

<https://doi.org/10.70731/pr1wwk40>

A Swot Analysis of the Construction of a National Junior Paddleboard Instructor Training Course

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KEYWORDS

*Paddleboarding;
Junior Coaches;
Course Construction;
Swot Analysis*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this review is to analyse the current situation of junior paddleboard instructor training courses in China, and to explore their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, in order to promote the standardised development of instructors, raise awareness of water sports safety, and encourage the consumption of fitness and sports tourism for all. This study used questionnaire data from 103 junior coaches to comprehensively assess the current situation of paddleboard coaches in China. The results of the study show that the strengths of China's paddleboard instructor training courses lie in the abundance of university resources, frequent races and a relatively complete curriculum system; the weaknesses lie in the incomplete curriculum system, inadequate safety services, small market capacity and unclear policy on water development. Opportunities lie in national support for the development of outdoor sports, and threats are mainly the lack of training funds. The conclusion is that there is still much room for improvement in China's paddleboard instructor training courses, and excessive competition should be avoided, focusing on experience, consumption and cultural promotion, and promoting the development of sports tourism and the industrial chain. It is recommended to enrich the course content, provide career development channels, strengthen instructor training, and establish a systematic and efficient instructor training mechanism

1. Introduction

The development of the social economy has resulted in an improvement in the living standards of residents; however, the fast-paced lifestyle has also given rise to a number of issues, including high pressure, urban diseases and sub-health (Lu, 2022). The increase in per capita disposable income has led to an elevated expectation of quality of life, which is no longer met by traditional lifestyle and sports programmes (Liu, 2022). Consequently, there has been a gradual shift towards the pursuit of emerging sports

such as surfing, diving, paddle boarding, rugby, skiing, and rock climbing.

On 4 August 2016, the Brazilian International Olympic Committee announced that five sports, including surfing, had been included in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, thereby providing an opportunity for the development of water sports (Chen & Dong, 2022). In October of the same year, the State General Administration of Sports issued the Aquatic Sports Industry Development Plan, which emphasised the full use of China's rivers, lakes, seas and other natural water resources to drive the development of fitness, leisure, entertainment and related industries and in-

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dustry chains (General Administration of Sport of China, 2016). The plan also required the strengthening of the discipline construction of aquatic sports projects, and the establishment of a cultivation system that combines theoretical teaching and practical learning to further promote the development of aquatic projects.

Nevertheless, the development of paddleboarding and other water sports in China has been comparatively recent, resulting in a paucity of professionals and an absence of international paddleboard judges who could participate in international paddleboarding events. Consequently, there is a particular necessity to enhance the training of paddleboard coaches in China

2. Research Objects and Research Methods

2.1. Research Objects

The present study takes the training course for junior paddleboard coaches of the State General Administration of Sports as the research carrier, with the aim of analysing the standard training system and assessing its application value.

Surfing and paddleboarding courses in some of China's colleges and universities are utilised to carry out the required elements of the curriculum, including the teaching objectives, class scheduling, course offerings of venues and equipment, teachers, teaching priorities and difficulties, and course evaluation and so on.

2.2. Research Methods

2.2.1. Literature Method

A search was conducted on the China Knowledge Network for keywords such as "paddle board", "course system", and "SWOT analysis", among others, to understand the current status of the paddle board instructor training programme and to provide theoretical support for this study.

2.2.2. Questionnaire Method

A questionnaire survey was conducted through the coaches of the primary paddleboard coach training, and the questionnaire was distributed through Questionnaire Star for statistical purposes, and the link for completion was distributed inside the coaches' group, explaining the precautions for completion. The content of the questionnaire included the situation of coaches participating in training, and what problems exist in the course training content, etc., to provide data support for this study. A total of 103 questionnaires were distributed and subsequently recovered, with all of these being deemed valid. This resulted in a recovery rate of 100% and an efficiency rate of 100%.

2.2.3. Mathematical and Statistical Method

Excel software was used to centrally manage the data from the survey and to analyse the data collected to complete this study.

