

# *Research on the Logic of Spatial Production of Rural Sports in New China from the Perspectives of Practice, Representation, and Symbolism*

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**Abstract:** While previous research has extensively studied rural sports from the perspective of practice, little attention has been paid to the analysis of its logical spatial production based on spatial theories. In light of this, through literature research and logical analysis, and drawing from Henri Lefebvre's theory of spatial production, this paper finds that spatial practice is the historical process of rural sports production experiencing conception, vicissitudes, and present-day resurgence; spatial representation is the mechanism composed of power subjects, local subjects, and capital subjects in rural sports production; and symbolic spaces are the effects of rural sports object space production composed of rural inheritance and rural sports tourism integration. This study provides a theoretical perspective and reference for the development of rural sports.

## 1. Introduction

The proposal of "implementing rural construction action" makes "How to revitalize rural areas" a proposition of The Times that must be answered.<sup>[1]</sup> Since the reform and opening up, with the popularization of mechanization and the application of new technologies in rural areas, the living standards of rural residents have significantly improved and they have more leisure time, leading to an increasing demand for leisure activities and fitness.<sup>[2]</sup> Academic studies have presented different perspectives on how rural sports should be developed by various subjects under the background of rural revitalization from multiple disciplines and dimensions. Scholars<sup>[3]</sup> have pointed out that the enactment of the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of Rural Revitalization* serves as a guiding principle, legal guarantee, and practical guide for the development of rural sports, promoting the diversified governance of rural sports<sup>[4]</sup>. The phenomenon of "sports setting the stage, and all parties performing" will become a new trend in the revitalization of rural areas<sup>[5]</sup>. However, some studies have also shown that the weak infrastructure of rural sports<sup>[6]</sup>, the inconsistency of social security systems between urban and rural areas<sup>[7]</sup>, and the significant urban-rural sports development gap<sup>[8]</sup> are the major challenges faced in the development of rural sports. Literature review indicates that academia has conducted extensive research on rural sports from the perspective

of practice, yet it has seldom analyzed its production logic from the viewpoint of space. Rural revitalization and rural sports focus on the production and living space of rural residents, which are both concrete and abstract, as proposed by Henri Lefebvre's notion of "abstraction concretes" in space. Lefebvre referred to spatial practice, spatial representation, and symbolic space as the "triple dialectics of space". Based on this, this paper attempts to explore the mechanism of rural sports' spatial production to further examine how the spatial form of rural sports evolves and what power agents play a role in the rural sports space. How is the spatial production mechanism shaped? The aim is to offer theoretical references and examples by applying the perspective of spatial production to the development of rural sports.

## 2. Spatial Practice as the Historical Space Production Process of Rural Sports

In spatial practice, a spatial relationship is formed with the "subject", who is one of the social members, and this relationship necessarily involves the relationship between people and the body. Social practice is based on the use of the human body. Therefore, spatial practice is a perceptible practice<sup>[9]</sup>. Perceptible spatial practice includes the production and reproduction of perceptible spatial practices, as well as the set of unique positions and spatial characteristics of each social form. Spatial practice ensures continuity and a certain degree of cohesion. It means the competence of the guaranteed hierarchies and the performance of the specific hierarchies.<sup>[9]</sup> Additionally, spatial practice presupposes and poses the space of that society in an interactive and dialectical way. When it controls and uses the latter, it slowly and surely produces it. From an analytical perspective, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the decryption of its space, which is the process of spatial production<sup>[9]</sup>. From the perspective of the process of production and reproduction, spatial practice is historical and is the diachronic and "etymology" of location. Each event happens in a specific location or place and is changeable in meaning. Everything is engraved in space. The past leaves its traces, and time leaves its imprint. However, space has always been a current space, as an established and direct totality that completes its relationships, whether near or far, within its own reality.<sup>[9]</sup>

Indeed, when it comes to rural sports, reviewing its development and growth history not only provides a glimpse into the "process of space production" of rural sports but also has important implications for its sustainable development.

