

# Research on the Current Situation and Prospects of Public Policy of Multi-Subject Collaborative Governance on Sports Events

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**Abstract:** In modern society, leisure and entertainment items are becoming important material and spiritual demands for national consumption, and the number of sports events are expanding, bringing about the unique branding effect of events and the rapid development of related sports industry chains. At the same time, the interaction and integration between government, market and society is increasingly more frequent, thus the national public policy of multi-subject collaborative governance on sports events needs to be improved as an inevitable trend. This paper will analyse the problems of the current public policy, and make specific policy recommendations on the macro-regulation and supervision of government, the major role of market participants and the support of social organizations for the public goods and technology, so as to optimize the collaborative governance of sports events, and to ensure more efficient interactions between multiple subjects and the progressive construction of social networks. It is also a way to enhance country's cultural soft power and build up new national economic industrial sectors, and to create distinctive sports events brands, as well as to achieve sustainable developments in various areas.

## 1. Introduction

With the increase in public consumption demand for sports events and the development of industrial economy, interaction and integration between multiple subjects of government, market and society is becoming closer, and the collaborative governance pattern has gradually become the mainstream. However, dilemmas in policy formulation and implementation are also exposed in this governance transformation process. In order to achieve optimal organization of sports events, this paper will analyse the specific public problems and policy shortcomings faced by each governance subject, so as to propose effective solutions to realize all-round development of events.

## 2. The Necessity of Optimizing Policy of Collaborative Governance on Sports Events

### 2.1 The Expansion of the Number of Events Held and Consumption Demands

Since the end of the 20th century, as a peaceful and stable post-cold war situation formed in the international community, countries gradually began to shift their development from focusing on materials to spirits and cultures, thus sports, film and television and other entertainment items attract more attention in nation for systematical construction. In addition, the Olympics advocated not only its diplomatic culture for peace and truce in the international community, but also bring its widespread cultural influence. Therefore, people who are satisfied with their daily material life spend more time and money on sports events participation and consumption. Countries began to propose sports items get systematized and standardized through public policies such as national fitness programs and sports professionalization reform, driving sports events held from blocked to inclusive with a large group of athletes and audience, comprehensive and targeted events organized by local or social associations. All of those phenomena show that content of events has become richer, organization and governance pattern has become more flexible, quantity and frequency of events have increased dramatically and gradually become a routine recreation form.

## **2.2 The Emergence of New Model of Sports Events Governance with Interactive and Integrated Relationships**

The endogenous demands for social development are important sources of the renewal of social network in governance[1]. In recent years, the decentralization of administrative power in national government and the increasing demand for sports events have led to a significant reform of socialized governance pattern in sport field. Consequently, government has begun to change their conventional administrative mindset and weaken their administrative dominance in the process of policy formulation and implementation of sports events. They have also introduced a series of policies to abolish the approval and examination for commercial sports events, and have chosen to transfer power through purchasing social and marketing services, encouraging various enterprises and sports social organizations to participate in the process of organizing events, creating a collaborative governance pattern of close integration and interaction with market participators, social organizations and other actors with interdependence.

## **2.3 Distinctive Brand Benefits and Economic Drivers of Event-Related Industries**

Sports events were often identified as welfare undertakings by nation and government previously, which were not allowed to carry out paid services or operating income to supplement consumption of events. Thus, it was unable to expand service content in accordance with market participators' demands actively, totally relying on government financial allocations as main source of funding for all kinds of sports events. Since extraordinary achievement of market-oriented operation made in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, countries have become aware of huge commercial value of sports technology, services and extended products from events, as well as significance of professional sports clubs and competitions, thus sports events are becoming industrialized, market-oriented and socialized, and many items have started to adopt club system in their construction. Enterprises from automobile, insurance, banking, food, real estate, Internet and other industries have flooded into sports market to provide sponsorship support such as funds and public goods. Sports events have transformed its operating from simple use of tangible assets to the development and conversion of tangible and intangible assets. In addition, the whole process of hosting sports events has also been transparent and open at social level, and resources that are available for trading, such as broadcasting rights and organizing rights, have been transferred more fairly. Thus, this has led to the introduction of a market mechanism that brings in social capital to host events and establishes a system for distribution of revenues from broadcasting of sports events in accordance with market principles, with this commercial approach gradually becoming mainstream of events organization and governance.

