

Exploration of Ethnic Dance Education and the Development Pathways for Dance Culture Inheritance

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Abstract: *Ethnic dance represents the dance art forms of specific ethnic groups. It is primarily influenced by geography, culture, and customs, shaping a unique and vivid dance system. This system is reflected not just in the movements and steps of the dance but more broadly in the display of ethnic attire, music, and even religion. Such cultural richness endows ethnic dance with a profound historical background and emotional expression. From an educational perspective, ethnic dance can be both an in-depth subject of professional study and a stand-alone art course. However, regardless of the approach, the focus should be on helping students understand that teaching ethnic dance is not merely about imparting dance techniques; it is more crucial to ignite respect and appreciation for ethnic culture in students, thereby recognizing the inseparable and close connection between dance and culture.*

Keywords: *Ethnic Folk Dance; Dance Culture; Environmental Inheritance; Talent Inheritance; Development Pathways*

1. Introduction

Ethnic dance is an art form that conveys emotions through the language of the body while also depicting the living conditions of various ethnic groups. As an art with a long history, ethnic dance has numerous forms, themes, and types. It not only deeply integrates the unique temperament of various ethnicities but also ingeniously combines corresponding ethnic costumes and music to construct a distinctive form of artistic expression. Ethnic dance possesses an irresistible charm that can touch the audience's emotions, provoke the pursuit of beauty, and a sense of satisfaction with life, while also enhancing people's aesthetic sensibilities [1].

In the vast land of China, the many ethnic groups each have their characteristics, such as habits, beliefs, and culture. Therefore, the dances they create also have their distinct features, which constitute the unique charm of Chinese ethnic dance. For instance, Xinjiang dance, known for its vitality, fluid rhythms, and brisk steps, is beloved for its combination of versatile wrist movements with dance, bringing a joyful experience to people; Mongolian dance showcases their bravery and passion with robust and resilient movements; the Dai people's Peacock Dance, akin to a beautiful painting, paired with melodious music, offers a dreamlike audiovisual enjoyment to the audience [2].

2. Characteristics of Ethnic Folk Dance

2.1 Cultural Characteristics

Analyzing from the attributes inherent to dance itself, the cultural and artistic attributes are the most direct manifestations. The origins and development of humankind have always been accompanied by dance, and the evolution of both has a high degree of synchrony. Throughout the thousands of years of human civilization, the presentation of dance itself has continuously evolved, and its changes have contributed to the development of human culture. However, what has remained unchanged is that the art of dance has always been a fundamental expression of culture, and culture itself has also endowed dance with unique artistic characteristics. The style of ethnic folk dance is a genuine interpretation of ethnic aesthetic orientations and a true representation of ethnic cultural aesthetics. During the Tang and Song dynasties, the development of Chinese national culture and art evidently reached its zenith. The rapid development of cultural and artistic endeavors at the time also contributed to the

open-mindedness of the nation, showcasing its strong national power to the world. This shows that the development of ethnic folk dance is directly related to the development of social and cultural affairs [3-4].

2.2 Morphological Characteristics

As is well known, in the development of each ethnicity, due to different regional cultures, customs and habits also differ significantly, leading to the formation of dances unique to each ethnicity, with several dance forms possibly coexisting. Each type of ethnic folk dance will have a unique morphology and aesthetic perspective. For example, the most representative feature of Korean dance is the "willow hand and crane leg," Uyghur dance is characterized by "shaking body and trembling," and Tibetan dance by "bending body and trembling knees". These are clearly the unique morphological characteristics of ethnic folk dances, the basic framework of these dances, and mainly the reason for the artistic beauty that people yearn for [5].

2.3 Inheritance Characteristics

The formation and development of ethnic folk dance have undoubtedly been a long journey. What we see and hear in society today is the result of generations of people's continuous efforts to pass it on. The process of inheritance has undergone countless innovations. Therefore, the development of ethnic folk dance itself has two basic features: continuity and innovation. These are also the main reasons why it is considered the essence of national culture and art. As a multi-ethnic country, different regions of China clearly have unique ethnic cultures. Dance, as an important manifestation of ethnic culture and with a folk color, can fully reflect the living habits and local conditions of ethnicities and regions during the performance process. Hence, over thousands of years, ethnic folk dances have been a direct reflection of the cultural inheritance of the Chinese nation [6-7].

3. Strategies for the Inheritance of Ethnic Folk Dance

Inheriting ethnic folk dances requires a focus on their cultural essence to ensure their effective preservation and development. In the modern era, there is a high demand for the inheritance and development of our country's folk arts. In the context of the new era, the state has increasingly turned its attention to the cultural inheritance and development of ethnic folk dances, and local governments have also stepped up support for the cultural transmission and progress of these dances. This demands that each region intensify efforts to inherit and innovate their ethnic folk dance cultures[8]. For instance, Congjiang County in Guizhou Province, to facilitate the appreciation of local folk dances by ethnic minority residents, has established "Congjiang Miao and Dong Ethnic Folk Art Protection Bases" in some towns and townships within the county and has conducted teacher training for "Miao and Dong Ethnic Folk Art Protection." This demonstrates that all localities place great emphasis on the inheritance and innovation of traditional ethnic dances.

