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The Impact of Chinese Sports Spirit on the Professional Identity of University Coaches:A Study Based on Role Conflict of Dual Identity

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Abstract

University coaches commonly face role conflicts and professional identity dilemmas brought about by dual identities (coach and teacher). This study aims to explore the impact of the Chinese sports spirit on the professional identity of university coaches, especially its regulatory role in the context of dual identity. Theoretical analysis reveals that the values of the Chinese sports spirit, such as self-improvement, integrity, and teamwork, play a significant role in enhancing coaches' stress resistance, strengthening their sense of responsibility, and integrating team resources, thereby effectively regulating their professional identity. This study deepens the understanding of the educational function of the Chinese sports spirit and provides a new perspective for alleviating coaches' role conflicts and promoting professional identity, which is of great significance for promoting sports education reform.

Keywords

Chinese sports spirit; University coaches; Professional identity; Dual identity; Role conflict

1 Introduction

Driven by sports education reform, the role of university coaches has evolved from being solely competitive guides to also bearing teaching tasks. This dual identity, while conducive to improving the comprehensive quality of coaches, also brings challenges to professional identity. Professional identity is the individual's confirmation and embodiment of self-identity in their profession, and coaches often face role conflicts under multiple role expectations, affecting their sense of professional identity[1]. This conflict may stem from pressures such as task allocation, time management, and societal expectations, leading to professional burnout and identity crises[2].

The Chinese sports spirit, as an important part of our country's sports culture, has attracted widespread attention for its role in education and competitive sports. Although existing research has mainly focused on the cultivation of athletes' psychological quality by the Chinese sports spirit, studies on how it affects coaches' professional identity are still limited[3]. Especially in the context of coaches' dual identity as teachers, the regulatory role of the Chinese sports spirit has not been fully explored.

In light of this, this paper aims to explore how the Chinese sports spirit plays a regulatory role in coaches' professional identity, especially in the context of dual identity. The research question focuses on: How does the Chinese sports spirit alleviate coaches' role conflicts and promote their professional identity? This study

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will analyze how the core values of the Chinese sports spirit (such as self-improvement, integrity, and teamwork) help coaches relieve professional pressures and enhance their sense of professional identity, providing theoretical references for the career development of coaches in university sports education and theoretical support for sports education reform.

2 Theoretical Foundation

2.1 The Relationship between Social Identity Theory and Professional Identity

Social identity theory is one of the important theories that explain how individuals define and recognize themselves through group affiliation. According to social cognitive theory[4], individuals construct their social identity through social group identification. This theory has been widely applied in professional identity, especially in the study of multi-identity professionals such as coaches. Professional identity is the individual's cognition and evaluation of themselves through their professional role, which directly affects the individual's behavior and psychological state in their career[4].

Applied to this study, the professional identity of university coaches is influenced by the identification of multiple groups. These groups include the expectations of school administrators, students, and peers. When coaches hold dual roles as both teachers and coaches, the different expectations of these groups often lead to identity conflicts. School administrators may focus more on teaching quality, while athletes rely more on the coach's competitive guidance. Under the pressure of multiple social expectations, how coaches find their self-identity becomes key to their career development.

Additionally, conflicts in social identity can also lead to the fragmentation of coaches' professional identity. The different role expectations brought by multiple identities make coaches face more pressure and challenges in the process of professional identity[5]. This identity conflict not only affects the psychological state of coaches but may also have a negative impact on their job satisfaction and work performance. Therefore, exploring how to adjust this identity conflict through external values, such as the Chinese sports spirit, is particularly important.

2.2 Role Conflict Theory and the Adjustment of Dual Identity

Role conflict theory points out that when an individual plays multiple roles and the requirements of each role are contradictory, role conflict and pressure are likely to arise[6]. In the context of university coaches also serving as teachers, role conflict is particularly evident. Coaches must undertake competitive training tasks while also meeting the requirements of teaching tasks, and the priorities and task demands of these two roles are often in conflict.

The core view of role conflict theory is that when an individual cannot effectively balance multiple roles, they will face greater psychological pressure and behavioral obstacles. For example, coaches may feel confused in time management, not knowing how to reasonably allocate energy between teaching and training. At the same time, different evaluation systems will also exacerbate the conflict, as the criteria for success in competitive training and the assessment standards for teaching achievements are significantly different.

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Applied to this study, how coaches balance task demands under dual identity is one of the keys to solving the problem of professional identity. Role conflict not only affects coaches' job satisfaction but also leads to professional burnout and identity crises[7]. Therefore, exploring how to adjust this conflict through values such as teamwork and a sense of responsibility in the Chinese sports spirit is an important direction for enhancing coaches' professional identity.

