

# From Physical Health Preservation to Cultural Identity: The Dissemination and Construction of Cross-cultural Body Practices in the "Chinese Medicine Fever" on the Internet

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## ABSTRACT

As a vivid carrier of excellent traditional Chinese culture, traditional Chinese medicine carries the Eastern wisdom of "unity of heaven and man", "dialectical treatment", and "prevention of disease". Its dissemination essence is a cross-cultural dialogue with the body as the medium and health preservation as the starting point. In recent years, the "Chinese medicine craze" on the extranet has continued to rise. Chinese medicine physical practices such as acupuncture and moxibustion, moxibustion, Chinese medicine conditioning, meridian massage, and dietotherapy regimen have gradually extended from the initial demand for "curing diseases and curing diseases" to an important path for overseas people to perceive Chinese medicine culture and identify with Chinese culture. This article is based on the core theory of traditional Chinese medicine, combined with typical cases of traditional Chinese medicine dissemination on the internet, to explore the dissemination path of traditional Chinese medicine body practice in cross-cultural contexts, analyze how body experience is transformed into cultural identity, reveal the role of traditional Chinese medicine body practice in constructing excellent traditional Chinese culture in cross-cultural dissemination, highlight the core concept and contemporary value of traditional Chinese medicine "people-oriented" and "conforming to nature", and provide a reflection on the combination of traditional Chinese medicine charm and practical significance for the overseas dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

## KEYWORDS

Traditional Chinese Medicine; External Network Dissemination; Cross Cultural Physical Practice; Cultural Identity; Wisdom of Wellness.

## 1. ORIGIN AND FOUNDATION: THE CORE CONNOTATION AND COMMUNICATION CHARACTERISTICS OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE BODY PRACTICE

The physical practice of traditional Chinese medicine is the concrete expression of its theory, with the core of "using the body as a carrier, health preservation as the goal, and harmony as the core". It always runs through the core concepts of "unity of heaven and man", "dialectical treatment", and "medicine and food sharing the same origin". This is also the fundamental reason why it can cross cultural boundaries and be widely spread overseas. Unlike the Western view of the body, which regards the body as a "mechanical component," the body in traditional Chinese medicine is an organic whole that combines form and spirit. "The form represents the sacrifice of the spirit, and the spirit represents the use of the form." The health of the body depends not only on the maintenance of the body, but also on the harmony of qi, blood, meridians, yin, and yang. This unique body cognition constitutes the cultural background of traditional Chinese medicine's body practice.<sup>[1]</sup>

The rise of "TCM fever" on the extranet cannot be separated from the promotion of the Internet platform, nor can it be separated from the multiple transmission paths of TCM physical practice. Overseas people are exposed to and participate in traditional Chinese medicine physical practice through various channels such as social media, offline experiences, professional institutions, and cultural exchanges, gradually moving from "unfamiliar" to "familiar", and from "trying" to "identifying". These dissemination paths not only retain the core characteristics of traditional Chinese medicine, but also combine the characteristics of cross-cultural communication, achieving effective adaptation of traditional Chinese medicine body practice to overseas contexts, and enabling the widespread dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine health wisdom.<sup>[2]</sup>

### **1.1. Social Media Communication: Fragmented Presentation, Expanding Communication Coverage**

Social media platforms (such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, etc.) are the main communication platforms for the popularity of traditional Chinese medicine on the internet. Their fragmented and visual dissemination characteristics perfectly match the concrete characteristics of traditional Chinese medicine body practice, allowing traditional Chinese medicine health preservation to quickly enter the daily lives of overseas people. Overseas practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine and health bloggers use short videos, graphics, and other forms to break down the practice of traditional Chinese medicine into simple, easy to understand, and actionable content, reducing the threshold for overseas participation.

