

# **FROM DEVELOPMENT OF SPORT TO DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPORT :**

## **A PARADIGM SHIFT FOR SPORT DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH KOREA**

GWANG OK & WANG XU

CHUNGBUK NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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# 1. Introduction




- ▶ During the past several decades, South Korea has gained tremendous international recognition by achieving an excellent performance in a variety of international sport competitions and hosting numerous mega-sporting events.
- ▶ Korea has become one of the six countries in the world who have hosted four major international sporting events, such as the **Summer Olympic Games** in 1988, **FIFA World Cup** in 2002, the **World Athletics Championships** in 2011, and the **Winter Olympic Games** in 2018.



2011대구세계육상선수권대회  
IAAF World Championships Daegu 2011



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- ▶ Historically, Korea has primarily maintained the ‘development of sport’ approach, which focuses on elite progression with an emphasis on ensuring sporting organizations attract and nurture talent to encourage elite level representation.
  - ▶ While the true value of sport has often been jeopardized by the outcome-obsessed sports culture, which is mainly derived from the ‘development of sport’ approach, this approach has undergone criticism.
  - ▶ Korea has attempted to utilize the true value and power of sport as a vehicle for various personal and social developments as well as positive social change since the beginning of the twenty-first century. This approach is known as the ‘development through sport’ or ‘sport for development’.

# Purpose

It is argued that sport in Korea is now in the process of a paradigm shift from 'development of sport' to 'development through sport'.

It is aimed to explore how historically this paradigm shift has occurred in Korean sport based on political and social perspectives.

## 2. Two Approaches in Sport Development: Development of Sport and Development through Sport

- ▶ Generally, sport development refers to sport participation itself and promoting the opportunities and benefits of its participation.
- ▶ **First, development of sport** is considered to be a traditional approach, representing the creation and enhancement of sport (e.g. the provision of sport coaching and facilities) intended to build sport capacity.



# The Pyramid Model



Figure 1 Pyramid model of sport development (development of sport approach)<sup>19</sup>

- ▶ Traditionally, the development of sport approach has been dominated by the Pyramid Model, which illustrates the connection between a wide base of sport participants at the lowest level and the elite athletes at the top.
- ▶ During the last four decades Korea has solely focused on the top-down perspective to elevate national prestige through successful performance at international sporting events.

# Development through sport

- ▶ The **second** approach of sport development is **development through sport** which is a more recent approach. This approach views sport as a powerful engine to drive various development schemes that cover the followings:

Resolution of inter-group conflict (facilitating diplomacy in international relations).

Human development (physical and psychological benefits).

Promotion of cultural understanding.

Development of infrastructures (physical, social, and community).

Health promotion and disease prevention.

Empowerment (often on how sport can empower girls and women).

Social integration and the development of social capital.

Driving of economic development (investment and sport tourism through staging sports events).



# 3. Development of Sport in South Korea

## **President Park Jung-Hee's military-based regime (1961–1979)**

- ▶ President Park Jung-Hee's military-based regime (1961–1979) is historically considered a starting point for the development of modern Korean sport.
- ▶ Just like authoritarian regimes in other countries, sport, during Park's regime, was used as a tool to promote political ideology as well as to establish political legitimacy.

## President Park Jung-Hee's military-based regime (1961–1979)

**There are several further meaningful achievements for the development of Korean elite sport.**

- ▶ First, the '**Athletic Specialist System**' in 1972, which was institutionally designed to develop talented young athletes in school sport, helped to lay the foundation of Korean elite sport
- ▶ Second, the KASA, currently known as the Korean Olympic Council (KOC), introduced the '**Life Pension System**' for elite athletes who won medals in major international sporting events. ( Tables 2 and 3 )
- ▶ Another aspect that contributed to the development of elite sport during Park's presidency was the '**Military Service Exemption Law**' for elite athletes enacted in 1973.

