Management of Social Sport Instructors in China

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Abstract. Social sport instructor contributes much to the sound development of Sport for All. This paper, adopting methods of expert interview and comparison analysis, firstly analyzed the status of the social sport instructors in China. Secondly, it proposed countermeasures about promoting the management of social sport instructors, such as transferring the management body, connecting the colleges and universities and the communities, managing the social sport instructor according to their categories and levels, implementing the employment access system, playing the role of the sport organization, establishing social sport instructor talent database and implementing incentives and constraints parallel mechanism.

Introduction

The prosperous development of Sport for All in China gives birth to a new occupation-professional social sport instructor, which is an important force to popularize Sport for all, improve living quality and construct socialist spiritual civilization. Article 11 of the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Physical Culture and Sports says that the State practices a skill-grading system for social sport instructors, who shall guide social sports activities, which is also emphasized in the Outline of the Nationwide Body-Building Plan. It is clear that a considerable number of organizations and communities in China have embraced the principles and practices of sport instruction, thus the corresponding research on social sport instructors has received much attention, which focus on the situation of some regions [1-4], the training system [5-6], management system [7], the comparison with other countries [8-9], while the corresponding research on the situation of the whole country has received minimal attention. The purpose of this study is to discuss how to manage the social sport instructors in China to meet the future challenges by analyzing the present situation of social sport instructors.

Method

Interview and comparative analysis were adopted. Some officials from the General Administration of Sport are interviewed about the future policies for social sport instructors. Meanwhile the situation of and policies for social sport instructors in China are compared with those of other countries.
Discussion
The Situation of Social Sport Instructor in China

Scale: not meeting the need of the Outline of the Nationwide Body-Building Plan

A social sport instructor, as a professional who teaches, trains, instructs and organizes people how to do physical activities, differs from coaching which needs the target objects to compete, from physical education which is in education system, also from extracurricular activities which is only done in a school. Furthermore, a good social sport instructor must be able to identify contextual factors that may be pertinent to the performance of the skill and how these factors impact performance. Article 11 in Chapter II of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Physical Culture and Sports regulates that the State implements the National Fitness Program, carries out the Physical Training Qualification Standards, conducts monitoring of the people's physique, and practices a skill-grading system for social sport instructors, who shall guide social sports activities. The National Profession Standard of Social Sport Instructor launched in 2001 stipulates the qualification of social sport instructors. Social sport instructors in China have been increasing rapidly in recent years. The number of social sport instructor ranges from 6,000 in 1996 to 1,470,000 in 2014, and the ratio ranges from 1:20398 in 1996 to 1:1050 in 2014. While not only the number but also the ratio lag behind the progress of the National Fitness Program. According to the Development Plan of social sport instructor (2011-2015), the social sport instructors at national level should be 3% of the total, and those at level I should be 10%. While the situation surveys of social sport instructors from many provinces show that the social sport instructors don’t reach the given standard. 20% of all people in Spain work as sports instructors, which is one of the occupations most practiced in Spain.

Scope: not big enough

Research data shows that the scope instructed by social sport instructors in Japan covers 98%, while China is less than half. On the one hand, compared with the developed countries, the number of people participating in physical activities organized by the communities, counseling stations and sport clubs is small, and most of them are basically in a spontaneous state. On the other hand, most of the state-level and first-level social sport instructors are engaged in the sport management, physical education, and coach other than social sport instruction. Furthermore, lacking of feasible incentive and restraint mechanisms influence the enthusiasm and service quality of the social sport instructors. Each year, a considerable number of sport and physical activity instructors leave the teaching scene [10].

Structure: unreasonable

Social sport instructors play an important role in such aspects as carrying out physical activities, improving people’s consciousness of participating in sports, instructing scientific exercise, and stimulating sports consumption. Although instructors are expected to provide meaningful instruction, very few instructors at high level have specific training in conducting instruction programs. Survey shows that most of the social sport instructors are at low level of education, old age and short work life. Those with higher education are not active in social instruction. Many graduates majored in social sport from sports colleges and universities don’t engage in social sport instruction. People over the age of 40 are the main force of social sport instructors, and most of them are retirees who are physical exercise activists. Thus they
are with obvious utilitarian and are unwilling to accept formal professional training. As we can see the development of social sport instructors doesn’t put the sport resources and the education resources into full play, and there is no benign interaction organ between the higher institutions and communities.

**Training: lack of pertinence**

One way that instructors gain knowledge is through training. Mary Ann Robertson suggested that instructors needed a trio of unique pedagogical skills in order to effectively engage in developmentally appropriate practices and they had to fundamentally accept a basic philosophical tenet of developmental teaching, including assessing developmentally, individualizing teaching and modifying task complexity [11]. Many countries have both classification system and rating system on social sport instructors. For example, there are more than 50 types of qualifications for social sport instructors, with the most authoritative qualification recognized by the American College of Sports Medicine, while the social sport instructors in China have skill-grading system only and lack of categories system which contributes to the pertinent training and administration. The same curriculum provision for all social sport instructors cannot meet the needs of different people. The survey of the job satisfaction of sport and physical activity instructors in Spain shows that sport instructors experienced job satisfaction because of the job itself, the feeling that their work was valued by their peers and the level of their performance. However, they experienced dissatisfaction with the lack of training and promotional opportunities, and the environmental conditions [12].

**Qualification: instruction without certification**

There are some social sport instructors engaging in instruction activities without training and authentication from the authority agency in China, and there are no strict practical requirements from the State for them. Thus many social sport instructors with certification are in name only and they don’t implement instruction activities actually, while most of the social sport instructors are approved to give instruction when they pass the examination after personal applying, unit’s recommendation, qualification examination and post training, which is not the case in many other countries. For example, in the United States, there are requirements about technique training, program evaluation and volunteer service for the community instructors before they are verified.

