

*Original Paper*

# Intergenerational Communication Strategies for the Young-Oriented Expression of Traditional Ethnic Minority Sports Culture

Guo Chengwei<sup>1,a</sup>, Wang Chun<sup>1,b,\*</sup>, & Tian Huifan<sup>1,c</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Liaoning Institute of Science and Technology, Xianghua Road, Benxi, Liaoning, China

<sup>a</sup> 1713519239@qq.com, <sup>b</sup>442300960@qq.com, <sup>c</sup>fanfany322@qq.com

\* Corresponding author

Received: December 20, 2025    Accepted: February 05, 2026    Online Published: February 25, 2026

doi:10.22158/assc.v8n1p118

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/assc.v8n1p118>

## **Abstract**

*Traditional ethnic minority sports culture is an essential part of China's excellent traditional culture, which embodies and spiritual cores of various ethnic groups. Amidst the backdrop of cultural diversification and the evolution of communication media, the inheritance of this culture faces challenges such as a generational audience gap and outdated forms of expression. This study employs a literature review, questionnaire surveys, and in-depth interviews to investigate the youth demographic. The findings reveal that young people have a shallow understanding but high recognition and strong willingness to participate in relation to traditional ethnic minority sports culture. Focusing on young-oriented expression, this research proposes strategies involving content reshaping, channel synergy, and scenario construction. These strategies aim to help traditional ethnic minority sports culture transcend generational barriers and achieve effective intergenerational communication and inheritance.*

## **Keywords**

*Traditional Ethnic Minority Sports Culture, Young-Oriented Expression, Intergenerational Communication, Cultural Inheritance*

## **1. Preface**

### *1.1 Research Background*

The formation of a pluralistic and integrated pattern of the Chinese nation is inseparable from the integration and mutual growth of the cultures of various ethnic minorities, with traditional ethnic

minority sports culture serving as a vivid carrier of this pattern. From the Mongolian Nadam Fair, the Dragon Boat races during the Dai Water-Splashing Festival, to the wrestling at the Yi Torch Festival and the Miao climbing poles, these forms of folk sports are not only forms of leisure, entertainment, and physical exercise, but also embody diverse cultural forms. Amidst the accelerating pace of modernization, the inheritance of traditional ethnic minority sports culture is confronted with bottlenecks. On one hand, traditional transmission methods, such as oral instruction and festival performances, are out of step with the pace of life and information reception habits of contemporary youth. On the other hand, the strong influence of Western competitive sports and the impact of popular entertainment culture continuously diminish the cultural space of traditional ethnic minority sports culture.

At a time when the state places increasing emphasis on China's excellent traditional culture, the \*14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural Development\* explicitly calls for "strengthening the protection and inheritance of the excellent traditional culture of ethnic minorities." (Bai, Wan, Bai et al., 2025) With the rise of the "China-Chic" trend, the sense of identity and pride among the youth regarding local culture is continuously growing due to the cultural atmosphere, providing a favorable social environment for the youthful transformation of traditional ethnic minority sports culture. The question of how to leverage youthful forms of expression to enable traditional ethnic minority sports culture to break through generational barriers has become an urgent issue for both academia and the industry.

### *1.2 Literature Review*

This study explores the potential pathways for the intergenerational transmission of traditional ethnic minority sports culture from the perspective of communication studies. Academic research on traditional ethnic minority sports culture primarily focuses on the following aspects:

In terms of content innovation, existing studies generally emphasize formal innovation while preserving the cultural core. Scholars argue that youthful expressions must remain rooted in ethnic spirit, historical context, and ritual norms. Some studies suggest moderate simplifications of traditional sports, such as breaking down movements or creating engaging educational content, to lower the barriers for youth participation. Other research advocates storytelling-based dissemination, integrating ethnic legends with contemporary life to bridge the gap between young people and the culture. Additionally, addressing the health and social needs of youth, exploring the practical value of traditional sports, and developing fitness programs and team-building projects have emerged as key research directions.

Regarding research on contexts and inheritance mechanisms, some scholars have focused on the role of contextual construction in promoting cultural dissemination, proposing strategies such as creating immersive experiential settings and developing cultural and creative products to enhance youth engagement. Other studies concentrate on intergenerational inheritance, suggesting the organization of parent-child activities and the cultivation of young inheritors to establish a transmission model where "the older generation guides the new" (Miao & Geng, 2024).

