JAPAN'S ELITE SPORTS SYSTEM: A CASE STUDY OF WOMEN'S MARATHON TEAM

Abstract

Japanese women's marathon runners have left the excellent results, which were 8 prize winners including 4 medals in 7 times Olympic Games' women's marathon, such as Naoko Takahashi Gold Medalist in Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Mizuki Noguchi Gold Medalist in Athens 2004 Olympic Games, and 19 prize winners including 10 medals in 12-time IAAF World Championships in Athletics. (Table 1)

The rate of prize winning by Japanese women's marathon runners in both Olympics Games and IAAF World Championship in Athletics is 40% and their medal winning rate is 21%. Women's marathon becomes one of the world-class women's sports in Japan. The nationwide television viewing rates of women's marathon races in Japan have been extremely high for the last 25 years, so women's marathon races have been established as one of the spectator sports event.

As a result, we've found out S-Curve between early 1980's and late 2000's like product development theory in manufacturing industry for both corporate teams numbers and top 20's marathon record. It was startup stage in 1980's, then strengthening term came out and it continued from early 90's to mid 2000's, in late 2000's stagnation period happened.

However, these day Japanese Women's track and field teams have not been able to produce stronger results in international marathon races.

Here, we discuss the current challenges of corporate teams by referring to the number of prize winners in the Olympics or international marathon races coming down, no Japanese runners on the top 20 in the world rankings last year, and no early-20 runners gaining power.
References: