

The Rural Sports Program in Guizhou Province: Towards A Development of Rural Sports Strategic Plan

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Abstract

In China's mass sports, rural sports is a very key content, and to promote the further development of rural sports. Development is a necessary means to effectively improve the overall sports level. This paper focuses on the development of rural sports in five townships in Guizhou Province, using methods such as literature, interviews, and questionnaires to investigate and analyze the existing problems and challenges of rural sports development, rural sports governance, and rural sports development models. The survey found that the development of rural sports in Guizhou Province is not ideal, mainly facing the following difficulties: 1. Lack of funds, 2. Incomplete organization and management, 3. Lack of sports talents. 4. Lack of awareness of physical fitness. Based on this, this paper discusses the relevant influencing factors, and formulates a three-year plan in line with the development of rural sports in Guizhou, which will help promote the further development of rural sports in Guizhou Province.

Keywords

Rural Sports, Strategic Plan, Guizhou Province.

1. Introduction

"A sound mind is a sound body." is the English translation of a famous quotation by the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher Thales. A healthy person can think normally and a sound body means a healthy body and free from diseases. Sports are an important part of the society even in far flung areas of the country. Rural sports refer to the use of simple sports facilities and equipment in the vast rural areas, or relying on the natural environment, with farmers as the main body of participation, through traditional projects, local projects or flexible forms of sports that conform to the characteristics of the rural regional environment. Modern projects to achieve social sports activities for physical fitness, leisure and entertainment, social education, and social interaction. For a long time, rural sports have always been a weak link in my country's sports development. The development of rural sports is faced with practical difficulties such as insufficient funds, lack of venues and facilities, lack of professional talents, weak organization and management, weak farmers' awareness of sports, and low participation enthusiasm. Its development effect is not acceptable. Optimism has become an important fetter for the country's sports development, restricting the realization of national strategic goals such as the construction of a strong sports country, the modernization of sports governance, and a healthy China. In the new era, in response to various problems in the development of rural sports, government departments have strengthened top-level design and macro-control, and issued a series of more targeted policies and systems, which have pointed out the direction and provided institutional guarantees for the development of rural sports. At the same time, government departments have strengthened the provision of public services for rural sports.

With the help of these new policy systems and service supply, the development of rural sports has been improved to a certain extent. Rural sports in some developed coastal areas have shown a booming scene, and the development trend has continued to improve; rural sports in poor areas also have certainly improved. However, a series of questions such as "to what extent has rural sports developed? How effective is the development? How is the implementation of government policies and systems? How is the transformation efficiency of various resources?" The scientific nature of sports development is not enough, which affects the effect of rural sports development. Therefore, it is urgent to strengthen the evaluation of rural sports governance in order to better diagnose various problems in it, optimize and improve it in a targeted manner, and improve the effect of rural sports governance implementation.

As an important developing province in the west of China, Guizhou Province has a total population of 38.52 million, of which 18.47 million are rural population, accounting for 47.95% of the total population. The rural population is large and plays an important role in the development of rural sports. In addition, there are many ethnic minorities in Guizhou Province, and there are rich traditional sports, which makes rural sports more diversified. This paper takes the development of five rural sports in Guizhou Province as an example, conducts innovative research on the development of rural sports, makes the best use of the situation, and discusses the long-term mechanism that is beneficial to the development of rural sports in Guizhou Province.

2. Review of Related Literature and Studies

2.1. Overview of Rural Sports

Rural sports are an important part of sports, which is related to the physical and mental health of hundreds of millions of farmers. For a long time, rural sports have been the short board of China's sports development, affecting the overall development level of China's sports and restricting the process of sports modernization. With the promulgation and implementation of national strategies such as the construction of a sports power, the construction of a healthy China, and rural revitalization, the development of rural sports has received further attention, and relevant research results have gradually increased. Under the background of the new era, how to better explore the problems existing in the development of rural sports in China, and put forward targeted solutions to promote the high-quality development of rural sports, continuously meet the sports needs of the broad masses of farmers, and help build a strong sports country, and the implementation of national strategies such as Healthy China Construction and rural revitalization are urgent research topics.