# Life Pension System

- Tables 2 and 3 display the current method of point evaluation and monthly payment for the pension system.
- The pension system which motivated athletes to excel in performance was 'indicative of the philosophy of the government towards elite sport success and reflected the growing concern of the government over elite sport development'.

**Table 2** A method of point evaluation for the performance enhancing research pension

Types of competitions	Gold medal	Silver medal	Bronze medal	4th place	5th place	6th place
The Olympic Games	90	70	40	8	4	2
The Paralympics and The Deaflympics	90	70	40	–	–	–
The World Athletic Championships						
4-year cycle	45	12	7	–	–	–
2–3-year cycle	30	7	5	–	–	–
1-year cycle	20	5	2	–	–	–
The Asian Games, The Universiade, and The Military (CISM) World Games	10	2	1	–	–	–

Source: <http://www.kspo.or.kr/?menu=105>

**Table 3** A way of monthly payment for the performance enhancing research pension based on point evaluation (Table 2)

Points	Monthly payment	Criteria (unit: won)
20–30	300,000–450,000 won	From 20 points 150,000 won per 10 points
30–100	525,000–975,000 won (1,000,000 won for Olympic gold medal) 75,000 won per 10 points	
100–110	1,000,000 won (upper limit)	25,000 won per 10 points
Above 110		1,500,000 won per 10 excess points (5,000,000 won for Olympic gold medal only)

Note: For Olympic gold (90 points), silver (70 points), and bronze medals (40 points), 1,000,000 won, 750,000 won, and 525,000 won are paid, respectively.

Source: <http://www.kspo.or.kr/?menu=105>

## Chun Doo-Hwan, another military-based regime (the Fifth Republic, 1980–1988)

- ▶ Chun's regime continued to use sport or mega-sporting events as a political tool for the establishment of the government's political legitimacy.
- ▶ Three professional sports, namely the Korean Professional Baseball League, the Korean Professional Soccer League, and Korean Professional Traditional Wrestling (known as Ssirreum), commenced in the early 1980s.
- ▶ The government's successful bids for the 1986 Asian Games and 1988 Olympic Games accelerated the nation's elite sport development
- ▶ The Fifth (President Chun's regime: 1980–1988) and Sixth Republics (President Roh's regime: 1988–1993) started to construct specialist sport schools across the nation with the aim of nurturing and promoting talented athletes in the future.

# Summary

The two regimes from 1980 to 1993 achieved much in the area of elite sport despite severe criticism for undemocratic politics.

One of the main critiques about sport development policies in the 1980s was the lack of governments' interests in mass sport participation with the concept of 'Sport forAll'.

However, unlike the previous military-based governments in the 1980s, each government, during the period dating from 1993 to today, has put an emphasis on 'Sport for All' to promote mass sport participation. In contrast, elite sport was given relatively little attention during the period.

## 4. Development through Sport in South Korea

- ▶ It should be noted that sport was often employed to develop better community and citizen life outcomes through a 'welfare state' process. This is quite consistent with the definition of 'development through sport', which focuses on public and community well-being.
- ▶ Korea began to participate in various 'development through sport' programmes and initiatives both **domestically** and **internationally** in 2000.
- ▶ The main target groups of these are underprivileged people in disadvantaged areas, such as women, ethnic minority individuals, people with disabilities, at-risk youth, refugees, and elderly people.



## 'Development through sport' In the domestic programmes

Domestically, 'Sport Equipment Support Program' and 'Sport Camp' are annually operated by the central government for the target groups mentioned above. For instance, in 2012, a total of 19,956 items of sports equipment were distributed to 10,600 local child centres, elderly facilities, and social welfare facilities across the nation.

Such programmes as 'Sport Class', 'Eowoolrim Festival', 'Eowoolrim Sport Camp', and 'Family Camp' were provided for multi-cultural groups to help them adapt well to Korean society.