In terms of dissemination content, the focus is on the core scenarios of traditional Chinese medicine body practice, guided by "practicality and daily life": firstly, the teaching of basic health preservation techniques, such as acupoint massage (Hegu acupoint to relieve headaches, Zusanli to regulate the gastrointestinal tract), simple moxibustion methods, meridian tapping techniques, etc., through live demonstrations by bloggers, allowing overseas people to operate independently at home; The second is the combination of traditional Chinese medicine and dietotherapy. In combination with the concept of "medicine and food are of the same origin", we recommend simple and easy to make health preserving diets such as lily lotus seed Congee, job's tears poria tea, and explain their conditioning effects, which meet the needs of overseas people for "natural health preservation"; The third is physical identification and regulation, which helps overseas people understand their own constitution and choose targeted health preservation methods through simple self testing methods (such as basic judgment of tongue coating and pulse).<sup>[3]</sup>

This fragmented dissemination not only expands the coverage of traditional Chinese medicine body practice, but also forms an "interactive dissemination" - overseas people share their practical experiences, ask questions and communicate in the comment section, and bloggers respond in a timely manner, forming a closed loop of "disseminators audience practitioners", allowing traditional Chinese medicine body practice to be promoted through interaction. At the same time, the algorithm recommendation mechanism of social media can accurately push traditional Chinese medicine health content to people who are concerned about health and natural healing, further improving communication efficiency.

### **1.2. Offline Experience Communication: Immersive Experience, Strengthening Physical Cognition**

The core of traditional Chinese medicine body practice is "body experience". Offline experience, as the most direct way of dissemination, can allow overseas people to personally experience the charm of traditional Chinese medicine, strengthen their understanding of the body view of traditional Chinese medicine, and is the key path to achieving "body acceptance" to "cultural identity". In recent years, the number of overseas TCM clinics, health centers, and cultural experience centers has been increasing, providing overseas people with immersive experience services such as acupuncture and

moxibustion, meridian massage, and traditional Chinese medicine conditioning, which has become an important carrier of TCM culture transmission.

As an important battlefield for the dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine in Europe, Germany has professional institutions such as the Kuitzing Hospital of Beijing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and the Hanseatic Medical Center of Hamburg University Affiliated Eppendorf Hospital. These institutions not only provide professional traditional Chinese medicine diagnosis and treatment services, but also carry out experiential activities for the public, allowing overseas people to have close contact with physical practice of traditional Chinese medicine.

The core value of offline experience is to enable overseas people to understand the connotation of "holistic concept" and "treatment based on syndrome differentiation" of traditional Chinese medicine through the intuitive feeling of the body - for example, through the sense of "getting qi" in acupuncture and moxibustion, they can feel the existence of channels; Understand the scientific nature of "syndrome differentiation and supplementation" through the taste and conditioning effects of traditional Chinese medicine decoctions; Experience the health logic of "warming up meridians" through the warm sensation of moxibustion. This immersive experience breaks down the barriers between language and cognition, allowing overseas people to gain physical recognition and laying the foundation for subsequent cultural identity.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **1.3. Professional Institution Communication: Standardized Development, Enhancing Communication Credibility**

The cross-cultural dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine body practice cannot be separated from the support of professional institutions. Overseas traditional Chinese medicine hospitals, clinics, research institutions, etc. have enhanced the credibility of traditional Chinese medicine overseas through standardized diagnosis and treatment services, specialized talent cultivation, and scientific research and promotion, promoting the transformation of traditional Chinese medicine body practice from "folk experience" to "professional diagnosis and treatment" and "scientific health care".

In terms of diagnosis and treatment services, overseas professional traditional Chinese medicine institutions strictly follow the theory of traditional Chinese medicine, adhere to the principle of "syndrome differentiation and treatment", provide personalized conditioning plans for overseas people, and win trust with actual therapeutic effects. As the only Chinese medicine hospital in Europe that receives inpatients and most of the expenses can be paid by the public medical insurance, the Quesing Hospital of Beijing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine has relieved the pain of countless overseas patients for 30 years. The team of Fang has helped patients with traumatic brain injury recover their ability to take care of themselves through oral and external use of Chinese medicine combined with acupuncture and moxibustion, massage and other treatments, and demonstrated the value of Chinese medicine with professional strength. In terms of talent cultivation, overseas professional institutions cooperate with Chinese traditional Chinese medicine colleges to carry out the training of traditional Chinese medicine professionals, while providing traditional Chinese medicine training for local Western medicine doctors. For example, Hansa Meian Traditional Chinese Medicine Center cooperates with Shanghai University of Chinese Medicine to train master's students in traditional Chinese medicine. This is the first high-level traditional Chinese medicine education project for Western medicine doctors in Europe, promoting the localization development of traditional Chinese medicine talents.<sup>[5]</sup>

