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Article

Research on the Countermeasures of Boosting the Development of Mass Sports Based on Behavioral Economics

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Abstract: Based on the theory of behavioral economics, this study deeply analyzes the principles of behavioral economics involved in the development of mass sports, including psychological expectation, selection deviation and incentive mechanism, rationalize the current situation of group sports development, discusses how to effectively promote the development of mass sports, and puts forward a series of concrete countermeasures. In view of the problem of behavioral expectations, it is suggested to establish a comprehensive publicity and education system to improve the public's awareness and understanding of sports, and to stimulate individuals' active participation through self-setting goals and planning methods. In view of the selection bias, it is suggested that the government and relevant institutions provide diversified and attractive sports activity options, and make full use of technological means to increase the visibility and participation of activities. In addition, in view of the incentive mechanism problem, it is advocated to adopt differentiated incentive measures to meet the needs of different groups. The government can provide some preferential policies and establish incentive mechanisms to provide support for the organization of mass sports activities. It is expected that this research can stimulate the enthusiasm of the masses to participate in sports and promote the healthy development of mass sports.

Keywords: behavioral economics; mass sports; psychological expectation; selection bias; incentive mechanism

With the continuous development of social economy and the improvement of people's living standards, mass sports are playing an increasingly important role in promoting people's physical and mental health, enhancing people's physique and carrying forward the spirit of sports. However, the current development of mass sports is facing many challenges, such as low participation rate, single project and other problems. Traditional policy tools have been unable to effectively address these challenges. Therefore, this study, based on behavioral economics, aims to explore how to use its principles to boost the healthy and comprehensive development of mass sports. As an interdisciplinary subject of behavioral economics, people discuss their irrational behavior and psychological bias.

Understanding people's behavioral patterns and psychological mechanisms can better explain and predict their participation in physical activities and attitudes towards sports facilities and activities [1]. Therefore, this study combines the theory of behavioral economics with the development of mass sports, and discusses how to use the principle of behavioral economics to formulate effective policies and measures to promote the healthy development of mass sports undertakings.

Through theoretical exploration and practical summary, this study aims to provide practical guidance on the development of mass sports and inspire deeper thinking on the application of behavioral economics in the field of sports. We firmly believe that the boosting strategy based on behavioral economics will bring new opportunities and challenges to the development of mass

sports. Promoting sports activities to play a greater role in society will bring a better future for social well-being, health promotion and community building.

1. Overview of behavioral economics theory

1.1. Core theories and principles of Behavioral economics

Behavioral economics is a fringe discipline integrating economics and psychology, aiming to explore the actual behavior and psychological mechanism of people when they make economic decisions in the real environment. It challenges the assumption of "rational man" in traditional economics, pointing out that people are often influenced by irrational factors such as limited rationality, emotion and cognitive bias when making decisions [2]. Individual rationality in decision-making is limited. Due to incomplete information, limited processing capacity and the limitation of limited resources such as time, people often cannot make completely rational choices, but adopt the approximate optimal solution. Prospect theory is an important correction to the traditional utility theory in behavioral economics, which holds that people dislike loss more than equal return when making decisions. The default option effect suggests that setting a behavior as the default option significantly increases the chance that people choose that behavior. People tend to maintain the status quo rather than change. Therefore, when promoting the development of mass sports, people's participation is promoted by taking sports activities as the default activities such as schools and communities. Social identity theory emphasizes that individual behavior is influenced by the social groups they identify with. People tend to imitate the behavior of individuals or groups that they identify with and respect.

1.2. Application cases and effects of behavioral economics in the sports field

In sports promotion activities, the self-commitment theory of behavioral economics is used to enhance individual motivation to exercise. For example, some fitness apps allow users to set personal goals and receive virtual rewards when they reach them, a mechanism that uses the psychology of individuals and tend to fulfill their commitments to avoid cognitive dissonance, effectively increasing the probability of continuous exercise.

