

Integration of Spiritual Guidance and Sports Education: Forging the Soul of a Leading Sporting Nation in the New Era

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Abstract: In the journey toward the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, sports shoulders the important mission of enhancing people's physical fitness, promoting the national spirit, and cultivating new-generation talents. Under the backdrop of the New Era, giving full play to the political and organizational advantages of spiritual guidance and advancing the deep integration of ideological development with the goals of sports education represents a strategic path to fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education and nurturing young people capable of shouldering the mission of national rejuvenation. Focusing on the two core themes of "spiritual guidance for innovative development of sports" and "deepening ideological-political education in physical education curricula", this paper systematically explores the practical pathways, internal logic, and epochal value of integrating spiritual guidance with sports, aiming to provide theoretical support and practical references for building a leading sporting nation in the New Era.

Keywords: Spiritual guidance; Ideological-political development; Integration with sports

Online publication: July 20, 2026

1. Spiritual guidance driving innovative development of sports

1.1. Strengthening spiritual guidance to steer the right course for sports development

Laying a solid ideological foundation is the fundamental prerequisite for the sound development of sports undertakings^[1]. Sports-related authorities must prioritize ideological development, organizing teachers, students, and coaches to thoroughly study important expositions on building a leading sporting nation and a strong educational country through theoretical learning and thematic educational practices, and deeply understand the important position of sports in the great cause of national rejuvenation^[2]. Sports practitioners should be guided to integrate personal values into the overall national development and clarify the duties and missions of "cultivating talents for the country and serving society".

Clarifying the value orientation is a key link in constructing a sports evaluation system^[3]. In sports evaluation, the weight of assessing ideological morality, willpower, and social responsibility of athletes

and students should be strengthened, guiding them to transcend mere championshipism and establish lofty sports values of “health first”, “striving for glory for the country”, and “serving the people”. A multi-dimensional indicator system for sports evaluation should be improved, incorporating ideological and political performance, teamwork ability, and willpower quality into the evaluation scope to form a morality-first, all-round development-oriented evaluation mechanism.

1.2. Giving play to organizational advantages to improve the effectiveness of sports education

Strengthening grassroots Party organizations serves as the organizational foundation for spiritual guidance in sports development^[4]. The organizational system should be improved in key areas such as sports teams, physical education departments, and sports associations, with sound working mechanisms to ensure full coverage of spiritual guidance and education. Backbones with strong political awareness, professional competence, and integrity should be selected as coaches, team leaders, PE teachers, or club instructors. Efforts should be made to cultivate advanced models among high-level athletes and young sports backbones, continuously optimize the structure of the backbone team, and enhance the cohesion and combat effectiveness of the organization. In sports teams, a mechanism for Party organizations to participate in major decision-making should be established and improved to ensure that the core role of spiritual guidance is implemented.

Exemplary role models of Party members are an important way to exert leading effects^[5]. “Pioneer Posts for Party Members” and “Pioneer Responsibility Zones” should be set up, requiring Party member coaches, athletes, and PE teachers to strive for excellence in training, strive for perfection in teaching, take on heavy responsibilities in competitions, and set an example in discipline, influencing and driving surrounding teachers and students with concrete actions. A system for Party members to contact the masses should be established, with each Party member contacting several teachers and students to carry out regular work such as ideological guidance, professional assistance, and care for daily life. In major competitions and urgent, difficult, and dangerous tasks, vanguard assault teams composed of Party members should be organized to give play to their exemplary and leading role and demonstrate an advanced nature and responsibility.

