

Strategies for promoting "Ou Quan" Wushu in Wenzhou city

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the promotion of Ou Quan, a traditional Wushu practice native to Wenzhou, aiming to contribute to research on the inheritance of local traditional sports. As a qualitative study, it focuses on key concepts including curriculum implementation, educational support, social dissemination, and cultural identity. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers, students, coaches, and social stakeholders, supplemented by literature analysis. The findings indicate that although Ou Quan has entered some school curricula, its development is constrained by irregular course design, insufficient teaching staff, limited policy support, and low public awareness. The study proposes targeted strategies to strengthen educational integration, teacher training, policy support, and youth cultural identification, offering practical implications for sustainable cultural transmission.

INTRODUCTION

Chinese Wushu is an important component of traditional Chinese culture, reflecting centuries of historical development, philosophical thought, and physical discipline. Beyond its function as a system of self-defense and physical training, Wushu also serves as a medium for cultural transmission and identity formation. In recent years, scholars have increasingly examined Wushu from multidisciplinary perspectives, emphasizing the cultural, regional, and social dimensions of martial arts styles. For instance, Wang (2022) proposed the use of “styles” as a research unit to better understand regional characteristics, while Li (2021) highlighted the role of local inheritors in sustaining community-based cultural identity. Similarly, Wang and Liu (2020) demonstrated how traditional styles such as Yue Jia Quan embody both familial and national values that motivate cultural preservation. Studies using oral history and structural analysis methods further reveal that local culture, historical evolution, and systematic inheritance mechanisms significantly influence the development and dissemination of Wushu styles (Yan, 2019; Zhang, 2018; Chen, 2018; Yang, 2018).

Despite its strong cultural foundation, the promotion of traditional Wushu faces challenges in contemporary society, particularly within educational systems. Research indicates that many schools lack standardized teaching systems, trained instructors, and sustained student engagement in traditional martial arts programs (Zhai, 2021; Lei, 2024). The integration of Wushu into modern physical education has been recognized as essential for improving students’ physical fitness and cultural awareness, yet implementation remains inconsistent across regions (Wu & Chen, 2024; Yang, 2024). In higher education, financial constraints and insufficient instructional resources further limit the development of Wushu courses (Zou & Tian, 2024). Scholars also emphasize that combining Wushu education with cultural and ideological instruction can strengthen students’ cultural confidence and national identity (Cai & Cheng, 2023). These findings suggest that systematic curriculum design, teacher training, and policy support are critical to sustaining traditional martial arts education.

At the regional level, the development of localized Wushu styles has gained attention as part of cultural preservation and cultural industry strategies. With the rise of cultural tourism and creative industries, researchers have explored the integration of Wushu culture with market-oriented development models to enhance both cultural dissemination and economic value (Chen Yun, 2021; Chia et al., 2024; Jin, 2023; Yu et al., 2024). In Wenzhou, studies on local martial arts development indicate that while traditional styles possess strong cultural significance, they face challenges such as limited institutional support, insufficient inheritors, and weak social recognition (Lin, 2023; Li, 2022; Deng, 2020; Zhao, 2020). Moreover, broader research on traditional Wushu highlights persistent dilemmas including declining youth participation, limited modernization of dissemination channels, and the impact of globalization on cultural identity (Song, 2021; Zhang & Qi, 2021; Liu, 2022; Peng & Cui, 2024).

To address these challenges, local governments and educational institutions have begun exploring innovative approaches to promote regional martial arts through school programs, cultural activities, and industry

collaboration. One example is Ou Quan, a localized Wushu system developed to represent the regional martial arts identity of Wenzhou. As a newly integrated traditional style, Ou Quan combines local cultural elements with structured teaching practices, making it a valuable case for examining how regional martial arts can be preserved and promoted in modern contexts. However, systematic research on its promotion strategies, educational integration, and cultural transmission remains limited. Therefore, this study investigates the promotion of Ou Quan in Wenzhou City, focusing on educational implementation, cultural identity formation, and policy support mechanisms to contribute to the sustainable development of localized traditional Wushu.

Research Gap

Despite the growing body of literature on traditional Chinese martial arts, several significant research gaps remain unaddressed. First, existing studies predominantly focus on nationally recognized martial arts styles such as Tai Chi, Shaolin Kung Fu, or Wushu routines standardized by the Chinese Wushu Association, while localized martial arts styles like Ou Quan have received minimal academic attention (Wang et al., 2020; Lin, 2023). This creates a knowledge gap regarding how region-specific martial arts can be effectively promoted and preserved within modern educational and cultural systems.

