

# *Analysis on the Influencing Factors of Cheerleading Expressive Force*

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**Abstract:** In this paper, through the literature, video analysis, logic analysis and other research methods to affect the cheerleading expressive force of the factors of research and analysis, combined with examples for the cheerleading expressive force to improve the methods and suggestions. At present, the factors affecting the expressive force of cheerleading are summarized as follows: Visual factors, including body and action, clothing and props, formation and modeling; Auditory factors include music and slogans and other factors, like emotional mutual feeling, imagination and so on. And in view of the above factors affecting the performance of cheerleading, from the athletes, coaches and spectators of these three aspects, we could see that they provide solutions to improve the performance of cheerleading to provide reference.

## 1. Introduction

Cheerleading originated in the United States. It was first used in basketball, football and baseball games to cheer, set off the atmosphere of the game and show the team culture. Later, it gradually evolved into the form of collective performance composed of various dance movements and difficult skills against the background of music. Today, with the continuous improvement of science and technology and training level, the individual technical level of athletes has reached a certain level, and most of the technical abilities between individuals are almost the same, and more gaps lie in individual expressive force and the creation of complete sets of exercises and dances. Therefore, whether it can get the approval of the judges and the favor of the audience, whether it expresses the connotation and expected performance effect of cheerleading, has long been not limited to the display of personal skills, but more reflected in the expression of expressive force[1].

### 1.1. Purpose and Significance

Through reading a large number of documents and watching and studying the videos of international cheerleading competitions such as Nanjing Cheerleading Open in 2014, ICU World Cheerleading Championship in 2015 and World Cheerleading Championship in 2016, the author aims to analyze the factors affecting the expressive force of cheerleading, and put forward some

suggestions suitable for the development of cheerleading in China according to the actual situation.

## **1.2. Research Methodology**

This paper analyzes and studies the factors that affect the expressive force of cheerleading by using the methods of literature and observation. Through searching keywords such as "cheerleading" and "expressive force", combined with a large number of related materials such as continuous publications, monographs and essays, it lays a theoretical foundation and a starting point for research. Then through the World Cheerleading Championships, ICU International Cheerleading Competition, International Cheerleading Open Invitational Tournament and other large-scale cheerleading events of the specific case video appreciation of the impact of the specific factors of cheerleading performance[2].

## **1.3. Related Concepts**

### **1.3.1. Cheerleading**

Cheerleading originated in the United States, refers to a sport that fully displays the team's superb sports skills, embodies youthful vitality, positive team spirit and strives for the highest sense of team honor through the unique difficulty, transitional cooperation, basic hand position and dance movements of complex and difficult events completed by athletes collectively with music accompaniment(Wang Hong 2013).

### **1.3.2. Expressiveness**

Expressive force is a comprehensive reflection of inner emotions through body movements accompanied by music, and also refers to the comprehensive reflection of athletes' self-confidence, narcissism beyond the audience's ability and enthusiasm infecting the audience's ability (Fan Chao 2004). It is an ability for athletes to transform the connotation of movements and music into their own inner emotions through their own cognitive ability, understanding, observation, imagination and self-confidence, and express them continuously with the help of external forms such as body posture, technical movements and facial expressions, so as to attract and infect the audience(Zheng Zhong 2004). In my opinion, expressive force is a kind of emotional mutual feeling, which is a mutual feeling process in which the internal abstract emotions and ideas are displayed through external concrete materials and behaviors, so that the audience can realize the emotions that the performers want to express and feedback them back[3].

## **2. Factors Affecting Cheerleading Performance**

### **2.1. Vision**

#### **2.1.1. Body and Movement**

Sports dance needs to take the body as the medium, through the form of dance to achieve the expression of inner feelings and communication with the audience, in such a physical performance process, so that the audience and themselves can get an artistic aesthetic experience. Sports dance is not only a sports competition to show dance skills and win excellent results, but also reflects an artistic spirit and the pursuit of artistic aesthetics through performance(Qiu Peng 2013). Cheerleading is a branch of sports dance, and it also has the characteristics and nature of sports dance. Combining cheerleading's own cheering culture with the connotation of setting off the

atmosphere, cheerleading performance requires athletes to show a warm manner and firm and powerful movements. In the performance process of complete sets of cheerleading, the requirement for athletes' action strength is not only a standard for the accuracy of action, but also conveys a firm belief through strength and skills. Of course, the expression of this expressive force can not only be limited to arm movements, For example, in the 2014 World Cheerleading Championships, two female players of the Japanese team used the difficulty and movements of their legs more, and made use of the characteristics that the movement track and range of their legs were larger than those of their arms, so as to better show the complete set of movements and win the championship of the doubles[4].

