

On Global Promotion Strategy of Chinese Table Tennis Events based on SWOT Analysis

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Abstract:

In this paper, the SWOT-based systematic analysis on strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of China's table tennis tournaments in global promotion is conducted to find out the appropriate development strategy conforming to the global promotion trend of Chinese table tennis tournaments. The research results show that the inner spiritual value of China's table tennis itself, the global economic growth, the positive sports policy and the commercial interests of open table tennis tournaments are the primary strengths and opportunities, while the low commercialization degree, imperfect system, strong competition of foreign sports powers for China's sports events, and the utilization of sports event resources are the important factors restricting the global promotion of table tennis events. Then, the following recommendations are put forward: Firstly, adopt the growth strategy; secondly, promote sports events by combining with marketing; thirdly, vigorously develop the construction of table tennis clubs; fourthly, improve resource utilization, perfect industrial administration system and strengthen the promotion of table tennis abroad; fifthly, increase the supports for table tennis peripheral industries.

Keywords: SWOT, table tennis events, global promotion, growth strategy

I. INTRODUCTION

The *Opinions on promoting the high-quality development of sports industry through the advocacy of national fitness and sports consumption* [1] issued by the general office of the State Council has brought about not only good development opportunity but also considerable challenges to table tennis project as China's traditional strength, especially to the dominant position of Asian table tennis in this circle, thus leading to the unbalanced development of table tennis events. In this paper, the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of developing table tennis events in China are studied and explored from the strategic perspective by conducting SWOT analysis on the promotion and development of international events of Chinese table tennis, and based on which, with the introduction of matrix form, the various factors obtained from analysis are combined for matching to be analyzed again to draw a conclusion, so as to ensure the scientificity and effectiveness of decisions, thereby depriving the global strategic direction for the promotion of Chinese table tennis events, and putting forward the corresponding suggestions.

II Research Result and Analysis

2.1 Strength analysis

2.1.1 Inner spiritual value of China's table tennis

The objective of promoting China's progressing for a sports power proposed by Chinese leader is not only the scientific development concept and the scientific orientation for the implementation of China's sports industry in the future, but also the future development strategy, objective, concept and implementation mechanism to lead the re innovation and reevaluation of competitive sports. Under the above background, China as a table tennis power in the world has the responsibility and obligation to undertake the important task of promoting the international table tennis development and maintaining the project balance. Meanwhile, it is urgent for China to formulate and perfect a long-term international development and promotion plan, so as to achieve the healthy and harmonious development of table tennis characterized by broad mass base and long historical culture [2].

2.1.2 Demand for table tennis industry stimulated by economic growth under globalization

Economic globalization as the most important driving force for sports industrial development makes it achievable for the providing of valuable opportunity for global capital expansion by hosting major sports events. For example, with the Adidas winning the bid of "Brazuca" for football design and operation management, the mass production of the finished ball is conducted in a production base of Shenzhen by a Taiwan funded company, which is the typical made in China, while the relevant industries in this supply chain can be benefited to some extent. Meanwhile, the economic globalization trend has been pushing the mutual cooperation between large companies such as ESPN, butterfly, Mizuno, DHS and international sports organizations such as the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) and the International Olympic Committee, so as to integrate resources and carry on global promotion of large-scale sports events [3]. All these strengths play an extremely important role in the development of China's table tennis industry.

In recent years, the continuous practice of "national fitness" idea and the advocacy of forming good exercise habit in China have made the public own the positive thinking through the participation in sports activities in an individual or collective way, so as to maintain social stability and unity and promote social stable development. Then, the counteraction of social stability on economic development has pushed the stable political situation and people's living and working in peace of China to be the great guarantee for industrial development. Among the indicators to measure the level of economic development, with per capita GDP as a comprehensive indicator for the comprehensive factors of consumption level, regional financial resources and residents' income, the location of table tennis halls mostly in cities has driven the Engel coefficient and per capita disposable income of urban residents to be used for the analysis on marketization degree of table tennis, in which, Engel coefficient as one of the major standards to measure the wealthy degree of a family or a country refers to the proportion of food expenditure in total expenditure, thus the lower it is, the higher the living standard of the people in this region, that is, the higher the proportion of residents' consumption after basic living consumption (culture, education, entertainment, etc.).

