

From the Perspective of Cultural Confidence: A Study on the Practical Paths of Traditional Ethnic Sports Empowering Cultural Education in Higher Vocational Colleges

Ying Yang*

Tongren Preschool Education College, Tongren, 554300, China

*Corresponding author: 18083208415@163.com

Abstract: In light of the present situation that there is a coordinated advance on building a culturally strong nation and high quality development of vocational education, it becomes imperative to explore an effective way to integrate China's fine traditional culture into the education system of higher vocational colleges so as to accomplish the basic task of cultivating virtue by education. Traditional ethnic sports have cultural, educational and practical features, which can transform abstract cultural knowledge into learning experiences perceived and understood by students via physical participation, situated experience and group interactions. From the perspective of cultural confidence, we established a five-dimensional analysis framework "cultural stance guidance, curriculum system integration, practical experience transformation, platform and field expansion, and evaluation mechanism optimization" and analyzed the internal logic of traditional ethnic sports empowering cultural education in higher vocational colleges. There are structural issues including unclear cultural position, lack of course alignment, shallow experiential transformation, single educational platform, and outdated evaluation method. We put forward some practical paths like strengthening value guidance, optimizing curriculum coordination, improving experience design, expanding diverse fields, and reforming the evaluation mechanism which provide references for increasing the effectiveness of cultural education in higher vocational colleges and promote the inheritance and innovation of China's fine traditional culture.

Keywords: cultural confidence; traditional ethnic sports; higher vocational colleges; cultural education

Introduction

As the deepening advancement in building a culturally strong nation, cultural education is very important for colleges and universities to accomplish the fundamental task of cultivating virtue by education. According to the Opinions on Implementing the Project for the Inheritance and Development of China's Fine Traditional Culture, we should include China's fine traditional culture throughout the whole course of national education^[2]; according to the new revision of the Vocational Education Law of the People's Republic of China, vocational education shall follow the principle of fostering virtue through education, cultivate both morality and technical skills, and comprehensively improve the overall quality of learners^[3], which calls for talent cultivation at higher vocational colleges cannot just focus on technical and skill training; it needs to integrate cultural identity, value shaping and spiritual cultivation into the whole process of education and teaching so as to achieve the organic unification between knowledge transmission, ability cultivation and value guidance.

Traditional ethnic sports play an important role in China's fine traditional culture with ethnic memory, rituals, values and spirit. Unlike other kinds of cultural transmission by means of knowledge teaching, traditional ethnic sports possess their unique embodied and practical characteristics so that students could experience cultural significance through movement practice, observe rules, cooperate for competitions, experience rituals. It has been shown that traditional ethnic sports may help generate cultural confidence during the process of "identification—reflection—re-identification"^[4], its value is not only about protecting events and inheriting skills but also constructing cultural identity, shaping spiritual character, cultivating a sense of community^[6].

But we emphasize protection and inheritance, development of events and promotion of campuses of traditional ethnic sports; hardly pay attention to its effective integration into the cultural education system of higher vocational colleges. Especially from the view point of higher vocational education: how traditional ethnic sports have stable links with talent cultivation objectives, curriculum systems, practical activities, campus culture and evaluation mechanisms? Constructing a five-dimensional analysis framework from the view point of cultural confidence, analyzing the present difficulties and putting forth corresponding practical paths which will provide theoretical references and practical guidance for higher vocational colleges to promote cultural education by traditional ethnic sports.

1. Theoretical Framework: Five Dimensions of Traditional Ethnic Sports Empowering Cultural Education in Higher Vocational Colleges

To empower traditional ethnic sports for cultural education in higher vocational colleges is not merely staging traditional sports events during physical education class or campus activity but integrating them into all systems of cultivating virtue through education, talent cultivation, and developing campus culture based on the logic of "value orientation—system support—practice transformation—space expansion—result feedback". We form five interrelated aspects including cultural stance guidance, curriculum system integration, practical experience transformation, platform and field expansion, and evaluation mechanism optimization. The cultural stance decides the direction of education, curriculum system offers institutional support, practical experiences help with cultural identity, platform and field extension expands its lasting influence, and evaluation mechanism test and improve the effect of cultural education. Five aspects are closely linked forming a complete closed-loop education.

