



AN INVESTIGATION INTO ASSESSMENT CRITERIA OF THE PÉTANQUE MOVEMENT CONTEXT AMONG STUDENTS AT TRA VINH UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM

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Abstract:

Pétanque, also known internationally as boules, originated in France over 110 years ago and found its way to Vietnam in the 1940s. Players stand within a circle ranging from 35 cm to 50 cm in diameter, positioned about 1m from the end and side boundaries of the playing area. In Vietnam, the Pétanque scene is primarily active in some main areas of cities, namely Ho Chi Minh City, Soc Trang, Tra Vinh, and Vung Tau. The sport was officially introduced into Malaysia's SEA Games program in 2001. This article aims to shed light on the context of the Pétanque movement among students at Tra Vinh University. To achieve this, various methods, such as referencing documents, conducting interviews, and utilizing statistical analysis, were employed to gather and process relevant data. The outcomes of this study illustrated that it offered insights into the Pétanque landscape among Tra Vinh University students through many aspects, including the number of regular participants, the presence of instructors and coaches, the existence of clubs and teams, as well as the frequency of competitions held within the university. Moreover, the findings revealed that students at Tra Vinh University engaged in regular Pétanque practice approximately 16.7%. Moreover, Pétanque instructors and collaborators constitute around 60% of the total sports training and competition staff at the university. The university boasts 10 teams and 2 official Pétanque teams, with 15 dedicated courts spanning an area of 60 m² each. In the academic year 2021-2022, Tra Vinh University organized two Pétanque tournaments, showcasing the growing interest and participation in the sport within the university community.

Keywords: context, movement Pétanque, students at Tra Vinh University, Vietnam

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1. Introduction

Health is the most precious asset of every citizen and of society as a whole. It is the objective of sustainable development and also a crucial determinant for achieving sustainability in Vietnam. Investing in the protection, care, and enhancement of public health must be prioritised in the country's socio-economic development plans and in every locality. Investment resources are mobilized from various sources, with state budgets focusing on disease prevention activities and health improvement [1].

Investing in physical education and sports is an investment in people, in the development of the nation. Increasing the proportion of state budget allocation, prioritizing investment in building physical infrastructure for physical education and sports, leveraging social resources to develop physical education and sports, and enhancing the strong role of social organizations in managing and directing physical education and sports activities. Preserving and honouring the values of national physical education and sports, embracing the cultural essence of humanity, and developing our nation's physical education and sports sector with national, scientific, popular, and civilized characteristics [2].

It can be affirmed that physical education and sports (TDTT) are an indispensable part of human culture, aiming to perfect individuals with the belief that movement is health, is life. Physical education and sports bring about the comprehensive development of an individual: "*Morally pure, spiritually rich, physically perfected*". In recent years, the physical education and sports movement nationwide has seen strong development in both high-performance sports and mass sports. The achievement of these results is attributed to the attention and guidance of the Party, the State, as well as the efforts of the entire physical education and sports sector. The Party's and State's orientations and policies on physical education and sports are always flexibly and creatively applied, closely associated with the movement of "*whole people exercise to follow the example of Great Uncle Ho*" [3].

The goal of physical education and sports (TDTT) is to strengthen and improve health, develop physical fitness, prolong the lifespan, enhance the quality of life, and meet the needs for movement, recreation, entertainment, and cultural exchange of organizations and individuals in society, and contribute to training human resources for the industrialization and modernization of the country with the motto "*Strong people make a prosperous nation*" and the slogan "*Be healthy to build and protect the Fatherland*". According to Ho Chi Minh: "*To work, produce well, work and study well, one needs to be healthy. To be healthy, one should regularly engage in physical education and sports. Therefore, we should develop physical education and sports movements widely*". The resolution of the XIth National Party Congress clearly states, "*There is a need to vigorously develop mass physical education and sports movements to improve the health of the people, enhance the quality of human resources, and increase the longevity of the Vietnamese people.*" [4].

