



# Research of Cultural Communication Strategies in Physical Education for International Students

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## Abstract

Along with the accelerated opening up of China, more and more international students come to China to study. The problem of cultural adaptation of international students, the problem of supporting education system in schools and the problem of insufficient refinement of their own cultural connotation have become the main factors affecting the cultural transmission in physical education for international students. This paper analyzes the colleges and universities at home and abroad with better cultural communication mode for international students, and puts forward the following four suggestions and strategies in light of the actual situation of schools in China, 1) Schools should create a good campus sports culture atmosphere and integrate excellent traditional culture; 2) Cultivate the cultural tolerance awareness of physical education teachers and improve the sports culture; 3) Focus on the cultural experience and participation of cultural activities of international students; 4) Tell the Chinese story well and make a good external discourse.

## Subject Areas

Physical Education

## Keywords

International Students, Physical, Education, Culture, Communication

## 1. Introduction

In the report of the 20<sup>th</sup> CPC National Congress on October 17, 2022, it was proposed that to build a modern socialist country in all aspects, we must adhere to the road of socialist culture development with Chinese characteristics, en-

hance cultural self-confidence, build a strong socialist cultural state around raising the flag, gathering the people's heart, nurturing new people, developing culture, and displaying the image, and develop a modern, world-oriented, future-oriented, national, scientific, and popular socialist culture, to stimulate the vitality of cultural innovation and creativity of the whole nation and to strengthen the spiritual power to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation [1]. The word "culture" is repeatedly mentioned in the sentences, the promotion of culture and self-confidence has become the main theme of the modernization of socialist culture in China in the new period. With the speed of China's reform and opening up, more and more foreign students, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan students, and even the children of returned overseas Chinese choose China as the mecca for higher education, so the education of foreign students has become an important part of Chinese culture spreading to the world. According to the data of the Ministry of Education, the number of overseas students in China has changed year by year in the past decade, as shown in **Table 1** [2].

In the past decade, the number of foreign students coming to China for further study has been increasing year by year, and reached the highest value in 2019. In 2020, the number affected by COVID-19 decreased somewhat, but still more than doubled compared with 2010. Due to the limitation of language and social circle, the daily life circle of international students is often limited to the social circle where their own culture and customs are similar, even the daily teaching is targeted at professional knowledge, but rarely on the knowledge of Chinese traditional culture and Chinese characteristic values. This leads to the difficulty of cultural adaptation of international students and is not conducive to the spread of excellent Chinese culture. According to different classifications of culture, culture can be divided into material culture, spiritual culture, behavioral

**Table 1.** The number of overseas students in China has changed year by year in the past decade.

Index	the number of overseas students in China
2010	130,637
2011	147,549
2012	157,845
2013	174,806
2014	192,358
2015	214,345
2016	243,735
2017	274,809
2018	307,501
2019	333,072
2020	273,792

culture and institutional culture [3]. From the perspective of communication science, cultural communication refers to the transmission of knowledge, concepts, value orientation, etc. from a cultural source or a social group to another social group, and its communication elements should include: communicator, content, channels and means of communication, audience and effect, etc. [4]. This paper takes physical education for international students as the communication channel, Chinese traditional culture and curriculum integration as the communication content, and multi-channel all-round education method as the communication means to improve the adaptation level and cognitive level of Chinese culture for international students and provide new ideas for the dissemination of Chinese excellent culture.

## **2. The Value of Cultural Transmission in Physical Education for International Students**

The Belt and Road initiative is a national strategy of China in the new era, meanwhile cultural export is an important part of the strategic policy of “The Belt and Road”, and there are many ways to export culture, school education, especially physical education, is a very good way to export culture. Through physical education, international students can grasp the essence of traditional sports in China, which contained the ideas and deep values, and bring back to their home countries for transmission and dissemination after they return home.

Cultural transmission is based on cultural adaptation. International students usually live in a single circle and have fewer ways to cognize traditional Chinese culture, while physical education happens to be a good means of cultural cognition education. Only by promoting international students to participate more in physical education and sports activities, and to perceive the essence of Chinese culture in physical education, can we promote the communication and understanding between multiple cultural modes and the improvement of cultural adaptation level by international students.

The reverse of cultural transmission in international students’ physical education promotes the refinement and promotion of China’s school sports culture. There are many kinds of traditional sports in China, including dragon boat, taijiquan, kite flying, mahjong, shuttlecock, etc. These sports contain the essence of many traditional cultural ideas, such as: the unity of heaven and man, the unity of knowledge and action, the virtue and the way of the middle ground. Taking taijiquan and mahjong as an example, it embodies the idea of stillness, cultivation and physical fitness, and the study of taijiquan by international students is inevitably accompanied by the study of Chinese cultural ideas, and mahjong is a reflection of the ancient Chinese philosophy of life, the future of the fate of the variable is large and not well known, personal value is not a fixed constant, innate advantages do not have a decisive role, to pay attention to the relationship between the individual and objective social factors thus that’s contributing to the spread of culture.

