

Cultural Embedding and Market-Driven: The Construction Path and Theoretical Implications of Luoyang's Local Go System

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of global Go development and China's sports governance transformation, traditional elite-oriented models (national system and Go dojos 道场) fail to meet local demands for popularization, cultural inheritance, and industrial linkage. In China, as Go promotion shifts to local cities, constructing a comprehensive system becomes critical. Luoyang, a "Hundred-Dan Go City," offers rich empirical data with its 43 professional players and 152 total dan ranks by 2023.

Existing studies focus on competition, cultural value, or single cases, lacking analysis of multi-factor synergy and the interaction between cultural embedding and market drive. This study addresses three questions: how cultural embedding supports market drive; whether Luoyang's multi-source funding model is sustainable; and how to balance popularization and elite

cultivation.

Using case study, in-depth interview, bibliometrics, and cost-benefit analysis, this study employs cultural embedding, market drive, and sports ecosystem theories, proposing a “Culture-Market-Talent” triangular synergy model.

Findings show that cultural embedding and market drive synergize to form a positive cycle; Luoyang’s multi-stakeholder collaboration achieves an ecological closed-loop; the model is universally applicable. The study enriches sports ecosystem theory, provides practical solutions for local cities, and offers policy references for integrating sports, culture, and tourism. Limitations include single-case bias and historical data gaps; future research could expand case scope and explore digital integration.

Key Words : Local Go System, Cultural Embedding, Market-Driven, Triangular Synergy Model, Sports Ecosystem

I. Background

1. Luoyang: A City Where History Meets Go

Luoyang, located in central China's Henan Province, stands as one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities, with a 5,000-year civilization as 13 dynastic capitals. As the cradle of Heluo Culture—the foundational root of Chinese civilization—Luoyang is inherently intertwined with the origins of Go, making it a unique site where cultural heritage and intellectual sport converge. Spanning 15,230 square kilometers with a population of 7.17 million, the city balances its UNESCO World Heritage status (home to the Longmen Grottoes, White Horse Temple, and 隋唐大运河 ruins) with a dynamic modern identity.

Its industrial legacy is equally pivotal to Go's development: in the 1950s, Luoyang became a core hub of China's "First Five-Year Plan," attracting 329,000 industrial workers from across the nation to districts like Jianxi. Actually, Luo Yang's status in China is comparable to that of Manchester and Liverpool in the UK. These migrant workers—many educated and passionate about Go—laid the groundwork for a vibrant grassroots Go culture, turning factories and communities into incubators for talent.

2. Historical Context of Go in China

Go, a 4,000-year-old strategic board game, is deeply rooted in Chinese philosophy, with its grid and stone mechanics mirroring the cosmic order of "Hetu Luoshu"河图洛书 (River Diagram and Luo Book). Its modern development in China reflects broader shifts in sports governance:

National System Era (1950s-1980s): Go was classified as a national sport, with government-funded sports schools and national teams focused on elite training. This era peaked with the China Vs Japan Go Super Challenge Match 中日围棋擂台赛 (1984-1996), where Nie Weiping 9P's victories sparked nationwide "Go fever," driving mass participation.

Market Transition Era (1990s-2010s): As state support declined, private Go academies (In Go domain, we called these academies Dojos or 道场"daochang") emerged in Beijing, Hangzhou, and Shanghai, focusing on preparing young players for professional qualification exams (定段赛"ding-duan sai"). While this model produced elite talent, it neglected grassroots popularization and cultural integration, leaving local cities with fragmented Go ecosystems.

Local System Era (2010s-Present): China's "Sports Power" and "Cultural Power" strategies shifted governance focus to grassroots development, tasking local governments with building comprehensive systems that balance popularization, cultural inheritance, and industrial linkage. This transition addressed the limitations of both the national system (overly elite-focused) and academy model (geographically concentrated), positioning local cities as the new engines of Go development.

3. The Development and Significance of Go in Luoyang

Luoyang's Go journey encapsulates China's local sports transformation, evolving through four phases to become the "Hundred-Dan City" (Hundred-Dan, this saying , in the field of Go, is originally from Hundred-Dan

Dojo founded by Go Master Kitani Minoru.) —a title earned in 2005 when its professional players collectively reached 100 dan ranks. By 2023, this figure had risen to 152 dan ranks across 43 professional players, solidifying its status as a non-first-tier city leader in Go development.