### **1.4. Cultural Exchange and Communication: Scene based Integration, Deepening Cultural Perception**

The cross-cultural dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) body practice is essentially a cultural exchange. Through scenario based integration, overseas people can experience TCM health preservation while also experiencing the excellent traditional Chinese culture behind TCM,

deepening their cultural perception. In recent years, cultural exchange activities between China and foreign countries have become increasingly frequent, and traditional Chinese medicine body practice, as an important cultural symbol, has been integrated into various cultural exchange scenarios, becoming an important link to promote cross-cultural understanding.

On the one hand, traditional Chinese medicine cultural exchange activities focus on "scenario based experience", combining traditional Chinese medicine body practice with elements of Chinese traditional culture, allowing overseas people to experience health preservation while feeling the charm of Chinese culture. For example, in overseas traditional Chinese medicine cultural study activities, international students not only experience traditional Chinese medicine characteristic therapies such as massage, cupping, and moxibustion, but also learn about Chinese medicine processing and dietary therapy combinations, while experiencing traditional Chinese etiquette and culture, making traditional Chinese medicine body practice a window to perceive Chinese culture.

On the other hand, foreign practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine have become an important bridge for cultural exchange. They are proficient in both traditional Chinese medicine theory and practice, as well as familiar with local culture. They are able to combine traditional Chinese medicine body practice with the local cultural context and spread traditional Chinese medicine culture in a way that is easy for the local people to understand. This cultural exchange style dissemination has made traditional Chinese medicine body practice no longer a simple means of health preservation, but an important carrier for cross-cultural civilization dialogue.<sup>[6]</sup>

## **2. CONSTRUCTING LOGIC: CROSS CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION FROM PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE TO CULTURAL IDENTITY**

In the online trend of "Traditional Chinese Medicine fever", the dissemination of cross-cultural physical practice is not only the promotion of traditional Chinese medicine health preservation techniques, but also a process of constructing cultural identity. Overseas people have gone through a complete path from "trying traditional Chinese medicine body practice" to "identifying with traditional Chinese medicine culture", which includes "body experience cognitive transformation value identification cultural belonging". This process uses the body as a medium and is supported by the core theory of traditional Chinese medicine, achieving a leap from the "body level" to the "cultural level" and demonstrating the vitality and inclusiveness of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

### **2.1. First Layer Transformation: Physical Experience → Cognitive Reconstruction, Breaking Down Inherent Health Cognition**

Overseas people's understanding of traditional Chinese medicine was initially limited to "mysterious Eastern therapies", and even had biases towards "unscientific" and "pseudo health preservation". However, the experience of practicing traditional Chinese medicine has become the key to breaking this bias and reconstructing health cognition. The traditional Western understanding of health revolves around "targeted treatment," viewing the body as an independent mechanical component and emphasizing local treatment of diseases; The practice of traditional Chinese medicine allows overseas people to personally experience the charm of "holistic health preservation" and gradually understand the body concept of "unity of heaven and man" and "unity of form and spirit" in traditional Chinese medicine.

When overseas people alleviate long-term joint pain through acupuncture and moxibustion, improve insomnia and gastrointestinal discomfort through traditional Chinese medicine conditioning, and strengthen their physique through moxibustion, they will intuitively feel the effectiveness of TCM physical practice, and then begin to reflect on their own inherent health cognition, gradually accept the health preserving logic of "regulating qi and blood, unblocking meridians, and regulating yin and yang" of traditional Chinese medicine.<sup>[7]</sup>

## **2.2. Second Level Transformation: Cognitive Transformation → Value Recognition, Acceptance of the Core of Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture**

When overseas people reconstruct their health cognition through physical experience and begin to actively understand traditional Chinese medicine theory, they will gradually accept the cultural core of traditional Chinese medicine, achieving a leap from "cognitive transformation" to "value recognition". Behind the physical practice of traditional Chinese medicine lies the cultural values of "unity of heaven and man", "conformity to nature", and "people-oriented". These concepts are concretely presented through physical practice, allowing overseas people to gradually understand and recognize these cultural values in health practice.

