

The Value Cultures and Pathways of Chinese Sports-personships to Promoting the Sense of Community of the Chinese Nation

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Abstract

Promoting Chinese sportsmanship serves as a vital pathway for forging a robust sense of Chinese national community consciousness. It's about strengthening cultural identity, cultivating core socialist values, and establishing positive behavioral norms. To foster national unity, consolidate the nation's foundations, and promote the development of a cohesive national community. To fully leverage the role of Chinese sportsmanship in the endeavor, a multi-faceted strategy is essential: (1) Leveraging Sports Functions & Optimizing Mechanisms: Maximizing the inherent societal functions of sport and refining collaborative frameworks; (2) Integrating Resources & Transferring Outcomes: Enhancing the consolidation of diverse resources and the effective application of resultant achievements; (3) Strengthening Education & Pedagogy: Improving the educational system within schools and elevating teaching quality. The systematic implementation of the above strategies will ensure that Chinese sportsmanship fully realizes its potential in forging a strong Chinese national community consciousness.

Keywords: Chinese Sports-personships, the Sense of Community of the Chinese Nation, Value Cultures, Pathways

Introduction

The concept of "*Chinese sports-personships*" was first proposed and utilized by Liu Xiaoming (1996), who defined it as encompassing "national supremacy, dedication, scientific realism, law-abiding conduct, unity and friendship, and hard work. Regarding the theoretical foundations of Chinese national identity, Xu Xiaodong (2021) noted that in 1902, Liang Qichao introduced the term "*Chinese nation*" and conceptualized it as follows: "*Whether based on*

blood relations, geography, emotion, language, or religion, the group identity of the Chinese national community is logically constructed". Concurrently, Fei Xiaotong (1989) developed the theory of the "*pluralistic unity*" pattern of the Chinese nation, defining it as encompassing all people with national identity within China's territory, comprising more than 50 ethnic units that are diverse in nature while collectively forming a unified Chinese nation. The groups are referred to as "ethnic minorities" but exist at different hierarchical levels.

Several scholars have contributed to the conceptualization of Chinese national community consciousness. Hao Yaming (2020) argues that this consciousness represents "*the awareness of a genuine community of interests and shared future destiny formed by Chinese people of all ethnicities based on their profound understanding and recognition of common historical and cultural elements*". Wang Xi (2020) characterizes Chinese national community consciousness as a psychological process, defining it as "*the cognition, sense of belonging, evaluation, and identification attitudes toward the Chinese national community that individuals develop through practical activities*".

Lang Weiwei et al. (2018) identify the core components of Chinese national community consciousness as identification with the great motherland, the Chinese nation, Chinese culture, and socialism with Chinese characteristics, representing collective, rational, and conscious forms of identity. Building upon the framework, Qin Yuying and Hao Yaming (2021) propose that Chinese national community consciousness encompasses not only interest identification among ethnic groups, political identity toward a unified state, and cultural identity across multiple ethnicities, but also value identification fostered through inter-ethnic exchanges, communication, and integration. As a theoretical synthesis encompassing the "*five identities*", it serves as the ideological foundation for cultivating and strengthening Chinese national community consciousness.

The sense of community of the Chinese nation represents the shared value recognition and emotional expression regarding history, culture, and politics that emerge from the exchanges, communication, and integration among China's 56 ethnic groups. Chinese sportspersonship constitutes a distinctive cultural formation that has evolved throughout the development of the Chinese nation, serving as a vital component of the broader Chinese spirit and holding profound significance for forging a strong sense of community among the Chinese nation (Li Bin & Li Zheng, 2013). Chinese sportspeople demonstrate high compatibility with the sense of community of the Chinese nation. Both represent spiritual products developed under the guidance of Marxist scientific theory while maintaining distinctly Chinese characteristics. The academic community has conducted multidimensional research examining how Chinese sportspersonship can promote the sense of community of the Chinese nation.

