

The Importance of Club Operation Development to The Development of Sports Events - Take Swimming Events as An Example

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Abstract. Governments have attached great importance to sports development, with people increasingly paying attention to health management. Through literature review and marketing model analysis, this paper discusses the advantages and disadvantages of club operation of swimming events, and the influence of star effect on market promotion. The results show that club operation can effectively improve the market competitiveness of swimming events, and integrate resources to enhance the efficiency of athlete selection and training. The star effect plays an important role in the promotion, which can increase the popularity and market influence of the swimming club. However, over-reliance on star power and commercial operations can have a negative impact on the career longevity of athletes, the financial stability of clubs, and the brand image. Therefore, clubs should balance commercialization and athlete development, adopt diversified operation strategies, and strengthen cooperation with the government and enterprises to achieve long-term sustainable development.

Keywords: Club Management, Star Effect, Sports Management, Marketing Promotion.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, sports have become an important force driving social development, not only playing a positive role in enhancing people's physical fitness, but also contributing to social cohesion, economic development, and enhancing the international image. Under the background of globalization, sports have been endowed with more cultural and economic significance. As early as the late 19th century, sports powerhouses such as the UK, the US, and Germany had already begun establishing sports clubs and creating star sports brands, thereby building a systematic training and development platform[1]. According to statistics, millions of people in China join the swimming learning and training team every year, which not only reflects the popularity of mass fitness but also shows the high degree of national attention paid to swimming. In particular, in the recent Olympic Games, the Chinese swimming team has performed excellently, winning multiple gold medals and bringing honor to the country[2]. Despite this, the current swimming training and talent development model in China still has many limitations, such as outdated talent selection mechanisms and narrow career paths for retired athletes. The club model is gradually considered an effective approach to solving these problems[2]. Research shows that the club model can not only provide individualized training environments for athletes but also enhance their overall competitive level through diversified resource allocation[1,2]. Furthermore, by studying the construction of mass swimming brand events in China, the key role of technical means and celebrity effect in sports brand communication was further explored, emphasizing the importance of the club model in brand building[2]. However, China's sports club model still faces many challenges, such as imperfect management mechanisms, insufficient commercial operation experience, and lower magnetization levels [2].

Based on the problems of the commercial development of swimming projects in China, this paper will use literature review and model analysis methods to explore the reasons why swimming projects have not been fully commercialized in China, focusing on the impact of club operation mode and celebrity effect promotion on the long-term sustainable development of swimming projects. The paper aims to provide theoretical support and practical reference for improving the selection range of

swimming athletes, enhancing their training resources and social attention. By analyzing different club models, this paper provides new perspectives and pathways for the development of swimming events and promotes China's swimming events to make greater breakthroughs in future development.

2. Organization of the Text

Sports clubs are important entities for cultivating and disseminating sports culture. They promote the development of mass sports activities by providing services such as venues, equipment, and technical guidance. These clubs not only provide the public with the opportunity to participate in sports but also play an important role in the construction of social culture. According to different functions and operation modes, sports clubs are generally divided into three types: amateur clubs, professional clubs, and commercial clubs (Table 1) [3,4].

Table 1. Three types of sports clubs

Amateur club	Proficlub	Business club
Primarily serving non-professional athletes and sports fans, its operations often rely on membership fees, government grants, and social donations. The goal of these clubs is to provide a healthy lifestyle and a social platform.	It focuses on the training and development of professional athletes and participates in high-level competitive events. The income sources of such clubs include ticket sales, TV broadcasting rights, sponsorship contracts and product sales, etc., which have strong commercial operation characteristics.	It not only focuses on the training of athletes, but also realizes the close combination of sports and business through commercial development, brand building and marketing.

These clubs not only provide sports enthusiasts and professional athletes with competitive and entertainment platforms but also gradually form a mature market economy model and a unique operating system. For example, sports clubs attract audiences and sponsors through the influence of star athletes, use a variety of marketing strategies to enhance club visibility, and realize the return of funds and sustainable development of clubs through events, training, and other forms [4,5].