Research on rural sports in China began in 1959. At that time, it mainly discussed the relationship between farmers' productive labor and sports activities, and whether farmers needed physical exercise. From then on to 1990, China's research on rural sports was in a stagnant stage, and there were few related studies; from 1991 to 2003, the research on this topic gradually increased. Under the guidance of national policies since 2004, research in this field began to grow rapidly and reached a peak in 2011, with 563 related research results. In 2016, there was a slight drop in research output. In the promulgation and implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, China has set off a second wave of research on rural sports since 2019, and the research results have since increased rapidly. From the perspective of research content, the research on rural sports in China mainly focused on the current situation of rural sports development, existing problems, causes, development models, rural public sports service supply, rural sports governance, rural sports development paths and strategies, etc.

2.2. The Existing Problems and Challenges of Rural Sports Development

Rural sports have the characteristics of rich content, diverse forms, wide range, loose organization, independent participation, and low stability of participation (Lu Yuan zhen, 2010). Furthermore, other factors to be looked into rural sports are reflecting on obvious entertainment, randomness, seasonality, simplicity, low consumption and other characteristics (Tian Yupu, 2006). "Sports Hollow" (Sun Feng et al., 2014); less sports exchanges (Lu Li, 2018); lack of supervision and evaluation (Liu Yu, 2017); insufficient sports resources (Chen Xin lin, 2018); single supply model; sports culture construction lag and other issues are the problems faced by the majority of rural sports in the country. The development of rural sports is closely related to economy, politics, culture, education, customs and so on. With the rapid development of economy and society, China's rural sports development has made great progress, which is embodied in the increasing number of rural sports facilities and gradually diversifying types; rural sports funding has improved to a certain extent; rural sports activities are becoming more and more colorful, The forms of organization have diversified; farmers' sports awareness has gradually enhanced, their enthusiasm for participating in physical exercise has gradually increased, the scale of sports participation has gradually expanded, and the proportion of sports population has gradually increased; rural sports organizations have been developed to a certain extent, and the allocation of social sports instructors has gradually improved .

However, due to the influence of various reasons, compared with developed countries, there are still many problems in the development of rural sports in China, which further affect the sustainable development of rural sports. Guo Qin (2010) as cited in Yili Li (2023) believes that China's rural sports are still in a state of "low level, poor foundation, imbalance, and low investment" in general. Specifically reflected in the imperfect construction of sports infrastructure, the imbalance between sports and economic development, the large gap between urban and rural sports development, the extremely uneven development of rural sports between regions, the lack of corresponding sports management organizations in rural areas, and the loss of the main force participating in rural sports, etc.. Yang Lili & Geng Yuanyuan (2010) as cited in Yili Li (2023) research pointed out that the development of sports in China's rural areas is unbalanced; sports venues are lacking in resources; farmers' lack of sports awareness; Chu Yajuan (2007) believes that the construction of sports venues in rural China is insufficient. Most of the sports venues are invested and constructed by the government, and they are mainly concentrated in towns. In terms of personal use; most of the sports and fitness equipment provided by the sports lottery public welfare fund for the grassroots are concentrated in towns centers and have not yet covered administrative villages. Shen Yilan's (2016) research also pointed out that insufficient construction of sports facilities, uneven distribution, insufficient sports funds, single investment subject, weak sports awareness of farmers, and low professional level of management personnel are the main problems in the current development of rural sports in China.

2.3. The Challenges in Slow Development of Rural Sports

The lag in the development of rural sports is the result of many factors. It is affected by macro factors such as economy, politics, social structure, system, and regional environment, as well as by micro factors such as farmers' sports needs, awareness, and subjective behavior. Xia Chengqian, Tian Yupu (2022), on the basis of sorting out the development of rural sports in China in different periods since the founding of New China, pointed out that the country's economic, political, and social environments are the decisive factors for the development of rural sports, and the economic level of rural areas is the key to the development of rural sports. An important premise is the attention of the party and the country is the basis for the development of rural sports; the quality and needs of farmers are the internal driving force for the development of rural sports; legal protection is a necessary condition for the development