## 2. Research Purpose and Significance

This study focuses on youth-oriented expression of traditional ethnic minority sports culture. By employing literature review, questionnaire surveys, and in-depth interviews, it systematically analyzes the current communication status and existing problems of traditional ethnic minority sports culture. On this basis, the study explores expression strategies that align with the aesthetic preferences and communication needs of the youth demographic, with the aim of providing theoretical references and practical pathways for the intergenerational communication of traditional ethnic minority sports culture, ultimately to promote its innovative development and creative transformation in modern society.

Existing research has primarily focused on historical tracing, cultural connotation interpretation, and protection strategies for traditional ethnic minority sports culture, with relatively insufficient systematic studies on its young-oriented expression and intergenerational communication. This research integrates theories from communication studies, cultural anthropology, and youth culture studies to construct a theoretical framework for the youth-oriented dissemination of traditional ethnic minority sports culture, enriching research perspectives in related fields and providing theoretical support for subsequent studies.

Through empirical investigation, this study clarifies the youth demographic's level of awareness and demand preferences regarding traditional ethnic minority sports culture, proposing feasible and innovative young-oriented expression schemes. These can offer practical guidance for cultural and tourism departments, sports institutions, and cultural and creative practitioners. Simultaneously, this research helps integrate traditional ethnic minority sports culture into the lives of young people, enhance their cultural identity, promote exchanges and mutual learning among various ethnic cultures, and forge a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation.

## 3. Research Methods

To comprehensively understand the current communication status of traditional ethnic minority sports culture, this study employs a combination of literature review, questionnaire surveys, and in-depth interviews, conducting analysis from both theoretical and empirical dimensions.

### 3.1 Literature Review

This study uses databases such as the National Center for Philosophy and Social Sciences Documentation and CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) to collect literature related to traditional ethnic minority sports culture, intergenerational communication, and youth-oriented expression, aiming to understand relevant theories and practices concerning the inheritance of traditional sports culture. Concurrently, policy documents from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the General Administration of Sport of China are examined to interpret the current status and trends in the protection and dissemination of China's traditional ethnic minority sports culture.

### 3.2 Questionnaire Survey

Regarding the questionnaire survey, a stratified sampling method was employed. Questionnaires were

distributed online to the youth demographic aged 18-35, resulting in 249 valid responses. The questionnaire content encompasses dimensions such as level of awareness, information acquisition channels, recognition of cultural value, preferences for youth-oriented expression, and willingness for intergenerational communication.

### *3.3 In-Depth Interview*

For the in-depth interview, purposive sampling was adopted to select 2 experts in the field of ethnic sports and 6 representatives from the youth demographic for semi-structured interviews. The discussions focused on themes including inheritance dilemmas, the logic of youth-oriented expression, and intergenerational communication mechanisms. The insights gathered from the interviews were cross-validated with the questionnaire data.

## **4. Current Situation Analysis**

### *4.1 Literature Review Status*

After reviewing the existing literature, it is found that current research primarily focuses on the following three directions:

**Cultural Connotation and Value:** Scholars generally believe that traditional ethnic minority sports culture possesses multiple values, including fitness, entertainment, social interaction, and religious significance, serving as important carriers of ethnic cultural identity. For instance, studies have pointed out that the Miao people's "Lusheng Dance" is not merely a physical activity but also a crucial ritual for ancestor worship and harvest celebration, embodying the ethnic group's historical memory.

**Research on Inheritance Dilemmas and Protection Strategies:** Most literature indicates that traditional ethnic minority sports culture faces challenges such as the aging of inheritors, singular inheritance methods, and a generational audience gap. In response to these issues, scholars have proposed strategies, including establishing intangible cultural heritage protection lists, implementing campus inheritance programs, and organizing folk festival activities. However, these related strategies primarily focus on "protection," with relatively weak exploration of how to "innovate communication."

**Research on Communication Pathways:** Some studies have focused on the role of new media in disseminating traditional ethnic minority sports culture, proposing the use of platforms such as short videos and live streaming for cultural presentations. However, existing research mostly remains at the introductory level of communication channels, lacking in-depth analysis of "how to innovate content based on the characteristics of the youth demographic," and has not yet formed a systematic framework for youth-oriented expression.