Second, previous research often examines martial arts promotion from a single stakeholder perspective—either focusing on students' learning experiences, coaches' teaching challenges, or administrators' policy concerns—without integrating these multiple viewpoints into a comprehensive analysis (Lei, 2024; Cai & Cheng, 2023). This fragmented approach limits understanding of the complex interplay between different actors in martial arts promotion and fails to capture the systemic nature of implementation barriers.

Third, most existing literature addresses either cultural preservation or physical education implementation separately, lacking systematic research on how localized martial arts can be integrated into formal education systems with adequate policy support and resource allocation (Xie & Huang, 2021; Sun & Zheng, 2022). The intersection of educational practice, cultural transmission, and policy frameworks remains underexplored, particularly for emerging regional martial arts styles.

Fourth, as a relatively new regional martial arts style created by the Wenzhou Municipal Government in the 2010s through the systematic integration of local Wushu schools, Ou Quan's unique characteristics, promotion strategies, and cultural transmission mechanisms have not been academically investigated. Unlike traditional martial arts with centuries of history, Ou Quan represents a contemporary attempt to create and promote a localized martial arts identity, making it a valuable case study for understanding how new cultural traditions can be cultivated and sustained in the modern era.

This study addresses these gaps by providing the first comprehensive, multi-dimensional analysis of Ou Quan promotion, examining obstacles, educational value, and cultural transmission potential from the integrated perspectives of athletes, coaches, and educational leaders.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The study examined the promotion of Ou Quan Wushu in Wenzhou through three primary objectives. First, it identifies the major obstacles affecting the promotion of Ou Quan within educational and social contexts. Second, it evaluates the educational value and implementation effectiveness of Ou Quan in school settings, particularly in relation to curriculum integration and student development. Third, it explores the cultural transmission potential of Ou Quan, focusing on its role in strengthening local cultural identity and supporting the preservation of traditional martial arts.

The findings of this study are significant to several sectors involved in the promotion and preservation of traditional sports and local culture. For educational institutions and teachers, the study provides practical insights on how Ou Quan can be systematically integrated into school curricula to enhance students' physical development, discipline, and cultural awareness. For policy makers and local government units in Wenzhou, the results offer evidence-based recommendations for strengthening policy frameworks, funding support, and institutional planning to ensure the sustainable promotion of localized martial arts

For coaches and cultural practitioners, the study highlights the need for standardized training programs and instructional resources to improve teaching quality and cultural transmission. Furthermore, for students and the local community, the research emphasizes the role of Ou Quan in strengthening regional cultural identity and encouraging youth participation in traditional practices. Finally, for future researchers, this study provides a foundational reference on the promotion of emerging regional Wushu styles and contributes to the broader discourse on the integration of education, culture, and policy in sustaining intangible cultural heritage.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This paper utilized pragmatism and cultural inheritance theory as the theoretical basis to provide support to the strategy of promoting "Ou Quan" Wushu in Wenzhou City.

Pragmatism advocates the acquisition of knowledge and the solution of practical problems through real-world activities. Its representative, John Dewey, believed that education should serve real life, and that "learning by doing" was the core concept of education. He suggested that learning should not be confined to books but should be achieved through the accumulation of practical experience to foster personal growth (Quay et al., 2022). In the promotion of Ou Quan, pragmatic instructional strategies were designed to enable learners to acquire skills and cultural awareness through practical participation in Ou Quan classes, performances, and competitions, thus realizing the transmission and popularization of traditional Wu Shu culture.

The theory of cultural transmission emphasized the passing down of core values, practices, and skills of a particular culture to future generations through education, social practices, and innovation to ensure the continuity and vitality of that culture. According to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, cultural

transmission was not merely about preserving tradition but also a crucial process of social reproduction, through which culture could be adapted and integrated into modern societal needs (Xu, 2011). In the process of promoting “Ou Quan” Wushu in Wenzhou City, the theory of cultural transmission provided theoretical support for the promotion strategy. By combining local cultural education with practical activities, the adaptive inheritance of “Ou Quan” under the new era was facilitated, ensuring that this traditional Wu Shu could continue to develop and play a meaningful role in modern society.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs qualitative descriptive design, utilizing in-depth interviews and focus group discussions as methods to explore students', coaches', and relevant leaders' perceptions, evaluations, and promotional practices regarding Wenzhou's Ou Quan movement. Based on interview findings, a promotional strategy for Ou Quan was formulated, with recommendations for optimized development.

Research Sample/Population

Participants include student athletes competing in the Wenzhou Martial Arts Championships across age groups, along with coaches, and team leaders, totaling 15 individuals.

Participants all have martial arts training experience and have competed in “Ou Quan” events.

