

The Inheritance and Development of Traditional Martial Arts Culture in Physical Education in the New Era

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Abstract: With the rapid development of society, traditional martial arts culture, as an important component of Chinese civilization, faces the dual challenges of inheritance and development in the context of modern physical education. Traditional martial arts are not only a means of physical exercise but also carry profound philosophical thoughts and cultural values, holding significant educational functions. However, the inheritance of traditional martial arts is facing certain difficulties due to issues such as teaching methods, curriculum content, and social perception. This paper analyzes the history and value of traditional martial arts culture, exploring its position, challenges, and innovative paths for inheritance in the context of modern physical education. The study shows that modern physical education should focus on the diversification of martial arts curriculum content, the modernization of teaching methods, and the integration of cultural connotations to promote the innovative dissemination and sustainable development of martial arts culture. In the future, efforts should be made to strengthen policy support, promote cross-cultural exchange, and utilize modern technological means to optimize martial arts education and dissemination, thereby promoting the widespread recognition and inheritance of traditional martial arts globally.

Keywords: Traditional martial arts, cultural inheritance, physical education, curriculum innovation, modern communication.

Introduction

With the continuous development of physical education in the new era, the inheritance and development of traditional martial arts culture occupy an increasingly important position in the education system. As a treasure of Chinese culture, traditional martial arts not only play a unique role in cultivating physical fitness, psychological resilience, and cultural literacy, but also carry profound philosophical thoughts and ethical values. Researching the inheritance path of traditional martial arts culture in modern physical education helps promote traditional culture and provides new ideas for the overall development of students. However, faced with challenges in the modern education system, the inheritance of traditional martial arts encounters many difficulties, particularly in areas such as curriculum innovation, teaching methods, and social perception. Therefore, exploring the educational functions and social value of traditional martial arts in the context of the new era holds significant theoretical and practical importance. This paper aims to analyze the current situation and challenges of traditional martial arts culture in physical education and proposes innovative inheritance paths to provide reference for the sustainable development and international dissemination of martial arts culture.

1. The History and Value of Traditional Martial Arts Culture

1.1 The Origin and Evolution of Traditional Martial Arts

Traditional martial arts, as an important component of Chinese culture, have a long history and profound cultural accumulation. Its origins can be traced back to ancient times, where they were initially used for self-defense and hunting activities. As society and civilization evolved, martial arts gradually incorporated combat techniques, philosophical ideas, and folk beliefs. During the pre-Qin period, martial arts were mainly used for warfare and self-defense, with many martial arts systems

beginning to take shape, such as ancient "fist techniques" and "weapon arts." By the Han dynasty, martial arts entered a more systematic phase. Under the influence of Confucian and Taoist thought, the concept of "martial and literary cultivation" became prominent, gradually developing into a tradition of martial arts that combined both martial techniques and cultural connotations^[1].

As history progressed, traditional martial arts continued to evolve. During the Tang and Song dynasties, martial arts played an important role not only in the military but also as a method for scholars to cultivate themselves. In the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, martial arts entered a period of prosperity, with numerous martial arts schools emerging, creating a trend of "sectarianism." Martial arts began to penetrate into the civilian population, forming a rich martial arts culture. Particularly during the Qing dynasty, the combative, philosophical, and artistic aspects of martial arts were fully expressed and gradually became an important symbol of cultural inheritance and social recognition.

1.2 The Cultural Connotations and Values of Traditional Martial Arts

The cultural connotations of traditional martial arts are profound, carrying rich philosophical thoughts, moral ethics, and spiritual values. In terms of cultural content, traditional martial arts are not only a manifestation of combat skills but also an embodiment of ancient Chinese philosophical thought. Their foundation is deeply rooted in the Confucian spirit of "ritual, righteousness, integrity, and shame," the Taoist philosophy of "wu wei" (non-action), and the Buddhist concept of "zen meditation." The practice of martial arts emphasizes not only external physical training but also internal cultivation and spiritual growth, aligning with the traditional cultural concept of "cultivating both inner and outer virtues."^[2]

In martial arts practice, the unity of "mind method" and "form method" is emphasized, reflecting the wisdom of "using stillness to control movement." For example, Tai Chi, one of the representatives of traditional martial arts, reflects the Taoist philosophical idea of "yin-yang balance" through its principle of "softness overcoming hardness." The rituals, sense of rhythm, and variations in energy flow in martial arts highlight the deep cultural foundation, further solidifying its role as a cultural symbol. Additionally, martial arts encompass significant ethical values, such as respect for teachers, diligent practice, and the balance between "bravery" and "humility." These values play an important guiding role in modern physical education.

