

Research on the Creative Features of Performance Events at the National Traditional Ethnic Sports Games

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Abstract: The traditional sports performances of China's ethnic minorities are an indispensable part of global sports culture. These traditional sports activities not only play a crucial role in the national sports industry but also represent the valuable heritage of Chinese ethnic traditions and culture. The purpose of researching traditional sports performances of ethnic minorities across the country is to protect, inherit, explore, and develop their cultural practices. This article utilizes literature review, logical analysis, and video analysis methods to analyze the performances of the three recent National Traditional Sports Games of Ethnic Minorities. It concludes that the creative process of these performances exhibits characteristics of authenticity, reflecting the connection to nature, production and daily life, customs and folklore, regional diversity, physicality, and artistry. This research aims to provide meaningful insights for the development and creation of traditional sports performances of ethnic minorities and further promote the inheritance and promotion of traditional culture.

Keywords: Traditional Sports of Ethnic Minorities; National Traditional Ethnic Sports Games; Performance Events; Creative Characteristics.

1. Introduction

The Chinese Communist Party and the government have always attached great importance to the development of traditional sports among ethnic minorities, ensuring the inheritance and development of minority interests and ethnic sports in accordance with the law. The National Traditional Ethnic Sports Games in China serve as a crucial platform to showcase the levels and spirits of traditional sports among various ethnic minorities, promoting national unity and friendship. The performance events at these games have been refined and artistically processed, incorporating elements of sports competition to form unique performance styles. These events originate from people's daily lives and are widely loved by the masses. The choreography and direction of the performance events in the Ethnic Minority Games draw inspiration from the distinctive styles of different ethnic groups, exhibiting their long histories and unique cultural traditions by incorporating genuine elements. Researching the creative characteristics of these performance events aims to delve into and develop the culture of traditional sports among ethnic minorities, promoting innovation and development in these traditional sports games. Investigating the creative characteristics of performance events in the National Traditional Ethnic Sports Games means reassessing their sustainability. This endeavor not only aims to inherit and protect our valuable national traditional culture but also to better facilitate the rapid development of traditional sports among ethnic minorities in China.

2. Concept Definition

2.1. National Traditional Sports Games of Ethnic Minorities

"The National Traditional Sports Games of Ethnic Minorities in the People's Republic of China is developed based on the National Ethnic Form Sports Performance and Competition held in 1953. Co-hosted by the National Ethnic Affairs Commission and the National Sports Commission,

this event is organized by local authorities and takes place once every four years. With its distinctive features of ethnicity, inclusiveness, and amateurism, this sports event has become one of the influential large-scale comprehensive sports games in the country. It aims to explore and compile various traditional sports forms of ethnic minorities, promote ethnic sports culture, develop ethnic sports, and encourage nationwide fitness activities. Additionally, it contributes positively to enhancing the physical fitness of people from all ethnic backgrounds and facilitating ethnic unity." [1]

2.2. Performance Events

"Performance events refer to sports performances in traditional ethnic sports that combine fitness, entertainment, spectacle, and ethnic elements with music, drum beats, and dance." [2]

3. Theoretical Foundations for the Creation of Performance Events at the National Ethnic Minority Sports Games

The theoretical foundations for the creation of performance events at the National Ethnic Minority Sports Games mainly include the following aspects:

3.1. Traditional Cultural Theory

In-depth research on the traditional cultures of various ethnic minorities is an important theoretical foundation for the creation process. It is necessary to understand the history, folklore, religion, values, and other aspects of ethnic minorities in order to have a comprehensive understanding of traditional sports projects.

3.2. Social Anthropology Theory

By drawing on the theories and methods of social anthropology, we can gain a deeper understanding of the significance and function of traditional ethnic sports projects within their social and cultural contexts. This helps in creating

performance events that have ethnic characteristics and cultural connotations.

3.3. Aerobics and Artistic Gymnastics Related Theories

Aerobics and artistic gymnastics both emphasize the strength, agility, and skills of performers, while also cultivating their artistic cultivation and stage performance abilities. Learning from relevant theories in aerobics and artistic gymnastics helps develop athletes with good physical fitness, professional skills, and stage presence, enabling better presentation of graceful, dynamic, and innovative performance events.

3.4. Dance Art Theory

Since there are many dance elements in the performance events of the National Ethnic Minority Sports Games, dance art theory is crucial in creating projects with a dance nature. Research on dance techniques, movement language, and choreographic principles provides guidance for creation.

3.5. Sports Science Theory

The field of sports science has conducted in-depth research on the physiology, psychology, and training aspects of sports. These theoretical knowledge can be applied to the creation of traditional ethnic sports performance events to ensure the athletes' physical health and technical proficiency during their performances.

4. Characteristics of Creating Performance Projects at the National Ethnic Games

4.1. Primitiveness

"The sudden popularity of the concept of primitiveness stems from modern people's reevaluation of culture, where the essence of culture is not props but spirit, and spirit emphasizes originality. The charm of some performance projects lies in their primitive characteristics, as both the audience and judges are deeply moved by the authentic nature of the sports." [3] Traditional ethnic sports performance projects maintain their original and natural state during the performance. These projects are usually derived from indigenous cultures and lifestyles, and after years of development and inheritance, they have become unique cultural heritage of ethnic minorities. Compared to modern sports events, traditional ethnic sports performance projects place more emphasis on preserving their original features and local characteristics.

For example, in the performance of "A-Chi Melon Guadalah," a dance imitating goats, the skillful coordination of movements and music gives the judges and audience a sense of an ancient and primitive culture. In the performance of "Fire Torch Building," there is a wild and rustic cry emanating from the center of the stage, highlighting the primitive and natural traits.

4.2. Productive and Livelihood-oriented

Many traditional ethnic sports performance projects are closely related to the production and livelihood of ethnic minorities. "In the process of creating traditional ethnic sports performance projects, the unique ethnic characteristics derived from the production and cultural practices of the ethnic minority are fully utilized. This is the fundamental

requirement for the development of traditional ethnic sports performance projects and plays an important role in promoting the exploration and development of ethnic culture. The specific competition events of each National Ethnic Sports Games reflect both the level of understanding of ethnic sports culture and fully showcase the sports and cultural connotations of these events." [4]

"Playing with Pinecone Ball" is inspired by the Mi'ao people's production labor and represents a form of entertainment within their work. Through the competition, participants also gain a sense of accomplishment. "New Rice Festival" is a celebration organized by the Hani people to mark a bountiful harvest. It showcases the customs of the Hani people, who pray for a successful natural environment and fruitful future. "Ayicai" is based on the intangible cultural heritage of the Miao people called "Miaoshan Da Nao," vividly demonstrating the intelligence and diligence of the Miao people while presenting their romantic customs associated with productive labor.

4.3. Ethnical and Folk Characteristics

The differences in ethnic customs, traditional culture, economic conditions, and living standards of different ethnic minorities determine the unique folk characteristics of their traditional sports. Various traditional sports activities are closely integrated with ethnic customs and are passed down through the formation, development, and changes of these customs. It can be said that the development of folk customs directly promotes the development of traditional sports of different ethnic groups. History, lifestyle, and folk customs are all evolving, and ethnic traditional sports are also constantly evolving and changing. Although a few activities may disappear from real life along with the disappearance of certain customs, the majority continue to innovate, develop, and perfect through continuous evolution, becoming a fixed form of ethnic traditional sports that have been passed down and developed to this day.

For example, "Jumping Rings" is a unique project that originated from the Yao ethnic group's male adulthood ritual "Dujie". Its movements are ancient, generous, combining strength and flexibility, and it has good fitness functions. It is a comprehensive project with a strong ethnic flavor. "Torch Stacking" as a performance project takes inspiration from the Yi ethnic group's Torch Festival, their grandest traditional festival. "Manchu Eight-Banner Drumming" originated from the performance activities of the Manchu people during harvest and ancestral worship, showcasing the joy of the Manchu people's harvest and their respect for ancestors.

4.4. Regional Characteristics

Due to the wide distribution of ethnic minorities, significant differences in geographical environment and climate, as well as diverse political, ideological, economic, cultural, and customs among various ethnic groups, traditional sports activities with rich contents, varied styles, diverse forms, and distinct ethnic characteristics have been formed. These minority traditional sports performances created and developed in the production and life of ethnic minorities carry strong regional features. [5]

The formation and development of the culture and traditional sports forms of ethnic minorities are influenced by natural geography and ecological environment. These factors make ethnic minority sports exhibit regional characteristics and present unique forms of expression. These distinctive

performance forms are showcased on the stage of the National Traditional Sports Games for Ethnic Minorities. Through fully exploring and utilizing the unique cultural heritage of each ethnic group, cleverly arranging programs, and showcasing diversity to the fullest extent. For example, the performance project "Torch Stacking" draws inspiration from the traditional elements of the Torch Festival of the Yi ethnic group, which is widely spread and inherited among the Yi people in the Yi Autonomous Prefecture of Chuxiong, Yunnan Province, and is extremely popular. This unique performance project combines Yi culture with sports competitions using torches as props, showcasing the wisdom and courage of the Yi people.

