


# Chapter 12

## Physical Education Innovations in Transnational Higher Education Sports Training Provision in China: Challenges, Opportunities, and Best Practices

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This chapter responds to Brunton and Mackintosh's (2017) desire to add to research in the area of university sport, given that it is a growing field of study. It also supports their designs to illustrate the potential for university sport through considering*

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*diverse national contexts to promote positive practices and policies (Brunton and Mackintosh, 2017). More specifically this chapter will consider the innovations taking place at two acclaimed and aspirational institutions. To achieve this end, the work will adopt a qualitative case study methodology. Training programmes, activities, partnerships and the application of technology will all be considered, and possible future directions discussed. This work should be of interest to a wide range of readers ranging from educators to students, policy makers to educational providers.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Physical education (PE) programs vary considerably between countries. Within the UK Higher Education (HE) context, for example, students can engage with one of the largest sports networks globally, as Mayne and Diamond (2016) note. Indeed, Mayne and Diamond (2016) go on to highlight how 5,500 university sports teams take part in competitive matches each Wednesday afternoon as part of the British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) Program, enabling both recreational and elite players to get actively involved. This enhances holistic learning, personal development, well-being and community (Mayne & Diamond, 2016). It is also the situation before intra-institutional events are considered and opportunities to get involved with external clubs noted. This weekly competitive training avenue is important on a national level as well, as between 1992 and 2008 61 percent of Olympic medals won by Team GB came from university graduates and students (Mayne & Diamond, 2016).

In China increasing emphasis is also placed on PE at university. In public universities students must pass mandatory national fitness tests as Chen and Chen (2017) highlight. There are also elite sporting academies in operation for identified talented individuals in certain sporting disciplines, but these typically start very early in the K12 education cycle as Lim (2008) noted and operate systematically as professional club academies might in the UK. At transnational higher education providers (TNHE) providers, such as Sino-British providers the University of Nottingham Ningbo (UNNC) and Xi'an Jiao Tong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) based in eastern China, students must take credit bearing PE courses during their first year as an undergraduate. In addition to these providers, others include Duke Kunshan University (DKU), Shanghai New York University and Wenzhou Keen University. TNHE providers are also now building state of the art training facilities for their communities, such as UNNC, XJTLU and DKU, to promote physical activity, enhance well-being and develop inter-transferable skill sets such as teamwork and leadership. They are also engaging with external partners and the community

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