Pétanque, or boules, has been recorded as early as 9000 BC when a set of stone boules and a target ball were found in Turkey. Modern Pétanque was born in 1907 in

Ciotat, in the Provence region of southern France. Pétanque has been present in Vietnam since the French colonial period, but it was not until 2000 that the sport was officially introduced into high-performance competition. This sport does not require significant investment, and the physical condition of players is not crucial; the rules are also quite straightforward [5]. Pétanque began to develop in Vietnam in the early 2000s, gaining popularity and momentum, particularly in the southern regions and provinces such as Ho Chi Minh City, Soc Trang, and Vung Tau. After 2007, the sport began to see stronger development in the northern regions and gradually received more systematic and professional planning and investment. The first person to decide to develop Pétanque was the former Vice Chairman of the Vietnam Olympic Committee, Mr. Hoang Vinh Giang [6].

Pétanque is a rather unique sport. It uses simple equipment and playing grounds, and the rules are very easy to grasp. Playing Pétanque has no age restrictions; children, adults, men, women, and even elderly people can enjoy this sport. Pétanque requires high concentration and precision; making defensive or offensive decisions within a short period demands players to possess both skill and spirit. Therefore, in the sport of pétanque, players are trained to become individuals with good character, intelligence, and patience [7].

The Pétanque movement has flourished nationwide in recent years, particularly in Trà Vinh province. Due to its accessibility, affordability, and longevity in usage, Pétanque attracts participants of all ages, from teenagers to the elderly, especially university students, making it very suitable for this demographic. In pétanque, male and female students can compete together without gender discrimination, which is rare or impossible in other sports. Despite this, the Pétanque training movement in universities and colleges has not yet been strongly developed. Therefore, universities and colleges must play an active role in introducing and understanding this sport, particularly within student clubs. To obtain accurate information and choose appropriate measures for developing the Pétanque movement among university and college students, it is important and necessary to understand the current situation.

Given its significance, we have chosen to research the topic in our article titled: "The Current Status of the Pétanque Movement among Students at Trà Vinh University, Vietnam." The article aims to survey experts, specialists, lecturers, and students to gather information on the current status of the Pétanque movement among students at Trà Vinh University, Vietnam.

2. Material & methods

2.1 Methods

The article uses the following research methods to address its objectives:

2.1.1 Literature review method

Using this method in the research process primarily serves to solve the objectives of the topic. Relevant specialized documents are gathered from various sources, which are a continuation and supplementation of scientific arguments and an exploration of issues related to the development solutions of the Pétanque movement. The study conducts comprehensive analysis from various sources to find the theoretical basis of the research issue, define the purpose, objectives, tasks, research methods, and organization, forecast research results, select solutions, and evaluate the suitability of the solutions with the practicality of Pétanque.

2.1.2 Interview method

Aimed at consulting the opinions of experts, scientists in the field of sports and Pétanque; students at Tra Vinh University thereby provide information evaluating the Pétanque movement context among Tra Vinh University students.

2.1.3 Statistical analysis method

It aims to process and analyse the collected data with the support of SPSS 20.0 software.

2.2 Participants

A survey was conducted on the participation in the Pétanque movement of 10,138 students at Tra Vinh University. Among them, 3,482 first-year students, 2,990 second-year students, 1,800 third-year students, and 1,866 fourth-year students participated in the survey.

The survey evaluated the current situation of the Pétanque movement. It included 20 lecturers, sports development coaches, heads of clubs, teams, and groups at Tra Vinh University, and 3,376 students.

The survey criteria for evaluating the Pétanque movement for students at Tra Vinh University include 12 individuals, including 4 Pétanque lecturers, 1 coach from Tra Vinh province, 2 referees, 3 management officials, and 2 experts.