As a systemic sport, swimming has gradually become an important way of daily exercise for its significant improvement of cardiopulmonary function and the coordinated development of muscles throughout the body. In recent years, the commercial development of swimming events in China mainly depends on the holding of large-scale events, the rise of swimming training institutions, and the promotion of swimming clubs. However, the selection and training of high-level competition talents still mainly rely on the traditional unified screening mechanism and the training mode of youth training teams [4,5]. This traditional mode guarantees the stability of the competitive level to a certain extent, but it also has obvious limitations, that is, it is difficult to fully explore and cultivate the potential of new forces. There is a certain contradiction between the rigidity of this model and modern society's demand for the diversified development of athletes [4,5]. At the same time, the re-employment planning of retired athletes in China has not yet formed a mature business ecological chain and club model as in foreign countries. In Europe the United States and other sports-developed countries, sports clubs not only undertake the task of athlete training but also provide retired athletes with opportunities for career transformation, such as management positions, coaching positions, or commercial promotion [4,5]. In contrast, the lack of relevant domestic systems has led to many retired athletes facing greater re-employment pressure after the end of their careers. This situation can be

improved by introducing and learning from mature foreign club models to help retired athletes achieve a smooth transition and long-term development [4,5].

3. Literature References

3.1. Clubbing management in swimming

The swimming club is not only an important place to train athletes, but also an important carrier to promote the popularization and development of swimming sports. To promote the club as a career, more people can contact and participate in swimming sports, and then improve the national fitness level. In addition, the club can organize competitions and events to promote the professional development of swimming. At the same time, the clubbing management of swimming events can not only enhance the social influence of swimming events but more importantly, provide a systematic platform for the development of athletes. However, excessive commercialization may also have a negative impact on the sustainable development of athletes (Table 2) [6,7].

Table 2. SWOT analysis with Club-Oriented Management for Athlete Development[6,7]

Strengths	<p>Resource integration: The club is able to pool resources to provide athletes with advanced training equipment and professional support.</p> <p>Timely update of training equipment: The club has a stronger financial ability to regularly update training equipment and maintain competitiveness.</p> <p>Data and information vocational training: Through data analysis and information management, optimize the training and competition strategies of athletes, so as to improve the training effect. It also helps to select and train excellent professional athletes and form a complete career path, covering all stages from youth training to professionalism.</p> <p>Market employment: Clubs can provide re-employment opportunities for retired athletes, such as coaching, management positions or marketing promotion, to help them achieve second career development.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>Over commercialization: can lead to shortened career life of athletes and affect their mental health.</p> <p>High operating costs: High costs associated with commercial operations can put pressure on a club's long-term financial health.</p>
Opportunities	<p>As society's focus on healthy lifestyles increases, the club has the opportunity to attract more members and sponsors.</p> <p>The development of digital technology provides new tools and methods for club management and athlete training.</p>
Threats	<p>The market is competitive: More and more clubs are entering the market and the competition is increasing.</p> <p>Policy Risks: Changes in sports policy can have a significant impact on club operations.</p>

From the macro environment, the government's sports policy, economic environment, social and cultural emphasis on sports, and the development of technology will have a profound impact on the operation of swimming clubs. In China, the development of swimming clubs is faced with many

challenges, such as insufficient funds, lack of management experience, immature market operation, etc. These factors restrict the large-scale development of clubs [4,5,6,7]. At the same time, through marketing model analysis (refer with: Fig. 1), it can be found that the sustainable operation of swimming clubs may be negatively affected by the "traffic" absorbed by other sports events. Secondly, successful swimming clubs require sound infrastructure and the use of diversified operational strategies. The venue of the club is the core element and must meet international or national standards and be equipped with advanced facilities and equipment. In addition, the high-quality coaching team is also the key, and the professional level of coaches directly affects the quality and reputation of the club's training. In the application of a cooperative marketing strategy, the club can cooperate with universities, governments, and enterprises to ensure funding sources in a diversified way. [6,7]. At the same time, network marketing, channel marketing, price marketing, and other combination marketing strategies, in the popularization of health knowledge at the same time, imperceptibly enhance the economic value of swimming teaching [7].

