



Biological Power: Disciplinary and Managerial Societies Emerging in the Body and School Physical Education in the Neoliberal Era

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Abstract. Efforts to analyze athletes' training processes through a Foucauldian lens have been ongoing long before recent events. Various monitoring methods have been utilized in elite sports to manage and control athletes during their practice routines, as extensively chronicled. In our modern societal landscape, characterized by a transition from a disciplined society to a controlling society, and ultimately into a performance society and management society, a notable incident involving player scrutiny in a prestigious professional baseball organization prompts a pertinent inquiry: "Has the disciplined society truly reached its endpoint?".

Keywords: Biological Power, Neoliberal Era, School Physical Education, Disciplinary and Managerial.

1 Introduction

The Panopticon, as discussed by Michel Foucault, serves as an efficient prototype prison structure for guards to monitor prisoners. Placing the prisoner in an asymmetrical space where guards remain unseen, the Panopticon's ruling principle underpins Foucault's concept of a "disciplined society," where surveillance and punishment are paramount. In Foucault's estimation, the Panopticon proves to be a tool well-suited for elucidating modern times.

If Foucault's conceptualization of a disciplined society serves as a judicious perspective for dissecting present-day circumstances, then Gilles Deleuze's notion of a "managed society" provides a valuable framework for understanding post-modern scenarios.^[1] Research exploring sports spaces and earnestly interpreting postmodern conditions as managerial social constructs indicate that our society continues to function within the parameters of a disciplined society, wherein individuals are not entirely emancipated from core societal mechanisms.^[2] As acknowledged, the shift in societal paradigms is an evolutionary process, where vestiges of bygone eras persist in our daily lives. This transformation represents a sophisticated dialectical unity.

The maintenance of the Panopticon's relevance in contemporary society can be attributed to the pragmatic implementation of neoliberalism. While ostensibly champi-

oning individual liberty and desires, neoliberalism ultimately subjugates them under dominant power structures. It internalizes norms in an effective, non-coercive manner, similar to the envisaged "self-monitoring" feature of the Panopticon. Just as a detainee remains unaware of the watchtower's observer, the ruling class remains blind to certain realities, thereby continuing to enforce surveillance, control, and penalties for non-conformist behavior.

This study aims to scrutinize representations of a disciplined society and a managerial society within the domain of school physical education from a Foucauldian perspective. The emphasis on school sports arises from the plethora of studies examining professional sports through a Foucauldian framework. Fundamentally, schools are perceived as carceral institutions in Foucault's schema, epitomizing the overt manifestation of disciplinary or regulatory power in the neoliberal epoch.

Through a review of literature, this paper analyzes the works of Foucault, as well as the advanced research in physical education and sports sociology that may form the basis of his dominant theory. This article presents the findings of research conducted for the aforementioned purposes.^[3] Viewing society through the lens of the prevailing ideology of modern times - neoliberalism, it uncovers that the concepts of "body" and "school physical education" embody attributes of both disciplinarian and managerial societies. It identifies the issues stemming from body discipline and management techniques applied to individuals and school physical education, and suggests potential avenues for improvement.

1.1 The Body in the Neoliberal Era

Violence is implicitly embedded within discourse, which is entirely shaped by power dynamics that inherently hold power. The issue lies in the fact that this discourse is often utilized in a manner that is seen as conventional for understanding and navigating the self and the world through language, actions, thoughts, and other means. Such discourse is commonly accepted as "common sense" and "natural", a phenomenon labeled by Foucault as the internalization of discipline^[4].

Among the most powerful words in contemporary society is "health". We are bombarded with health information from various media outlets on a daily basis, which may not necessarily align with the advice given by medical professionals. Health has emerged as a central research focus in the field of sports science, with numerous national policies centering on health-related issues. The fusion of health discourse and crisis discourse conveys the notion that "health is a significant crisis within society", exerting a profound influence on a global scale, spanning countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

How does health discourse relate to the dominant forces of power? Neoliberalism plays a bridging and magnifying role in this relationship. The discourse on health involves reducing state-guaranteed expenditures on citizen health and lowering social costs to enhance investment in human resources. Although this intention takes the form of discourse, it exerts what Foucault referred to as biological power (biopower).^[5] Foucault classified the power mechanism into "disciplinary power," which regulates the body alone, and "biological power," which defines the body as the origin of human

