

Exploring China's "The Belt and Road" Sports Foreign Aid Initiatives

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Abstract: This study conducted interviews with coaches from Hunan Institute of Science and Technology who participated in the foreign aid management of the "Belt and Road" sports foreign aid project and athletes from aided countries, discussed the opportunities and challenges faced by foreign sports aid, and evaluated the experiences of foreign athletes from foreign aid in sports foreign aid. The results showed that Hunan Institute of Science Technology provided technical assistance to recipient countries and provided high-quality training facilities and systematic training plans to enhance the competitive ability of athletes in recipient countries. In terms of management mechanism, the university has established a team leader responsibility system and multi-department coordination and management to ensure the smooth progress of the project. Regarding the training plan, coaches formulate scientific and systematic plans in strict accordance with the characteristics of the project and the athlete's skill level to ensure the steady improvement of athletes' training performance. In terms of cultural exchanges, the university actively participates in international cooperation to promote national sports. However, the translator team faced the challenge of language and cultural differences and needs to strengthen foreign language communication and professional translation skills. Coaches had solid basic theoretical knowledge and professional technical level, but language, culture and other factors may cause communication and understanding barriers. The university provided comprehensive logistical support, but needed to adapt to the needs of different cultural backgrounds. Future research directions mainly focus on the following aspects, explore more diverse athletes and coaches, consider the responses of underage athletes, use focus groups to conduct research, pay attention to the sustainable development of projects, strengthen technological innovation, and strengthen cultural exchanges to promote the development of sports foreign aid projects.

Keywords: The "Belt and Road", Sports Foreign Aid, Experience, Opportunity, Challenge, Management Mechanism, Training Plan, Cultural Exchange, Translation Service, Coach Level, Venue Facilities and Logistics Support.

1. Introduction

The "belt and road", short for "The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road", were proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in September and October 2013 to build a partnership initiative for the construction of "new the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road". [1] With both the existing and effective regional cooperation platforms, the area was designed to use the historical symbol of the ancient silk road, the banner of peaceful development, the active development of economic cooperative partnership with the countries along the belt and road, and jointly create political mutual trust, economic integration, cultural and inclusive interests, community and community of shared responsibility.

The world today was undergoing complex and profound changes [2-3]. The deep-seated impact of the international financial crisis continued to emerge. The world economy was slowly recovering and developing divided. The international investment and trade pattern and multilateral investment and trade rules were undergoing profound adjustments. [4] The development problems faced by all countries were still severe. The joint construction of the "Belt and Road" conformed to the trend of world multipolarity, economic globalization, cultural diversification, and social informatization, upholds the spirit of open regional cooperation, and was committed to maintaining the global free trade system and an open world economy. The joint construction of the "Belt and Road" aimed to promote the orderly and free flow of economic factors,

efficient resource allocation and deep market integration, promote economic policy coordination among countries along the route, carry out larger-scale, higher-level and deeper regional cooperation, and jointly create an open, an inclusive, balanced and universally beneficial regional economic cooperation structure. The joint construction of the "the Belt and Road" was in line with the fundamental interests of the international community, demonstrates the common ideals and beautiful pursuits of human society, was an active exploration of new models of international cooperation and global governance, and would add new positive energy to world peace and development.

Currently, China's economy was highly interconnected with the world economy. [5-7] China would consistently adhere to the basic national policy of opening up to the outside world, build a new pattern of all-round opening up, and deeply integrate into the world economic system. Promoting the "Belt and Road" construction was not only the need for China to expand and deepen its opening to the outside world, but also the need to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation with Asia, Europe, Africa and other countries around the world. China was willing to assume more responsibilities and obligations within its capabilities and made greater contributions to the peaceful development of mankind.

As part of the "Belt and Road" Initiative, sports foreign aid was an important means to enhance international friendship, promote sports spirit, and promote sports development. Give full play to the important role of sports foreign aid in the "Belt

and Road" sports diplomacy, increased the scale and quantity of aid to countries along the route, and provided software assistance such as sports teacher training, sports training guidance, sports business management, sports capital, and sports venues to countries along the route, and other hardware assistance; promote the flow of sports talents from countries along the Belt and Road, spread advanced training concepts, and promote the integrated development of sports along the Belt and Road. It was also aimed at promoting the sound operation of China's foreign aid.[8] Sports foreign aid was a characteristic field of diplomatic work and a green platform for foreign aid.

