

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63332/joph.v5i5.1753>

Educational Processes in the Creation of Youth Fitness Dance Among the Northern Sichuan Qiang Ethnic Group in Chengdu

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Abstract

This study investigates the educational processes involved in developing a culturally integrated youth fitness dance inspired by the traditional motions of the Northern Sichuan Qiang ethnic group. The initiative, based on exercise physiology, human anatomy, and ethnographic study, aims to combine the expressive features of Qiang dance with the regimented style of modern aerobics. To assure cultural authenticity and pedagogical appropriateness, the creative team undertook extensive fieldwork in Qiang communities, spoke with local folk artists, and worked with educational institutions. It comprises four primary movement phases totaling 288 beats and incorporates symbolic dance components such as axial rotation, hip circling, and the characteristic Guozhuang style. Traditional Qiang instruments and melodies were combined with contemporary beats to increase involvement and authenticity and costume design to show cultural identity while ensuring utilitarian performance. Pilot initiatives in Chengdu schools resulted in high student involvement, favorable feedback, and greater cultural understanding. This initiative provides a unique model for physical education and helps preserve and revitalize Qiang's intangible cultural legacy via creative educational practice.

Keywords: Qiang Ethnic Group, Youth Fitness Dance, Cultural Integration, Dance, Educational Innovation.

Introduction

The Qiang, one of China's most ancient and culturally affluent ethnic minorities, have significantly contributed to the advancement of Chinese culture. Their distinctive customs, dances, and rituals, with a history exceeding 5,000 years, provide significant insights into the richness of China's intangible cultural heritage (Jin & Martin, 2019). Currently, most Qiang communities are situated in the hilly highlands of Northern Sichuan, namely in places such as Maoxian, Wenchuan, Lixian, and Beichuan. Despite its substantial historical heritage, contemporary pressures, such as urbanization, demographic changes, and the decline of cultural custodians, present considerable obstacles to the transmission and survival of Qiang traditional arts, especially among younger generations (You, 2022; Heyang et al., 2021; Song et al., 2022).

In response to these issues, novel strategies are devised to reconcile tradition with modern significance. One solution is to incorporate Qiang cultural components into juvenile fitness dancing programs in Chengdu (Ren, 2023; Xiaolei et al., 2023). Aerobic fitness dance, celebrated for its widespread appeal and health advantages, is an optimal medium for rejuvenating traditional culture that resonates with the youth. This effort improves physical fitness while promoting cultural identity, serving as a dual-purpose teaching instrument (Chen, 2024; Yu & Buck, 2022).

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The pedagogical framework for developing Qiang-inspired young fitness dancing is intricate and multidisciplinary. It entails interpreting ancient Qiang dance forms, such as Shalang (a circular ensemble dance that integrates music, movement, and poetry)—and modifying its ritualistic movements, totemic imagery, and rhythmic patterns to align with contemporary fitness paradigms (Li & Liang, 2024; Zhu, 2018). This technique integrates elements from sports physiology, music education, and ethnocultural studies, highlighting cultural authenticity and physical efficacy (Jin & Snook, 2022; An et al., 2025). The collaboration among local education departments, cultural practitioners, and academic institutions has been essential in guaranteeing that the resulting dance programs are both pedagogically sound and culturally sensitive and creative (Chen, 2018; Wang, 2019; Seeyo et al., 2023).

This research is positioned within the overarching national framework of China's "Healthy China 2030" initiative and the resurgence of traditional ethnic sports. In Chengdu, a center for education and culture in southern China, the incorporation of ethnic history into school fitness education exemplifies a form of inclusive and customized curriculum development. This research analyzes educational tactics, collaborative mechanisms, and pedagogical practices in developing Qiang youth fitness dancing, offering a reproducible framework for advancing ethnic culture via physical education. It illustrates the simultaneous attainment of cultural preservation and national health objectives, establishing a pattern for other efforts throughout China.

Literature Review

Regional Policies for Youth Dance in Universities in Chengdu

In recent years, Chengdu has actively advanced regional policies to support youth dance and physical education at the university level, strongly focusing on integrating sports and education. The city's annual youth sports work plans are designed to promote the all-around development of young people through structured initiatives that emphasize physical health, skill development, and broad participation. These policies aim to strengthen the educational function of sports by encouraging regular instruction, frequent practice, and consistent participation in competitions. In doing so, Chengdu is fostering a dynamic environment for cultivating athletic and artistic talent while supporting its broader goal of becoming a nationally recognized sports and cultural hub (Liu, 2020; Panera, 2023).