3.1. Foundation Phase (1960s-1970s): Systematic Training Takes Root

Prior to the 1960s, Go in Luoyang was confined to a small circle of scholars. The turning point came in 1964, when Xue Youjun, director of the Luoyang Railway Bureau, recruited Chen Dai 4 dan—one of New China’s first professional players—to serve as the city’s first full-time Go coach. Chen, a veteran of national tournaments, brought standardized training methods, and in 1966, the Luoyang Sports Commission built a dedicated Go training facility in Wangcheng Park, marking the start of organized mass activities.

Despite disruptions during the Cultural Revolution, Luoyang’s Go community persisted. With support from Henan Provincial Party Secretary Liu Jianxun—who famously pledged to “preserve the seeds of Chinese Go”—Chen Dai continued mentoring young talents, including future professionals like Wang Jianhong 9-dan 汪见虹九段 and Wang Guanjun 8-dan 王冠军八段. By 1973, the Luoyang Sports School Go Class was established, and in 1976, Luoyang won its first provincial team championship. The 1982 introduction of China’s professional dan system solidified this foundation: seven Luoyang players were among the first batch of professional rank holders, setting the stage for future success.

3.2. Popularization Phase (1980s-1990s): Industrial Heritage Fuels Grassroots Growth

The 1980s marked a golden age for Luoyang Go, driven by two synergistic forces: the national “Go fever” from the Sino-Japanese Super Match and the city’s industrial heritage. Jianxi District, home to 110,000 workers, became a Go hub: factories like Luoyang Bearing Factory and First Tractor Works organized clubs and tournaments, with workers volunteering as coaches for local children.

Key figures emerged from this grassroots movement: Yu Zhaochang, a Zhejiang-born technician at Luoyang Bearing Factory, founded a Go class at the factory’s primary school, mentoring Wang Jianhong and Yu Meiling 4-dan; Wang Jiaqiang, (于梅玲四段, 汪见虹九段) a disciple of Chen Dai, discovered future 9-dan Zhou Heyang 周鹤洋 at Luoyang Railway Locomotive Factory.

3.3. Market Transition Phase (2000s-2010s): From State to Multi-Stakeholder Governance

The 21st century brought marketization to Luoyang’s Go ecosystem. As factory-sponsored clubs declined, former worker-coaches established private training institutions, capitalizing on growing demand for extracurricular education. By 2010, Luoyang had over 50 registered Go 培训机构, with the Luoyang Go Association introducing certification standards to ensure quality. Shi Yue 时越 9 dan world champion, learned Go during this period.

This phase also saw Luoyang emerge as a tournament host. In 2012, the city partnered with the Chinese Go Association to launch the China Go Qisheng (Go Sage) Tournament—the nation’s most prestigious professional title match—sponsored by local scenic spots like Longmen Grottoes and Baiyun Mountain. This collaboration pioneered the “sports + culture + tourism” model, demonstrating how local cities could leverage Go to drive economic and cultural development.

3.4. Ecological Maturity Phase (2011-Present): The “Hundred-Dan City” Ecosystem

Today, Luoyang’s Go system is defined by three core strengths that address local demands for popularization, cultural inheritance, and industrial linkage:

Mass Popularization: With 100,000 active Go enthusiasts (4.7% of the urban population), Luoyang has one of China’s highest participation rates. It boasts 36 national-level “Go Featured Schools” and hosts over 60 annual tournaments, from community workshops to national events like the “Hanjiang Cup” Amateur Go Finals.

Cultural Inheritance: Luoyang has built unique cultural carriers, including the 2012-opened Luoyang Go Museum (China’s first dedicated Go museum, housing 3,000+ artifacts) and “Go + Tourism” routes that blend cultural site visits with Go experiences.

Industrial Linkage: The Go industry generates over 20 million yuan an-

nually in tourism and training revenue, with sponsorships from local enterprises supporting tournaments and grassroots programs.

Luoyang's significance extends beyond China; as a global cultural heritage site, it serves as a bridge for international Go promotion, proving that traditional sports can thrive through localized, multi-stakeholder collaboration.

4. Research Questions

Guided by the gaps in existing research and Luoyang's unique context, this study addresses three core questions:

1. How does cultural embedding—rooted in Luoyang's Heluo Culture and industrial heritage—support market-driven development? What is the synergistic mechanism and interaction boundary between these two forces?
2. Is Luoyang's multi-source funding model (government subsidies + corporate sponsorship + industrial revenue) sustainable across different developmental phases? How has it adapted to address funding shortages?
3. How does Luoyang balance popularization and elite cultivation through its "Culture-Market-Talent" framework? Can this balance be replicated in other local contexts?

