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Research on the Challenges and Approaches to Family Inheritance of Ethnic Traditional Sports Culture

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Abstract

Purpose: The study takes Shizhu County, Chongqing Municipality, one of the Tujia settlements in China, as an example to sort out the dilemmas that families currently face in the transmission of ethnic traditional sports culture, and to analyze the factors that lead to the dilemmas in the transmission of ethnic traditional sports culture.

Methodology: Comprehensive use of literature, fieldwork, interviews, questionnaires, data analysis, logical reasoning and other methods, the use of Citespace to analyze existing research results. 1030 questionnaires were distributed to Shizhu ethnic families, 981 valid questionnaires were recovered, and SPSS22.0 was used to establish the questionnaire database and analyze and process the data.

Results: The results of the study show that there are the following dilemmas in the family inheritance of ethnic traditional sports culture in Shizhu County: alienation of children's ethnic traditional sports culture capital acquisition; lack of family integration of ethnic traditional sports culture; misunderstanding of the family's joint participation in ethnic traditional sports activities; lack of the main body of cultural inheritance, intergenerational inheritance stagnation; and lack of self-awareness of ethnic traditional sports culture.

Conclusion: Based on the results of research on the relationship between the family environment and the inheritance of traditional ethnic sports culture, several experiences and insights have been presented: Strengthen the national cultural identity and establish the correct beliefs of parents; pay attention to the transformation of family capital and optimize the structure of capital distribution; create a supportive behavioral environment in the family to enhance the interaction between parents and children; promote the creation of the physical environment of traditional national sports and the precise implementation of the ground; integrate into classroom teaching and promote the "feeding" inheritance; strengthen social guidance to enhance the awareness of national sports; strengthen the platform construction to enhance the cultural atmosphere of traditional national sports. Integrate into classroom teaching to promote "feeding" inheritance; strengthen social guidance to enhance the awareness of national sports; and strengthen platform construction to enhance the cultural atmosphere of national traditional sports.

Keywords: family inheritance; traditional ethnic sports culture; inheritance dilemma.

1. Introduction

The Report of the Government of the Communist Party of China to the Twentieth Congress states that it is necessary to transmit the outstanding traditional Chinese culture and satisfy the growing spiritual and cultural needs of the people^[1]. China's excellent traditional culture is deep and profound, and is the crystallization of the wisdom accumulated by people of all nationalities in the long-term communication and integration and production life, and the traditional ethnic sports culture, as an important part of it, is a sports activity that can satisfy people's physical and mental needs. National sports embody national identity and strengthen both body and spirit^[2]. It is a vital aspect of both national and human sporting culture^[3]. Promoting the high-quality development of Chinese traditional ethnic sports is essential in the new era. This development should take advantage of strategic opportunities provided by a strong sports nation, strong education, a healthy China, and a robust cultural landscape^[4]. It is necessary to thoroughly explore family inheritance, existing challenges, and effective strategies for preserving these sports. Traditional ethnic sport culture is grounded in heritage, it requires nourishment from its roots^[5]. China in the process of development, now the traditional ethnic sports compared with Western sports, still face serious difficulties, the root of the traditional ethnic sports culture heritage lost the family heritage of this fertile ground.

In the existing results, different levels of research have been conducted on the inheritance of Chinese traditional national sports culture from different perspectives, and certain results have been achieved, but the research that deeply analyzes the dilemmas and strategies of family inheritance of Chinese traditional national sports culture is still relatively lacking.

Therefore, this paper tries to analyze the existing dilemmas and development strategies from the perspective of family inheritance, so as to provide ways and methods for the inheritance of Chinese traditional national sports culture.

2. Current Situation of Traditional Ethnic Sports Inheritance in Shizhu County

Most traditional ethnic sports have their roots in labor, military history, funerals, rituals, and religion, which are closely linked to the geographical context of the respective ethnic areas. For instance, the bamboo bell ball and the twisting of flat bands originated from labor practices directly tied to the paddy farming economy of Shizhu. In recent years, the infrastructure development within various ethnic regions of Shizhu has been accelerating, leading to a crude economic growth model. This has intensified the contradiction between development modes and the limited ecological carrying capacity, resulting in significant changes to the natural ecological environment that adversely affect the sustainable development of traditional ethnic sports culture.

