



CURRENT SITUATION AND EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF HANOI UNIVERSITY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS, VIETNAM

Huong Xuan Nguyen,
To Tien Thanhⁱ

Dr., Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports,
Vietnam

Abstract:

Post-graduation employment is considered an urgent concern not only for graduates but also for their families, educational institutions, and society. Hence, the paper attempts to evaluate the contemporary situation, identify the underlying causes of unemployment status, and propose feasible solutions to improve post-graduation job opportunities for graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports. The survey includes 973 alumni having graduated between 2018 and 2022 from two universities, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City Universities of Physical Education and Sports. The results indicate that the proportion of employed bachelors within 12 months of graduation exceeds 90%. The study also identifies nine factors influencing the job-seeking process of graduates. Afterwards, the study proposes six solutions which comprise three directions aimed at educational institutions and three ones aimed at students.

Keywords: solutions, employment, graduates, Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports, Ho Chi Minh City University of Physical Education and Sports

1. Introduction

Vietnam's economy is now on a trajectory of growth, and while it has a few advantages, it also has a number of obstacles. One of those challenges is the increasing issue of joblessness among graduates in the present market-driven economy. This circumstance forces policymakers to consider an important question: what are the main causes of this trend? Is it because of the quality of education provided by universities, which may still need to be improved, or is it related to government policies concerning labor distribution? Studies on teacher education conducted by scholars such as Elliott-Johns & Tidwell (2013) [9], Erickson, Young, & Pinneger (2011) [10], Korthagen, Loughran, & Lunenberg (2005) [11], Murray & Harrison (2008) [12], and Swennen & Bates (2010) [15] have highlighted

ⁱ Correspondence: nguyentdt@gmail.com

its critical importance in society and its future development. The European Commission has also demonstrated a concern, both nationally and internationally, by publishing a document acknowledging the significance of teacher education. To be more specific, the Commission emphasized the need for a more solid theoretical foundation to support governments in assisting teacher educators in Europe [8], thereby encouraging further scientific research in the field of teacher education. A systematic review by McEvoy et al. (2015) [12] on the quality of physical education teachers from 1990 to 2014, synthesizing data from 96 scientific papers from 15 countries and 25 journals, revealed that physical education teachers' teams need to urgently enhance their professional competence in the near future.

In developed countries like Italy, physical education teachers at each educational level are subject to clear standards, with each teacher specializing in a specific educational level [6]. In 2018, the law was adjusted to align with European countries, allowing physical education teachers at secondary schools and high schools to also teach at the elementary school level [7]. In terms of qualifications, primary school physical education teachers must hold a bachelor's degree in Sports Science, while middle and high school physical education teachers must have a master's degree in Sports Science. The bachelor's degree level, in particular, contains a set of sports science subjects, whereas the master's degree level includes three specialized fields: Sports Science, Sports Management, and Sports Development [6], [14].

The educational program of physical education at Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports aims to nurture physical education teachers with competent skills to meet the holistic educational needs of Vietnam. They are expected to be characterized by qualities of honesty, creativity, compassion, and tolerance, dedicating themselves to the education of future generations. The teachers serve as role models, demonstrating a high sense of responsibility towards themselves, their families, and the country's growth. In compliance with Decree No. 11/2015/NĐ-CP [2] and Decision No. 1076/QĐ-TTg [3], Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports has taken a number of actions to improve educational quality. These actions include updating curriculums in accordance with contemporary expectations, innovating teaching methods, increasing the integration of technology into lesson planning, emphasizing the teaching of soft skills to students such as communication, problem-solving, language, and computer skills, and encouraging student participation in scientific research, etc.

Given the significance of graduates' employment and in line with Official Letter No. 4806/BGDDT-GDDH [1], it is crucial to conduct an assessment of the present situation and offer critical solutions for the graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports in Vietnam. Hence, the authors attempted to conduct a study on: "*The Current Situation and Employment Solutions for Graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports, Vietnam*".

