

Development Guidelines for Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs: A Systematic Analysis of Chinese Higher Education Institutions

Wang Bin¹ & Pacharawit Chansirisira¹

¹ Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham University, Mahasarakham, Thailand

Correspondence: Pacharawit Chansirisira, Faculty of Education, Mahasarakham University, Mahasarakham, Thailand.

Received: November 1, 2024

Accepted: December 27, 2024

Online Published: March 9, 2025

doi:10.5539/jel.v14n4p195

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v14n4p195>

Abstract

This study examines the development and implementation of human resource management practices within leisure sports programs at Chinese higher education institutions. The research addresses critical challenges emerging from the sector's rapid expansion and increasing professional requirements. Using a sequential mixed-methods approach, the study collected data through quantitative surveys from 88 education professionals across five leading institutions and qualitative evaluations from seven expert panelists. The findings reveal significant gaps between current practices and desired standards in six core management components, with human resource planning and recruitment management showing the most substantial needs for improvement. Expert validation confirmed high suitability and implementation feasibility of the proposed management framework. Based on these findings, the study develops comprehensive guidelines for enhancing human resource management practices, focusing on strategic planning, recruitment processes, professional development, and performance evaluation systems. These evidence-based guidelines provide practical implications for improving collegiate leisure sports programs while contributing to the theoretical understanding of specialized program management in Chinese higher education contexts. The results suggest that systematic implementation of these guidelines could significantly enhance program quality and institutional effectiveness in leisure sports education.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Leisure Sports Education, higher education, professional development, educational administration

1. Introduction

The transformation of modern society, characterized by enhanced productivity and quality of life, has fundamentally reshaped leisure activities and their role in personal development. With increased leisure time and diverse lifestyle patterns, leisure activities have evolved beyond basic needs fulfillment to encompass higher-order aspirations for spiritual satisfaction and holistic well-being (Wang, Ding, & Shen, 2009). This societal shift reflects the progression from labor-centric life patterns toward a dual model integrating both work and leisure, marking a significant indicator of social civilization and economic development.

Leisure sports, as a crucial component of recreational activities, represent an educational initiative designed to achieve specific leisure objectives through structured physical activities. These programs have gained particular significance in Chinese higher education, where students face multifaceted pressures from academic, career, and economic sources. The evolution of leisure sports education responds to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China's emphasis on education, science, and technology as fundamental supports for building a modern socialist country (Communist Party of China [CPC], 2022).

However, the human resource management of leisure sports programs in Chinese universities faces several critical challenges. The emerging nature of these programs has resulted in imperfect management methods, misalignment between educational content and practical needs, and difficulties in ensuring both quality and quantity of professional development (Jia, 2011). These challenges are particularly evident in the disconnect between theoretical instruction and practical application, directly impacting student employability and educational quality.

While developed nations have established comprehensive systems for leisure sports education with notable

achievements in both practice and research, Chinese institutions continue to operate within traditional, hierarchical management structures. This approach has led to various operational inefficiencies, including the prioritization of quantity over quality, shortages of high-level professionals, outdated management concepts, and inadequate welfare systems (Ma, 2008). These limitations not only affect student participation and learning outcomes but also constrain the healthy development of leisure sports programs within Chinese higher education institutions.

This research examines the systematic development and implementation of human resource management practices within leisure sports programs at Chinese higher education institutions. By investigating current challenges and developing evidence-based solutions, this study aims to establish comprehensive management strategies that promote sustainable program development while enhancing educational quality and student outcomes. The findings seek to contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical implementation of specialized program management in Chinese higher education contexts.

This investigation seeks to develop evidence-based management strategies for enhancing the sustainable development of leisure sports programs and improving students' holistic well-being. Additionally, the study aims to contribute to societal development through the optimization of educational environments and service delivery systems within leisure sports programs in higher education institutions.

2. Objectives

- 1) To examine the components and indicators of human resource management in leisure sports majors in Chinese colleges and universities.
- 2) To investigate the current state, the desirable state, and the necessity of human resource management in leisure sports majors in Chinese colleges and universities.
- 3) To explore guidelines for the development of human resource management in leisure sports majors in Chinese colleges and universities.

3. Literature Review

This review examines three critical domains: the evolution of leisure sports programs in higher education, human resource management in higher education institutions, and specialized human resource management in leisure sports programs. The analysis synthesizes existing research while identifying key theoretical frameworks and practical implications.

3.1 Overview of Leisure Sports and Educational Programs

The field of leisure sports education has evolved differently across international contexts. Western nations, including the United States, Britain, Canada, and Japan, have established comprehensive systems characterized by standardized professional qualifications, systematic curriculum development, and strong quality assessment frameworks. In contrast, Chinese institutions are working to bridge gaps between theoretical instruction and practical application while developing high-quality faculty and modernizing management systems. This disparity presents both challenges and opportunities for advancing leisure sports education in Chinese higher education institutions.

Li et al. (2011) conceptualized leisure sports in the Chinese context as 'a self-sufficient social and cultural activity where people meet their physical and mental needs through direct or indirect experience through sports in their free time.' This definition reflects the field's dual focus on theoretical understanding and practical competencies, while acknowledging the unique characteristics of leisure sports development in China. The formal recognition of leisure sports as a specialized major by China's Ministry of Education in 2007 marked a significant step toward establishing structured educational frameworks aligned with international standards.