According to the principle of social comparison in behavioral economics, people tend to compare their own performance with others. In stadiums or fitness centers, by setting up open rankings to show members who insist on exercise, they can encourage others to win the list, thus increasing the frequency of exercise [3]. Loss aversion refers to people's aversion to loss is greater than the joy of equal amount. Some group sports activities collect prepaid and promise to return after completing a certain number of exercises. This advance payment system can encourage participants who do not want to lose money to actively participate in sports. The default effect in behavioral economics suggests that people tend to maintain the default option, in certain sports events, unless they voluntarily opt out, which been found to significantly increase people's participation rates.

Self commitment to reward mechanism increased the individual motivation to movement, social comparison inspired to enhance the people's competition consciousness, the application of loss aversion to improve the prepaid user participation, the default choice practice makes more people in the case of "lazy" still choose to participate in sports activities, these cases based on the principle of behavioral economics for the promotion of mass sports provides a new idea and methods.

1.3. The guiding role of behavioral economics in the development of mass sports

One of the core theories of behavioral economics is the irrational and psychological deviation of people in making decisions. In the field of mass sports, this irrationality is manifested as the tendency, inertia and psychological disorder of individuals when choosing whether to participate in physical activities. By deeply understanding these irrational factors, the participation of mass sports activities [4].

Behavioral economics emphasizes the role of the environment in shaping individual behavior. In the development of mass sports, the layout of sports facilities, the organization of sports activities

and the formulation of relevant policies will have an important impact on people's participation in sports. By designing a reasonable environment and incentive mechanism, it can effectively guide the masses to participate more in sports activities [5].

Moreover, behavioral economics provides a range of effective strategies for behavior change. By making use of reward, punishment, social influence and other means, individuals can be encouraged to change their sports participation behavior, so as to promote the development of mass sports undertakings.

To sum up, behavioral economics provides important theoretical support and practical guidance for solving the problems in the development of mass sports. By deeply understanding the irrational characteristics of individual behavior, the influence of environment on behavior and the effective strategies of behavior change, the healthy development of mass sports cause can be better promoted.

2. Analysis of the development status of mass sports

2.1. Definition and scope of mass sports

Mass sports refers to the sports activities that widely cover the public, and promote people's health and all-round development. Different from competitive sports, mass sports pay more attention to individual participation and enjoyment, and encourage everyone to achieve positive social benefits and achieve personal development through sports [6].

The scope of mass sports includes various forms of sports activities, not limited to specific competitive items, which can be individual daily activities or group sports, for example, entertainment, relaxation, personal interest, walking, travel, yoga, cycling, etc.; organized in community sports activities to promote social interaction among community residents, such as community basketball games, community aerobics, etc.; Sports activities held in public places, such as parks, squares, are for the public to participate freely, such as morning running and park fitness equipment; organized group activities, such as football, basketball, volleyball, badminton and other team projects; individual or group sports activities in private facilities, such as gym, natatorium and golf course. Participants in mass sports include people of different ages, gender, occupations, abilities and interests, ranging from teenagers to the elderly, and from amateurs to professional practitioners.

The goal of mass sports is to provide a variety of sports choices and opportunities so that individuals can enjoy the fun of sports and achieve the goal of physical fitness while achieving social interaction and emotional satisfaction during sports. Through mass sports, people can improve their physical fitness, develop a healthy life model, cultivate their team spirit, enhance their social communication skills, and experience the pleasure brought by sports.

2.2. Statistical analysis of the participation in mass sports

In recent years, with the development of the concept of national fitness, more and more people began to participate in mass sports activities. According to the latest data released by the National Bureau of Statistics, the number of people participating in physical exercise in China reached 370 million in 2019, an increase of 23.5 percent over 2016. In particular, due to the COVID-19, people pay more attention to their health, coupled with home quarantine and other factors, the scale and participation of mass sports have seen a blowout growth of [7].

