

Current Situation and Countermeasures of Sports Funding Input in Agricultural Colleges and Universities

—A Case Study on Huazhong Agricultural University

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Abstract - By analyzing of the sports funding of three consecutive years (2010-2012) in the Huazhong Agricultural University, the present paper aimed to figure out the causes of the development bottleneck of sports cause and to seek solution for it, which was intended to help promote the sustainable development of the physical education and sports environment in agricultural colleges and universities. Finally we reached the conclusion that the investment from the government and the channels of funding of the sports sector should be increased, and the resources should be scientifically allocated and the efficiency of the fund use should be promoted.

Index Terms - agricultural colleges and universities, sports funding, countermeasure

As the foundation of college education, college sports education is closely related to students' physical and mental health and life-long happiness as well as the future and destiny of the nation. In recent years, there have been a large number of reports on the declining physical quality of college students. Whether the current sports education in colleges and universities can meet the demand of modern education and the development of sports has become the focus of attention.

As a university of "211" project directly administrated by the Ministry of Education and one of the best domestic agricultural universities, Huazhong Agricultural University has always attached great importance to the development of sports cause and the enhancement of the students' physical quality. By the analysis of the sports funding of three consecutive years (2010-2012) in the university, the present paper aimed to figure out the causes of the development bottleneck of sports cause and to seek solution for it, which was intended to help promote the sustainable development of the physical education and sports environment in agricultural colleges and universities.

1. The Status Quo of Sports Funding

Funding for sports lays foundation for all teaching and learning activities, which is an important factor affecting the sustainable development of physical education. At present, Huazhong Agricultural University has the following problems in sports funding:

A. Inadequacy of Funding for Sports

The fund of the university sports investment mainly falls into two large categories: the fund for the sports annual maintenance and the fund for the construction of sports facilities. The fund for the sports annual maintenance is to

support the necessary funding that ensures the normal and sound operation of sports education, which facilitates the sports education, organization of sports competitions, guidance of spare-time training and extracurricular activities; while the fund for the construction of sports facilities is to financially back the necessary updating of the sports facilities. The two financial indicators are important references for the evaluation of the sports education level of a university.

In 2010 -- 2012, the economic investments for sports of Huazhong Agricultural University were 48.29 yuan, 54.80 yuan and 69.95 per capita, respectively, which were much higher than the average input of the colleges and universities directly administered by the Ministry of Education (40.58 yuan per capita) in 2005 [1]. But a large gap still exists between the funding of higher education and the economic input in the sports education. The fund for the sports annual maintenance accounted for only 0.82%, 0.79% and 0.84% of the total fund of the university in the three years respectively, which still did not reach the minimum ratio (1%) as set by the Ministry of Education. Thus, it can be speculated that the investment still can not meet the actual demand of college sports education.

B. Limited Sources of Funding for Sports

The funding sources of university sports mainly include the government funding, the budget of the university, social donations and the revenue of the sports education department. As indicated by the following table, the funding of Huazhong Agricultural University sports education mainly relies on the budget of the university and the revenue of the sports department, and the fund from the government and donations is very limited, which is a very significant factor that inhibits the development of the sports education cause of the university.

TABLE I Proportions of the funds for sports from different sources of Huazhong Agricultural University in 2010 – 2012

Year	2010	2011	2012
Government funding	0	0.48%	1.49%
University budget	56.76%	41.99%	49.12%
Public donation	4.88%	5.23%	5.07%
Revenue of the sports department	38.36%	52.30%	44.32%
Total	100%	100%	100%

C. Inefficient Use of the Funds

Due to the improper and inefficient use of the sports funds, full and complete economic benefits and social benefits have not been created, resulting in the waste of funds. With its public property being ensured, its industrial property has not been fully developed. Many sports resources that can be operated market-orientedly actually make modest or no economic benefits, because the authority of the university pays little attention to the economic use of already-existing sports resources and the lack of motivation of the sports department for the for-profit operation. This causes the large waste of sports facilities even with great lack of funds.

2. Causes of the Current Situation of Sports Fund Investment

Although there are a number of causes for the current problems of the sports funding in agricultural colleges and universities, the major causes are as follows.

A. Inadequate Support from the National Policy

As can be seen from the channels of sports funds, the major source of the sports funds in universities is the funding of the government, which is necessary to ensure the steady growth of investment and the source of sports funds and promote the sports education development in colleges and universities of our country. However, there are limitations of such a single sports investment structure. This is because of the limited resource of the colleges and universities, particularly the resources of sports education, which can not meet the demand. Once there is any change of the budget, the extra expenses can not be guaranteed, resulting in the difficulties of sports education.

B. Insufficient Concern from the Leadership

Since sports funding of college is a complex issue, great efforts should be made to achieve a substantive breakthrough. This is because of the difficulties resulting from the insufficient concern from the leadership and the out-of-date conception of education. For instance, long-distance running has been cancelled in many universities because of the frequent sudden death of students caused by poor physical quality. The students' physical quality has been declining sharply in recent years and poor eyesight is more frequently detected at younger ages. All of the above indicate that sports education in college is still very unsatisfactory, and enough importance has not been attached to sports education and no agreement has been reached on the issue.