Sports diplomacy has always been an important part of China's diplomacy. In order to unite the people of the world and improve the sports technology and competitive ability of neighboring friendly countries, the State General Administration of Sports of China has sent foreign sports coaches to neighboring friendly countries since 1957, and received other countries Coaches and athletes came to China for training. The development of sports foreign aid work has helped the recipient countries improve their sports competitive ability, and at the same time spread Chinese culture to the recipient countries, laying a good foundation for the overall layout of China's diplomacy and promoting national relations between China and other countries cultural exchange. Sports foreign aid projects have always been an important part of sports diplomacy. With the development of the international situation today, there were still athletes from underdeveloped countries who cannot get access to scientific and systematic training, and there were no high-level coaches to train them. Competitive ability has not been improved, and the overall level of sports was at a low level. As a big sports country with a sense of responsibility, China has actively carried out cultural exchanges and cooperation in sports with foreign countries, vigorously opened sports foreign aid training bases, encouraged outstanding Chinese coaches to go abroad, and received athletes and coaches from neighboring friendly countries to China for sports competition ability training. Improvement and exchange, the development of sports foreign aid projects was an extremely important measure of China's sports diplomacy, and it was also a very successful measure.

In recent years, China's sports foreign aid work has attracted much attention and research. The study found that Chinese sports foreign aid coaches face many challenges, including insufficient reserves and imperfect management systems. In response to these problems, scholars have put forward a series of suggestions, including increasing national financial investment, improving management systems, and strengthening the reserve and training of foreign aid coaches.

China's sports foreign aid work has outstanding features, which can quickly promote international sports and cultural exchanges and make full use of national sports science and technology resources. Under the guidance of the "Belt and Road" initiative, China's sports foreign aid work was committed to building a community with a shared future for mankind and promoting the common development of global sports culture and competitive levels.

Through exchanges between coaches and athletes, China's sports foreign aid work provided an important platform for international sports and cultural exchanges. Scholars believed that China's sports foreign aid work played an important role in promoting international sports diplomatic relations to deepen cooperation and displaying the image of a sports

power with Chinese characteristics.

As of the end of June 2023, China has signed more than 200 cooperation documents on the joint construction of the "Belt and Road" with 152 countries and 32 international organizations. The "Belt and Road" foreign aid can produce such a large international influence in such a short period of time, which fully shows that its cooperation concept was popular. [9]The "Belt and Road" university sports foreign aid referred to the behavior of Chinese universities to the regions and countries along the "Belt and Road" sports technical assistance, including coaches, scientific research experts, competition organizations and so on.

Since 2017, Hunan Institute of Science and Technology has begun to undertake the "Belt and Road" Sports Foreign Aid Project. The construction of the sports foreign aid training based of Hunan Institute of Science and Technology served the requirements of national policies. It was also an important medium for cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries in the process of foreign aid sports training, laying the foundation for sports diplomacy and building a bridge for cultural exchanges. The School of Physical Education of Hunan Institute of Science and Technology actively responded to national policies, opened a sports foreign aid training base on campus, received athletes from recipient countries to come to China for training, and sent coaches abroad to lead training, so as to improve the sports competition level of recipient countries in all aspects. The international sports technology exchanged and cooperation project of Hunan Institute of Science and Technology has received good social responses.

With the continuous advancement of the "Belt and Road" construction, the importance of foreign sports aid has become increasingly prominent. Colleges and universities undertake the important functions of personnel training, scientific research, social services, cross-cultural communication and the important mission of cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries. In the process of China's foreign sports aid, colleges and universities played an important role.[10] The ways and means of participating in foreign sports aid, the interaction with recipient countries, and the special role they played in the field of China's foreign aid deserve attention.