According to the research data, young people are the main groups participating in mass sports. The group aged 20-34 years was the most involved in physical exercise, accounting for 38.6%. Young people have good physical quality and full vitality, but also pay more attention to a healthy lifestyle and social interaction, so they have a high demand for and participation in physical exercise. With the improvement of women's health awareness and social environment, the proportion of women participating in physical exercise has also increased significantly. In 2019, the proportion of women participating in physical exercise has reached 41.5%, higher than the 35.1% of men. Public activities are more popular, such as parks, squares, streets and other public places to exercise become the main way of people fitness, relax, according to statistics, advocating urban and community public fitness activities, fitness events and change city refresh image together, caused a strong reaction from

the public, in the city and community public fitness venues on the project efforts also made some achievements. The main reasons for individuals to participate in mass sports are their interests, physical fitness and social interaction. College students, white-collar workers and other groups are more inclined to participate in light sports, such as jogging and yoga. In 2023, 246,000 mass sports events were organized at all levels, with about 71.83 million people participating. Group activities such as climbing in the New Year, walking on the Grand Canal, the National Fitness Day, and the mass ice and snow season run throughout the year, covering the country. Folk sports events such as "Village Super", "Village BA" and "VA Village" are popular. Community fitness facilities and gyms in front of the door become the city meeting room for ordinary people. "Frisbee, paddle board, surfing, camping, mountain outdoor has become the new choice for people's fitness, leisure and healthy life.

In general, the participation of mass sports has been significantly improved, but there are also some deficiencies and problems. For example, the participation of some special groups, such as the elderly, ethnic minorities and the disabled, is still relatively low. We still need to strengthen the construction of sports facilities and constantly improve the promotion strategies and measures to increase the popularity and participation of mass sports.

2.3. Problems and challenges of the development of mass sports from the perspective of behavioral economics

Behavioral economics provides us with a new perspective to understand the problems and challenges faced in the development of mass sports. By revealing the irrational factors behind human decision-making, it can help us to identify and solve the problems existing in promoting mass sports activities more accurately.

In the information society, although information about physical activity and healthy lifestyle is everywhere, the accuracy, excess and inconsistency of information often lead to mass confusion and misunderstanding [8]. The concept of limited rationality in behavioral economics points out that people have limitations in processing and evaluating information, but excessive information may lead to the paralysis of decision-making, and then affect the willingness and ability of the masses to participate in sports activities.

People tend to pursue immediate gratification while ignoring long-term benefits, a phenomenon called "present preference" in behavioral economics. In the context of sports participation, many people may prefer short-term rest and entertainment (e. g., watching TV and playing video games) rather than physical exercise with long-term health benefits. This short-term preference constitutes an important barrier to the promotion of mass sports activities.

According to outlook theory, people often have more aversion to potential losses than a preference for equal gains. In physical activity, individuals may choose to avoid participation in physical activity because of potential "losses" of fear of injury, physical disapproval or fear of shame, even if they recognize the long-term health benefits of exercise.

In the current social context, individual motivation to participate may be greatly reduced as expected if physical activity is not seen as a general social habit or group activity, and negative social labels and body image anxiety may also prevent some groups from participating in sports. Everyone's sports preferences, physical conditions and living environment are different, and this personalized difference is also one of the challenges facing the promotion of mass sports. Standardized physical activity often struggles to meet the needs of all people, resulting in insufficient participation.

3. Influencing factors based on behavioral economics

3.1. Selection Biases

Selection bias is an important concept in behavioral economics, which has an important influence in boosting the development of mass sports. Selection bias refers to the tendency of people to make choices inconsistent with economic benefit maximization due to cognitive and psychological factors [9]. In the development of mass sports, selection bias may lead to people's tendency and preference to participate in sports activities. First, people may restrict certain sports programs because of cognitive biases related to past experiences or social labels, thus limiting their choice

space. For example, for women, traditional ideas may make them reluctant to participate in certain programs that are considered male or rugged, thus reducing their chances to participate in sports.

In addition, people are also susceptible to group behavior when making choices, namely, the "conformity effect". For example, in some cases, people may be more willing to participate in sports that are generally accepted and participated by the public and ignoring other potential options. This tendency can lead to insufficient diversity of physical activity, limiting people's choice opportunities.

In addition, people's preferences for future benefits will also affect their choices. In the development of mass sports, some sports activities may need long-term investment and practice to obtain obvious benefits, and the long-term investment with the immediate effect, easy to cause people choose to give up sports activities or choose those who can immediately get greater satisfaction, thus limiting the development of mass sports [10].