### **2.1.2. Costumes and Props**

Costumes and props are one of the important elements in cheerleading performance, The choice of costumes and props can well convey the theme, style and action tone of cheerleading sets, and different costumes and props can also reflect the regional and national characteristics, so that judges and audience can master the theme and connotation of cheerleading sets well from the beginning and increase the expressive force of cheerleading performances (Villi 2014). Nowadays, the choice of clothing is not limited to the traditional clothing of aerobics, but has a diversified development trend. For example, in recent years, Chinese traditional elements such as cheongsam and Facebook are often seen in domestic competitions. At the Nanjing Cheerleading Open in 2014, The American team abandoned the traditional cheerleading costumes and stunned the audience with a thick "cowboy style". The red long-sleeved jacket, leopard-print trousers and black vest were very playful and lovely. Combined with the enthusiastic cheerleading movements of American players, the audience felt a lively and positive attitude.

### **2.1.3. Formation and Modeling**

The design of formation and modeling is the most important part of cheerleading performance, which determines whether the key points you want to express can be highlighted, whether the characteristics of your team can be displayed through levels, and directly determines whether the cheerleading performance can achieve the expected expressive effect. For example, whether multiple groups are carried out at the same time or multi-level are completed in turn, different designs achieve different goals and effects. At the 2015 ICU World Cheerleading Championships, The Chinese Taipei team has applied multi-level throwing and connecting for many times to complete the transition between difficult combinations, This kind of action creation is very natural and smooth, but it is completely unified when collective difficulty display is needed. There is no hierarchical design, and the collective only completes continuous skill difficulty at the same time. Through the design of formation change and the choice of modeling action, it shows the characteristics of excellent collective technical ability of the team[5].

## **2.2. Auditory**

### **2.2.1. Music**

The choice of music plays an important role in influencing the expressive force of cheerleading. The so-called choice here not only refers to whether the music repertoire conforms to the atmosphere of cheerleading dance, but also considers the lyrics and rhythm of the repertoire. Even if it is the same action, the performance effect produced under different background music is quite different. Good cheerleading repertoire and the coordination of movements can highlight the characteristics of the participating teams and determine the success of the whole set of arrangements.

For example, in the collective street dance competition of the 2016 World Cup Cheerleading Championship, the perfect coordination of music and movements of the Chinese Taipei team was impressive, and the sound effects one after another matched with the multi-level changes of movements, which caused bursts of cheers from the audience. Especially, the sound effect of "high heels" in 1 minute and 18 seconds is matched with the action imitation of male players, which not only makes a natural division for different music styles, but also adds a lot of color to the uniqueness of the whole routine. Coupled with the rapid expansion and sharp contraction of musical special effects, the whole set of expressive force is pushed to a new height.

### **2.2.2. Slogans**

Slogan is an important part of skillful cheerleading. Good slogan design is generally not complicated, which can not only reflect the team characteristics, but also be familiar. It can make the audience remember and participate in the interaction quickly, and can also drive the atmosphere to bring impact to the audience's hearing and enhance the expressive force of cheerleading. In the 2016 World Cheerleading Championships, Mexico won the championship in the Elite Group Mixed Team Skills Competition. The opening design is very expressive and impactful. Mexican players hold high three monochrome flags, namely green, white and red, corresponding to the letter cards of Me, Xi and Co, and hold them up in turn to cooperate with slogans and three groups of multi-level cooperation. That is, the color and slogan of the Mexican flag can be deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, and the throwing can appear natural, smooth and full of impact.

## **2.3. Other factors**

### **2.3.1. Emotional interaction**

Cheerleading athletes should learn to pay attention to others, have strong emotional ability and generous spirit, that is, make others feel happy and inspire others, and they cheer (Wang Yanmei 2009). Athletes need to be able to make the audience feel the meaning and connotation expressed by the complete set through the expression of physical behavior, and make the audience participate in emotions, and give back to athletes through cheers and applause on the spot. After the game, athletes can sum up the advantages and disadvantages of their own performances and complete sets of designs according to the feedback from the scene, and then present them to the audience after further adaptation. The formation of this mutual inductance is a continuous virtuous cycle, which can be continuously improved in feedback and feedback, so as to enhance the expressive force of cheerleading.