II. Literature Review and Theoretical Foundation

1. Literature Review

Existing research on Go promotion falls into three strands, with notable gaps that this study addresses:

Elite Training and Competition: Studies focus on professional player development, such as Wang Zuo(2020) who analyzed China’s training and educating systems, and Frejlak (2024) who explored AI’s impact on Go coaching. These works prioritize technical aspects but overlook grassroots popularization and cultural-market synergy.

Cultural Value and Transmission: Scholars like Lee (2024) examine Go’s cross-cultural role, while The Go and Luoyang Editorial Team (2024) documents Luoyang’s Go history. However, they describe cultural value without analyzing how it drives sustainable, market-integrated development.

Local Case Studies: Research on Hangzhou (Zhao, 2023) and Shenzhen (Chen, 2022) focuses on single models (government-led academies or talent recruitment) but fails to systematically analyze multi-factor synergy—especially in non-first-tier cities grappling with limited resources.

This study fills these gaps by exploring the interaction between cultural embedding and market drive, and proposing a replicable “Culture-Market-Talent” framework for local Go system construction.

2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1. Cultural Embedding Theory

Derived from economic sociology (Granovetter, 1985), cultural embedding theory argues that economic activities are embedded in cultural contexts, with symbols, values, and norms shaping behavior and creating competitive advantages. In Go promotion, this involves integrating local cultural resources (e.g., history, heritage, community identity) into Go's development to foster emotional attachment and lower participation barriers—critical for addressing local demands for cultural inheritance.

2.2. Market-Driven Theory

Market-driven theory (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990) emphasizes the role of market demand, resource allocation, and competition in driving growth. For local Go systems, this translates to opening training markets, commercializing tournaments, and developing industry linkages (e.g., Go + tourism) to generate sustainable revenue—solving the funding shortages that plague grassroots promotion.

2.3. Sports Ecosystem Theory

Sports ecosystem theory (Westerbeek & Smith, 2003) views sports development as a dynamic system of participants, organizations, resources, and culture, with synergy between elements being key to sustainability. This framework helps analyze how cultural embedding, market drive, and talent

guarantee interact to form a closed-loop system that balances popularization and elite cultivation.

III. Methods

To address the research questions, this study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining case study, in-depth interview, bibliometrics, and cost-benefit analysis—consistent with the methodological framework outlined in the abstract.

1. Case Study Method

Luoyang is selected as the core case due to its status as a “Hundred-Dan City” and its representative local Go system. The study divides Luoyang’s Go development into four phases (foundation, popularization, market transition, ecological maturity) and analyzes key initiatives:

Cultural embedding: Luoyang Go Museum, “Go + Tourism” routes, and cultural forums.

Market-driven operation: China Go Qisheng Tournament, Luoyang Elite Go Tournament, and training market regulation.

Talent guarantee: Youth team training, student-coach incentives, and段位-based升学 policies.

2. In-Depth Interview Method

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 32 stakeholders between 2023 and 2024 to capture diverse perspectives:

Policy and governance: 5 officials from the Luoyang Sports Bureau, Education Bureau, and Go Association (focus: policy design, resource coordination).

Market and talent: 8 professional players (e.g., Wang Jianhong 9-dan, Shi Yue 9-dan) and 10 training institution directors (focus: talent cultivation, sponsorship acquisition).

Grassroots participation: 9 Go teachers from featured schools and community participants (focus: popularization effectiveness, cultural identification).

3. Bibliometrics Method

Systematic literature review was conducted on four types of documents:

Policy documents: Luoyang Go Development Five-Year Plan (2025-2029), Go-in-School Implementation Plan (2025).

Historical records: Luoyang Sports History (1990), Jianxi District Chronicles (1988), The Phenomenon of Luoyang's Hundred-Dan Go City (2023).

Tournament and statistical data: Chinese Go Association annual reports, Luoyang Go Association internal records (1980-2023), and media coverage (e.g., Luoyang Evening News Go columns).

Economic data: Luoyang Cultural and Tourism Bureau's Go tourism revenue reports, tournament budget records, and training institution financial statements.

Bibliometrics analysis quantified trends in Go population growth (from 10,000 in the 1980s to 100,000 in 2023), professional player output, and tournament scale—validating the effectiveness of Luoyang's system.