1.1 Cultural Stance Guidance: Clarifying the Educational Direction of Value Internalization

Cultural confidence isn't liking traditional culture but a rational affirmation and practical self-consciousness about its historical value, present importance and vitality in development^{[1][2][5]}, if traditional ethnic sports enter higher vocational colleges just treat them as competitions, decoration on the class wall or cultural exhibitions will weaken their education very quickly. Change from asking "is an event interesting", to the one "what culture an event carries and what qualities it can cultivate". Fully expose the ritual norms, collective awareness, aesthetic concepts and spiritual pursuit inside. Traditional ethnic sports has profound cultural connotations which is not a simple combination of physical movement; Usually they are deeply connected with the lifestyle, bodily cognition and collective memory of a certain ethnic group. Higher vocational students learn best through doing things and getting involved in situations. By means of traditional ethnic sports, we convert abstract cultural values into a participative, experiential and reflective educational process for cultural knowledge settling down into stable cultural attitude and value orientation.

1.2 Curriculum System Integration: Forming Stable and Sustained Institutional Support

The true integration into talent cultivation programs and curriculum system for traditional ethnic sports will not lead to activity, temporary arrangement and marginalization. The integration includes three parts: curriculum provision, instructional design and cultivation objectives. Needs to have a stable course module or school-based course according to the professional features and resource conditions of the school; Instructing movements, introduction of the origin of events, its historical evolution, ritual norms and contemporary value; Link related learning results with the school's cultural education objectives, vocational quality cultivation and campus culture development. There is some suggestion that integrating traditional culture into the curricula of physical education majors in colleges and universities are a coordinated advancement from the level of curriculum objectives, content structure and teaching organization^[7] Physical education courses also need to coordinate ideology and politics courses, general education courses, specialized courses and second classroom activities, form an education chain of joint classroom learning, club training and practical activities^[8].

1.3 Practical Experience Transformation: Establishing a Mechanism from Physical Participation to Cultural Identity

The educational value of traditional ethnic sports is that it conveys cultural meanings via physical practices. Through cooperation competitions, rule observances, ritual participating, students won't only

gain skills but also have contacts with some behaviors and relationships in communities. Generation has four steps: "physical participation — situated experience — meaning understanding — value identification", participation as an entrance, culture context as a carrier and teacher's guidance and reflection expressions as keys. If we train movements without cultural interpretations, participation might fall down to entertainment or skill level; only by combining experiences with discussions, expressions, comparisons and re-practices could cultural meanings be gradually internalized. This is just matching the fundamental characteristic of higher vocational education which is practice oriented, bridging practice and meaning.

1.4 Platform and Field Expansion: Building a Diversified Collaborative Education Space

The effect of one class is temporary: traditional ethnic sports need to expand from physical education classes into various aspects like campus culture, student clubs, themed education, social practice and digital communication. We can acquire basic knowledge and experience through classes, build continued participation through clubs and competitions, enhance collective atmosphere through campus cultural activities, put students in real cultural context through school-local cooperation, broaden dissemination scope through digital platforms. Interaction between different fields makes traditional ethnic sports transcend staged teaching content, become a regular part of the campus cultural ecosystem, create an educational pattern for collaboration involving schools, teachers, students, local cultural institutions, and social organizations participate together. Some researches point out that cultural education needs the joint participation of curriculum space, activity space, environmental space, and social space^{[3][8]}.

1.5 Evaluation Mechanism Optimization: Ensuring Educational Effectiveness through Developmental Evaluation

Still focusing on movement standards, skills attained and competition results, the goal of cultural education will be replaced with technical training. The content of evaluation should consider skill mastery, cultural understanding, participation attitude, cooperative performance and identity change all together; the method of evaluation should move away from single outcome assessments towards process oriented, developmental and value added evaluation; subject of evaluation should move away from teacher alone evaluation to combine teacher evaluation, student self-evaluation, peer evaluation and practical observation through materials like learning portfolio, participation record, reflection report or display of achievements showing changes in students' cognition, emotion and behavior providing basis for teaching adjustment. We need to realize that evaluation is not only a tool to test results but a weather vane to guide teaching which embeds the goals of cultural education into the evaluation process without squeezing it out by the logic of technical assessment.

2. Current Difficulties: Main Constraints on Traditional Ethnic Sports Empowering Cultural Education

Current practices: There are traditional ethnic sports in the curriculum and campus activities of some higher vocational colleges, they are partly explored and formally incorporated but the cultural education function is still not fully released, which mainly manifest as follows 5 aspects.