Therefore, this study further investigates the cultural value and pathways through which Chinese sportspersonship contributes to forging a strong sense of community of the Chinese nation (Figure 1). It examines existing research on promoting national community consciousness through Chinese sportspersonship to provide effective theoretical and practical support for the endeavor.

Overall, these are the questions based on the above explore as below:

Q1. *What are the cultural values of exploring Chinese sportspersonships to promote the sense of community of the Chinese nation?*

Q2. *What are the pathways to explore Chinese sportspersonships to promote the sense of community of the Chinese nation?*

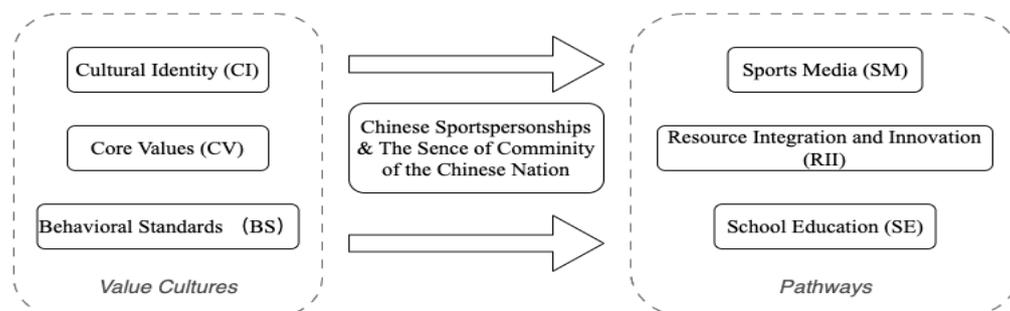


Figure 1. The conceptual framework of the study

Q1. *What are the cultural values of exploring Chinese sportspersonships to promote the sense of community of the Chinese nation?*

The Cultural Value of the Chinese Sportspersonships in Strengthening the Sense of Community of the Chinese Nation

As the adage states, *‘Without spirit, a person cannot stand; without spirit, a country cannot be strong’*. The Chinese sportspersonship draws profound nourishment from China’s excellent traditional sports culture. It embodies rich cultural connotations and exemplifies the relentless struggle and tenacious perseverance of generations of athletes and sports professionals. The spirit represents a dynamic and innovative development within China’s contemporary sporting culture.

Fostering Cultural Identity to Strengthen the Chinese National Community

On the one hand, Chinese sportspersonship both inherits and develops traditional Chinese sports philosophy. Promoting the spirit helps the nation rediscover shared memories, awaken a common sporting culture, and strengthen cultural identity. The sporting ethos embodied in ancient Chinese practices forms the bedrock of modern Chinese sportspersonship and constitutes a vital component of the Chinese national community consciousness. For instance, the *Daoyin Tu* unearthed from *Mawangdui* in Changsha illustrates an ancient Chinese method combining breathing exercises with physical training, epitomizing the concept of *“harmony between humanity and nature”*. Board games like Chinese chess and go advocate using sport for personal cultivation and achieving *“unity of body and mind”*. Ancient ball games such as *Cuju* and *Polo* embody the principle of *“As Heaven’s movement is ever vigorous, so must a gentleman ceaselessly strive along”*. Activities like *Chuiwan* and *Dragon boat racing* emphasize adherence to rules and etiquette, prioritizing harmony and balancing competition with courtesy (*“harmony in diversity”, “competition with propriety”*). Collectively, these traditions manifest the humanistic concern, moral values, and patriotism inherent in Chinese culture.

On the other hand, promoting the Chinese sportspersonships and establishing sporting and cultural symbols shared nationwide among all ethnic groups will foster interaction, exchange, and integration. The selfless dedication shown by volunteers at major sporting events, alongside the courageous efforts of athletes striving for national glory on the field, inspires patriotism and dedication among people of all ethnicities across the country. Every world champion is the product of the dedicated efforts of countless individuals—coaches, team doctors, teammates, and support personnel. The unsung heroes, rarely receiving public accolades, willingly serve as steppingstones, paving the way for others' success. By subordinating personal interests to the nation's collective well-being, which embodies a spirit of selfless dedication. Through sporting events, the nationally shared sporting cultural symbols crystallize into a profound sense of the Chinese national community.