### 2.1 The Conception of Rural Sports (1949-1956)

From 1949 to 1965, the beginning of the establishment of new China was a time when there was much to be done. During this period, rural sports were given a new mission of "serving the people's health and serving national defense"<sup>[10]</sup>. It was required that farmers use their spare time to engage in militia training to promote their health. The use of the term "spare time" and "militia training" undoubtedly represented a hidden space production process. Rural residents perceived sports practice through militia training during their spare time, and the militia training ensured the continuity and degree of cohesion of sports. In other words, combining militia training during spare time was helpful to fulfill the new mission of "serving the people's health and serving national defense". In addition, the "National Rural Sports Work Conference" in 1956 put forward the principle that rural sports work must comply with production, adhere to the principles of amateurism and voluntarism, and carry out simple and easy sports activities<sup>[11]</sup>. The concept of "rural sports work must comply with production" has already placed rural sports in the domain of space practice. Of course, the term "production" here is still the specific universality synonym that Marx expressed based on Hegel's ideas.<sup>[12]</sup> The "specific universality" is the result or concretization of rural sports participating or influencing social activities and is a form of reproduction.

## 2.2 The Vicissitudes of Rural Sports (1957-1976)

This era is designated as the “period of comprehensive socialist construction”. Nonetheless, the “people’s communes”, “Great Leap Forward”, “Three Years of Natural Disasters” (1960-1963), and the “Ten Years of Cultural Revolution” (1966-1976), which arose during this same period, were at odds with China’s national condition and the development laws of spatial production, thus inflicting a fatal blow to rural sports during its formative stages. For instance, the erroneous ideations of the “Great Leap Forward”, coupled with leftist tendencies, compelled 60% of youths in Gaotang County, Shandong, to become members of the Sports Association.<sup>[13]</sup> “The Three Years of Natural Disasters (1960-1963) and Ten Years of Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)” led rural sports astray and contributed to their “entropy” and erroneous development. As Lefebvre<sup>[9]</sup> remarked in *The Production of Space*, “If every society does indeed produce some space, its own space, then this will have other consequences, some of which we have not yet foreseen. Any social existence that craves or claims to be ‘real’ but cannot produce its own space has become a perplexing entity, a special type of abstraction that is inseparable from the realm of ideology and/or culture. It will ultimately descend into legend, disappearing completely sooner or later, along with its identity, fame, and other vulnerable positions, which will be ephemeral.”

## 2.3 The Present-Day Resurgence of Rural Sports with Ambition and Promise (1978-)

Since the reform and opening up, people's material living conditions have been improved and the demand for sports urgently needs to be met. The rural sports have been in the trough in this period ushered in a turning point. Since the introduction of reform and opening-up policies, the people’s material living conditions have improved, and the demand for sports has become urgent. Consequently, a series of measures were taken to revitalize rural sports. For example, in January 1980, the *Several Opinions on Revitalizing Cultural Life in Rural Areas* was promulgated, and in September 1986, the Farmers’ Sports Association was established<sup>[14]</sup>. Rural sports embarked on a transformative journey towards revitalization. Entering the 21st century, rural sports development has entered a comprehensive stage of rapid growth. From 1995 to 2000, the first phase of the *Outline of the National Fitness Program* issued by the State Council was completed, which led to the formation of a social environment and atmosphere that encourage physical fitness. From 2001 to 2010, the second phase of the *Outline of the National Fitness Program* was launched, accelerating the development of rural sports. For instance, in 2009, the *Regulations on National Fitness* was promulgated, designating August 8 as “National Fitness Day”. In addition, a plethora of policies and documents have been promulgated to provide direction and support for the development of rural sports, such as the *Opinions on Further Strengthening Rural Sports Work through the Function of Township Comprehensive Cultural Stations*, *Healthy China 2030 Planning Outline*, *Medium- and Long-Term Plan for Youth Development (2016-2025)*, *National Action Plan for Healthy Lifestyles (2017-2025)*, and many others. From the perspective of spatial practice, the promulgation of these policies and documents is theoretically unified and consistent. This emphasis on unity expresses the importance of the notion of unity. In the eyes of Hegelian philosophy, the end of Hegelian historical facts does not refer to the disappearance of the substantial products of history. On the contrary, it refers to the result of a production process driven by knowledge (concepts) and guided by consciousness (language, logic). This necessary product declares itself self-sufficient and continues to exist through its own power.<sup>[9]</sup>