As shown in Fig. 1 (per capita GDP of China from 2016 to 2020) and Fig. 2 (disposable income of urban residents 2016 to 2020), relative to the year 2016 with per capita GDP of 53,783 yuan, the per capita GDP in 2020 valued as 72,000 yuan shows a significant increase, thus indicating the year-by-year increase in per capita disposable income of urban households during these four years. Economists believe that with the increase of family income and the expenditure available for science, education, culture and sports projects, sports consumption as the consumption with high elasticity will account for a certain amount of extra consumption of life to gradually become one of the important components of life consumption. Thus, it can be seen that the good growth trend of economy and the improvement of residents' living standards can provide necessary economic basis for the further global promotion of table tennis.

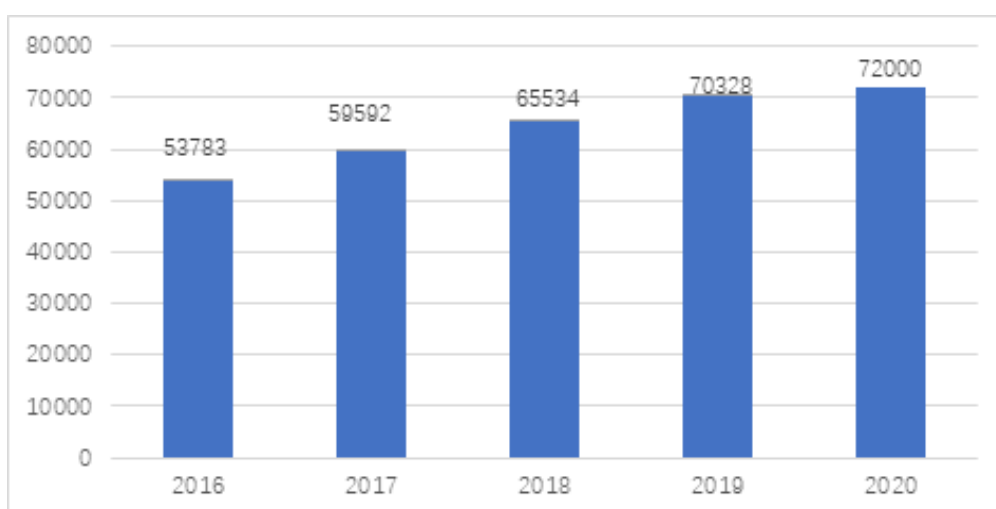


Fig 1: Per capita GDP of China from 2016 to 2019
(Data source: Statistics on per capita GDP of China from 2016 to 2019)

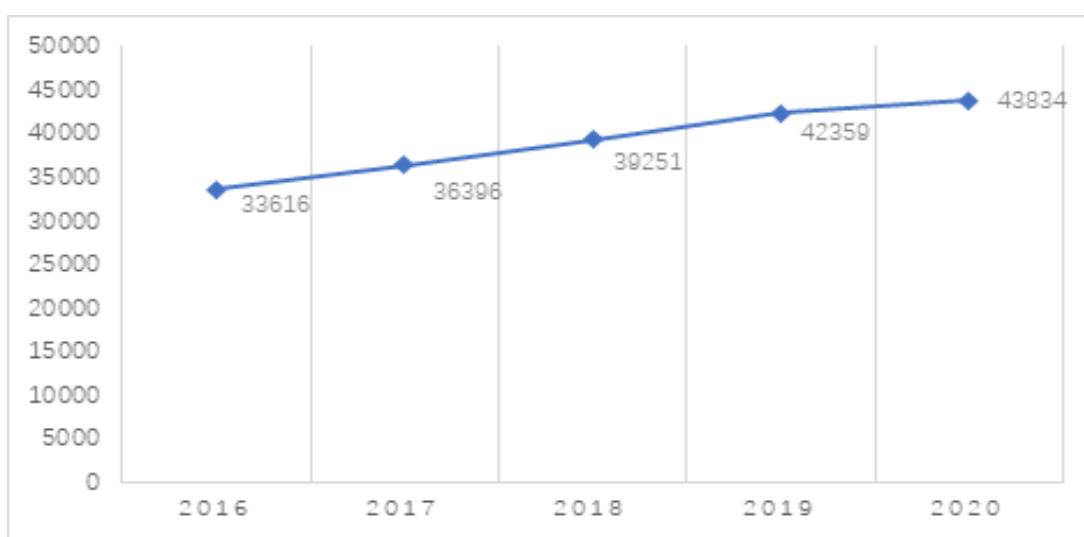


Fig 2: Disposable income of urban residents from 2016 to 2019
(Data source: Statistical Communique on disposable income of urban residents in China from 2016 to 2020)