Data Collection Tools

The study utilized an interview guide divided into three sections: teacher interviews explored martial arts instructors' perspectives on promoting “Ou Quan,” including primary obstacles encountered, school curriculum implementation, and teaching methodologies. Administrator interviews explored officials' perspectives on Wenzhou's overall planning, policy support, and future development directions for “Ou Quan” promotion, while evaluating its practical implementation in schools and communities. Student interviews focused on participants' interest in “Ou Quan,” learning experiences, and the impact of school promotion activities to assess its popularity and development potential.

Data Collection Process

Interviews were categorized into student, teacher, and leadership segments. Teacher and leadership interviews were conducted during leadership meetings on martial arts competition days, while student interviews were scheduled after the Wenzhou competition. Each respondent answered nine questions corresponding to the three research objectives. Data collection spanned three months, with one competition held monthly during this period.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study followed a systematic qualitative thematic approach to ensure a clear and credible interpretation of the interview data. After collecting the data through semi-structured interviews, all responses were transcribed and carefully reviewed to familiarize the researcher with recurring ideas related to the promotion of Ou Quan Wushu in Wenzhou City. Open coding was first conducted to identify significant statements from students, coaches, and administrators, which were then grouped into categories such as curriculum implementation, teaching resources, policy support, student participation, and cultural dissemination. Through axial coding, relationships among these categories were examined to identify patterns and similarities across stakeholder groups, while selective coding was used to consolidate the categories into major themes aligned with the research objectives, namely the obstacles to promotion, educational value and implementation effectiveness, and cultural transmission potential. Frequency counts were used to highlight dominant responses, and data triangulation across participant groups helped strengthen the validity of the findings. Finally, the interpreted themes were compared with existing literature on traditional Wushu promotion and cultural inheritance to ensure analytical consistency and to support the development of practical promotion strategies for Ou Quan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main obstacles to the promotion of Wenzhou Ou Quan

Through thematic coding and frequency analysis, five major themes were identified across the responses, highlighting systemic gaps, limited professional resources, low public awareness, insufficient institutional support, and lack of top-down policy. The following section provides a detailed discussion of these barriers, supported by participant quotations and relevant literature.

Table 1. Obstacles to the promotion of Ou Quan

Participant s	Theme	Frequenc y	Key findings
Athletes	Lack of support from school curricula	5	The vast majority of respondents came into contact with Ou Quan through non-school channels, reflecting that it has not yet been systematically incorporated into the formal school physical education curriculum.
	Insufficient coaching resources	3	There is a lack of professional Ou Quan coaches, and some schools are taught by general Wushu teachers, which affects teaching quality and the standardization of movements.
	low public awareness	3	The general public knows very little about Ou Quan, often mistaking it for other types of boxing, resulting in low awareness and acceptance.
	Loss of interest and difficulty in persevering	3	Although it was attractive at first, some students gave up halfway due to a lack of cultural background or the difficulty of the movements.

Participants	Theme	Frequency	Key findings
Coaches	Limited distribution channels	2	Low exposure on social media and mainstream media has made it difficult to promote Ou Quan outside of schools and in other regions.
	Lack of qualified coaches	5	All coaches stated that there is a serious lack of professionally trained Ou Quan coaches; most are part-timers from other Wushu fields.
	Weak teaching resources	4	Coaches lack standardized teaching materials and visual aids, leading to inconsistencies in student understanding.
	Low recognition and policy support	3	Ou Quan is not part of official PE policy and has low social visibility; promotion depends on personal initiative.
	Incomplete institutional structure	3	Ou Quan is often treated as an extracurricular club activity, with unstable schedules and poor institutional support.
	Lack of qualified coaches	5	All coaches stated that there is a serious lack of professionally trained Ou Quan coaches; most are part-timers from other Wushu fields.
	Lack of top-down planning	5	All leaders noted the absence of city-level policy frameworks and coordinated planning to support Ou Quan promotion.
Leaders	Insufficient resource support	4	Limited funding affects training, curriculum development, and event organization, hindering sustainability.
	Inadequate teacher/coach training systems	4	Lack of standardized training prevents the formation of a consistent and qualified instructor pool.
	Low public awareness and media coverage	3	Ou Quan receives minimal media coverage, limiting its visibility and public engagement.
	Lack of top-down planning	5	All leaders noted the absence of city-level policy frameworks and coordinated planning to support Ou Quan promotion.

For athletes

Research findings indicate that as a traditional Wushu native to Wenzhou, Ou Quan has yet to establish a comprehensive promotion mechanism within the current educational and cultural systems. This aligns with Zhai (2021) and Wu & Chen (2024), who emphasized that traditional Wushu often lack formal curriculum integration and suffer from marginalization in school settings. Furthermore, respondents highlighted the shortage of professional coaches, consistent with Lei (2024) and Cai & Cheng (2023), who pointed out that without standardized training and policy support, Wushu education struggles to maintain instructional quality.