As Western sports culture and modern urban lifestyles aggressively penetrate the relatively underdeveloped and insular rural areas of Shizhu, the agricultural civilization that has historically underpinned traditional economic development faces challenges. The impact on traditional ethnic sports culture is profound, leading to cultural ecological damage, homogenization, and marginalization of these traditions. The prevailing social environment for sports in Shizhu has come to be dominated by Western modern sports culture, prompting traditional ethnic sports to "actively" undergo transformation to align with Western standards. This phenomenon of "cutting the feet to fit the shoes" results in the erosion of integrity and national uniqueness within the traditional ethnic sports culture. Consequently, the authentic character of these traditional sports is gradually fading from our collective experience.

3. Difficulties Faced by Families in Passing on Traditional Ethnic Sports Culture

3.1. Children Traditional Ethnic Sports Cultural Capital Acquisition Alienation

The acquisition of cultural capital related to youth traditional ethnic sports can be categorized into several domains, including family, school, community, and associations, each characterized by distinct attributes in how they facilitate this acquisition. While the family plays a crucial role in the transmission of traditional ethnic sports cultural capital among youth, changes in the lifestyle and entertainment practices of ethnic families in Shizhu County have diminished the sense of familial experience. This has resulted in a lack of a supportive sports culture and low levels of parental understanding and engagement with traditional ethnic sports. Consequently, relying solely on the family as a source of cultural capital is insufficient for meeting the needs of youth; there is a pressing need to actively seek out cultural capital through other avenues, such as schools and community engagement.

Research indicates that the process of inheriting traditional ethnic sports culture within schools in Shizhu County currently faces several challenges. These include a shortage of qualified teachers, inconsistencies in teaching materials, the absence of specialized agencies to standardize curricula, and insufficient motivation among various institutions to promote these sports. As a result, the promotion of traditional ethnic sports within schools often remains superficial, lacking the depth of cultural education necessary for meaningful engagement.

The inadequate access to traditional ethnic sports and cultural capital in both home and school environments has led to the alienation of young people from these cultural practices, hindering their connection to their ethnic heritage.

3.2. Lack of Integration of Traditional Ethnic Sports and Cultural Families

Integrating family into the inheritance of traditional ethnic sports culture primarily involves elders educating and influencing the next generation across various aspects, including living habits, folkways, customs, religious beliefs, and historical and cultural contexts. This process aims to encourage younger members of the ethnic group to develop a habit of participating in traditional ethnic sports, thereby fostering a deeper understanding and acceptance of their cultural heritage. By continuously strengthening their ethnic consciousness through these practices, a sense of intergenerational heritage can be realized.

The extent of parental involvement in traditional ethnic sports subtly influences their children's engagement in these activities. As practical role models, parents significantly affect their children's knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of their traditional culture. However, findings indicate that parental participation in traditional ethnic sports and cultural activities is generally low and often not integrated into family education. Consequently, there is a noticeable absence of parental guidance in this context.

This lack of guidance leads to children having an unclear understanding of their cultural identity and limited awareness of their heritage. As a result, they exhibit little interest and enthusiasm for engaging in traditional sports of their ethnicity and participate less frequently in related activities.

3.3. Misconceptions About Families Participating Together in Traditional Ethnic Sports Activities

The establishment of a cultural atmosphere for traditional ethnic sports within the family largely hinges on the collective participation of family members in these activities. For instance, engaging in or observing traditional ethnic sports competitions and discussing related topics are vital ways to cultivate children's interest in these sports. Through watching, participating in, and discussing traditional ethnic sports, parents and children communicate effectively, facilitating the mutual transmission of sports culture and thereby accelerating the intergenerational transfer of traditional ethnic sports heritage.