In alignment with these efforts, the local education authorities have introduced implementation plans focused on improving school physical and aesthetic education. These initiatives stress the importance of balancing academic study with physical exercise and artistic development. Youth dance is positioned as a key component, with measures that include organizing university-level competitions, promoting international and modern dance styles, and enhancing the professional capacity of instructors. Special attention is also given to discovering and training students with potential in dance performance and competition. Collectively, these policies aim to elevate youth dance education, improve physical fitness, nurture creativity, and contribute to the overall cultural and artistic development of young people in Chengdu (Wilcox, 2018; Wei & Phanlukthao, 2023).

The General Knowledge of Qiang Dance

The Qiang dance, originating from the ancient Di-Qiang culture of Northern Sichuan, serves as a profound manifestation of the Qiang people's spiritual convictions, societal traditions, and historical narratives. Previously guided by shamans, Qiang dances were influenced by shamanism and a matriarchal society, and were performed at rituals including healing, ancestor

reverence, and festivals. The renowned "top hip" trend exemplifies artistic expression and cultural iconography, merging power with gentleness (Wang, 2002). These dances are intricately linked to the rhythms of quotidian existence and spiritual rituals, encapsulating the strength and vigor of the Qiang people. Despite over a hundred unique forms, qiang folk dances may be categorized into three or four primary types—sacrificial, ceremonial, gathering, and self-entertainment. Only a select handful, such as the Kasadawen Dance and Walo Festival, have been designated national intangible cultural assets, highlighting the necessity for further recognition and protection. Recent study and documentation initiatives, encompassing textbooks and field investigations, have enhanced the comprehension and dissemination of Qiang dance. These projects seek to preserve their movement lexicon and cultural identity while ensuring accessibility for future generations via educational and creative avenues (Jun, 2018; Zhang et al., 2011).

The Trend of Fitness Sports Among Chinese Teenagers

The prevalence of fitness sports among Chinese adolescents has surged in recent years, bolstered by national initiatives to enhance health, cultural consciousness, and educational reform. There is a focus on incorporating traditional culture into schooling, fostering sports representing regional and ethnic variety, and promoting young engagement in culturally significant physical activities. These initiatives seek to develop well-rounded individuals with robust physical health and cultural assurance while promoting unity and identity among various populations (Chan, 2011; Li et al., 2019). Ethnic fitness aerobics has arisen as a contemporary manifestation of this tendency, integrating traditional dance motions with the framework and advantages of aerobic training. Its approachable, low-intensity format attracts a broad audience, particularly adolescents, and promotes physical health and cultural education. This activity is progressively integrated into school programs and extracurricular activities, significantly promoting traditional cultural values, enhancing physical education curriculum, and advancing the overarching objectives of fostering a healthy, culturally vibrant community (Yu, 2023; Li et al., 2023).

The General Knowledge of Chinese National Fitness Exercises

Ethnic fitness activities have emerged as a crucial element of China's national fitness policy, especially within ethnic minority sports. Since their inception as performance events at the National Ethnic Games, ethnic fitness routines have transformed into officially sanctioned competitive activities, highlighting cultural variety and physical fitness. Diverse areas have established practices grounded on local ethnic traditions, including those of the Bai, Dai, Miao, Tujia, and Tibetan communities. These routines ingeniously amalgamate classical dance components with fitness exercises, embodying artistic expression and health-oriented adaptation. Nationally endorsed routines such as *Our Shared Home* and *Our Beautiful Home* epitomize ethnic harmony and cultural inclusivity, each consisting of 56 eight-beat portions that reflect China's 56 ethnic groups. The principal objectives of these programs are to facilitate cultural interchange, strengthen national unity, and safeguard intangible cultural assets via physical exercise (Menhas et al., 2021; Zheng et al., 2022).

Notwithstanding the advancements in advocating for ethnic fitness aerobics, obstacles persist in attaining broad acceptance and enduring growth. Despite the growing popularity of these exercises in competitions and among the general populace, especially among women and youngsters, challenges such as inadequate teacher resources, insufficient finances, absence of specialized locations, and poor public awareness persistently obstruct their growth. Furthermore, university programs and vocational institutions have not yet completely

incorporated ethnic fitness routines into their standard curricula. To resolve these difficulties, more efforts are required to diversify standard material for various age and gender demographics, augment financial and institutional backing, expand infrastructure, and elevate promotional initiatives throughout society. Enhancing these domains will be crucial for sustaining the long-term vitality and cultural significance of ethnic fitness routines inside China's national fitness initiative (Feng et al., 2024; Pan et al., 2022).

