

Reflections on the Related Values of Five Animals-Exercises from the Perspective of National Culture

Lei Ye^{1, 2, a, *}, Cunxi Jiang³

¹Department of Taekwondo, Graduate School of Dong-A University, 49315, South Korea

²School of Physical Education, Xian Yang Normal University, Xianyang, 712000, China

³School of Physical Education & Sports Science, South China Normal University, 510631, China

^ayelei0705@gmail.com

Abstract

In modern society, a number of people choose more healthy and scientific ways to ensure the development of physical and mental health. Among them, Five Animals-Exercises can effectively achieve the goal of fitness and spirit relax. Through the method of literature review and expert interview, the author has a better understanding and reflection on the development and changes of Five Animals-Exercises and its own value. The results show that the value of Five Animals-Exercises is under great pressure in the course of its development. As a typical representative of Chinese health preserving culture, it is necessary to build up the health preserving skills based on one's own technology and at the same time absorb the excellent training methods in western sports civilization to ensure the realistic value of Five Animals-Exercises. It must adhere to principle and nationalism in order to better to tolerance and responsible attitude towards the performance of the national culture. Five Animals-Exercises cultural values by the perspective of national culture of thinking will be understanding and explore better for arousing more people a sense of belonging and pride of national culture.

Keywords

National culture; Five Animals-Exercises; Real value; Cultural identity; Cultural confidence.

1. Introduction

No matter how society changes and develops, national culture is always the main way to maintain national sentiments and gather national strength. Although the realistic value of Five Animals-Exercises has different interpretations in different periods, the national complex it precipitated after a long time cannot be removed and abandoned. As a typical representative of national culture, the formation and development of Five Animals-Exercises own value is deeply influenced by traditional culture such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, traditional Chinese medicine and Five elements theory. Therefore, it has a strong cultural foundation. Since ancient times, the cultural charm of Five Animals-Exercises has exerted an imperceptible influence on people's behavior and lifestyle. However, since modern times, influenced by the western sports culture, the value system of Five Animals-Exercises has also been impacted and influenced to a certain extent, especially the contemporary youth lack of cultural identity of their own national culture to a certain extent. The reason is that it is difficult to explore the different needs of different groups in the traditional health-preserving culture of sports such as Five Animals-Exercises. Therefore, by combing the development of Five Animals-Exercises in different periods and analyzing the realistic value of modern society, we will further enhance the role

and value of traditional national culture such as Five Animals-Exercises in maintaining national emotion, and enhance the sense of identity and belonging to national culture.

2. The Development and Value Analysis of Five Animals-Exercises

2.1. Overview of the Development of Five Animals-Exercises

Five Animals-Exercises is a fitness-oriented guiding technique based on imitating the movements of five animals. Its origin can be traced back to ancient times. According to historical records, at that time, the rivers in the central plains were overflowing and the dampness was diffused, and many people suffered from the disease of "heavy legs" with unfavorable joints. Therefore, a method to facilitate guidance was created, an exercise method similar to "dancing". This "dancing" with the function of "easy to guide" was the bud of Qigong guidance [1]. Five Animals-Exercises was produced under this background. Its formation is closely related to the guidance technique. Hui Lin's "The sound and Meaning of the Tripitaka" Volume 18 "Shi lun jing· massage" wrote that the way most people rub and pinch themselves, stretch their hands and feet, and relieve fatigue and irritability is guidance. Lu Deming's "The Annotation of Classic" quoted Li Yiyun: "By combining the movement of the limbs and the coordination of breathing, the qi of the viscera and meridians is smoothed and the body is soft and flexible" [2]. It can be seen that Five Animals-Exercises is a method of physical exercises carried out through guidance. Five Animals-Exercises is a stage of maturity gradually in different periods of development. In the Western Jin Dynasty, the "Three Kingdoms: Huatuo Biography" written by Chen Shou, it was recorded that I have an exercise method named Five Animals-Exercises. They are tiger play, deer play, bear play, monkey/ape play, and bird play, which can be used to prevent diseases, and at the same time, it can make the legs and feet light and easy, which can be used as a guide. This provided evidence for Hua Tuo's creation of Five Animals-Exercises. During the northern and Southern Dynasties, Tao Hongjing described the movements of Five Animals-Exercises in "Yangxing Yanming Lu". In the Qing Dynasty, Cao Wuji's "Wan Shou XianShu·Guiding technique" presented Five Animals-Exercises in the form of pictures and words. In today's society, there are countless texts, books, and video materials related to Five Animals-Exercises, and its development also pays more attention to the fitness effect on the people, and the charm and value of its traditional cultural value in modern society. In the future development, workers and researchers of traditional health-preserving culture are required to accurately grasp and tease out traditional health-preserving theories, and conduct scientific and systematic evaluation of its value from an academic perspective.