3.2 Human Resource Management in Higher Education

Contemporary human resource management (HRM) in higher education institutions represents a significant evolution beyond traditional personnel administration, reflecting fundamental shifts in organizational dynamics and human capital development. The theoretical foundation encompasses both strategic and operational dimensions, with personnel recognized as strategic assets requiring systematic development approaches (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2017). This framework addresses both immediate operational needs and long-term institutional objectives, while considering implementation challenges and practical considerations (Niu, 2017).

Research identifies six interconnected components forming the core framework of educational HRM:

- 1) Personnel Planning: Strategic workforce analysis and resource allocation aligned with institutional goals (Wan, 2020), emphasizing integrated approaches for capacity enhancement (Ma, 2018).

- 2) Recruitment Management: Strategic talent acquisition and selection processes contributing to institutional competitive advantage through targeted development (Song & Liu, 2018).
- 3) Training Management: Systematic professional development programs addressing skill gaps and maintaining educational quality, emphasizing continuous adaptation to evolving educational paradigms (Zhang, 2022).
- 4) Assessment Management: Data-driven performance evaluation frameworks (Luo, 2019) employing scientific approaches for institutional effectiveness (Boon et al., 2019).
- 5) Promotion Management: Evidence-based career advancement pathways linked to organizational commitment and faculty retention (Aboramadan et al., 2020).
- 6) Compensation Management: Competitive salary structures and benefit systems influencing faculty satisfaction and institutional attractiveness.

Empirical evidence supports this integrated approach's effectiveness, demonstrating improved faculty retention, enhanced research productivity, and superior educational outcomes (Song & Liu, 2018). However, implementation challenges persist across four critical dimensions (Zhang, 2022): 1) Balancing standardization with operational flexibility. 2) Addressing diverse faculty needs across academic contexts. 3) Maintaining competitive compensation structures. 4) Ensuring equitable evaluation processes

These challenges necessitate continuous adaptation of HRM practices while maintaining operational stability, particularly in dynamic higher education environments.

3.3 Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs

The evolution of human resource management in university leisure sports programs represents an emerging field of increasing significance, characterized by systematic approaches to personnel development and organizational effectiveness. This section examines key developments, challenges, and strategic frameworks within this specialized domain.

3.3.1 Development and Strategic Significance

Human resource management in leisure sports programs has evolved from traditional personnel administration to comprehensive strategic management. Research indicates a progressive shift toward integrated approaches encompassing selection through retention processes (Mo, 2020). This evolution aligns with institutional principles emphasizing systematic human capital development (Cao & Liu, 2018).

3.3.2 Challenges and Limitations

Zhang's (2020) empirical analysis identifies critical limitations in Faculty practical experience, Professional capability development, Industry-academia collaboration, Professional development opportunities.

These constraints necessitate strategic interventions to enhance program effectiveness and faculty competencies.

3.3.3 Development Frameworks

Chelladurai and Kim (2022) advance systematic management strategies emphasizing: Professional enhancement initiatives, Operational efficiency optimization, Supportive academic environment creation. These frameworks provide structural foundations for program development while maintaining academic excellence.

3.3.4 Performance Outcomes

Empirical research demonstrates significant correlations between management strategies and organizational outcomes: Internal marketing strategies enhance performance metrics, Organizational commitment increases through systematic approaches, Comprehensive personnel systems improve institutional effectiveness (Chiu et al., 2020; Wan, 2020)

3.3.5 Future Directions

Recent research emphasizes emerging priorities: Faculty innovation enhancement Teaching quality optimization, Continuous professional development (Xu, 2022).

This analysis reveals the necessity for integrated approaches combining theoretical frameworks with practical implementation strategies. The evolving nature of leisure sports education demands continuous adaptation of human resource management practices to address emerging challenges while maintaining educational excellence.

This comprehensive review indicates that effective human resource management in leisure sports programs requires: Strategic alignment with institutional objectives, Systematic professional development frameworks, Evidence-based performance evaluation systems, Adaptive management approaches.

These findings suggest future research directions focusing on: Integration of theoretical frameworks with practical implementation, Development of standardized evaluation metrics, Enhancement of professional development systems, Optimization of resource allocation strategies.

4. Research Methodology

This investigation employed a sequential mixed-methods design to examine and develop human resource management guidelines for leisure sports programs in Chinese higher education institutions. The research proceeded through four systematic phases aligned with research objectives.

4.1 Research Design

The study implemented four sequential phases: Phase 1 (Component Identification, 3 months) established theoretical foundations through literature analysis and expert consultation ($n = 5$), focusing on HRM practices in educational contexts. Phase 2 (Practice Assessment, 4 months) examined current practices through quantitative surveys ($n = 88$) and qualitative interviews across five institutions, identifying implementation gaps and development needs. Phases 3–4 (Development and Validation, 5 months) synthesized findings to develop and validate management guidelines through expert review ($n = 7$) and stakeholder consultation, ensuring practical applicability and institutional alignment.