### **2.3.2. Imagination**

Imagination is also an important factor affecting the performance of cheerleading. Imagination plays a decisive role in the performance of athletes, coaches and spectators. For athletes, proper association can improve the expressive force of the action itself, enhance the feeling of action, enrich the connotation of the whole set of dance exercises, and better polish their performances; And the application of coaches' imagination is more diversified, It can be reflected in all aspects of the whole cheerleading set. For example, whether the choice of costumes and props has echo and creativity, whether the setting of music and movements can show a whole set of connotations, whether the whole set of creation can have plots and highlights, etc., rich imagination can show extremely shocking effects and impact the hearts of the audience to increase the expressive force; For the audience, imagination determines the intuitive feeling of watching, and whether they can understand the emotions that the creators and performers want to express. "There are a thousand

Hamlets in the eyes of a thousand people." Different imaginations can bring different feelings to the audience.

### **3. Methods of Cultivating and Improving Expressive Force**

#### **3.1. Athletes**

Athletes are the actual carrier of cheerleading expressive force, which is mainly reflected in the performance of movements and demeanor. As an athlete, we must first achieve the standard of movement skills, which is all the prerequisites for completing routines to achieve the expected goals; Secondly, athletes need to understand the connotation of coaches creating complete sets, including a set of prominent themes, the combination of music and action, the selection factors of costumes and props, etc. Only by clearly knowing the connotation to be expressed and skillfully mastering the nodes of music and action, can the matching of costumes and props be better expressed with actions and expressions; The last thing we need is the repeated practice of athletes, which includes the practice of individual skills of athletes and the cooperation of the whole team. A complete set of display requires athletes to master every detail skillfully and the team to cooperate skillfully. Only in this way can the action itself be ignored and the emotion and connotation be expressed emphatically in the final performance.

#### **3.2. Coaches**

Coaches are important implementers and designers of cheerleading expressive force, and are the decisive factors for the success or failure of cheerleading expressive force. Coaches need to carry out three stages of work, one is the preparation stage, which includes the choice of music, the matching of costumes and props, and the determination of movements and difficulties. In the choice of music, we should be able to highlight the technical characteristics of the team, In the matching of costumes and props, we should dare to innovate boldly and not stick to fixed templates. Show the team's personality characteristics, and set the movements and difficulties according to the actual ability level of the whole team members. It is necessary to take the team members' completion as the premise, and don't just pursue high difficulty or someone's high level and ignore the integrity of cheerleading performance; Second, the actual creation stage, The creation of cheerleading set is the part that can best reflect the expressive force of cheerleading. In the process of creation, it should always focus on the theme, design into a form of expression with alternating high and low tide and difficulty, and apply the visual effect produced by the change of formation and shape and the auditory impact formed by the combination of music and action to increase the expressive force of cheerleading set; The third stage is the stage of performance and reflection. The effect of performance is the best feedback. Whether the opening design can bring the audience into the state quickly and whether the audience's emotions and interactions can be aroused during the performance is the intuitive feedback of coaches' work effect. Coaches need to reflect and summarize after performance, learn from each other's strengths and constantly improve the complete set of creation[6].

#### **3.3. Audience**

Audience is an intuitive manifestation of cheerleading performance. Whether the opening slogan can cause audience interaction or not to attract audience in the process of cheerleading performance can provide clear guidance for the development of cheerleading performance. The most intuitive embodiment is the cheers and applause of the audience, and the place where the cheers are the

warmest is often the place where the action design is the most ingenious and expressive. After a performance, the audience's mood is the direct criterion for judging the performance of cheerleading sets. As an audience, we should abandon race and geographical tendencies and look at every performance objectively, cheer for excellent creation and performance without stint, and express our true feelings frequently with athletes, so as to promote the benign development of cheerleading expressive force.

#### 4. Conclusions

The expressive force of cheerleading is an important part of the performance effect of cheerleading, and the factors affecting cheerleading performance are mainly as follows: First, visual factors, including body and action, costumes and props, formation and modeling, etc.; The second is auditory factors, including music and slogans; Third, other factors include emotional mutual feeling, imagination and so on.

There are many ways to improve and cultivate cheerleading expressiveness, It needs not only the athletes' own technical skills, teamwork and understanding, but also the coaches' repeated research and exploration in three different stages, and the interactive feedback of audience emotions. Only when these three aspects work at the same time can we gradually achieve the goal of improving the expressive force of cheerleading.

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