Additionally, cognitive barriers persist. D1 and D4 mentioned that Ou Quan is often misunderstood or misidentified in competitions, indicating a lack of cultural labeling. This reflects Liu (2022)'s finding that traditional Wushu suffers from a weakened symbolic identity under globalization. Zhang & Qi (2021) similarly observed that outdated promotion channels fail to connect with modern youth, contributing to declining interest.

Cognitive barriers are another critical issue. Both D1 and D4 mentioned that during performances or competitions in other regions, Ou Quan Wushu are often mistakenly identified as “Southern Wushu” or “self-created Wushu,” and referees lack awareness of the standard movements in Ou Quan Wushu. This “lack of cultural labeling” directly impacts the dissemination and recognition of Ou Quan Wushu, indicating that it has not yet established an independent identity within the regional cultural symbol system.

In conclusion, the five major obstacles facing Ou Quan promotion: systemic gaps, coach shortages, low recognition, unstable interest, and limited dissemination, mirror the broader difficulties of traditional sports in modern education, requiring integrated strategies of policy, teacher training, and cultural branding.

For coaches

Coaches agreed that the most serious issue in promoting Ou Quan is the lack of professional training and specialization. D1 remarked, “We are Wushu coaches, not Ou Quan specialists.” This confirms Ou Quan’s weak development path and training pipeline. Similar findings were reported by Li & Lin (2022) in their research on the professional barriers to local Wushu, and Chen (2023), who highlighted that the absence of national teaching standards often excludes such sports from formal education.

The shortage of teaching materials presents another key challenge. As D2 stated, “We rely on experience without official teaching aids or movement standards.” This leads to inconsistent teaching quality, echoing Zhou & Du (2020), who found that lack of standardized content in traditional Wushu hinders learning outcomes. It is also consistent with Huang & Mei (2021), who emphasized the absence of structured pedagogical tools in intangible cultural heritage education.

The lack of systemic policy support was emphasized by D3: “There are no official policies promoting Ou Quan.” This aligns with Liu & Yang (2019)’s theory of “policy isolation of local traditional sports.” Moreover, Zhao (2021) pointed out that without top-down strategic planning, traditional sports depend on personal passion, which leads to instability and unsustainability.

In addition, several coaches reported that the course system was inadequate. D4 said, “The practice time is unstable and depends on whether there are other activities.” This indicates that Ou Quan instruction lacks a formal course schedule, teaching objectives, and assessment mechanisms, and has not yet been truly “incorporated into the curriculum” at the institutional level.

These issues are intertwined and constitute the main obstacles to the promotion of Wenzhou Ou Quan, while also negatively impacting the quality of coaching and students' interest in learning.

For Leaders

From a policy perspective, leaders agreed that Ou Quan lacks systematic top-down planning. D1 said, “There is no special policy support like for soccer.” This aligns with Xie & Huang (2021), who pointed out the exclusion of traditional sports from official policy, and also reflects Sun & Zheng (2022), who emphasized

the absence of institutional frameworks for sports-related intangible cultural heritage.

Insufficient funding was another major issue. D3 stated that “funding mainly depends on schools.” This hinders the implementation of teaching, coaching, and competitions. These concerns are echoed by Wang & Li (2020), who linked resource inequality to project instability, and Fang (2021), who detailed local project failures due to financial fragility.

In terms of human resources, D2 pointed out, “We have not yet established a training mechanism for Ou Quan coaches.” This indicates that, within the current education system, Ou Quan has not yet formed a complete teacher-coach hierarchy, lacking professional management and development paths, which in turn affects the consistency and systematic nature of teaching content.

Lastly, low visibility and limited communication channels restrict public awareness. D4 mentioned “very few people know what Ou Quan is.” This situation supports Luo & Gao (2021), who addressed the communication gap in cultural heritage, and Tang (2020), who identified the lack of digital media integration as a barrier to wider recognition.

In summary, the four core obstacles to the promotion of Ou Quan in Wenzhou are an inadequate promotion system, insufficient resource support, a lack of human resources, and limited communication platforms.

The educational value and implementation effectiveness of Ou Quan

To further assess the role of Ou Quan in the educational setting, this study explored its impact on students’ physical development, psychological growth, cultural identity, and classroom integration. Based on interviews with athletes, coaches, and school leaders, multiple dimensions of educational value emerged – such as improved fitness, enhanced discipline, strengthened teamwork, and campus cultural resonance. Meanwhile, implementation effectiveness was evaluated through aspects like curriculum continuity, retention rates, and integration barriers. The following discussion presents a detailed analysis of the findings, organized by stakeholder group, and supported by thematic frequency and relevant literature.