It can be seen that present sports events are not only able to create social benefits for the public, but also bring significant brand economic benefits through marketing approaches such as press and media publicity, television broadcast promotion, title sponsor advertising and sports competition performances. Sports events are gradually becoming self-managed and profitable, with win-win effect of multi-subject collaboration. Market-oriented sports events, from external sponsorship to internal self-operation, gradually become the major part, and derivative industries of sports achieve deep integration, creating unique sports brands and own intellectual property.

## **3. The Definition of Current Policy Deficiencies and Public Problems in the Management of Sports Events**

### **3.1 Confusion of Departmental Functions and Organizational Deficiencies Resulting from Blurred Lines of Power and Responsibility**

Although current structure of sports events governance has seen an increasing number of market participators and social organizations, government is still in control of most of resources and rights to manage and approve the organization of events according to its institutional discipline and administrative inertia, which has resulted in the market and social subjects not being fully equipped to communicate with each other on an equal footing[2]. And under this pattern, with the rapid

increase of sports events, the malpractice of government in its administrative management process becomes obvious. Due to the limitations of market and society in obtaining information and exercising power, division of responsibilities and functions of all parties in the events is vague and overlapping, leading to duplication or non-responsibility during these subjects. Those lack of synergy in collaborative governance will expose problems such as insufficient funds and public services, incomplete examination and approval procedures, unprofessional events organization, inadequate preparation in safety accident plans and logistical support, lagging of supervision.

### **3.2 Conflicts of Interest Distribution among Multiple Governance Entities**

Even though governance of sports events has changed from traditional government-dominant pattern to collaborative approach combining administrative, market and social power, which is dedicated to optimizing and improving presentation of sports events, in practice all subjects hope to maximize their own interests through their governance and operation. The government hopes to enrich supply of public sports services, promote social and economic development and cultural communication; the market hopes to obtain operating experience and lucrative commercial rewards, the enterprises are eager to improve their brand awareness and productive reputation through publicity; and the society hopes to further expand overall scale, obtain more resources and financial support, and increase its influence and citizen recognition. Different interests of various actors may lead to conflicts in the distribution of benefits during collaborative governance, which may upset the balance and affect effectiveness of services and branding development, resulting in “tragedy of the commons” with chaotic management, unclear boundaries of authority and responsibility.

### **3.3 The Limitation of Event Benefits Output and Industry Chain Development**

As government hasn't built a well-developed system to manage and cultivate sports events, and policies lack long-term incentives for market participators, social organizations and citizens to participate, there's low motivations for all parties in events governance. At the same time, some sports events may be held in the areas where layout of space is unreasonable, pricing mechanism is imperfect, and operation of venues is unintelligent, resulting in pretty limited sports benefits.

In addition, although sports events are currently implemented into collaborative governance pattern with multiple subjects, and capital brought by market and society are operated more efficiently, the post-event economic sustainability is deficient, and venues are often used for public welfare or commercial performances in other fields, or even left vacant, resulting in shortage of consumption and operation times, causing resources wasting and delayed transition between the old and new industries. These phenomena are also closely related to the fact of the current unclear industry positioning and pattern of sports events, and the poor linkage of sports industry chain, such as sports goods manufacturing, sports tourism and training. And its low integration with the real economy leads to the restricted extension of consumption space and greatly weakens the potential of the cluster-type development for sports industries.

### **3.4 Weak Cultural Foundation and Insufficient Promotion of Values**

The cultural and spiritual contents of sports events are nearly absent in the formulation of current sports events policy texts, with it almost exclusively focused on the implementation of how to promote overall operation and commercial benefits thereof, while detailed sport items to the public are very limited by media popularization. It has also failed to promote the dissemination of the business culture, symbols and values of sports events, or to improve the integration and transmission of the cultural characteristics of cities, and the development of national cultural soft power through sports events.

### **3.5 Absence of Evaluation Systems to Optimize Post-Event Effects**

The evaluation mechanism in sports events policy refers to governance subject's estimation of preparatory value of sports events in the early stage, quality monitoring in the middle stage and judgement of influences in the late stage. The system for assessing sports events in policy formulation and implementation is inadequate, resulting in no systematic and objective criteria for

judging the whole quality and influence of events, and a lack of reasonable recognition and calibration of the effectiveness with each department's work, which is not conducive to accurately measuring the potential and long-term values of the developments of sports events and letting it difficult to make financial investment, thus leading to a waste of resources or insufficient role for government, market participators and social organizations, as well as failing to ensure that the events provide sufficient social and economic benefits for country and sports market.

