachers and society, and even led to the loss of confidence in physical education in schools as a whole. With the in-depth development of national fitness and the increasing importance of school sports, physical education teachers have been given important social missions and educational responsibilities, which urgently requires physical education teachers to make efforts to build good relationships with all parties so as to create conditions for their own identity. Universities should respect the autonomy of university teachers and implement "de-administrative" management methods. Colleges and universities should maintain their autonomous organizational culture and learning and working style, so that teachers in Koran can have a relatively free space and place to carry out innovative work. On the other hand, colleges and universities should maintain their autonomy based on their cultural strengths and professional fields, so that they can maintain their independent personality and their insistence on seeking truth and pursuing scientific truth. On the basis of this, first of all, the physical education teachers should establish a trust relationship with students and parents, which is an important link to maintain the relationship between the two sides and is also a manifestation of the professionalism of physical education teachers. Secondly, physical education teachers should establish good social relationships, actively participate in community fitness activities, organize, promote and guide the national fitness movement, give back to the society with their professionalism and skills, and in the process, reap positive comments from the media and public opinion, reverse social prejudice and gain identity through practical actions, so as to add more innovative ability in a benign environment.

## 4. Conclusion

Physical education teachers build their social identities through emotional commitment, work values, and team identity to confirm that the profession has a strong teaching force. And physical education teachers' high level of commitment to building their innovative behaviors, especially in the areas of creativity, new solutions to problems, and pedagogical flexibility, also needs to be built upon. Future researchers could delve into similar topics from a broader and deeper perspective to confirm the relationship between teachers' innovative behaviors and social identity.

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