The concept of "harmony between heaven and man", through physical practices such as seasonal health preservation and daily life adjustment, allows overseas people to feel the respect of traditional Chinese medicine for natural laws - nourishing the liver in spring, the heart in summer, the lungs in autumn, and the kidneys in winter, living in accordance with the circadian rhythm. This "natural" way of health preservation is in line with the contemporary global concepts of "green development" and "sustainable development", allowing overseas people to experience the core value of "harmonious coexistence between man and nature" in traditional Chinese culture in health practice.

The concept of "people-oriented", through the physical practice of "dialectical treatment" and "personalized adjustment", allows overseas people to feel the respect of traditional Chinese medicine for individuals - each individual's constitution is different, and their health preservation methods are also different. This "teaching according to aptitude" health preservation logic reflects the value pursuit of traditional Chinese culture of "respecting differences and accommodating diversity".

## **2.3. Third Layer Transformation: Value Identification → Cultural Belonging, Constructing Cross-Cultural Cultural Identity**

When overseas people accept the cultural core of traditional Chinese medicine and achieve value recognition, they will gradually form emotional resonance with traditional Chinese medicine culture, thereby generating cultural belonging, completing the final transformation from "value recognition" to "cultural belonging", and constructing cross-cultural cultural identity. This cultural belonging is not a denial of one's own culture, but an acceptance and recognition of traditional Chinese medicine culture on the basis of respecting one's own culture, forming a cross-cultural cognition of "diverse coexistence". For example, Anemone Saikeles from Germany has been working in the traditional Chinese medicine department of the park pharmacy for over 30 years, meticulously following the process of traditional Chinese medicine preparation, reviewing the German version of the Pharmacopoeia of Traditional Chinese Medicine, and even participating in quality testing of traditional Chinese medicine. Her recognition of traditional Chinese medicine has risen from "efficacy recognition" to "cultural recognition", becoming a disseminator of traditional Chinese medicine culture.

This cross-cultural cultural identity is not only reflected in the acceptance and dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture by overseas people, but also in the integration and coexistence of traditional Chinese medicine culture and local culture. Overseas practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine combine local cultural contexts to optimize the dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine body practices, integrating traditional Chinese medicine culture with local health concepts and lifestyles, and forming a "localized" form of traditional Chinese medicine culture. For example, De Zhong Tang in Germany has established a model of "full process quality control from Chinese fields to European pharmacies", which not only preserves traditional Chinese medicine but also meets EU standards, allowing Chinese medicine to take root in the European market. At the same time, it also integrates Chinese medicine culture with European medical culture and lifestyle culture, achieving cross-cultural symbiotic development. This fusion and symbiosis not only promote the

overseas dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine culture, but also facilitate the exchange and mutual learning of cross-cultural civilizations.<sup>[8]</sup>

### **3. PROMOTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-CULTURAL DISSEMINATION OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE BODY PRACTICE**

Firstly, based on cultural differences, achieve "localized" dissemination. In response to the cultural differences between the East and the West, it is necessary to focus on the core characteristics of traditional Chinese medicine and combine them with the cognitive habits of overseas people to achieve the "localization" dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine body practice. On the one hand, using easy to understand language and visual methods to interpret core theories of traditional Chinese medicine such as "Yin Yang and Five Elements" and "Meridians, Qi and Blood", transforming profound TCM theories into easily understandable health knowledge for overseas people and lowering cognitive barriers; On the other hand, combining local health concepts and lifestyles, optimize the communication content and form of Chinese medicine body practice, such as adjusting the Chinese medicine diet program, acupuncture and moxibustion techniques, etc. according to the diet habits of local people, so that Chinese medicine body practice can better meet the needs of overseas people. At the same time, strengthen the integration of traditional Chinese medicine culture with local culture, integrate traditional Chinese medicine body practice into local health, tourism, education and other scenarios, and achieve "cultural symbiosis".