Materials and Methods

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative, practice-based research approach that combined ethnographic fieldwork, cultural analysis, and artistic creation. The aim was to integrate traditional Qiang dance elements into a structured youth fitness routine through a systematic educational and creative process.

Participants

The primary participants included:

- 1) Eight third-year undergraduate students from the Dance Performance program at Sichuan Film and Television College were selected based on academic performance, dance ability, and familiarity with Qiang dance styles.
- 2) Qiang folk artists from Maoxian County and surrounding regions, who served as cultural consultants during field visits and college exchange sessions.
- 3) Students from two pilot schools—Chengdu Shuangliu Experimental Primary School and the Affiliated High School of Sichuan Film and Television College—who participated in the trial implementation and feedback process.

Data Collection

Data were acquired using:

- 1) During site visits, participants conducted field observations and interviews with Qiang community members and dance practitioners.
- 2) Workshops and video recordings of traditional Qiang dance moves.
- 3) Photographs and performance recordings from rehearsals and school demonstrations.
- 4) Student participants and teachers provided questionnaires and informal comments throughout the pilot implementation phase.

Development Process

The creation of the Qiang ethnic fitness routine followed several key phases:

- 1) Preparatory Phase: Team formation, research planning, and movement feasibility assessment.
- 2) Creative Phase: Selection of culturally representative dance movements; integration of aerobic and artistic elements; music composition using Qiang and modern instruments; and costume design incorporating the traditional Qiang waist belt.
- 3) Choreographic Structuring: The routine was divided into four sections—stretching,

upper limb, lower limb, and full-body movement—comprising 24 eight-beat sets and 288 beats.

4) **Instructional Material Development:** Production of a fitness textbook with photos, terminology, movement breakdowns, and teaching notes for educational use.

Implementation

The routine was adopted in two schools, where pupils were given supervised instruction in dance, music, and cultural history. The educational impact was assessed using observations of student engagement, involvement levels, and physical coordination.

Ethical Considerations

All participants gave their informed consent for participation, documentation, and the use of photos in academic publications. Cultural discussions were carried out with consideration and respect for Qiang customs and community knowledge holders.

Results

Background of Creation Dance

The Qiang people, a notable ethnic minority with a rich and dynamic history, persist in inspiring others through their cultural manifestations and lifestyle. The creative team established the Qiang ethnic fitness regimen based on three fundamental principles: valuing individuals, honoring cultural authenticity, and ensuring a harmonious fusion of sports and art. To respect these objectives, the team did extensive academic study and performed immersive fieldwork in Qiang villages, engaging in substantive interactions with indigenous folk artists. These connections infused the creative process with depth and life.

During field trips to Qiang communities, especially in Maoxian County, the team noted the patterns of everyday life and traditional customs of the Qiang people. The vigor and emotive quality of Qiang dancing had a profound impact. These motions, characterized by vigor, rhythm, and symbolic gestures, effectively expressed the Qiang people's audacious spirit, profound connection to nature, and exuberance for life. Elements from these dances were meticulously altered and integrated into the choreography of the workout routine, preserving the cultural spirit while providing a contemporary interpretation (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Interview with Qiang Folk Artists during Field Visit to Maoxian, Aba Prefecture

Source: Researcher, 2024

The project was enhanced by the participation of Qiang folk artists in workshops and exchange sessions at Sichuan Film and Television College, in addition to fieldwork. These performers delivered genuine performances and offered insights on embodying the essence of Qiang dance. Their active participation enhanced the team's comprehension of the profound cultural significances inherent in each action and assisted in refining the routine's direction and structure (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Cultural Exchange and Study with Qiang Folk Artists at Sichuan Film and Television College

Source: Researcher, 2024

The development procedure emphasized youth participants' physical and cognitive attributes, guaranteeing that the routine was scientifically valid and accessible. Focus was directed towards incorporating traditional Qiang music, dance themes, and parts of customary costume to provide a workout experience that is captivating and steeped in ethnic identity. The regimen integrates physical exercise with cultural storytelling, enhancing health and wellness while cultivating a respect for Qiang history.

Creative Elements

Theoretical foundation of creation.

The Qiang ethnic fitness routines were developed based on exercise physiology and human anatomy concepts. Exercise physiology investigates the body's reactions and adaptations to exercise, whereas anatomy studies the body's structure and functioning systems. The exercise regimen was created using these theories to graduate from simple to complicated motions with precisely regulated time and intensity. Representative moves from Qiang dance were chosen for their cultural connection, simplicity, and practicality to improve youth engagement and learning results. The goal was to create a routine that is both productive and accessible to adolescent learners.

The routine focuses on sensible intensity levels, culturally relevant exercises, and rhythmic diversity. Choreography was meticulously planned to achieve an adequate density and volume of physical exercise, progressively increasing movement range, speed, and intensity in accordance with children's ages and physical abilities. Age-appropriate designs and classic Qiang dance components were merged into various movement areas, and rhythm and music were carefully chosen to improve coordination and overall effectiveness.

Creative Ideas

Three fundamental creative elements fueled the development of the Qiang ethnic fitness regimen.

- 1) By blending the elegant elements of Qiang dance with the strength and structure of aerobic training, the program creates a harmonic balance of art and exercise. This fusion also illustrates the functional similarities of several ethnic dances, emphasizing cultural acceptance.
- 2) The exercise draws on traditional radio calisthenics and begins each part with Qiang dancing motions. This invention produces a new and fascinating structure that attracts attention while remaining familiar.
- 3) The routine combines Qiang cultural aspects throughout the movement, music, and visual display. From warm-up to cool-down, it strives to completely portray the creative beauty of Qiang culture, transforming each session into a cultural and aesthetic experience.

4.2.3 Creativity Principles

- 1) The design follows teens' physical and psychological growth patterns, enabling balanced, symmetrical, and age-appropriate activities. The movements are chosen to promote healthy growth while staying simple and functional, with a moderate exercise load that does not interfere with academic achievement.
- 2) The practice prioritizes student safety using safe, low-impact, simple motions. There are no high jumps or intricate aerial maneuvers; each action provides constant foot support and reduces the danger of damage.
- 3) Given the decline in teenage physical health, the regimen fits within a 5-minute exercise window suitable for school breaks. It provides a thorough workout that promotes cardiovascular health, muscular coordination, and mental engagement, which is consistent with the objectives of national youth fitness initiatives.
- 4) The motions are broken down and simplified to make them easier to grasp and intuitive and pleasurable. This promotes engagement, decreases stress, and boosts motivation while delivering excellent physical results quickly.

Creation Methods

- 1) The holistic method stresses the overarching notion of the routine, providing a clear structure from the start. This includes determining the exercises' style, rhythm, intensity, and length to provide coherence and consistency throughout the regimen.
- 2) This approach includes incorporating parts of Qiang traditional dance into a fitness setting. Cultural movements are tailored to serve as physical exercise through creative processing, combining tradition and current practice.
- 3) The approach generates fresh, exciting workouts by reconstructing and mixing motions from both Qiang dance and traditional fitness regimens. These motions are designed to correspond with human physiological function, boosting health while providing creativity and variation for young people.

Preparatory Phase

The preliminary process of producing Qiang ethnic fitness workouts begins with organizing a

trained team, allocating tasks, and creating a detailed development strategy. This first stage entails assessing the viability of including Qiang dance into a planned workout regimen. The approach must be consistent with institutional goals, notably the school's fitness program criteria, while remaining culturally respectful and authentic. Respect for Qiang cultural heritage is a fundamental concept. At the same time, the project must conform to fundamental standards such as scientific validity, safety, efficacy, physical activity value, and simplicity of learning. These criteria guarantee that the chosen movements are physiologically adequate, safe for student involvement, and ideal for wide dissemination. This meticulous planning and review process establishes a solid foundation for formulating and implementing the Qiang ethnic fitness regimen (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Conference on the Education of Qiang Fitness Exercises

Source: Researcher, 2024

The Selection of Dancers

The dancers selected for this project consisted of eight third-year undergraduate students from Classes 7 and 8 of the Dance Performance program at Sichuan Film and Television College. These students were chosen based on their strong academic performance in dance and their physical suitability, including appropriate height, body proportions, and stage presence. All eight dancers possess a foundational understanding of Qiang ethnic dance, which significantly contributed to the efficiency and accuracy of the creative process. Their prior exposure to Qiang movement vocabulary allowed them to quickly grasp the stylistic nuances and embody the cultural essence more authentically. As individuals or small groups perform most traditional Qiang dances, this ensemble size was ideal for choreographing a routine that balanced group coordination with individual expression. The dancers' background and training played a crucial role in achieving the fitness routine's intended artistic and cultural outcomes.

