

The Influence of Japanese Sports Anime on the Audience's Sports Value Orientation in the Context of Cross-Cultural Communication: Taking "*Slam Dunk*" as an Example

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Abstract:

The issue of artistic creation and cultural dissemination in Japanese sports anime has received widespread attention, but there is still insufficient attention to the influence of values. This article takes "*Slam Dunk*" as an example and uses text analysis and questionnaire survey methods to analyze the factors that influence the audience's sports value orientation in Japanese sports anime, their impact on the sports value orientation of Chinese youth, and the differences that arise between different generations. This article analyzes the impact of Japanese anime on the spiritual needs and cultural identity of youth, as well as the problem of communication value deviation caused by quality control and propaganda guidance in cross-cultural communication. Based on this, this article proposes the following suggestions: Japanese anime should use localization methods in cross-cultural communication, understand the cultural habits and current market conditions of the recipients, strictly classify and regulate the content of the works, and organically integrate with the recipient market to avoid cultural barriers and misleading in the transmission process, and convey correct ideas.

Keywords: Sports anime; *Slam Dunk*; sports value orientation; cross-cultural communication

1. Introduction

Japanese sports anime began to sprout in the 1980s, with passion and youth as the main theme, running through the youth of every young person who loves

sports, and attracting more people to fall in love with sports culture in the process of dissemination. The regionalization theory holds that since the 1980s, Japan has become a regional-scale center, continuously exerting influence in Southeast Asia and forming a

common cultural circle. This theory ignores the influence of different cultures on individuals, and that consuming the same culture can lead to different interpretations. Gong Aoxue believes that Japanese anime utilizes the similarity between Chinese and Japanese cultures, the heterogeneity of Japanese culture presented through high-quality visual music, and the integration of cultural elements from multiple countries for cross-cultural dissemination in the Middle Ages [1]. Li Chenmei also believes that cultural proximity, cultural heterogeneity, cultural diversity, government support, and industry improvement are the reasons for the successful cross-cultural dissemination of Japanese anime in China [2].

Huihe and Luo Minghao proposed that “*Slam Dunk*” uses character facial makeup symbolization and NBA players as prototypes to attract young audiences with elements such as fighting, love, friendship, and ambition; Through the visual imagery rendering of anime, it brings symbolic psychological enhancement to youths [3]. Hao Yuemei believes that “*Slam Dunk*” has conquered millions of children through character design, Q-version transformation, as well as color, lighting, dynamics, and sound [4].

Zheng Heming and Ye Ming believe that socialization is the starting point for youths to accept sports anime, and character identity runs through the entire process of their acceptance of sports anime [5]. Tang Lan and Zhao Li proposed that “*Slam Dunk*” promotes young people’s understanding of sports and stimulates their awareness of participating in sports by popularizing basic basketball knowledge, showcasing basic basketball skills, and spreading the spirit of basketball [6].

The current research mainly discusses artistic techniques and cultural dissemination, with more focus on issues related to creation and expression, and less attention paid to the influence of values. This article aims to use “*Slam Dunk*” as an example to explore the influence of Japanese sports anime on the values of youth sports in the context of cross-cultural communication. This article adopts text analysis and questionnaire survey methods to distinguish different age groups of audiences and propose their impact on the sports value orientation of Chinese youths before and after the millennium by generation.

2. Research Methods and Results

2.1 Methods

2.1.1 Text analysis method

This article analyzes the content and summarizes the rules of “*Slam Dunk*”, and summarizes the factors that can affect the sports value orientation of young people at work.

It intuitively summarizes the impact of Japanese sports anime on the sports value orientation of young people in the context of cross-cultural communication.

