



Research on the Reform of the European Approach to Sports Development

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Abstract. This article will examine the sports development approaches of three representatives of developed European countries, namely the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. It uses a combination of literature, inductive and deductive methods, comparative analysis, and expert interviews to analyse and compare the patterns and characteristics of European sports development concepts, management systems, and operational mechanisms, and to explore the systems and measures adopted in Europe to improve the sports development approach. Through multi-level and multi-faceted comparative studies, the basis of these development models, the advantages and shortcomings in their operation will be analysed, and the common features and general rules of the sports development models of major European countries will be discovered, thus providing useful references and new ideas for the reform of China's sports development models. This article will also provide suggestions for China. Specifically, the state departments should promote the formation of a virtuous model of "school sports as the leader, mass sports to strengthen the foundation, competitive sports to showcase the style, and sports industry to re-blood". Besides, they should fully mobilise social forces, promote the construction and promotion of sports clubs, achieve equal opportunities, and make participation in sports activities and exercise an integral part of social services, thus making participation in sport an integral part of public services. While for the sports administration, they should formulate and improve relevant policies and regulations under the laws of the socialist market economy and the development of sports, and guide the comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable development of sports, so that more social organisations and groups can participate in sports management activities and promote the gradual strengthening of the socialisation of sports.

Keywords: Sports · Development · Chinese Reform · European Experience

1 Introduction

In previous comparative studies, literature from the United States, the former Soviet Union, and Japan have been cited more frequently, while studies on European countries have been relatively scarce, containing only Germany and France, among others. In fact, the European region has a long-standing humanistic philosophy and tradition of sport,

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and each country has a good accumulation of scientific research and strong governmental support, which makes its research results in sport, especially in the humanities and sociology of sport, absolutely influential internationally, and the research in the USA, the former Soviet Union, and Japan also places great importance on drawing on the scientific research results from European countries [1].

In 2008, the Chinese sports delegation made a breakthrough in the gold medal table at the Beijing Olympics, overtaking the United States and Russia to take first place. However, the overall competitiveness of China's athletics is still far from that of the established European sports powerhouses with a strong mass base, especially in collective sports. Collective sports are the most effective in reflecting the national outlook and in lifting the spirits of the nation after a victory. Therefore, the level of collective sports reflects the overall strength of a country's sports. However, China's men's football and volleyball teams have failed to qualify for the Olympic Games for many years. As hosts, China's women's and men's football teams did not perform well at the Beijing Olympics, and in this respect did not match the performance of a strong competitive sporting nation. The unevenness of these sports and performance structures suggests that the national system and operational mechanisms of competitive sports need to be further improved. These problems and potential crises, therefore, place an urgent demand on reforming the way sports are developed.

China's approach to sports development has left a distinctive mark on its development practice over the past half-century, and what path it will follow in the future requires theoretical elaboration. In this article, three representative European traditional sports powerhouses - the UK, France, and Germany - are selected for study, with a focus on development philosophy, management systems, and development methods. Specifically, the paper will first analyse the background, historical transformation, and current development of sport in the UK, France, and Germany. Then, it will analyse the main models and characteristics of the management systems and operational mechanisms in these three countries, as well as the overall development of sport, thus summarising the characteristics of each period and the overall development trend. It will also identify the lessons learned and the problems that exist.

Through a comparative study of the UK, Germany, and France, this paper will analyse the foundations of sports reform and development, and the strengths and weaknesses in the operation of different countries, to identify the common features of sports development in these three countries. This article will apply management, sociology, sports, and new institutional economics theories to draw out scientifically applicable development laws and finally provide useful insights for the reform of sports development in China.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Sports Development in the UK

The development of British sport has been greatly influenced by the modern games in Britain in the 20th century. The influence of modern athletics is not only seen in Britain but also various countries across the continent. The British Government published its first *White Paper on Sport and Recreation in 2001*. This document made it clear that sport should be provided as an everyday community service and that it is an important part of

the national service. This reflected the concept of the welfare state, as the government was then seen as a service provider for the needs of the population, planning sports venues and providing sports facilities to make sports services a general benefit to the population. According to sources, one of Sport England's main tasks was to promote sport for the masses. Its main objective was to ensure that the government had sufficient funds to invest in the development of mass sport appropriately, to provide facilities for the public to engage in sport, to guide the formation of clubs, and to train coaches.

2.2 Sports Governance System in the UK

The British sports governance system is a joint management of sport by the government and social sports organisations. The UK values the strengths of competitive sport and believes that social sport is the foundation of competitive sport. The UK government, therefore, focuses on input and output and believes that science and training should be closely integrated.