1.3 The Educational Functions and Social Values of Traditional Martial Arts

Traditional martial arts play a unique role in terms of educational functions and social values. In terms of educational functions, traditional martial arts enhance students' physical fitness and cultivate their resilience, willpower, and self-discipline. The focus, perseverance, and endurance developed through martial arts training help students maintain calm and develop strong mental fortitude when facing challenges. Moreover, martial arts practice emphasizes teamwork and a sense of collective honor, which strengthens students' sense of collectivism and social responsibility.

From a social value perspective, traditional martial arts are not only a means of fitness and competition but also an important carrier of Chinese culture. The popularization and inheritance of martial arts help promote national culture, enhance cultural confidence, and facilitate global cultural exchange and understanding. As globalization advances, martial arts have become an important medium for the external dissemination of Chinese culture, improving global recognition and respect for traditional Chinese culture. Additionally, martial arts activities contribute to promoting interpersonal harmony, enhancing social cohesion, and fostering social stability.

In conclusion, traditional martial arts, as a long-standing cultural phenomenon, hold significant meaning both in education and society. They are not only a transmission of skills but also a carrier of cultural identity and spiritual values, playing an irreplaceable role in the context of modern physical education.

2. The Current Situation and Challenges of Traditional Martial Arts Culture in New Era Physical Education

2.1 The Status of Traditional Martial Arts in Modern Physical Education

In the system of modern physical education, traditional martial arts hold a special position and

value. As physical education continues to develop, traditional martial arts are no longer merely viewed as a form of combat sport; their unique role in enhancing physical fitness, mental health, and cultural literacy has gradually gained recognition from scholars and education practitioners. As an important carrier of Chinese culture, traditional martial arts are entrusted with the vital task of cultural transmission in modern physical education. Despite the increasing variety of competitive sports and fitness programs within the physical education curriculum, martial arts maintain their place as a crucial component of the curriculum due to their unique educational functions.

In many universities and vocational schools, martial arts courses have become an important part of students' comprehensive quality education. These courses not only emphasize physical training but also focus on the philosophical and cultural education embedded in martial arts. Through martial arts practice, students not only enhance their physical fitness and cultivate perseverance but also gain insight into the spiritual essence of traditional culture, such as etiquette, humility, and self-discipline. Furthermore, with the national emphasis on the inheritance of traditional culture, martial arts, as one of the cultural representatives, have received increased support and promotion at the policy level. However, despite the important status of martial arts in modern physical education, challenges still remain, particularly in terms of course design and innovation in teaching methods, which have yet to fully meet the needs of the new era^[3].

2.2 The Demand for Traditional Martial Arts Culture in Modern Physical Education

The demand for traditional martial arts culture in modern physical education is mainly reflected in its emphasis on comprehensive quality education and cultural inheritance. In the new era, the goals of physical education are no longer limited to improving students' athletic abilities but also emphasize their overall physical and mental development, as well as the cultivation of cultural identity. Traditional martial arts, which integrate physical fitness, intellectual development, and spiritual cultivation, fulfill the multidimensional functions required in modern physical education. As society increasingly demands talent with comprehensive qualities, particularly in areas such as innovation, teamwork, and character development, traditional martial arts contribute not only to improving physical fitness but also to enhancing mental toughness and cultural literacy, with particular educational value in strengthening willpower, cultivating responsibility, and boosting self-confidence.

Moreover, the demand for traditional martial arts culture in modern physical education also manifests in the pursuit of its unique educational methods and cultural connotations. With the acceleration of globalization, traditional martial arts, as an important part of Chinese culture, have become a significant bridge for cultural exchange overseas. In this context, modern physical education should not only preserve and transmit the techniques of martial arts but also deeply explore its inherent philosophical ideas and cultural essence, making martial arts a tool for promoting cultural diversity and fostering international understanding. Therefore, the demand of modern physical education is not limited to the technical teaching of martial arts but also includes the exploration and innovative dissemination of its profound cultural content. In particular, in the context of globalization, the cross-cultural dissemination of martial arts has become increasingly important.

