

The dilemma of inheriting the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in Sichuan and the path to breaking it

Liu Haidong*, Lei Ping, He Hao

School of Physical Education, Chengdu Normal University, Chengdu, China

**Corresponding author*

Keywords: Ethnic minorities; traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities; inheritance dilemmas

Abstract: The dilemma of transmitting the traditional sports culture of Sichuan minority groups is studied using the literature method and the example method. The study finds that the main factors restricting the inheritance of the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in Sichuan are the lack of education and talents, the loss of social culture, and the influence of changes in the social environment. In turn, the following paths are proposed: strengthening the construction of talent teams, promoting traditional sports culture, and upholding the heritage of ethnic traditional sports culture.

1. Introduction

The inheritance and preservation of traditional minority sports culture can promote cultural diversity, facilitate dialogue and mutual understanding among global civilisations and enrich the diversity of global sports culture. The Sichuan region is one of China's most populous ethnic minority regions and is rich in traditional minority sports culture. This is mainly due to the diversity of the geographical environment and the intermingling of multi-ethnic cultures in the Sichuan region. In the mountainous areas of Sichuan, the ethnic minorities have developed a traditional sporting culture with strong regional characteristics through their long-term productive work and cultural heritage, such as centipede wrestling, dollar bamboo horses and archery. The Sichuan region was also one of the most important routes along the ancient tea-horse route. The exchanges between ethnic groups and cultures laid the foundations for the prosperity and diversity of traditional minority sports culture. In modern times, traditional ethnic minority sports culture faces several challenges, including a lack of talent, the impact of branding and commercialisation, and a lack of social acceptance. In addition, the characteristics of ethnic minority traditional sports culture have also become difficult to pass on, such as unique customs and practices and language barriers.

2. Identification of relevant concepts

2.1 Traditional sports culture

Traditional sports culture refers to a long-established sports activity and culture with national characteristics and historical accumulation. It emphasises the unity of physical exercise and spiritual

cultivation, focuses on harmonious individual and collective development, and is an indispensable and important part of the national culture[1]. Traditional sports culture includes national sports, martial arts, games and children's games, which have been passed down to this day and still carry the cultural spirit and aesthetic philosophy of the national people in their pursuit of health and happiness.

2.2 Ethnic Minority Sports Culture

The ethnic minority sports culture is a cultural system with strong local characteristics created by many of China's ethnic minorities, reflecting the rich and colourful spiritual world and cultural traditions of these ethnic groups regarding production, life and recreation. It includes famous traditional sports, such as Mongolian wrestling, Tibetan equestrianism and Hani pigeon racing. These sports are not only the cultural heritage of these ethnic minorities but are also an important part of China's traditional sports culture. By passing on and promoting these sports cultures, the exchange and integration between ethnic minorities and the mainstream culture can be strengthened, promoting the development of colourful ethnic and cultural pluralism.

3. The dilemma of inheriting traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in Sichuan

3.1 Lack of education and talents

Due to historical reasons and geographical limitations, traditional sports culture in some minority areas of Sichuan is not passed on smoothly, making it impossible for traditional sports culture to be passed on effectively. At the same time, there is a lack of experienced coaches, managers and financial support in the inheritance process, and a lack of professionals to inherit, operate and promote traditional minority sports culture. Moreover, there is a lack of positive publicity and education on traditional minority sports culture [2]. Some people do not have sufficient knowledge of the value and importance of traditional minority sports culture, thus leading young people to choose modern sports methods and ignore the importance of traditional sports culture. For example, the heritage and promotion of traditional sports, such as Tibetan-style wrestling, must be improved. There are problems, such as insufficient understanding of techniques and skills and inconsistent rules of refereeing, resulting in the need for more competitiveness of these traditional sports in modern sporting events. For example, the pursuit of modern lifestyles by young people in the Tibetan areas of Sichuan has led to the gradual loss of traditional folk sports culture, such as bonfire feasts, and young people are no longer interested in such traditional activities, leading to a loss of talent and cultural loss, which has restricted the development of the heritage of traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in Sichuan.