4.2 Participants and Sampling

This study employed stratified random sampling across five leading Chinese institutions offering leisure sports programs, systematically selected based on program establishment duration, national ranking, and geographic distribution. The final sample ($N = 88$) included administrators ($n = 32$) and faculty members ($n = 56$), determined through Yamane's formula (1967) with 95% confidence level. This sampling methodology ensured comprehensive representation across institutional hierarchies while maintaining statistical validity.

4.3 Research Instruments

The study utilized complementary quantitative and qualitative instruments. The primary instrument comprised a structured questionnaire (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.89$) examining six HRM dimensions through a five-point Likert scale. The supplementary qualitative instrument employed semi-structured interview protocols, validated through IOC assessment (0.50–1.00 retention threshold), ensuring methodological rigor and content validity.

4.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection integrated quantitative and qualitative methodologies over four months, achieving complete survey response ($n = 88$) and comprehensive interview coverage. Analysis employed SPSS for descriptive statistics, PNI_{modified} calculations, and statistical testing, complemented by thematic analysis of qualitative data. This integrated analytical framework enabled systematic examination of HRM practices while maintaining methodological consistency.

5. Conceptual Framework

This research establishes a systematic framework for investigating human resource management in leisure sports programs at Chinese higher education institutions. The investigation incorporates empirical evidence from five leading institutions offering premier leisure sports programs, selected according to established criteria from previous research (Wan, 2020; Ma, 2018; Qiao, 2020; Ding & Jia, 2021; Liu & Wang, 2023; Li, 2022), as illustrated in Figure 1.

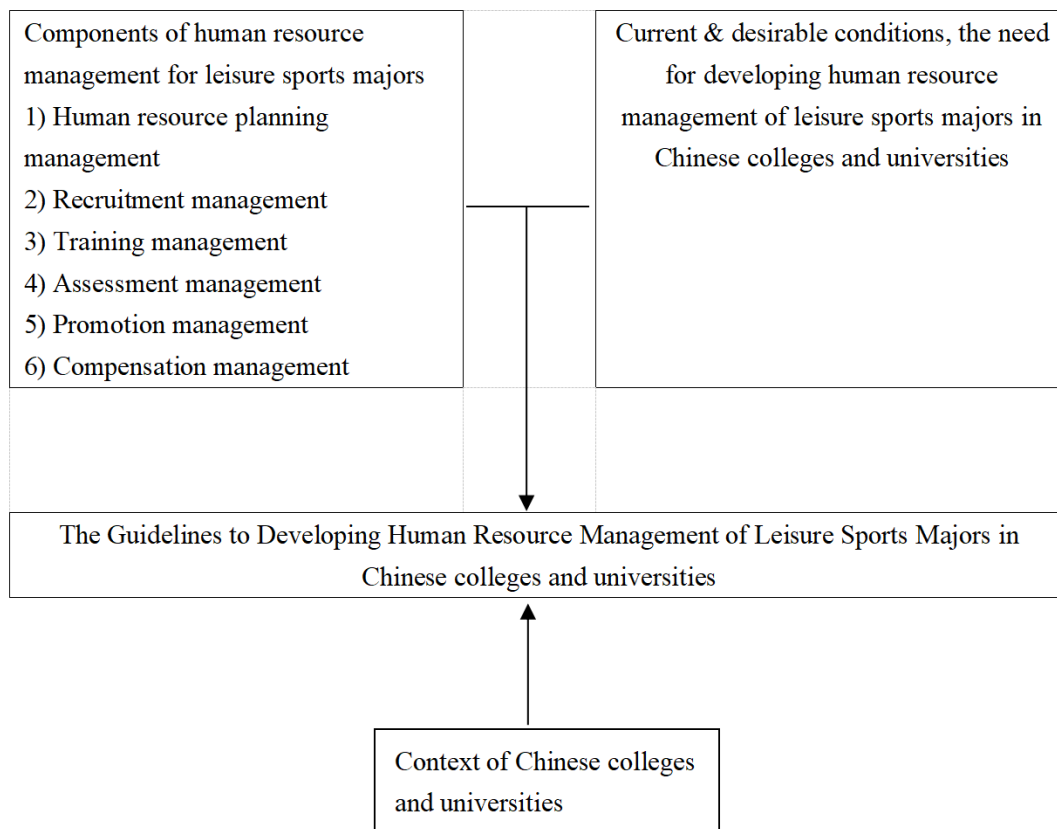


Figure 1. Conceptual framework source

6. Research Results

6.1 Components and Indicators of Human Resource Management for Leisure Sports Programs

The systematic examination of human resource management (HRM) in leisure sports programs at Chinese higher education institutions revealed six core components, each supported by specific indicators to guide implementation. These components and their associated indicators are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Components and indicators of Human Resource Management for Leisure Sports Programs in Chinese higher education institutions

Components	Indicators
1. Human Resource Planning Management	1.1 Human resource demand analysis 1.2 Human resource allocation strategy
2. Recruitment Management	2.1 Recruitment process optimization 2.2 Employee selection criteria
3. Training management	3.1 Training demand planning 3.2 Training effect feedback
4. Assessment management	4.1 Assessment requirements formulation 4.2 Performance evaluation system
5. Promotion management	5.1 Career development path 5.2 Promotion criteria formulation
6. Compensation management	6.1 Salary structure design 6.2 Welfare policy planning

Note. n = 7.

