

Analysis on UTR system in China by Communication, Psychological, and Sociological Factors

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Abstract. Tennis had a long history and was introduced to China about 130 years ago. However, the development of Chinese tennis wasn't as fast as other sports introduced at the same time. The dominant reason for this problem is the weakness of the current tennis system and the tennis environment. In order to speed up the development in the Chinese tennis environment, the introduction of the UTR system would be the efficient way. The article will focus on the comparison between US tennis development and China tennis development from communication, psychological, and sociological factors. Our finding indicates that the introduction of the UTR system would lead to the increasing trend of tennis development in China, and more talented players succeed internationally.

1. Introduction

The Universal Tennis Rating (UTR) system is a relatively new tennis ranking system that has gained popularity in recent years. It was developed by a team of tennis players, coaches, and mathematicians, led by Mark Leschly, a former professional tennis player. The UTR system differs from traditional ranking systems in that it takes into account the quality of opponents and the margin of victory in matches. This means that a player's UTR rating is based on their performance against a range of opponents, rather than just their wins and losses. While the development of the UTR system in China showed an inefficient spreading rate, communication is one of the factors. At the same time, tennis is the second largest sport in the world, so there is no worry about the customer size being too small. To have efficient propaganda, it has to fulfill both customers' and players' demands. Such communication based on customers' needs became the priority. To improve players' skills and mental strengths, competition is the fundamental course to go through. M Crespo (2003) stated that it can be concluded that competition is an important factor in player development and that countries who want to be successful at the professional level should try to provide best competitive progression for their players [1]. It indicated that competition was the best way to improve tennis. As the improvement of people's tennis skills, keeping playing with people at the same level could always help one advance. Not only for professional players, but also for people from beginner level, intermediate level, and advanced level that were from different age groups. For the United States, the refined tennis system like UTR and USTA dominated the market. And all the USTA matches will update to the UTR system as well. This contributed to the universal tennis rate that everybody recognized.

Overall, the development of the UTR system has been a significant step forward in the world of tennis rankings. It provides a more accurate and objective measure of a player's ability, and it has the potential to help players, coaches, and fans make more informed decisions about training, competition, and performance. In contrast, China had a less unified tennis system with each tournament run by their own rating system. This showed the problem of fulfilling customer's demands to compete with people on the same level. The introduction of the UTR system would lead to the development of the Chinese tennis environment by communicational, sociological, and psychological factors.

2. Communications factors

The use in social media could be efficient propaganda nowadays. For the major events like Australia Open and US Open, they already had a player and audience foundation that had no demand for advertising. But for the new upcoming small-scale tournaments, advertisements on social media could attract a lot of target customers. Just like the introduction of the UTR system, propagating on social media would be effective since there is no foundation for players' and people's recolonization. Fangyan Yin (2018) stated that customers' social media posts, comments, and recommendations are an effective way as influencers help a lot in customer acquisition and retention for a company [2]. Creative ideas from customers are also beneficial marketing communication strategies to increase customers' participation. Because of the fluidity of social media, it would have a greater impact on the local region than developing nationally. At the same time, the number of customers would be exponentially increased due to the huge population of people using social media. In recent years, there has been

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a significant increase in media coverage of tennis in China, with more tournaments being televised and more coverage in newspapers and online media. This has helped to increase awareness of the sport and generate interest among fans. In order to lead to the development of teenage tennis players and college players, use increasing awareness wisely would be the key to success. As time changed, the development of the Internet also benefited the promotion of tennis organizations. Ashleigh-Jane Thompson (2014) stated that with the development of the internet, the popularity of social media changed the way sports organizations communicate with their customers [3]. Like a unique channel, the internet could provide for sports organizations to strengthen their relationship with their consumers. It used to be hard for tournament organizations to build a close relationships with their stakeholders. But the internet provided them with a great way to achieve it. For organizations that were struggling in getting the attention of their target audience and consumers, social media could play a really important role in propaganda. Besides propaganda, the relationship with consumers would also improve the popularity of tournaments. However, the promotions for small-scale tournaments in rural regions would be a greater problem. The propaganda on social media could easily solve it. Since there were ways to advertise promotions to certain regions, it would be a great way to boost tournaments to make it popular.

3. Motivation factors

Besides the communication factor, analyzing a player's mental activity is also an effective way to promote the UTR rating system. In order to succeed, fully understanding a player's competitive nature is an important factor. Tennis is a sport involving a greater portion of psychological quality. Players need to be able to manage their emotions. Tennis can be an emotional sport, with players experiencing a range of emotions during a match. Players need to be able to manage their emotions and not let them negatively affect their performance. This means staying calm and composed, even in the face of adversity. The internal motivation of players is key during the matches leading the players to success. Hongjian Yin (2022) stated that the motivation of tennis players could be divided into intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation [4]. For intrinsic motivation, it was the psychological factors that affected the victory of players. For extrinsic, it was the environmental factors that affected the victory of players. The combination of these two factors would eventually lead to the confidence that helped them win the competition. The mental activity of players during a match would always vary due to the score change. Control of their own emotions during the matches became a key factor to win the matches. Therefore, the demand for players to strengthen their mental ability and analyze their competitive performance increased dramatically. While a couple of matches couldn't represent a player's real competitive ability, the UTR rating system would show a comprehensive evaluation that would help players improve their self-

awareness. This self-awareness would play a major role during the competitive matches which eventually lead to the victory.