Music Design

The Qiang people, with their rich cultural legacy and strong musical traditions, provide a distinctive soundscape that adds artistic and utilitarian value to the Qiang ethnic exercise regimen. As a synthesis of tradition and contemporary culture and health, music is critical for strengthening the routine's identity and efficacy. This part delves into music design from three distinct perspectives: the features of Qiang music, the guiding principles of aerobic music design, and the unique composition method for the Qiang exercise program (Table 1).

Aspect	Key Points
Rhythmic Vitality	Brisk, dynamic rhythm to energize movement.
Melodic Appeal	Pleasant, memorable melodies to enhance engagement.
Cultural Integration	Includes Qiang instruments and musical elements to reflect ethnic identity.
Rhythm	Blends Qiang drum/clap patterns with aerobic timing.
Melody	Adapts Qiang folk tunes with modern elements for accessibility.
Harmony	Uses polyphony and traditional instruments like the Qiang flute and mouth harp.
Instrumentation	Mix of traditional (flute, harp) and modern (synth, guitar) instruments.
Structure	Music follows fitness flow: intro → theme → climax → end.

Table1. Summary of Music Design for Qiang Fitness Exercises

Costume Design

The clothing design for Qiang ethnic fitness activities strikes an appropriate balance between cultural representation and utilitarian performance. The Qiang waist belt is important for aesthetic and utilitarian objectives.

- 1) **Cultural Representation:** The Qiang waist belt, a distinguishing feature of traditional Qiang dress, contains significant cultural meaning. Its incorporation in the workout routine clothing emphasises the distinct charm of Qiang heritage and creates a sense of cultural belonging.
- 2) **Functionality for Movement:** The Qiang belt, which is traditionally knotted around the waist, is artistically appealing and incredibly functional. In the context of aerobics, it provides a solid fit and flexibility of mobility, allowing for vigorous physical exercise without sacrificing comfort.
- 3) **Blending Tradition and Modernity:** The costume design cleverly incorporates traditional components such as the Qiang belt into modern sporting attire. This blend gives the routine a fresh, contemporary style while respecting classic aesthetics, increasing its visual appeal and cultural significance (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Qiang Waist Belt Used in the Fitness Routine

Source: Researcher, 2024

Motion Design

The Qiang ethnic exercise regimen stresses symmetrical form and repetitive motions, improving visual balance and learning efficiency. Repetition helps teens enhance their skills, whilst symmetry promotes aesthetic and biomechanical balance. The routine is intended to be both accessible and engaging, with somewhat challenging motions to keep participants interested without becoming frustrated. It combines Qiang dance's dynamic, expressive features (such as axial rotation, circular motion, and hip circling) with typical aerobic rhythms. The composition comprises nine parts, each with eight beats, which combine Qiang dance and aerobic motions in a planned sequence. The practice lasts around four minutes and adheres to national radio calisthenics requirements, assuring proper exercise intensity while fostering fitness and cultural awareness. The Qiang ethnic fitness routine comprises four major sections, totaling 24 eight-beat segments. Each section integrates culturally representative and physically beneficial movements as follows (Table 2):

Section	Action Elements	Total Beats
Stretching Exercise	Axis rotation, circular rotation, twisting and swinging rhythm	6 eight-beat sets
Upper Limb Movement	Forward swing, side swing	6 eight-beat sets
Lower Limb Movement	Flat running, hip circling, rotating hip circling	6 eight-beat sets
Full Body Exercise	Qiang Guozhuang's dance movements	6 eight-beat sets

Table 2. Structure and Action Elements of Qiang Ethnic Fitness Exercises

Following comprehensive preparation—including the selection of Qiang ethnic elements, choreography of movements, and determination of music style—the fitness routine was assembled according to a structured exercise sequence. During this integration phase, careful adjustments were made to transitions, beats, rhythms, and movement directions to ensure fluidity, coordination, and optimal performance quality. The finalized Qiang ethnic fitness routine integrates symbolic Qiang dance with functional fitness, structured into four symmetrical sections. It includes a preparatory segment, two transitions, and four main segments—each with six 8-beat sequences—totaling 288 beats. The routine balances cultural expression and physical effectiveness. (Figure 5).