Overall, while existing research provides a theoretical foundation for this paper, there is a notable deficiency in integrating youth-oriented expression with intergenerational communication, which also creates space for the development of this study.

### *4.2 Questionnaire Survey Findings*

The 249 valid samples from this survey covered young people from different occupations and regions,

quantitatively presenting the youth demographic's cognition, attitudes, and communication preferences regarding traditional ethnic minority sports culture. The data indicates that young people's understanding of traditional ethnic minority sports remains at a superficial level (those who "have some understanding" or less account for 71.49% collectively). Further cross-analysis revealed no significant difference in cognitive levels between current students and employed individuals, suggesting that communication bottlenecks are widespread. Information acquisition heavily relies on short video platforms and social media, reflecting the dominant role of new media in youth cultural communication. Consequently, the focus of communication channels must shift from festival performances and oral instruction to digitalization, socialization, and mobilization.

Attitude survey results show that respondents highly recognize the core values of traditional ethnic minority sports culture and have a strong demand for youth-oriented expression. Over 80% of respondents expressed a desire to access related content through short video platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou, recognizing short videos and micro-documentaries as suitable communication formats. Youth-oriented carriers such as anime IP and interactive H5 also received support from over half of the respondents.

Regarding intergenerational communication, "lack of shared cognitive foundation" and "insufficient interactive scenarios" emerged as primary obstacles. Analyzed through the lens of the intergenerational cultural transmission model, differences exist between elders and youth in family settings concerning information acquisition methods and value concepts, coupled with a lack of stable interactive channels, leading to a rupture in cultural transmission.

Word frequency analysis further confirmed that the core issues currently facing the communication of traditional ethnic minority sports culture are concentrated on "insufficient appeal" and "lack of formal innovation." In contrast, the communication formats desired by the youth demographic are focused on directions such as "short video promotion," "event-based challenges," and "immersive interactive experiences," providing clear guidance for integrated communication pathways.

The findings of this study's questionnaire (shallow cognition, high recognition, strong willingness among youth) mutually corroborate with communication trends at the national level. According to a report from *Guangming Daily*, Wei Kaixuan, an inheritor of the fireworks snatching tradition, has already introduced this project into high school curricula, with three students selected for the Guangxi Fireworks Snatching Team. Li Linghui, a Tai Chi inheritor, has accumulated millions of fans through short video platforms, encouraging numerous veteran Tai Chi masters to engage with online communication. (Yin & Li, 2024) These individual cases demonstrate that young people are not "uninterested," but rather lack effective scenarios for engagement and modes of expression—precisely the starting point of the core issue addressed by this study.

#### *4.3 Current Situation in In-depth Interviews*

**Inheritance Bottlenecks: The Dual Constraints of Insufficient Popularization and the Lack of Scenarios for Youth Engagement.** Respondents generally agreed that the most significant challenges currently

faced are insufficient popularization and the lack of scenarios for youth engagement. One expert pointed out: “Traditional ethnic minority sports are mostly rooted in specific ethnic settlements, primarily transmitted through festival rituals and family inheritance. They lack effective channels to penetrate the broader youth demographic.” Performances presented at tourist sites are often simplified versions intended for viewing, leaving young people with few opportunities for personal participation, which makes it difficult to form emotional connections.

**The Core Logic of Youth-oriented Expression: Using Formal Innovation as a Vehicle While Adhering to the Cultural Core.** Regarding the essence of “youth-oriented expression,” respondents reached a consensus: the key lies in “transforming the form” while “preserving the core.” An inheritor of intangible cultural heritage stated: “The charm of traditional ethnic minority sports lies not only in the movements and skills but also in the ethnic spirit, ritual norms, and historical memories embedded within them.” Youth-oriented expression is not about turning traditional sports into ‘internet-fad toys,’ but about using methods that young people can accept to help them understand the core.”

**Key Elements of Intergenerational Communication: Practical Value as the Foundation, Emotional Connection as the Bond.** Regarding the key elements of intergenerational communication, respondents consistently emphasized that practical value is the foundation for attracting youth attention, while emotional connection is the core for achieving long-term inheritance. A youth representative noted: “Young people today like things that are ‘useful.’ If traditional sports can be combined with health needs and social needs, they will actively engage with them.” Simultaneously, the shared memories and cultural identity between elders and youth can transform traditional sports into a bond that maintains intergenerational emotional ties.