2.2 Weakness analysis

2.2.1 Low commercialization degree of table tennis

Commercialization degree can be reflected by sponsors, brand effect, broadcasting rights, competition operation, stadium, etc., just like the commercial major league of nearly 10 billion dollars created by American professional basketball through the hosting of a global top event [4]. The transformation of table tennis project towards the commercial direction by abolishing the gold medal only theory at the national level shall encourage social enterprises to sponsor and join in the promoted brands, and cancel the rule of tournaments that only provincial and municipal teams can participate in professional competitions, but allow the individual table tennis lovers to sign up for competitions after selection. At the same time, as the strategic center for the industrialization of table tennis tournaments in China, strengthening the construction of professional, semi professional and amateur clubs should follow the principles of "sustainable development", "combining with foreign experience" and "vigorously developing clubs" during the specific operation.

2.2.2 Imperfect competitive sports system

The obvious division of competitive sports organization system over the years and the relatively closed training system have resulted in the poor fluidity between the internal resources of system and the resources inside and outside the system, while the idleness and waste of the limited competitive sports resources are not conducive to the sustainable development of China's competitive sports. To realize the rational fluidity and sharing of sports resources, the government should firstly play its leading role in resource allocation to give full play to the advantages of China's competitive sports system; secondly, the socialist market economy should completely play its role in resource allocation by using the invisible hand of the market [5,6], thus gradually establishing and improving the mobile market of competitive sports resources, and vigorously developing the important exchange markets such as competitive sports athletes and competitive sports event markets, athlete protection and employment markets. With the necessity in the communication of athletes to break the barriers of institutions, administrative regions and talents, the reasonable and orderly talent flow can be realized in various forms, such as leasing, exchange, one off buyout (or transfer), joint training, protocol exchange, contract signing and independent job selection; open up the competition markets of competitive sports to explore multiple channels for helping all social circles host the relevant sports events, so as to promote the development of sports events; the social security system for elite athletes can be established by adopting the unified security fund, athlete disability insurance, athlete unemployment insurance and endowment insurance; the security system for elite athletes can be also perfected by establishing professional skill training system for athletes; encourage social forces to participate in sports exercise and vigorously develop community sports, so as to create more employment opportunities for athletes; improve the flow mechanism and legal system of competitive sports resources to improve the flow environment of competitive sports resources.

2.3 Opportunity analysis

2.3.1 Positive sports policy

At present, aiming at the way of keeping the consistence between China's sports undertakings and international sports as one of the problems to be solved in the transformation of sports development mode in China, the national leader believe that sports strength is an indispensable part of the country's comprehensive national strength and national soft power, but China's competitive sports industry has separated from national overall reform after years of development, which urgently needs the reform and opening up, thus we need to play the role of going out, bringing in and interactive communication in the creation of multi-level, all-round and wide-ranging opening-up model, so as to achieve the building of competitive sports cooperation strategy characterized by international diversified cooperation, mutual benefit and win-win [7]. Conforming to the trend of China's integration into the world also requires us to implement the development strategy of "One Road and One Belt" and expand sports diplomacy with the countries and regions along the line. The construction of competitive sports with its formed strong power has become an important field for the rising and foreign exchange of China, and then we should try to provide Chinese road for the development of competitive sports in the world by narrating Chinese good stories and sharing Chinese good experience to "Sports World".

2.3.2 Commercial interests of International Table Tennis Open

ITTF World Tour and ITTF Challenge as the two series of ITTF respectively have two levels, the former's platinum tournament and regular season, the latter's professional competition and ordinary competition. In 2018, for the ITTF World Tour hosted at 12 sites with platinum tournament and regular season respectively accounting for the half, 150,000 dollars and 100,000 dollars provided by the ITTF were respectively the minimum bonus requirements for platinum tournament and regular season, with the bonus of the finals up to 1 million dollars, while the ITTF Challenge was hosted at 9 sites, with the minimum bonus reaching 40,000 dollars. In 2019, the minimum bonus of the ITTF Challenge was required by the ITTF to be raised to 60,000 dollars (professional competition) and 30,000 dollars (ordinary competition). At the same time, the Grand Slam tournaments of World Table Tennis Professional League (WTT) were held in 2021, with the bonus of competitions at branch sites once up to 3 million dollars, where many Chinese table tennis stars such as Zhang Jike and Zhang Yining have created great value for enterprises by their popularity. Moreover, striving to be the pioneers, China's own brands such as Li Ning, Peak, etc. that can be seen as the sponsored brand and trademark in large-scale sports events use sponsorship as the means of enterprise marketing to gain greater economic benefits through their bold investment in activities with global influence. The sports industries related to competitive sports said to have become a new driving force in China are conducive to promote China's economic construction.