2.2. The Value of Five Animals-Exercises

For modern society, the fitness value and cultural value of Five Animals-Exercises are worth exploring. Five Animals-Exercises comes from the special movements of five kinds of animals. It combines disciplines such as meridian, viscera and Chinese traditional medicine, and it's a diversified and applicable traditional health preserving movement. On the one hand, it has the fitness value of strengthening physique, preventing and treating diseases, cultivating one's mind and prolonging one's life. On the other hand, Five Animals-Exercises and other health preserving methods came into being in ancient times, and the cultural heritage that it has accumulated over the long years is also immeasurable. Therefore, we should not only pay attention to the changes of the body function of Five Animals-Exercises, but also pay attention to the cultural connotation of Five Animals-Exercises to shape and influence on the inner world.

2.2.1. The Fitness Value of Five Animals-Exercises

Hua Tuo's creation of Five Animals-Exercises has opened up a precedent for later generations to keep fitness and health, and its fitness value is well known and recognized. Specifically, it can

improve cardiovascular disease, respiratory system function, exercise and bone system, immune system, mental health and other aspects.

First, the role of Five Animals-Exercises in cardiovascular disease has been confirmed by experiments. According to the literature, 95% of the causes of hypertension are primary, but most of the incidence rate is from bad lifestyle rather than pathological factor [4]. This shows that exercise in daily life is very important for maintaining their own cardiovascular function. Liang Wenyu and other scholars pointed out that Five Animals-Exercises is a kind of medium and small intensity aerobic exercise which can prevent and treat cardiovascular diseases and inducing factors. Other researchers have also confirmed through some experiments that regular Five Animals-Exercises exercise can improve the cardiovascular function of the elderly, such as the enhancement of myocardial contractility and the improvement of blood circulation speed [7, 8], and can reduce the pathogenicity of its risk factors [8]. From this we can see that Five Animals-Exercises has a positive effect on the treatment of cardiovascular disease.

Second, Five Animals-Exercises can improve the function of the respiratory system. Both traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine believe that a healthy respiratory system is the first barrier to prevent disease invasion. Five Animals-Exercises pays attention to regulating the breath and entraining the qi to return to the origin, emphasizing the coordination of movement with breathing and exhalation. Through exercise, it effectively exercises the respiratory muscles, while taking into account the improvement of cardiopulmonary function, increasing lung capacity, thereby enhancing emphysema and bronchitis Placement function of respiratory diseases [9]. Cheng Yufeng and other studies have shown that long-term practice of Five Animals-Exercises will greatly improve the respiratory muscle strain of patients with lung disease, delay the decline of lung function of patients with lung disease, and help improve the quality of life of patients with lung disease [10], which is basically consistent with the research conclusions of Gao Yanfang [11] and Zhao Qiaoliang [12].

Third, Five Animals-Exercises, through the transformation of movements such as stretching, opening and closing, ups and downs of virtual reality, causes the bones, joints and muscles to move in a spiral manner, thereby acting on the motion system. Studies have shown that long-term practice of Five Animals-Exercises can improve joint flexibility [13, 14] and maintain bone elasticity and toughness [13], so as to achieve the effect of preventing bone deformity and joint deformation [14]. There are also studies that show that middle-aged and old women's practice of Five Animals-Exercises can help to enhance their balance ability [15, 16] and muscle strength [14, 15]. In addition, Li Jingwei and other researchers found that long-term practice of Five Animals-Exercises helps to protect the normal structure of bones and joints, maintain the normal metabolism of bones [17, 18], and prevent the decline and aging of joint function. Moreover, Guo Chengfen's research shows that long-term practice of Five Animals-Exercises can effectively improve the level of bone mineral density of the human body [19, 20], and can effectively improve and alleviate the low back pain of elderly patients with osteoporosis, and to a certain extent, stimulate the endogenous mechanism of bone, slow down bone absorption and promote bone formation, which is an effective method for the prevention and treatment of primary osteoporosis [17, 19, 21]. From here we see that Five Animals-Exercises also has positive effects on sports and skeletal system.