2.3 The Regulatory Mechanism of Chinese Sports Spirit and Professional Identity

The Chinese sports spirit, with its unique cultural connotation, plays an important role in promoting professional identity and adjusting role conflicts. The core values of the Chinese sports spirit include self-improvement, integrity, and teamwork, which provide strong psychological support for coaches in the face of role conflicts.

First, self-improvement is one of the important connotations of the Chinese sports spirit. It emphasizes the spirit of individuals continuously striving and being unyielding in the face of adversity. Under professional pressures, the spirit of self-improvement can help coaches strengthen their self-belief and enhance their stress resistance, thus better coping with the challenges in professional identity[3].

Second, integrity is crucial for shaping coaches' professional ethics and sense of responsibility. The integrity values in the Chinese sports spirit require coaches to maintain a sense of professional responsibility when facing dual identity tasks. This helps to enhance coaches' sense of professional identity and maintain a consistent professional attitude in teaching and training[8].

Lastly, the spirit of teamwork occupies an important position in the Chinese sports spirit. It not only helps coaches cooperate with students and athletes in the team but also plays a regulatory role in role conflicts, alleviating the task pressure of coaches. Through teamwork, coaches can better handle the conflict between teaching and training tasks, enhancing their sense of professional identity[9].

3 Professional Identity Dilemmas of Dual Identity Coaches

3.1 Challenges in Coaches' Professional Identity

In the current university sports education system, coaches are responsible not only for competitive training but also for teaching tasks. This dual identity brings unique challenges to coaches' professional identity. First, the conflict between teaching tasks and competitive training is the primary issue faced by coaches. Teaching requires coaches to impart knowledge in the classroom, focusing on the systematic and rigorous nature of teaching, while competitive training requires quick decision-making, flexible response, and result orientation. This dual task often leads to conflicts in coaches' energy and time allocation, making it difficult to meet the demands of both[1].

Second, the splitting and ambiguity of professional roles are also key factors affecting coaches' professional identity. In teaching, coaches play the role of educators, while in competitive training, they are leaders and managers. This role ambiguity makes it difficult for coaches to clearly position themselves, leading to confusion in professional identity. Long-term exposure to role splitting can lead to excessive psychological pressure and issues such as job burnout[10].

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3.2 Main Sources of Role Conflict

The main sources of role conflict are manifested in the conflict of time management and energy allocation and the divergence between societal expectations and personal identity. First, in terms of time management, coaches often need to find a balance between teaching and training. However, the time demands of these two tasks are often irreconcilable, leading to difficulties in time management for coaches. For example, coaches may need to conduct training in the morning and teach classes in the afternoon, and this tight schedule can make them exhausted from juggling between the two roles[2].

Second, the divergence between societal expectations and personal identity is also an important source of role conflict. As teachers and coaches, coaches need to face expectations from different groups. School administrators may focus more on the teaching outcomes of coaches, while athletes and parents are more concerned with their competitive training results. This pressure from multiple expectations makes coaches confused about their self-identity and makes it difficult to meet the requirements of all groups[11].

3.3 The Impact of Professional Identity Dilemmas on Coaches' Work

The ambiguity of professional identity not only affects the psychological state of coaches but also has a direct impact on their job performance. First, the confusion of professional identity can lead to a decrease in coaches' job satisfaction. If coaches cannot find a clear self-positioning in their professional roles, they are prone to dissatisfaction, which in turn affects their enthusiasm and commitment to work[12]. Second, the pressure from role conflict can lead to professional burnout. Long-term exposure to role splitting and conflict can cause coaches to lose passion for their work and even consider leaving their profession[5].

Therefore, exploring how to alleviate the professional identity dilemmas of coaches through the regulatory role of the Chinese sports spirit has important theoretical and practical significance.

4 The Regulatory Role of Chinese Sports Spirit on Coaches' Professional Identity

4.1 Self-improvement and the Construction of Professional Identity

The spirit of "self-improvement" in the Chinese sports spirit is an important spiritual support for coaches facing professional pressures. Self-improvement emphasizes the spirit of individuals continuously striving and fighting without stopping in the face of challenges and difficulties[3]. For coaches, task conflicts in teaching and competitive training often bring great pressure, which may lead to a decline in their sense of professional identity. In this case, the spirit of self-improvement can inspire coaches' self-belief and help them maintain a positive attitude in the face of difficulties.

Through the spirit of self-improvement, coaches can enhance their stress resistance. This spirit not only keeps coaches motivated in competitive training but also helps them find their self-positioning in teaching tasks. Research shows that the spirit of self-improvement helps to enhance coaches' sense of professional identity, allowing them to find balance in role conflicts under dual identity[8].