4.5. Sports Characteristics

Many ethnic minorities in China are distributed in different regions, and they directly reflect their unique culture and way of life through ethnic sports activities. In the performance events of the National Traditional Sports Games for Ethnic Minorities, many are showcased in the form of song and dance, fully demonstrating the diverse sports culture of each ethnic minority. These events combine competitiveness and performance, presenting strong characteristics of entertainment, fitness, and cultural integration. In the performance events of ethnic sports games, song and dance complement and are inseparable from sports. Choreographers need to ensure that the performance events fully showcase the unique culture and traditions of each ethnic minority, allowing the audience to gain a deeper understanding of the sports culture of ethnic minorities. For example, the performance event "Floral Hip Swing" is a comprehensive performance by a group of Dai girls and boys. It seems to resemble a dance, but it clearly demonstrates its fitness aspect. In the Yi ethnic group's performance event "Da Ge," the choreographer starts with a shoulder stand and incorporates high leg movements with ethnic style, clapping and nodding movements, along with a lively and powerful rhythm, all of which demonstrate its fitness aspect.

4.6. Artistic Features

Traditional sports of ethnic minorities in China not only showcase their athletic properties, but also exhibit their artistic features. In the performance events of the National Traditional Sports Games of Ethnic Minorities, participating units draw essence from their own ethnic sports forms and create works with strong artistic performance and aesthetic value through artistic processing and dance choreography. This combination of art, sports, and entertainment perfectly demonstrates the rich cultural connotations of traditional sports of ethnic minorities. In terms of artistic appreciation, how to showcase the essence of the performance within a limited time and achieve the best effect is an important consideration in the choreography process. To attract the attention of the audience and judges and create a profound impression, the performance choreography pursues compact and diversified content, making every moment full of vitality and charm.

For example, in the program "Monkey Play Lion," various martial arts such as Shaolin Boxing and Monkey Boxing are cleverly integrated, allowing the audience to appreciate exquisite martial arts performances. The young actors showcase remarkable high-difficulty movements such as leaps and somersaults to vividly present the bravery and fierceness of the lion and the agility and cuteness of the

monkey. Through precise and flexible martial arts movements, they bring these animal images to life. The unique choreography of the entire program requires actors to possess high-level basic skills and martial arts techniques. This is not only a challenge to their technical abilities but also showcases a high level of performing arts.

"Xiangshan Board" is a tool used by the Zhuang people for mixing sauce, keeping poultry, and driving away birds that peck at crops. The program showcases the rhythmic and bustling scenes of Zhuang girls and boys striking the Xiangshan boards. The crisp and melodious sounds of the Xiangshan boards alternate between softness and exuberance, resembling a symphony of harvest echoing through the mountains, conveying an atmosphere of happiness and joy. This scene artistically presents the charm and vitality of Zhuang culture.

5. Conclusion

The national traditional sports performance projects of ethnic minority groups in China are an important part of their traditional sports, showcasing the diverse cultural connotations of each ethnic group. These projects have always been key events in the National Games, characterized by their originality, production and daily life relevance, folk customs, regional uniqueness, artistic value, and physical fitness aspects. These projects embody the production and lifestyle of ethnic minorities and are the most authentic forms of expressing their traditional culture. Through meticulous training, these performances present beautiful artistic effects. They highlight the characteristics of sports and physical fitness while also possessing a wide mass base and promotional value. Moreover, these projects serve as important indicators to evaluate the production, life, religious rituals, as well as the psychological and individual characteristics of ethnic groups. Performances that successfully integrate rich ethnic cultural information truly exhibit their unique ethnic cultural features. In the process of creation and performance, directors and actors cannot do without the creative soil of ethnic culture. Only by fully drawing on the elements of ethnic culture can the spiritual demeanor of each ethnic group be authentically presented, radiating the cultural charm of different ethnicities.

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