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POPULARIZATION OF CHINESE NATIONAL TRADITIONAL KINDS OF SPORTS

The article analyzes the problem of popularization of Chinese national traditional kinds of sports. The purpose of the study was to determine ways to promote national traditional sports. The research involved 322 respondents, including 271 ordinary Chinese citizens (Hainan Province) and 51 professionals in physical education, i.e. athletes and coaches involved in the development of Chinese national traditional kinds of sports. The average age of respondents was 25 years.

The following methods were used during the study: theoretical analysis and generalization of scientific literature, document analysis, system analysis, sociological survey, methods of mathematical data processing.

One of the most popular and world-famous Chinese national traditional kind of sports is the Dragon and Lion dance, which is recognized as an official kind of sports for the transformation from a national dance to a competitive activity. More than 60% of respondents, athletes, coaches and ordinary citizens assess the popularity of Dragon and Lion dance in the country above average, which indicates its public recognition and commitment to it by citizens. Most respondents consider it as a symbol of traditional holidays. 72.5% of respondents like this kind of sports. About 44% of physical culture specialists, athletes and trainers consider the main advantage of Dragon and Lion dance to improve the festive atmosphere, and only 25% of them consider that its fitness function is important. Only 36% of the respondents highly appreciate the function that shows a very low level of public awareness of the positive impact of Dragon and Lion dancing on the human body. Most respondents believe that the Dragon and Lion dance should be spread in China and abroad (33% of professionals in physical education, athletes, coaches, and 67.8% of citizens), the main sources of information about this kind of sports is media, according to the idea of the most part of respondents.

So the main ways to popularize national traditional kinds of sports are identified as the formation of appropriate public policy, effective marketing, introduction in educational institutions and campuses, raising public awareness through the media (especially the Internet); dissemination among rural residents, combining innovative elements of the competition program with traditional ones, improving the system of international and national competitions.

Key words: Chinese national traditional sports culture, Chinese national traditional kinds of sports, Dragon and Lion dance, international federation, sports competitions, ways of popularization.

Чень Дундун, Бондар А. Популяризація китайських національних традиційних видів спорту. В статті проаналізовано проблему популяризації китайських національних традиційних видів спорту. Метою дослідження стало визначення шляхів популяризації національних традиційних видів спорту. У дослідженні приймали участь 322 респонденти, з них 271 особа з числа пересічних громадян Китаю (Провінція Хайнань) та 51 особа з числа фахівців фізичної культури, спортсменів і тренерів, які займаються розвитком китайських національних традиційних видів спорту. Середній вік опитаних склав 25 років.

Під час проведення дослідження застосовувалися наступні методи: теоретичний аналіз і узагальнення наукової літератури, аналіз документів, системний аналіз, соціологічне опитування, методи математичної обробки даних.

Одним з найпопулярніших і відомих у світі китайських національних традиційних видів спорту є танець дракона та лева, який визнаний офіційним видом спорту для трансформації з національного танцю у вид змагальної діяльності. Більше 60% опитаних фахівців фізичної культури, спортсменів, тренерів та пересічних громадян оцінюють рівень популярності танцю дракона та лева в країні вище середнього, це свідчить про його суспільне визнання і прихильність до нього з боку громадян, більшість опитаних вважає його символом традиційних свят. 72,5% опитаних громадян подобається цей вид спорту. 44% фахівців фізичної культури, спортсменів, тренерів вважають основною перевагою танцю дракона та лева покращення святкової атмосфери, і лише 25% з них, вважають важливою його фітнес-функцію, з пересічних громадян лише 36% опитаних високо оцінюють дану функцію, що свідчить про низький рівень обізнаності населення щодо позитивного впливу занять танцями дракона та лева на організм людини. Більшість опитаних вважає, що танець дракона та лева слід поширювати в Китаї та за кордоном (33% фахівців фізичної культури, спортсменів, тренерів, 67,8% громадян), основними джерелами поширення інформації про даний вид спорту більшість опитаних вважають ЗМІ.

