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Strategies for Enhancing the Cultural Literacy of High-Level Adolescent Athletes from the Perspective of Chinese Sports Spirit

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Abstract
Starting from the perspective of Chinese sportsmanship, this study thoroughly explores the systematic strategies to enhance the cultural literacy of high-level youth athletes. Through in-depth analyses of theoretical foundations, comprehensive surveys of the current situation, multi-dimensional analysis of influencing factors, and critical reference to international experiences, this study has constructed a comprehensive and systematic framework for the enhancement of youth athletes' cultural literacy. The framework not only provides a theoretical basis for the reform of China's physical education system, but also points out a specific direction for practitioners. In the future, on the basis of adhering to the spirit of Chinese sports, it is necessary to continuously innovate the education mode, optimise the policy environment, and strengthen international exchanges, so as to cultivate more sports talents with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness and aesthetics. This is not only a major change in China's physical education system, but also a contribution of Chinese wisdom and Chinese solutions to the development of global physical education.

Keywords
youth athletes; cultural literacy Young athletes; Cultural literacy; Chinese sportsmanship; Sports training; Cultural education; Influencing factors; International experience; Educational model

1 Introduction

On the global sports competitive stage, the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes is as important as their athletic skills, together shaping the comprehensive quality of athletes. However, at present, while Chinese adolescent athletes pursue sports achievements, the enhancement of cultural literacy is often neglected. This phenomenon not only limits the personal development of athletes but also affects their adaptability in society and future career transformation[1]. This study aims to explore how to solve this problem under the guidance of the Chinese sports spirit and improve the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes.

The Chinese sports spirit, as the core value of Chinese sports culture, emphasizes not only the struggle and team cooperation at the competitive level but also includes cultural requirements such as integrity and moral cultivation[2]. These values provide valuable ideological resources for the cultural literacy education of adolescent athletes. However, in reality, there is a structural contradiction between sports training and cultural education. Sports training often occupies the time and energy of cultural learning, leading to the lack of cultural literacy among athletes[3]. In addition, the combination of Chinese sports spirit and cultural education is

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insufficient, and there is a disconnection between physical education and cultural education, which further complicates the issue[4].

This study aims to explore how to effectively enhance the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes under the perspective of the Chinese sports spirit and find new paths for the integrated development of sports and cultural education. This study is of significant theoretical and practical significance for promoting the comprehensive development of physical education in China and cultivating high-quality athletes with international competitiveness.

2 Theoretical Foundation

2.1 Theoretical Overview of Chinese Sports Spirit

The Chinese sports spirit is the core value system of Chinese sports culture, including important values such as self-improvement, unity and cooperation, integrity and morality, and hard work and enterprising spirit[2]. This spirit is not only reflected on the sports field but is also deeply rooted in traditional Chinese culture. Some scholars[5] have pointed out that the Chinese sports spirit is the specific manifestation of the Chinese national spirit in the field of sports, with its core including patriotism, collectivism, hard work, and the courage to innovate.

The theoretical basis of the Chinese sports spirit originates from the influence of Confucian culture, emphasizing that sports are not only a contest of physical strength but also a cultivation of personal character and social responsibility[4]. Some scholars [6] further elaborated on the connotation of the Chinese sports spirit in the new era, believing that it should include the organic unity of the Olympic spirit, the spirit of traditional Chinese culture, and the core values of socialism. This spirit not only inherits the essence of traditional Chinese culture but also integrates the universal values of modern sports.

By applying the core values of the Chinese sports spirit, it can help adolescent athletes not only improve their athletic skills during training but also promote the development of personal cultural literacy and moral cultivation through sports education. However, research[7] shows that effectively conveying this spirit to students in actual physical education teaching is still a challenge, requiring teachers to have profound cultural literacy and teaching skills.

2.2 Theory and Connotation of Cultural Literacy

Cultural literacy refers to an individual ability to understand, comprehend, evaluate, and create culture in social life[1]. This concept originated from the research on “cultural literacy” by Western scholars in the 1980s and has gradually developed into a multidimensional concept. According to Hirsch[8], cultural literacy refers to “the mainstream cultural knowledge of a society or country, which every literate person should master.”

For adolescent athletes, cultural literacy means not only the accumulation of academic and knowledge levels but also includes the enhancement of humanistic spirit, social responsibility, and moral consciousness. Light[9] proposed the concept of “positive pedagogy” in sports teaching, emphasizing the cultivation of students’ cultural literacy and critical thinking abilities in sports teaching, providing a new approach for the cultural literacy training of adolescent athletes.