2.4 Threat analysis

2.4.1 Strong competition of foreign sports powers for China's sports events

(1) The United States

The data of Plunkett research center shows that as a growing industry in the United States, the sports industry with the net profit increasing from 48 billion dollars to 72 billion dollars in 2009-2019 has pushed itself to be an important part of the tertiary industry and become a pillar industry. For example, with at least 140 million people per year participating in outdoor sports in the United States, the popular industries such as golf, camping, etc. can create the profit of 160 billion dollars a year, and the driving of Nike and Reebok has pushed the sporting goods industry to be thriving; at the same time, the policy of the United States to vigorously support the mass sports development has promoting the enterprises to encourage the participation of the public in physical exercise through publicity, lobbying and sponsoring events. Moreover, the more prosperous development of sports media has made the generation of famous sports media such as ESPN, NBC, FOX, ABC, CBS, etc., [8] in which, the current value of ESPN founded in 1979 is up to 40 billion dollars, with its annual income and the number of employees worldwide respectively reaching 10 billion dollars and 8,000. These data fully confirm the contribution brought about by sports industry, whose positive role can not be ignored [9].

(2) Britain

The report shows that the relevant revenue of horse racing industry in Britain reached 3.45 billion pounds in 2012; in the field of football, the relevant revenue of 92 football clubs from 2011 to 2012 reached 3 billion pounds; in the field of bicycles, the estimation report of the Oxford Institute of economics in Britain says that the bicycle exercise industry had made a contribution of 3 billion pounds to the British economy by 2017 [10,11]. Besides bringing about a large amount of employment opportunities, these sports industries have also promoted the development of tourism, service industry and other related industries in Britain. The consumption of British residents on the diversified sports consumption products provided by the developed sports industries in Britain can simultaneously promote the vigorous development of sports industry.

(3) Japan

In Japan, the high priority of sports industries given by governments has pushed the special research institutes to look for factors promoting development, formulate corresponding policies and promote industrial development for the sports and its related industries. By the 1980s, the increase of residents' income had made people's demands for material culture raise rapidly, which was accompanied with the year-by-year increase of sports consumption in Japanese families. Then, in 1994, the domestic consumption on sports service products in Japan played a dominant role in national economy, accounting for 83.03% of total expenditure on sports consumption. At present, the industrial operation with great progress is ranked second in the world [12,13].

2.4.2 Weakness in utilization of competition resources

At present, during the development of sports events under the driver of the corresponding policies formulated by China, there are still many problems in international high-quality resources: The first is the hindering on resource utilization of sports events. The expensive costs and the complex procedures in the application for many international commercial activities greatly reduce the resource utilization due to the requirement for a large amount of time and funds of the applicant. The comparison with foreign governments shows that on the one hand, the governments in many countries have been devoting to the resource competition of all the sports industries in a fair environment for the continuous improvement of their service functions; on the other hand, the governments' supports for all markets can avoid the possibility of some clubs occupying resources.

The second is the low utilization rate of domestic resources. In European and American countries, the sports associations organized on the basis of club development can provide service for clubs, and implement hierarchical management on club personnel and sports venues to continuously improve the professional level of relevant parties continuously, so as to perfect the industrial administration mechanism, which then pushes the gradual formation of autonomy system of sports project to play a vital role in the popularization and improvement of sports activities. However, in China, the insufficient government funding and the inappropriate administration mechanism of administrative departments have resulted in the increasingly intensified contradictions between clubs, professional league associations and national teams, thus pushing the government and the market to face the challenges of not only guaranteeing the training performance of national team, but also helping clubs realize economic benefits to coordinate the interests of all parties.

In addition, the domestic mobility policies are still imperfect, especially with many problems in agency. The table tennis project with great achievements in our country is still restricted by capital in the aspect of its industrial development. Compared with international brands such as Adidas and Nike, the Double Happiness Sports as one of the largest domestic table tennis industries has the obviously insufficient international influence, so the rare naming sponsorship of Chinese enterprises in the world table tennis championships, Olympic Games and other international events is one of the poor performances of the competitiveness of domestic table tennis industry.