Research indicates that in Shizhu County, the frequency of ethnic families participating in traditional sports activities is predominantly limited to "1-2 times together" or "never together," reflecting a low level of joint participation and insufficient parent-child interaction. Interviews revealed that many parents perceive the teaching of ethnic sports and culture as primarily the responsibility of schools, believe that the transmission of ethnic culture is a matter for government consideration, and view accompanying their children to traditional sports activities as an obligation imposed by educational institutions.

This lack of parental involvement in cultural transmission presents a significant challenge. The absence of active parental engagement and prevalent misunderstandings regarding cultural transmission can hinder the development of traditional ethnic sports behaviors and the understanding of young people throughout their growth, particularly during childhood.

3.4. The Absence of the Main Body of Cultural Heritage and the Stagnation of Intergenerational Inheritance

The primary participants in traditional ethnic sports are members of their own ethnic groups, serving as both participants and inheritors of these cultural practices. However, changes in the local production and lifestyle have compelled many young people to migrate in search of work, resulting in a mobile population that dilutes the community's ability to engage in traditional ethnic sports. Consequently, those who perform these activities are increasingly scattered, leading to a lack of vitality in traditional performances and competitions during ethnic festivals. This fragmentation hinders the execution of folklore and cultural festivities.

The erosion of the cultural inheritance framework has gradually diminished the rich atmosphere surrounding traditional ethnic sports, contributing to a decline in the number of individuals engaged in cultural activities. As a result, the elite forces vital for the participation in and preservation of traditional ethnic sports and cultural practices are dwindling, disrupting the core of the inheritance process.

With the aging of elder cultural inheritors who have a deep understanding of these traditions, there are fewer individuals who grasp the intrinsic value of these cultural practices. This decline results in a significant loss of cultural continuity, leading to a diminishing number of heirs and custodians of traditional ethnic sports culture. As the principal actors in this cultural inheritance diminish, the succession of traditional sports programs among ethnic minorities faces an increasing risk of extinction.

3.5. Lack of Awareness of Traditional Ethnic Sports Culture

Cultural self-consciousness is the expectation of Mr. Fei Xiaotong on the lack of self-cultural awareness of people in China, which means: "People living in a certain environment have 'self-knowledge' of their culture, and understand its origin, formation process, characteristics and development trend."^[6] The inheritance and development of the traditional ethnic sports culture not only implies a high degree of recognition of the traditional ethnic sports culture, but also reflects a high degree of confidence in the traditional ethnic sports culture, and also reflects a high degree of self-confidence in the inheritance and development of the traditional ethnic sports culture based on cultural confidence^[7]. Long-standing historical realities have resulted in significant cultural cognitive deficiencies among the Chinese people regarding their own heritage, leading to a lack of self-confidence and awareness related to the culture of traditional ethnic sports. The unique characteristics of these sports and their inherent cultural values are not adequately recognized by the populace. Additionally, the absence of a sense of ceremony at folk festivals, coupled with the diminishing cultural relevance of traditional ethnic sports, has created a void in the cultural space necessary for these sports, which depend on folk festivals for their vitality. This situation has contributed to a decline in cultural awareness surrounding traditional ethnic sports and has weakened the sense of cultural self-identity.

Interviews with young members of the Tujia ethnic group reveal that they possess a vague understanding of the origins of their traditional sports and culture, as well as their cultural background and the historical development of their ethnic identity.

This lack of clarity has hindered their willingness to engage deeply with traditional sports culture and to become its inheritors. Instead, they are increasingly distancing themselves from these cultural practices, rarely taking the initiative to participate in ethnic traditional sports programs.

Many young people are drawn to novel Western and modern cultures that resonate with contemporary trends. They often perceive traditional cultural values as incompatible with modern society, viewing the Western civilization promoted by globalization as more fashionable and appealing. Consequently, they regard their own culture as outdated and rustic, leading to a disinterest in and lack of enthusiasm for participating in traditional sports from their ethnic heritage. This shift results in a diminished pride in their cultural identity and sense of responsibility. For instance, they tend to prefer modern Western sports such as yoga, taekwondo, and basketball over traditional ethnic activities like swinging hand dance, bamboo bell ball, and high-footed horse.