Secondly, improve industry standards and enhance the credibility of communication. Promote the standardized development of TCM physical practice, and improve the internationally unified industry standards, including the qualification standards of practitioners of TCM, the quality standards of TCM, and the operating specifications of acupuncture and moxibustion. Strengthen cooperation between Chinese and foreign traditional Chinese medicine institutions, jointly develop Chinese medicine body practice norms that meet international standards, such as Director Schroeder actively participating in the standardization of Chinese medicine and promoting the integration of Chinese medicine practice with international standards; Strengthen the training and management of overseas traditional Chinese medicine practitioners, establish a sound qualification certification system, eliminate the phenomenon of "fake traditional Chinese medicine" and "fake health preservation", and enhance the credibility of traditional Chinese medicine overseas. At the same time, strengthening the quality control of traditional Chinese medicine, promoting the standardization of traditional Chinese medicine planting, processing, and manufacturing, ensuring that traditional Chinese medicine products meet the quality requirements of the international market, and providing guarantees for the overseas dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine.

Thirdly, cultivate versatile talents and strengthen communication capabilities. Strengthen the cultivation of cross-cultural communication talents in traditional Chinese medicine, and establish a comprehensive talent cultivation system of "traditional Chinese medicine theory+practical skills+foreign language ability+cross-cultural communication ability". On the one hand, we need to strengthen cooperation between Chinese medicine universities and overseas universities, carry out joint training programs, and cultivate compound talents who are proficient in traditional Chinese medicine and familiar with overseas cultures; On the other hand, strengthen the training of existing overseas TCM practitioners, enhance their TCM theoretical level and cross-cultural communication skills, and encourage foreign TCM practitioners to play a bridging role.

Fourthly, enrich the forms of dissemination and explore cultural connotations. Breaking through a single form of communication and building a diversified communication system of "online+offline" and "technology+culture". Online, in addition to fragmented dissemination of short videos, images and text, online traditional Chinese medicine courses, live diagnosis and treatment, cultural lectures,

etc. can also be offered to deeply interpret the theoretical and cultural connotations of traditional Chinese medicine; Offline, in addition to experiencing services, activities such as traditional Chinese medicine culture exhibitions, health forums, and traditional skills performances can also be held to allow overseas people to fully experience the charm of traditional Chinese medicine culture. At the same time, we will explore the cultural stories behind the practice of traditional Chinese medicine in the body, such as the deeds of Wittmann in spreading traditional Chinese medicine culture and the development process of Quitzstein Hospital. Through storytelling dissemination, we will enhance the infectiousness of traditional Chinese medicine culture and promote overseas people to deeply leap from "physical experience" to "cultural identity".

## 4. CONCLUSION

The dissemination and construction of cross-cultural physical practice in the "Chinese medicine fever" on the internet is an important path for the overseas dissemination of Chinese medicine culture, and also a vivid manifestation of the excellent traditional Chinese culture going global.

From the perspective of dissemination pathways, the fragmented dissemination of social media has expanded its coverage, the immersive dissemination of offline experiences has strengthened physical cognition, the standardized dissemination of professional institutions has enhanced credibility, the scenario based dissemination of cultural exchanges has deepened cultural perception, and the coordination of multiple pathways has promoted the widespread dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine body practice overseas. From the perspective of construction logic, overseas people have gone through a complete process of "physical experience cognitive reconstruction value identification cultural belonging". In this process, traditional Chinese medicine body practice not only provides practical health preservation methods for overseas people, but also becomes an important carrier for cross-cultural civilization dialogue, promoting the integration and coexistence of traditional Chinese medicine culture and local culture.

Although the cross-cultural dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine body practice currently faces challenges such as cultural differences, lack of standards, and talent shortage, as long as we focus on the core characteristics of traditional Chinese medicine, combine with the laws of cross-cultural dissemination, achieve "localization" dissemination, improve industry standards, cultivate composite talents, and enrich dissemination forms, we can promote the sustainable development of cross-cultural dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine body practice.

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