Bolstering Core Socialist Values to Build the Foundation of Chinese National Community Consciousness

Chinese sportspersonship constitutes a concrete manifestation of core socialist values within the sporting domain, embodying the national, societal, and individual values inherent in China's athletic development. It represents the culmination of the synergistic interplay between the Chinese national spirit and the universal sportsmanship. Promoting patriotism, solidarity, cooperation, and tenacious struggle serves to fortify the foundation of a strong Chinese national community consciousness. In 2019, the General Office of the State Council underscored this linkage by issuing the *'Outline for Building a Powerful Sports Nation'*, explicitly calling for the in-depth exploration of Chinese sportspersonships and their integration into the cultivation of core socialist values.

Major international sporting events provide crucial platforms for showcasing the nation's image and securing national honor. On the global stage, Chinese athletes embody a patriotic spirit as they compete for their country, projecting excellence to worldwide audiences. When citizens across the nation witness these athletes draped in the national flag, standing atop the podium as the Five-Star Red Flag ascends, they are profoundly stirred by a shared surge of patriotism. The collective experience fosters a powerful sense of national honor and belonging, actively shaping the patriotic spirit of the Chinese nation. Furthermore, the sports ethos characterized by fearlessness in the face of hardship, tenacious struggle, unity and cooperation, and the courage to scale the heights inspires people of all ethnicities nationwide to strive forward with determination. It also plays a vital role in guiding youth to establish positive worldviews, philosophies of life, and value systems.

Forging Behavioral Norms to Instill the Essence of Chinese National Community Consciousness

The Chinese sportspersonship represents a distinct cultural element of the Chinese nation and plays an indispensable role in shaping the behavioral norms underpinning Chinese national community consciousness. Forged through practical sporting endeavors, sportspersonship demands that athlete respect referees, opponents, and spectators while emphasizing equal competition and impartial officiating, thereby establishing a foundational code of conduct. Specifically, the spirit's pursuit of national glory instills the patriotic norm of loving and defending the motherland within the Chinese national community consciousness. Its emphasis on adherence to rules cultivates the collectivist norm of compliance and respect for opponents within the Chinese national community consciousness. Its ethos of unity and

cooperation fosters daily behavioral norms centered on solidarity, mutual assistance, and friendship within the Chinese national community consciousness.

Furthermore, the Chinese sportspersonship of perseverance and hard work propels the Chinese people to forge ahead, confront challenges directly, and never yield. The inherent nature of sports competition necessitates strict adherence to rules, respect for opponents, and deference to referees. The inviolable authority of sports regulations is paramount: athletes comply with the rules, referees enforce them fairly and impartially, and spectators observe events with civility. The principles collectively define the normative behaviors expected within the sporting arena (Gao et al., 2024). Ultimately, the Chinese sportspersonships, emphasizing concepts such as equal competition and fair officiating, actively shape the everyday behavioral norms integral to the Chinese national community consciousness (Gao et al., 2024).

Q2. What are the pathways to explore Chinese sportspersonships to promote the sense of community of the Chinese nation?

Pathways to Enhancing Chinese National Community Consciousness via the Chinese Sportspersonships

The Chinese sportspersonships, a distinct cultural phenomenon forged through the development of the Chinese nation, hold significant importance in the inheritance and cultivation of Chinese national community consciousness. Through the medium of sports, the spirit demonstrates to the world the unity of all ethnic groups in China, closely knit under the party's leadership, striving collectively toward Chinese modernization, thereby reinforcing the Chinese national community consciousness.