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In modern sports education, the cultivation of cultural literacy has gradually become an important part of the comprehensive development of athletes. Excellent cultural literacy can help athletes better understand the social function and cultural significance of sports, enhance their social adaptability and communication skills, and enable them to integrate into society more smoothly after retirement[3]. Sotiriadou research shows that athletes with higher cultural literacy perform more positively and rationally in the use of social media, which has a positive impact on their career development and social image[10].

2.3 Theoretical Discussion on the Integration of Sports and Cultural Education

The integration of sports education and cultural education has long been an important issue in modern education. Theoretically, sports education and cultural education are not opposed but can complement each other, forming a holistic development educational model[1]. Si[11] proposed the application of "socio-cultural learning theory" in sports teaching, emphasizing the cultural learning process in sports activities, providing a theoretical basis for the integration of sports and cultural education.

Athletes need not only to achieve success on the competitive field but also to have cultural literacy to achieve comprehensive growth in their personal careers and society. Ryba[12] proposed a cultural competence model, emphasizing that cultural factors should be considered in sports psychology research and practice, providing a new perspective for the cultural literacy training of adolescent athletes.

The integration of sports education and cultural education can be achieved through various forms, such as introducing cultural courses into sports training, promoting adolescent athletes to understand and internalize cultural knowledge in sports practice. Haugen research points out that one of the challenges faced by Chinese physical education teachers in their careers is how to effectively integrate cultural elements in teaching, reflecting the complexity and necessity of the integration of sports and cultural education[13].

However, existing theories still have some limitations. First, most studies are based on Western backgrounds and lack in-depth examination of Chinese sports culture. Second, empirical research on how to effectively implement cultural education in high-intensity training is relatively insufficient. Finally, existing theories pay insufficient attention to the differences in cultural literacy training in different types of sports. These issues need to be further explored and resolved in future research.

3 Analysis of the Current Status of Cultural Literacy among Adolescent Athletes

3.1 Definition and Measurement Standards of Cultural Literacy

Cultural literacy is a multidimensional ability that covers understanding of cultural knowledge, enhancement of social responsibility, and cultivation of moral judgment. Among adolescent athletes, the measurement standards of cultural literacy can include mastery of academic knowledge, improvement of aesthetic ability, and enhancement of social and humanistic consciousness[1]. However, Robbins[14] believes that there is no unified consensus on the measurement standards of cultural literacy among adolescent athletes, and the indicators used in different studies vary greatly, which brings challenges to cross-study comparisons.

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Some studies point out that cultural literacy can be measured by indicators such as students' academic performance, artistic cultivation, team cooperation, and social participation. For example, whether athletes have a critical understanding of different cultural phenomena, and whether they can demonstrate leadership and cooperation in teams, are important standards for measuring cultural literacy [3]. Bell [15] further proposes that cross-cultural communication ability should also be an important indicator for measuring the cultural literacy of athletes in the context of international sports management. These standards not only have a direct impact on the current development of athletes but also relate to their career planning and social role transformation after retirement.

3.2 Current Status of Cultural Literacy among Adolescent Athletes

To systematically analyze the current status of cultural literacy among adolescent athletes, this study used a systematic literature review method to sort out and analyze the relevant studies published from 2010 to 2024. Through searching databases such as Web of Science and CNKI, a total of 46 documents were included in the analysis. The analysis results show that the current status of cultural literacy among adolescent athletes has the following characteristics:

In the current education system, the development of cultural literacy among adolescent athletes faces many challenges. Due to the heavy burden of sports training and competition tasks, many athletes' cultural learning time is limited, leading to a relatively lagging level of cultural literacy. Wang research shows that before and after the Beijing Olympic Games, although the cultural literacy level of Chinese adolescent athletes has improved, there is still a significant gap compared with ordinary students[16]. Some studies show that the cultural literacy level of adolescent athletes is obviously lower than that of non-athlete students, especially in cultural knowledge and aesthetic ability[4].

Specifically, the current status of cultural literacy among adolescent athletes includes the following points:
Poor academic performance. Many adolescent athletes, due to their focus on sports training, cannot take care of their studies, leading to unsatisfactory performance in cultural courses. Haugen[13] research found that in the process of preparing for the Chinese Olympic Games, the cultural learning time of athletes was greatly compressed, resulting in a general decline in academic performance.

Weak humanistic literacy. Due to the insufficient investment in cultural education for athletes in the education system, many athletes have a weak cultivation in the fields of literature and art.