**Backbone: no benign interaction between the higher institutions and communities**

The key force in any field is the professional, who decides the development and quality of its field. Though the team construction of the social sport instructors has made much progress in recent years, the poor education background is the constraint of bettering the knowledge composition of them. Teachers and students majored in sports from sports colleges and universities have professional knowledge and skills and shall be the backbone of sport industry, while most of them are not accepted by the community and/or unwilling to work for the community due to no benign interaction organ between the higher institutions and communities. Thus many social sport instructors with higher education background don’t join the stream of instructing physical activities.

**Management: ignore of sport organizations**

Under the leader of the General Administration of Sport of China, the social sport instructors in China are co-managed by the sport bureaus at provincial and municipal levels, sub-district
offices, industry associations, and sport organizations. All of these agencies are not the authentic authorities which take the management of the social sport instructors as their part time job, leading to the disorder management of the social sport instructors. Furthermore, sport organizations owning the resource advantage haven’t shared their resources and put their great ability to service the social sport instructors, which is not the same in western countries. As we can see the social sport instructors are managed by the biggest recreation institution in the United States, and by Japan Sports Association in Japan.

Promoting the Development of Social Sport Instructors

Transferring the management body

Perfect management system and sound regulatory framework are the guarantee of the health development of the social sport instructor, and the key of managing the social sport instructor regularly and scientifically. Sports administrative departments shall be the macro-management body rather than the daily management agency. They shall be responsible for regulations and policies, performance appraisal standards, reward and punishment system, qualification framework, training system, communication and coordination. The associations of social sport instructor should be responsible for the specific management of social sport instructors, such as the training, evaluation, recommendation and promotion. The sub-district offices, local sports organizations, community sports fitness clubs and community sports stations should be responsible for the regional management of social sport instructor.

Connecting the colleges and universities and the communities

There is no inherent skill and quality that any person is born with, and the social sport instructor is the same case. The lack of sport education background, training and experience can lead to unfavorable attitudes, fewer opportunities, and poorer instruction for people instructed. Better job performance and service quality can thus ensure the educational, social and health benefits for the society. Sports colleges and universities have the advantage of resources, and they should play their advantages to the full. The administrative department of the sports colleges and universities should cooperate with the personnel department, labor and social security department of the social sport instructor to establish an evaluation mechanism in the inner education system in line with the certification of the social sport instructor, and regulate grading standards for different education background. The education of sports colleges and universities should integrate with the identification of certification. Furthermore, there shall be benign interaction organ between the higher institutions and communities to make up the lack of community sports instructors. The sports colleges and universities should emphasize the discipline setup for the social sport instructor and recommend their graduates for the community, and the community should provide a good platform for the graduates.

Implementing the employment access system

Rules and regulations of the social sport instructor shall be improved, the employment access system shall be implemented, and regulate training and further education system shall be established to meet the requirement of fitness of the public. The training should provide the social sport instructor with a substantial content and pedagogical knowledge base that allow them to be effective in their jobs, with effectiveness being the ability to help them meet the desired outcomes of the given context. By providing workers with ways to improve their abilities, it would enhance their sense of self pride, competence and self-confidence [13]. In
the United Kingdom, sport instructors may initially complete Level 1 and 2 qualifications and deliver general exercise or physical fitness training before taking an older adult Level 3 qualification, while for sport instructor to deliver classes to older adults paid for by the National Health Service, the instructor normally needs to possess a nationally recognized qualification in exercise-class provision at Level 3 or above [14]. The specialist older adult exercise-training companies and charities include considerable information on motivation of older adults to exercise, whereas other training providers do not specifically cover this.

**Undertaking their responsibilities of the sports organizations**

Sports organizations will be an important governance body of the society in the future. The national sports organizations, especially those individual sports associations should try their best to be the managing and executive bodies of the sports social instructors. Like those in western countries, they should cooperate with related functional departments to formulate the national professional standards for the sports social instructors.

**Establishing talent database and incentives and constraints parallel mechanism**

Sabina’s study on the future instructors’ motivation to participate in Sport for All programs of professional training and improvement shows that 20% respondents desire to work as a Sport for All instructor [15]. Many factors contribute to job satisfaction. Oshagbemi claims that personal achievement, supervisors, responsibilities, the job itself, compensation, personal safety and working conditions are some of these factors [16]. If sport instructors are satisfied with their jobs, they produce better and active sportsmen and -women and contribute more to the success of the organization. Thus incentives and constraints parallel mechanism and social sport instructor talent database shall be established to attract more people to engage in sports instruction. Furthermore, regular evaluation shall be conducted on the social sport instructor, those outstanding among which shall be recommended and rewarded, those inactive punished.

**Conclusion**

Sport for All represents a social activity field of national interest that supports the practice of physical activities by all the population categories, as a factor for the health improvement, the development of human personality, the integration of moral values, the promotion of self-discipline, self-respect and mutual respect, as a means of social integration and tolerance learning. With the development of Sport for All, people have more requirements for the social sport instructors. Authorities at all levels in China attach importance to the development of social sport instructors and introduce some relative laws and rules, while there is much room to improve in many aspects such as the scale, structure of age and education, training and certification of the social sport instructors, the scope instructed, the interaction between the higher institutions and communities, and the role of the higher institutions and sport organizations. Thus, the current administrative mechanism should be reformed and improved to better develop social sport instructors in China.

**References**