2.1.2 Questionnaire survey method

In previous research, Zheng Heming compiled indicators of the depth relationship between “*Slam Dunk*” and basketball-related value elements of “Douban” bloggers, studying the varying degrees of influence of the works on value orientation, reflecting the trend and direction of audience sports value development. He pointed out that while watching “*Slam Dunk*”, the audience is also completing the interpretation and acceptance of a basketball-themed work, expressing their feelings, viewpoints, and opinions in various ways [5]. In the mid to late 1990s, the educational philosophy of “humanism” returned, and China integrated the idea of “health first” into its policies, emphasizing the importance of sports work; In 2014, the Ministry of Education proposed the concept of “core literacy”, further emphasizing the influence of sports education on nurturing students [7]. *Slam Dunk* was released in the Chinese Mainland around 1994, and the audience before the millennium was the first group to be affected. With the advancement of the times and technology, high-definition remastered works were once again played on online platforms in 2013, and the audience after the millennium became the second group affected. Due to the development of the times, the values of two generations are influenced by different factors, and their feelings towards the same work will also be different.

Therefore, this study adopts a questionnaire survey method, using the millennium as the generation segmentation line for stratified sampling, aiming to conduct a comparative study on the different influences on the sports value orientation of adolescents under different generation backgrounds. Electronic questionnaires help to obtain data on audiences in different periods. The questionnaire is designed to address the audience’s situation, the post-viewing experience of the work, the impact on the value of sports, and the relationship between related sports value elements from shallow to deep. Then, data statistics and analysis are used to explore group characteristics, discover patterns, and trends. Two questions were set based on the short-term impact of the work on sports orientation, and three questions were set based on the long-term impact, to explore the different orientations of “*Slam Dunk*” towards the audience’s basketball orientation. This survey selected the “Wenjuanxing” platform for electronic questionnaire distribution to cover a more comprehensive age group. A total of 232 questionnaires were distributed in this study. As this article focuses on the impact of “*Slam Dunk*” on the values of youth sports, those who have not watched

this work will not be studied. Therefore, 211 valid questionnaires were collected in this study. There were 116 cases before the millennium and 95 cases after the millennium.

2.2 Results

2.2.1 Influence analysis

After watching ‘*Slam Dunk*’, the audience’s sports values were influenced, and the work was influenced through plot setting, character development, and relationship construction. In “*Slam Dunk*”, “Dr. T Basketball Classroom” is often added or explained to the audience the basic knowledge of basketball through the analysis of basketball players, psychological activities, coach deployment, and discussions with the audience outside the court, giving youths a certain knowledge foundation. At the same time, the work continuously unlocks basic basketball skills from beginners through the growth line of the protagonist Sakuragi Hanamichi, emphasizing the importance of basic skills and the preciousness of effort in sports activities, and standardizing the thinking of young people in sports practice. Various advanced basketball skills, such as “fly block shots” allow youths to imitate and study, stimulating their interest in sports. The inspiring competition plot

in the work showcases teamwork and competition spirit, conveying sports spirit such as team consciousness and competition consciousness to young people, and standardizing sports values. Whether it’s Sakuragi Hanamichi, Ryukawa Maple, or Mitsui Shou, some of their traits always resonate with youths. “*Slam Dunk*” showcases the laughter and tears, struggle, and self-reconciliation of youth through rich character development and relationship construction.

2.2.2 The audience’s attitude towards basketball after watching anime

The survey results show that after watching “*Slam Dunk*”, the audience’s attitude towards basketball has undergone a certain change, with an impact rate of 89%. In Table 1, it can be seen that in the short term of watching the work, about 74% of the audience stated that they had tried basketball. Over 78% of the audience is motivated by the impact of the work, and their enthusiasm for participating in sports has increased. From a long-term perspective, ‘*Slam Dunk*’ conveys the direction of enhancing confidence, improving team awareness, cultivating competitiveness, and inspiring sports enthusiasm, and has a significant cognitive impact on the audience from different perspectives.

Table 1. The Influence of *Slam Dunk* on the Audience’s Sports Value Orientation.