For the problem of selection bias, we can take a series of countermeasures. First, governments and relevant agencies can provide diverse and attractive sports options to meet the needs of different populations. This will allow the masses to have more choices and reduce the impact of selection bias. Secondly, it is the key to improve the people's awareness and understanding of sports activities. By strengthening publicity and education, addressing the bias against specific sports programs, people can expand their choice space. In addition, using technology, such as social media and mobile apps, to improve the visibility and participation of sports activities can also promote the diversity of sports choices.

Behavioral economics provides a new perspective for deeply understanding individual selection bias and decision-making errors. By understanding and overcoming these selection bias and decision-making errors, we can design more effective strategies to promote more people to participate in mass sports and improve the health of the whole society.

3.2. *Psychological expectations*

Psychological expectation refers to the psychological effect and feelings that people expect when participating in a certain activity. In the development of mass sports, psychological expectation can affect individuals' choice and participation in sports activities.

First, psychological expectations can influence individuals' cognition and expectations of physical activity. If individuals expect to experience positive experience and psychological benefits after participating in a physical activity, they may be more willing to choose the activity and devote themselves to it. For example, if individuals expect teamwork, social interaction, and accomplishment by participating in basketball games, they are more motivated to participate in basketball.

Secondly, psychological expectations can also be influenced by social factors [11]. When making choices, individuals often consider the evaluation and expectations of others. If individuals expect that participation in a physical activity provides recognition and social support from others, they may be more motivated to participate in the activity. Social identity and group pressure have an important impact on individuals' motivation to choose physical activity. For example, individuals may be more willing to choose sports that receive highly praised and attention in society.

Moreover, individual psychological expectations are also influenced by self-setting goals. Individuals are more motivated to participate in activities if they are able to explicitly set goals for physical activity participation and anticipate the intrinsic satisfaction they may gain after completing their goal. For example, individuals can set the goal of participating in Tai Chi three times a week and expect to achieve physical and mental relaxation, health management and self-improvement through practice.

Psychological expectation is an important factor to boost the development of mass sports. By understanding and guiding the formation of individual psychological expectation, we can promote the development of mass sports projects, and improve people's active participation and satisfaction with sports activities.

3.3. *Incentive mechanism*

Incentive mechanism refers to to guide and influence individual behavior by means of reward and punishment. In the development of mass sports, the incentive mechanism can have an impact on the enthusiasm and sustainability of individual participation in sports activities. First, providing rewards or recognition can motivate individuals to participate in physical activity. Reward can be material, such as money, prizes, or non-material, such as honor, prestige, etc. Individuals are more motivated to actively participate in sports activities after they expect to receive a certain reward. For example, the government could set up bonuses for sports activities to attract more people to participate and encourage individuals to maintain their motivation for long-term participation.

Secondly, punishment mechanisms can also have an impact on individual sports participation. For those individuals who lack active participation and abandon physical activity, the introduction of corresponding punitive measures can play a role of warning and restraint. For example, in team competitions, if individuals are frequently absent or perform poorly, corresponding penalties can be set to remind and motivate individuals to remain motivated to participate [12].

In addition to reward and punishment, individuals' willingness to participate is also influenced by social support. When individuals participate in physical activities, if they can get support and encouragement from their family, friends and community, then they will be more motivated to continue to participate in physical activities. This social support can come from the companionship and understanding of family members, or from the support and help of organizations and the community.

In general, the incentive mechanism is an important factor to boost the development of mass sports. By developing incentive and punishment measures that provide social support and services, we can motivate individuals to actively participate in physical activities and enhance their motivation for sustained participation. It is hoped that the reasonable design and implementation of the incentive mechanism can promote the healthy development of mass sports undertakings.

3.4. Comprehensive analysis of environmental and policy factors

Promoting the development of mass sports involves many factors, among which environmental and policy factors are particularly critical. High-quality sports facilities and rich resources can greatly stimulate the enthusiasm of individuals to participate, while reasonable price and cost incentive measures can effectively reduce the participation threshold [13]. Health education and publicity play an important role in guiding individual awareness and behavior, especially with the help of the principles of behavioral economics, more targeted and attractive publicity strategies can be designed to emphasize the multiple benefits of physical exercise on health.