Social responsibility and moral literacy need to be improved. Some athletes lack concern for social issues, and their sense of social responsibility and moral consciousness are relatively low[1]. However, Sotiriadou[10] research also found that with the popularization of social media, some adolescent athletes have begun to express social concerns through new media platforms, which may indicate that their sense of social responsibility is gradually increasing.

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3.3 Bottlenecks and Problems in the Development of Cultural Literacy among Adolescent Athletes

Adolescent athletes face many bottlenecks and problems in the development of cultural literacy. Based on a systematic analysis of existing literature, we can summarize these problems into the following aspects:

Time conflict. Athletes need to spend a lot of time on training and competition, and the time and energy for cultural learning are often compressed[3]. Kristiansen[18] research shows that this time conflict is particularly prominent during the preparation for high-level competitions, which seriously affects cultural learning. Insufficient educational support. The support from schools and society is not enough, and there is a lack of cultural courses designed specifically for athletes, leading to a disconnection between cultural education and sports training. Si[11] pointed out that the Chinese sports system and cultural characteristics have a significant impact on the psychological services of athletes, which is also reflected in the dilemma of cultural literacy training.Lack of cultural edification. Many athletes feel less cultural edification in training and lack long-term planning for the improvement of cultural literacy[2].Single evaluation system. Tan [19] research found that the current evaluation system for adolescent athletes still focuses too much on sports achievements and neglects the importance of cultural literacy, leading to a lack of motivation for athletes and coaches to improve cultural literacy.

In general, although people attention to the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes has increased in recent years, there are still many challenges in practice. Future research should pay more attention to how to find a balance between sports training and cultural education, and how to design cultural literacy training programs that are more suitable for the characteristics of athletes.

4 Analysis of Factors Influencing the Cultural Literacy of Adolescent Athletes

To gain an in-depth understanding of the complex mechanisms affecting the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes, this study constructs a multi-level theoretical model based on existing literature. This model includes four levels: individual factors, family factors, school factors, and societal factors, and considers the interplay among these factors.

4.1 Individual Factors

Individual factors are the primary aspect influencing the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes. The cultural competence model proposed by Ryba[12] emphasizes that an athlete personal traits, cognitive styles, and learning motivation play a key role in the development of their cultural literacy. Specifically, individual factors include:

Learning motivation. An athlete interest in and emphasis on cultural learning directly affect the enhancement of their cultural literacy. Si found that athletes with higher intrinsic learning motivation are more likely to invest time in cultural learning outside of rigorous training[11].Time management skills. High-level athletes often face multiple pressures of training, competition, and study, and good time management skills become key to balancing these tasks. Kristiansen[18] points out that successful Youth Olympic athletes usu-

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ally possess excellent time management skills.Cognitive abilities. An athlete basic cognitive abilities, such as memory, comprehension, and analysis, also affect the speed and depth of their cultural literacy development.

4.2 The Impact of Family Background and Cultural Education

The family is the primary setting for the development of cultural literacy among adolescent athletes. Si emphasizes that in the Chinese cultural context, the influence of the family on athletes is particularly significant[11]. Family factors mainly include:

Parents' educational level. The cultural level of parents directly affects the family cultural atmosphere and the emphasis on their children cultural education. Si research indicates that parents with higher education are more likely to create a good cultural learning environment for their athlete children[11].Family economic conditions. Families with better economic conditions can provide athletes with more cultural learning resources and opportunities.Parents' educational philosophy. Parents' attitudes towards sports and cultural education directly affect the athletes' learning motivation and behavior. Sotiriadou[10] found that parental support has a significant impact on adolescent athletes' social media use and cultural participation.

4.3 The Crowding-out Effect of Sports Training on Cultural Learning

Sports training has a clear "crowding-out effect" on the cultural learning of adolescent athletes. Tan points out that this crowding-out effect is particularly evident during the preparation for major events such as the Olympic Games[19]. It is specifically manifested as:

Time conflict. A large amount of training time occupies the time that could have been used for cultural learning. It shows that during the preparation for the Beijing Olympic Games, athletes' cultural learning time was significantly compressed[8].Energy allocation. High-intensity sports training consumes a lot of athletes' physical strength and energy, affecting the effectiveness of cultural learning.Attention dispersion. The pressure of competitions and performance requirements make it difficult for athletes to fully engage in cultural learning.