2.3 Main Challenges in the Inheritance of Traditional Martial Arts Culture

The inheritance of traditional martial arts culture faces several challenges, primarily in the areas of teaching methods, resource allocation, and social perceptions. First, the lag in innovation in martial arts teaching content and methods is a key issue. Many martial arts courses still rely on traditional methods of oral transmission and personal instruction, lacking scientific and systematic teaching models that can meet the diverse needs of students in modern educational environments. Additionally, the course content is often narrow and fails to align with modern educational philosophies, leading to a decline in student interest and participation, which affects the overall teaching effectiveness.

Second, distorted social perceptions also pose an obstacle to the inheritance of traditional martial arts. With the development of technology and the rise of emerging sports, traditional martial arts are gradually being overshadowed by other competitive sports. Many people view martial arts as an "outdated" activity, overlooking its unique value as a cultural heritage. This misconception has led to a decline in public recognition of traditional martial arts, especially among younger generations, for whom martial arts hold far less appeal compared to modern sports. Moreover, the lack of qualified instructors and teaching resources, particularly in remote areas, further exacerbates the difficulty of passing on martial arts culture^[4].

3. Innovative Inheritance Paths and Development Strategies for Traditional Martial Arts Culture

3.1 Curriculum Innovation of Traditional Martial Arts Culture in Physical Education

3.1.1 Diversification of Curriculum Content and Cultural Integration

In the system of modern physical education, the curriculum innovation of traditional martial arts should focus on the diversification of content and the integration of culture. Traditional martial arts are not only a means of physical exercise but also an educational tool carrying rich cultural connotations. Therefore, the curriculum design of traditional martial arts should break away from the framework of solely teaching techniques and actively incorporate cultural elements such as philosophy, history, and ethics. For example, Tai Chi not only emphasizes the smoothness of movements but also contains philosophical ideas such as the "balance of yin and yang" and "softness overcoming hardness." Integrating such ideas will help students develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of traditional culture while learning martial arts. The curriculum should be designed flexibly, taking into account students' age, physical abilities, and interests, including both basic skill training and systematic cultural transmission. This approach ensures that students not only master martial arts techniques but also understand the cultural and philosophical principles behind them.

3.1.2 Modernization of Teaching Methods and Interactivity

With the advancement of educational technology, traditional martial arts courses should gradually incorporate modern teaching methods, such as multimedia, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR). These technologies allow students to interact with martial arts masters in virtual environments and experience techniques from different martial arts styles, enhancing learning interest and participation. Furthermore, teaching methods should include group collaboration and project-based learning, encouraging students to engage in interaction and teamwork, which fosters creative thinking and a sense of collective responsibility. This not only improves technical skills but also stimulates creativity and team spirit.

3.1.3 Introduction of Personalized Learning and Lifelong Education Concepts

The introduction of personalized learning and lifelong education concepts will further promote the innovation and development of traditional martial arts courses. Since each student has different interests and abilities, martial arts teaching should fully respect individual differences and develop flexible curriculum structures and learning paths. For instance, students with different interests could have access to a variety of elective courses, such as martial arts performance, martial arts fitness, and martial arts philosophy, allowing them to select the most appropriate content based on their needs. This personalized learning path not only boosts students' enthusiasm for learning but also sustains their interest in traditional martial arts. Additionally, traditional martial arts courses should be integrated with the concept of lifelong education, encouraging students to continue learning and practicing martial arts after leaving school, thus establishing a long-term learning system that combines physical fitness with cultural heritage^[5].

3.2 Modernized Transmission Channels for Traditional Martial Arts Culture

3.2.1 Digital Transmission and the Use of Social Media Platforms

With the rapid development of information technology, digital transmission has become an important channel for the inheritance of traditional martial arts culture. Through digital platforms, traditional martial arts can overcome the constraints of time and space, reaching a broader audience. Social media platforms such as Weibo, Douyin, and YouTube provide excellent channels for dissemination. Using short videos, live streams, and other formats, martial arts teaching and performances can be instantly shared, attracting a global audience. Digital technology allows the details of martial arts movements to be captured and displayed accurately, enabling viewers to learn martial arts techniques and understand the cultural context more intuitively through videos or interactive participation. Additionally, educational videos and interactive platforms for traditional martial arts provide multi-layered learning resources, including everything from basic teaching to advanced techniques, as well as from martial arts history to philosophical thinking, enabling learners to choose content based on their needs.