3. Research Findings and Analyses

3.1. Significance of the Construction of the Training Programme

Paddleboarding originated in Hawaii, U.S.A., and is loved by sports enthusiasts all over the world for its relaxation, leisure and close contact with nature. In recent years a number of higher education institutions in China have introduced new programs (Su, 2018). such as Xiamen University and Beijing University of Physical Education, have opened paddleboarding courses (Zhang, 2020) and in 2024, Hainan for the first time included paddleboarding in the single examination of colleges and universities, which indicates that paddleboarding is increasingly valued in the country

Paddleboarding controls body balance through leg strength, which can effectively exercise balance ability, and attracts many social enthusiasts to participate because of its strong adaptability of the venue and low learning difficulty (Sun, 2019). Although a number of paddleboarding events have been held around the world in recent years, the degree of participation and the frequency of the events are still not as high as other sports. Therefore, it is particularly important to strengthen the training of paddleboard coaches.

3.2. Definition of SWOT analysis Concept

SWOT analysis includes four aspects of Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat, and is proposed by a professor of management at the University of San Francisco, U.S.A. SWOT can be divided into two parts: SW analysis focuses on the use of internal strengths to overcome weaknesses, and OT analysis focuses on the changes in the external environment. analysis focuses on the opportunities and threats brought by changes in the external environment see Table 1 (Chen & Chen, 2024). The SWOT analysis of the paddleboard instructor training programme aims to comprehensively assess its internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and challenges presented by the external environment

3.3. SWOT Analysis of Paddleboarding Coach Training Course Construction

3.3.1. Strengths of the Coach Training Course Construction

3.3.1.1. Some colleges and universities in China offer paddleboarding courses

Despite the recent emergence of paddleboarding in China, it was included in the sports single enrolment programme in 2023 (Liu, 2023). As an emerging fashionable leisure sport, paddleboarding presents diverse forms of development in domestic colleges and universities (Li & Li, 2024) showing the trend of its gradual recognition and popularity.

3.3.1.2. Frequent domestic and foreign paddleboarding events International organisations

such as the International Surfing Association (ISA) and the World Surfing League (WSL) regularly hold water

Table 1 | Matrix model table for SWOT analysis

	Advantage (S)	Weaknesses (W)
Opportunities (O)	SO Relying on internal strengths Taking advantage of external opportunities	WO Overcoming internal disadvantages Taking advantage of external opportunitie
Threat (T)	ST Relying on internal strengths Evasion of external threats	WT Overcoming internal disadvantages Evasion of external threats

sports events around the world, and paddleboarding, as one of the important elements, has been widely promoted.

Paddleboarding can be played both on land and in bodies of water such as lakes and rivers, as well as in swimming pools. In China, there are famous large-scale paddleboarding events (Zhang, 2022) such as the Eight Hundred Miles Oujiang (Lishui) Landscape Poetry Road Paddleboard Race, the CHINA Jiangle Kayak Paddleboard Marathon Open, the Qingtian International Paddleboard Race, and the 2024 Asian Paddleboard Championships (Han, 2019; Zhang et al., 2024).which have further promoted the popularity and development of paddleboarding.

3.3.1.3.Enhanced paddleboard course construction

(1) Teaching objectives: The survey indicates that over 90% of junior coaches consider the training objectives to be clear and practical.The course is meticulously designed into two segments: the initial segment focuses on imparting theoretical knowledge of paddleboarding, while the subsequent segment is dedicated to the practical application of the skills and actions, thereby ensuring the successful mastery of the relevant competencies by the trainees. Additionally, the course incorporates essential safety knowledge and rules of the sport, ensuring that participants fully master the fundamental skills.Upon completion, students are required to pass both a theoretical and a practical test to verify their learning outcomes.

(2) Course arrangement: The duration of the course must be considered to ensure it is neither excessively brief, nor unduly protracted, thus compromising the educational efficacy or impeding the trainees' capacity to adhere to the programme. A survey of junior coaches revealed that the total duration of the training programme is approximately 72 hours, comprising 24 lessons of 3 hours each, which is analogous to the curriculum of paddleboard courses in institutions of higher education, ensuring systematic and effective learning (He et al., 2022).

(3) Course venues: paddleboarding venues are versatile and can be conducted either in school swimming pools or outdoors in natural bodies of water, such as lakes. The survey revealed that more than half of the training venues were located in lakes, emphasising the importance of safety measures. Trainees are required to wear life jackets during all paddleboarding activities to ensure their safety (Liu, 2023).