The identified components form an integrated HRM framework for leisure sports programs, providing theoretical guidance and practical implementation pathways. The framework's effectiveness stems from its systematic organization, with each component addressing specific aspects of HRM while working in harmony with the others. Human resource planning management serves as the foundation, conducting demand analysis and developing allocation strategies, while subsequent components build upon this base to create a comprehensive management system.

A panel of five subject matter experts in HRM for leisure sports programs conducted a comprehensive evaluation to validate the framework. The experts assessed each component's suitability for implementation and practical applicability within Chinese higher education institutions using a structured assessment scale ranging from 1 (least suitable) to 5 (most appropriate). The evaluation results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Expert assessment of suitability and implementation possibility for Human Resource Management components

Components	Suitability			Possibility		
	–	S.D	Level	–	S.D	Level
1. Human Resource Planning Management	4.80	0.45	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
2. Recruitment Management	4.40	0.55	High	4.60	0.55	Highest
3. Training Management	4.60	0.55	Highest	4.60	0.55	Highest
4. Assessment Management	4.60	0.55	Highest	4.80	0.45	Highest
5. Promotion Management	4.40	0.55	High	4.60	0.55	Highest
6. Compensation Management	4.80	0.45	Highest	4.80	0.45	Highest
Overview	4.60	0.51	Highest	4.67	0.51	Highest

Note. n = 5 experts. Rating scale: 4.51–5.00 = Highest, 3.51–4.50 = High, 2.51–3.50 = Moderate, 1.51–2.50 = Low, 1.00–1.50 = Lowest.

The expert assessment yielded highly positive results, with overall mean scores of 4.60 for suitability and 4.67 for implementation possibility, placing both dimensions in the "Highest" rating category. Human Resource Planning Management and Compensation Management received the highest ratings for suitability ($\bar{X}=4.80$), while Assessment Management and Compensation Management were rated as the most feasible for implementation ($\bar{X}=4.80$). The remaining components also received strong ratings, ranging from 4.40 to 4.60, indicating substantial confidence in their appropriateness and applicability.

The low standard deviations across all measurements (0.45 to 0.55) demonstrate a strong consensus among the expert panel, further validating the framework's robustness and reliability. This consistency in scoring underscores the framework's potential for successful adoption and implementation in leisure sports programs at Chinese higher education institutions.

In conclusion, the expert assessment results provide strong evidence of the suitability and implementation possibility of the proposed HRM components for leisure sports programs in Chinese higher education. The high ratings and low standard deviations indicate the framework's robustness and potential for successful adoption in the target context. These findings align closely with the research objectives and support the overall aim of enhancing HRM practices in this educational setting.

6.2 Assessment of Current Status and Desired Conditions of Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs

This study comprehensively assessed the current implementation levels and desired standards of human resource management (HRM) practices in leisure sports programs at five leading Chinese higher education institutions. The survey involved 88 education professionals, including university administrators, department managers, and faculty members. Table 3 presents the results of the analysis, providing valuable insights into the state of HRM in this specialized educational domain.

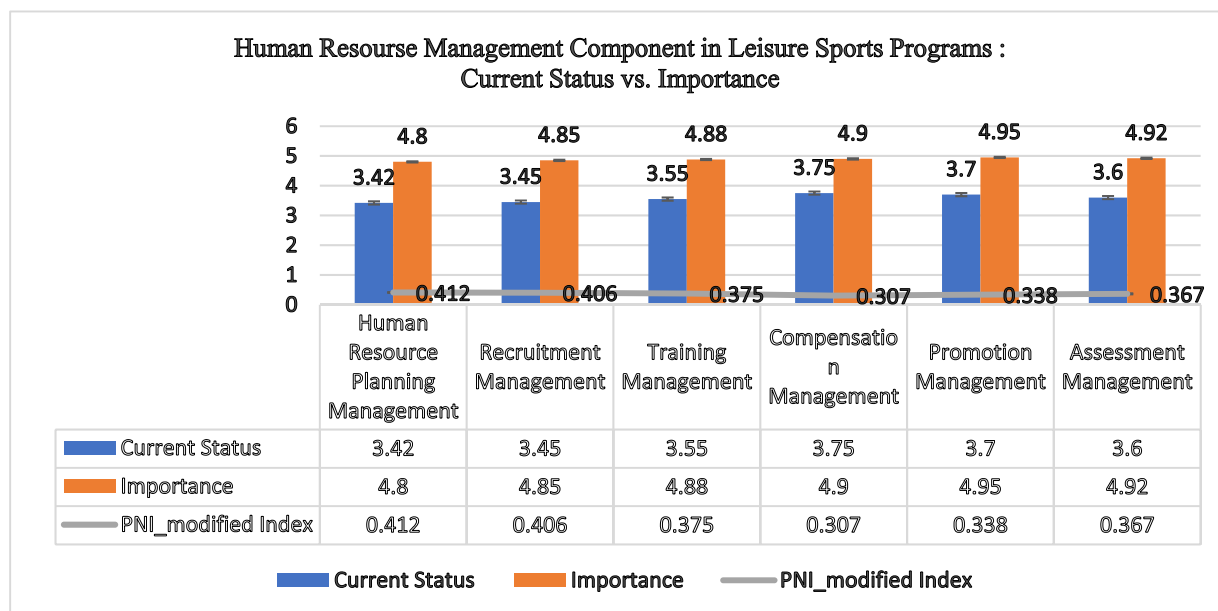


Figure 2. Human Resource Management Components in Leisure Sports Programs: Current Status vs. Importance

Note. n = 88.