Physical education for international students has prompted the reform of physical education in schools. The excellent sports education model not only provides institutional guarantee for international students' education, but also provides more references for the development of school physical education, increases the content of school physical education, improves the cultivation mechanism of students, enriches the cultural connotation of schools, and lays the foundation for the spread of sports culture.

### **3. Problems Faced by Cultural Communication in Physical Education of International Students**

#### **3.1. Problems of Cultural Adaptation of International Students**

International students need to have a process of adaptation when they first arrive at the place of study, not only in terms of living, but also in terms of getting to know the local culture, which involves a problem of cultural identity, that is, whether international students can get acquainted with the whole process from the beginning to the full understanding and then to the recognition and adaptation, so that through a period of cognitive and behavioral assimilation, international students can develop cultural memory and cultural experience of China. The reality is that although students from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan are of the same origin as those from mainland China, there are still some differences in ideology and thinking habits, while foreign students mainly have language differences and difficulties in integrating into the educational model, thinking style and management system. Influenced by history and politics, some students in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan think that their own culture is independent and close to the West, but in fact, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan have been deeply influenced by Chinese Confucian culture since ancient times. Chinese traditional culture is the mother culture of these regions, which is closely related to each other and inseparable. Therefore, international students need not only time to adapt to the problem, but also the follow-up of the overall education method.

#### **3.2. Problems of School Supporting Education System**

The cultivation system of international students itself includes teachers, teaching environment, curriculum, talent cultivation goals and modes, etc. In terms of the current cultivation system of international students in colleges and universities, international students receive education mainly through language courses, professional courses and general education courses, among which the content of physical education courses is relatively single, *i.e.* the content of courses for international students is the same as the courses for ordinary college students in China, and the assessment methods are also the same. In addition, international students do not have more extra-curricular activities of sports and culture, and the way for international students to know the essence of Chinese traditional culture is relatively single and limited. In terms of teachers, there are not enough bilingual physical education teachers who are proficient in Chinese and foreign

languages, not enough physical education teachers for international students in ethnic traditional sports, and not enough competitions or activities that can reflect the essence of Chinese traditional culture.

### **3.3. Insufficient Refinement of Its Own Cultural Connotation**

China's 5000-year-old culture has a long history, and through the long civilization, it has gradually derived the unique Confucianism and the Way of the Middle Way, and the traditional sports represented by Taijiquan and Sangsheng Gong, which are mainly for the purpose of cultivating the body and self-improvement, are a kind of traditional sports that are different from "force" and "barbarism". Under the guidance of China's excellent traditional culture, schools need to build not only the "explicit culture" of the campus but also refine more "implicit culture" [5] to highlight the soft power and humanistic cultural connotation of the school. The school and the city as a whole need to have special sports programs and special sports culture to support, then bring these programs which contain the spirit and culture to international students, and create a good cultural experience from the overall environment.

## **4. Case Study of Physical Education Model for International Students in Domestic and Foreign Universities**

### **4.1. University of Utah Model**

American college sports culture is the epitome of American culture, and it can be said that American culture is based on a developed sports culture. With its unique and powerful sports culture, it ranks at the top of the world in terms of cultural export and influence, especially the three major balls—football, baseball and basketball are popular throughout the United States and the world.

#### **4.1.1. Global Enrollment**

The University of Utah is located in Salt Lake City, the capital of Utah in the north central region of the United States, and is a research comprehensive university. The University of Utah's commitment to openness, freedom, and advancement is a prerequisite for the recognition of American culture, as is the globalization of admissions and cultural tolerance.

#### **4.1.2. Thriving Sports Culture**

Unlike the booming economy and abundant entertainment industry on the East and West coasts, Salt Lake City is conservative and has few ways for international students to spend their time, so sports are one of the few ways for international students to enjoy themselves. Athletic training facilities and "go uts" signs are everywhere on campus, conveying a strong culture of confidence, competition and teamwork. "This is a distinctive value orientation that allows every international student to feel the strong atmosphere of athletic competition. The 50,000-person football stadium on campus is packed to the rafters for every home team game, and the revenue from ticket sales, television broadcasts, player uniforms

and peripheral merchandise during games is a marvel at the mature sports business system and cultural model in the United States.