C. Limited Financial Resources of Agricultural Colleges and Universities.

On one hand, the financing channels of the agricultural university and its self-dependent fiscal revenue are rather limited. On the other hand, there are too many aspects that need the university's investment. Thus, limited schooling funds have been a long-term inhibitory factor to the rapid development of the university. The analysis of the financial resources of Huazhong Agricultural University suggests that

government funding takes a proportion of 70% of the total funds of the university, indicating that the capacity of self-financing is very limited. Therefore in the allocation of funds, when salary of the faculty and the daily operation of the university are set as priority, the fund input into the sports education is insufficient.

D. Unreasonable Incentive Mechanism of the Sports Sector

There is a great lack of reasonable mechanisms of incentive, management and competition in the self-supply of the sports fund in colleges, which largely restrains the effective and reasonable macro-controlling of the funding and demotivates the units in and out of the university to donate fund. This is an important factor that has great effects on the market behavior for self-supply, the reasonable relationship between serving the university and serving the society as well as between social benefits and economic benefits. The policy to guide the financial self-supply activities of the sports sector from the university authority is inadequate, which results in the failure of government funding to drive the development of financial self-supply activities of the sports sector. The university sports sector must face this reality and actively seek policy support so as to create conditions for financial self-supply, improve the self-supply channels available and actively explore new self-supply sources, effectively make use of social resources and make efficient use of the current resources, thus to gradually increase the degree of marketization in self-supply activities and enhance the capacity of financial self-supply.

3. Countermeasures to Improve the Investment of Sports Funds in Agricultural Universities

In view of the current problems in the sports funding in agricultural universities, the government, the university authority and the sports sector should attach great importance to the input of funds for sports.

A. Increasing Investment from the Government

College physical education is considered as an important part of China's education, and "Education Law of the people's Republic of China" and "Sports Law" have set clear regulations to ensure the input of funds. The administrative departments of education and sports administration management should establish corresponding supervision agencies to supervise the financial input of universities and colleges to sports education and coordinate with the audit. First of all, no less than 1% of the whole education funds should be invested into the sports education. Secondly, sports education expenses should be set as priority when there is newly-increased funding from the government. Reasonable proportion of the public expenses of the university should be invested to the sports education correspondingly to the increase of the standard of the public expenses. The "national school sports and health conditions for basic standard" should be referred to promote the construction of sports facilities, and sports funds should be included in the budget and investment

plan for basic construction, which will ensure the basic sports venues and facilities.

B. Increasing the Concerns from the University Authority

Through the establishment of the evaluation system of physical education and the renewing the concepts of college physical education, the education competence, capability of development and competitiveness of the university leadership are going to be assessed and promoted. Based on the promotion of the vitality of the university and from the point of view of output-to-input ratio, the increase of input of sports funds should be purposefully combined with the perfection of the education functions and the enhancement of the competence of education to achieve new sources of students and competitiveness of students in job market, which is going to facilitate the prominence of the distinguished features and the reputation of education. According to the “National Physical Health Standard of Students”, students’ physical health conditions should be regularly assessed and the results should be released publicly. To pertinently improve the sports education in colleges and universities, financial input of universities and colleges in sports education, improvement of facilities and students’ sports, and physical conditions of college students should be fully investigated taking advantages of the annual reports of sports education launched by the Ministry of Education in 2013.

C. Increasing the Channels of Funding of the Sports Sector

The sports sector should open the mind, change the conception and be socialized, thus to fully develop the charging use of sports facilities by taking advantage of the finance, aiming to obtain multi-channel funding of college sports education in different forms [2].

1) The already-existing facilities and equipment can be rented with certain charge. With reasonable planning, some sports service centers can be established to provide charging service to the faculty and students as well as the society with specialized equipments and professional teachers.

2) To meet the demand of students, paid teaching of swimming, table tennis, skating, martial arts, aerobics, tennis and football etc. can be provided.

3) Sports stadiums can be opened to the general public and the service can be charged, which is going to feed back the financing of the stadiums.

4) Sports talents among the faculty can be used to provide paid teaching of sports in society, and at the same time make contribution to the national fit-keeping program

5) Sports competitions of high level can be hosted so as to cultivate the students’ interests in sports and guide them to rational and reasonable sports consumptions.

D. Scientifically Allocating the Resources and Promoting the Efficiency of the Funds

Physical education industry calls for scientific and reasonable management and running mainly through the improvement of the output-to-input accounting system and evaluation system, and modern management methods such as cost-control and intensive management, which will improve the efficiency and output efficiency of the use of limited resources, and bring the best economic benefits with minimal consumption of resources. Therefore, the sports sector must carefully plan the use of funds to avoid waste and increase channels of sports funding, aiming to achieve the best effect with the least resources. With rather limited education resources, particularly the economic resources, to improve the use efficiency, renew the teaching contents, promote the use of stadiums and facilities and to control expenses are going to be crucial factors affecting the development of sports education in colleges and universities [3].

In general, we need to strengthen the theoretical study of physical education in colleges and universities, explore new financial sources, make scientific and reasonable allocation and efficient use of sports funds, strive to improve the quality of university students and fulfill the implementation of talent development strategy in the twenty-first century.

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