#### **4. Analysis and Detailed Optimization on the Public Policy of Sports Events Organization**

The management and governance of sports events are complex work involving many processes, and the formulation, implementation and supervision of its policies face multiple challenges, including explicit tasks such as planning and organization, and implicit contents such as corporate sponsorship, stadiums and equipment preparation, healthcare and safety security, public transports regulation, press and media publicity, finance and technological support, voluntary services, foreign affairs activities, cultural performances and exhibitions. All of these involve a large number of departments and a complicated social network, and therefore requires better cooperation of government, market participators and social organizations in order to optimize the governance of sports events and promote untapped value[3].

##### **4.1 Government: Macro-Regulation, Planning Support and Supervision**

The main function of government is to provide satisfied social services and public goods to citizens, and to maximize the public interests in society, so it should also play a leading role in the collaborative governance of public affairs in sports events. However, it's important to avoid the closed and monopolized top-down administrative pattern, but instead to change from management in power to macro-policy formulation, supervision and service providing. Government has responsibility to form beneficial interaction with market and society, enrich collaborative governance methods, clarify the division of labour and the boundaries of power and responsibility, develop nurturing plans and institutional guarantees, and promote cultural communication of the sports events and host region. In addition, due to the excessive application of administrative examination and approvals in advance leading to block of social operation fluidity, government should transform it into supervision in the process and after the events, focusing on the regulation of on-course behaviour and the maintenance of order in the sports market for all types of events, imposing specific punitive measures on serious defaulters, fulfilling its regulatory responsibilities and establishing a two-way supervision mechanism with market and society. These behaviors will help to optimize the execution so as to maintain sustainable and healthy development of the sports events.

The concept and mode of multi-subject collaborative governance in sports events is a microcosm of country's operational thought in solving social problems, and also shows the direction of relationship between government, market and society. Under the trend of market-oriented development of sports events, government should gradually reduce its direct financial participation and consciously bring into play professional capacity of the market in the process of nurturing the events. It also needs to take market and society as the main participators in the actual governance of the events, shift down the hosting power and adopt marketization and socialization methods such as multi-subject agreements, administrative purchase, contract outsourcing, franchising and voucher systems to give them more autonomous operational authority[4]. On the source of the funding for sports events, government should encourage the market to make fully use of its own capacity to attract investment and make profits under the premise of ensuring basic material supports, so as to reduce its reliance on public finance, while formulating specific policies to incentivise market participants to make long-term investment. In terms of the involvement of social organization in management, government ought to deepen its registration reform, strengthen classification guidance and lower its threshold, and at the same time empower them to participate in decision-making, operation and supervision of sports events, and encourage more social actors to participate in the governance process through financial subsidies and incentives, provision of public facilities and

purchase of services, so that the complementary advantages of collaborative governance model can be achieved.

#### **4.2 Market Participants: Resource Allocation, Media and Business Promotion, Industrialization Development**

Current social construction is increasingly in line with the law of market rules instead of government administrative orders, with market entities playing a leading role in resource allocation. The scale of market participants and social organizations is constantly growing in the shape and structure of national development. As a result, the operation and governance of sports events are moving towards a market-oriented path. In order to make better use of market power and optimize collaborative governance, capital input and output should form a virtuous circle mechanism. Market participants should persist on upholding the mass service and commercial demand of the general public as a guide, compensate for the shortages of government in the diversified supply of sports events and the voluntary failure of social organizations in high-quality services, expand consumption space and innovate products, improve competition organizing efficiency, enhance marketing and media publicity, and achieve an effective matching between public demand and market supply for obtaining mutual benefits and win-win situation. In addition, market should strengthen the interaction and integration with industrial chains such as sports goods manufacturing, tourism to form a characteristic development pattern, improve the potential of sports industry clusters and enhance influence and sustainability of event economy, and realize the unification of social and economic benefits.

#### **4.3 Social Organizations: Public Service, Technological Support and Citizen Participation**

Social organizations in sport include various public welfare clubs, sports foundations, associations of people with disabilities, community volunteer associations and other specialized and comprehensive institutions, all of which are public subjects of social relations in line with economic development trends established according to specific purposes and systems. In the process of collaborative governance of sports events, these organizations are expected to provide professional technical guidance, business consultation and social security service support in public welfare, undertake responsibilities entrusted by government in accordance with laws and regulations, and carry out close cooperation with market participants[5]. Besides, social organizations should also strive to help improve the enthusiasm of individual citizens to participate in public affairs of sports events, whether they are athletes, referees, volunteers or residents in the host areas, increase citizen's awareness of their own participation in public policies, maximize the utility of social resources, so as to inherit the culture of events and the values of sports at a social level and build a new type of social relationship network.