Upon a holistic examination of the historical development of rural sports, it is apparent that it has undergone phases of conception, vicissitudes, and present-day resurgence. Meanwhile, the historical development of rural sports from the spatial perspective reflects the transcendence of the philosophical dichotomy between “subject” and “object” in its spatial practice (production). The order

of its production is manifested through the collective wisdom of the populace triggered by the requirements of simultaneity and synchronicity. In this regard, the national policy of rural sports emerges as a result of strategic collective wisdom. As such, the activities of spatial production are permeated by the fluidity of time and space.

### 3. The Spatial Representation as a Mechanism for Rural Sports' Spatial Production

The spatial representation serves as a mechanism for various social actors such as scientists, urban planners, and technical bureaucrats to equate their first-hand experiences, perceived space, and conceptual space. Through this process, they bind together the production relations and the reinforced “order” which emerges as a result. Such binding entails linking knowledge, symbols, code, and other “front-office” relationships <sup>[10]</sup> to create the dominant space in any social space or production mode. In so doing, they maintain social relationships in a state of coexistence and coherence <sup>[9]</sup>. Spatial representation is categorized as an abstract symbol that reflects the control and counter-control of the ruling class over the spatial concept of ordinary people. In the context of rural sports, spatial representation is exemplified by various policies, regulations, plans, and measures that the government, local authorities, and private enterprises enforce to exert influence over the development of rural sports, thereby satisfying and maintaining the vision for the ruling class’s “conceptual space”. Consequently, rural sports’ spatial production is divided into the spatial production of power subjects, local subjects, and capital subjects. Each subject produces different types of space, which vary in spatial range and function. Cooperation and strategic considerations between different subjects are necessary to obtain the optimal spatial production mode. <sup>[15]</sup>

#### 3.1 Mechanisms of Spatial Production for Rural Sports As a Power Subject

Currently, the dominant power subject in rural sports is mainly the state and government. Their power production is primarily realized through the spatialization of texts and power. The spatialization of texts refers to the political system and administrative planning practices through which political elites conceive of space as an abstract spatial imagination. It is through textual forms that intentions, concepts, and ideals are injected into space, creating a representation of space. <sup>[16]</sup> Rural sports play a critical role in validating the achievements of rural revitalization and serve as a pivotal instrument in promoting rural development. In terms of spatial production, the power subject utilizes two primary methods, i.e., institutional design and administrative measures. The former involves institutional apparatuses such as the *Notice on Promoting the Construction of Sports and Leisure Characteristic Towns* <sup>[17]</sup> by the General Administration of Sports of China on May 11, 2017, which includes rural sports in sport-centered town construction, thus forging a new developmental model for rural sports. In the national-government-led narrative structure, this strategy effectively mobilizes participation, ensures active engagement in rural sports’ development, and provides an essential source of intrinsic motivation for its growth. The latter approach, through administrative measures, entails providing funding support, organizing mass sports events and activities, and providing various athletic resources for sports characteristic towns. By taking advantage of these measures, rural sports can achieve healthy and sustainable development, ensuring poverty alleviation and supporting the promotion of rural revitalization. In essence, Lefebvre contended that power is pervasive, permeating every aspect of existence and saturating the entire spatial landscape. Accordingly, he viewed power as a mechanism for sustaining relations of subordination and exploitation. <sup>[18]</sup> Members of power spaces aspire to hold power, causing each isolated spatial member to submit to the larger collective in compliance with a preconceived strategy, concealed intentions, and overarching agendas. The contents of power spatialization production entail the transformation of the logic governing capital rights, economic capital, and cultural capital. In other words, the

countryside, as a spatial entity within the larger scope of power relations, has been subjugated as yet another arena for the exercise of power.