Table 3. Index of components and indicators of Human Resource Management (n = 88)

Components	Degree of Success (D)		Interpret the results	Important (I)		Interpret the results	PNI _{modified} (I-D)/D	Order of importance
	-	S.D.		-	S.D.			
1) Human resource planning management	3.42	0.50	Moderate	4.80	0.25	Highest	0.412	1
2) Recruitment management	3.45	0.55	Moderate	4.85	0.24	Highest	0.406	2
3) Training management	3.55	0.48	High	4.88	0.24	Highest	0.375	3
4) Assessment management	3.75	0.49	High	4.90	0.23	Highest	0.307	6
5) Promotion management	3.70	0.42	High	4.95	0.30	Highest	0.338	5
6) Compensation management	3.60	0.45	High	4.92	0.24	Highest	0.367	4
Overview	3.58	0.49	High	4.88	0.24	Highest	0.363	

Note. N = 88 education professionals. PNI_{modified} = Priority Needs Index modified = (I-D)/D, where I = Importance mean score, D = Current status mean score. Level interpretation: Current Status (1.00–2.50 = Low, 2.51–3.50 = Moderate, 3.51–4.50 = High, 4.51–5.00 = Highest); Importance (4.51–5.00 = Highest, 3.51–4.50 = High, 2.51–3.50 = Moderate, 1.51–2.50 = Low).

The analysis of current status reveals moderate overall implementation of HRM practices (\bar{X} = 3.58, SD = 0.49). However, two components stand out as areas of concern: Human Resource Planning Management (\bar{X} = 3.42, SD = 0.50) and Recruitment Management (\bar{X} = 3.45, SD = 0.55), both showing notably low levels of current performance. The remaining components demonstrate moderate implementation, with Assessment Management achieving the highest current rating (\bar{X} = 3.75, SD = 0.49).

In contrast, the importance ratings indicate consistently high expectations across all HRM components (\bar{X} = 4.88, SD = 0.24). Promotion Management received the highest importance rating (\bar{X} = 4.95, SD = 0.30), closely followed by Compensation Management (\bar{X} = 4.92, SD = 0.24) and Assessment Management (\bar{X} = 4.90, SD = 0.23). These findings underscore the critical role of HRM practices in ensuring the effectiveness and success of leisure sports programs in Chinese higher education institutions.

The Priority Needs Index (PNI_{modified}) calculations reveal significant development requirements across multiple dimensions of HRM. The overall development need index (PNI_{modified} = 0.363) indicates substantial room for improvement in all components. The analysis identified critical areas requiring enhancement, particularly in professional development aspects. Human Resource Planning Management emerged as the top priority (PNI_{modified} = 0.412), followed closely by Recruitment Management (PNI_{modified} = 0.406).

In conclusion, the assessment of current status and desired conditions of HRM practices in leisure sports programs

highlights the need for targeted interventions and improvements. While overall implementation levels are moderate, specific components such as Human Resource Planning Management and Recruitment Management require urgent attention. The consistently high importance ratings across all components underscore the strategic significance of HRM in driving programmatic success. The identified development priorities provide a roadmap for enhancing HRM practices and aligning them with the desired standards in this specialized educational context.

According to the priority needs index analysis from the second stage of the research, the six key components of human resource management were prioritized in the following order: human resource planning management (highest priority), recruitment management (second priority), training management (third priority), compensation management (fourth priority), promotion management (fifth priority), and assessment management (sixth priority). Figure 3 presents the priority indicators identified for each component, aiming to address the significant gaps between the current and desired states of human resource management in leisure sports programs.