The study explored the lived experiences as well the opportunities and challenges encountered by coaches and foreign athletes of Hunan Institute of Science and Technology in Hunan Province, China, in participating in the foreign aid of college sports in the "Belt and Road" Initiative, and evaluated the benefits of athletes in recipient countries. The results of this study were important to the following groups of individuals and entities.

2. Materials and Methods

The method of this study was qualitative research particularly the qualitative narrative inquiry design. The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of the coaches and foreign athletes who joined the "Belt and Road" sports foreign aid and how the "Belt and Road" sports can provide better foreign aid. The study conducted interviews with Chinese coaches and athletes from recipient countries participating in sports aid from Hunan Institute of Science and Technology. Through interviews and participatory observations, data would be collected, and the "Belt and Road" university sports foreign aid recommendations would be proposed.

The research was conducted at Hunan Institute of Science

and Technology, Hunan Province, China. The interviews were conducted at the Hunan Institute of Science and Technology's library graduate conference room. The purpose of conducting the interviews at the library was to increase the athletes and coaches' environmental comfort so that their narratives were captured as authentically as possible.

Purposive sampling would be applied. The researcher scheduled interviews for the 12 athletes and 12 coaches and put other responses on a waiting list. The average age of the athletes was 18 of full age and capacity, the sports specialties were track and field, football and volleyball. Coaches were selected with more than 10 years of training experience, and the sports specialties also were track and field, football and volleyball.

It was used to interview coaches of sports foreign aid, and discusses the main opportunities as well challenges specific solutions faced in the actual promotion of sports foreign aid work from a micro level. During these interviews, participants was encouraged to share detailed narratives about their experiences as coaches or athletes in the sports aid program. Questions was designed to elicit rich, qualitative data that capture the temporal, social, and spatial dimensions of their experiences, as outlined in the narrative inquiry framework. By allowing participants to narrate their stories in their own words, researcher can gain a nuanced understanding of the complexities and nuances of their lived experiences.

Furthermore, the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for adaptability and responsiveness to emerging themes and insights. Researchers can probe further into areas of interest, clarify ambiguous responses, and explore unexpected avenues of discussion. This flexibility ensured that the interviews remain focused on the research objectives while also accommodating the diverse perspectives and experiences of participants.

Overall, in-depth, semi-structured interviews serve as a powerful tool for capturing the multifaceted narratives of coaches and athletes involved in the "Belt and Road" sports aid initiative. By delving deeply into their lived experiences, these interviews provided valuable insights that contribute to a richer understanding of the program's impact and implications.

3. Discussion

As the first foreign sports technology training based in Hunan Province, Hunan Institute of Science and Technology has undertaken national teams in track and field, football, volleyball, basketball, gymnastics, weightlifting and other projects. More than 300 athletes and coaches came to China for training.[11] In response to the development of the sports foreign aid training base, an aid project management team led by Dean has been established. The coaching organization was composed of outstanding coaches with many years of practical training experience from College of Physical Education Hunan Institute of Science and Technology.

In recent years, our school has accepted foreign national team athletes, and the number of teams coming to the school for training has continued to grow, and we have also achieved many good results. While the foreign national teams were in school, our school mainly provided guidance and services in terms of training technology, venues, accommodation, catering, etc., welcomed foreign friends with a warm and full spirit of science and engineering, and actively carried out activities with Chinese traditional culture characteristics, aiming to make foreigners Athletes perceive China and

understand traditional Chinese culture, adding luster to the country's the "Belt and Road" strategy.

Table 1. Athletes Information

Athlete	Age	Nationality	Sports Affiliation
A1	18	Vanuatu	track and field
A2	18	Vanuatu	track and field
A3	19	Vanuatu	track and field
A4	19	Vanuatu	track and field
A5	18	Samoa	football
A6	18	Samoa	football
A7	19	Samoa	football
A8	19	Samoa	football
A9	18	Myanmar	volleyball
A10	18	Myanmar	volleyball
A11	19	Myanmar	volleyball
A12	19	Myanmar	volleyball