of rural sports. Some studies (Chaoqun, 2003; Xu Zhenghong, 2006) believe that the dual pattern of "dividing urban and rural areas, one country, two policies" is the profound reason for the differences in sports between urban and rural areas, and it is also the main reason for the lagging development of sports in rural China. Tian Biao et al., (2004); Lu Wenyun et al., (2005); Zhang Yujuan et al., (2006), discussed the issue of rural sports development from the perspectives of social environment, economic development, and sports culture values in rural China, and deliberated that rural social environment, social structure, production mode, factors such as population quality, geographical environment, and values are important factors affecting the development of rural sports. Zhou Jie (2011) believed that local leaders do not pay attention; there are few sports and fitness places; farmers have low personal income; backward concept and poverty; lack of scientific-based exercise methods; the slow development of physical education in schools are the main reasons why rural sports are underrated.

On the basis of these reasons, scholars have put forward the different angles of rural sports development. Three viewpoints have been roughly formed on rural sports development. One viewpoint is to combine rural sports and local folk sports by improving, and integrating national traditional sports, and promoting the development of folk sports. Another viewpoint is for rural sports to take the road of industrialization by developing regional natural ecological resources and sports cultural resources, and promoting rural sports tourism industry. An additional viewpoint is to combine rural sports and national fitness activities. Rural sports and national fitness activities are mutually beneficial. On the one hand, national fitness activities can promote the popularization of traditional folk sports and enhance farmers' awareness of physical fitness. On the other hand, rich rural sports activities are also in line with the national fitness policy. The farmers' fitness project is conducive to promoting the development of national fitness activities.

In terms of the specific development strategies of rural sports, (Tian Biao et al., 2004; Lu Wenyun et al., 2005; Zhang Yujuan et al., 2006) recommended that rural sports must develop with the development of production, and must be based on the production, living standards, peasant traditions and this is the correct embodiment of the ideological line of adhering to production-centered and seeking truth from facts in the development of rural sports. The focus of rural sports development lies in the soundness of the sports organization network and the cultivation of sports backbones. On the basis of establishing the organization, gradually establish a regular work order, and at the same time, adhere to the diversified sports values and development models. Lu Wenyun (2005) proposed to play the role of the government through institutionalization and legalization, improve sports organizations, cultivate sports talents, fully explore ethnic and folk sports, properly carry out sports activities, pay attention to the sports development of migrant workers and disadvantaged groups, and pay attention to the development of sports in rural schools.

Feng Jian (2022) proposed to strengthen the research on rural sports, establish a new idea of rural sports to make up for the "weak" with "strong"; build a "strong" culture of rural sports that has both ethnic and regional characteristics and is advanced in the times; implement rural school sports as the leading regional sports coordination strategy; relying on the development of "big culture" industry, gradually prospering the rural sports consumption market; improving the rural sports management system, establishing a system guarantee for rural sports from weak to strong; based on the logic of Chinese sports culture, constructing Chinese characteristics rural sports lifestyle. There are researches that believe that villages are the foundation of rural sports, and the development of rural sports in the new era should focus on townships and villages as the main body. Specifically, the focus of work should be lowered, village sports should be developed appropriately, and the important role of village leaders should be brought into play.

Chen Xinlin, (2018) and Zhang Huaping (2018), stated that in terms of alleviating sports poverty, both theoretical research and practical exploration try to drive villagers out of poverty through the "Sports +" model. On the other hand Meng (2016; Duan (2017; Liu (2018; & Huang (2019) ascertained that in terms of countermeasures, it is proposed to develop rural sports resources, plan sports facilities, create rural sports culture, and cultivate talents to promote rural sports to get rid of difficulties.

2.4. Synthesis

Throughout the existing research, scholars at home and abroad have conducted a lot of research on "the current situation of rural sports development, existing problems, causes, development models, rural public sports service supply, rural sports governance, rural sports development paths and strategies." Research perspectives including both the vertical diachronic perspective and the horizontal synchronic perspective, the research results are quite fruitful. Existing studies have provided valuable reference materials and theoretical results for understanding the current situation, characteristics, and existing problems of rural sports development, laying a good foundation for further research.