As a result, the distinctive cultural heritage of ethnic traditional sports is increasingly suppressed and eroded, leading to a gradual dilution and destruction of psychological identification with this cultural legacy. Young people fail to recognize the splendor of their own culture, which is a significant part of the broader tapestry of Chinese culture. They also overlook their duty and obligation as members of their ethnic group to pass on and promote their cultural heritage, ensuring that future generations can appreciate and understand their ethnic identity, thereby preserving the richness and diversity of Chinese ethnic culture.

4. Strategies for Family Inheritance of Traditional Ethnic Sports Culture

4.1. Strengthening National Cultural Identity and Establishing Correct Parental Beliefs

The unique affinity and penetration of traditional ethnic sports culture can promote cultural identity in subtle transformation, and play an important role in promoting national spirit and national cohesion^[8]. Cultural knowledge is inextricably linked to value beliefs; parents cannot develop accurate beliefs if they lack a comprehensive understanding of their own ethnic's traditional culture and do not recognize the importance of inheriting national culture for the nation's future development.

To assist parents in gaining a deeper understanding of their ethnic's traditional sports culture and thus forming sound beliefs about cultural inheritance, the following approaches can be considered. First, parents should actively engage in traditional ethnic cultural activities organized by their families, schools, and communities - including institutions and enterprises - to acquire relevant knowledge through sports practice, accumulate capital related to traditional ethnic sports and culture, and foster a supportive family atmosphere.

Second, to harmonize the "three views" concerning family sports and the inheritance of national culture, parents must dispel the misconception that "cultural education is solely the school's responsibility and participation in sports activities is unimportant." Families must proactively guide their children's involvement in traditional ethnic sports and instill in them a proper appreciation of ethnic cultural values. Establishing a supportive family environment for such behaviors is essential.

To ensure the effective inheritance of traditional ethnic sports culture, it is vital for parents to establish accurate beliefs regarding cultural inheritance. By integrating traditional ethnic sports culture into family education, maintaining the continuity of parental involvement, and encouraging the active participation of the younger generation, we can enhance cultural self-awareness and foster a strong identity within traditional ethnic sports culture, ultimately facilitating a seamless process of intergenerational cultural inheritance.

4.2. Focus on Household Capital Transformation and Optimizing the Structure of Capital Distribution

Family capital encompasses economic, cultural, and social capital, with these various types of capital capable of transforming into one another. First, it is essential to emphasize the significance of investment in physical education and to increase funding for this area, as it serves as an effective channel to enhance children's cultural capital related to traditional ethnic sports. Currently, much of the investment in youth family education tends to be directed toward school-related or performance-oriented cultural activities, while funding for physical education remains significantly lower. Parents must recognize the importance of investing in sports activities for their children's healthy development and the role that traditional ethnic sports and culture play in enhancing their children's ethnic and cultural education. This recognition should lead to an adjustment in educational investment planning that prioritizes sports education.

Second, attention should be given to transforming individual sports and cultural capital into social capital. Youth social capital is a resource that develops from individual interpersonal networks, and parents should focus on building their children's sports-related social networks. They should actively guide their children to cultivate good habits in physical exercise while fostering a supportive peer group atmosphere centered around sports culture. Participation in traditional ethnic sports, along with competition, cooperation, and communication with peers, provides young people with vital opportunities to construct meaningful social networks, significantly contributing to their accumulation of social capital. Parents should encourage their children to engage in various traditional ethnic sports and cultural activities organized by schools and to participate in team sports, facilitating the transformation of cultural capital among their peers.

4.3. Creating a Family Supportive Behavioral Environment to Enhance Parent-child Interaction

Once parents have established correct beliefs, they need to adopt effective strategies and behaviors to encourage youth participation in traditional ethnic sports and cultural activities, implementing these behaviors in a purposeful and planned manner. Parents can begin by addressing their children's psychological needs, such as selectivity, mastery, and achievement, to effectively and skillfully facilitate their involvement. Supportive parental behaviors in traditional ethnic sports include role modeling, using motivational language, encouraging and permitting participation in traditional ethnic sports activities, providing logistical support for involvement, and purchasing necessary equipment for their children. By combining these supportive behaviors, parents can fulfill their children's psychological needs, create conducive conditions for participation, and promote active engagement.

