



# The Importance and Dilemma of Inheriting and Protecting Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture

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**Abstract.** Traditional Chinese medicine culture is a treasure trove of Chinese traditional culture, and its cultural origin comes from traditional Chinese cultural ideas. Analyzing the importance of protecting traditional Chinese medicine culture and the difficulties in its dissemination can help us seek countermeasures to protect local traditional Chinese medicine enterprises and activate the vitality of traditional Chinese medicine culture inheritance and innovation.

**Keywords:** Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture Inheritance, Development, Dissemination Dilemma, Countermeasures

## 1 Introduction

At present, there are many research achievements on the dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture in the academic community, including both monographs and academic papers. In terms of content, the main focus is on the popularization of traditional Chinese medicine culture, focusing on the inheritance of the spiritual part of traditional Chinese medicine culture. However, there is still a lack of material carriers for cultural inheritance. This article focuses on cultural material carriers and proposes corresponding countermeasures.

Chinese medicine, as one of the four national treasures, has played an important role in the development and dissemination of Chinese culture. However, in the context of globalized big data, information cocoons and the acquisition of traditional Chinese medicine enterprises have caused difficulties in the development of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

## **2 Definition of the Cultural Connotation of Traditional Chinese Medicine**

Traditional Chinese medicine culture is the essence of China's excellent traditional culture. The Chinese Society of Traditional Chinese Medicine has for the first time defined the connotation of traditional Chinese medicine culture: Traditional Chinese medicine culture is the sum of material civilization and spiritual civilization that reflects the characteristics of traditional Chinese medicine in China's excellent traditional culture. In the explanation of traditional Chinese medicine culture provided by Xu Zhen and others, it is believed that traditional Chinese medicine culture also includes thinking patterns, behavioral patterns, traditional customs, etc. related to traditional Chinese medicine. <sup>[1]</sup> It can be said that traditional Chinese medicine culture nurtures the social concepts and humanistic thoughts of the Chinese nation from ancient times to the present.

## **3 The Importance of Protecting the Inheritance and Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture**

### **3.1 Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture is a Treasure of Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture**

Traditional Chinese medicine culture contains a rich content of Confucianism, Taoism, and traditional philosophy in China, which is a testament to the excellent traditional Chinese culture of the times.

Confucian culture and ancient Chinese philosophical thought emphasize the concept of "harmony between heaven and man". <sup>[2]</sup> Confucianism values benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trust, believing that heaven is an existence that endows people with the essence of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom, and can have an inductive relationship with people. In addition, Confucian culture also proposes the concept of the unity of form and spirit. The "Xunzi Tian Lun" mentions that "the form is embodied and the spirit is born" <sup>[3]</sup>, which lays the foundation for traditional Chinese medicine health preservation.

There is also a source of traditional Chinese medicine culture in Taoist culture. The core of Taoist culture is "Dao", which regards "Dao" and "One" as a whole and emphasizes the regularity and integrity of all things in the world.<sup>[4]</sup> The Book of Changes states that "heaven and earth are dense, all things turn into alcohol; men and women form the essence, and all things turn into life", indicating that yin and yang are opposed and permeated with each other. This dynamic and mutually penetrating view of yin and yang has contributed to the diverse view of life that traditional Chinese medicine refers to.

The diverse traditional ideas have jointly nurtured the development of traditional Chinese medicine culture. It can be said that the development of traditional Chinese medicine culture reflects the understanding and grasp of the laws of heaven, earth, and people in ancient China, and is a vivid display of the Chinese people's way of thinking

and behavioral norms in building the world. The inheritance and innovation of protecting traditional Chinese medicine culture are to inherit and carry forward the intellectual wealth left by ancient sages.

### **3.2 Traditional Chinese medicine culture has profound historical value**

The core values of traditional Chinese medicine culture can be summarized as "benevolence, harmony, refinement, and sincerity". That is to say, traditional Chinese medicine emphasizes the benevolence of doctors and the need to love and respect life. This is the embodiment of the spirit of putting life first in traditional Chinese medicine and the cultural source of the anti-epidemic spirit. In the fight against the epidemic, doctors do not give up on any life that may be saved, guarding the last line of defense for life. The Chinese nation has demonstrated the spirit of daring to struggle and forged the great anti-epidemic spirit of putting life first. This coincides with the value orientation of traditional Chinese medicine contained in traditional Chinese medicine culture, as well as the life, disease, and values of Chinese medicine. Therefore, traditional Chinese medicine culture deserves our protection.

## **4 Difficulties in the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese medicine culture**

### **4.1 Insufficient protection for traditional Chinese medicine enterprises themselves**

Cross-cultural communication should pay attention to ethnocentrism in culture, and cultural communication should be dynamic. <sup>[5]</sup>Historically, China and other countries have spread the culture of traditional Chinese medicine in medical exchanges. For example, the Korean physician Xu Jun wrote the Eastern Medicine Treasure Book in 1611, which recorded the meridians, acupuncture and moxibustion, and other related contents of traditional Chinese medicine. From 1492 to 1500, Sakaki Yoshimoto of Japan studied traditional Chinese medicine in China, brought with him relevant books such as "Treatise on Typhoid and Miscellaneous Diseases", and spread Zhang Zhongjing's theory in Japan. Traditional Chinese medicine also spread its culture to Europe through missionaries. <sup>[6]</sup>From the history of the dissemination and exchange of traditional Chinese medicine culture, we can know the importance of material media for cultural dissemination. Therefore, to inherit traditional Chinese medicine culture, it is necessary to preserve the material foundation of traditional Chinese medicine. However, there is currently a phenomenon of a large number of acquisitions of traditional Chinese medicine enterprises. In 2021, Japanese companies purchased shares of Tianjin Shengshi Baicao Group; In May 2023, Japan Jincun traditional Chinese patent medicines and simple Preparations Group acquired Shaanxi Ziguang Chenji Group, both of which are local TCM industries with a long history and numerous products. These events remind us to pay attention to the protection of traditional Chinese medi-

cine enterprises, as both material foundation and spiritual form are indispensable parts of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

