National sport policy and Olympic success: South Korean case study using SPLISS model

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Elite sport performance has always been the top priority of Korean sport policy during the last half decade, while more attention were given to community sport development relatively recently. The Olympic Games are the sites where the effectiveness of national sport policies are came into view, coupled with the influence of economic power and the size of population. South Korea has stayed no worse than 12th place in the medal tally since 1988 Seoul Olympics and ranked 7th in 2008 Beijing Olympics, which can be seen remarkable for a small country with relatively less experience of international sport competition than European countries. Using SPLISS model(De Bosscher, De Knop, Van Bottenburg and Shibli, 2006), the author examined various aspects of South Korean sport policy including sport structure and governance, financial support, sport participation, talent identification and development, athlete career support, training facilities, coach provision and development, national and international competition, and scientific research and innovation. The result showed South Korean system is highly effective with strong athlete development, although the unbalance among different policy pillars were discovered. The result was discussed compared to the success and failure at 2012 London Olympic Games to find implications for future Korean sport policy as well as for sport policies of other countries' in similar context.