Table 2. Educational Impact and Implementation

Participants	Theme	Frequency	Key Findings
Athletes	Diversification of physical education	5	All respondents indicated that the Ou Quan course addressed the issue of limited content in physical education classes, enhancing both the enjoyment and practicality of the lessons.
	Training to improve physical fitness	5	Long-term Ou Quan training significantly improves coordination, explosiveness, and rhythm, enhancing athletes' overall physical fitness.
	Cultivate self-discipline and teamwork	5	Training requires focus and perseverance, while competitions demand teamwork and cooperation, thereby enhancing students' self-management skills and team spirit.
	Enhance psychological resilience	4	Ou Quan training enhances stress resistance and mental stability, enabling athletes to maintain emotional stability and confidence during competitions.
	Campus culture has been met with an enthusiastic response.	3	The performances and competitions were well received by teachers and students alike, and Ou Quan gradually became part of the campus culture, enhancing student participation and a sense of belonging.
Coaches	Enhanced physical fitness	5	All coaches agreed that Ou Quan improves students' explosive power, coordination, and body control.
	Discipline and teamwork	4	Training requires synchronized movement and cooperation, fostering discipline and teamwork.
	Engagement and cultural identity	4	Students gradually develop interest and local cultural pride through performances and competitions.
	Low course retention	3	Initial enthusiasm is high, but lack of assessments and unstable resources lead to dropouts.
Leaders	Traditional sports education reinforcement	5	Ou Quan is viewed as an effective medium for transmitting traditional Chinese sports values.
	Physical development support	4	Ou Quan training improves strength, coordination, and rhythm among students.
	Improvement of teacher-student interaction	3	Collective practice fosters class cohesion and enhances teacher-student relationships.
	Resistance in curriculum integration	3	Despite recognized value, challenges in curriculum development and scheduling hinder formal integration.

For athletes

Although the initial promotion of Ou Quan faced challenges, its integration into schools yielded positive educational outcomes. Students expressed that the course enhanced classroom engagement, consistent with Yang (2024) and Zou & Tian (2024), who asserted that Wushu diversifies PE offerings and promote active participation, especially in vocational schools.

In terms of physical fitness, the demands of Ou Quan on speed, reaction time, stability, and core strength have led to an overall improvement in students' physical coordination. D2 mentioned "significant improvements in explosive power and rhythm," which is consistent with Li & Oyam's (2023) research on the role of Wushu in promoting comprehensive physical development in adolescents.

On a psychological level, Ou Quan training reinforces students' discipline and time management skills. D4 said, "It was difficult at first, but now I can complete a whole set of movements on my own," indicating that the training not only shaped their bodies but also cultivated a spirit of perseverance. In team training, students gradually developed a sense of cooperation and responsibility through coordinated performances, competition formations, and group drills. D5 pointed out, "We encouraged each other, built friendships, and became more focused."

In addition, competition and performance experiences have also become important platforms for students' psychological growth. Through repeated training and formal presentations, students gradually master emotional regulation skills, develop self-confidence and psychological resilience, which is consistent with Rogowska & Tataruch (2024) research on mindfulness and emotional regulation in sports training.

For coaches

Coaches universally noted the physical benefits of Ou Quan. D2 stated that students showed measurable improvements in fitness scores. The sport's focus on explosiveness, rhythm, and body control supports Liu & Xu (2021), who confirmed the effectiveness of Wushu training for youth physical development. These findings also align with Tan & Zhao (2022), who found significant gains in vocational students' fitness following Wushu training.

D3 added, "We practice routines with consistent rhythms, so we have to work together well." The entire set of Ou Quan moves emphasizes rhythm and unity, naturally promoting cooperation and collaboration among students, which is conducive to cultivating a sense of discipline and collective honor. It is especially suitable as a team performance project to be incorporated into campus cultural activities.

At the same time, teaching Ou Quan has also subtly strengthened students' sense of local cultural identity. D4 said, "They are very proud when they perform, saying, 'This is Wenzhou's own Ou Quan.'" Coaches have generally found that students feel a sense of identity and respect during performances and competitions, which has increased their interest in and emotional connection to traditional sports.

However, course sustainability remains a challenge. As D5 pointed out, "Some students quit after two sessions." This illustrates the lack of assessment and feedback mechanisms. Xu (2020) emphasized that without clear evaluations, student motivation declines. Likewise, Chen & Luo (2023) concluded that traditional sports need to be integrated with modern education systems to ensure sustainability.

For Leaders

School leaders highlighted Ou Quan's value in promoting traditional Chinese culture. D2 said, "It is not just exercise – it's cultural education." Through gestures and rituals, it embeds Confucian values like respect and discipline. This supports Guo & Chen (2021)'s research on Wu Shu as a moral education tool and Li & Hong (2023) on traditional sports as carriers of spiritual values.