### 3.2 Mechanisms of Spatial Production for Local Subjects in Rural Sports.

“Place” is a fundamental concept in human geography, referring to a socially constructed and characteristic geographic or spatial entity. The rural sports local subject space is primarily an envisioned space designed by rural sports experts, governmental project leaders, and others. These actors utilize various power mediators such as knowledge and symbols to produce “projects<sup>[19]</sup>” or institutions in the spatial realm. Project-oriented resource allocation and supply is an important way for grassroots governments to promote rural development<sup>[20]</sup>, and it is also an essential institutional carrier for the sinking of rural sports resources. Project-driven village entry is a governance approach proposed in light of China’s basic national conditions. Integrating the “project system” into rural sports development has become the primary means of contemporary rural sports development. Guided by project-oriented governance, two key processes are involved in local subjects’ creation of space: First, the local subjects engage in “place-making”, which refers to the “continual construction of a place’s culture by individuals in the same space over time”<sup>[16]</sup>. For example, based on the competitive advantage of the local industrial base, the “Jinhua Model” has accelerated the cross-boundary integration of rural sports development. In the process of “place-making”, Jinhua City has continuously enhanced the cohesion between the local dominant industry and sports projects, creating characteristic rural sports development space clusters with distinct features in each county and city, such as the sports goods trade zone in Yiwu, the sports goods manufacturing gathering area in Yongkang, and the sports health and leisure holiday zone in Wuyi<sup>[21]</sup>. Secondly, local subjects engage in “re-localization”, a spatial production process that first involves continuously excavating the unique sports culture of the local region, achieving the goal of “what others lack, I possess, and what others have, I have my own specialties”. Thirdly, local subjects continue to promote and serve folk sports development, such as the filing of intangible cultural heritage projects and the cultivation of inheritors. Finally, they always remember the commission to pay attention to the importance of environmental protection and ecological conservation. In conclusion, rural sports local subjects are bound together by their knowledge, symbols, codes, and various “front-office” relationships. Through “place-making” and “re-localization” approaches, these actors fill their envisioned space with the ample embodiment of desirable rural sports scenery and personal values.

### 3.3 The Spatial Production Mechanism of Rural Sports Capital Subject

The rural sports capital subject mainly refers to sports industry enterprises that are rooted in the countryside or entities that provide guidance and support for rural sports development. “The content of the capital subject’s spatial production consists primarily of producing and increasing the total amount of capital of different capital forms.”<sup>[15]</sup> The mechanisms that govern the rural sports capital subject’s spatial production are comprised of “the sports consumption mechanism and the sports tourism path mechanism of capital subject spatial production.”<sup>[15]</sup> Firstly, the rural sports capital subject’s spatial production consumption mechanism. French scholar Jean Baudrillard posited that consumption is a myth, “the new logic of consumption is a consumption ideology.”<sup>[22]</sup> Consumption, as an ideology, governs people’s values and lifestyle. The rural sports sector has extensive absolute space and a plethora of potential athletes, harboring significant potential for sports consumption. Therefore, the rural sports capital subject uses modern multimedia, sports sponsorship, and other means, to bolster the villagers’ cognizance of sports brands, and enhance rural sports spatial production and reproduction through the manipulation of consumption ideology. Secondly, the capital spatial production of the sports tourism path mechanism. Sports tourism refers to the summation of