The policy support and regulation of the government are very important, and the formulation of relevant laws and regulations and policies can provide long-term support and guarantee for mass sports. At the same time, cross-departmental cooperation and social participation are also indispensable factors to promote the development of mass sports. The government, educational institutions, enterprises, social organizations and other parties should strengthen cooperation, jointly assume responsibilities, and jointly promote the development of mass sports.

Therefore, it is very important to design and implement effective incentive mechanisms and policy measures from the perspective of behavioral economics. Only through comprehensive consideration and strong policy support, can we create a healthy and positive environment for the development of mass sports, and then promote more people to actively participate in sports activities, and fully release the positive impact of sports on society, health and economy.

4. Strategic research of behavioral economics to boost the development of mass sports

4.1. Establish a comprehensive publicity and education system

Different groups of people have different perceptions and attitudes towards mass sports. Therefore, the publicity and education system needs to formulate corresponding publicity strategies for different audiences. For adolescents, the benefits of physical exercise on study and academic

performance, and for professionals, the importance of physical exercise on stress release and improve work efficiency.

The publicity and education system needs to use diversified publicity media and forms to increase the attention and interest in mass sports. In addition to traditional TV, radio and newspapers, we can also make full use of new media platforms and social media, such as Weibo, WeChat, TikTok, etc., to arouse people's interest in and desire to participate in sports activities through wonderful short videos, interactive content and exquisite pictures.

By establishing demonstration projects and publicizing successful cases, people's desire to participate in mass sports can be stimulated. Set up successful case display points in various places to show those individuals and groups who have made outstanding achievements and won honors in sports activities, which can not only provide encouragement, but also help to set an example effect, and promote more people to participate in mass sports [14].

People are often influenced by group identity and social factors in their behavioral decision-making, and the publicity and education system can use this to promote the development of mass sports. For example, emphasizing sports activities in propaganda can increase social circles, cultivate friendships, and increase people's desire and motivation to participate in mass sports through the interaction and participation with others.

The research of behavioral economics shows that setting up reward mechanism and competition activities can effectively stimulate people's enthusiasm. In the publicity and education system, a series of incentive measures can be set up, such as participation awards, winning awards, as well as all kinds of competition activities, to encourage people to participate in sports activities, which can not only improve people's interest in participating in mass sports, but also increase their initiative and enthusiasm.

4.2. Enrich the selection and visibility of physical activities

In order to attract more people to participate in mass sports activities, the types and forms of sports activities should be enriched. In addition to traditional mass sports such as football and basketball, some novel sports, such as yoga, mountaineering and rock climbing, can also be introduced to meet the needs and interests of different groups of people. Diversified selection of activities can enhance participants' sense of participation and experience value, and stimulate their motivation for continuous participation. Combining sports activities and community mass activities, can increase the accessibility and attraction, in the community organization regular sports activities, such as aerobics, morning run, provide residents to participate, through strengthening community activities, can close the distance between sports activities and participants, promote continuous participation and establish community sports culture. According to the needs and interests of different groups of people, can provide personalized sports services, through the research analysis, understand the preferences and characteristics of participants, to provide tailored sports activities, personalized custom service can not only increase the satisfaction and participation, participants also can promote their investment in sports activities and continuous participation.

Increase the promotion of sports activities, improve its visibility and visibility, through a variety of propaganda, such as advertising, posters, social networking platform, to the public spread of sports information and window, attract more people and participate in will, in addition, can use differentiation marketing strategy, for different audience precise positioning and custom propaganda, improve the effectiveness of visibility. With the media, community organizations, schools to establish partnership, jointly promote sports activities, through cooperation with all parties, can expand the spread of activities, increase its visibility and influence, with the help of partner resources and platform, improve sports exposure in society, attract more people to participate in and have lasting impact. Set up the reward mechanism and provide interactive experience, increase the attraction and visibility of sports activities, for example, set up participation, sign in reward incentives, encourage people to participate in sports activities and interact with others, by providing pleasure experience and affordable rewards, attract more attention and participate in sports activities, and enhance its visibility and attraction.

4.3. *Adopt differentiated incentive measures*

Customized incentive schemes can be designed for different types of participants. For example, an initial incentive mechanism can be set up for beginners to encourage them to try and persist in physical activity. For long-term participants, a cumulative reward system can be established to gradually increase the return on participation and encourage their continuous participation and efforts to improve. Through targeted incentive programs, different types of participants can more effectively attract and retain them, and promote the development of mass sports.