(4) The quality of the participants: The survey demonstrated that all 103 participants in the training programme attended due to their passion for paddleboarding or their future career development needs.All participants have participated in municipal and above paddleboarding competitions and obtained relevant certificates, and more than 80% of them have more than two years of paddleboarding experience, indicating that the overall quality of the participants is high.

(5) The quality of the instructors: The survey revealed that all instructors have successfully completed the coach training programme administered by the State General Administration of Sports. In addition, they have each coached more than 200 individuals, demonstrated their abilities in the organisation and officiating of paddleboarding events, and obtained the qualifications to officiate at a provincial level or above. The survey further revealed that all instructors possess a solid set of practical skills and a robust theoretical foundation, thus ensuring the quality of the training.

3.3.2.Inadequacies in the Construction of Coach Training Courses (Weakness)

3.3.2.1.Inadequate paddleboarding safety services

In the third section, which is entitled 'Inadequacies in the construction of coach training courses', the first point is 'Weaknesses in paddleboarding safety services'.According to a report by China Consumer News on 8 March, 023, the Consumer Rights Protection Committee of Pudong New Area, Shanghai, investigated 15 paddleboarding establishments and found that some of the establishments did not display information on the qualifications of coaches and did not set up safety warning signs.The survey showed that the ratio of instructors to students was uneven, ranging from 1:5 to 1:15.Excessively high teaching ratios lead to a lag in learning progress and a decline in experience for beginners. Furthermore, the investigation revealed that some clubs are remotely located and lack adequate changing and shower facilities, which is a cause of inconvenience to participants.In addition, the study found that some venues had insufficient safety measures in place, and that the instructors did not focus on explaining self-rescue techniques for falling into the water. Instead, they allowed the participants to go into the water on their own

after only simple instruction, which increased the safety risk for beginners.

3.3.2.2. Factors Restricting the Development of Paddleboard Sports

(1) Limited Participation Crowd: Paddleboarding can be considered a niche sport, with participants tending to be kayakers, swimmers, members of triathlon clubs, and water sports practitioners, and with less participation by school students and social youth. The limited availability of information on paddleboarding, coupled with the uncertainty surrounding the policy of opening up waters around the world, and the risk of management difficulties or over-utilisation of resources after the opening up of some waters, further limits the number of participants.

(2) Contradiction between the number and qualification of coaches: Paddleboarding has high requirements for coaches, who need to master first aid knowledge in addition to professional skills. Currently, coaches are required to pass the paddleboarding level training exam and hold the national paddleboard yoga junior coach induction qualification certificate. However, the number of qualified coaches is insufficient, which restricts the development of the industry (General Administration of Sport of China, Water Sports Management Center, 2022).

3.3.3. Opportunity for the Construction of Train-the-Trainer Programmes

November 2022, the General Administration of Sport, in conjunction with eight other departments, promulgated the Outdoor Sports Industry Development Plan (2022-2025), which expressly This document proposed measures to enhance the quality and efficiency of the outdoor sports service industry, with a view to strengthening the system of synergistic development of outdoor education, training, festivals, exhibitions and sports tourism, and other multi-industry modes, with competition and performance, fitness and recreation as the core. This provides policy support for the development of paddleboarding (Zhu & Zhang, 2023).

Concurrently, the Water Sports Management Centre of the State General Administration of Sport has facilitated an augmentation in the number of paddleboarding events, as evidenced by Figure 1. According to the Catalogue of National Paddleboard Events 2022-24 of the Aquatic Centre of the General Administration of Sport, the number of national paddleboard events escalated from 15 to 47 from 2022 to 2024 (General Administration of Sport of China, 2021). A similar trend is evident in the proliferation of provincial, municipal, and club races, suggesting a growing popularity and influence of paddleboarding in China. This development presents a favourable opportunity for the development of coach training courses.