The Influence of <i>Slam Dunk</i> on the Audience’s Sports Value Orientation		
Degree of impact	Number of people	Ratio
A. Falling in love with basketball	26	12.21%
B. Falling in love with a basketball player	35	16.43%
C. Basketball Enlightenment	39	18.31%
D. Start playing basketball	27	12.68%
E. Want to play basketball	18	8.45%
F. Buy a basketball	18	8.45%
G. Watching basketball games	21	9.86%
H. Choose a relevant major	6	2.82%
I. Still do not like basketball	17	7.98%
J. Other	6	2.82%

2.2.3 The difference before and after the millennium

The impact on the audience varies before and after the millennium. Before the millennium, about 38% more youths regarded “*Slam Dunk*” as a basketball enlightenment than after the millennium; The number of youths who watch basketball games influenced by works after the millennium is 50% higher than before the millennium; The number of people choosing related majors is five times higher than before the millennium. Before the mil-

lennium, due to the singularity and limited dissemination of television programs, there were relatively few sports animations available, so “*Slam Dunk*” was regarded as a basketball enlightenment; After the millennium, with the development of the Internet, more sports animation can be accessed, such as “*Kuroko’s Basketball*”, “*Yuri on Ice*” and so on. The rich information sources give youths more choices.

3. Causes and Problems of Impact

3.1 The Influence of Japanese Anime on Youths

There is a wide variety of anime genres in Japan, including hot-blooded adventure, romantic youth, sports competition, and culinary healing, all of which have a fixed audience. Anime of the same type often have similar features and styles, which can attract a fixed group. For the relatively vertical market, Japanese anime accurately grasps the psychological characteristics of youths and focuses on catering to their different psychological needs [8]. Youths are in the stage of self-exploration and shaping their values, and have a high level of curiosity and sensitivity towards external works. They are easily influenced by the values or behaviors at work. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory divides human needs into five categories based on a pyramid structure, namely physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs [9]. During adolescence, although respect is dominant, the need for self-actualization is also constantly increasing. Adolescents have a desire to learn and develop, as well as a desire to explore new and unknown things. In anime works, youths constantly absorb new perspectives and internalize them, gradually forming their ideological system.

With the continuous development of Japan's anime culture, animation, as an important form of cultural soft power, has profoundly affected the cultural identity of young people [10]. Especially in some sports anime, the growth of the protagonist is used to convey the idea of hard work and the spirit of teamwork to the audience. Most of these anime protagonists are still in school; they are "useless" and counterattack, cultivating tacit understanding and friendship with their teammates in daily training and competition. They share the same frequency as youths' lives, but have different experiences. This type of work, which originates from life but transcends it, allows viewers to discover possibilities beyond the routine of campus life, broadens the horizons of young people, and subtly spreads Japanese culture and related knowledge. Anime not only involves history and war, but also explores issues such as anti-war and environmentalism, which, to some extent, affects the depth of young people's thinking [11].

Japanese anime adopts various channels of dissemination and appears in front of teenagers in different ways. In addition to the conventional Internet streaming media publicity means, animation will also be co-branded with some catering brands and stationery, with the role of high popularity on the packaging. Snack, beverage, and stationery stores often appear around schools and subtly appear in the lives of teenagers. Young students often have limited

access to the Internet. These products are packaged to attract young people to buy, and then passed through word of mouth among students to expand the scope of communication and expand the audience.

3.2 Problems

3.2.1 The negative impact of Japanese anime on teenagers

With the rapid production and dissemination of Japanese anime, a large number of well-produced works have attracted teenagers to become addicted to it. Many anime series are released, often giving the works a long tail effect and causing teenagers to focus on "chasing updates" for a long time, consuming a lot of time.

The phenomenon of uneven quality of work also occurs from time to time, and negative tendencies affect the thinking of young people. Youths often have a worship mentality towards characters, among which characters exhibit surreal behaviors, such as exaggerated sports skills, which may lead to dangerous imitative behavior and a desire for quick success. Some anime may contain violent, bloody, or revealing elements, and early exposure to them by youths can lead to negative behavioral tendencies and potential threats. Some villains have bad behavior and low morality, but due to the portrayal of characters in anime, villains also have personality charm. Youths may unintentionally dilute their impression of the characters' wrong behavior, thereby unconsciously lowering their moral bottom line requirements.

Repetitive and low-level content in works can also imprison the thoughts of young people. Repetitive and ineffective content can cause teenagers to develop thinking inertia or moral distortion, subconsciously choosing methods that do not conform to the current situation. For example, in some harem anime, the handling of opposite sex relationships by characters may be reasonable in a secondary world setting, but in real life, it may go against popular perception and common beliefs.