different physical entertainment, physical exercise, sports competitions, sports rehabilitation, sports cultural exchanges, etc. that tourists engage in during their travels, as well as the relationship between the tourism destination, sports tourism enterprises, and society. Through sports tourism, the main body of rural sports culture experiences migration and “infection”, leading to a transformation in the attribution of rural sports culture. Henceforth, sports tourism emerges as a potent mechanism for advancing the spatial production of the rural sports capital subject. Pierre Bourdieu’s seminal theory tying together the “Three Forms of Capital” posited that capital assumes three distinct guises - economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital - each amenable to transformation. Consequently, the interplay between different forms of capital facilitates capital reproduction. “Capital, in its nature, is confined within the realm that engenders and regenerates it; each type of wealth, ascribed to social class, derives its value and potency through a particular set of idiosyncratic rules and regulations operative within each domain.”<sup>[23]</sup> In this context, the rural sports capital subject’s spatial production melds capital space, cultural space, and social space into rural sports tourism and rural consumption, triggering a mutual intertransformation marked by economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital, and thus augments the rural sports capital subject’s overall capital corpus.

In summary, spatial representations are invariably imbued with a relative and ever-evolving admixture of knowledge - a blend of cognition (*connaissance*) and ideology<sup>[9]</sup> which plays a crucial role in social and political practices. As they intrude into and modify the “texture” of spatial configurations propagated by efficacious knowledge and ideology<sup>[9]</sup>, such representations impact their respective practices. Consequently, the domain of rural sports is marked by a complex interplay among various actors who are poised at different vantage points of the government - representing authority, rural sports experts and departments - the society, comprising villagers, inheritors, as well as various social organizations and institutions such as travelers, researchers, and enterprise - signifying capital, to serve processes and outcomes of different objectives and interests that have collectively emerged in pursuit of rural sports<sup>[16]</sup>.

#### **4. The Representational Space as an Effect on the Subject’s Spatial Production in Rural Sports**

The representational space corresponds to the space of residents and users, a direct lived space that is intrinsically entwined with everyday life, and one that lies in a state of subordination, domination, and vulnerability. In the context of rural sports, rural sports leverages its unique and intrinsic ingredients to forge relationships with other entities, securely positioning itself towards a trajectory of harmonious integration and development. The subject’s spatial production in rural sports, therefore, encompasses a variety of facets, including the rural sports village inheritance space, as well as the trajectory and course of rural sports and tourism convergence.

##### **4.1 The Content and Trajectory of Rural Sports Village Inheritance Spatial Production**

Regarding the content of rural sports village inheritance spatial production, the primary focus is on the production of cultural practices and lifestyles related to rural sports. Firstly, the production of rural sports social customs mainly refers to various aspects of worship, festivals, and beliefs, which are accompanied by traditional ethnic sports elements, such as archery activities held by different ethnic groups and regions, including the Lhoba, Mongolian, Tuva, and Xibe people. These traditional sports and cultural customs in rural areas have a profound influence on generations of Chinese people and are significant in the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, contributing to the values and cultural identity of various ethnic groups in China. Secondly, the production of rural lifestyles mainly refers to the production of ways of life, cultural activities, and customs that arise from the specific natural and cultural ecologies of communities based on kinship and geography. They adhere to the behavioral norms established by the villagers, who operate within an ancient running trajectory that