Table 2. Essence of activity

Theme	Essence
Training	Sports exchange and cooperation. By allowing foreign athletes to train in China, international sports exchanges and cooperation can be promoted and mutual understanding and friendship enhanced.
Community Activity	Cultural exchange and historical inheritance. As a historical and cultural heritage of China, Yueyang Tower allows foreign athletes to visit it so that they can better understand China's history and culture and promote cross-cultural exchanges and understanding.
Yueyang Tower Tour	International cooperation and public diplomacy. By promoting the Belt and Road Initiative in the community, we can introduce China's international cooperation initiatives to local residents and promote transnational cooperation and development. It is also a way for China to demonstrate its policies and ideas to the outside world.
Cultural Exchanges	Folk culture exchanges and people-to-people exchanges. By participating in traditional Chinese food and cultural activities, foreign athletes can experience Chinese folk culture, enhance mutual understanding and friendship, and promote cross-cultural exchanges and integration.

In the "Belt and Road "Sports foreign aid project, foreign athletes coming to China for training was an important measure to promote international sports exchanges and cooperation.[12] Sports exchange was not only the teaching of technology, but also the exchange and collision of culture, ideas and spirit.

Promote international sports exchanges and cooperation. International sports exchanges were an important way for countries to develop together. Allowing foreign athletes to come to China for training can bring the sports circles of different countries closer together and enhance mutual understanding and cooperation. This helped promote the development of international sports and promoted friendly exchanges around the world.

Enhance mutual understanding and friendship. The interactions and exchanges between athletes in training and the confrontation on the field are not only a contest of

technology and physical fitness, but also a collision of culture and soul. Through joint sports training, athletes can have a deeper understanding of each other's cultural backgrounds and living habits, thereby enhancing mutual understanding and friendship.

Promote the exchange of sports technology and concepts. Different countries and regions have different sports technologies and training concepts[13]. When foreign athletes came to China, they can come into contact with China's unique sports technology and training concepts. This exchange helped promote exchanges and cooperation between countries in sports technology and concepts, and jointly promote the progress of sports.

Enhance the international influence of Chinese sports. Foreign athletes came to China for training, and the strength and level of China's sports community have received international recognition and attention. The training results and experiences of foreign athletes in China can be disseminated through various channels, further enhancing the international influence of Chinese sports and allowing more countries to understand and recognize Chinese sports.

Community activities were an important way of cultural exchange and historical inheritance.[14] By promoting the "Belt and Road" initiative in the community, the school introduced China's the "Belt and Road" international cooperation initiative to local residents and promoted the development of transnational cooperation. Foreign athletes can become ambassadors for China to showcase its policies and ideas to the outside world. By sharing their country and culture, they can help enhance local residents' understanding and recognition of China's policies and ideas, and promoted the in-depth development of international cooperation.

Cultural exchange and historical inheritance, Yueyang Tower, as a historical and cultural heritage of China, has witnessed hundreds of years of historical changes in China. By visiting Yueyang Tower, foreign athletes can feel China's long history and profound cultural heritage, which helped enhance their knowledge and understanding of Chinese history and culture.

Promoting cross-cultural exchanges and understanding, a trip to Yueyang Tower was not only a historical journey, but also a cross-cultural exchange and interaction. Foreign athletes can learn about the essence and values of Chinese traditional culture by visiting Yueyang Tower. At the same time, they can also have close contact with Chinese cultural heritage and understand the charm and history of Chinese traditional culture. At the same time, they can also share their own country and culture and promote transnational cooperation. develop and deepen.

Research by Li Hailing showed that cultural exchanges are an important way to enhance mutual understanding and friendship. By participating in traditional Chinese food and cultural activities, foreign athletes can deeply experience the charm of Chinese folk culture, enhance mutual understanding and friendship, and promote cross-cultural exchanges and integration. Foreign athletes' participation in traditional Chinese food and cultural activities was an in-depth experience of Chinese folk culture. By tasting traditional food, participating in folk performances and other activities, foreign athletes can feel the enthusiasm and friendliness of the Chinese people and enhance their understanding and recognition of Chinese culture. Cultural exchange was not only the satisfaction of appetite, but also the exchange and collision of souls. Foreign athletes can learn about the

Chinese people's lifestyle and values through cultural activities, thereby enhancing mutual understanding and friendship. Cultural exchange was an important way to promote cross-cultural communication and integration. By participating in traditional Chinese cultural activities, foreign athletes can integrate their own cultural characteristics and values into traditional Chinese culture and achieved cultural interaction and integration.