3. Results

3.1. Identifying Criteria for Evaluating the Current State of Pétanque Movement among Students at Tra Vinh University [10]

Through the compilation of documents and interviews with experts, the article has selected 5 criteria for evaluating the current state of the Pétanque movement among students at Tra Vinh University, including:

- **Criterion 1:** Number of students regularly practicing pétanque,
- **Criterion 2:** Number of collaborators, coaching staff teaching and training pétanque,
- **Criterion 3:** Number of Pétanque clubs, teams, and school-level teams,
- **Criterion 4:** Number of Pétanque training and competition facilities,

- **Criterion 5:** Number of Pétanque tournaments organized annually at the university.

3.2. Evaluation of the Current State of Pétanque Movement among Students at Tra Vinh University

The article evaluates the current state of the Pétanque movement among students at Tra Vinh University for the academic year 2021 – 2022 based on the 5 criteria identified in section 3.1, as follows:

- **Criterion 1:** Number of students regularly practicing pétanque

To evaluate criterion number 1, the article conducted a survey of 10,138 students at Tra Vinh University, the results of which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The statistical results of the survey of students at Tra Vinh University participating in the Pétanque movement

TT	Survey content	Number	Percentage (%)	
1	Students	First year	3482	34.3
		Second year	2990	29.5
		Third year	1800	17.8
		Fourth year	1866	18.4
		Total	10138	100.0
2	Gender	Male	7066	69.7
		Female	3072	30.3
		Total	10138	100.0
3	Participation in the Pétanque movement	Participated	1735	17.1
		Did not participate	8403	82.9
		Total	10138	100.0
4	Training time	Under 30 minutes per session	0	0.0
		Over 30 minutes per session	1735	100.0
		Total	1735	100.0
5	Number of training sessions	1 session per week	39	2.2
		2 sessions per week or more	1696	97.8
		Total	1735	100.0
Total number of students at Tra Vinh University for the academic year 2021 - 2022		11056		
Percentage of students participating in the survey/ Total number of students		91.7%		

The data in Table 1 shows that for the academic year 2021-2022, Tra Vinh University had a total of 11,056 students, with 10,138 students participating in the survey, accounting for 91.7%. Among them, first-year students had the highest participation, with 3,482 students, accounting for 34.3%, while third-year students had the lowest, with 1,800 students, accounting for 17.8%. Second-year students accounted for 2,990 students or 29.5%, and fourth-year students accounted for 1,866 students or 18.4%.

Regarding gender, there were 7,066 male students, accounting for 69.7%, and 3,072 female students, accounting for 30.3%.

Out of the total of 10,138 surveyed students, 1,735 participated in Pétanque training, accounting for 17.1%, all of whom trained for over 30 minutes per session.

Among the 1,735 students participating in Pétanque training, 1,696 students trained at least twice a week, accounting for 97.8%, while 39 students, or 2.2%, trained once a week.

An analysis of the relationship between the number of training sessions attended by students according to their academic year is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: The relationship between the number of training sessions of students by academic year

TT	Students	One session per week		Two sessions per week or more		Total	
		Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
1	First year	0	0.0	532	30.7	532	30.7
2	Second year	18	1.0	594	34.2	612	35.3
3	Third year	0	0.0	333	19.2	333	19.2
4	Fourth year	21	1.2	237	13.7	258	14.8
5	Total	39	2.2	1696	97.8	1735	100.0

The data in Table 2 shows that second-year students had the highest participation in training, with 612 students, accounting for 35.3% (1.0% of students trained once and 34.2% trained twice or more), while fourth-year students had the lowest participation, with 258 students, accounting for 14.8% (1.2% trained once and 13.7% trained twice or more). First-year students had 532 participants, accounting for 30.7%, all of whom trained twice or more, and third-year students had 333 participants, accounting for 19.2%, all of whom trained twice or more.

Based on the data in Tables 1 and 2 and the evaluation criteria of criterion 1, it is shown that Tra Vinh University had 1,696 students participating in Pétanque training regularly (training at least twice a week, with each session lasting over 30 minutes).