#### **4.2 Lack of knowledge and cultural confidence in traditional Chinese medicine**

Traditional Chinese medicine culture is an excellent traditional culture, but there is an anti-traditional Chinese medicine alliance in China. This is because we are not familiar with traditional Chinese medicine knowledge and do not have sufficient cultural confidence in traditional Chinese medicine culture, so people are easily misled by intentionally smearing traditional Chinese medicine.

#### **4.3 The non-standard dissemination of new media**

The emergence and development of internet communication in human life have promoted the creation of virtual reality and significantly changed the form of relationships between people. The rise of short videos and entertainment methods such as television and movies has accelerated the dissemination of information, providing a platform for the inheritance of traditional Chinese medicine culture and also bringing harm. Firstly, there is a significant phenomenon of homogenization and fragmentation in the dissemination of content.<sup>[7]</sup> The dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture, which focuses on health preservation culture, dietary culture, and other easily mastered cultural elements, has led to a large number of similar cultural dissemination, making it difficult for people to have access to more in-depth content of traditional Chinese medicine culture. Secondly, the lack of authority among traditional Chinese medicine culture disseminators can easily lead to impersonating practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine to exaggerate the efficacy and carry out false propaganda, leading to the situation of the masses being deceived. Finally, some TV dramas do not have professional traditional Chinese medicine consultants but instead use traditional Chinese medicine inheritance as a background to deepen the stereotype of the public towards traditional Chinese medicine learning. For example, in the TV drama "Houlang", the exaggeration of the inheritance of traditional Chinese medicine has hindered the dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

### **5 Suggestions for Inheriting Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture**

#### **5.1 The government strengthens the protection and dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture**

In the current inheritance and innovation of traditional Chinese medicine culture, the government needs to play a leading role. In the face of foreign investment's acquisition of traditional Chinese medicine enterprises, the government should strengthen its review to prevent the significant loss of core Chinese medicine prescriptions and pro-

duction technologies. Support the development of traditional Chinese medicine enterprises, attach importance to and protect the rights and interests of traditional Chinese medicine enterprises.

## **5.2 Strengthen talent cultivation mechanism**

The country should strengthen the cultivation of traditional Chinese medicine professionals, rationalize the curriculum, and appropriately increase the content of traditional Chinese medicine culture and traditional Chinese medicine classics. Strengthen students' traditional Chinese medicine thinking through teaching by renowned doctors, reading traditional Chinese medicine classics, medical history, etc. Schools should strengthen students' understanding of the traditional Chinese medicine values of "benevolence, harmony, refinement, and sincerity" through education, and deepen their understanding of the culture of traditional Chinese medicine by organizing interesting traditional Chinese medicine communication activities, such as traditional Chinese medicine speech competitions, telling traditional Chinese medicine stories, identifying traditional Chinese medicine herbs, and interpreting traditional Chinese medicine classics.

## **5.3 Standardize Traditional Chinese Medicine Communication Media**

Scientifically utilizing the dissemination function of new media to authenticate institutions, individuals, etc. <sup>[8]</sup> That disseminates traditional Chinese medicine culture, to facilitate the public's identification of authoritative and correct knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine culture. Build an open and interactive platform, and choose a variety of traditional Chinese medicine and cultural knowledge for dissemination. At the same time, TV and movies with relevant backgrounds should be guided by authoritative practitioners and cannot exaggerate the facts. Strictly review relevant TV and movies related to traditional Chinese medicine culture and practitioners to ensure the authenticity and quality of the dissemination content, and reduce the dissemination of exaggerated concepts and knowledge.

# **6 Conclusions**

Culture is the sum of visible material conditions and the invisible spiritual world, which often subtly affects people's behavior. Traditional Chinese medicine culture embodies the wisdom of ancient Chinese traditional culture, embodies the philosophical thinking of ancient sages, and is an important cultural asset. However, the acquisition of local traditional Chinese medicine enterprises and the emergence of smearing traditional Chinese medicine cultural groups all indicate the urgency of protecting traditional Chinese medicine culture. Faced with the dilemma of inheriting traditional Chinese medicine culture, we can only maintain our traditional culture and establish a good image of traditional Chinese medicine culture by focusing on and valuing the inher-

itance and dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture from all levels of society.

## Fund Items

The 2020 Humanities and Social Sciences Research Project of the Ministry of Education "Research on the Film and Television Communication of Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture since the New Century" (20XJCZH015); Research on Enhancing the External Communication Ability of Shaanxi Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture in the Context of "Cultural Confidence", a 2020 Key Scientific Research Program Project of the Shaanxi Provincial Department of Education (20JZ037)

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