Table 3. Coaches Information

Coach	Background	Sports Specialization	Years of Coaching
C1	Doctor, Professor,Dean	track and field	32
C2	Doctor, professor	track and field	28
C3	Doctor, professor	track and field	25
C4	Doctor, professor	track and field	21
C5	Doctor	football	20
C6	Doctor	football	19
C7	Doctor	football	16
C8	Doctor	football	10
C9	Doctor	volleyball	22
C10	Doctor	volleyball	17
C11	Doctor	volleyball	16
C12	Doctor	volleyball	12

In order to develop the sports foreign aid training base, Hunan Institute of Science and Technology has established an aid project management team led by dean. This team played an important role in the organization, coordination and execution of the project. At the same time, foreign aid coaches were a crucial part of this system. They were composed of outstanding coaches with many years of practical training experience and provide professional guidance and training for foreign athletes. The Dean of the School of Physical Education lead the management team of the aid program and was responsible for the overall planning and decision-making of the program[15]. As leaders, they bear the ultimate responsibility and decision-making authority for the entire project, ensuring that the project proceeds smoothly and achieves the desired results.

Coaches were the most critical part of the aid program, as they directly guide and train foreign athletes. These coaches have rich practical experience and professional knowledge, and have outstanding performance in track and field, football, volleyball and other sports. They were committed to providing systematic and scientific training for foreign athletes and providing personalized guidance based on the athletes' characteristics and needs.

After President Xi Jinping proposed the "Belt and Road" initiative, domestic and foreign countries have paid more and more attention to the development of foreign aid projects. Sports foreign aid projects were an important part of national diplomacy. The implementation of sports foreign aid projects has been further improved on the basis of predecessors. Since 2017, Hunan Institute of Science and Technology has undertaken sports foreign aid projects and has provided assistance to most third-party countries in the world in a few years. The country provided sports assistance to improve the competitive level of the countries it assists, making important contributions to national sports diplomacy. Since the "Belt and Road" foreign aid project was undertaken, the school has

not only provided all-round training guarantees such as venues, equipment, accommodation, food, and medical care (physical monitoring, rehabilitation and physical therapy) for

athletes from various countries, but also arranged a rich and colorful amateur cultural life for them.

Table 4. Opportunities for the "Belt and Road "sports foreign aid

Theme	Opportunity	Responses
Sports Foreign aid Training	International Exchange and Cooperation	"school began to undertake sports foreign aid projects in 2017 and became a successful pilot for college sports foreign aid."
		I will learn about some relevant conditions in their country in advance, including customs, cultural traditions, etc., so that we can establish a harmonious relationship as soon as possible and let them use it in the best possible way. Training with a good attitude
Celebration of Chinese and Foreign Traditional Festival	Multicultural Experience	"During the training of the Vanuatu national team in the school, it coincided with the National Independence Day. The school specially organized a national Independence Day celebration for Vanuatu athletes."
Friendship Parties and Competition	Expand International Influence	"in order to promote China-Myanmar friendship, let Myanmar athletes experience Chinese civilization and further promote Chinese culture. During the training camp of Myanmar athletes in China, the school held a China-Myanmar Friendship Party."
		in order to promote cultural exchanges between China and Samoa, the China-Samoa Culture and Art Exchange Meeting was successfully held
Logistics Support Work	Enhance International Reputation	logistics work cannot be separated from the basic "clothing, food, housing and transportation". The development of logistics work was an important guarantee for sports foreign aid training projects.

Sports foreign aid coaches have played an important role in China's sports foreign exchanges, and their existence was an important part of China's diplomacy. It has been continuously developed and improved with the changes in social economy and international environment.[16] In the process, it has achieved important results and experience, and at the same time, it was constantly facing new difficulties. In addition to the professional skills, foreign language, political and other abilities that sports foreign aid coaches need to possess in the past, foreign aid coaches in the information age also need good computer application capabilities and the ability to use various advanced instruments and equipment, as well as strong learning abilities, adaptability, communication skills and resilience.