#### **4.1.3. Rich After-School Activities**

The University of Utah has a variety of sports options, including hiking, rock climbing, scuba diving, and even wilderness survival classes, in addition to the traditional three major sports, so that international students can be more involved in the knowledge of local humanities and geography, and appreciate the local customs and natural features. In addition, the University of Utah has many sports clubs, including a stage for international students to play traditional sports of their own country and a visit to the American Museum of Natural History, which allows international students to better adapt to campus life and increases their sense of belonging and national identity, thus promoting cultural integration to a certain extent.

#### **4.2. Jinan University Model**

Jinan University has some practical explorations in the integration of physical education for foreign students into cultural communication. The first is to open five types of education for the entering freshmen combined with national conditions, which includes Ceremony culture, special report, event, knowledge learning and experience education and to cultivate foreign students to strengthen their perception of traditional culture through lectures and martial arts courses; secondly, to promote the foreign dissemination and promotion of cultural transmission through the training and performance of traditional sports such as martial arts, dragon and lion dance, and cultural lectures; finally, to participate in or hold large competitions of major traditional sports by means of competition to promote practice. Lastly, we promote the cultural exchange and integration of foreign students by participating in or organizing large competitions of major traditional sports through competitions to promote practice, deepen the understanding of Chinese culture, and promote cultural exchange and integration of foreign students [6].

### **5. Cultural Communication Strategies in Physical Education for International Students**

The cultural communication of international students should absorb the advanced experience at home and abroad, follow the inherent rules of cultural communication, and at the same time, formulate appropriate policies in conjunction with the school's objectives and actual situation.

#### **5.1. Schools Should Create a Good Campus Sports Culture and Integrate Excellent Traditional Culture**

The school should uphold the essence of China's fine traditional culture, attract students from all over the world to learn about China and study China with the broad-mindedness and tolerance of a great nation, strengthen cooperation among

international schools, deepen exchanges, and provide more convenient admission policies for international students. The school itself should create a loud and distinctive cultural brand, build campus hardware facilities reflecting Chinese cultural elements, enrich campus material culture, and improve campus institutional culture, organically combining culture and institutional construction, fully reflecting the superiority of China's institutional culture.

### **5.2. To Cultivating Physical Education Teachers' Awareness of Cultural Inclusion Meanwhile Improving Their Physical Education Cultural Literacy**

The group of physical education teachers is one of the main links in spreading culture. They should provide humanistic care for international students in daily physical education teaching and training, pay attention to various learning needs of international students, advocate home country students to help international students in life and academics, and improve the cultural adaptation of international students. International students should be encouraged to participate in various sports clubs, sports training teams, sports competitions and sports event volunteers, serve as captains and representatives of sports classes, etc. Priority should be given to international students in terms of scholarships and sports advancement. Physical education teachers should also strengthen their bilingual teaching ability and cross-cultural awareness, and enhance their scientific research ability in physical education and cultural communication while improving their business level ability, so as to find more theoretical basis for cultural communication in physical education.

### **5.3. Focus on Cultural Experience and Participation in Cultural Activities for International Students**

Carry out traditional sports and cultural activities, organize international students to participate in practice and experience the cultural atmosphere, encourage international students to see more, learn more and participate more by combining culture, sports and tourism, and learn Chinese culture and feel the changes in China by experiencing it. The traditional cultural contents in the teaching materials are carried out in the form of sports activities to create more space for international students to practice cultural knowledge, change cultural cognition with actions and enhance cross-cultural empathy.

### **5.4. Tell the Chinese Story and Build a Good Foreign Language System**

Based on China's rich historical and cultural resources, physical education teachers should vividly tell the story of Chinese culture, continuously improve the international reputation and influence of Chinese culture, introduce Chinese culture in textbooks, writings, movies and dramas into the classroom, take Chinese excellent traditional culture as an important ideological resource, deeply explain its cultural essence and spiritual identity, and outline for every international

student in China the image of a civilized country with a long history and on the way to rejuvenation. The course introduces Chinese traditional culture as an important ideological resource, deeply explains its cultural essence and spiritual identity, and draws an image of a civilized country with a long history and a renaissance for every international student in China.

## 6. Conclusion

With the accelerated pace of globalization, the trend of intercultural integration among ethnic groups has become a trend, and thus the dissemination of Chinese culture has become an important issue. In reality, with the increasing number of international students in China, the use of international students as an important window for Chinese culture dissemination has attracted the attention of more and more schools, and the grasp of the ways and means of cultural dissemination in schools combined with the exploration of cultural dissemination modes in school education will become an important research area in the future.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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