From the perspective of time dimension, the previous researches showed obvious wave-like development characteristics, and the peak of research mostly appeared 1-2 years after the promulgation of major national policies on rural development, which reflects the consistency of research and national orientation; and most of the early researches focused on the status quo, existing problems, causes, and optimization strategies of rural sports development, while later researches mostly turned to the fields of rural public sports services and rural sports governance, which are closely related to China's governance modernization process. These researches demonstrated obvious timeliness characteristics. From the perspective of space, most of the previous achievements have studied the problems, constraints, development strategies, methods and means of rural sports governance, institutional systems, operating mechanisms, policies and regulations, and governance issues in rural sports as a whole. There are relatively few research results on the differences in group participation in rural sports, and there are few comparative studies specifically targeting farmers of different ages, genders, and levels of education participating in rural sports.

Summarizing and refining the previous literature, it can be found that the "problem orientation" of research is becoming more obvious, and the research objects are gradually refined. Academic discussion and empirical research are not enough, and the combination of theory and practice needs to be strengthened. At the same time, due to the different research horizons and research interests, there are not many preliminary studies focusing on the "comparative" perspective to explain the participation of different groups in rural sports; thematic and systematic research on the evaluation of rural sports in Guizhou is still lacking.

Due to the influence of various factors such as history and culture, economic development, rural areas, customs and habits, the development of rural sports in Guizhou Province presents some unique characteristics, forming a distinctive field. Farmers of different genders, ages, and levels of education in Guizhou Province have great differences in their motivation to participate in sports, the degree of convenience, and their understanding of the functional value of sports. Proposing an optimization strategy is an important prerequisite for ensuring the high-quality development of rural sports in Guizhou.

Based on the above analysis, and from the understanding, confusion and reflection on the problems existing in the development of rural sports in Guizhou, this study intends to focus on the "comparative" perspective of rural sports with a view of providing for the development of high-quality rural sports in Guizhou.

3. Research Method

The study used the quantitative method with comparative-descriptive design. The assessments of the rural sports program were done using numerical representations. While the comparisons of the assessments were done using mathematical analysis. The interviews were also done and analyzed without the philosophical underpinnings of a qualitative study. The interview data were analyzed to simply substantiate the quantitative findings of the study.

3.1. Research Locale

The study was conducted in the selected five villages in Guizhou province. The selected five villages were Fuquan, Taijiang, Baojia, Pingliang, and Suzhuang. These villages were selected because they fit the traditional Chinese rural township with small populations. The combined population of the five villages is 2150 only.

3.2. Sampling Method

The respondents of the study are people aged 18 years old and above. This age group was selected because they already have a vast experience of the sports program of their towns. Purposive sampling was used to make sure that the respondents fit the age criteria. Being familiar with the population of the township, the researcher believed that 350 respondents were enough to represent the adult population. The sample size per township was distributed equally as shown in Table 1.

Figure 1. Distribution of the Respondents Village

Village	Population	Sample Size
Fuquan	542	70
Taijiang	794	70
Baojia	278	70
Pingliang	215	70
Suzhuang	321	70
TOTAL	2150	350

For the interviews which were used to substantiate the quantitative findings, the interviewees were one farmer, one government official, and one coach from every township. In all, there were 15 interviewees.

3.3. Assessment of the Rural Sports Program

Table 1. Summary of Assessment of Rural Sports

Areas	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Adjectival Interpretation	Ranking
Health Development	3.48	0.47	Good	Highly Manifested	1
Accessibility of Sports	2.49	0.89	Poor	Less Manifested	2
Modernization of Equipment	1.36	0.53	Very Poor	Not Manifested	4
Governance of Sports	1.43	0.54	Very Poor	Not Manifested	3
Composite Mean	2.19	0.61	Poor	Less Manifested	

Legend: 3.51-4.00 (Excellent/Very Highly Manifested), 2.51-3.50 (Good/Highly Manifested), 1.51-2.50 (Poor/Less Manifested), 1.00-1.50 (Very Poor/Not Manifested)

Table 1 presents the overall status of rural sports programs in the selected villages. With a composite mean of 2.19, it is considered that the rural sports program is poor and less manifested in rural areas. There is very limited equipment and facilities, thus the accessibility to sports programs is also limited. At the bottom of this could be the governance of sports is not manifested. While the health development area is considered highly manifested which probably means that despite the very poor sports facilities, the lack of accessibility, and the poor sports governance, the respondents are still able to utilize what could be there for their physical activities.