At the same time, the physical training value of Ou Quan has also been widely recognized. As stated in D5: "We have observed that some junior high school students have seen significant improvements in their physical fitness test scores after practicing Ou Quan." Ou Quan incorporates various dynamic leg techniques, explosive strikes, and rapid footwork changes, providing comprehensive training for coordination and strength across multiple body parts. It is an effective method for enhancing physical fitness among primary and secondary school students.

Ou Quan also promotes teamwork and cohesion. D3 emphasized its group-based nature. This finding is consistent with He & Zhang (2020), who noted the social function of Wu Shu in campus settings, and Wang & Li (2023) on the role of sports clubs in building campus social capital.

However, leaders admitted that integrating Ou Quan into the official curriculum is difficult. D4 noted the absence of course outlines and evaluation systems. This issue parallels Jiang & Wu (2022)'s findings on the barriers faced by heritage sports and Zhang (2023) on the lack of pedagogical structure for traditional sports.

The cultural transmission potential of Ou Quan in school settings

In addition to its physical and educational benefits, Ou Quan also carries significant cultural value as a localized Wushu deeply rooted in Wenzhou traditions. This section investigates how Ou Quan contributes to cultural identity construction, fosters a sense of belonging, and acts as a medium for cultural expression and transmission among students. Drawing from interviews with athletes, coaches, and school leaders, this objective focuses on the symbolic, social, and communicative functions of Ou Quan within school settings. Through thematic analysis, it reveals that while the sport has succeeded in fostering local pride and student engagement, it still faces challenges in expanding beyond campus boundaries and establishing sustainable cultural outreach channels.

Table 3. Cultural Value and Integration of Ou Quan in Schools

Participants	Theme	Frequency	Key Findings
Athletes	Build a sense of cultural belonging	5	Through practicing Ou Quan, students deepened their understanding of traditional Wenzhou culture and developed a sense of cultural pride in being Wenzhou natives.
	Spiritual growth	4	During training, develop a strong willpower, never give up easily, and remain calm and confident in the face of challenges.
	desire to promote culture	4	Several athletes expressed their desire to become volunteers or coaches for the promotion of Ou Quan, hoping to bring this Wushu to a wider audience.
	Extension of cultural expression	3	Ou Quan is regarded as an integral part of life, and athletes are willing to persevere in the sport over the long term while promoting the spirit and culture of Wenzhou abroad.
Coaches	Ou Quan's local cultural uniqueness	5	All coaches recognized Ou Quan as a unique local Wushu, helping students connect with their regional identity.
	Good adaptability to cultural events	4	Ou Quan's fast-paced and rhythmic movements are suitable for festivals and performances, enhancing cultural exposure.
	Enhanced student cultural pride	4	Students show pride in Ou Quan and are eager to perform and introduce it to others.
	Limited cultural promotion channels	3	Coaches noted that Ou Quan's cultural promotion is largely limited to school settings, lacking media and social support.
Leaders	Local cultural representation	5	All leaders viewed Ou Quan as a symbolic representation of Wenzhou's cultural heritage.
	Integration with festival and civic education	4	Ou Quan performances can enrich school festivals and promote cultural learning.
	Cultural identity construction	4	Ou Quan helps foster students' pride in local traditions and strengthens cultural confidence.
	Promotion channels need expansion	3	Promotion remains limited to schools and lacks external media or event-based support.

For athletes

Ou Quan has become a medium for students to build cultural identity. D1 expressed pride in Wenzhou's local boxing style, a finding supported by Jonsson (2003), who argued that traditional sports reshape social roles and personal identity. Lin (2023)'s research on Nanquan similarly found that localized Wushu enhance the youth's sense of belonging to their cultural roots.

Cultural belonging is not merely reflected at the cognitive level but is increasingly transforming into a "desire to pass on traditions." Both D2 and D4 indicated their willingness to participate in the promotion of Ou Quan as volunteers or coaches in the future. Students transitioning from initial participants to active promoters indicate that Ou Quan possesses educational potential to transition from cultural input to cultural output. This process aligns with Jonsson's

(2003) theory of “identity role formation mechanisms under sports cultural intervention,” which posits that local sports not only transform the body but also reshape social roles and cultural identities.

Moreover, Ou Quan has transitioned into a symbolic campus identity. D5 noted its popularity in school performances. Wang & Liu (2020) observed that Wushu’s visual and ritual elements make them suitable for integration into school culture. However, as Zhao (2020) argued, without external media support, such traditional practices remain confined to campus visibility.