2.1 Unclear Cultural Positioning

Some schools treat traditional ethnic sports merely as a way to enrich physical education teaching in order to liven up the school's atmosphere or show off their educational features without sufficient understanding on its educational value for cultural confidence. They emphasize showing events rather than value guidance in teaching and activities; although they master the movements and rules, they don't systematically understand the historical context, cultural symbols and spiritual connotations. The purpose of cultural education is still transmitting knowledge, but doesn't consider cultural identity, value attitude and spiritual cultivation so that "cultural resources" hasn't really become "value resources", and the internal identification emphasized by cultural confidence can't turn it into students' relatively stable cultural attitudes through traditional ethnic sports.

2.2 Lack of Overall Alignment in the Curriculum System

The majority of traditional ethnic sports courses belong to electives that follow interests and have no continuity and progress among them, linking up with talent cultivation objectives, ideological and political courses, general education courses and specialized courses; some classes emphasize movement training and skills assessment, whereas cultural interpretation is merely extra content. There is no collaborative design in these courses and there is also no effective linkage mechanism between physical education courses and ideological and political courses and cultural courses for converging the cultural education function as an overall synergy. Due to lack of cross-curricular design, faculty collaboration and institution safeguards although traditional ethnic sports "enter the curriculum", yet we do not establish a stable course cluster and education chain.

2.3 Insufficient Transformation from Practical Experience to Cultural Identity

There are too many activities that focus on participation scale, performance effect and competition ranking while neglecting the formation of cultural context, guidance in the process and post-activity reflection and distillation; students perform movements or compete without understanding the ritual norms, collaborative ethics and appeal values behind them. There's no long-term design after the end of an activity for discussion, recording, display, and re-practice making it hard for embodied experience to elevate to deep cultural understanding resulting in a disconnect between the participatory behavior and identity construction. Activities are frequent however its actual effectiveness is low, the embodied advantage of traditional ethnic sports hasn't been fully released.

2.4 Relatively Undiversified Educational Platforms and Resource Collaboration

Main body of traditional ethnic sports: Physical education class or temporary activity on campus without a stable club, signature event, cultural practice base and school-local cooperation mechanism; Colleges and Universities do not make full use of social resources (local intangible cultural heritage project, inheritors and social organization); Rarely get chance into real cultural settings; Construction of digital course, new media product and online display platform far behind; Cannot integrate well with the current media ecology. Its educational influence is short term and localized, thus it is hard for them to achieve the educational function of traditional ethnic sports jumping out from fragmented experience to sustained immersion.

2.5 Evaluation Methods Cannot Easily Reflect the Effectiveness of Cultural Education

The current evaluation indicators are technical movement, physical fitness data and competition results with no obvious points like cultural cognition, participation enthusiasm, collaboration spirit, and identity changes, lack of process records and developmental evaluation that make it difficult for teachers to understand the trajectory of students' growth over time (lacking mechanisms to adjust teaching plans according to evaluation information), dominance of teacher evaluation subjects has not changed, student self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and social practice evaluation have not been utilized well. The lagging situation caused traditional ethnic sports to gradually become "pure skill training" pushed the preset goal of cultural education to the margin.

3. Practical Paths: Building a Systematic Mechanism for Cultural Education through Traditional Ethnic Sports

3.1 Strengthening Cultural Guidance and Promoting the Transformation of Cultural Value from External Input to Internal Identification

The schools should clarify the significance of traditional ethnic sports for cultural education in talent cultivation program and campus culture development plan (cultural identity, value shaping and spiritual cultivation), Goal of relevant course(s) or activity(ies): teaching contents can not just be introducing names of events and movement rules, but systematic interpretation with historical background, cultural symbols, ritual norms, inter-ethnic exchanges and contemporary value; Ways of expression: it's no longer one way preaching increase the perceptibility of cultural content by such means like storytelling, audiovisual materials, cases of individuals, situational reenactment and problem-based discussion. The teachers needs to assist students comparing tradition and modernity, the

local and the national, individual experience and community values so that they could develop a rather rational cultural identity based upon understanding and reflection which achieve the transformation from external input to internal generation.