Основними напрямками популяризації національних традиційних видів спорту визначено: формування відповідної державної політики, ефективний маркетинг, введення у закладах освіти і кампусах, підвищення рівня інформування населення через ЗМІ (особливо Інтернет); поширення серед жителів сільської місцевості, поєднання інноваційних елементів програми змагань з традиційними, удосконалення системи міжнародних та національних змагань.

Ключові слова: китайська національна традиційна спортивна культура, китайські національні традиційні види спорту, танець дракона та лева, міжнародна федерація, спортивні змагання, шляхи популяризації.

Formulation of the problem. Chinese national cultural traditions have been preserved for thousands of years, in addition to writing, art and literature; they include traditional holiday ceremonies with dances, games, martial arts performances [10]. At the beginning of their existence, they had a religious decoration and ritual character, that later were transformed into a national traditional sports culture [11]. Chinese national traditional kinds of sports are a part of the sports culture; each sport is developed and preserved through a separate ethnic group, of which there are 56 in China. Today, there are 977 traditional ethnic kinds of sports in China [12]. In order to preserve the national sports culture and to spread it among the population, in 1953 the National Traditional Games of National Minorities of the People's Republic of China were launched, which included competitions in national traditional kinds of sports and demonstrations of athletes [1].

One of the most popular and world-famous Chinese national traditional kind of sports is the Dragon and Lion dance, which is recognized as an official kind of sports for the transformation from a national dance to a competitive activity. The Chinese Dragon and Lion Sports Association and the International Dragon and Lion Dance Federation were founded in 1995, making the sport school widespread in the world [2]. In 2017, the International Federation brought together 31 federations from different regions and countries, most of which are located in Asia, for example in Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan [9].

As of 2017, more than 200 national Dragon and Lion dance competitions and more than 60 international competitions have been successfully held in China. Gradually, this Chinese national traditional kind of sports is gaining popularity in various countries around the world. Now in Indonesia, Singapore, Australia and other countries, Dragon and Lion dance competitions are becoming a global event and recognized by people around the world [6].

The first Lion Dance World Championships in Genting, Malaysia, were held in 1994 and have been held every two years since. The 2020 competition was postponed until further notice due to the pandemic, but in 2018, 36 teams from 16 countries competed. Preserving culture and striving for excellence is a central idea that spans continents and generations in Dragon and Lion dance [9].

The popularization of the Dragon and Lion dance in America and Europe needs special attention, as it is not yet widespread in these areas. In order to spread the Dragon and Lion dance in America, the Dragon and Lion Dance Sports Association of the United States was established, which organizes and conducts sports competitions, and associations and federations that have already been opened in individual states and cities. Dragon and Lion dance festivals are held in some European countries to celebrate seasonal holidays, and are organized by Chinese communities living in these countries [5]. There are some cases of Dragon and Lion dance federations in France and the Netherlands, however, this kind of sports does not yet have a large population coverage, and usually involves people from China or Asia [4].

In Ukraine, the Dragon and Lion dance has not gained popularity, given the complexity of its implementation, but among young students, the interest to it is already growing, thanks to workshops and demonstrations in international student programs [7].

The uneven distribution of the dragon and lion dance on different continents and in different countries of the world, determined in the course of the analysis of the scientific literature, led to the choice of the topic of further research.

The purpose of research was to identify the ways of popularization of Chinese national traditional kinds of sports.

Materials and methods of research. The study involved 322 respondents, including 271 ordinary Chinese citizens (Hainan Province) and 51 professionals in physical education, i.e. athletes and coaches involved in the development of Chinese national traditional kinds of sports. The average age of the respondents was 25 years. All the study participants agreed to participate in the research.

In the research, the following methods were used: theoretical analysis and generalization of scientific literature, document analysis, system analysis, sociological survey, methods of mathematical data processing.

Theoretical analysis and generalization of scientific literature was carried out to determine the object of scientific research and analysis of the degree of study of this problem.

The analysis of documents contributed to the study of the history of public administration of Chinese national traditional kinds of sports in China and internationally, including Dragon and Lion dance, the formation of international competition, statistics of the most popular competitions in the world.