For coaches

As a unique boxing style native to Wenzhou, Ou Quan is not only a sport but also a symbol of local culture. All coaches (D1–D5) unanimously pointed out that the promotion of Ou Quan has obvious cultural value. D2 said, “This is our Wenzhou Ou Quan. After learning it, children know that this is something from their hometown.” This shows that Ou Quan has an important function in teaching students a sense of local identity and enhancing their cultural confidence.

All coaches highlighted the strong performance capabilities of Ou Quan Wushu in festivals and campus events, noting its ease of integration into cultural contexts. D3 remarked, “We have incorporated Ou Quan Wushu demonstrations into school sports meets, the Lantern Festival, and orientation events, and the audience has responded very positively.” Ou Quan features a distinct rhythm and rich body language, making it highly suitable for group activities and thus becoming a highlight project for campus cultural dissemination. This aligns closely with the research findings of Wang & Liu (2012) on the “visual communication advantages of traditional Wu Shu culture.”

D4 observed that students often share Ou Quan videos on social media and teach it at home, suggesting the Wu Shu has grassroots communication potential. This mirrors Huang & Li (2023), who found that student-led digital expression supports cultural sustainability. Cai (2022) also advocated for youth participation in cultural transmission via new media platforms to revitalize intangible heritage.

However, there are also shortcomings. D5 pointed out, “We mainly promote the sport through school performances, and it has hardly been reported in the media.” Coaches generally reflect that Ou Quan has not yet formed a cultural influence in public opinion, lacks a mechanism for cooperation with television media and local cultural and tourism departments, and has not developed more effective means of communication such as cultural and creative products and film and television integration.

To truly achieve the dual inheritance of “sports + culture” in Ou Quan, it is necessary to break through its current limitations of being spread only within schools and expand it to the social stage, community culture, and new media platforms. This will not only broaden its recognition, but also help enhance young people's sense of belonging to their hometown culture and their responsibility to pass it on.

For Leaders

Leaders emphasized Ou Quan’s significance as a cultural symbol of Wenzhou. D1 said, “It’s part of our cultural DNA.” It functions as both a skill and

a carrier of local heritage. This aligns with Jonsson (2003) on identity construction through sport, and Li & Yu (2021) on traditional sports' role in shaping regional identity.

D4 noted that Ou Quan performances during school festivals enhanced cultural ambiance. Its expressive and ceremonial nature makes it suitable for cultural ritualization, Wang & Liu (2020) on cultural symbolism in campus celebrations.

Currently, dissemination remains limited to school environments. D5 mentioned a lack of outreach to communities. Cheng (2022) also emphasized the importance of social media and digital storytelling in youth cultural identity building.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of the study provide several theoretical implications for understanding the promotion of traditional martial arts within educational and cultural contexts. First, the study extends the principles of pragmatism, particularly the concept of "learning by doing" proposed by John Dewey. The results suggest that experiential learning in martial arts education does not only support skill acquisition but also contributes to the construction of cultural identity and the accumulation of meaningful learning experiences. Through active participation in Ou Quan training, performances, and competitions, learners internalize both physical techniques and cultural values, thereby broadening the application of pragmatist learning theory in culturally embedded physical education settings.

Second, the study contributes to the extension of cultural inheritance theory by highlighting multiple transmission pathways beyond traditional top-down instructional models. The findings indicate that peer-to-peer interaction among students plays an important role in sustaining cultural practices. Moreover, institutional support – such as school programs and policy frameworks – emerges as a critical mediating factor in ensuring continuity of cultural transmission. The study also emphasizes that cultural capital in martial arts is dynamically constructed through practice, interaction, and social context rather than being passively transferred across generations.

Third, the study demonstrates the integration of pragmatism and cultural inheritance theory as complementary frameworks for understanding martial arts education. Pragmatism explains how effective learning occurs through experience and participation, while cultural inheritance theory clarifies why such learning is significant for identity formation and social continuity. Together, these frameworks provide a more holistic explanation of how localized traditional sports can function simultaneously as educational tools and cultural carriers.

Finally, the study acknowledges certain theoretical limitations and critical reflections. Since both pragmatism and cultural inheritance theory were largely developed within Western academic traditions, their application to Chinese traditional martial arts requires contextual adaptation. The findings suggest that these theories do not fully address collectivist learning patterns and the dual construction of regional and national identity present in localized martial arts

practices. Therefore, future theoretical work may further refine these frameworks to better reflect the cultural and social realities of traditional martial arts education.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Promotion mechanisms are not yet fully developed: Although “Ou Quan” is a traditional Wushu with deep cultural connotations and unique regional characteristics, it has not yet formed a systematic and institutionalized development path within the existing education system and social promotion mechanisms. Research shows that Ou Quan courses mostly take the form of extracurricular clubs or performances, lacking formal course support and policy regulations, and overall promotion remains in an exploratory stage.