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4.2 Integrity and the Enhancement of Professional Responsibility

Integrity is one of the core values of the Chinese sports spirit and plays an important role in shaping coaches' professional ethics and sense of responsibility. Integrity is not only a basic requirement of professional ethics but also a fundamental principle that coaches must adhere to in teaching and competitive training. Through the values of integrity, coaches can focus more on their professional responsibilities and enhance their sense of commitment to teaching and training tasks[9].

Integrity also helps coaches maintain a consistent professional attitude when facing dual identity. Whether in the classroom or on the training field, coaches should hold themselves to the same standards to ensure their actions comply with professional ethical standards. The values of integrity enhance coaches' sense of professional identity under dual identity, thereby more firmly assuming their professional responsibilities[10].

4.3 Teamwork and the Alleviation of Role Conflict

The spirit of teamwork in the Chinese sports spirit plays a significant role in alleviating the role conflict of coaches. Teamwork is not only an important link between coaches and athletes but also a key to balancing tasks under dual identity for coaches. Through teamwork, coaches can better allocate tasks, reasonably divide teaching and training tasks among different team members, and reduce their own work pressure[12].

In addition, the spirit of teamwork also helps coaches find ways to resolve conflicts when facing multiple role expectations. Coaches can coordinate the task allocation between different roles through cooperation with colleagues, students, and athletes, avoiding the negative impact of excessive role conflict[9]. This spirit of teamwork not only improves coaches' work efficiency but also enhances their sense of professional identity, allowing them to find balance in the dual tasks of teaching and training.

5 Theoretical Analysis: The Regulatory Mechanism of Chinese Sports Spirit on Role Conflict

5.1 The Chinese Sports Spirit and the Adjustment of Time Management Conflicts

In the context of university coaches also serving as teachers, time management has become one of the main challenges they face. The spirit of "self-improvement" in the Chinese sports spirit can help coaches alleviate conflicts between teaching and competitive training tasks by reasonably allocating time. The spirit of self-improvement encourages coaches to maintain perseverance and fighting spirit when facing heavy tasks, actively addressing difficulties in time management[3].

At the same time, the concept of teamwork in the Chinese sports spirit can effectively alleviate the pressure of time management for coaches. By cooperating with colleagues and students, coaches can better allocate work tasks and ensure efficient completion of both teaching and training tasks[9]. This spirit provides coaches with strategies for dealing with role conflicts, allowing them to effectively manage work within a limited time.

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5.2 Psychological Adjustment of Role Conflict and the Role of Chinese Sports Spirit

Role conflict is not only manifested in task distribution conflicts but also involves psychological pressure on coaches. The spirit of "self-improvement" and "integrity" in the Chinese sports spirit can help coaches adjust role conflicts at the psychological level. The spirit of self-improvement enhances coaches' psychological resilience, allowing them to maintain a positive attitude when facing pressure and reducing professional burnout caused by role conflict[3].

In addition, integrity helps coaches maintain a strong sense of professional responsibility, enabling them to find a stable professional identity in the face of complex societal expectations. By adhering to their professional responsibilities, coaches can maintain psychological balance when facing diverse external expectations[8]. This psychological adjustment mechanism not only alleviates the pressure on coaches but also enhances their adaptability in role conflicts.

5.3 The Coordination of Societal Expectations and Self-identity by the Chinese Sports Spirit

Coaches, under dual identity, often face societal expectations from different groups, which may conflict with each other. The Chinese sports spirit can help coaches find their self-positioning among these different societal expectations. Through values such as "integrity" and "teamwork," coaches can find a balance point among different role expectations and achieve self-identity[9].

The values of integrity help coaches maintain their professional beliefs when facing societal expectations, thereby reducing the negative impact of external expectations on their self-identity. At the same time, the spirit of teamwork enables coaches to better handle multiple expectations from schools, students, and athletes, coordinate the needs of all parties, and ultimately achieve a higher sense of professional identity[12].

6 Conclusion

By exploring the regulatory role of the Chinese sports spirit on the professional identity of university coaches, this study reveals that under the context of dual identity, the Chinese sports spirit can effectively alleviate coaches' role conflicts and enhance their sense of professional identity. First, the spirit of self-improvement in the Chinese sports spirit helps coaches enhance their stress resistance and maintain professional passion when facing conflicts between teaching and competitive tasks. Second, the values of integrity prompt coaches to adhere to their professional beliefs in the face of complex societal expectations, strengthening their sense of professional identity. Lastly, the spirit of teamwork plays a significant role in alleviating task pressures and balancing multiple role expectations, helping coaches seek support within the team and ultimately integrating their professional identity.

Future research directions should focus more on the application of the Chinese sports spirit in international sports education, exploring how to promote Chinese culture in the context of globalization and facilitate the dissemination of its values on the international sports stage.

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