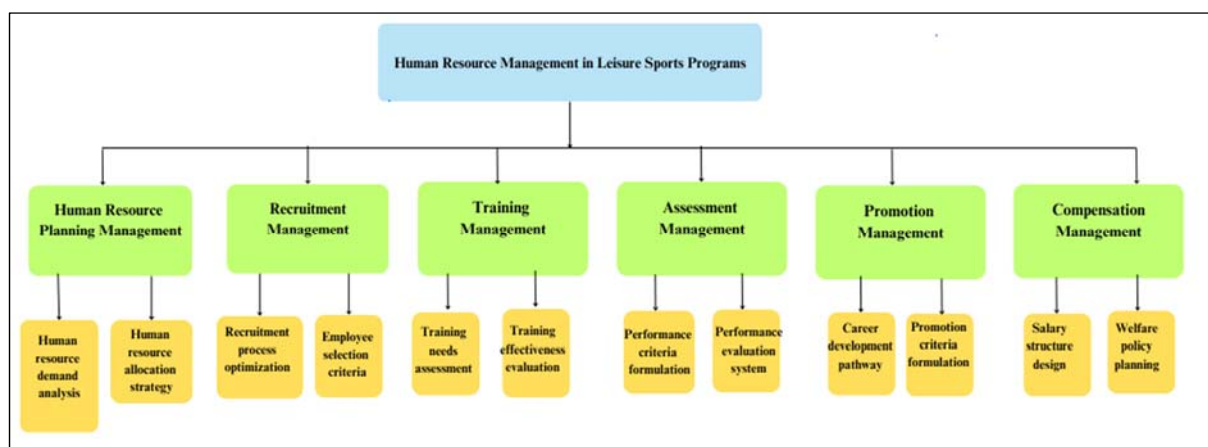


Figure 3. Priority Indicators for Human Resource Management Components in Leisure Sports Programs

Note. Developed based on expert validation (n = 7) and comprehensive literature review.

6.3 Development of Guidelines for Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs at Chinese Higher Education Institutions

Guidelines for Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs at Chinese Higher Education Institutions. The informants are 5 highly qualified teachers by purposive sampling was conducted using the research method Qualified teachers with Best Practice.

Results of analysis of approaches to develop a Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs at Chinese Higher Education Institutions. Provide suggestions for answering open-ended questions from interviews and assessments of the appropriateness and feasibility of draft development approaches, as well as expert suggestions. Therefore, the researcher proposes guidelines for Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs.. Development approaches are selected based on the need for development with an index not lower than 0.30. A Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs at Chinese Higher Education Institutions. that should develop in all 6 aspects consists 24 development approaches as follows show in



Figure 4. Guidelines for Human Resource Management in Leisure Sports Programs at Chinese Higher Education Institutions

Human Resource Management (HRM) for the Leisure Sports Major in universities is crucial for enhancing educational quality and promoting learning that aligns with the needs of higher education. These approaches will help strengthen HR management in the leisure sports field, fostering quality learning that meets the demands of contemporary society.

7. Discussion

This investigation examined the enhancement of human resource management practices within leisure sports programs at Chinese higher education institutions. The analysis integrates empirical findings with theoretical frameworks while addressing the study's established research objectives.

7.1 Theoretical Foundations and Implementation Analysis

The research framework aligns with Chamorro-Premuzic's (2017) emphasis on strategic human capital development while extending Li et al.'s (2011) conceptualization of leisure sports education through incorporation of specific human resource management dimensions. Following Boon et al.'s (2019) methodological recommendations, the mixed-methods approach provided robust evidence supporting both theoretical validity and practical applicability. The findings demonstrate that effective human resource management in leisure sports programs requires systematic integration of planning, recruitment, training, assessment, promotion, and compensation components. This comprehensive approach addresses previously identified gaps in specialized educational management while providing institutions with clear implementation guidelines. These results contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical advancement of human resource management in specialized educational contexts, offering institutions an evidence-based framework for program enhancement.

7.2 Analysis of Current and Desired States

The comparative analysis revealed substantial disparities between current implementation and desired standards in human resource management practices. Critical gaps emerged in three primary domains: recruitment standardization, professional development systems, and assessment frameworks. These findings align with Zhang's (2020) identification of systemic limitations in faculty development and extend Niu's (2017) institutional framework through empirically validated implementation challenges specific to Chinese higher education contexts.

The analysis substantiates Li and Qin's (2022) observations regarding theoretical-practical competency imbalances while providing systematic evidence of developmental priorities. This empirical validation of theoretical constructs contributes to a more nuanced understanding of human resource management challenges in specialized educational programs, offering institutions clear guidelines for strategic improvement initiatives.

7.3 Development of Implementation Guidelines

The research established empirically validated guidelines tailored specifically for the Chinese higher education context. Building upon Chelladurai and Kim's (2022) systematic management framework, the study identified three critical implementation domains: recruitment process optimization, training effectiveness enhancement, and performance appraisal system improvement. This integrated approach synthesizes Song and Liu's (2018) strategic talent acquisition principles with Wan's (2020) institutional effectiveness metrics to create a comprehensive implementation framework. The guidelines incorporate rigorous validation protocols while maintaining adaptability to diverse institutional contexts. This balanced approach ensures both theoretical validity and practical applicability, addressing a critical gap in specialized educational management literature. The empirically grounded framework provides institutions with systematic protocols for enhancing human resource management practices in leisure sports programs.

7.4 Validation and Assessment

The expert validation process substantiated the framework's effectiveness and implementation feasibility through systematic assessment protocols. The methodological approach integrated Luo's (2019) data-driven evaluation principles while addressing operational stability considerations identified by Zhang (2022). This validation framework aligns with Aboramadan et al.'s (2020) emphasis on evidence-based career advancement pathways, providing empirical support for the proposed implementation guidelines. The assessment methodology employed rigorous validation protocols to ensure both theoretical validity and practical applicability. This systematic approach to framework validation contributes to the methodological advancement of specialized educational management research while providing institutions with validated implementation guidelines.