3.1 Talent Inheritance

Firstly, the nurturing of ethnic folk dance successors should be aligned with the actual development of the local economy. There is a symbiotic relationship between cultural and economic development; the depth of culture is fundamental to economic success, and economic growth will inevitably lead to rapid improvements in local economies. Hence, in the path of local economic development, the cultural industry must be a focal point, and comprehensively cultivating successors in ethnic folk dance becomes a fundamental and critical task according to the current overall economic situation and future strategic planning. Secondly, the training of successors in ethnic folk dance must be based on the strategic height of national cultural development. The advancement of cultural industries is also the hope of national development and the spiritual driving force for progress[9-10]. Especially in the journey towards the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," maintaining comprehensive development of national cultural industries is of utmost importance and forms the fundamental support for realizing this national dream. Thus, it is essential to utilize the cultural functions of relevant social organizations and government departments to jointly focus on nurturing successors in ethnic folk dance. Finally, local cultural resources should be maximized to cultivate successors of ethnic folk dances. Ethnic folk dances inherently possess clear national and regional characteristics, which are advantages in their inheritance, promotion, and development. Local authorities should delve into these regional

resources as advantageous factors in the training process, ensuring the continuous growth and strengthening of ethnic folk dances, allowing them to become a driving force for local cultural and high-quality economic development[11].

3.2 Mass Inheritance

Since ethnic folk dances are the crystallization of the wisdom of the masses, their transmission, promotion, and development in different historical contexts should return to the people. During this period, department staff should immerse themselves in communities, streets, and villages, to establish and continually improve platforms for ethnic folk dance activities, and utilize cultural activity rooms in rural areas to actively carry out related popularization and promotion activities. Additionally, schools' art education platforms should be leveraged to strengthen the popularization and promotion of ethnic folk dances among students of all educational stages. In this process, whether it is the popularization of ethnic folk dances in streets and communities or the art education in schools, both will cultivate people's sentiments and purify their souls, thus contributing to the formation of sound personalities. Such a path of inheritance has significant social value and can also provide an ideal space and environment for the development of Chinese culture and art industries[12].

3.3 Social Inheritance

It is beyond doubt that the inheritance, promotion, development, and protection of ethnic folk dances cannot be accomplished through the effort of individuals alone; it requires the relentless commitment of more institutions and departments working together. During this process, the government, specialized training institutions, and cultural promotion departments are evidently indispensable forces. The government should play a role in organization, guidance, and safeguarding; specialized training institutions should enhance the professional level of ethnic folk dance groups comprehensively; and cultural promotion departments should make full use of social media to play a role in the publicity and promotion of culture and arts. Only in this way can we ensure that the general public's awareness of their culture and arts is continuously elevated, providing strong support for the comprehensive inheritance, vigorous promotion, sustained innovation, and effective protection of ethnic folk dances.

3.4 Modern Inheritance

With the rapid development of internet information technology, the forms of dance art that people come into contact with have gradually diversified, which has significantly influenced their aesthetic perception of traditional dance arts. Dance arts imbued with a modern essence are clearly more favored by the masses. To adapt to the modern population's aesthetic view of dance art, ethnic folk dance artists are also innovating in their forms of expression, thus achieving the goal of adapting to the general trend of cultural and artistic development of the era. Here, it is not only necessary to fully understand the public's aesthetic orientation but also to preserve the inherent artistic characteristics of ethnic folk dances. These should be scientifically integrated with modern dance elements, allowing ethnic folk dances rich in traditional and folk colors to exhibit the beauty of modern art, undoubtedly stimulating the aesthetic interest in ethnic folk dances among modern audiences. For example, in the creation of ethnic folk dances, internet technology can be fully utilized for remote creation. Firstly, innovation is needed in the performance form of ethnic folk dances, choosing appropriate performance forms based on different ethnicities, regions, and styles; secondly, internet technology is applied in the creation of ethnic folk dances, turning them into electronic videos or pictures; thirdly, internet technology is used to produce dance music of different styles or to spread the music through various media forms. Moreover, internet technology can be used to build a virtual stage, allowing performers to perform in a virtual environment. This not only enriches the expressive forms of China's ethnic folk dance art but also ensures its better inheritance.

4. Development Pathways for Folk and Ethnic Dance

4.1 Intensifying Promotion and Enhancing Awareness of Heritage

As society progresses, there has been a significant improvement in the material standard of living of the masses, and folk and ethnic dances are an indispensable part of our country's traditional culture.

With the advancement of the times, people have gradually begun to question this traditional folk dance. Especially in today's era, as people's pace of life accelerates and the way of life changes dramatically, many feel that folk and ethnic dances have lost their original charm and can no longer meet the spiritual and cultural needs of the people. Under such circumstances, we must do our job well, strengthen the recognition of cultural heritage, and enhance its promotion and protection.