has been passed down over time. <sup>[16]</sup>

In terms of the trajectory of rural sports village inheritance spatial production, two main pathways are essential: the promotion of ecological livability and the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage related to rural sports. Ecological livability is a crucial goal in China's modernization and is also the ecological mission of rural sports. The production of rural sports village inheritance spatial production is based on the foundation of ecological livability and natural symbiosis. The rural environment provides a "visual logic" for the development of rural sports. This includes the idea of "written language" described by Marshall McLuhan, which refers to the impact of the natural environment on the human body, as well as Guy Debord's "spectacle", which describes the environmental impact on the human psyche. Additionally, rural sports emphasize ecology, value the integration of humans and nature, and involve the transformation of natural elements such as mountains, water, fields, lakes, grass, and sand, to serve the needs of villagers for fitness, entertainment, recreation, and wellness at different levels. <sup>[24]</sup> Furthermore, the rural space, known as the "fourth space", as characterized by Lefebvre, not only provides a variety of resources (such as a spatial layout that allows certain interactions but not others), but also provides implications for memory (spatial culture) and behavior (spatial practice) <sup>[25]</sup>. Therefore, the trajectory of rural sports village inheritance spatial production is one that leads to the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage related to rural sports. Scholars Cai Xinglin and Li Peiming <sup>[26]</sup> suggested that the traditional trajectory of sports culture inheritance can be divided into four aspects: "inheritors", "inheritance fields", "inheritance objects", and "inheritance mechanisms". Firstly, "inheritors" are the creators, inheritors, and producers of cultural space. Therefore, the key to the continuation of rural sports intangible cultural heritage and spatial production lies in the "inheritors" of this heritage. To begin with, it is necessary to improve the awareness of "inheritors" of their role in cultural inheritance. Next, it is essential to explore methods of validating "collective inheritors". Lastly, it is crucial to implement the idea that "everyone is a cultural inheritor". Secondly, the "inheritance field" refers to the spatial combination for communication and contact in the transmission process of traditional rural sports culture. <sup>[27]</sup> The spatial place and institutional organization of rural sports are the three basic elements of the "inheritance field" in traditional rural sports culture inheritance. However, with the development of new technologies and methods, the "inheritance field" has expanded its scope. Thirdly, "inheritance objects" typically consist of inheritance carriers and inheritance items. Rural sports culture can be transmitted not only through language, text, signs, and technical movements but also through intangible cultural heritage carriers. Additionally, some scholars divide the carriers of ethnic traditional sports culture into three levels: objects, technology, and ideology. <sup>[28]</sup> Finally, the "inheritance mechanism" refers to the selection and application of methods of cultural inheritance. There are many types of inheritance methods for rural sports intangible cultural heritage, such as applying for intangible cultural heritage status, establishing databases, and conducting "living protection" in Yunnan. <sup>[29]</sup> In addition, oral transmission, behavioral transmission, psychological transmission, academic transmission, and written transmission are all important methods of inheriting rural sports intangible cultural heritage.

#### **4.2 The Integration of Rural Sports Heritage, Rural Tourism, and Spatial Production: Contents and Paths**

The nexus between rural sports culture and nature is a seamless union – both systems complementing and enhancing each other. Rural tourism shares a dual identity with rural sports culture and nature. Thus, the broad expanse of rural areas is conducive to the concomitant development of rural sports culture (particularly intangible cultural heritage) and tourism culture. As such, rural sports serve not only as carriers of tourism but also as cultural arenas in their own right.

In this context of sports- tourism confluence, the “sports + tourism” model has gained wide acceptance and recognition. As the natural soil of tourism, the nexus between rural sports and tourism manifests as a hub for economic benefit in terms of spatial production. This implies that the spatial production content of sports and tourism consolidation serves as both the production of capital and the reproduction of sports culture in tandem. Firstly, the spatial production of sports and tourism consolidation entails the production of capital. A key strategy of capital space production involves transforming rural sports cultural space into tourism space, such as the creation of the “Pingnan Baishuiyang Scenic Area” in Pingnan County, Fujian Province. This integrates water sports with hiking, cycling, and walking, promoting the development of the local rural areas. Secondly, sports and tourism consolidation spatial production represents the reproduction of sports culture. As previously mentioned, tourism has a capitalization attribute, which enables the rural sports culture to experience capitalization within the tourism confinement. Through the consumption function of rural sports culture, it has expanded into new derivative cultures, enriching and extending the connotation of rural sports culture. This provides a foundation for the next round of sports-tourism consolidation.