Coaches all said that formulating a scientific and systematic training plan was the guarantee for ensuring the steady improvement of athletes' training performance during training. The training plan was strictly based on the different characteristics of each project and its unique training principles, and a systematic training plan was carefully and professionally formulated. As the technical level of world sports has developed to this day, the common understanding was that if you want to improve your sports skills, you must strictly formulate a scientific training plan, and the most important feature of scientific training was to abide by the objective laws of the training process. Therefore, constructing a scientific training plan was a prerequisite for implementing scientific training and a manifestation of responsibility for the recipient countries.

For coaches and athletes, the monthly training plan was an overall plan for the entire month of training, clarifying the training goals that need to be completed that month. The monthly plan goals were jointly formulated by the coaching

team and the foreign coaching team. Develop scientific and effective training methods based on the special techniques, basic techniques, special intensity, special speed endurance, etc.. [17-18]The monthly plan clearly stipulates the weekly training time and the time allocation ratio and intensity ratio of basic physical fitness and special abilities. The daily schedule carefully planned the specific training content of the day. According to the basic situation of the athletes, the daily training focus was formulated, and the athletes' training time and content arrangement were planned in detail every morning and afternoon.

The coaches have solid basic theoretical knowledge and professional skills, and provided guidance to athletes in many aspects such as training, nutrition, diet, and psychological quality. In the process of sports training, coaches must first follow the principle of gradually increasing the sports training load, and use different training environments and atmospheres to keep athletes as excited as possible, thereby maintaining the best competitive level. Coaches used exercise physiology and sports rehabilitation to provide physical therapy and sports rehabilitation to athletes after training to help athletes quickly relieve fatigue and improve their sports level.

Athletes in sports foreign aid came from different countries and had different languages and cultures. The common languages of most countries were English, French, Spanish, etc., but there were also some athletes who speak their own language. There were very few coaches at Hunan Institute of Science and Technology who were proficient in using foreign languages to communicate, so they rely on translators.[19] In the past foreign aid work, they relied on external translators, and the school lacks translation reserve personnel. In order to ensure the nutritional supply of aided national athletes

training in China, coaches developed scientific diet plans and strictly managed the athletes' dietary intake. At the same time, they need to understand the eating habits of different countries, improved the style and taste of dishes, refined the content and standards of athletes' dietary structure, ensured the nutrition needed by athletes in different sports, and formulated scientific nutrition supplies according to the requirements. Medical security has established emergency measures for accidental sports injuries, formulated plans to monitor athletes' physical status, and achieved all-time health management. At the same time, in order to prevent athletes from emergencies due to reasons other than sports injuries, the school also arranged for school doctors with advantages in language and emergency medical technology to monitor the athletes' daily training.

4. Conclusion

In terms of management mechanism, the college has established a team leader responsibility system and implemented multi-department coordination and management to ensure the smooth progress of the project. For training plans, coaches can formulate scientific and systematic plans in strict accordance with the characteristics of the project and the skill level of the athletes to ensure the steady improvement of athletes' training results. In terms of cultural exchanges, sports aid to spread Chinese culture needs to be integrated into national characteristic projects. The school actively participates in international cooperation to promote national sports.

There were challenges in the translator team. Due to language and cultural differences, it was necessary to strengthen foreign language communication skills and professional translation levels, and improve detailed services. Coaches have solid basic theoretical knowledge and professional technical level, and can develop personalized and scientific training plans for different countries and projects. However, language, culture and other factors may cause communication and understanding barriers. Sports venues and equipment need to be improved, including adding new venues, updating existing facilities, and introducing advanced equipment to improve the level of physical education and training and meet the needs of students and athletes from recipient countries. The school can provide comprehensive logistical support, including accommodation, food, medical care, etc., but there may be problems in understanding and adapting to the needs of different cultural backgrounds.

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