The purpose of this article is to assess the current situation, explore the underlying causes of unemployed cases, and subsequently propose solutions to enhance

employment opportunities for graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports.

2. Methodology

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, the study employed the following research methods:

- Document synthesis Gathering relevant literature, consolidating findings related to the research topic, establishing a theoretical foundation, forming scientific hypotheses, defining objectives, and validating results throughout the research.
- Survey and interview: Collecting substantial data from the Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City universities of physical education and sports to objectively evaluate the employment status of the graduates who completed their university degrees between 2018 and 2020. This method is also used to identify factors that can affect their current employment status. Expert interviews are conducted to select criteria for assessing the employment status of the graduates.
- Statistical Analysis: Analyzing data with SPSS for Windows version 20.0, involving descriptive analysis, internal consistent reliability analysis, factor analysis, and Cronbach Alpha.

The study developed an assessment scale to evaluate the employment status of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports graduates in three steps. First, a preliminary questionnaire was created. Experts and specialists were then consulted to refine it. Subsequently, the reliability of the questionnaire was assessed to remove unreliable items. At the final attempt, the official questionnaire was delivered to participants, gathering enormous quantitative data regarding the employment status of the graduates.

2.1 Participants

The survey on the post-employment status was conducted on 973 graduates who completed a bachelor's degree between 2018 and 2020. The participants consisted of 545 graduates from Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports (including 226 graduates in 2018, 183 in 2019, and 136 in 2020) and 428 graduates from Ho Chi Minh City University of Physical Education and Sports (including 166 graduates in 2018, 154 in 2019, and 108 in 2020).

The study also surveyed 185 Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports graduates majoring in physical education to determine the underlying reasons for their unemployment.

The study also interviewed 45 experts who are professors, associate professors, and PhD holders in the field of physical education. Their consultations were used to select criteria for evaluating the employment status of graduates from Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports.

Regarding ethical considerations in research, the study drew upon a scientific project funded by the Ministry of Education and Training in 2022, titled "*Employment Solutions for Physical Education Graduates to Meet Sustainable Development Requirements*", written by Dr. Xuan Nguyen Huong et al.

3. Results

3.1. Post-employment status of graduates from Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City universities of physical education and sports between 2018 and 2020

The study delivered a questionnaire to all graduates of the two universities to investigate the employment status of those who majored in physical education one year after their 2018-2020 graduation. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Post-employment status of graduates from Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City universities of physical education and sports between 2018 and 2020

Survey time	Graduation year	Total graduates	Responding graduates /total graduates		Employed graduates/ total responding graduates	
			n	%	n	%
Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports						
2019	2018	238	226	94.96	214	94.69
2020	2019	196	183	93.37	167	91.25
2021	2020	149	136	91.27	123	90.44
Ho Chi Minh City University of Physical Education and Sports						
2019	2018	181	166	91.71	152	91.57
2020	2019	166	154	92.77	135	87.66
2021	2020	119	108	90.75	98	90.77

Table 1 shows:

- Regarding Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports:

In 2018, the university obtained responses from 226 out of 238 graduates, representing a response rate of 94.96%. Out of these, 214 graduates were employed within 12 months of graduation, accounting for 94.69%.

In 2019, the university obtained responses from 183 out of 196 graduates, resulting in a response rate of 93.37%. Among these respondents, 167 graduates were employed within 12 months of graduation, accounting for 91.25%.

In 2020, the university obtained responses from 136 out of 149 graduates, with a response rate of 91.27%. Out of these respondents, 123 graduates were employed within 12 months of graduation, accounting for 90.44%.

- Regarding Ho Chi Minh City University of Physical Education and Sports

In 2018, the university obtained responses from 166 out of 181 graduates, with a response rate of 91.71%. Out of these respondents, 152 students were employed within 12 months of graduation, accounting for 91.57%.

In 2019, the university obtained responses from 154 out of 166 graduates, with a response rate of 92.77%. Among these respondents, 135 students were employed within 12 months of graduation, accounting for 87.66%.