## **5. Practical Strategies for the Youth-Oriented Expression of Traditional Ethnic Minority Sports Culture**

Integrating the analysis of the current dissemination status, core challenges, and the characteristics of the youth demographic’s needs regarding traditional ethnic minority sports culture, and adhering to the core principle of “preserving the cultural essence while expanding forms of expression,” an effective path for the youth-oriented dissemination of this culture can be constructed from three levels: content reshaping, channel synergy, and scene construction. This approach aims to break down the practical barriers to intergenerational inheritance.

### *5.1 Content Reshaping: Creating Youth-Oriented Expression While Preserving the Cultural Core*

Content is the key vehicle for youth-oriented communication. In the dissemination process, it is essential to adapt the forms of expression appropriately while retaining essential cultural elements such as ethnic spirit, historical context, and ritual norms. (Li, Wang, & Zhou 2024) On one hand, this involves exploring the accessible and personalized aspects of traditional sports, breaking down complex skills into manageable and participatory content units. For instance, the Miao ethnic group’s climbing pole, symbolizing courage, can be used to design a “step-by-step fun challenge” short video

series. Following the progressive logic of “basic movement demonstration → skill advancement analysis → cultural meaning explanation,” young people can naturally grasp the project’s spiritual essence while participating in the challenge. For the etiquette and costume culture embedded in Mongolian wrestling, an animated series like “Intangible Cultural Heritage Etiquette Micro-Classroom” can be developed, using situational narratives to interpret the cultural symbolic meaning of costume patterns and the historical origins of competitive etiquette. On the other hand, storytelling within the content should be strengthened by integrating traditional sports with ethnic legends and contemporary life scenes. For example, formats like “Inheritor’s Growth Diary” or “Youth Experience Log” can document the transmission journey of traditional sports in modern society. By leveraging individual perspectives, the psychological distance between youth and the culture can be shortened, allowing the cultural connotations to be conveyed naturally through emotional resonance. Simultaneously, aligning with youth interests in health, social interaction, etc., the practical value of traditional sports should be extracted. Developing content like “Intangible Cultural Heritage Fitness Light Guides” or “Ethnic Sports Team Building Plans” can facilitate the integration of traditional sports into the daily lives of young people.

### *5.2 Channel Synergy: Building a New Media Matrix to Achieve Omni-Scenario Penetration and Dissemination*

Based on the information acquisition habits of the youth demographic, a communication network of “online multi-platform linkage + offline multi-scene embedding” should be established to overcome the spatial and temporal limitations of traditional communication. Online, the focus should be on core channels like short videos and social media platforms to create a differentiated content matrix: launch lightweight content such as “15-second Intangible Cultural Heritage Challenge” or “Ethnic Sports Trivia” on platforms like Douyin and Kuaishou, leveraging algorithmic recommendations to reach a broader youth user base; publish in-depth educational videos and experience notes on platforms like Bilibili and Xiaohongshu to satisfy young people’s desire for knowledge and sharing; utilize live-streaming platforms for “Real-time Instruction by Inheritors” or “Ethnic Sports Event Broadcasts,” incorporating interactive elements to enhance youth participation. Simultaneously, rely on big data to analyze user preferences, enabling precise content delivery and improving communication effectiveness. Offline, promote the deep integration of traditional sports into campus, cultural tourism, and community settings: On campuses, integrate traditional sports into physical education curricula and club activities, develop teaching systems suitable for students, and stimulate youth participation through fun competitions and cultural festivals; In cultural tourism contexts, transform performances into “immersive experience projects,” allowing visitors to participate in activities like wrestling or Lusheng dance under professional guidance, deepening their cultural perception; Within urban communities, collaborate with cultural and creative spaces and fitness institutions to organize “Ethnic Sports Workshops” or “Weekend Experience Camps,” (Xizang Minzu University, 2025) Providing convenient avenues for youth participation.