3.2 Loss of social culture

With the rapid development of society, the transmission of traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in Sichuan has been hindered by the weakening of traditional values, the loss of ancestral traditions, the loss of cultural symbols and cultural integration, and other factors of social and cultural loss, resulting in the failure of traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities to be adequately transmitted and developed [3]. For example, more and more people are abandoning traditional farming methods and daily habits and no longer supporting and participating in the traditional sports and cultural activities of ethnic minorities. In addition, the modernisation process of urbanisation and the cultural shift has also made the culture lack a basis for transmission and development, thus creating an obstacle to its transmission and development. For example, the Xulong Fist, a traditional fighting style in Tibetan areas of Sichuan, was once so popular that in some areas, groups of

youngsters would even stick to the traditional training grounds, studying traditional fighting moves and sparring every day. However, with the loss of culture in society, the younger generation's interest in this traditional culture has gradually declined, and they are no longer accustomed to passing on their culture in the old way. In addition, the Torch Festival, a sport unique to the Yi people of Sichuan, is also at risk of being passed on due to the loss of culture in the community. Traditionally, the Torch Festival is a soft instrument made of leather ropes and twigs. On the 15th day of the first month of the lunar calendar, just after the sun sets, thousands of Yi people dance with torches in their hands, illuminating the entire mountain village with a dazzling red light. However, as modern urbanisation accelerates and people's lives become increasingly modern, the traditional Torch Festival is becoming difficult to pass. As a result of this loss of culture, more and more young Yi people have lost sight of the cultural values behind the traditional culture. They have become more interested in the modern urban lifestyle, needing more ability to dig deeper and discover the traditional culture, which has hurt the project's heritage.

3.3 Impact of changes in the social environment

As the modernisation process continues, the inheritance of the traditional sports culture of Sichuan ethnic minorities has been hindered by changes in the social environment. The traditional sports culture is gradually fading out of people's lives, and many young people lack interest in traditional culture, resulting in a serious challenge to the transmission of traditional sports culture. At the same time, urbanisation has led to many ethnic minorities living in cities[4] making it more difficult to maintain their original cultural practices and traditional sporting activities than traditional rural life. In addition, the commercialisation brought about by modernisation has caused the traditional sporting culture to lose its original cultural connotations and become a purely commercial activity. Many traditional sports activities have been turned into sports tied to commercial interests, which has caused many people to lose their sense of understanding and heritage of traditional sports culture. In the case of Tibetan archery competitions, for example, the changing social environment, the intervention of modern technology and accelerated urbanisation have led to a gradual loss of traditional Tibetan sporting culture. Originally, archery competitions were held in Buddhist temples or assembly halls, where the participants were all Tibetans, but nowadays, this traditional event has gradually faded away. Due to the fast pace of urban life, where people need completely different places and ways to work, study and play, many have forgotten their ethnic and cultural traditions and stunts.

4. The path of breaking the dilemma of Sichuan's traditional minority sports culture inheritance

4.1 Strengthen the construction of talent team

Talent team construction is the key to promoting the inheritance of the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in Sichuan. The following approaches can be taken: (1) increase investment in training inheritance talents. Increase the financial investment in training traditional culture and sports inheritance talents, and set up special scholarships, etc., to attract more young people to join the cause of traditional culture and sports inheritance. (2) Strengthen the training of heritage talents. Through the organisation of training courses and seminars for traditional cultural and sporting heritage talents, the level of traditional cultural and sporting skills and expertise of heritage talents will be improved so that they can pass on and promote traditional ethnic minority sports culture with ease [5]. (3) Support the innovation and entrepreneurship of traditional culture and sports inheritance talents. Provide a more favourable entrepreneurial environment, policy support and financial and taxation support to provide more space and opportunities for traditional cultural and sporting heritage talents

to develop. (4) Strengthen cultural and sports exchanges and cooperation. Carry out cultural and sports exchange activities within and outside the province to promote the inheritance and development of traditional ethnic minority sports culture. At the same time, strengthen international exchange and cooperation so that more foreigners can understand and learn about our traditional sports culture (5) Establish an evaluation system for traditional cultural and sports heritage talents. Establish a scientific and reasonable evaluation system to assess and motivate the performance and effectiveness of traditional culture and sports heritage talents to devote more consciously to the cause of traditional culture and sports heritage.

4.2 Promoting traditional sports culture

In the context of cultural intermingling in the new era, to promote the inheritance of the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in Sichuan, the importance of promoting traditional sports culture is self-evident. The following approaches can be adopted: (1) Strengthen the excavation and collection of traditional sports culture, gain an in-depth understanding of the history of sports culture, traditional sports styles, skills and characteristics of ethnic minorities, and establish a database through the collection and aggregation to facilitate research and promotion. (2) Offer courses on traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in basic education so that students can understand and learn about the process of these sports and develop their cultural self-confidence and sense of national identity. (3) Conduct colourful traditional ethnic minority sports and cultural activities such as dancing, bull-skin ball playing and cockfighting in communities and villages to promote the transmission and development of local traditional sports culture [6]. (4) Create clubs for traditional minority sports culture and organise coaches, athletes, and enthusiasts to discuss, discuss and pass on traditional minority sports culture and stimulate enthusiasm for studying minority sports culture. (5) Strengthen exchanges and interactions with other regions, compare and exchange Sichuan's ethnic sports culture with that of other regions, from which we can learn, study and pass on the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities, realise the pluralistic intermingling of national, ethnic cultures and learn from each other, and enhance the ability to pass on and develop the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities [7].