In the process of setting up the reward mechanism, the reward mode with strong appeal and leading power can be designed by combining the social influence factors. For example, awards such as "best partner" and "best performance" are set up to stimulate the competitive consciousness and motivation of other participants by recognizing and rewarding outstanding participants. At the same time, with the help of social media and group effect, the recognition and influence of rewards will be expanded, prompting more people to participate in sports activities, which will actively influence the spread.

In addition to material rewards, virtual reward incentive mechanisms can also be introduced to improve participants' sense of participation and fun of participation. For example, virtual MEDALS, badges, hierarchies, etc., are set up to record the activities of participants and give corresponding virtual rewards. Virtual rewards can not only satisfy the participants' pursuit of achievements, but also increase the interest and interactivity of the activities, and stimulate the initiative and sustainability of their participation.

4.5. *Social identity strategy*

Emphasizing the role and importance of individuals in team sports activities is an effective way to enhance the social identity of individuals participating in sports activities. By organizing team competitions, friendly matches and group training activities, individuals can work closely with others and establish a network of team trust and support, thus enhancing their sense of identity with sports activities.

Establishing a reward system is another effective strategy to set up honors, trophies, MEDALS and other awards through sports competitions to emphasize the achievements and contributions of individuals in the team or community, so as to encourage individuals to actively participate in sports activities and enhance their social identity [15].

Active use of social media platforms and community activities to publicize and share the benefits and results of individual participation in sports activities can attract more people to pay attention to and participate in sports activities, thus triggering social identification effect and strengthening individuals' identification and desire to participate in sports activities.

In addition, some people who have made outstanding achievements in the field of sports are selected as role models to stimulate individuals' social identification of sports activities through their successful experiences and deeds. By promoting their honors and achievements, inspiring individuals to become successful athletes and thus actively participating in sports.

Encouraging individuals to actively participate in community sports activities and establishing a social network of mutual assistance and cooperation is also an effective way to enhance individuals' social identity. By organizing community sports events, collective exercise activities and volunteer services, individuals can participate more in sports activities in the community, cultivate the sense of belonging and belonging, so as to improve their social identity to sports activities.

In short, social identification strategies should fully consider the characteristics and needs of individuals, play a positive role of social influence, and avoid unhealthy competition, exclusion and discrimination, so as to effectively promote individuals' active participation and identity in sports activities.

5. Conclusion

With systematic innovation and exploration, under the support of behavioral economics, we have a more profound and comprehensive understanding of promoting the development of mass sports. Based on the theory and practice of behavioral economics, this study explores the strategies of enriching the selection and visibility of sports activities and adopting differentiated incentives to boost the development of mass sports.

Enriching the choice of sports activities and improving the visibility is the key to attracting more people to participate in mass sports. Through diversified activity types, strengthening community mass activities and personalized customized services, the needs and interests of different groups of people can be met, and the enthusiasm and investment of participants can be stimulated. At the same time, the publicity and marketing strategies, establishing partnerships, and using reward mechanisms and interactive experience are adopted to enhance the visibility and influence of sports activities, attract more people to participate and generate continuous willingness to participate.

In addition, adopting differentiated incentives can more effectively mobilize the enthusiasm and participation willingness of the participants. By designing incentive programs according to the characteristics of participants, designing incentive mechanism according to social influence and introducing virtual incentive incentive mechanism, participants are encouraged to continue to participate and improve their own level. These differentiated incentives can increase the participants' sense of participation and satisfaction, and promote the sustainable development of mass sports.

The purpose of this study is to promote the development of mass sports. However, in order to realize the popularization and development of mass sports, the joint efforts of various parties are still needed. The government, sports organizations, community organizations and individuals and other parties should strengthen cooperation to jointly promote the development of mass sports and provide more support, resources and convenient conditions.

In the future development, we should uphold the goal of national health and social progress, and continue to promote the application and research of behavioral economics in the field of mass sports. Through the comprehensive use of various strategies and innovative thinking, we can promote the sustainable development of mass sports and realize the common vision of national health and social progress.

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