In 2020, the university obtained responses from 108 out of 119 graduates, with a response rate of 90.75%. Out of these respondents, 98 students were employed within 12 months of graduation, accounting for 90.77%.

It can be seen that more than 90% of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports alumni who graduated between 2018 and 2020 were successfully employed within 12 months of graduation. That rate is slightly higher when compared with Ho Chi Minh City University of Physical Education. The result also reflects society's demand for professional workers in the field of physical education and sports training.

3.2. Unemployment causes among Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports graduates

While the employment rate for graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports is high, there is still a portion of graduates who struggle to find employment within one year of graduation. Therefore, this paper sought to investigate the reasons behind such cases. This exploration of the causal factors aims to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the remaining employment challenges and serves as the groundwork for future research. The survey involved 185 physical education graduates who had not yet been employed, based on the above results of post-employment status. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Unemployment causes at Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports graduates (n = 185)

No.	Causes	Number	%
1	The relationship between the university and employers is not good.	43	23.24
2	The training program does not meet the employer's requirements.	38	20.54
3	Your communication skills are not satisfactory.	86	46.48
4	Your professional knowledge and skills do not meet the employer's requirements.	53	28.64
5	Your foreign language and information technology skills do not meet the requirements of the position.	115	62.16
6	You lack the required qualifications in sports and physical education or other certificates.	132	71.35
7	There is a high competition among bachelors in physical education and sports training at other institutions.	145	78.37
8	There is a high competition between bachelors in physical education and those in other majors.	125	67.56
9	You do not proactively update the recruitment information.	43	23.24
10	You face financial difficulties.	162	87.56
11	Some employers do not value the graduates in physical education and sports training.	63	34.05
12	Other reasons	71	38.37

Table 2 indicates that the most significant factor influencing graduates' ability to find employment after graduation is the lack of financial resources, with 87.56% of respondents highlighting this as a key issue, followed by the high competition among graduates from other institutions offering the same physical education programs (78.73% of responses).

Additionally, the absence of the required qualification in physical education and other related certifications results in limited opportunities (71.35% of responses). The least influential factor is the quality of training curriculums, with only 20.54% of jobless graduates identifying it as a barrier to their unemployment.

3.3. Quality of post-graduation employment of graduates from Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports

The study successfully established a comprehensive set of 28 criteria for evaluating the quality of post-graduation employment of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports graduates by synthesizing relevant literature to build the preliminary questionnaire [4], consulting experts for questionnaire modification, and using Cronbach's Alpha for reliability assessment. These criteria include eight aspects related to job characteristics, five aspects referring to job satisfaction and involvement in developing competence, and 15 aspects related to the application of taught knowledge to current jobs. Notably, in this survey, 58.8% of participants were employed within one year after graduation, while 41.2% remained unemployed.

The survey of 185 graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports obtained the following results:

After graduating from Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports, 30 individuals found employment within 3 to 12 months, accounting for 16.22%; 35 individuals found employment within 12 to 24 months, making up 18.92%; 20 individuals found employment within 24 to 36 months, representing 10.81%; 27 individuals found employment within 36 to 48 months, constituting 14.59%; 25 individuals found employment within 48 to 60 months, amounting to 13.51%; and 48 individuals found employment after 60 months, accounting for 25.95%.

Concerning the current employment status, 146 individuals have regular jobs, comprising 78.92%, while 39 have irregular jobs, accounting for 21.08%.

Regarding the alignment of their current jobs with their majors, 156 individuals confirm they are strongly related to each other, making up 84.32%; 18 individuals find them somewhat relevant, representing 9.73%, and 11 individuals do not consider them relevant, accounting for 5.95%.