Based on the evaluation criteria, the analysis of the percentage of Tra Vinh University students participating in regular Pétanque training compared to the total number of surveyed students is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: The percentage of students from Tra Vinh University regularly participating in the pétanque training by academic year

TT	Students	Total number of surveyed students		Students regularly participating in Pétanque training		Percentage (%) of students regularly participating in Pétanque training out of total surveyed students
		Times	%	Times	%	
1	First Year	3482	34.3	532	31.4	15.3
2	Second Year	2990	29.5	594	35.0	19.9
3	Third Year	1800	17.8	333	19.6	18.5
4	Fourth Year	1866	18.4	237	14.0	12.7
5	Total"	10138	100.0	1696	100.0	16.7

The data in Table 3 shows that the percentage of Tra Vinh University students regularly participating in Pétanque training is 16.7%. Among them, the highest participation rate (%) was among second-year students at 19.9%, and the lowest was among fourth-year students at 12.7%. The participation rates (%) for third-year and first-year students were 18.5% and 15.3%, respectively.

- **Criterion 2:** Number of collaborators, coaches teaching pétanque

To evaluate criterion 2, the article conducted a survey of 20 lecturers and staff members teaching Physical Education at Tra Vinh University, analyzing the composition of lecturers. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Composition of teaching staff, managerial officers in teaching and learning of Physical Education at Tra Vinh University

TT	Survey Content	Number	Percentage (%)	
1	Position	Managerial officers	3	15.0
		Lecturers	17	85.0
		Total	20	100.0
2	Gender	Male	15	75.0
		Female	5	25.0
		Total	20	100.0
3	Age Group	Under 30 years old	2	10.0
		30 to 40 years old	13	65.0
		41 to 50 years old	5	25.0
		Over 50 years old	0	0.0
		Total	20	100.0
4	Education Level	College	0	0.0
		University	5	25.0
		Postgraduate	15	75.0
		Total	20	100.0
5	Teaching Experience	Under 5 years	2	10.0
		From 6 to 10 years	6	30.0
		From 11 to 15 years	8	40.0
		Over 15 years	4	20.0
		Total	20	100.0
6	Teaching, Training in Pétanque	Yes	12	60.0
		No	8	40.0
		Total	20	100.0
Total number of students at Tra Vinh University for the academic year 2021 - 2022		11056		
Percentage % SV/GV GDTC		552.8SV/GV		

The data in Table 4 evaluates criterion 3, showing the composition of lecturers and managerial staff teaching Physical Education at Tra Vinh University: the total number of lecturers and staff teaching Physical Education at Tra Vinh University is 20, predominantly male (75.0%), over 30 years old (90.0%), with postgraduate education

(75.0%), and with teaching experience of over 10 years (60.0%); of which, 60.0% are currently teaching and coaching pétanque.

The percentage ratio of total students to lecturers teaching Physical Education at Tra Vinh University is 552.8 students per lecturer. Based on Decision No. 2160/QĐ-TTg dated November 11, 2013, of the Prime Minister approving the "Development Planning of Physical Education and Sports in Vietnam until 2020, with a vision to 2030", the lecturer-to-student ratio in Physical Education at the university level should reach 1/500 by 2015, 1/400 by 2020, and 1/300 by 2030.

According to Decision No. 1076/QĐ-TTg dated June 17, 2016, approving the comprehensive development plan for physical education and sports in schools for the period 2016-2020, with a vision to 2025, the target regarding teachers and lecturers of physical education and sports at all levels of education and training is: *"at least 90% of vocational education and university education institutions have a sufficient number of physical education and sports teachers and lecturers, ensuring standard training levels as regulated."* Based on these decisions, it is evident that the team of lecturers and managerial staff teaching Physical Education at Tra Vinh University is currently inadequate and does not meet the standards as prescribed. This also provides the basis for proposing solutions to develop Pétanque training activities for students at Tra Vinh University.

Based on the analysis, the percentage (%) of the total number of Pétanque coaches and collaborators compared to the total number of Physical Education coaches and collaborators at Tra Vinh University is 60%.