4. Cost-Benefit Analysis Method

Two flagship tournaments were selected for cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the sustainability of Luoyang's multi-source funding model:

China Go Qisheng Tournament 中国围棋棋圣战 (2017-2021): Costs included prize money (¥800,000 for champions), venue rental, and promotion; benefits included sponsorship revenue (¥1.2-1.5 million annually), media rights, and tourism (increase in Baiyun Mountain visitors).

Luoyang Elite Go Tournament (2004-2024): Costs included prize money (¥20,000 for champions) and organizational expenses; benefits included entry fees, corporate sponsorship, and government subsidies.

The analysis showed that both tournaments achieved financial sustainabil-

ity, with the Qisheng Tournament generating a 35% annual return on investment and the Elite Tournament reaching 78% self-sufficiency by 2023.

IV. Findings: The “Culture-Market-Talent” Triangular Synergy Model

Luoyang’s success stems from the “Culture-Market-Talent” triangular synergy model, where cultural embedding, market-driven operation, and talent guarantee interact to form a self-sustaining ecosystem. This model directly addresses the three research questions, demonstrating how cultural and market forces synergize, multi-source funding ensures sustainability, and popularization and elite cultivation are balanced.

1. Cultural Embedding: The Foundation of Market Support

Cultural embedding leverages Luoyang’s local unique resources to create emotional and identity-based connections, laying the base-work for market-driven development.

1.1. Cultural Symbol Extraction and Transmission

Luoyang’s cultural embedding centers on three core aspects that link Go to local identity:

To begin with, Hetu Luoshu 河图洛书, The ancient cosmic symbols (square grids, black-white dots) are integrated into tournament logos (e.g.,

Luoyang Elite Go Tournament), museum exhibitions, and textbooks like Go and Luoyang (2024). This connection positions Luoyang as a “birthplace of Go philosophy,” enhancing its cultural legitimacy and attracting both locals and tourists.

In addition, Luoyang has Industrial Heritage. Stories of worker-coaches (e.g., Chen Dai, Yu Zhaochang) are highlighted in community workshops and school curricula, framing Go as a symbol of grassroots resilience and cross-regional integration—resonating with Luoyang’s industrial population.

Finally, There are many historical figures in the history of Luoyang. For example, Tang Dynasty Go master Wang Jixin, whose epitaph was unearthed in Luoyang, is celebrated in cultural events, linking modern Go to the city’s imperial past and strengthening cultural inheritance.

These symbols reduce market entry barriers: 38% of new training institution students surveyed in 2023 cited “interest in Luoyang’s Go culture” as their primary motivation, while 60% of Go tourism participants were non-players before their visit—converting cultural interest into market demand.

1.2. Cultural Carrier Construction

Tangible cultural carriers materialize and amplify Go’s cultural value, providing platforms for market integration:

Luoyang Go Museum: Opened in 2012, the museum houses 3,000+ ar-

tifacts (Tang Dynasty Go stones, modern professional game records) and hosts 5,000+ annual visitors, including 230 student groups. It generates revenue through ticket sales (¥15 per person) and 文创 products (e.g., Hetu Luoshu-themed Go sets), with 30% reinvested in grassroots programs.

Go + Tourism Routes: Three signature routes blend Go with cultural/natural attractions:

1. “Cultural Origin Route”: Longmen Grottoes → Luoyang Go Museum → Hetu Luoshu Site Park.
2. “Mountain Retreat Route”: Baiyun Mountain → Go camps with celebrity lectures.
3. “Industrial Memory Route”: Jianxi District Industrial Heritage Park → Former factory Go clubs.

These routes generated ¥20 million in tourism revenue in 2023, with 80% of revenue coming from non-local visitors—proving that cultural embedding drives marketable tourism products.

2. Market-Driven Operation: Sustaining the Ecosystem Through Multi-Source Funding

Luoyang’s market-driven model addresses funding shortages through a multi-source mechanism that combines government subsidies, corporate sponsorship, and industrial revenue—proving its sustainability across devel-

opmental phases.

2.1. Training Market: Regulation and Expansion

Luoyang's training market has evolved from unregulated growth to standardized operation, ensuring quality while meeting popularization demands:

Market Access: The Luoyang Go Association requires all 54 certified institutions to meet coach qualification (85% hold 5-dan+ ranks) and curriculum standards, building trust among parents.

Tiered Services: Institutions offer three programs to cover diverse needs:

1. Enlightenment (ages 4-6): Game-based learning (no dan requirements) for mass popularization.
2. Skill Building (ages 7-12): Weekly classes focusing on dan exams, bridging popularization and elite cultivation.
3. Professional Preparation (ages 13+): Intensive training for the national pro qualification exam, supporting elite development.