The survey was conducted to determine the level of popularity of Chinese national traditional kinds of sports among ordinary Chinese citizens and professionals in the sphere of physical education, athletes and coaches involved in these sports, as well as to study public opinion on ways to promote these sports in China and all over the world. Two versions of the questionnaires have been developed for the survey: one for the citizens, the other for the specialists, athletes and coaches, they contain 8 mixed questions.

The research was conducted in three stages. The first one was presented as an analysis and generalization of scientific literature, studying of the state of the research problem, developing a research program, forming a scientific apparatus, identifying research methods. On the second stage were analyzed the documents, was studied the history and condition of development of Chinese national sports public administration, the current statistics on the popularity of Dragon and Lion dance in the world was studied. Moreover there were developed questionnaires and conducted a survey of Chinese people to determine their views on popularization of Dragon and Lion dance in China and in the world. On the third stage the processing and interpretation of the obtained research results were carried out, the conclusions were substantiated and drawn up.

The results of the sociological survey obtained during the research were processed by the simplest method of descriptive statistics.

Presentation of the main material of the study. A survey of physical culture and sports professionals, athletes and coaches involved in the development and popularization of Chinese traditional national kinds of sports, including Dragon and Lion dance, found that 22% of respondents noticed that the prevalence of Dragon and Lion dance in China was high. Among them, 42% said it was above average, 11% – average, and the remaining 25% – below average (Table 1).

Table 1

Opinion of physical culture experts, athletes and coaches on the prevalence level of Dragon and Lion dance in China (N=51)

Level	High	Above Average	Average	Below Average
Quantitative Index				
Number of respondents	11	21	6	13
Index %	22%	42%	11%	25%

The majority of surveyed physical culture specialists, athletes and coaches (44%) believe that the main advantage of Dragon and Lion dance is the improvement of the festive atmosphere during its performance. Among them 32% associate its benefits with a rich cultural connotation, which is the main reason for the long-term prosperity of the Dragon and Lion dance, and 24% appreciate its fitness function. At present, it seems that the potential of the Dragon and Lion dance has not been fully realized, and people have not fully discovered its benefits. Dragon and Lion dance marketing should fully highlight its benefits.

Table 2

The main advantages of dragon and lion dance according to physical culture experts, athletes and coaches (N=51)

Benefits	improves the festive atmosphere	follows rich cultural traditions	performs fitness functions
Quantitative Index			
Number of respondents	23	16	12
Index %	44%	32%	24%

In a survey on the popularity of Dragon and Lion dance competitions, 23% of respondents thought they were very popular, 33% – quite popular, and the remaining 44% of respondents believe that competitions are not popular enough. To some extent, the popularity is due to geographical reasons, and in the provinces with a long tradition of Dragon and Lion dance, the mass involvement of the population in competitions is much higher.

The majority of surveyed professionals, athletes, coaches, it is namely 42% consider that one of the most important way to promote the Dragon and Lion dance is its implementation at schools and campuses. 23% of the respondents reacted negatively to this idea, and 35% said it was “difficult to answer” despite the fact that the introduction of Dragon and Lion dance on campus is an effective means of increasing the social audience by involving schoolchildren and students in active leisure.

In response to the question “Which media should be used to promote the Dragon and Lion dance”, 42% of respondents believe that the Internet is the most effective means of communication. Among them 22%, believe that television as a traditional tool still plays an indispensable role, and 36% believe that newspapers are still the simplest means to promote the Dragon and Lion dance (Table 3).

Table 3

Effective media to promote dragon and lion dance according to physical education experts, athletes and coaches (N=51)

Media	Internet	Television	Newspapers and Magazines
Quantitative Index			
Number of respondents	21	11	19
Index %	42%	22%	36%

Regarding the current profitability of Dragon and Lion dancing, 25% of respondents believe that this index is very high, 15% – high, 35% – medium, and 25% – low. This statistics definitely reflects the current state of the Dragon and Lion dance industry in China and must increase marketing activities in the country and abroad.

Regarding the key direction for promoting the Dragon and Lion dance, 52% of the respondents believe that it should be rooted in rural areas, 15% believe that the focus will be on cities, and 33% say that there is a huge space for development abroad (Table 4).