3.3.4. Weaknesses in the Design of Trainer Training Programmes (Threat)

Training funds are an important part of instructor training and are used to pay for expenses related to teaching venues, coaches, equipment and so on. At present, the funding for paddleboard coach training mainly relies on the tuition fees of the students, which is RMB 2,800 per person, including coaching fees, equipment fees, examination

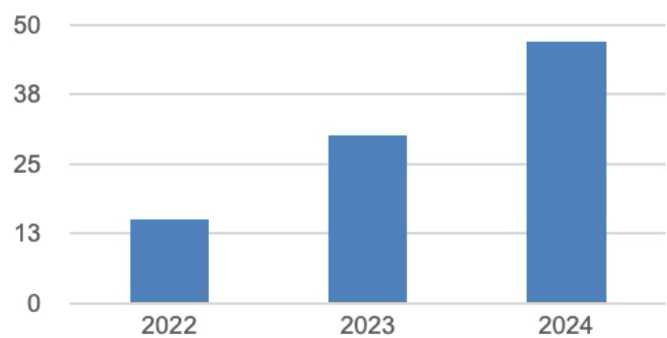


Figure 1 | National Paddleboard Race Statistics, 2022-2024

fees, venue fees, insurance fees, teaching materials, and so on. Due to limited funding, domestic coaches are generally invited to training courses, while hiring foreign first-line coaches, world champions or academic experts is more costly, limiting the further development of training.

To overcome this difficulty, it is necessary to diversify funding sources, make full use of social resources and project features, actively seek support from government departments, gradually improve the training framework for paddleboard coaches, and promote the long-term sustainability of the training programme.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Conclusion

4.1.1. Multiple Impacts of Paddleboard Training Courses

The surge in popularity of paddleboarding has led to a growing demand for coaches and senior technical athletes in the field. To address the limitations of the existing curriculum, the training programme should be grounded in university development, frequent competitions, and a meticulously designed curriculum. The scientific design of training courses has the potential to address these limitations, while concurrently imparting management skills to enhance the coaches' comprehension of course objectives, rhythm control, emotional management, teaching strain, and other domains. The multifaceted nature of paddleboarding, encompassing talent training, teaching content, and learner development, underscores the necessity for a comprehensive approach to address the emotional identity of participants at various levels (Lv et al., 2024).

4.1.2. Obstacles to Regional Development

Paddleboarding services are not perfect, the market volume is small, the policy of opening the waters is unclear and the division of rights and responsibilities is not clear. Water resources are considered public assets; therefore, the absence of a clearly defined policy regarding their utilisation carries the potential to heighten the risk of investment by clubs. The present domestic development model is predicated on the operation of clubs, while foreign development is driven by race operation and the sale of equipment. The utilisation of the nation's robust development of outdoor sports projects serves as a means to cir-

cumvent the challenge posed by the paucity of training funds.

4.2. Recommendations

4.2.1. Promotion Planning

The future water management centre will see an increase in the construction of water sports public service systems and industrial systems. This will serve to resolve the contradiction between the demand for national fitness activities and the lack of venues. It is anticipated that water sports will become intertwined with leisure tourism, water sports and equipment manufacturing, and other such activities. This will provide significant support to the fitness and leisure industry (Zhang & Zhang, 2017). Do not make the sport into a sports competition, to be made into an experience, to be made into a consumer, to be made into a culture to promote the sport, thus driving sports tourism consumption, and promote the development of the industry chain.

4.2.2. Enrichment of Teaching Content

The curriculum should combine with the latest trends and hotspots of paddleboarding to add new modules such as paddleboard golf, paddleboard fitness, paddleboard ball, ice paddleboarding, etc, so as to enhance the diversity and practicability of the curriculum.

4.2.3. Career Development Channels Should Be Provided.

A perfect professional standard and qualification system for paddleboard coaches should be formulated, and a systematic training system should be established. Social support and protection should be increased, and relevant policies should be introduced to create a favourable environment for career development.

4.2.4. Teacher Training and Capacity Building Should Be Strengthened.

Expert exchanges and cutting-edge knowledge training should be carried out regularly to improve the level of teachers. International paddleboard organisations should be engaged with to learn from foreign coach training experience and sports development concepts.

There is still much room for improvement in the training of paddleboard coaches in China, and a systematic and efficient training mechanism can be constructed through the cooperation of experts from colleges and universities, clubs, equipment manufacturers and other fields, so as to clarify the fundamental competencies, instructional materials, and evaluation criteria (e.g., paddling, lifesaving, physical fitness, etc.) must be delineated to align with the evolution of the sport and societal requirements, thereby fostering the collective utilisation of resources and fostering enduring collaboration.

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