### **5. Significance and Prospects for the Development of Optimal Collaborative Governance on Sports Events**

#### **5.1 Building New National Development Model and Promoting Regional Construction**

Optimizing the multi-subject collaborative governance policy of sports events is conducive to shaping new national development pattern, promoting country's splendid culture and values through the more influential media in market entities and social organizations, showing the core of national civilization in various aspects, including natural and historical landscape, tourism consumption, urban planning, transportation services. And it's beneficial for generally popularizing the concept of mass fitness, improving supply quality of its demand for sports events, expanding overseas markets and promoting foreign economic trade.

In addition, excellent events management and policy governance can contribute to the upgrading and expansion of public infrastructure in the areas where sports events are held. The organization takes into account economic, social and ecological benefits, and at the same time, its high-standard operation mode brings strict requests for regional communication, safety and environmental

protection. Therefore, it has become one of the most important and innovative projects for the coordination of resources and balanced development of the city. Under this collaborative and efficient governance pattern, the carry capacity of urban areas can be enhanced comprehensively, construction and transformation of backward areas and improvement of economy in developed areas can be promoted, development of core industries such as tourism, transportation and manufacturing can be advanced, and the capacity of basic public service and radiation-drive achievement of the region can be enhanced.

## **5.2 Improving Synergistic Pattern of Multiple Subjects in Public Policy Participation and Collaborative Governance**

The government, market and social organizations have jointly established more and more mature standardized work processes in the competition cooperation, which can effectively reduce the communication costs between enterprise entities, stimulate market vitality and enrich the supply in a more efficient manner, thus optimizing multi-subject collaborative linkage mechanism and new governance pattern for the policy formulation and implementation of sports events.

This approach also allows the public to participate directly in the events, thus mobilizing citizens to participate in public policy making and social governance, increasing popularity of sports items and mass fitness awareness. This in turn activates the development of extended industries in all regions, and strengthens communication among various industries. It not only promotes a rational and functional urban structure, but also a substantial implementation of the social benefits and well-being for citizens[6]. Under the model of joint participation and cultivation, the content of sports events has also been optimized, brand image has been improved, production cost has been reduced and cooperation channels have been further expanded, thus bringing huge competitive advantages for its market-oriented development.

## **5.3 Developing the Cultural and Branding Industrialization of Sports Events and Market-Oriented Reforms**

Today's Fast-Moving Consumer Goods(FMCG) era is gradually changing people's consumption consciousness, therefore their demand for sports competition and performance business has skyrocketed, which provides new opportunities for the global development of sports economy industry, and investment sponsors of sports events and the media market are putting forward higher requirements for innovation of related enterprises. Major sports events are also an favorable chance for the hosting region to allocate high-quality sports resources worldwide. Under the collaborative governance with multiple subjects, the success of sports events can better facilitate government to guide society to alleviate contradictions of supply-side structural reform and enrich social and economic benefits. At the same time, sports market provides a vast range of platforms for commercial investments, attracting enterprises from all over the world to create economic values, which in turn restructures the national economic structure and promoting the shifting and upgrading of industries.

By optimizing the collaborative governance policies of sports events, the development approach of integrating sports with culture can be more effectively implemented. Public departments can choose to land sports events in city landmark buildings or tourist attractions, and together with the promotion through media market, so as to drive sports tourism activities in and around hosting area, satisfy people's demand for sports culture and leisure, and promote wide dissemination of commercial values and cooperative concepts. In addition, reference can also be made to deep integration and innovation of sports event culture and the image of the hosting city, thus creating unique event bands, building leisure towns with sports characteristics, enhancing international competitiveness, attraction and cultural soft power and shaping cultural identity and participation in consumption practices.

## **6. Conclusion**

By analyzing the current policy deficiencies and public problems in the governance of sports

events, optimizing collaborative governance model of multiple subjects in a targeted manner can better utilize government's role of macro planning and supervision, market's role of resource allocation and publicity, and society's role of supplying services and technical support, thus promoting both high-quality development of sports events and its industrial economy, as well as the progress of social relations interaction and enhancement of national cultural soft power.

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