We should strengthen the popular education of folk culture in the region. In the use of information technology, modern technological media must be utilized effectively. Modern technology can be used to produce audiovisual products and video materials of folk and ethnic dances, making them available for people to enjoy and learn. At the same time, propaganda activities can be carried out through the internet and multimedia. Thus, our country's folk dances can reach more areas, enhancing people's understanding of folk dance.

Establishing an online platform for communication. In today's world, due to the development and application of internet + information technology, we are able to obtain a lot of information about minority ethnic folk culture from various media. For this purpose, we should use the internet media to create compatible online media to better provide services to the masses. We can also establish websites related to folk and ethnic dances on the internet for their promotion.

In the inheritance of traditional dances of ethnic minorities, we should organize a variety of cultural activities with diverse forms and rich content for promotion. We can also take advantage of various festivals to hold folk dance performances and competitions to facilitate understanding among people. Advanced technology can be utilized to exhibit and teach folk art.

Folk dance is an art form that is full of vitality and creativity. Therefore, to better inherit and develop this folk and ethnic dance, we must strengthen the protection and cultivation of this group. The protected "heritage" requires corresponding "professional techniques." On this basis, through professional training and strengthening research in the field, we can improve the professional level in this area. This will allow cultural heritage inheritors to better acquire the necessary professional skills and knowledge, thereby better carrying out the protection and development of cultural heritage.

4.2 Valuing Talent Cultivation to Solidify the Foundation for Inheritance

From the perspective of inheritors of folk and ethnic dances, to effectively promote their inheritance and development, talent cultivation must be valued, and the foundation for inheritance must be solidified. First is the expansion of the circle of inheritors. As folk and ethnic dances have strong regional characteristics, in their development, we can explore folk dance talents in different regions through government support and cooperation with folk artists, forming a professional and stable inheritance team. Second is the cultivation of inheritors, who are the backbone of the development of folk and ethnic dance, and their cultivation must be strengthened. We should vigorously carry out inheritor training, intensify training efforts, formulate comprehensive inheritor training plans, and focus on enhancing their professional skills, artistic literacy, and overall quality. There must be an increase in efforts to protect cultural heritage to promote its preservation. In the inheritance and development of our country's folk and ethnic dances, more cooperation is needed among the inheritors. This will not only drive the continuous development of folk and ethnic dances but also foster innovation. Collaboration and exchange can also occur among different inheritors to better develop the nation's folk dances. Third, we should integrate folk dances with contemporary life. As the times progress, some young people have lost interest in traditional folk dances. Inheritance should be linked with contemporary society to better inherit and develop our country's folk and ethnic dances. Fourth, we should perfect the assessment and reward system for inheritors. A comprehensive evaluation and incentive system must be constructed to ensure effective assessment and motivation of the inheritors' work. It should be made an integral part of the local intangible cultural heritage, encouraging more people to join in protecting and developing it. Only in this way can the inheritance and development of folk and ethnic dances play a positive role in the advancement and progress of our country's traditional culture.

4.3 Transforming the Methods of Inheritance, Highlighting the Characteristics of the Times

In the process of inheriting ethnic folk dance, inheritors play a crucial role, hence their contribution is of utmost importance throughout the transmission of ethnic folk dance. However, traditional methods of transmitting ethnic folk dance are overly simplistic, and under such conditions, it is difficult to stimulate the enthusiasm and initiative of inheritors, as well as to ignite their passion for ethnic folk

dance. To better preserve and pass on ethnic folk dance, it is imperative to transform these traditional methods and emphasize the characteristics of contemporary times. Ethnic folk dance is an extremely artistic and emotionally powerful traditional cultural expression. When carrying out activities related to the transmission of ethnic folk dance, it is necessary to enhance the training of professional skills for the inheritors and to improve their level of expertise. As an art form with significant representational value within Chinese traditional culture and with a strong capacity for artistic influence, only by doing so can we better inspire the inheritors' passion for ethnic folk dance. In the course of inheritance activities, it is vital to fully utilize the important role of the inheritors, ensuring that they firmly establish the idea of preservation and promotion of traditional culture.

4.4 Utilizing Modern Technology to Innovate Inheritance Pathways

Facing the challenges in inheriting and developing ethnic folk dance, we should start from the following aspects to actively innovate the methods of transmission. Firstly, the government should increase financial assistance. During the process of inheritance and development, the government should amplify its investments, establish special funds in relevant departments, and carry out activities related to inheritance and development. Secondly, the use of modern technology. With the continuous advancement of modern technology, the methods of transmission should also evolve with the times, actively employing modern technology to innovate the channels for ethnic folk dance transmission. During the performance of ethnic folk dances, advanced multimedia technology can be fully utilized, allowing the audience to deeply experience the charm of traditional culture during the viewing process, thereby further strengthening the influence of traditional culture.

5. Conclusion

In summary, the inheritance and development of ethnic folk dances require efforts to enhance national cohesion, as well as the collaborative cooperation of government departments, relevant institutions, and organizations. Mutual coordination among all parties is essential to support the inheritance and development of ethnic folk dances, ensuring that they shine and radiate warmth on the path to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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