Table 4

Territorial spread of Dragon and Lion dance in the future according to physical culture experts, athletes and coaches (N=51)

Territorial spread	village	city	abroad
Quantitative Index			
Number of respondents	27	7	17
Index %	52%	15%	33%

A survey of Chinese people on the popularity of the Dragon and Lion dance among the local population showed that 28.2% of respondents consider the level of popularity as high, 40% of respondents – above average, 17.8% – average, 15% – below average. A comparative analysis of the results of assessing the level of popularity of the Dragon and Lion dance of physical culture specialists, athletes, coaches and ordinary citizens is presented in Fig. 1.

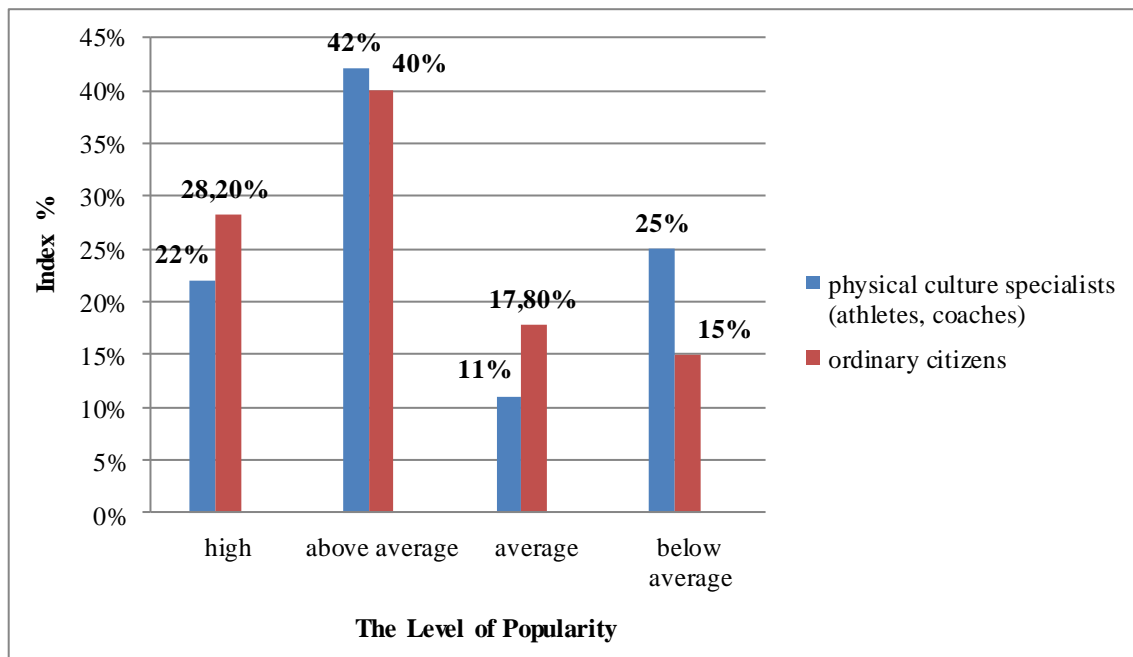


Fig. 1. Comparison of estimates of the level of popularity of the Dragon and Lion dance by physical culture specialists, athletes, coaches and ordinary people in China

As can be seen from Fig. 1, more than 60% of surveyed professionals in physical education, athletes, coaches and ordinary citizens rate the popularity of Dragon and Lion dance in the country above average, which indicates its national recognition and commitment, most respondents consider it as a symbol of traditional holidays.

When surveying ordinary people about the fitness function of the Dragon and Lion dance, 36% of respondents said that it has a high level of health effects on the body, 22% – above average, 11.5% – average, 21.5% – low, and 10% of respondents chose the answer “difficult to answer”.

It was found that comparing the results of the survey of citizens with the results of the survey of physical culture specialists, the second category of the respondents also do not consider fitness function as the main advantage of Dragon and Lion dance. These results indicate a low level of public awareness of the positive impact of this sport on the human body, which reduces its attractiveness and hinders the mass involvement of people in classes.

To the question “Where is the best place to hold a Dragon and Lion dance competition: indoors or outdoors?”, 45.1% of respondents believe that it is better to organize outdoors competitions, 36.5% of respondents chose the answer – indoors, 22% said that the place of the competition does not matter to them.