This tiering generates ¥1.2 million annual revenue from 12,000 trainees, with 20% used to subsidize free community workshops—balancing market profitability with public welfare.

2.2. Tournament Commercialization: From Grassroots to Elite

Tournaments are the backbone of Luoyang's market-driven model, with events at all levels generating revenue and visibility:

2.2.1. Elite Tournament: China Go Qisheng Tournament 中国围棋棋圣战

As China's most prestigious professional title match, the Qisheng Tournament exemplifies successful multi-source funding:

Sponsorship: From 2012-2014, it was sponsored by Longmen Grottoes ("Longmen Cup," ¥600,000 champion prize); 2017-2021 by Baiyun Mountain ("Baiyunshan Cup," ¥800,000 champion prize). Sponsorship fees account for 60% of tournament revenue.

Government Support: The Luoyang government provides 20% of funding for venue rental and promotion, leveraging the tournament to boost city branding.

Media and Tourism Revenue: CCTV Sports broadcasts reach 50 million viewers, while finals at Baiyun Mountain drive 15% annual growth in tourism景区客流量—creating a "sponsorship + government + tourism" revenue loop.

2.2.2. Grassroots Tournament: Luoyang Elite Go Tournament

Founded in 2004 by Liu Xia (Luoyang Go Association Secretary-General), this event has grown from 50 local participants in 2005 to 211 national/international players (including 7 professionals) in 2023:

Revenue Sources: Entry fees (¥200 per amateur player), corporate sponsorship (Zhongzhi Software, ¥150,000 annually), and government subsidies

(22% of funding).

Sustainability: By 2023, the tournament achieved 78% self-sufficiency, with revenue reinvested in prize money and youth player development—proving that grassroots events can be financially viable.

2.2.3. Mass Participation Tournaments

Local tournaments like the City Go Duan Rank Tournament (quarterly, 1,000+ participants) and Community Go League (free entry) ensure popularization while feeding talent into higher levels. These events rely on government subsidies (30%) and small-scale corporate sponsorship (20%), with low costs (no prize money, community venue use) ensuring sustainability.

2.3. Multi-Source Funding Sustainability

Luoyang's funding model has adapted across phases to remain sustainable:

Foundation Phase (1960s-1970s): 100% government funding (training facilities, coach salaries).

Popularization Phase (1980s-1990s): 60% government + 40% factory sponsorship (factory-sponsored clubs).

Market Transition Phase (2000s-2010s): 30% government + 50% corporate sponsorship + 20% training revenue.

Ecological Maturity Phase (2011-Present): 4.7% government + 10.6% corporate sponsorship + 84.7% industrial revenue (tourism, training, 文创).

This evolution shows a shift from reliance on public funding to self-sustaining industrial revenue, proving the model's long-term sustainability. By 2023, Luoyang's Go ecosystem generated ¥23.8 million in total revenue, with only ¥1.12 million from government subsidies.

3. Talent Guarantee: Balancing Popularization and Elite Cultivation

Talent guarantee ensures the ecosystem's long-term vitality by creating a hierarchical pathway that connects grassroots participants to elite ranks—addressing the third research question.

3.1. Hierarchical Talent Selection

Luoyang's selection system identifies and nurtures talent at every level, ensuring both mass participation and elite output:

Grassroots Scouting: Coaches from certified institutions visit 150+ kindergartens and primary schools annually, identifying 500+ potential players through school tournaments.

Municipal Level: The Luoyang Youth Go Team (86 players, ages 8-16) is selected through municipal tournaments, receiving ¥500,000 annual government funding for training and travel.

Provincial/National Level: 23 players (2018-2023) were sent to national academies (e.g., Hangzhou Intelligence Sports School) or the Henan Provincial Go Team, with 50% of funding from corporate sponsorship (e.g., Junhewan Real Estate).

3.2. Incentive Mechanisms

Incentives for students and coaches balance popularization and elite cultivation:

Students:

Popularization Incentives: Go 段位 is included in student comprehensive evaluations in schools, encouraging mass participation.

Elite Incentives: New professional players receive a ¥200,000 government reward; top youth players earn “Heluo Go Scholarships” (¥5,000-¥20,000).

Coaches:

Popularization Incentives: Coaching community/school programs counts toward workload evaluations and continuing education credits.

Elite Incentives: Coaches receive 30% of their students’ provincial/national tournament prize money, motivating elite talent development.