Leveraging Sports Media: Events and Mechanisms to Consolidate Chinese National Community Consciousness

Sports serve as a powerful medium for fostering exchange, interaction, and integration among all ethnic groups, contributing significantly to the healthy development of individuals' physical and mental well-being. We can leverage the role of sports media to forge a strong sense of Chinese national community consciousness.

Firstly, Promoting National Sports Events under the Government Strategy. Government departments, social organizations, and service institutions should vigorously promote the hosting of major sporting events. Sport possesses a unique capacity to shape collective memory, and the trajectory of Chinese sport has been intrinsically linked with patriotism. In international competitions, athletes, coaches, and spectators alike represent not merely themselves, but China's comprehensive national strength and image. Each instance of the national flag being raised and the national anthem being played inspires generations of Chinese people with pride, confidence, and self-reliance in the motherland's prosperity. Athletes who bring glory to the nation and dedicated sports professionals motivate people of all ethnicities across the country to strive diligently through their actions.

Secondly, the "Sports Plus" Development Model Integration Mechanism. Concurrently, an integrated communication mechanism should be established, promoting the "Sports Plus"

development model. This involves advancing the integrated development of “*Sports + Tourism*” and “*Sports + Ethnic Culture*”, alongside the promotion of traditional ethnic sports. The traditional activities, developed through long-standing practice, embody distinct cultural memories and encapsulate the patriotic sentiments and spiritual qualities of the Chinese people. For example, China’s hosting of the *13th National Traditional Games of Ethnic Minorities* created a grand platform for showcasing minority sports cultures, enhancing inter-ethnic understanding, strengthening unity, and fostering shared consensus.

Thirdly, fully harnessing the media function of sports. Crucial for awakening shared cultural memories among all ethnic groups, strengthening the Chinese nation’s historical consciousness, and encouraging people nationwide to enhance national identity, deepen cultural awareness, fortify cultural confidence, solidify the concept of “*diversity within unity*”, and advance the construction of Chinese National Community Consciousness.

Resource Integration and Creative Transformation: Cultivating Chinese National Community Consciousness

The significance and scope of the Chinese sportspersonships have long transcended the boundaries of modern competitive sport, evolving into a vital spiritual pillar underpinning the Chinese national community consciousness.

Firstly, we can further delve into and synthesize the essence and dimensions of the Chinese sportspersonships, actively seeking out the shared memories of the Chinese nation. The spirit inherits the quintessence of ancient Chinese sports culture. Intensifying research into its foundations and tracing the sportsmanship and patriotism embedded within historical athletic traditions will enrich educational resources on the subject and cultivate a Chinese sportspersonship that is both distinctly nationally and contemporarily relevant.

Secondly, the profound and extensive nature of the Chinese sportspersonship necessitates its concretization. It should be systematically categorized and integrated across national, societal, and individual levels. Utilizing tangible “people”, “events”, and “objects” as conduits allows people of all ethnicities to appreciate this spirit through sports activities. We can comprehensively document outstanding sports achievements and the stories of iconic figures embodying the spirit, integrating online and offline resources to promote it widely. Leveraging relatable people and events fosters a stronger Chinese national community consciousness.

Thirdly, strengthening the interpretation and academic research of the Chinese sportspersonships is paramount for building a robust resource repository to support the Chinese national community consciousness. It is essential to prioritize and incentivize scholarly inquiry, guiding specialized research teams to investigate its theoretical logic, historical-cultural roots, and value connotations. Simultaneously, promoting the transformation of academic findings into accessible formats is crucial. It involves systematically organizing textual and video materials (content) and enhancing resource library infrastructure (form). Vigorous promotion through integrated online and offline channels will increase the affinity and appeal of the Chinese sportspersonships, creating a conducive environment for their dissemination and the forging of a robust Chinese national community consciousness.

Cultivating Chinese National Community Consciousness through School Education

School education serves as the primary conduit for cultivating Chinese national community consciousness among youth. It requires a multi-faceted approach.