### *5.3 Scene Construction: Creating Interactive Platforms to Strengthen Intergenerational Emotional Connections*

Scenes are crucial supports for building emotional bonds. Designing diverse scenarios is necessary to enhance young people's emotional identification with the culture and build bridges for intergenerational communication. (Wang, 2024) On one hand, create immersive experience scenes to boost youth participation and sense of belonging. For example, organize an "Ethnic Sports Carnival" featuring sections like competitive events, cultural exhibitions, and hands-on craft experiences, allowing young people to appreciate the cultural charm fully through participation in competitions and making traditional props. Develop cultural and creative products and digital collectibles themed around traditional sports, combining ethnic elements with modern design to create items like blind boxes or sports-related merchandise. This satisfies youth consumer demands while achieving the everyday dissemination of the culture. On the other hand, build intergenerational interaction scenes to facilitate the transmission of traditional sports between generations. Encourage family participation in "Ethnic Sports Parent-Child Activities," where elders, as inheritors, impart skills and share cultural stories, constructing shared cultural memories through interaction. Implement a "Young Inheritor Cultivation Program," inviting experienced inheritors to serve as mentors, attracting young people to participate in inheritance through master-apprentice pairings and intensive training. Simultaneously, support young inheritors in innovating expressions based on modern concepts, fostering an ecosystem of intergenerational transmission and mutual empowerment.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study addresses the intergenerational communication challenges faced by traditional ethnic minority sports culture, revealing the typical characteristics of the youth demographic—namely, "shallow cognition, high recognition, and strong willingness to engage." It argues that youth-oriented expression does not mean deconstructing traditional culture, but rather represents a pathway of creative transformation grounded in the core logic of "preserving the essence while innovating forms." Building on this foundation, the study constructs a trinity strategy system of content reshaping, channel synergy, and scene construction, offering a systematic framework for breaking down intergenerational barriers. At the theoretical level, this research introduces communication accommodation theory and intergenerational cultural transmission models into the study of ethnic minority sports culture, thereby broadening the analytical perspectives within this field. At a practical level, the proposed strategies are both actionable and contextually relevant, providing references for intangible cultural heritage protection, cultural and tourism integration, and youth-oriented cultural communication. Nevertheless, certain limitations exist: the sample predominantly consists of urban youth, with limited representativeness of young people in ethnic minority areas; the effectiveness of the proposed strategies has yet to be systematically empirically tested; and the long-term mechanisms of intergenerational communication require further in-depth tracking. Future research may expand the scope of

investigation, conduct action research, and incorporate intergenerational family tracking designs to continuously promote the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional ethnic minority sports culture.

### Acknowledgements

This research is supported by the 2026 Liaoning Institute of Science and Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program for College Students (Project No. 202611430006): “Flourishing Like Maple Leaves: A Workshop for the Inheritance and Health Promotion of Traditional Ethnic Minority Sports in Benxi City.”

### References

- Bai, J. X., Wan, Y., Bai, L. et al. (2025). Research on the Inheritance and Development of China's Traditional Ethnic Sports during the 15th Five-Year Plan Period. *Journal of Sports Science*, 45(12), 3-11. <http://dx.doi.org/10.16469/J.css.2025KX105>
- Li, Q. B., Wang, X. F., & Zhou, R. (2024). Influencing Factors and Configuration Paths for Enhancing the International Communication Effect of Chinese Traditional Ethnic Sports Culture: An Empirical Analysis Based on Popular YouTube Videos. *Journal of Wuhan Sports University*, 58(05), 35-42. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15930/j.cnki.wtxb.2024.05.007>
- Miao, S. G., & Geng, X. W. (2024). A Study on the Intergenerational Transmission of Tibetan Traditional Sports from the Perspective of Cultural Ecology Theory. *Martial Arts Research*, 9(06), 105-108+113. <http://dx.doi.org/10.13293/j.cnki.wskx.010589>
- Wang, H. S. (2024). Constructing Social Interaction: A Pathway to Resolve Obstacles in the Inheritance of Traditional Ethnic Sports Culture. *Journal of Hebei Sport University*, 38(05), 81-88.
- Xizang Minzu University. (2025). *Research on the Transmission Paths and Innovative Practices of Tibet's Intangible Cultural Heritage, Qamdo Guozhuang Dance, Based on Living Protection*. Department of Culture and Tourism, Tibet Autonomous Region, 2025-10-28.
- Yin, Z. H., & Li, D. Y. (2024). Traditional Sports Are Getting Younger. *Guangming Daily*, 2024-11-26 (012). <http://dx.doi.org/10.28273/n.cnki.ngmrb.2024.007179>