beings and regulates it from a population perspective. With the evolution of capitalism, power shifted from disciplinary to biological. Biological power controls the entire human process from birth to death, disease, public health, etc. The human body is integrated rather than individualized, and is developed through management. In the context of health discourse, biological power is exercised in the following ways: "healthy bodies" are enforced, as seen in the portrayal of skinny men with small muscles and skinny women as TV idols and actors. Idol stars with exceptional physical attributes and artists exposed in various media entertainment programs are accepted as the standard for a healthy body. A distorted view of a healthy body as thin and underweight can lead to unnecessary dieting and health issues. Some reality shows depict obesity as a severe disease, presenting individuals who engage in unhealthy behaviors as victims of laziness or failure. In some countries, junk food is taxed, seen as a form of punitive control. Foucault explains that biopower focuses on punishing the soul rather than the body, similar to the transition from violent public punishment to the emergence of prisons in the 19th century. Obesity is hence viewed as a disciplinary offense. In response to this, young people frequent fitness centers, while the elderly engage in physical activities in their communities. Weight loss and physical appearance are seen as routine tasks, emphasized as matters of self-management and personal responsibility. A body that is not slim or toned is considered unhealthy, placing complete responsibility on the individual. This trend aligns with the level of self-monitoring desired by controlling power. In essence, the Panopticon continues to exert significant influence in a more clandestine and intricate manner in the neoliberal era.

2 School Sports in the Neoliberal Era

This chapter aims to focus on regular physical education classes, students' health and physical fitness assessments, school sports clubs, and evaluate the performance of student discipline and school sports management.

2.1 Disciplinary Society and Managerial Society Embodied in Regular Physical Education Lessons

With the changing times, school physical education has undergone a transformation from a disciplined society to a managed society. Traditional school physical education mainly focused on cultivating national strength through the improvement of physical fitness. Physical fitness is equated with national strength, and teachers who effectively teach physical education are those who strive for the healthy physical development and fitness improvement of their students. The national curriculum explicitly states that physical fitness should be developed through various sports, but in reality, the primary goal is to improve physical fitness itself. This has led to the inclusion of cyclical exercise to enhance physical fitness within the curriculum.

The concept of "physical education as part of military education, the school sports policy of nurturing top-level athletes" lacks physical education teachers who are empathetic towards students, respect students' human rights, and uphold correct values.

Foucault's book "Surveillance and Punishment" defines discipline as shaping the body for achievement, enforced for order and a standard of conduct. In the pursuit of training successful elite athletes, discipline-controlled physical training is employed to enforce the connection between obedience and utility in physical fitness, ensuring continual compliance. Students do not learn how to independently manage their bodies, as they are subjected to various constraints and instructions in all aspects, from training to competition execution scenarios.

This kind of disciplined social culture is also evident in formal physical education classes at schools. Physical education teachers, entrusted with the responsibility of enhancing the national physique, wield absolute power. Students who challenge this authority by resisting or disobeying instructions are often subjected to corporal punishment and violence without hesitation. This creates an environment where physical education teachers are symbolized by "sunglasses, stopwatch, and whistle." The negative stereotype of a physical education teacher, characterized by harsh language and a desire for control, reinforces this image.

Students who defy instructions are often disciplined through rigorous physical activities such as "100 push-ups, 10 laps around the playground, and repetitive drills." [5] This imposition of control restricts their freedom in an era that emphasizes individual liberties, human rights, and rational thinking. Obedient students are praised as model pupils, embodying the conformity desired by physical education teachers. These students, molded through such education, conform to the expectations of a compliant citizen, obedient to state policies. According to Foucault, this process aligns with the historical development of human subjects shaped by power.

With the advent of the new era, school physical education has got rid of the disciplined society and transformed into a managed society. In addition to the most important purpose "mental field" in physical education teaching, the content system of the learning field is extended and extended to the "cognition and definition field". [6] The change in school physical education has also changed the traditional image of the "good physical education teacher". Teachers who emphasize students' self-subjectivity, classroom dominance is divided into two parts: teachers and students, and use diversified teaching models (collaborative learning model, personal social responsibility model, physical education teaching model, one teaching model, etc.) to support and manage students to effectively achieve teaching goals began to receive attention.

In order to eliminate the education of depriving and controlling students' personal freedom, suppressing and standardizing, and grow into an ethical subject of harmonious development of emotion and rationality, PE teachers support students' behavior, emotional exchange, and use various teaching methods, which is a kind of change. The student agency emphasized by OECD Education 2030 is also reflected in physical education and education courses. [7] Students are managed with the support of teachers and are regulated through their inner will as second supervisors. As a result, students walk out of the monitoring network of bystanders in a disciplined society. The second monitor regulates behavior from the heart and produces his own morality. Taking this as a starting point, students grow up as a moral subject. The development cycle process.