Fourth, Five Animals-Exercises, as one of the oldest fitness techniques in China, regulates the nervous and stressed immune system by means of body movement and breathing, and promotes the recovery and stabilization of the disordered immune function, so as to achieve the effect of improving the function of the human immune system [22]. Yu Dinghai et al.[16], Intervened 100 healthy middle-aged and elderly people in Five Animals-Exercises experiment for 6 months, and the results showed that the CD3+ of female subjects in the experimental group increased significantly ($P < 0.05$), CD8+ decreased significantly, and the ratio of CD4+ / CD8+ increased significantly ($P < 0.01$). This is basically consistent with the results of previous

studies [22, 23], indicating that Five Animals-Exercises can improve the body immunity of participants.

Fifthly, Cui Yongsheng et al. [24], studied the practicer of fitness Qigong · Five Animals-Exercises from the perspectives of psychology and physiology, and the results showed that after 3 months of Five Animals-Exercises, the members of the experimental group not only showed significant changes in their physiological indicators compared with those before and after the experiment, but also had a positive impact on various indicators of mental state. Lu Cuilian's research shows that the mental health level of college students who have been practicing Five Animals-Exercises for a long time is significantly higher than that of normal students. Long-term practice can significantly regulate and alleviate the anxiety, depression, hostility and other adverse psychological states of College Students under various pressures [25]. Research by Cheng Xiang et al. [26], found that Five Animals-Exercises has a certain effect on improving the metabolic indexes of the prefrontal lobe and hippocampus, and thus has a therapeutic effect on patients with mild depression. These studies are enough to prove that the creation of Five Animals-Exercises is scientific and reasonable, and it has a positive effect on the physical and mental health of practitioners.

2.2.2. The cultural value of Five Animals-Exercises

Five Animals-Exercises, a Chinese traditional sports culture, has profound connotations of health preserving culture and Taoist culture, which is a characteristic of national traditional culture. The formation and development of Five Animals-Exercises is deeply influenced by traditional culture. It requires respect for the regularity between the mechanism of body movement and the changes of four seasons, which is consistent with the values of natural inaction and harmonious unity advocated by Taoism. According to the Tao Te Ching, "the reason why Tao is revered and virtue is precious is that Tao grows all things without interference, and virtue cultivates all things without dominating it, and let it go" [8], emphasizing that people should respect the laws of nature and conform to nature. The health-preserving thought of Five Animals-Exercises comes from this and is deeply influenced by it. This kind of health-preserving thought requires practitioners to calmly get rid of worries and cultivate their hearts during practice to improve self-cultivation. The Five Elements Theory is an important theoretical foundation of ancient Chinese culture. It is the study of the theory of interrelationship between things based on the law of mutual growth and mutual restraint between the five elements. The five elements refer to the five elements of gold, wood, water, fire, and earth, which correspond to the kidney, liver, spleen, heart, lung, and five internal organs of the human body. Influenced by the cultural concept at that time, Hua Tuo chose the five birds of "tiger, deer, bear, ape and bird" and named the "Five Animals-Exercises", and exercise the five internal organs based on the attributes of the five elements and the law of their interaction, which is the specific application of the five elements theory. In addition, Five Animals-Exercises, as a kind of guidance technique, uses guidance to achieve the purpose of sweating, so as to achieve the exercise effect of dredging the meridians, regulating internal organs, regulating qi and blood, maintain a balance of yin and yang, and restoring the original functions of the human body. And finally achieving the purpose of strengthening the muscles and bones, promoting qi and blood circulation, preventing and curing diseases. This fully reflects the theory of yin and Yang, qi and blood, meridian and collateral theory in traditional Chinese medicine, and adds a deeper cultural heritage to it. In a word, the cultural value of Five Animals-Exercises can be summarized as health-preserving culture, five elements theory, traditional Chinese medicine concept and so on.