1.3. Promoting institutional innovation to empower high-quality development of sports

Brand building of “Spiritual Guidance + Sports Culture” is an effective carrier to enhance the influence of ideological development^[6]. Carefully planned and sustained activities such as “Red Sports Meetings”, thematic orienteering courses of “Retracing the Long March Road”, and “Sports Champions Entering Campuses to Tell Party History” should be carried out, integrating the Party’s history and revolutionary traditional education into sports competitions and mass sports activities, endowing sports activities with profound ideological connotations, and enhancing the attractiveness and influence of the “Red Sports” brand. Attention should be paid to tapping local red resources and sports traditions to build regionally featured red sports brands, forming a vivid situation of “one school, one brand, one region, one characteristic”. Meanwhile, new media platforms should be fully utilized to expand the coverage and influence of red sports culture communication, making it deeply rooted in the minds of young students^[7].

Collaborative research of “Spiritual Guidance + Sports Scientific Research” is an important engine for promoting technological innovation in sports^[8]. Focusing on major national needs such as improving competitive levels, promoting national health, and developing the sports industry, research teams led by Party members should be formed to make breakthroughs in key technologies, training methods, sports rehabilitation,

and the application of sports big data, reflecting the leading role of spiritual guidance in promoting the self-reliance and self-improvement of sports science and technology. “Research Pioneer Posts” should be established to encourage research backbones to take on heavy responsibilities and overcome difficulties in arduous research tasks. Meanwhile, the transformation and application of sports scientific research results should be strengthened, turning research results into a practical force for improving the effectiveness of sports education.

2. Deepening ideological-political education in PE curricula: Cultivating new-era talents through PE classes

Physical education curricula are important carriers for fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, containing rich and unique ideological-political educational resources. The key to deepening ideological-political education in PE curricula lies in integrating value shaping, knowledge imparting, and ability cultivation, achieving integration like salt in water and imperceptible influence.

2.1. Precisely grasping the ideological-political educational goals of PE curricula

“What kind of people to cultivate” is the fundamental issue of ideological-political education in PE curricula^[9]. The goal is to nurture well-rounded socialist builders and successors with moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor development. PE curricula should focus on shaping students’ strong physique, sound personality, firm will, cooperative qualities, rule-abiding awareness, and profound patriotism^[10]. Physical education should not only impart sports skills and enhance physical fitness but also pay attention to cultivating students’ moral character, aesthetic taste, and labor spirit to promote their all-round development. The construction of ideological-political education in PE curricula should center on the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, clarifying the unique value and functional positioning of physical education in talent cultivation.

“How to cultivate people” is the methodological issue of ideological-political education in PE curricula. Through systematic physical exercise, skill learning, competition participation, and sports cultural edification, students should be guided to perceive sportsmanship, understand life philosophies, and elevate ideological realms in practical experience, achieving unity of knowledge and action. PE curricula are characterized by strong practicality, deep experience, and high interactivity; these characteristics should be fully utilized to let students “learn by doing”, “comprehend by practicing”, and “feel by competing”, receive ideological education through personal participation, and realize internalization of values through concrete actions. Attention should be paid to exerting the educational function of sports competitions, letting students experience success and failure, cooperation and competition, rules and freedom in competitions, and cultivating a sound personality and good psychological quality.

2.2. Systematically exploring and integrating ideological-political elements in PE curricula

Ideals and beliefs are the core content of ideological-political education in PE curricula^[11]. Combined with Olympic history, the development history of Chinese sports (such as the leap from the “Three Olympic Questions” to the “Dual Olympic City”), and the struggle experiences of sports role models, stories of Chinese sports should be well told, demonstrating national development achievements and enhancing the “Four Matters of Confidence”, especially confidence in the path and culture. Through PE curricula, students

should understand the glorious course of China's sports undertakings, recognize the unique advantages of the sports development path with Chinese characteristics, and strengthen confidence in adhering to the sports development path with Chinese characteristics.

Patriotism and collectivism education are important contents of ideological-political education in PE curricula^[12]. In queue training and team sports teaching (basketball, football, volleyball, etc.), the spirit of strict obedience, unity and cooperation, and fighting for collective honor should be emphasized. When watching international competitions, students should be guided to be rational patriots, cheer for the hard work of Chinese athletes, and demonstrate the demeanor of great-power citizens. PE curricula should cultivate students' collectivist spirit, letting them learn to cooperate, contribute, and take responsibility in team sports, and enhance collective honor and team cohesion.