# 'Development through sport' In the international programmes

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, Korea has also been actively involved in various 'sport for development' (SFD) programmes and initiatives to promote international cooperation and relationships.

One of the most representative programmes with regard to international development through sport in Korea is the 'Sport Partnership Program'.

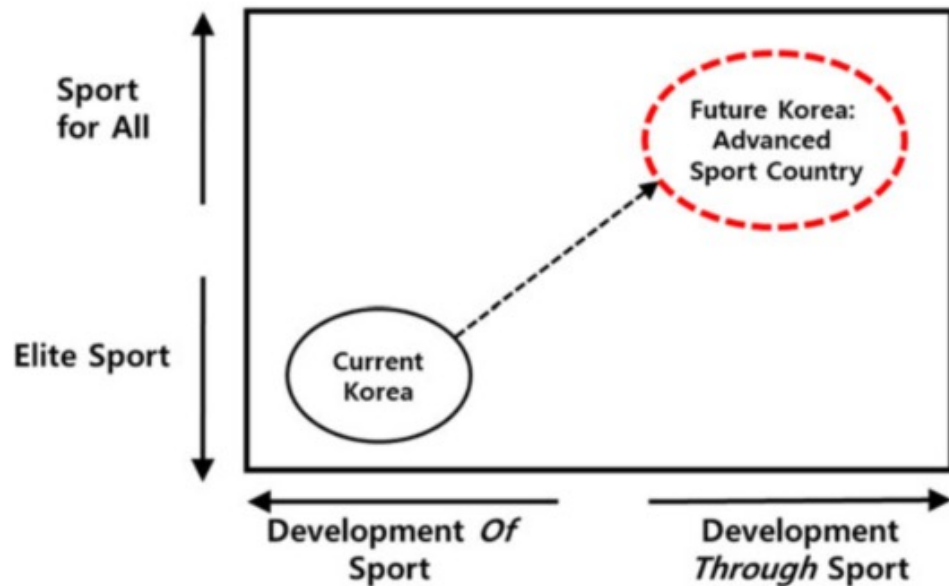
The programme is designed to provide sports equipment and joint athletic training services, and to dispatch athletic coaches to various developing countries such as Nigeria, Jordan, Egypt, Pakistan, Bhutan, and so forth.

South Korea is vigorously utilizing Taekwondo, which is the Korean traditional martial art, as a tool for promoting international cooperation.

# Some issues of international cooperation programmes

- ▶ **First**, most programmes are predominantly focused on the development of elite sport in developing countries rather than mass sport participation (i.e. Sport for All).
- ▶ **Second**, although the sport-based international cooperation programme is grounded in the ‘development through sport’ approach, they would be rather largely inclined to take the ‘development of sport’ approach. In other words, the programmes are not aiming at utilizing sport as a tool for social development in developing countries, but aiming in developing sport itself in those countries (i.e. development of sport).
- ▶ **Lastly**, the international cooperation programmes through sport are mostly operated at provider-centred perspectives (i.e. South Korea) without considering economic, societal, and political conditions in developing countries.

# The future direction of international cooperation programmes



Future direction for international cooperation through sport in South Korea

- ▶ To alleviate the two problems above, the authors of this paper propose the future direction of international cooperation programmes through sport in Korea.
- ▶ The figure shows that with regard to future sport-based international cooperation programmes, Korea needs to place more emphasis on 'sport for all' and 'development through sport' perspectives than on 'elite sport' and 'development of sport' perspectives in order for Korea to become a truly advanced sport country.

## 5. Conclusion

Conclusively, the success in elite sport at international sporting competitions has made Korea to be considered a sporting powerhouse in the world.

However, the success has been criticized because it has generated an outcome-obsessed sporting culture while focusing on the development of sport itself, particularly elite sport.

International cooperation activities through sport in order to become a 'true advanced country' in sport by focusing on 'sport for all' and 'development through sport' perspectives.

Thank you!