In terms of jobs, 40 individuals work as physical education teachers in secondary schools, accounting for 21.62%; 65 are university lecturers in physical education and sports, making up 35.14%; 15 individuals work as research officers in physical education and sports, representing 8.11%; 28 individuals are involved in sports and physical activities management, comprising 15.14%; 15 individuals work as sports coaches, making up 8.11%; 1 individual is a management officer, accounting for 0.54%; 10

individuals are specialists in various departments, totaling 5.41%; 11 individuals hold various other positions, accounting for 5.95%.

Regarding their average monthly income, 30 individuals earn less than 2 million VND per month, comprising 16.22%; 120 individuals earn between 2 to 3 million VND per month, making up 64.86%; 25 individuals earn between 3 to 5 million VND per month, amounting to 13.51%; 10 individuals earn over 5 million VND per month, accounting for 5.41%.

In terms of the factors influencing the ability to find a suitable job, 167 individuals emphasized having satisfying professional skills, representing 90.27%; 5 individuals highlighted their proficiency in foreign languages, making up 2.70%; 5 individuals mentioned excellent computer skills, accounting for 2.70%; 5 individuals emphasized their good communication skills, accounting for 2.70%; and 3 individuals cited other factors, accounting for 1.62%.

After completing their bachelor's program, the graduates attempt to upgrade themselves with additional training courses as follows: 66 individuals attended further training courses, comprising 35.68%; 20 individuals attended foreign language courses, making up 10.81%; 18 individuals attended computer training courses, accounting for 9.73%; 5 individuals participated in courses related to state management, amounting to 2.70%; 25 individuals attended various other training courses, representing 13.51%; 40 individuals pursued additional degree, comprising 21.62%; and 1 individual pursued their studying in other fields, accounting for 0.54%.

Regarding what extent the knowledge taught during the undergraduate program is beneficial to their current jobs, 50 individuals stated it is very helpful, accounting for 27.03%; 128 individuals considered it somewhat helpful, making up 69.19%; and 5 individuals noted it is not effective, accounting for 2.70%.

The survey's results provide a holistic view of the employment status of graduates from Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports, involving the time of job seeking, current jobs, monthly income, participation in additional courses, the alignment of the training quality and job requirements, and so on. These factors need to be given more attention by the school board in order to make appropriate adjustments to the educational programs to enable students to meet their desired job requirements. It's essential to note that among the 185 survey participants, those who believe that having high competence can help them find employment quickly accounts for 90.27%, while the remaining 9.73% remained unemployed due to other factors.

Furthermore, the majority of graduates found employment within the first 6 months after graduation, primarily depending on their network, and job advertisements from both private and state-owned enterprises. The most common job positions secured by Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports graduates are teachers, sports trainers, sports specialists, and physical education teachers. These positions align closely with their major. Their income levels are distributed mainly within the range of 3 million to 5 million VND and less than 3 million VND. However, there is a growing trend of graduates earning over 5 million VND per month, primarily in the positions of sports

trainers at service facilities and those unrelated to the major in foreign enterprises or private businesses.

Notably, most of the Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports graduates who successfully found employment related to their major are considered to have sufficient competence in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

3.4. Employment solution for the graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports

Based on theoretical foundations and the current situation, the study attempted to propose six employment solutions for Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports graduates. These include three solutions aimed at educational institutions and three ones aimed at undergraduate students as follows:

- Group of solutions targeting educational institutions:
 - Solution 1: Enhancing career counseling and brand promotion of the university
 - Solution 2: Innovating the training content, teaching, and assessment methods of physical education training programs
 - Solution 3: Increasing the number of opportunities for students to obtain hands-on professional experience.
- Group of solutions targeting undergraduate students:
 - Solution 1: Enhancing awareness and perceptions of vocational activities
 - Solution 2: Nurturing proactivity, creativity, and autonomy
 - Solution 3: Enhancing professional competence and soft skills

4. Conclusion

During the period from 2018 to 2020, graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports and Ho Chi Minh City University of Physical Education and Sports had an average employment rate of over 90% within 12 months of graduation.

It was found that there were nine causes of unemployment among the graduates of Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports. Among those, the primary causes for unsuccessful job searches included a lack of connections with employers, insufficient work experience, and a lack of clear career direction.