3. Examining Five Animals-Exercises from National Culture

3.1. Five Animals-Exercises and Cultural Identity

Culture is the soul of a nation, and cultural identity is the root of national unity. Earlier in this article has been pointed that there are rich cultural values in Five Animals-Exercises, which are formed during the development of the Chinese nation for thousands of years. They are the crystallization of the wisdom of predecessors and the pride of the nation. All these are unanimously recognized by the Chinese nation. However, since modern times, with the introduction of western culture, Chinese traditional culture has been constantly challenged, especially under the impact of market economy, eager for quick success and instant benefit, blind development, which has caused great damage to national traditional culture. In addition, the acceleration of information flow and rapid economic development have caused the traditional culture of the original minority social system to disappear at an unprecedented speed[27], and many excellent cultural traditions have been lost or endangered. This shows from the side that extreme unconfidence leads to the lack of cultural identity. Liu Tongfang [28] pointed out that to enhance cultural identity, we must work hard to inherit and promote the excellent traditional Chinese culture, and should not only deeply explore and vigorously promote the values of Chinese excellent traditional culture, but also keep pace with the times and actively promote cultural innovation to inject new vitality and new connotation into Chinese excellent traditional culture. As one of the excellent traditional cultures, Five Animals-Exercises has the qualification of cultural identity. Although the current development of Five Animals-Exercises is not bad, it still needs the attention and recognition of the country, because cultural identity is an important basis for the legitimacy of the country and nation. A strong cultural identity can unite people's hearts, form a common idea, and promote national unity [29] And the integration and development of national culture. Therefore, the Five Animals-Exercises can be used to enhance cultural awareness and cultural identity, so as to achieve the purpose of cultural self-confidence.

3.2. Five Animals-Exercises and Cultural Confidence

National traditional sports culture is an important part of the national cultural system and an important foundation for enhancing cultural confidence and cultural pride of various nationalities [30]. As one of them, Five Animals-Exercises is an important part and carrier of national culture, and an important source of strength for us to strengthen our cultural confidence. In the thousands of years of inheritance, Five Animals-Exercises was only carried out in the way of "Teach by personal example as well as verbal instruction". Later, with the development of writing style, a large number of literature materials appeared through the way of written description and graphic description, many of which are about Five Animals-Exercises. These literature materials, such as the "Three Kingdoms: Huatuo Biography" by Chen Shou in the Western Jin Dynasty, "Nourishing Nature and Life Extension" by Tao Hongjing in the Southern and Northern Dynasties, Fan Ye's "History of the Later Han Dynasty" in the Southern Dynasty, Ma Zhen's "FuQi JingWen Lun" in the Tang Dynasty, and Song Dynasty's "Five Animals-Exercises Gongfa Diagram" and "Book of Five Animals-Exercises", Qing Dynasty Cao Wuji's "Wan Shou XianShu·Guiding technique", etc., have left precious cultural heritage for later generations, provided important supporting materials for its development history, and provided important basis for us to strengthen our cultural confidence. The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China emphasizes the rejuvenation of the nation, first of all, the rejuvenation of culture. The traditional Chinese sports culture is an important carrier of national culture. Under the background of national rejuvenation and cultural confidence, it is necessary to maintain respect and confidence in the Chinese traditional sports culture, and strengthen publicity, excavation, protection, inheritance and innovation in the

whole society, so as to promote the improvement of the spiritual and cultural level of all nationalities and strengthen cultural confidence. As one of the important members, Five Animals-Exercises plays an important role in protecting, inheriting and carrying forward the traditional sports culture of the Chinese nation. It contributes to the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and is the best interpretation of cultural confidence.

4. Reflection

The practical value of Five Animals-Exercises can be explored and research from the viewpoint of national cultural identity. Through the in-depth study of the fitness value and cultural value of Five Animals-Exercises, it enriches the form of national culture and enhance the people's sense of identity and pride of national culture.

Chinese traditional national sports have a distinct national color, and need a powerful development model to conduct standardized guidance to avoid them from falling into a difficult dilemma. At present, in the face of the lack and decay of the scientific elements of local sports in the structure of sports culture, we should not only start from the perspective of sports development, but also from the inheritance and innovation of Chinese traditional culture. More importantly, we should take advantage of the 'good wind' of the new era, enhance cultural consciousness, reshape cultural confidence, and contribute to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation [31]. Therefore, we puts forward the following suggestions.

First of all, as one of the traditional sports, Five Animals-Exercises should be based on a series of disciplines such as traditional Chinese medicine, meridian and collateral theory, kinematics and rehabilitation, to build a theoretical system of Five Animals-Exercises. Secondly, we should create the development model of Five Animals-Exercises with different groups and conditions through sociology, culture, history and other disciplines. Finally, it is necessary for Chinese people to retrieve their lost self-confidence from the cultural level, based on the new era and new development trend, adhere to cultural confidence and promote the innovation of national traditional sports culture, so as to promote cultural renaissance.

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