According to the research, the school PE curriculum governance system in the UK covers three levels: the national standard PE curriculum, local PE curriculum standards, and school PE curriculum. The curriculum in the UK is managed through a combination of legal compulsion and choice, with a large number of elective courses in addition to the compulsory ones. Extra-curricular activities are mainly administered through sports clubs and social sports organisations. The Ministry of Education is responsible for school sports and the education system regulates sports at a macro level through the enactment of the Education Act [2].

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2.3 Sports Operational Mechanism in the UK

In the UK, the mechanism for running sports is mainly carried out through the government establishing or authorising sports departments to manage public sporting affairs. This requires the government to make full use of public resources to build stadiums, develop physical education, fund sports associations, organise sporting events, promote international sports exchanges, train outstanding athletes and conduct mass sports activities.

The operational mechanism of school sports in the UK is mainly achieved in three different ways. Firstly, the school should take the physical education curriculum. The reform of the physical education curriculum in the UK is based on a child-centered curriculum and focuses on the individual differences of students. They emphasise a wide range of teaching and learning activities from the child's background, as well as strengthening basic physical activity. Physical education is about developing basic motor

skills through games and specific activities [4]. Secondly, a health education curriculum is offered. The basic concept of “lifelong physical education and the development of physical fitness” is integrated throughout the teaching of physical education. In the meanwhile, physical education and health courses are commonly offered in schools, with a focus on the healthy growth and all-around development of students. Thirdly, the UK government promotes internal and external cooperation at the same time to develop physical education.

3 Methodology

3.1 Literature Method

This article will focus on the development of the sport in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. This research will focus on the relevant monographs, academic journals, newspapers, yearbooks, and the Internet to study the management systems and operational mechanisms of sports development around the world. Specifically, papers and books on European organised sport, European fitness for all, European welfare state policies, German sports history, British sports history, sociology of sport, and physical education will be studied, and a search will be made for chronicles of the development of sport in the world. This research will also collect policy documents issued by European governments at different times. Through a systematic review of relevant research literature, a common pattern of sports development in European countries can be summarised to provide theoretical support for the study.

3.2 Experts Interviews Method

In this research, interviews will be conducted with experts in Chinese sports theory and then seek their opinions and suggestions on sports development concepts, management systems, and operational mechanisms [5]. This will provide an understanding of the direction and context of sports development reform in the context of China’s economic development transition and provide concrete suggestions for sports development reform in China.

3.3 Comparative Method

Through comparative studies, this article will analyse the similarities and differences of various sports development approaches, so as to grasp the essence of sports development. Through the study of sports development approaches in European countries, the article will analyse their successful experiences and summarise the background and characteristics of their sports development concepts, management systems and operational models, so as to provide inspiration for the transformation of sports development approaches in China.

3.4 Inductive and Deductive Method

Induction is the process of moving from the individual to the general by extracting general patterns from the examination of individual things and then generalising them to similar things. Literature, interviews and information gathered from a variety of sources are summarised to form the main elements and arguments for each part of the discussion. Deduction is the process of deriving new facts about the field or the subject based on general principles already known. Induction and deduction complement each other, and their mutual transformation makes the understanding of objective things becomes clearer [6]. This article attempts to analyse and summarise the way in which sport has developed in European countries and to deduce the way in which sport has developed in the context of our economic development.

4 Conclusion

At present, there is still a gap between the intermediaries in the Chinese sports market and those in developed countries. Therefore, the influence of foreign intermediaries on China should be viewed correctly. Although it seems that the interests of sports intermediaries in China are currently being divided up by foreign institutions and their room for survival is being squeezed, the injection of large amounts of capital and talent from foreign institutions will stimulate a “catfish effect”, which will be beneficial to the long-term development of the sports intermediary industry in China. The focus should be on the rational allocation of human resources to maximise potential. Therefore, China should adopt effective policies and measures to attract outstanding sports talents, for example, it can try to naturalise foreign athletes and make them legal citizens of China to represent the country in competitions. At the same time, the government can appropriately guide financial capital into the sports industry to generate economic benefits and enhance the development of the sports industry, creating a win-win situation for both sides. Government departments can formulate specific policies to attract private organisations or individuals, overseas capital, or technology to participate in the development of the sports industry, which not only solves the problem of lack of capital but also facilitates the market-oriented operation, enterprise management, and social organisation of the sports industry.

For developed countries, the development of their sports industry has also benefited from government support. Therefore, the Chinese government should implement a series of incentives to encourage the development of the country’s sports industry. In addition to this, the development of laws and regulations is also an important factor in the development of the sports industry in developed countries. Therefore, the Chinese government should have a policy system in terms of investment, taxation, sports lottery, and sports fund to regulate the competition in the sports industry market and ensure the healthy and orderly development of the sports industry.

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