Additionally, parents can actively participate in traditional ethnic sports and cultural activities alongside their children. This interactive engagement serves multiple purposes: it provides role models and contextual understanding for the children, as parents can offer positive, reasonable, and timely feedback based on their own experiences. This involvement allows parents to gain deeper insights into their children's emotions and a better understanding of their real needs. Furthermore, parental participation offers companionship, and through their own efforts and timely encouragement, parents can effectively stimulate their children's intrinsic motivation, enhancing their persistence in participating in traditional ethnic sports and cultural activities.

4.4. Encourage the Creation of Physical Environments for Traditional Ethnic Sports and the Precise use of Land

Youth participation in traditional ethnic sports necessitates adequate space for movement. Access to quality sports equipment and facilities is essential for young people to engage in various traditional ethnic sports programs. When youth are provided with a conducive environment and sufficient equipment for these activities, it can significantly enhance their skills and foster a sense of self-achievement in participating in traditional sports. Satisfying the psychological need for achievement is beneficial in cultivating young people's interest in participation, sustaining their engagement, and promoting cultural inheritance. Moreover, it creates more opportunities for interaction among peers and family members. This is particularly evident in collective sports, such as bamboo bell ball, where recognition of each player's role within the team can foster a sense of collectivity and belonging, thereby stimulating youth motivation for autonomy and sustained participation.

To achieve this, families and society must create a "demand-support" environment for children. Family support in purchasing relevant equipment, along with social provisions for venues and environments, can facilitate active participation in traditional ethnic sports.

The government plays a crucial role by formulating implementation plans and management measures for the construction of traditional ethnic sports bases, clarifying responsibilities and goals for base development, enhancing organization and promotion, and ensuring tangible outcomes. By honing internal skills and cultivating an external image, the government aims to establish benchmark bases for ethnic sports projects at the county or city level. Additionally, it facilitates skill exchanges and activities within these traditional sports bases in diverse forms, thereby providing a solid physical environment to support the development of traditional ethnic sports activities and cultural inheritance.

4.5. Integration into the Classroom to Promote "Feeding" the Heritage

The school education system is the main venue for the transmission of traditional ethnic sports culture^[9], it is one of the main means of promoting cultural heritage. Beginning with school curricula, traditional ethnic sports that embody strong cultural characteristics, such as bamboo bell ball, cricket race, sky ball, and pearl ball, should be integrated into educational programs. This involves bold exploration and innovation to enhance the quality of sports education and to purposefully train reserve talents for traditional ethnic sports.

Schools should offer ethnic sports courses and amateur training tailored to students' age groups and skill levels, ensuring that the development of traditional ethnic sports progresses from popularization to mastery. This approach is essential for transmitting excellent traditional ethnic sports programs, training national sports enthusiasts, cultivating cultural inheritors, and realizing the goal of "fitness for all, participation for all, and cultural inheritance."

As part of the implementation of traditional ethnic sports programs, schools should actively assist teachers and coaches in discovering efficient teaching and training methods through practical experience. Based on a comprehensive understanding of these sports programs, schools can develop and compile unique teaching materials specific to traditional ethnic sports, integrating them into the curriculum. In promoting teaching, various resources - human, material, and financial - should be coordinated to ensure robust support for educational initiatives. Regular training for the teaching staff will help guarantee that the development of ethnic sports culture within schools remains sustainable and vibrant.

Furthermore, establishing a campus inheritance system is vital for enhancing the cultural atmosphere surrounding traditional ethnic sports at educational institutions. This system can help cultivate students' interests and solidify their foundational skills in traditional ethnic sports and culture. Schools and communities should organize small-scale, engaging traditional ethnic sports competitions that require minimal space, allowing for feedback to parents regarding their children's growth and interests. This feedback can encourage parents to pay attention and engage in their children's activities, thereby strengthening family interaction and realizing the principle of "family participation - family communication - family inheritance."