3.2.2 Cross-Cultural Exchange and the Promotion of International Competitions

The modernization of the transmission of traditional martial arts also relies on cross-cultural

exchange and the promotion of international competitions. Martial arts is not only a sport but also a medium for cultural exchange. By hosting international martial arts competitions, martial arts can gain widespread recognition and respect worldwide. These competitions not only showcase the competitive appeal of martial arts but also serve as platforms for cultural displays, transmitting the profound cultural content of Chinese tradition to the world. In addition, international competitions and cultural exchange activities can foster interaction and understanding between different cultures. Through martial arts, which serve as a common language, people from various countries can experience the unique charm of Chinese culture. Therefore, the modern transmission of traditional martial arts should emphasize interaction and cooperation with the international community, using international competitions, cultural festivals, and exchange platforms to promote martial arts culture globally, turning it into an important cultural ambassador for China.

3.2.3 Integration of Cultural and Creative Industries with Traditional Martial Arts

Combining traditional martial arts with the cultural and creative industries is another effective way to promote its modern transmission. With the rapid development of industries such as film, animation, and video games, traditional martial arts can gain new vitality through these modern cultural forms. For instance, the success of many martial arts movies and TV series has allowed the movements and philosophies of traditional martial arts to be widely disseminated. These films not only provide martial arts enthusiasts with a rich audiovisual experience but also display the cultural appeal of martial arts to the general public. In the future, the deep integration of martial arts with industries such as animation and video games will provide even broader channels for its dissemination and further enhance its global influence. Through this cross-industry collaboration, martial arts culture will not only be more widely spread but also occupy a prominent place in the global cultural market^[6].

3.3 Policy Support and Implementation for the Inheritance and Development of Traditional Martial Arts Culture

3.3.1 National Policy Guidance and Resource Support

National policies play a crucial role in the inheritance of traditional martial arts. The government should formulate relevant policies to encourage the protection and development of martial arts, such as establishing support funds for martial arts research, the development of educational materials, teacher training, and infrastructure construction. At the same time, the investment in traditional martial arts culture within the education system should be increased, promoting the establishment of martial arts programs in universities and vocational colleges, and encouraging the offering of elective martial arts courses to enhance students' recognition and interest in traditional culture. Policy guidance and financial support will provide a solid foundation for the inheritance of traditional martial arts.

3.3.2 Cultural Heritage Protection and Legal Safeguards

As a cultural heritage, traditional martial arts urgently need legal protection. The government should establish laws and regulations to clearly define the status of martial arts as an intangible cultural heritage, ensuring its inheritance and development. By listing martial arts as a national-level intangible cultural heritage project and establishing a legal safeguard framework, its history and cultural connotations can be effectively protected, ensuring its continued transmission in modern society.

3.3.3 Promotion through Social Participation and Grassroots Practice

The inheritance of traditional martial arts does not solely rely on government and academic institutions; the widespread participation of society is equally important. Social organizations, martial arts associations, and community sports organizations should actively participate in promoting traditional martial arts. Local governments can stimulate public interest, particularly among young people, by hosting training sessions, performances, and cultural activities. Grassroots communities should innovate martial arts forms based on local characteristics to enhance their appeal and participation. Through support at the social level, the inheritance of traditional martial arts will receive broader foundational support, promoting its popularity and development.

Conclusion

In the future, the inheritance and development of traditional martial arts culture should be innovated and improved from multiple levels. First, the curriculum content should become more diversified by incorporating cultural elements and philosophical ideas to enhance students' understanding and

recognition of traditional culture. Second, teaching methods should integrate modern educational technologies to improve interactivity and student engagement, allowing students to deeply experience the connotations and essence of martial arts through practice. Additionally, there should be increased policy support to promote the global dissemination and exchange of traditional martial arts, especially through cross-cultural cooperation and modern communication channels, to enhance its international influence. With the deepening of globalization, traditional martial arts, as an important part of Chinese culture, is expected to rejuvenate within the new educational system, continuing to contribute to global cultural diversity and human civilization.

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