2.5 Building of SWOT matrix

Table I. swot matrix

	Strengths 1. Inner spiritual value of China's competitive sports 2. Demand for table tennis industry stimulated by economic growth under globalization	Weakness 1. Imperfect competitive sports system 2. Imperfect resource allocation system
Opportunity 1. Positive sports policy 2. Commercial interests of international open table tennis competition	SO strategy Rely on internal strength and utilize external opportunity. SO1 Use the good market environment to expand the scale of international table tennis tournaments under the background of global rapid economic development. SO2 With the dependence on relevant government policies, utilize the current strengths of China's sports industry to expand the influence of sports events, thus attracting more funds and attention, and developing the scale of sports events.	WO strategy Utilize external opportunity and overcome internal weakness. WO1 Attract the high-quality talents in sports event administration through high salary by using the commercial interests of International Table Tennis Open. WO2 Use positive sports policies to deal with the attack of foreign sports powers on China's sports industry.
Threats 1. Strong competition of foreign sports powers for China's sports events 2. Weakness in utilization of competition resources	ST strategy Rely on internal strength and avoid external challenge. ST1 Develop China's sports industry with the support of funds by taking advantages of the trend of rapid economic development under economic globalization, so as to compete with foreign sports industry. ST2 Do a good job in market development by taking advantages of inner spiritual value of China's table tennis, so as to positively promote and expand the international table tennis tournaments.	WT strategy Reduce internal weakness and avoid external challenge. WT1 Minimize the contradictions within the sports system and strengthen the development of event promotion in the international market. WT2 Cultivate and attract more high-quality administrator and practitioners for the promotion of international table tennis events.

According to the above Table I swot matrix shows that China's International Table Tennis Open with many obvious advantages in its development can also be benefited from external opportunities for its development. However, the various disadvantages of International Table Tennis Open make themselves face the various challenges, thus it can be said that the promotion of China's International Table Tennis Open has been the accompaniment between advantages and opportunities, threats and challenges. Therefore, we must make full use of the advantages and opportunities of International Table Tennis Open, and transform the unfavorable factors into favorable conditions according to the changes of external environment, so as to turn the challenges into opportunities for development.

III RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Recommendations

3.1.1 Use the good market environment to expand the scale of International Table Tennis Open under the background of global rapid economic development. With the dependence on relevant government policies, utilize the current strengths of China's sports industry to expand the influence of sports events, thus attracting more funds and attention, and developing the scale of sports events.

3.1.2 Promote the sports events by combining with marketing; firstly, provide direct sales services or products for consumers, that is, the adoption of traditional marketing means, such as selling event tickets, peripheral industrial products, etc.; secondly, carry on the marketing of products or services through sports events, that is, the marketing of sports events by taking advertisement as carrier, such as enterprise sponsorship, on-site and off-site enterprise advertising and intangible asset sales.

3.1.3 Vigorously develop the building of table tennis clubs; build amateur clubs and professional clubs in the hope of selecting talents for table tennis by developing professional scouts, so as to create a world's top event.

3.1.4 Improve the efficiency of resource utilization; with the perfection of industrial administration system, strengthen the communications with coaches, service and research teams of foreign table tennis players, so as to drive the development of table tennis industry in China and provide strength for the sustainable development of table tennis globalization.

3.1.5 The peripheral industries driven by the increased supports should strengthen innovation, improve their international competitiveness, so as to make their brands go to the world.

3.2 Conclusions

Sports events with long development history and continuously expanded scale in the world has been gradually developing in China, thus inevitably there must be a lot of problems to be solved. The research on International Table Tennis Open has pushed the author to use the growth strategy (SO) as the strategic direction for the future development of global promotion of Chinese table tennis tournaments, while transforming people's demands for sports and fitness into an industrial chain with the ability to really promote the consumption behavior of national economy is the core competitiveness of sports events. At present, as a common behavior, broadcasting the advertisements of sports products through TV, the Internet, smart phone, radio and other media can be more easily accepted by the public. Marketing with its effect closely related to the survival and development of China's sports industries is an important means to not only promote the internationalization and industrialization of China's table tennis tournaments, but also mobilize and attract people to participate in sports events and performances. The possible means of

promotion is as follows: The online mode contains YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Microblog, We chat, etc., while the offline mode contains regional publicity, dissemination through fan effect, etc. In Asia Pacific, North America, Europe and other regions around the world, the table tennis tournaments are actively promoted to expand the impact of table tennis events and increase people's participation. At the same time, the vigorous promotion of table tennis events will be conducive to absorb social funds by widely attracting the attention of all circles in the society, so as to lay a solid foundation for promoting the development of table tennis sports events all over the world.

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