With the justification of Foucault's concept of self-monitoring, students began to pursue physical growth centered on motor functions, and through participating in

physical education classes, they jointly cultivated role behaviors of social development, thus forming a personal sense of responsibility mechanism for society. Under the accommodation of the national and social requirements of embodying student-centered values and respecting students' human rights in school physical education, physical education teachers have got rid of the role of student supervisors centered on discipline, and become managers and supporters who support students' internal self-discipline functions to play effectively. In the process of ensuring students' individual behavior and deepening the internalization of social moral values, Foucault's self-enlightenment theory has become the leading discourse of school physical education.

2.2 Regular Power and Biological Power Appearing in Student Health and Physical Fitness Assessment (PAPS)

Foucault proposed the "experiment" of controlling the mind and body, as well as regulating the body through the mind. Examinations can effectively exercise disciplinary power by monitoring and recording individuals with the results shown in figures and statistics. In modern society, particularly in neoliberalism-centered regions like North America, several developed countries use standardized testing results of students as health indicators to control their bodies, leading to increased attention.

The Physical Activity Promotion System (PAPS) follows a process of "examination and evaluation of customized physical activity prescriptions → guidance to the Online system → utilization by students and parents." Since health-related indicators were introduced into the Sports White Paper in 2010, PAPS results have been included annually, highlighting the issue of deteriorating overall student health. Particularly, low physical strength and obese students are separately classified, emphasizing the need for their management. The School Physical Education Revitalization Law requires the separate management and prescription of students with health strength evaluation results of 4-5.^[8] In the initial stages of PAPS operation, physical fitness evaluation results at the school unit level also impact the school's overall evaluation, with rewards for excellent schools, placing a strong responsibility for health on the unit school level.

The main characteristics of the PAPS process are "customization," "information disclosure," and "evaluation," all of which inherently involve restricting individuals through power. Customized physical activity prescriptions based on PAPS results can be seen as a form of punishment on the individual's body. Separate classification of obese or low-physical students and opening health and physical fitness classrooms to improve PAPS results can be viewed as direct punishment on the body. While the goal may seem to be about promoting student health and enhancing physical fitness, the intention may actually be to reduce the proportion of students in the 4-5 grade range in schools, and ultimately decrease potential future health and medical insurance costs. "Customization" may disguise itself as being "demand-centered" for the benefit of individuals but ultimately aims to make individual body information available and controllable.

Secondly, it is possible for "information disclosure" to develop from a generic structure of "top-down" supervision to a "self-supervision" or "bottom-up" supervision structure. First, guide oneself to manage oneself by comparing with others by providing

one's own body information with the average level of peers, and disclose the same information to parents, thereby increasing crisis awareness and promoting physical control over children.

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Secondly, it is possible for "information disclosure" to develop from a generic structure of "top-down" supervision to a "self-supervision" or "bottom-up" supervision structure. First, guide oneself to manage oneself by comparing with others by providing one's own body information with the average level of peers, and disclose the same information to parents, thereby increasing crisis awareness and promoting physical control over children. Third, "evaluation" also plays a role in strengthening the supervision and punishment of the body. Together with the school sports club registration rate, the PAPS level 4-5 ratio is one of the indicators for school evaluation. Low-fitness, obese students who fail to manage themselves are labeled as "persistent", lowering school evaluation scores and increasing the workload of teachers. Under the power structure, teachers exercise strong discipline power for school evaluation on the body of obese students. In order to get a better evaluation, schools will urge teachers and students to carry out heteronomic changes to the body of obese students, or distort

the body information itself. After all, the way in which PAPS statistics are used as a unit of the whole country to control the individual body of students can be said to be a typical manifestation of biological power, and the actual situation of various educational activities tried to improve the index for low physical strength and obese students can be said to be imposed disciplinary power on their bodies. The discipline-centered power of the neoliberal era is exercised invisibly, but it imposes the mandatory principle of visibility on those who pass the exam to obey. For these students, the form of autonomous participation is ostensibly taken, but it transcends the health discourse and the obesity discourse, pushing it towards the "long-term patient discourse" and controlling the students with the logic of missing a favorable opportunity for the recovery of healthy physical fitness, who may become patients in the future. In the school playground in the open space of the physical fitness class, so that the students involved in after-school activities are monitored by the surrounding line of sight, in the crisis discourse can find a physical regularity of the dimension. The students were managed to self-confess their eating and living habits under the pretext of health diagnosis, and through the supervision and self-monitoring of physical education teachers and nutrition and health teachers, it can be known that they were forced to regain their healthy body and strength.

3 Monitoring and Control Exposed in School Sports Clubs

The health discourse proposed in this paper, that is, the neoliberal consciousness logic that the reduction of students' physical activity leads to an increase in obesity, an increase in the incidence of diseases in future adulthood, and an increase in national medical insurance costs, has become the main foundation for the production of the "School Sports Club" policy in 2007. It can be said that school sports clubs are also physical activities orchestrated by dominant powers, just like modern gymnastics in the imperialist era, which emphasized the cultivation of healthy citizens.