3.3. Balance in Action

The results speak to the balance achieved:

Popularization: 36 Go Featured Schools, and 60+ annual grassroots events.

Elite Cultivation: 23 national academy recruits (2018-2023),.

This balance is maintained by the “funnel effect” of the talent pathway: mass participation (100,000 enthusiasts) feeds into municipal selection (86 youth team members), which feeds into elite development (23 national recruits)—ensuring no trade-off between breadth and depth.

4. Triangular Synergy: The Closed-Loop Ecosystem

The three pillars of the model interact dynamically to form a positive cycle, addressing the first research question on cultural-market synergy:

Cultural Embedding → Market Drive: Cultural symbols and carriers attract non-players. For example, 38% of training students joined due to cultural interest, and Go tourism converted 60% of non-players into participants.

Market Drive → Talent Guarantee: Revenue from training and tournaments funds youth team training, coach incentives, and facility upgrades. The Qisheng Tournament’s ¥1.2 million annual sponsorship revenue, for

instance, supports the youth team's training budget.

Talent Guarantee → Cultural Embedding: Elite players, Such as Shiyue 9 dan, serve as cultural ambassadors, enhancing Luoyang's Go brand and attracting more market resources.

This synergy creates a self-sustaining ecosystem where each pillar reinforces the others—proving that cultural embedding and market drive are not opposing forces but complementary engines of development.

V. Discussion

1. Key Findings Addressing Research Questions

1. Cultural-Market Synergy: Cultural embedding supports market drive by creating emotional connections that reduce participation barriers and attract resources. The interaction boundary lies in “cultural authenticity”—Luoyang's success stems from aligning market activities with genuine cultural heritage (e.g., Hetu Luoshu, industrial stories) rather than superficial branding.
2. Multi-Source Funding Sustainability: Luoyang's model is sustainable due to its evolution from government reliance to industrial self-sufficiency. The key is diversifying revenue streams (sponsorship, tourism, training) and reinvesting profits in grassroots programs, ensuring market profitability does not override public welfare.

3. Popularization-Elite Balance: The hierarchical talent pathway and targeted incentives balance breadth and depth. By linking mass participation (school programs, community events) to elite development (youth teams, national academies), Luoyang avoids the “elite-only” trap of the national system and the “no-talent” trap of pure popularization.

2. Universality of the Triangular Synergy Model

The model’s universality is demonstrated by its adaptability to different city types:

Cultural-Rich Cities: Prioritize cultural embedding (e.g., extracting local symbols, building heritage carriers) to differentiate their Go systems.

Economically Developed Cities: Leverage market drive (e.g., corporate sponsorship, high-end training) to scale services.

Resource-Limited Cities: Start with low-cost cultural activities and grass-roots tournaments, gradually integrating market and talent elements as the ecosystem matures.

3. Limitations and Future Research

As noted in the abstract, this study has limitations:

Single-Case Bias: Luoyang’s unique cultural and industrial heritage may limit direct replication. Future research should expand to multi-case studies (e.g., Chengdu, Xi’an) to test the model’s adaptability.

Historical Data Gaps: Some 1980s-1990s data (e.g., factory Go club participation) relies on interviews and 地方志, with limited quantitative precision. Future research could digitize archival records to enhance accuracy.

Future research should also explore digital integration, as AI and online platforms offer new opportunities to expand cultural 传播, market reach, and talent training—especially for resource-limited cities.

VI. Conclusion

This study proposes the “Culture-Market-Talent” triangular synergy model through an in-depth analysis of Luoyang’s local Go system. Against the backdrop of China’s sports governance transformation, the model addresses the limitations of traditional elite-oriented models by demonstrating how cultural embedding and market drive synergize to form a sustainable ecosystem, how multi-source funding ensures long-term viability, and how popularization and elite cultivation can be balanced.

Luoyang’s experience offers three key lessons for local cities worldwide:

Cultural Embedding is the Foundation: Leverage unique local heritage to create emotional connections that drive market participation and cultural inheritance.

Market Drive Ensures Sustainability: Diversify revenue streams to reduce reliance on public funding, while reinvesting profits in grassroots programs.

Talent Guarantee Maintains Vitality: Build a hierarchical pathway and targeted incentives to balance mass participation and elite development.

As Go continues to be promoted globally, the triangular synergy model provides an excellent framework for local cities to build comprehensive, sustainable Go systems that honor tradition, drive economic development, and foster community engagement. By adapting this model to their unique contexts, cities can contribute to the global revitalization of traditional board games while addressing local demands for sports, culture, and industry integration.

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