4.4 The Influence of Societal and School Education

Societal and school environments also play a significant role in the development of cultural literacy among adolescent athletes. Haugen emphasizes the key role of physical education teachers in the cultivation of athletes' cultural literacy[13]. The main influencing factors include:

School curriculum design. Whether there are cultural courses designed for the characteristics of athletes directly affects learning outcomes. Bell points out that international sports management courses are of great significance for enhancing athletes' cultural literacy and cross-cultural abilities [15] .Teacher quality. The quality and teaching methods of sports coaches and cultural course teachers affect athletes' learning interest and outcomes.Social support system. The degree of society emphasis on and support for athletes' cultural literacy is also an important factor. It shows that social support is one of the key factors affecting the development of adolescent athletes[14].Policy orientation. National and local sports education policies directly affect resource allocation and educational focus.

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By constructing this multi-level theoretical model, we can more comprehensively understand the complex mechanisms affecting the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes. Future research can be based on this model to conduct quantitative analysis and verify the extent of influence and interplay of various factors. This will provide a scientific basis for formulating more targeted policies and measures.

5 International Comparison: Experience in Enhancing the Cultural Literacy of Adolescent Athletes

In order to comprehensively understand and learn from international experience, this study used a systematic cross-cultural comparison method to analyze the practices of countries and regions such as the United States, Europe, and Australia in enhancing the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes. Through comparative analysis, we can provide valuable references for Chinese practice.

5.1 International Perspective on the Integration of Sports and Cultural Education Models

In the field of international sports education, the integration model of sports and cultural education has been well developed. Palumbo comprehensively analyzed the development process and characteristics of the American "student-athlete" model[20]. This model ensures the balanced development of athletes in academics and sports through clear institutional provisions. Specific practices include:

Academic requirements. Establish minimum academic standards to ensure that athletes do not neglect cultural learning while maintaining a competitive level.Academic support. Provide specialized learning guidance and resources to help athletes overcome learning difficulties.Time management. Reasonably arrange training and learning time to avoid excessive training affecting studies.Defruyt introduced the operation mode of the French sports college system in detail[21]. This system focuses on the improvement of cultural literacy while cultivating high-level athletes, with main features including:Dual-track education. Athletes receive both sports training and cultural education at the same time.Flexible academic system. Provide a longer learning cycle according to the competition and training arrangements of athletes.Career planning. Pay attention to the career transformation of athletes after retirement and provide relevant courses and guidance.

5.2 Successful Experience in Enhancing Athletes' Cultural Literacy Abroad

O'Neill research on Australian elite sports schools revealed the successful experience of its "Sports and Academic Balance" program[22]. The main practices include:

Individualized learning plans. Develop flexible learning plans according to the training and competition arrangements of athletes.Distance education. Use network technology to allow athletes to continue learning while training or competing outside.Psychological counseling. Provide professional psychological counseling to help athletes balance the pressure of sports and learning.Nickl[23] analyzed in detail the "Sports and Academic Dual-Track System" in Germany. The core of this model lies in the close cooperation between sports clubs and schools, with main features including:Cooperation mechanism. Establish a formal cooperative relationship between sports clubs and schools to jointly develop educational plans.Special courses.

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Design special courses suitable for athletes, with adjusted content and progress.Mentor system. Assign a learning mentor for each athlete to provide personalized guidance.

5.3 Enlightenment for the Cultural Education of Chinese Adolescent Athletes

Through systematic analysis of international experience, we can provide the following enlightenment for the enhancement of cultural literacy among Chinese adolescent athletes:

Institutional guarantee. Wang points out that China needs to establish a framework similar to the American NCAA, specifying the academic requirements and rights protection for athletes[16].Flexible education model. Liang[17] suggests that China can learn from the experiences of France and Germany to establish a more flexible education system to meet the special needs of athletes.Technology support. Sotiriadou[10] emphasizes that modern technology and social media should be fully utilized to provide athletes with more diversified learning channels.Career planning. Tan[19] points out that China should pay more attention to the future career development of athletes and combine cultural education with career planning.Multi-party cooperation. Si[11] suggest that China should strengthen cooperation between sports departments, education departments, and all sectors of society to build a comprehensive support system.

However, when drawing on international experience, we also need to pay attention to Chinese special national conditions and cultural background. Bell[15] points out that there are significant differences between Chinese sports system and cultural traditions and those of Western countries, so it is necessary to make localized adjustments and innovations when implementing these experiences.

Future research directions can focus on how to combine these international experiences with Chinese actual situation to develop an athlete cultural literacy enhancement model that meets international standards and has Chinese characteristics. At the same time, more empirical research is needed to evaluate the implementation effects of these reference measures.