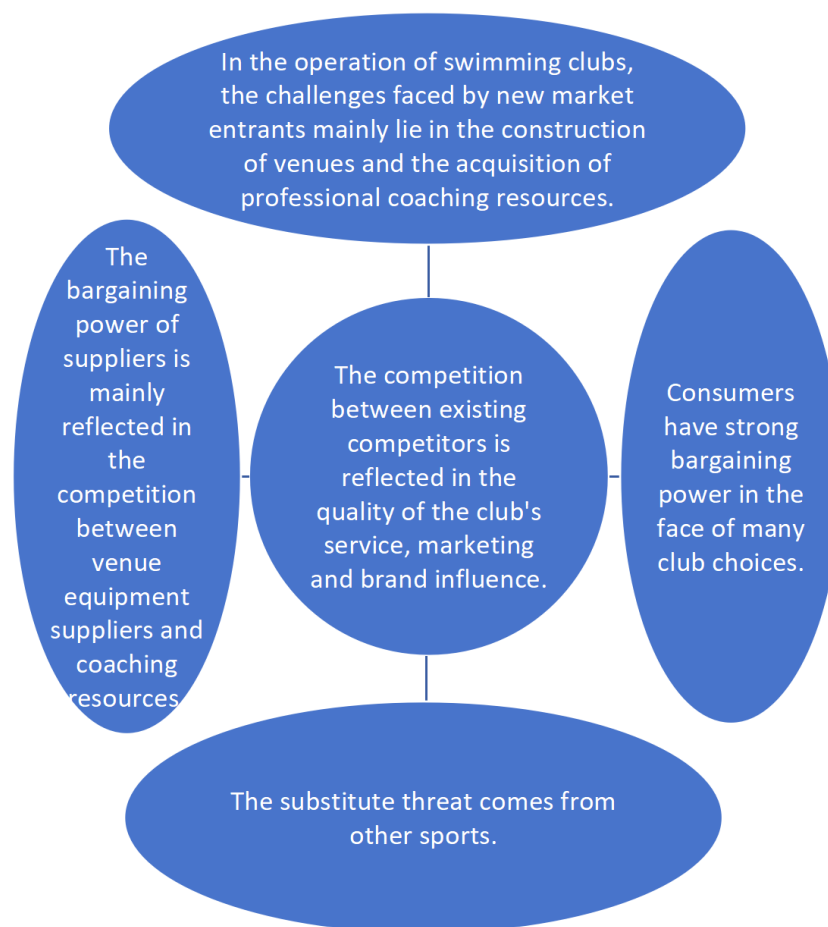


Figure 1. Porter's Five Forces model analysis with clubbing management in swimming [6,7]

Therefore, in addition to the necessary professional swimming clubs in a reasonable response to market challenges, amateur clubs as early water testing projects can also help the swimming industry produce economic value and social influence [7]. Amateur swimming clubs can play a role at multiple levels, including organizing competitions, providing national fitness services, and providing professional instruction. Through amateur club competitions, swimmers can also gain more practical experience and improve their competitive level [7]. The National Fitness Service under the amateur club provides an opportunity for the public to participate in sports and contributes to the improvement of the health of the whole population [7]. Professional guidance can provide a platform for those who are interested in a swimming career to learn and improve.

3.2. Celebrity effect in the swimming club

In the context of sports clubs, the star effect is usually combined with the club through endorsement, participation in activities, social media promotion, etc., to enhance the public recognition and attractiveness of the club [8]. The joining or participation of well-known swimmers can quickly raise the profile of the club, attract more members, and increase public interest in swimming [7,8].

Star effect has multiple positive effects on the development of a club. First, through the promotion of star athletes, clubs can use their strong appeal to carry out effective marketing [8]. The participation of star athletes can actively lead mass participation through advertising, social media campaigns, and public events, drive the sports trend, and thus enhance the overall image and influence of the club. Second, the star effect helps popularize the concept of health, stimulates the public's interest in participating in sports activities such as swimming, and makes people have the desire to try through psychological influence [8]. In addition, the addition of star athletes can not only increase course sales, such as the swimming courses that stars participate in but also expand the overall influence of the swimming industry and promote the market demand for secondary products, such as swimming equipment, sports apparel and so on [8,9]. Although star power can bring significant economic benefits and social impact to a club in the short term, there are also some potential disadvantages. Excessive reliance on the star effect may lead to the club's brand image and the star's image is too bound, when the star image is damaged, the club's reputation may also be affected. In addition, the high endorsement fees of stars may increase the operating costs of clubs, thus adversely affecting their long-term financial health [Fig.2][9].