4.3 Maintaining the heritage of traditional ethnic sports culture

From the perspective of social environment changes, adhering to the inheritance of national traditional sports culture and forming an all-round and multi-angle protection and inheritance mechanism is necessary[8]. Specific measures are as follows: (1) Strengthen the propaganda and education of traditional sports culture: through the news media, the Internet and other propaganda channels, let more people understand and cognise traditional sports culture to enhance people's cultural self-awareness and protect and inherit traditional sports culture. (2) Strengthening education and training for the inheritance of traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities: establishing training centres for the inheritance of traditional sports culture, offering relevant courses, training professional talents for the inheritance of traditional sports culture, strengthening cooperation with ethnic sports colleges in ethnic minority areas, and carrying out multiform and multi-level educational activities for the inheritance of traditional sports culture. (3) Strengthen policy protection: Strengthen policy support for the inheritance of traditional sports culture in ethnic minority areas, establish relevant regulations and rules, give more policy protection to traditional sports culture inheritors and contractors, and encourage and support the inheritance of traditional sports culture in ethnic minority areas[9]. (4) Strengthen social participation: through social organisations, strengthen cooperation with traditional sports culture inheritance work in ethnic minority areas, increase the attention and participation of all sectors of society in traditional sports culture inheritance, and create a social

atmosphere in which the whole society pays attention to, protects and inherits traditional sports culture together.

5. Conclusion

The preservation and transmission of the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities is an important part of human civilisation and has a rich historical and cultural value. These traditional sports cultures can help us understand the living habits, religious beliefs, wisdom and traditional skills of ethnic minorities, as well as enrich our sports culture and spiritual and cultural life. In addition, traditional cultures of ethnic minorities are passed on and exchanged among different regions and races, promoting cultural identity and mutual understanding between them, creating a more colourful cultural ecology and contributing to the diversity of human civilisation and cultural exchange. Moreover, with the development of modernisation and urbanisation, the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities is facing a serious problem of preservation and transmission. Under such circumstances, we need to take a series of measures to ensure the continuity and development of the traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities.

Acknowledgements

Research on the Development of Traditional Sports of Ethnic Minorities in the Context of Cultural Integration" (Project No. XXTY2022B18), a project of Sichuan Leisure Sports Industry Development Research Centre, a key research base of Humanities and Social Sciences of Sichuan Provincial Education Department.

References

- [1] Li Nana. *The art of sumo wrestling in the Song Dynasty* [J]. *Journal of Chengdu Institute of Physical Education*, 2020, 46(05):27-30+36.
- [2] Matusitz J, Simi D. *Pathways to Sports Leadership for Latinas in U.S. Higher Education*. [J]. *Journal of Latinos and Education*. 2019; 18(2):151-163.
- [3] Lam VL, Corson E-J. *National and ethnic identification, intergroup attitudes, and sport participation in the context of the London Olympics* [J]. *The British journal of developmental psychology*. 2013; 31(4):379-394.
- [4] Han Yuji, Wang Hongshen, Song Xiuping. *An overview of the inheritance mechanism of traditional national sports culture* [J]. *Journal of Beijing University of Physical Education and Sport*, 2022, 45(02):132-144.
- [5] Li Jing, Ma Xiaoli, Yu Jinhai. *Changes and Development of Traditional Culture of the Nomadic People—A Case Study on Naadam in Henan County of Qinghai Province in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau*[J]. *International Journal of Business Anthropology*. 2021; 11(2):3-13.
- [6] He X, Tian S. *Analysis of the Communication Method of National Traditional Sports Culture Based on Deep Learning* [J]. *Scientific Programming*. April 2022:1-8.
- [7] Liu H. D., Li N. N. *Cultural differences and subject perceptions: the insurmountable gap between sports and education integration* [J]. *Sports and Science*, 2020, 41(05):36-42.
- [8] Wan Yi. *"The paradox of "original sports": deconstructing and reshaping the protection model of intangible cultural heritage of sports* [J]. *China Sports Science and Technology*, 2016(1):5-12
- [9] Liang Qinchao, Wang Hongshen, Li Yuan. *The loss and recovery of minority village sports in the urbanization transition* [J]. *Journal of the Capital Institute of Physical Education*, 2016(1):96-99