6 Strategies for Enhancing the Cultural Literacy of Adolescent Athletes under the Perspective of Chinese Sports Spirit

Based on the theoretical analysis, current situation survey, and international experience reference in the previous text, this study proposes a series of strategies to enhance the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes under the guidance of the Chinese sports spirit. These strategies cover aspects such as education system reform, curriculum optimization, and social support mechanism construction, aiming to provide a systematic solution for the comprehensive development of Chinese adolescent athletes.

6.1 Strengthen the Dual Integration of Sports and Cultural Education

In the process of enhancing the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes, the primary task is to achieve the dual integration of sports training and cultural education. Si[11] emphasize that this integration should fully consider the characteristics and cultural background of Chinese sports system. Specific measures include:

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Institutional design. Draw on Palumbo research on the American NCAA model to establish clear academic standards and reward and punishment mechanisms to ensure that athletes do not neglect cultural learning while pursuing competitive achievements[20].Curriculum integration. Based on Nickl analysis of the German dual-track system, design courses that organically combine sports training and cultural education[23], such as sports history and exercise physiology, to enhance athletes' interest in learning.Time management. Refer to Kristiansen research on the Youth Olympic Games to optimize the arrangement of training and learning time to avoid excessive training affecting studies[18].

6.2 Optimize the Curriculum Arrangement and Learning Environment for Adolescent Athletes

In response to the time conflict between cultural learning and sports training faced by adolescent athletes, it is necessary to optimize the curriculum and learning environment. Haugen research provides important insights for the professional development of Chinese physical education teachers[13]. Main measures include:

Individualized learning plans. Draw on O'Neill research on the Australian experience to develop flexible learning plans according to the training and competition arrangements of athletes[22].Distance education. As suggested by Sotiriadou[10], make full use of modern technology and social media to provide athletes with online learning platforms and resources.Professional tutoring. Assign special academic tutors to help athletes solve learning difficulties.

6.3 Integrate Cultural Education Content into Sports Training

Liang research reminds us that Chinese past emphasis on sports achievements while neglecting cultural education needs to change[17]. Therefore, we can:

Cultural penetration. Integrate literary, historical, artistic, and other cultural elements into daily training to increase the cultural content of training.Value education. Combine the Chinese sports spirit and traditional cultural values into the training process to enhance athletes' cultural identity and moral cultivation, drawing on Si research[11].Cross-cultural exchange. Increase opportunities for international exchanges and improve athletes' cross-cultural communication skills, drawing on Bell experience in international sports management[15].

6.4 Social Support and Policy Guarantee

Wang research points out that enhancing the cultural literacy of athletes requires the joint efforts of the whole society[16]. Therefore, we need:

Policy support. Refer to Tan research and formulate special policies to clearly stipulate the cultural learning rights and requirements of athletes[19].Funding guarantee. Establish special funds to support cultural education activities for athletes.Social Participation. Encouraging all sectors of society to participate in the cultural literacy training of athletes, such as companies providing internship opportunities and cultural institutions offering free visits[14].Family support. Defruyt research emphasizes the importance of family support and should strengthen the education and guidance of athletes' parents to raise their awareness of cultural

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literacy[21].Career planning. Draw on the experience of the French sports college system[21] and pay more attention to the future career development of athletes, combining cultural education with career planning.

In general, these strategies aim to build a comprehensive, multi-level system for enhancing the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes. However, as Defruyt[21] points out, when implementing these strategies, we need to fully consider Chinese special national conditions and cultural background and make necessary localized adjustments. Future research can focus on the evaluation of the implementation effects of these strategies and how to further optimize and improve this system.

7 Conclusion

This study, starting from the perspective of the Chinese sports spirit, deeply explores the systematic strategies for enhancing the cultural literacy of high-level adolescent athletes. Through in-depth analysis of the theoretical basis, comprehensive survey of the current situation, multidimensional analysis of influencing factors, and critical reference to international experience, this study has constructed a comprehensive and systematic framework for enhancing the cultural literacy of adolescent athletes. This framework not only provides a theoretical basis for the reform of Chinese sports education system but also points out a specific direction for practitioners.

In the future, It needs to continuously innovate educational models, optimize policy environments, strengthen international exchanges, and cultivate more sports talents with comprehensive development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor, based on adhering to the Chinese sports spirit. This is not only a major transformation of Chinese sports education system but also a contribution of Chinese wisdom and Chinese solutions to the development of global sports education.

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