Firstly, schools (university, college, high school, middle school, etc.) are important to prioritize this education, ensuring top-level strategic planning and establishing a robust collaborative mechanism integrating families, schools, and communities. It should strategically leverage key moments during major sporting events and festivals to spearhead the design of relevant themed activities. Maximizing online resources is essential to solidify this tripartite (family-school-community) education mechanism. It ensures that schools, as the principal platforms for fostering Chinese national community consciousness, firmly root the concept within the minds of both teachers and students.

Secondly, classroom teaching must be optimized by systematically integrating this education throughout the curriculum, thereby establishing a comprehensive system for cultivating Chinese national community consciousness. As the core platform of school education, effective classroom instruction is paramount. Ideological and political education courses and physical education classes must fully harness their unique cohesive potential. Ideological and political courses should incorporate compelling sports narratives, such as the spirit of the Women's Volleyball Team and the Winter Olympics, enriching content with vivid examples. Physical education courses should emphasize competitive sports, utilizing competition to foster positive sportsmanship and values among students. Crucially, teaching methodologies must adhere to cognitively appropriate approaches for students at all levels, continuously optimizing methods and refining evaluation mechanisms to enhance instructional effectiveness. It ensures the targeted, methodical, and effective establishment of students' Chinese national community consciousness.

Thirdly, strengthening campus cultural development is vital to embed the seeds of Chinese National Community Consciousness. Schools should create a series of campus cultural landscapes embodying Chinese sportspersonship and Chinese national community consciousness, imbuing physical spaces (landscapes, venues, and buildings) with educational significance to practice holistic *"three-dimensional education"*. Furthermore, schools also organize diverse campus activities, innovating through immersive methodologies such as virtual simulations and online *"cloud"* venues. These initiatives enable students to experientially grasp the spiritual power of Chinese sportspersonships through narratives, settings, and atmosphere. The subtle yet powerful approach strengthens the *"Four Confucian Virtues"*, enhances the cohesion, centripetal force, and self-confidence of the Chinese nation, and promotes the formation of a more recognizable and cohesive Chinese national community consciousness. Ultimately, it gathers potent spiritual strength for all ethnic groups across China to actively engage in comprehensively building a modern socialist country and advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Conclusion

Promoting Chinese sportspersonships constitutes a vital pathway for forging a robust Chinese national community consciousness. Advancing it contributes significantly to strengthening cultural identity, cultivating core socialist values, and establishing positive behavioral norms. The effects unite the populace, fortify the nation's foundations, and empower the Chinese nation in building a cohesive community consciousness. To fully

leverage the role of the Chinese sportspersonships in the endeavor, a multi-faceted approach is required as follows: leveraging sports functions & optimizing mechanisms, maximizing the inherent societal functions of sport, and refining collaborative frameworks; integrating resources & transferring outcomes, strengthening the consolidation of diverse resources and the effective application of resultant achievements; and enhancing school education & teaching quality, reinforcing the educational system, and elevating pedagogical standards. Its strategies will ensure the Chinese sportspersonship fully realizes their potential in forging a strong Chinese national community consciousness.

Research Contribution

The study makes a significant contribution by systematically conceptualizing and operationalizing the unique role of Chinese sportsmanship as a catalyst for forging a sense of community for the Chinese nation. It explicitly identified and articulated three core, actionable pathways: 1) the strategic leveraging of sport's inherent societal functions coupled with optimized collaborative mechanisms; 2) the enhanced integration of diverse resources and effective transfer of resultant outcomes; and 3) the targeted strengthening of educational systems and pedagogical quality within schools. By proposing the above multi-faceted framework, it provided a powerful framework and a grounded and practically implementable model for harnessing the distinct value cultures embedded within Chinese sportsmanship to actively cultivate and solidify shared national identity, cultural belonging, and collective consciousness among the Chinese people.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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