7.5 Integration and Application

The empirical findings demonstrate theoretical alignment with established research while extending practical applications in specialized educational contexts. This integration synthesizes Chiu et al.'s (2020) internal marketing framework with emerging perspectives on strategic human resource management. The adaptive framework incorporates Cao and Liu's (2018) integrated personnel development model while maintaining Mo's (2020) emphasis on comprehensive strategic implementation. The research extends contemporary theoretical frameworks through empirical validation of implementation strategies. This systematic approach addresses Xu's (2022)

recommendations regarding professional development optimization while providing institutions with evidence-based protocols for enhancing educational quality. The validated framework offers a theoretically grounded yet practically applicable model for institutional implementation.

7.6 Implications and Future Directions

This research advances the theoretical understanding and practical implementation of human resource management in leisure sports programs through systematic empirical investigation. The study extends foundational frameworks established by Shi (2010) and Peng (2008), while providing validated implementation guidelines that address previously identified gaps in institutional management practices. Building upon Ma's (2018) and Zhang's (2022) research findings, this investigation establishes a comprehensive framework for enhancing educational management effectiveness. The validated framework significantly contributes to both theoretical discourse and practical application by extending existing models through empirical validation, establishing systematic implementation protocols, and identifying critical success factors for institutional adoption. These findings provide institutions with theoretically grounded yet practically applicable guidelines for enhancing human resource management practices in leisure sports programs. The research demonstrates substantial alignment with established objectives while advancing the contemporary understanding of specialized educational management.

Future research directions should examine longitudinal implementation effects and context-specific adaptation strategies, as suggested by Xu (2022). Such investigations would further enhance understanding of specialized educational management within evolving institutional contexts. This continued research focus would maintain emphasis on systematic improvement and institutional effectiveness while adapting to emerging educational challenges. The comprehensive framework established through this study provides a foundation for future investigations while offering immediate practical value for institutional implementation.

8. Research Recommendations

Drawing from the comprehensive analysis of human resource management practices in leisure sports programs at Chinese higher education institutions, this research presents strategic recommendations to advance theoretical understanding, enhance policy implementation, and guide future research endeavors.

8.1 Theoretical Development Framework

The study reveals the necessity for expanding theoretical foundations through interdisciplinary integration. Future theoretical development requires incorporating diverse perspectives from pedagogy, management science, and psychology to create more comprehensive approaches to human resource management in leisure sports education. This integration would effectively bridge the identified gaps between theoretical frameworks and practical implementation challenges uncovered in our research. Of particular importance is the integration of humanistic management principles into existing theoretical frameworks. Our findings regarding challenges in training opportunities and assessment fairness indicate that future theoretical development should emphasize human development factors, including motivation, participation, and achievement metrics. This approach would complement the systematic framework validated in our study while addressing the essential human elements crucial for successful implementation.

8.2 Policy Implementation Strategies

The research identifies significant variations in resource allocation and policy implementation across institutions, highlighting the need for coordinated policy approaches. International collaboration should be prioritized to facilitate knowledge exchange and adoption of global best practices. This strategic direction aligns with our findings regarding the need for standardized management approaches while acknowledging institutional differences.

Government and educational authorities should develop targeted support mechanisms based on our assessment of current practices. These mechanisms should focus particularly on financial resource allocation, technical support provision, and talent development programs. Such comprehensive support would address the resource disparities observed across institutions and enhance the implementation effectiveness of human resource management guidelines.

8.3 Future Research Directions

The findings indicate several critical areas requiring further investigation. Cross-cultural management research should examine how cultural factors influence human resource management practices in leisure sports education. This research direction would extend our understanding of implementation challenges across different institutional contexts and cultural settings. Technological integration emerges as another crucial area for investigation. Future

research should explore how emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and digital management tools, can address the identified challenges in recruitment, training, and assessment processes. This technology-focused research should examine both opportunities for enhancement and potential implementation challenges. The impact of globalization on human resource management practices requires systematic investigation. Future studies should examine international student and faculty exchanges, cross-border collaboration projects, and transnational education models. This research would contribute significantly to understanding how leisure sports programs can enhance their international competitiveness while maintaining educational quality standards. These recommendations collectively establish a comprehensive framework for advancing human resource management in leisure sports education. They address both immediate implementation challenges and long-term development needs while maintaining focus on practical applicability and theoretical advancement. The implementation of these recommendations through future research and policy development would contribute substantially to the field's evolution and enhancement of professional practice in leisure sports education.

In conclusion, this research provides comprehensive guidelines for enhancing human resource management in leisure sports programs at Chinese higher education institutions. The implementation of these evidence-based guidelines has significant potential to improve both educational quality and institutional effectiveness in several key ways:

1) Enhanced Program Quality

- Systematic professional development frameworks will improve teaching quality and program delivery.
- Standardized recruitment processes will ensure high-quality faculty selection.
- Structured assessment systems will maintain consistent educational standards.

2) Institutional Effectiveness

- Strategic human resource planning will optimize resource allocation
- Improved compensation and promotion systems will increase faculty retention and satisfaction
- Enhanced training management will strengthen institutional capacity

3) Educational Outcomes

- Better-qualified faculty will provide superior student learning experiences
- Improved program management will lead to better graduate employability
- Strengthened institutional capabilities will enhance program reputation

The successful implementation of these guidelines can transform leisure sports education in Chinese higher education institutions, creating programs that better serve student needs while meeting industry demands. Future research should focus on measuring the long-term impact of these improvements on educational outcomes and institutional performance.