Of the graduates, 90.27% of the individuals from Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports were successfully employed within 12 months of graduation, while the remaining 9.73% were still without jobs due to various other factors. Most graduates secured employment within six months of graduation through referrals from their friends and acquaintances, as well as through advertisements. The predominant job positions were sports instructors, sports specialists, and physical education teachers. The majority had a monthly income ranging from 3 to 5 million VND.

The study has also proposed six employment solutions for graduates in the field of Physical Education and Sports, including three solutions targeted at educational institutions and three solutions aimed at students.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

About the Author(s)

Huong Xuan Nguyen is the Vice Principal at Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports, Vietnam.

To Tien Thanh has been a physical education teacher at Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports, Vietnam.

References

1. Ministry of Education and Training (2016). *Official Dispatch No. 4806/BGDDT – GDDH dated September 28, 2016, on Reporting the employment situation of graduates.*
2. Government (2015). *Decree No. 11/2015/ND-CP, January 31, 2015 Regulations on physical education and sports activities in schools.*
3. Government (2016). *Decision No. 1076/QĐ-TTg dated June 17, 2016, Approving the overall project for developing physical education and school sports for the period 2016-2020, orientation to 2025.*
4. Bui Quang Hai, Nguyen Thu Huong (2014). *Assessing the quality of full-time university training of Bac Ninh University of Physical Education and Sports in the period 2008 - 2013.*
5. D'elia, F. (2019). The training of physical education teachers in primary school. Retrieved from <http://rua.ua.es/dspace/handle/10045/85857>
6. D'elia, F., Mazzeo, F., Raiola, G. (2018) The core curriculum in the university training of the teacher of physical education in Italy, *Journal of Human Sport and Exercise*, 13, pp. S413-S420. Retrieved from <http://rua.ua.es/dspace/handle/10045/77493>
7. European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2013. *Physical Education and Sport at School in Europe Eurydice Report.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved from <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/physical-education-and-sport-school-europe>
8. European Commission. (2013). *Supporting teacher educators for better learning outcomes.* Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2012:0374:FIN:EN:PDF>
9. Elliott-Johns, S. E., & Tidwell, D. L. (2013). Different voices, many journeys: explorations of the transformative nature of the self-study of teacher education practices. *Studying Teacher Education: A journal of self-study of teacher education*

- practices*, 9(2), 91-95. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17425964.2013.808043>
10. Erickson, L. B., Young, J. R., & Pinneger, S. (2011). Teacher educator identity: emerging understandings of person, positioning, roles, and collaborations. *Studying Teacher Education: A journal of self-study of teacher education practices*, 7(2), 105-107. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17425964.2011.591123>
11. Korthagen, F., Loughran, J., & Lunenberg, M. (2005). Teaching teachers e studies into the expertise of teacher educators: an introduction to this theme issue. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(2), 107-115. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46657475_Teaching_teachrs_-_Studies_into_the_expertise_of_teacher_educators_An_introduction_to_this_the_me_issue
12. McEvoy, E., MacPhail, A., & Heikinaro-Johansson, P. (2015). Physical education teacher educators: A 25-year scoping review of literature. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 51, 162-181. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0742051X15001134>
13. Murray, J., & Harrison, J. (2008). Editorial. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 31(2), 109e115.
14. Raiola, G., D'elia, F., Altavilla, G. (2018) Physical activity and sports sciences between European Research Council and academic disciplines in Italy, *Journal of Human Sport and Exercise*, 13, pp. S283-S295, Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326443589_Physical_activity_and_sports_sciences_between_European_Research_Council_and_academic_disciplines_in_Italy
15. Swennen, A., & Bates, T. (2010). The professional development of teacher educators. *Professional Development in Education*, 36(1/2), 1-7. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/249062324_The_professional_development_of_teacher_educators

Creative Commons licensing terms

Authors will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Physical Education and Sport Science shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflict of interests, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated on the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).