- **Criterion 3:** Number of Pétanque clubs, teams, and university teams

To evaluate criterion 3, the article conducted a survey of Pétanque clubs, teams, and university teams at Tra Vinh University as follows:

Regarding Pétanque clubs at Tra Vinh University, no university-level Pétanque club has been established.

There are 10 Pétanque teams at Tra Vinh University participating in training sessions. They train 2-3 times per week, with flexible training times during lunchtime, in the afternoon after classes, and whenever they are free.

Regarding university Pétanque teams at Tra Vinh University, there are 2 university Pétanque teams (a men's team with 12 athletes and a women's team with 8 athletes) training at the university's Pétanque field 5 times a week, during lunchtime and in the afternoon after classes. They compete in friendly matches with other teams on weekends.

In the academic year 2021-2022, the Tra Vinh University Pétanque team participated in the Tra Vinh Province Sports Festival and won 1 gold and 1 silver medal; they also participated in the Tra Vinh City Sports Festival and won 1 gold and 1 silver medal. Moreover, they participated in the expanded Tra Vinh City Open Tournament and won 2 gold and 1 silver medal.

The statistical results show that Tra Vinh University has no Pétanque clubs, 10 Pétanque teams, and 2 university Pétanque teams.

- **Criterion 4:** Number of Pétanque training and competition facilities

To evaluate the current situation of Pétanque training and competition, the article compiled data on the facilities serving Pétanque training and competitions for students at Tra Vinh University, presented in Table 5.

Table 3.5: Statistics of sports facilities serving Pétanque training and competitions for students at Tra Vinh University

TT	Sports Facilities	Quantity	Condition	Current Usage	Area
1	Tra Vinh University	6	Good	Campus grounds	360 m ²
2	Trung Ngọc	2	Good	Rented	120 m ²
3	Tím Coffee	5	Good	Rented	300 m ²
4	CLB 168	2	Good	Rented	120 m ²
Total					900 m ²
Number of students participating in training					1735
Area ratio per student participating in training					1.93 m ² /SV

The data in Table 5 shows that the total area of the facilities serving Pétanque training and competitions for students at Tra Vinh University is 900 square meters. Among these, 6 training grounds at Tra Vinh University are free of charge, while the remaining grounds (Trung Ngọc, Tím Coffee, CLB 168) have fees, albeit at a subsidized rate for Tra Vinh University students. The ratio of area (in square meters) per student for physical education training is 1.93 square meters per student. Comparing this with the current government regulations on the area per student in vocational schools, colleges, and universities, which should be 2 square meters in 2015, 3 square meters in 2020, and 4 square meters in 2030, it is evident that Tra Vinh University's Pétanque training and competition area does not meet the required standards. This indicates that while the infrastructure conditions for Pétanque training and competition at Tra Vinh University generally meet the needs of students, the area provided falls short of the regulatory requirements, thus not fully meeting the students' training needs.

The reality demonstrates: "*Fields, gymnasiums, training equipment... are part of the school's facilities, an integral component of school physical education. Without funding, physical education facilities, one cannot speak of school physical education*" [13, p. 342]. The goal of developing physical education and sports in schools is to have "*at least 90% of vocational education institutions, 95% of universities have training grounds; at least 85% of colleges, 90% of universities, 95% of universities have multi-purpose gyms equipped to meet prescribed standards*" [14].

The synthesized results show the total number of Pétanque training and competition grounds at Tra Vinh University, including 15 grounds, each with an area of 60 square meters; 06 are at Tra Vinh University and 9 are outside the university, belonging to Pétanque clubs in Trà Vinh City (Trung Ngọc, Tím Coffee, Club 168).

- **Criterion 5:** The number of Pétanque competitions organized annually at the university

To evaluate the actual situation of the number of Pétanque competitions organized annually at Tra Vinh University, the article provides statistics on Pétanque competitions held during the 2021-2022 academic year as follows:

Pétanque competition celebrating Student and Pupil Traditional Day on January 9, 2022, with the participation of 63 students from 13 faculties at Tra Vinh University, including 41 male and 22 female participants competing in 7 categories (Men's doubles, Women's doubles, Mixed doubles, Men's triples, Mixed triples, Men's team, Mixed team). Pétanque competition celebrating the establishment of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union on March 26, 2022, with the participation of 76 students from 13 faculties at Tra Vinh University, including 49 male and 27 female participants competing in 7 categories (men's doubles, women's doubles, mixed doubles, men's triples, mixed triples, men's team, mixed team).