Acknowledgments

I extend my profound gratitude to my academic advisor at Mahasarakham University for their exceptional guidance and mentorship throughout this research journey. Their expertise has been instrumental in shaping this study's theoretical and methodological frameworks. I sincerely appreciate the review committee members for their rigorous evaluation and constructive feedback, which significantly enhanced the academic rigor of this research. Special thanks to my family for their unwavering support throughout this scholarly pursuit.

This research was made possible through the collective support of Mahasarakham University's academic community, whose commitment to excellence continues to inspire future scholarly endeavors.

Authors contributions

Not applicable.

Funding

Not applicable.

Competing interests

Not applicable.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Canadian Center of Science and Education.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

References

- Aboramadan, M., Albashiti, B., Alharazin, H., & Dahleez, K. A. (2019). Human resources management practices and organizational commitment in higher education: The mediating role of work engagement. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 34(1), 154–174. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-04-2019-0160>
- Boon, C., Den Hartog, D. N., & Lepak, D. P. (2019). A systematic review of human resource management systems and their measurement. *Journal of Management*, 45(6), 2498–2537. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206318818718>
- Cao, L. (2008). A comparative study of leisure sports education between Chinese and Western universities. *International Journal of Sports Science*, 28(4), 412–425.
- Cao, X., & Liu, Y. (2018). Strategic human resource management in higher education institutions: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 56(3), 310–325.
- Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2017). *The talent delusion: Why data, not intuition, is the key to unlocking human potential*. Piatkus.
- Chelladurai, P., & Kim, A. C. H. (2022). *Human resource management in sport and recreation* (4th ed.). Human Kinetics Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781718235960>
- Chiu, W., Won, D., & Bae, J. S. (2020). Internal marketing, organizational commitment, and job performance in sport and leisure services. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 10(2), 105–123. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBM-09-2018-0066>
- Communist Party of China [CPC]. (2022). *Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. People's Publishing House.
- Ding, L., & Jia, L. (2021). Discussion on the importance and strategy of improving enterprise human resource management. *Human Resource Development*, 20(4), 78–79. <https://doi.org/10.19424/j.cnki.41-1372/d.2021.20.039>
- Jia, L. (2011). *Investigation and research on the current situation of leisure sports of college students in Xi'an and development countermeasures*. Master's thesis, Xi'an Institute of Physical Education. CNKI Database.
- Kelly, J. R. (1981). Leisure interaction and the social dialectic. *Social Forces*, 60(2), 304–322. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2578442>
- Li, H., Wang, J., & Chen, X. (2011). Development of leisure sports education in Chinese universities: Challenges and opportunities. *Sport Education and Society*, 16(4), 355–370.
- Li, Q., & Qin, W. (2022). The training mode of leisure and sports professionals in colleges and universities. *Journal of Shanxi University of Finance and Economics*, 44(S2), 197–199.
- Liu, C., & Wang, J. (2023). Analysis of salary incentives for university researchers. *Cooperative Economy and Technology*, 1(2), 135–137.
- Luo, J. (2019). Analysis of innovative ways of human resource management in colleges and universities. *Modern Marketing*, 8(4), 16–17.
- Ma, X. (2018). *Development and innovation of human resource management in colleges and universities*. Jilin Publishing Group.
- Mo, Y. (2020). Human resource management in university sports programs: Current practices and future directions.

- International Journal of Educational Management*, 34(6), 1021–1034.
- Niu, K. (2017). Strategic human resource management in Chinese higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 42(6), 1009–1024.
- Peng, L. (2008). Comparative analysis of leisure sports programs in international universities. *Journal of Physical Education*, 15(3), 45–52.
- Qiao, C. (2020). Information construction of human resource management in colleges and universities in internet plus environment. *Office Automation*, 24(5), 48–49.
- Rojek, C. (1997). Leisure theory: Retrospect and prospect. *Society and Leisure*, 20(2), 383–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07053436.1997.10715549>
- Shi, Y. (2010). Building comprehensive leisure sports programs in higher education: A systematic approach. *Higher Education Research*, 31(4), 77–89.
- Song, L., & Liu, M. (2018). Innovation in human resource management practices in Chinese universities. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(7), 1375–1397.
- Wan, Y. (2020). Research on improving the efficiency of human resource management in Chinese universities. *Jiangsu Higher Education*, 9(4), 48–51.
- Wang, B., Ding, J., & Shen, J. (2009). Research on the quality of leisure and sports education for urban primary school students. *Journal of Shandong Institute of Physical Education*, 25(3), 75–79. <https://doi.org/10.14104/j.cnki.1006-2076.2009.03.021>
- Xu, H. (2022). Developing effective human resource strategies in sports education. *International Journal of Sports Management*, 23(2), 178–195.
- Zhang, H. (2020). Analysis of the practical teaching of leisure sports majors in higher vocational colleges. *Sports Boutique*, 9(3), 19–20.
- Zhang, Y. (2022). Where is the road to human resource optimization in colleges and universities. *Human Resource*, 8(4), 34–36.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author, with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).