The production pathway of the integration of sports and tourism into a spatial realm involves utilizing tourism as a medium to create a reimagined rural sports cultural heritage landscape and to establish a living environment for intangible cultural heritage. Through encoding suitable symbolic texts for tourism development, tourists decode, interpret, structure, and reconstruct these symbolic texts, thus generating new ones that also impact the reproduction of intangible cultural heritage.<sup>[10]</sup> Regarding the spatial production of the integration of sports and tourism, the pathway includes the combination of power, capital, culture, and tourism. Consequently, power, capital, and culture extensively remodel the tourism space, rendering it the “medium” for disseminating rural sports culture. Canadian scholar McLuhan considered “medium as message”, stating that “any form of media, human extensions, impacts individuals and communities solely because of the new scale introduced.”<sup>[30]</sup> Therefore, political power, local culture, and capital distribution are the leading forces that drive the development of rural sports and tourism space. Within the realm of the integration of sports and tourism, the rural sports capital subjects are the government, developers, and operators who transform into tourism, encode tourism symbolic texts, and engage in the cultural reproduction of symbolic texts through the creation of a material cultural heritage landscape and an intangible cultural heritage living environment. This attracts local intangible cultural heritage inheritors, tourists, outsiders, and others to become participants in decoding the integration space of sports, agriculture, and tourism. Consequently, by attracting more people to participate and ultimately creating an asset “siphoning effect”, the harmonious development of rural sports and tourism is achieved.

In summary, according to Lefebvre, representational space is manifested as a system of various symbolic forms<sup>[9]</sup>. The directly experienced, or lived, space is related to the covert aspects of social life through its associations with various symbolic forms, and is therefore dominated by them, as perceived by its “inhabitants” and “users”, who have no other purpose but to describe the space. This represents an objectified space production<sup>[9]</sup>, which is the response or effect of social space production when it occurs. In the case of rural sports, the social customs and production lifestyles created by people’s participation in rural sports, based on blood and geography, constitute the content of the rural inheritance space production for rural sports spaces, as perceived by its “inhabitants” and “users”. The green and beautiful rural environment, formed by the good ecological environment and natural surroundings, not only provides a variety of spatial resources but also provides hints and suggestions for human interaction and memory. It is another pathway for the rural inheritance space production of rural sports. The vast rural areas are compatible with rural sports culture (mainly referring to intangible cultural heritage culture) and tourism culture. Therefore, the production of the integrated space of sports and tourism includes not only capital production but also the corresponding reproduction of sports culture. Through reshaping and integrating tourist space using power, capital,



and culture, it becomes the “medium” for spreading rural sports culture.

## 5. Conclusion

This study draws upon the theory of space production by Lefebvre to establish a research framework for triadic dialectical space production in rural sports. Spatial practice signifies the process of space production, articulating a historically situated, discernible space. The historical development of rural sports undergoes an evolution, from its origins, through fluctuations, and towards future prospects. Thus, the history of rural sports epitomizes the triadic dialectical space practice of rural sports in accordance with Lefebvre’s theoretical construct. Spatial representation, on the other hand, encapsulates the mechanism of space production and corresponds to the imaginary dimension of social space, shaping a conceptual space that holds dominion. The authoritative entities of rural sports, including its power, capital, and local bodies, sustain its growth, prompting the spatial production of rural sports objects as per Lefebvre’s triadic dialectical space representation framework. Representational spaces align with the space of inhabitants and users and evoke a tangibly lived space that remains subordinate, dominated by authority. The same produces a holistic space that functions as the representational space mediator, allowing bodies to communicate and interact, leading to the creation of rural sports heritage and rural sports-tourism. Therefore, the spatial production of rural sports objects constitutes the triadic dialectical representational space of rural sports as per Lefebvre’s framework. The theory of space production is intricate and comprehensive, and this paper endeavors to inspect rural sports from the lens of space production, aimed at propelling supplementary exploration and academic scholarship.

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