4.6. Strengthening Social Guidance to Increase National Sports Awareness

A multi-party mechanism should be established, comprising county committees, people's committees, education committees, schools, and families, to enhance social guidance. The county committee will provide political and economic direction; the people's committee will coordinate the implementation of policies and the training of teachers; the education committee will oversee and evaluate the curriculum's implementation; schools will focus on curriculum research and development, as well as the cultivation of both professors and future talents; and families will actively participate in the programs while providing a supportive environment for participation. Interdepartmental coordination will be implemented to effectively promote the inheritance and development of traditional ethnic sports and culture, thereby advancing the Party's ethnic policy. Relevant departments will actively support the development of traditional ethnic sports activities by providing necessary facilities, funding, and promotional materials to enhance social awareness and engagement.

Efforts should be made to fully leverage various communication channels, including icons, bulletin boards, radio, television, and online platforms, to strengthen the promotion of traditional ethnic sports and cultural activities. A balance between theory and practice must be maintained to build consensus among the county's residents regarding their participation in these activities and the promotion of traditional ethnic culture. This approach aims to create a supportive atmosphere of concern and engagement throughout society. Consequently, the slogan "Developing Traditional Ethnic Sports and Supporting Traditional National Sports" can become a conscious commitment among the county's residents.

This is especially important in promoting the distinctive bamboo bell ball program, fostering an inclusive environment for participation, and guiding all communities to take concrete actions to preserve and develop traditional ethnic sports and culture.

4.7. Strengthening the Construction of Platforms to Enhance the Cultural Atmosphere of Traditional Ethnic Sports

Ethnic sports events and celebrations are important carriers and concrete expressions of traditional ethnic sports culture^[10]. To enhance the cultural richness and visibility of traditional ethnic sports in Shizhu, we aim to maximize and create various exhibition platforms such as folklore festivals, the National Games, and individual activities. By firmly establishing the bamboo bell ball as a central feature and leveraging the National Games as a primary platform, we will position the Tujia bamboo bell ball as a distinctive symbol of Shizhu's traditional ethnic sports culture.

Using the National Games selection platform, we will host traditional ethnic sports competitions and invite experts, referees, and judges to guide these events. This will enhance public understanding and recognition of traditional ethnic sports, thereby fostering a culturally vibrant atmosphere within the county.

We will accelerate the promotion of traditional ethnic sports contests, such as grabbing the sky and earth, high-foot racing, and board shoe racing. These activities will be organized annually at the county level, including folk games, school-level ethnic sports contests, school-to-school friendly matches, and class exchange contests. This will build a platform for the exchange of traditional ethnic sports and cultures, cultivate talents through interactive exchanges, and fully discover and enhance athletic abilities, thereby achieving comprehensive popularization and development.

Furthermore, we will actively organize village sports and strengthen the development of traditional ethnic sports activities in rural areas. We will select traditional ethnic sports programs suitable for village development and conduct activities at the village and community levels to cultivate a sense of cultural consciousness.

5. Conclusion

Culture is the bloodline of the nation and the spiritual home of the people. Cultural self-confidence, cultural identity, and cultural self-awareness are the important foundations of cultural heritage. In recent years, with the profound economic and social changes in China, the rapid development of internet technology and new media, increasing openness to the outside world, and the more frequent fusion of different ideas and cultures, there is an urgent need to deepen the understanding of the significance of China's traditional ethnic sports culture and further enhance cultural self-confidence and cultural self-awareness.

As one of the main areas of cultural inheritance, it is of great significance to grasp the family inheritance path of traditional ethnic sports culture for its development. The purpose of this paper is to inspire deeper cultural and sociological thinking within the academic research community on the development of Chinese traditional ethnic sports, hoping to provide assistance for the inheritance of this cultural heritage.

Disclosure:**Authors' contribution:**

Caixia Jiang: Selecting the topic, setting the framework, writing, unifying and revising the manuscript.

Hao Qin: Gather, categorize and analyze information.

Siyong Xia: Review and revise the full text.

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This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the School of Physical Education, Southwest University of China (SWU-TY202105) and followed the Declaration of Helsinki, and written informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Data availability statement:

The datasets generated and/or analysed during the current study are not publicly available due to privacy, but are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Conflict of interest:

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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