Willpower and striving spirit education are characteristic contents of ideological-political education in PE curricula^[13]. In high-intensity exercises such as endurance running, strength training, and confrontational events, students should be encouraged to challenge themselves, overcome difficulties, and never give up, tempering their hard-working and indomitable willpower. Encouragement should be combined with cases of athletes struggling with injuries and turning the tide in adversity. PE curricula should become a melting pot for tempering students' willpower, letting them cultivate the striving spirit of tenacious struggle and never-say-die in the process of challenging limits and surpassing themselves.

2.3. Innovating implementation paths and methods for ideological-political education in PE curricula

Optimizing curriculum goal design is the basic link of ideological-political education in PE curricula^[14]. Ideological-political educational goals should be clearly and specifically written into PE teaching syllabi and unit/lesson plans, and organically integrated with goals such as sports skills and physical development. Curriculum goal design should achieve "three integrations": integrating ideological-political goals with professional goals, explicit goals with implicit goals, and phased goals with long-term goals, forming a scientific and reasonable ideological-political education goal system for curricula.

Deepening teaching content reform is the core task of ideological-political education in PE curricula. In explicit integration, relevant sportsmanship, historical stories, deeds of role models and their contained ideological-political connotations should be directly taught in theoretical courses, warm-up explanations, and summary comments. In implicit infiltration, situations should be created in skill teaching, tactical drills, competition practice, and game activities (such as simulating critical moments of competitions and setting team cooperation tasks) to guide students to personally experience and understand the importance of qualities such as unity, struggle, discipline, and responsibility. In exploring project characteristics, corresponding ideological-political elements should be accurately refined and integrated according to the characteristics of different sports (such as precision and aesthetics of gymnastics, struggle and breakthrough of track and field, wisdom and cooperation of ball games).

Innovating teaching methods and means is the key measure to improve the effectiveness of ideological-political education in PE curricula^[15]. Case teaching should be widely used, selecting classic cases in the sports field embodying lofty spirit, patriotism, and tenacious will (such as the Women's Volleyball Spirit, Su Bingtian's breakthrough, and the deeds of disabled athletes) for in-depth analysis. Situational experience teaching should be carried out, designing tasks requiring team cooperation to overcome difficulties and simulating psychological adjustment training under competition pressure, letting students experience and grow

in real situations. Problem-oriented discussions should be adopted, organizing discussions around hot sports events to guide students to distinguish right from wrong and establish correct values. Digital empowerment should be promoted, using MOOCs, micro-lectures, VR/AR technology to vividly display sports history, culture, and spiritual connotations, enhancing attractiveness and appeal.

3. Conclusion: Integration and symbiosis, forging soul and cultivating through sports

The deep integration of spiritual guidance and sports education is a lofty mission entrusted to sports undertakings by the New Era. By giving full play to the fighting fortress role of Party organizations and the exemplary role of Party member pioneers in the sports field, the political and organizational advantages of spiritual guidance should be transformed into a strong driving force for promoting innovative development of sports. Meanwhile, PE classrooms should be deeply cultivated, integrating ideological-political elements systematically, scientifically, and artistically to achieve organic unity of value guidance and skill imparting.

Only in this way can sports be truly built into a melting pot for tempering will, improving personality, and nurturing spirit, cultivating new-era talents with strong physique, sound personality, firm will, and ability to shoulder heavy responsibilities, injecting majestic youthful power into accelerating the construction of a leading sporting nation and a strong educational country, and realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. Let the spiritual banner of “Red Sports” fly high on and off the field, and let the educational value of sports shine more brightly in the New Era. On the new journey of building a modern socialist country in an all-round way, sports will surely write a new chapter of sports education in the New Era with a more high-spirited posture, richer connotations, and more prominent contributions.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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