The poor status of rural sports as revealed in this study conforms with the general assessments of rural sports in China. According to Guo Qin (2010) as cited in Yili Li (2023, China's rural sports are still in a state of "low level, poor foundation, imbalance, and low investment" in general. This poor status is specifically reflected in the imperfect construction of sports infrastructure, the imbalance between sports and economic development, the large gap between urban and rural sports development, the extremely uneven development of rural sports between regions, the lack of corresponding sports management organizations in rural areas, and the loss of the main force participating in rural sports.

4. Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn from the findings of the study:

1. The respondents' profile shows the typical characteristics of rural villages where educational attainment is low and most of the people are farmers.
2. With the overall rural sports program in poor status, it can be concluded that it is a failure. It is not delivering the expected results in terms of accessibility, equipment, and administration.
3. With all profile groups giving a negative assessment to rural sports, and in most cases with no significant differences at all, it can be concluded that the poor status of rural sports program is very evident to the general public that there is hardly any diversity in their views.
4. The failure of the rural sports programs is rooted on enormous and interrelated problems. The villages are incapable of directly confronting these problems.

5. Three Year Rural Sports Program in GuiZhui province in China (2022-2025)

This three-year strategic plan is created by the researcher with consultation of other experts in rural sports.

In the process, all kinds of information related to the development of rural sports in Guizhou through extensive research have been collected and on this basis, summarized the main problems of rural sports. The main content is as follows: firstly, the overall development of rural sports in Guizhou Province is poor. The government's public resource supply is insufficient and organization and management are weak. Secondly, the accessibility of sports is poor, which may be due to limited sports facilities and equipment; thirdly, the cultural construction is imperfect; fourthly is the lack of sports professionals; and the last is the low degree of sports organization.

The emergence of these problems is not only affected by macro factors such as economy, politics, culture, social structure, and education, but also by meso factors such as management system and organizational structure, as well as by the initiative of micro subjects. Given the limited capacity of the village, it is impossible to directly solve the above problems. After analyzing the factors that restrict the development of rural sports, this study draws up relevant strategic plans, and proposes to optimize the supply mechanism of rural sports public products, strengthen the construction of rural sports social instructors, develop traditional national

sports, improve the organization and management of rural sports, strengthen farmers' sports awareness and draw up strategies promoting the orderly development of rural sports in Guizhou.

GOAL 1 Enhancing Farmers' Sports Awareness

Strategy 1 - To popularize the concept of physical fitness

Strategy 2 - To prosper rural sports culture

Strategy 3 - To carry out regular trainings in rural sports

Strategy 4- To strengthen sports and fitness activities in the countryside

GOAL 2 - Optimizing the Supply Mechanism of Rural Sports Public Products

Strategy 1 - To overcome Sports Public Goods Supply

Strategy 2 - To realize supply subjects of rural sports public products

Strategy 3 - To improve the expression mechanism of rural sports public products demand

Strategy 4 - To upgrade the supervision mechanism for the supply of rural sports public products

Strategy 5 - To construct the internal and external mechanism of the supply of rural sports public products

GOAL 3 - Constructing Team of Rural Sports Social Instructors

Strategy 1 - To optimize the team structure of rural sports instructors

Strategy 2 - To improve the professional level of rural sports instructors

Strategy 3 - To increase investment in sports and strengthen activities of rural sports instructors

Strategy 4 - To stimulate the enthusiasm of rural sports instructors

Strategy 5 - To improve the organizational system and improve the management level of rural sports instructors

GOAL 4 - Developing national traditional sports

Strategy 1 - To excavate tourism resources of national traditional sports

Strategy 2 - To dig and organize sports items

Strategy 3 - To support the development of national traditional sports culture industry

Strategy 4 - To consolidate social forces in supporting national traditional sports

Strategy 5 - To expand national traditional physical education

GOAL 5 - Creating sound sports organization and management

Strategy 1- To strengthen the independent development of community sports organizations

Strategy 2 - To improve the top-level design, reshape the thinking and service concept

Strategy 3 - To improve the internal governance mechanism and enhance social credibility

Strategy 4 - To establish a sound organization

Strategy 5 - To combine the strengthening of government functions with the awareness of sports construction

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