There is another discourse formed in the process of school sports club entering the curriculum, creative experience activity field, and becoming a compulsory course of "school sports club activities". This is the theory of human nature (citizenship). Various youth problems, such as school violence and suicide, are obstacles to the future development of healthy citizens who are responsive to the state. It is important to note that we chose physical activity, i.e. "sport," as a tool to solve these teenagers' problems. Currently, physical education courses "provide regular physical activity, which not only suppresses students' anger and depression, triggers a sense of security and happiness, but also has a positive impact on teaching attitudes, such as improving self-confidence and classroom concentration".^[9] Based on the logic brought, policy support such as expanding weekly study time has been realized.

The physical discipline embodied in school sports clubs is like the use of sports in prisons as a window to ease inmates' violent behavior or eliminate their aggressive instincts. Sport is encouraged in order to develop citizens (prisoners) who can adapt to the system of the state (prisons). In addition, the results of school sports club activities are also recorded in the student life record book, and even the development plan is

reflected in the university. The direction of these policies allows self-monitoring to be regulated and provides an excuse for schools to encourage rather than force school sports club activities.

In addition, the diversification of programs such as the school sports club support policy to activate girls' sports has overcome the phenomenon of women's negative physical activity, and new disciplinary powers have been activated during sports exercises and competitions. Efforts to overcome traditional male-centered prejudices and to make female students actively involved in physical activities as major participants in the discourse of health and humanity. In the preparation for participation in sports club leagues, a "transitional ethic" has emerged that requires that athletes should be actively involved in sports, not only in self-monitoring, but also through peer students within the bystander structure, allowing them to monitor each other "synopticon" to work together. That is to say, if formal physical education classes can be excluded from participating in physical education classes according to the individual's status, the school will disclose it.

Within the club, coercive participation through constant self-control, with mutual surveillance, due to surrounding surveillance and speechless pressure. This kind of self-discipline mechanism stimulates the social responsibility of team sports performance through the personal responsibility of team members, the common goal of achieving results in competitions, and makes the mutual supervision mechanism of Kanban a sports culture that jointly requires efforts to achieve common goals. Policies to expand the participation of girls in school sports clubs have also triggered gender discourse to achieve the national goal of gender equality in school sports and to overcome gender stereotypes about physical activity. In this way, the role of school sports in adolescent health management is defined as educational discourse. Through the experience of actively participating in sports activities in the student period, based on the neo-liberal spirit of minimizing state intervention, both men and women have laid the foundation for health management through sports activities from a long-term perspective. From this, it can be considered that the governance goals achieved by Foucault's power theory have been achieved.

4 Conclusion

In the era of neoliberalism, our "body" still cannot be freed from disciplinary power and biological power, and "sports" still presents the appearance of managing society under the state of containing prison metaphor and modern gymnastics metaphor. Therefore, it is difficult to say that the logic of individual self-management guided by power has achieved a perfect transformation to a managed society. Self-management is self-monitoring, and instead of collapsing, Panopticon has only developed into a more advanced structure that can be monitored from the top down and from the bottom up.

First of all, the biggest problem with the self-monitoring mechanism established by Panopticon lies at the ethical level. In particular, a look of disgust and pity at obesity, a "victim of a wrong lifestyle" and a "consequence of laziness" all boil down to moral and economic logic. That is to say, to the immoral people who are obese or do not work for

it, while also being described in the national economy as the presence of cancer, and the process of media-centered disciplinization of discourse towards the people influenced by disciplinary power, biological power mechanisms, we must maintain an academically sensitive attitude. In particular, the progress towards the "bottom-up" monitoring structure and the specific phenomena resulting from it need to be considered as future research topics from the sociological and pedagogical levels.

Second, what needs to be vigilant is that various school sports policy work is used as a discourse tool that has nothing to do with the nature of sports such as human nature and school violence, and internalized into discipline. But despite these on-the-spot problems, it is also true that the operation of power mechanisms does not have only negative attributes. It is a more reasonable measure to change the school sports policy work to a positive direction, such as school sports clubs, PAPS, health sports classes, etc. It is necessary to try to make up for the problem of relying on quantitative evaluation of school sports achievements, pay attention to the advantages brought about by school sports clubs as discipline rather than solving human nature and school violence, expand sports experience opportunities, form sports leisure culture, etc., and make it more educational. The specific example is that instead of targeting healthy physical fitness classrooms for obese and low-physical students with a significant expected stigma effect, it is necessary to minimize the disengagement of obese and low-physical students in a school atmosphere that guides all students to physical activity and improves healthy physical fitness.

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