Figure 5. First Version of the Qiang Fitness Exercise Textbook

Source: Researcher, 2024

Creation Results and Evaluation

Incorporating Qiang ethnic cultural components into exercise aerobics has resulted in considerable creative and educational outcomes, with a strong, favorable response from both participants and onlookers. This invention effectively combines traditional Qiang dancing with modern fitness, highlighting the cultural diversity of the Qiang people while improving the attraction and functionality of aerobic training.

Creatively, the initiative revived Qiang cultural aspects by merging them into choreographed exercise routines. The precisely choreographed gestures, which are rhythmically synchronized with music, create a vibrant and captivating combination of tradition and contemporary. These routines represent the beauty and spirit of Qiang culture, adding to the visual appeal and physical advantages of fitness aerobics.

In actuality, the promotion of Qiang exercise regimens at Chengdu's Shuangliu Experimental Primary School and the Affiliated High School of Sichuan Film and Television College was well received. Students eagerly participated in learning and executing the routines, acquiring physical fitness and a better understanding of ethnic culture. The effort has improved campus cultural life and raised student knowledge of the cultural legacy (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Qiang Fitness Exercise Promotion at Shuangliu Experimental Primary School in Chengdu.

Source: Researcher, 2024

Feedback from students, teachers, and cultural specialists has been overwhelmingly favorable. The unique mix of Qiang cultural themes and physical aerobics was lauded for its educational value and visual appeal. Experts praised the practice as a significant tool for cultural diffusion and health promotion, praising its contribution to artistic expression and cultural preservation

Discussion

The incorporation of Qiang ethnic cultural aspects into fitness aerobics constitutes a significant step forward in both cultural preservation and physical education. This initiative not only illustrates the potential of converting traditional ethnic dance into a modern, youth-friendly exercise style, but it also emphasizes the importance of schools as essential sites for cultural transmission (Deng et al., 2022; Ye et al., 2023). The practical application in school demonstrates the potential for culturally enriched fitness programs to fulfill several goals, including physical health, cultural identity, and aesthetic instruction (Zhao et al., 2021).

One of the initiative's main assets is its multidisciplinary approach. The choreography strikes a delicate balance between the physiological principles of adolescent fitness and the artistic aspects of Qiang dance, ensuring that the routine is scientifically grounded and emotive. Symbolic Qiang motions, such as hip circling, axial rotation, and the Guozhuang dance, illustrate how ancient cultural forms may be altered while maintaining their core (Lau et al., 2016). This methodological fusion provides a reproducible blueprint for creating comparable processes for other ethnic groupings (Xinxin et al., 2024; Chang et al., 2024). Another important topic of debate is the educational benefit shown during the pilot deployment. Students responded with great excitement, involvement, and cultural curiosity. These replies indicate that incorporating cultural components into physical exercise can increase engagement, enhance learning outcomes, and build cultural appreciation in young people. It also corresponds with national initiatives that emphasize integrating physical and aesthetic education and revitalizing traditional culture via innovation (Yue & Seekhunlio, 2023).

However, the endeavor did provide several obstacles. For example, creating and promoting such routines necessitates professional knowledge in ethnic dance and fitness training, which may not be available in all institutions. Furthermore, guaranteeing the long-term viability of this effort

will require ongoing institutional support, curricular integration, and the availability of teaching materials and teacher training (Tan, 2021; Huang & Noknoi, 2025). Despite these obstacles, the findings support the cultural and educational significance of Qiang ethnic fitness routines (Yu et al., 2018). This program proposes a forward-thinking strategy for preserving intangible heritage in meaningful and relevant ways for today's youth by blending tradition with innovation and culture with movement (Zeng & Chantamala, 2025). Future research should concentrate on expanding the program to other locations, creating uniform teaching tools, and investigating the influence of such programs on students' long-term cultural identity and physical well-being.

Conclusion

The development and execution of Qiang ethnic fitness routines mark a significant intersection of cultural heritage and modern physical education. By combining traditional Qiang dance components with planned aerobic workout routines, this effort not only revives intangible cultural heritage but also improves physical health, particularly among young students. The process—from field research and movement design to music composition and instructional material development—showcases a complete and culturally appropriate approach to educational innovation. The routine's effective promotion at schools such as Chengdu's Shuangliu Experimental Primary School and the Affiliated High School of Sichuan Film and Television College demonstrates its pedagogical and cultural significance. Students have benefited physically while improving their grasp of Qiang customs, highlighting the importance of schools as essential spaces for cultural transmission.

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