4. Goal-Setting factors

Another factor that influences tennis players' development is good goal-setting during practice and competition. Tennis players need to be able to handle stress and pressure. Tennis matches can be long and grueling, and players need to be able to handle the physical and mental demands of the sport. They also need to be able to handle the pressure of playing in high-stakes matches. However, tennis players who can handle stress and pressure are more likely to perform well under these circumstances. As they are practicing tennis, they have to imagine the real competition in order to mimic the nervous feeling during the real match. Ignoring this feeling of nervousness would help the player win the key point like a tiebreaker that would affect the victory of the match. At the same time, players have to aim for victory during the competition in order to encourage themselves and show confidence. Howard Z. Zeng (2020) stated that Intrinsic motivation possesses a higher impact power than extrinsic motivation. Such as Goal setting and participation motivation has a significant impact on tennis players [5]. When players reach a certain skill level, the part they should focus more on during practices would be the engagement that enhances the players' motivations in the same activity again and again in the future. Setting a good goal would apply to all competitive sports, especially tennis that involve both competition in fitness, skills, and mental. The UTR rating system could help players to fulfill their requirements in goal setting. When different players have their unique UTR scores they earn it from their tough matches. Setting a higher goal than they currently have would always help them improve themselves and increase their UTR score. Since confidence is another factor that would lead to success in the court. Players need to believe in themselves and their abilities to succeed. This confidence comes from experience, practice, and success. Tennis players who have a strong sense of confidence are more likely to take risks and play aggressively, which can lead to success on the court. For example, putting players into their zone of proximity could always train their mental strengths and help them be more ready for the competition. Not only for their tennis skills development, when they earn a higher score than they used to, this could also fulfill their mental happiness like rewards or incentives, which could also promote their growth in tennis.

5. Sociological factors

The demands of facilities and coaches varied for different sports. However, they all require an expensive cost to bring up a professional sports athlete. For tennis, it even requires a higher payout since tennis players couldn't improve only from practicing with themselves, but the guidance from coaches and the massive amount of competitions. Therefore, for the families that have the

average salary, the talented tennis players would likely be buried because their families couldn't afford the great cost. Long Zhou (2017) stated that the insufficient facilities and teaching staff decreased the development of tennis in China [6]. Therefore, there are still challenges that need to be addressed. One issue is the lack of depth in the talent pool. While China has produced some top-ranked players, there are not as many players in the lower ranks as there are in other countries. This could be due to a number of factors, such as a lack of access to quality coaching, or a focus on other sports. For most universities, it could only fulfill the basic teaching demands because of the not affordable cost. Nevertheless, the introduction of the UTR rating system could improve the environment of the Chinese tennis system. Since the two main parts of developing tennis skills are practice and competition, UTR matches have the strength of low cost for competition. Players could freely sign up for the small-scale tournaments UTR held which would lead to the development of players' fitness and skills. Even though there are many tennis academies and training centers in China, there is a need for more programs that can help to identify and nurture young talent from a young age. This would help to create a larger pool of players who can eventually compete at the highest levels of the sport. For this reason, the low price of accessing a greater number of tournaments would help more talented players for them to have a higher chance to become professional players with an ordinary family background.

6. Cultural factors

Tennis is a relatively new sport in China, and there are cultural factors that have affected its development. One such factor is Chinese culture's traditional emphasis on academics and education. Many parents in China prioritize their children's academic success over sports, and this can limit the number of children who participate in tennis programs. Additionally, the high cost of tennis equipment and lessons can also be a deterrent for families who prioritize financial stability. Another cultural factor that affects the tennis environment in China is the country's focus on team sports. Team sports, such as basketball and soccer, are highly valued in Chinese culture, and individual sports like tennis are not as popular. This means that tennis lacks the support and infrastructure that team sports enjoy in China, such as well-established leagues, training programs, and sponsorships. Furthermore, the perception of tennis as an elite and bourgeois sport can also limit its appeal in China. Tennis is often associated with luxury and affluence, and this can create a barrier to entry for those who do not have the financial means to participate. This perception can also discourage the development of tennis as a grassroots sport, as it may not be seen as accessible or relevant to many Chinese communities. Huang Shiguang (2020) stated that tennis could not only improve students' physical fitness, but the tennis culture included in this sport could also play a role in enhancing students' moral awareness and cultivating sentiment [7]. Since the various cultural factors hindered the development of tennis in China, the

introduction of UTR system could improve this environment. As the tennis culture learned by the teenage players, this would act as a legacy that is kept inherited by the next generations. While the luxury stereotype had created a barrier to entry for those who do not have a strong family background to participate in this sport, UTR system could solve this problem. The large number of tournaments could make the organizers reduce the price for each tournament which could allow more tennis players to participate in this sport. Therefore, the barrier would not exist would definitely lead to the development of a youth tennis environment in China, and act as a legacy that is learned by each generation who experienced the culture.

7. Conclusions

The performance of the tennis market in China showed that there were both communication, psychological, and sociological factors that influenced the development. Since there was a mature system and policy, the introduction of the UTR rating system might not be favored by the consumers and competitors. However, both China and America have established tennis systems that aim to develop young players and promote the sport. While there are similarities in the approaches taken by both countries, each country faces unique challenges and opportunities. By continuing to invest in grassroots programs, training facilities, and coaching resources, both countries can continue to produce top-level tennis players and grow the popularity of the sport. In order to fulfill this goal, the efficiency propaganda of the system would eventually lead to the increasing number of tournaments and the development of professional players. Tennis is a sport that requires both fitness, skills, and mental activity. For a player to improve themselves, they have to practice from different aspects. Nevertheless, they also have to frequently compete with others at the same level to put what they learned into matches, and the UTR system could precisely help with it. In order to promote the development of tennis in China, propaganda for the UTR rating system is necessary. While consumers might be unfavored by this change in the system, fulfilling their demands from communication, sociological, and psychological aspects would lead to success.

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