Moreover, departments regularly establish teams to participate in friendly matches with each other and interact with other units in districts within Tra Vinh province, such as Cau Ke and Chau Thanh.

The statistical results for the 2021-2022 academic year at Tra Vinh University include two Pétanque competitions held to celebrate the Student and Pupil Traditional Day on January 9, 2022, and to commemorate the establishment of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union on March 26, 2022.

The assessment of the current situation of the Pétanque movement for students at Tra Vinh University according to the 5 criteria in section 3.1 is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of the evaluation of the current situation of the Pétanque movement for students at Tra Vinh University

TT	Criteria	Evaluation Results
1	Criterion 1: Number of students regularly training in Pétanque	The percentage of Tra Vinh University students who regularly train in Pétanque is 16.7%.
2	Criterion 2: Number of collaborators, coaches, and instructors teaching and training Pétanque	The percentage (%) of Pétanque coaches, collaborators compared to the total number of coaches, collaborators in Physical Education and Sports at Tra Vinh University is 60%.
3	Criterion 3: Number of school-level Pétanque clubs, teams, squads	Tra Vinh University does not have a Pétanque Club (CLB), but it has 10 teams and 02 Pétanque squads.
4	Criterion 4: Number of Pétanque training and competition facilities	The total number of Pétanque training and competition fields at Tra Vinh University includes 15 fields, each with an area of 60 m ² , of which 06 fields belong to Tra Vinh University and 09 fields belong to Pétanque Clubs outside the university (Trung Ngoc, Tim Coffee, Club 168).
5	Criterion 5: Number of Pétanque competitions	In the academic year 2021 - 2022, Tra Vinh University organized two Pétanque competitions: one to celebrate Student's Day on

	organized annually at the university	January 9, 2022, and the other to celebrate the establishment of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union on March 26, 2022.
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The data in Table 6 indicates the current status of the Pétanque movement among students at Tra Vinh University as follows:

The proportion of Tra Vinh University students regularly practicing Pétanque is 16.7%.

The percentage of total Pétanque coaches and collaborators compared to the total number of coaches and collaborators in Physical Education and Sports at Tra Vinh University is 60%.

Tra Vinh University does not have a Pétanque Club, but it has 10 Pétanque teams and 02 Pétanque teams.

The total number of Pétanque training and competition grounds at Tra Vinh University includes 15 grounds, each with an area of 60 m². Among these, 06 grounds belong to Tra Vinh University, and 09 grounds are outside the university, belonging to Pétanque clubs in Tra Vinh City (Trung Ngoc, Tim Coffee, Club 168).

In the academic year 2021-2022, Tra Vinh University organized two Pétanque competitions to celebrate the Student and Pupil Traditional Day on January 9, 2022, and to commemorate the establishment of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union on March 26, 2022.

4. Conclusions

The synthesis of survey results from experts, coaches, and lecturers shows the current situation of the Pétanque Sports movement among students at Tra Vinh University: The percentage of Tra Vinh University students regularly practicing Pétanque sports is 16.7%; 60% of Iron Sports coaches and collaborators compared to the total number of coaches and collaborators in Sports and Physical Education at Tra Vinh University; there are 10 teams and 02 Pétanque Sports teams; there are 15 fields, each with an area of 60 m²; including 06 fields belonging to Tra Vinh University and 09 fields outside the university belonging to Pétanque Sports Clubs in Tra Vinh city (Trung Ngoc, Tim Coffee, CLB 168); and in the academic year 2021-2022, Tra Vinh University organized two Pétanque Sports tournaments to celebrate the holidays on January 9th and March 26th.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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