3.2 Optimizing the Curriculum Structure and Establishing a Cross-Course Collaborative Education Mechanism

Based on its professional layout, student foundation and local culture, higher vocational colleges could set up three levels of course module (basic experience, thematic expansion, practical application) so that basic-level helps students know what is happening and its background, expansion-level strengthens their skills, etiquette and cultural interpretation while application-level aims at transferring knowledge and integrating abilities by doing things like planning, volunteering services, digital communication or project development. In addition, it should be strengthened to connect physical education courses with ideological and political courses and other related specialized courses: for example, in ideological and political courses we explore national sentiment and community consciousness; in majors such as art design, tourism management, new media, we carry out projects about visual presentation, cultural interpretation, and communication of traditional ethnic sports. We need to formally include traditional ethnic sports into talent cultivation program and teaching quality evaluation from institution level, which will get stable institutional support and eventually form a long-term mechanism of cross-course collaborative education^[8].

3.3 Improving Experience Design and Forming a Transformation Chain of “Participation—Reflection—Re-practice”

The traditional ethnic sports activities need to change from "organize students to participate" to "design cultural learning experiences", teachers apply ritualized teaching, role assignment, task situation and cooperation competition to let students feel and understand rules and values within a genuine or simulated culture context. Incorporate observation, questions and interpretation into this activity; finally encourage sharing feelings and interpreting cultural meaning with different ways: e.g., writing learning journal, having group discussion, presenting themes, creating short videos, reviewing projects etc.. Colleges can set up continuous projects which let students go through several steps (initial experience, in-depth learning, achievement exhibitions and performances), enhancing their cultural identity by multiple participation. Encourage students to moderate innovation of traditional events but do not dissolve its cultural foundation, thus there will have an organic connection between traditional expression and youth lifestyle.

3.4 Expanding Diverse Platforms to Form a Collaborative Pattern Both On-Campus and Off-Campus and Both Online and Offline

On campus: Higher vocational colleges should establish stable traditional ethnic sports clubs/training teams/branded activities; incorporate traditional ethnic sports festival/thematic culture week/campus competition into annual education plan; enrich the daily atmosphere through space design for campuses, cultural display or communicating information. Off campus: Colleges have to establish long-term cooperation with local intangible cultural heritage protection institutions, ethnic cultural venues, communities, inheritors and social organizations; build practice bases; send students to do research/performance/volunteer service/cultural communication. Digital platform development: Colleges can develop micro-courses/project database/virtual exhibition/columns of short videos inviting student participation in content planning and production. Studies show that multi-stakeholder collaboration and digital communication helps expanding field of cultural education^[8] – only when we have on-campus/off-campus linkage and online/offline integration, traditional ethnic sports go beyond isolated activity as a constantly running new ecosystem of cultural education.

3.5 Improving the Evaluation System and Establishing a Closed Loop of “Evaluation—Feedback—Improvement”

In order to overcome this lagging evaluation mechanism, we must build up a multi-dimensional evaluation system focused on process and development. On evaluation contents: going beyond single skills assessment and include cultural understanding, participation attitude, identity change and comprehensive development into an indicator system; on evaluation methods: choose different tools

(classroom observation, learning portfolio, practice record, reflection report, achievement display) or means (questionnaire and interview), pay attention to the degree of students' progress relative to their starting point; on evaluation subjects: introduce diverse participations via teacher evaluation, student self-evaluation, peer evaluation. Colleges should make good use of evaluation results to adjust curriculums, optimize activities, train teachers, allocate resources, formulate a "evaluation—feedback—improvement" continuous optimization mechanism promoting cultural education through traditional ethnic sports from experience-based exploration to institutionalized and normalized operation.

4. Conclusion

Features such as cultural bearing, physical practice and group interaction of traditional ethnic sports offer a practical carrier conforming to the laws of vocational education for cultural education for higher vocational colleges. We build up an analysis framework on cultural stance guidance, curriculum system integration, practical experience transformation, platform and field expansion, and evaluation mechanism optimization from the view point of cultural confidence, analyze the problems existing in structure, put forth corresponding implementation paths. What we emphasize here is that empowering traditional ethnic sports can't depend solely on adding some courses or organizing several activities; it requires systematic coordination from cultural stance, curriculum system, experience mechanism, platform and field, and evaluation methods. The five aspects complement each other and progress layer by layer together form a complete closed loop of education. Only when there are clear value orientation, solid systemic architecture, smooth practical mechanisms, strong platform support, and proper evaluation methods, its cultural education function will be continuously released and really become an endogenous force in the system of fostering virtue through education in higher vocational colleges. Our study mainly adopted theoretical integration and experience summary method. Empirical investigations could be done in higher vocational colleges of different regions and types in our future research so as to further test the mechanisms of action, implementation conditions and educational effectiveness of specific projects.

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