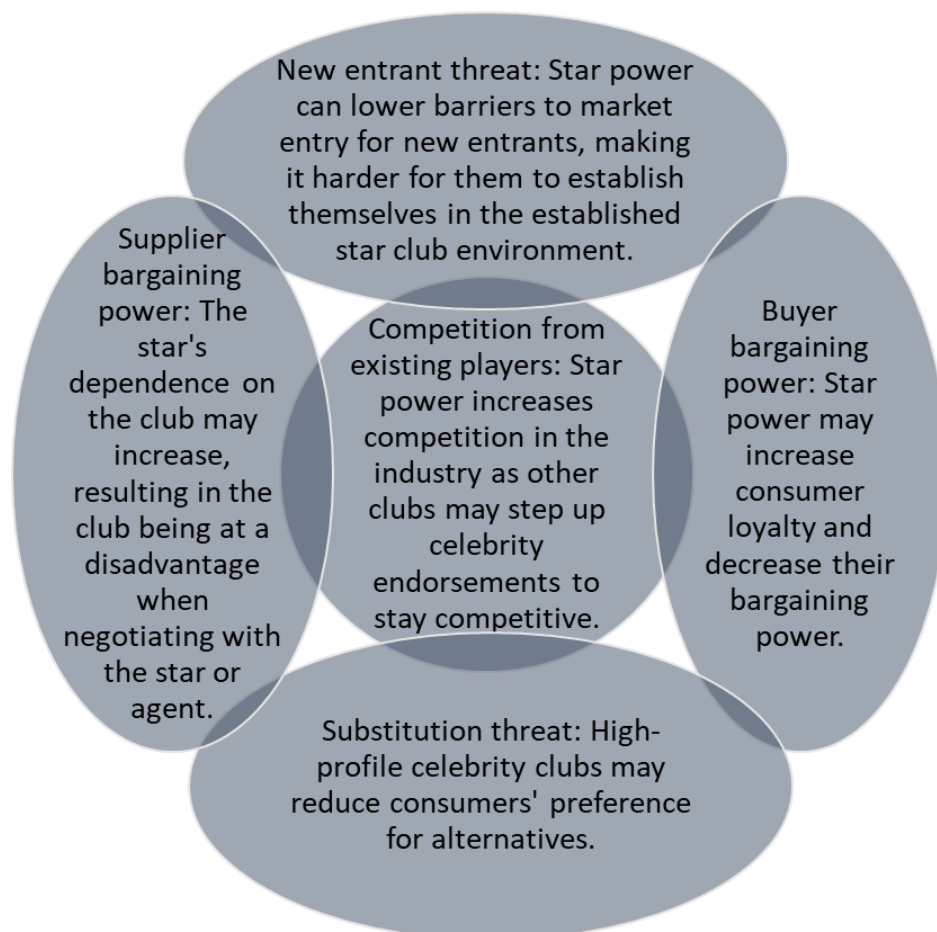


Figure 2. Porter's five forces model analysis with celebrity effect in sports clubs [8,9]

As mentioned above, China's athlete selection mechanism is currently mainly a unified national team selection system. Although this model has certain advantages in ensuring a competitive level, its support for the market development of swimming events is limited. Therefore, the current development mechanism of swimming training teams often ignores the potential of market-oriented

clubs in exploring and developing young athletes, limiting the opportunities for athletes from different backgrounds to enter higher-level competitions [7,8,9]. In this regard, swimming clubs or training teams can learn from the youth training camps and professional league systems of European football clubs. By holding more national and regional "star competitions", they can provide more competitive opportunities for serving athletes, help young people better understand swimming, and provide ways to explore their own sports advantages [8,9]. To provide a broad basis for the selection of talents for the club and the national team. For retired athletes, clubs can also provide more re-employment opportunities, such as serving as coaches, event promotion managers brand spokesmen, etc[8,9]. While helping them successfully achieve career transformation, they can also use the secondary star effect, further expand the gold content of clubs, and improve the overall economic benefits of the industry [8,9].