The emergence of derivative products that accompany anime, such as peripheral and themed restaurants, often leads teenagers to overspend money on their favorite characters or works at a stage where they have no concept of money, and develop bad habits. In response to differences in purchasing power, Japanese anime merchandise not only produces high-end limited-time products but also sells general merchandise products, adopting differentiation strategies [12]. This makes it more common for youths to choose purchasing agents through unconventional channels, which may violate legal red lines.

3.2.2 The problems of cross-cultural communication in Japanese anime

Some Japanese anime are very popular in the local area, but they are not adapted to the local conditions in China, and many of these works have not been localized. As the center of East Asia, Japan will form a certain cultural circle within the region. When accepting foreign cultures in other regions, it is not a complete acceptance, but selective, and there will be different interpretations based on differences in one's own country's values and cultural heritage. There is a type of anime with excessive male gaze or overly "Jack Su" that often loses a large number of viewers in China because such works can cause strong discomfort to Chinese audiences and deviate from the current social trend in China. It is impossible for a work to thrive on the soil of another country without making improvements based on the audience's acceptance.

When a large number of Japanese anime are selected, the Chinese anime market is naturally squeezed out, which is not conducive to young people constructing thinking that is more in line with the development of Chinese society. Japanese anime often conveys values such as "funeral culture" that are not suitable for the current situation in China. When young people are influenced by this mindset for a long time, they may develop a biased "Japanese style" consciousness. Chinese animation has not been seen, and the transmission of local culture is naturally blocked. This conflicts with the thinking and environment of young people, which is not conducive to the shaping of correct concepts and personal development and growth.

The promotional focus of the same work also needs to be adjusted. If a work is about the history of Japan, it will have a natural audience in Japan, but not in other countries. Therefore, when the work is broadcast overseas, the natural effect will be greatly reduced, and it will not be able to open up sales.

4. Suggestions for Localizing Cross-Cultural Communication

In the subsequent cross-cultural communication, on the one hand, it should accept cultural diversity, and on the other hand, it should demand cultural integration to achieve better value dissemination. In the operation of cross-cultural communication models, communication has cultural connotations, and people who are influenced by different cultures will have different interpretations [13]. As a big country, China embraces diverse cultures, but at the same time, it will take its essence and discard its dross. To achieve successful cross-cultural dissemination of Japanese anime, it is necessary to understand the cultural habits and current market conditions of the recipients. Strictly classify and regulate the content of works, and some sen-

sitive themes can choose not to be disseminated in China, to ensure the guidance and shaping of the values of the youth group. Works should avoid issues of vague history, excessive beautification or ugliness, showcase the national landscape, and deepen positive influence. For works that can be disseminated to China, organic integration with the recipient market and linkage with popular singers or voice actors will naturally attract a portion of the fan base and achieve promotional effects. In the process of promotion, emphasis can be placed on promoting universal values and emotions, such as elements of "family" and "love", which can effectively break down cultural barriers and convey correct ideas.

5. Conclusion

Japanese sports anime has different impacts on the sports values of different generations of young people in the context of cross-cultural communication, and is generally positive, exerting the promotional power of sports anime. With the "sports fever" brought by sports anime such as *"Slam Dunk"*, various sports are constantly understood and mastered by the Chinese public, subtly spreading the spirit of sports and influencing the value orientation of youth sports. The country vigorously promotes relevant sports policies, allowing young people after the millennium to have a deeper understanding of related majors and promoting the improvement of national sports awareness. In the future, sports anime will continue to influence generation after generation of teenagers, allowing them to constantly update their sports values with the changing times, providing inexhaustible motivation for the development of the sports industry, and bringing sustainable and sustainable growth.

Japanese anime has brought many influences in cross-cultural communication, and overall, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, providing important references for the development of cross-cultural communication in anime. Future research can provide a more detailed division of adolescent age groups and conduct an in-depth analysis of the differences in the impact of value orientation.

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