Education integration has shown initial results but there are still shortcomings: Incorporating Ou Quan into campus physical education has been well received, not only enriching the content of physical education courses but also enhancing students’ physical fitness and teamwork awareness. However, the courses lack unified teaching objectives and assessment systems, and the teaching staff is unstable, resulting in insufficient continuity and professionalism, making it difficult to form a large-scale, systematic teaching model.

Cultural identity is strengthening: Ou Quan training has not only improved students’ physical fitness, but also strengthened their understanding and emotional attachment to Wenzhou’s local culture. Many students expressed pride in “Wenzhou Ou Quan” in interviews and said they would like to share what they have learned with their families and on social media, demonstrating the potential value of Ou Quan as a vehicle for cultural identity.

Teachers and resources are the core bottlenecks: Currently, the biggest challenge in promoting Ou Quan is the lack of professionally trained teachers. Most coaches are general Wushu teachers, which limits the depth of teaching and the standardization of movements. In addition, the lack of unified teaching materials, instructional videos, and assessment standards also limits the improvement of teaching quality and promotion efficiency.

Policy support and social dissemination still need to be strengthened: Ou Quan has not yet been incorporated into municipal education or sports policy systems, and there is a lack of specific documents and financial support. At the same time, mainstream media and social media platforms have low exposure rates, resulting in insufficient public awareness. This makes it difficult to promote Ou Quan outside of schools and in other regions, and cultural dissemination at the social level remains inadequate.

Recommendations

1. Institutionalize Ou Quan within the school physical education system

It is recommended that Ou Quan be formally incorporated into primary and secondary school physical education curricula in Wenzhou. Unified curriculum standards, teaching syllabi, and learning objectives should be developed at the municipal level to ensure consistency and sustainability. Ou Quan may be introduced through compulsory modules, elective courses, or school-based, forming a stable and long-term implementation mechanism rather than relying solely on extracurricular clubs.

2. Establish a professional teacher training and certification system

Local government and education authorities should establish a graded training and certification system for Ou Quan instructors. Regular professional development programs, teaching workshops, and skill assessments should be provided to improve instructional quality. Meanwhile, outstanding local Wushu practitioners should be encouraged to participate in teaching, forming a diversified teacher reserve combining “local cultivation and external introduction.”

3. Strengthen the development of policy support and resource guarantee systems

It is recommended that a special policy document, such as the Wenzhou Ou Quan Inheritance and Development Plan, be formulated to clarify development goals, responsible departments, and implementation pathways. Dedicated financial support should be allocated for curriculum development, teacher training, venue construction, competition organization, and cultural promotion, providing institutional guarantees for sustainable development.

4. Promote cultural dissemination and industry integration

Diversified promotion pathways should be explored by integrating Ou Quan with cultural tourism, intangible cultural heritage protection, and cultural and creative industries. Ou Quan performances can be incorporated into local festivals and tourism activities, while short videos, documentaries, animations, and cultural products can be developed to enhance public visibility and appeal among youth.

5. Enhance youth cultural identity and participation mechanisms

Schools should encourage students to actively participate in learning and promoting Ou Quan through competitions, performances, and community activities. Initiatives such as “Ou Quan Campus Ambassadors” or “Young Cultural Inheritors” can be established to cultivate students’ cultural pride, identity, and sense of responsibility for heritage transmission.

FURTHER STUDY

Despite providing a multi-dimensional analysis of the promotion of Ou Quan Wushu in Wenzhou from educational, cultural, and policy perspectives, this study has several limitations that warrant further investigation.

First, in terms of methodology, this research primarily relies on qualitative approaches, with a relatively limited sample size. Future studies may incorporate quantitative instruments such as questionnaires, physical fitness assessments, and learning outcome evaluations, or adopt mixed-method research designs to enhance the robustness and explanatory power of the findings and to compare the effectiveness of different promotion models.

Second, regarding research scope, future research could extend beyond a single-city case by conducting cross-regional or cross-institutional comparative studies. Including diverse educational contexts – such as primary and secondary schools, vocational institutions, and universities – as well as perspectives from parents, community organizations, and cultural administrators, would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the social dissemination of local traditional Wushu.

Third, future studies should further examine the institutionalization of Ou Quan within school physical education systems, focusing on curriculum objectives, instructional content, assessment mechanisms, and their alignment with students' physical, psychological, and cultural development.

Moreover, from the perspective of cultural communication and sports sociology, subsequent research could systematically explore the role of digital media, online platforms, and virtual exhibitions in facilitating the contemporary transmission of Ou Quan and in shaping youth cultural identity.

Finally, comparative research between Ou Quan and other regional Wushu styles may help identify common patterns and distinctive pathways in local martial arts promotion, thereby contributing broader insights into the sustainable development of traditional sports in China.

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