4. Suggestion

By analyzing the development status of Chinese swimming clubs, it is found that the clubs are faced with the problems of immature management, insufficient funds, and ineffective promotion. These problems make it difficult for the club to maintain and expand the market in the long term. In contrast, sports clubs in European and American countries can maintain sustained financial growth and steadily expand in the market through sound sponsorship models, government subsidies, and commercial cooperation [10]. Therefore, swimming clubs in China can learn from the successful experiences of other countries, especially in terms of sponsorship and commercial cooperation models. For example, clubs should actively seek corporate cooperation to attract more financial support through brand sponsorship and tournament naming. Government subsidies are also common abroad, and through partnerships with local governments, clubs can apply for government sports development funds to supplement day-to-day operating expenses[10]. In addition, the club can increase membership fees by upgrading member benefits and services and adopting flexible pricing strategies, such as offering family packages and discounts for long-term members, to attract more members with different income levels [10].

In addition, the star effect plays an important role in sports promotion. However, star power also has certain risks and limitations. First, clubs that rely too much on stars may suffer damage to their brand reputation when the image of stars is negatively affected. If the public image of the star is damaged, the club may not be able to respond quickly and adjust its marketing strategy, resulting in the loss of members or the withdrawal of sponsors [8,10]. Secondly, the high cost of celebrity endorsement may increase the financial burden of the club, especially if the club is small or has limited financial reserves. Therefore, for the use of star effect, clubs can adopt diversified star management strategies[8,11]. First, clubs should avoid over-reliance on a single star and establish a multi-star endorsement system to spread risks. Secondly, clubs can cultivate their star athletes through the youth training system and reduce their dependence on external stars. For example, some successful football clubs in Europe have developed future stars through their youth system, which not only saves on endorsement costs but also significantly increases the long-term appeal of the club brand [8,10,11].

At the same time, while commercialization has brought significant economic benefits to clubs, excessive commercialization can also have a negative impact on athletes' careers and mental health. Excessive pursuit of economic benefits may lead to excessive fatigue of athletes in intensive commercial activities and competition schedules, thus increasing the risk of injury [11]. In addition, the stressful environment of commercialization can have an adverse impact on the mental health of athletes, especially when they need to juggle a large number of advertising endorsements and media activities. To avoid the negative impact of excessive commercialization on athletes, clubs should find a balance between commercial operation and the long-term development of athletes[12]. First, clubs should develop scientific and reasonable competition and training plans, reduce unnecessary commercial activities, and ensure that athletes have enough rest time. Secondly, clubs should provide psychological support services to athletes to help them cope with the mental pressure brought about by commercialization. In addition, clubs should adopt a phased and limited strategy in terms of

advertising endorsement and event scheduling to ensure that the health and professional development of athletes are not affected[12].

5. Summary

To summarize, this paper studies the influence of the operation of swimming clubs on the development of swimming events, focuses on the existing problems such as immature management, insufficient funds, and ineffective promotion of swimming clubs in China, and analyzes the dual role of star effect in club promotion. This paper finds that the management system of swimming clubs needs to be further optimized, especially in terms of cooperation with the government and enterprises, clubs still face a lack of resource integration and long-term management mechanisms. At the same time, as an effective marketing tool, although the star effect can quickly enhance the popularity and influence of the club, over-reliance may lead to excessive binding of the brand and the personal image of the star, thus bringing negative risks. To solve these problems, it can be optimized through a diversified star endorsement system to disperse risks, cultivate its star athletes, reduce external dependence, and strengthen cooperation with enterprises and governments to ensure a stable supply of funds and resources. At the same time, clubs should pay more attention to the long-term development of athletes, provide reasonable training arrangements and psychological support, and avoid the negative impact of over-commercialization on the physical and mental health of athletes. Because the research in this paper only made a detailed analysis in terms of marketing and star effect and did not carry out a detailed analysis on the management and development of athletes, the deep cooperation mode between clubs and other relevant stakeholders (such as the government and enterprises), and the long-term operation of the event organization. Therefore, future research will focus on how to enhance the career development path of athletes through clubbing operation mode, increase the commercial value of swimming events, and promote the sustainable development of the entire swimming industry chain.

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