Regarding the type of music in the Dragon and Lion dance, 54.5% of respondents prefer traditional music, 25.5% – modern music, and 20% of respondents consider it appropriate to combine modern and traditional music, which promotes the Dragon and Lion dance for a wide audience.

The majority of respondents – 67.8%, believe that the Dragon and Lion dance can be easily popularized, including abroad, while 22.5% of respondents believe that it is quite a complex process, 10% of respondents chose the answer “Difficult to answer”. Citizens are optimistic about the popularization of Dragon and Lion dance, given the already existing indicators of mass involvement of the population to the Dragon and Lion dance.

To the question “From what sources did you learn about the Dragon and Lion dance?” 65.5% of respondents chose the answer “through the media” (television, newspapers, Internet, radio, etc.), 13.5% – from teachers, 18.5% – from friends. The professionals in physical education, athletes, and coaches also give the media an important role in informing the public about the Dragon and Lion dance, which shows the importance of the media to popularize the Dragon and Lion dance, especially through the Internet.

To the question “Do you personally like the Dragon and Lion dance”, 72.5% said they liked it, 18.5% said they did not like it, and 9% said they were indifferent to the Dragon and Lion dance. However, young people are ready to adopt improved and innovative Dragon and Lion dance programs and integrate some modern elements that can often rejuvenate and give vitality to the national traditional kind of sports. This is also the current direction of the Dragon and Lion dance itself.

As you can see, among the main ways to promote the Dragon and Lion dance in China and abroad, according to physical culture experts, athletes, coaches and ordinary citizens of China, we can highlight:

- Development of marketing programs for Dragon and Lion dance, taking into account its main advantages, in particular the improvement of the festive atmosphere, preservation of cultural traditions, the implementation of fitness functions;
- Introduction of various levels of education in educational institutions and promotion of Dragon and Lion dance on

campuses;

- Dissemination of advertising and educational information about the Dragon and Lion dance in all media, especially on the Internet;
- Active promotion abroad, especially in Europe and America;
- Creating the necessary conditions for attracting rural residents to mass classes;
- Introduction of innovative changes and modern elements in training and competition programs, including elements of modern music, preserving the main direction and national traditions;
- Improving the system of competitions and providing the opportunity to attend competitions both outdoors and indoors.

Discussion. The study showed that in the process of popularization and dissemination of Chinese national traditional kinds of sports in the country and abroad, the main task facing society today is to preserve the cultural heritage and traditions of the Chinese people, which embody the national sports culture of the country [11]. Thus, the Dragon and Lion dance, which originated between 220 and 280, is important for modern youth [9]. This fact is evidenced by a survey of ordinary Chinese citizens and professionals in physical education, as well as athletes, coaches who want to spread the dance Dragon and Lion abroad, improve it and make it more attractive to modern consumers by introducing innovative elements, while maintaining the uniqueness and traditional components of the dance.

The main ways to preserve the national heritage in the process of further development of national traditional kinds of sports are following: raising public awareness, creation of a base for heritage protection and development of local national traditional sports culture. Also very important is formation of state policy and improvement of the system of state management of the national traditional sports culture development as well as the use of the media to implement the inheritance and development of national traditional sports culture [13].

To popularize Chinese national kinds of sports in the process of developing physical culture, the state, for its part, should plan to take such steps as ending of excessive regulation of the sports services market and limiting its role in ensuring fair and competitive market conditions. Moreover providing private capital access to the sports industry in addition to its financial support is highly important as well supporting the sports industry in a more preferential mode [3].

Conclusions. Popularization of Chinese national kinds of sports among the population of China and abroad is undoubtedly an important task of society and the state, as national traditional sports affect the cultural, social, economic development of the country, perform a fitness function, some of which are a real business card of China and an obligatory decoration of traditional holidays. The main ways to promote national traditional kinds of sports are as follows: the formation of appropriate public policy, effective marketing, introduction in educational institutions and campuses, raising public awareness through the media (especially the Internet). As well as dissemination among rural residents, combining innovative elements of the competition program with traditional ones, improving the system of international and national competitions.

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