

# Application and Innovation of Northeast Ethnic Dance Elements in College Aesthetic Education

Shuyi Zheng

Changchun Humanities and Sciences College, Changchun, Jilin, 130117, China

## ABSTRACT

Northeast ethnic dance, as a brilliant pearl of Chinese culture, embodies rich history and ethnic sentiment. With the rapid development of society, modern education often neglects the deep transmission of traditional culture while nurturing students' comprehensive qualities. In particular, Northeast ethnic dance, an art form that carries local characteristics and national spirit, has gradually become marginalized. In the aesthetic education of college students, how to integrate this cultural treasure with modern educational concepts, and how to innovate its teaching methods, has become an urgent problem to solve. This paper explores the current status of the application of Northeast ethnic dance elements in college aesthetic education, analyzes innovative teaching paths and outcomes. The study shows that effectively incorporating Northeast ethnic dance elements into college students' aesthetic education not only helps improve students' aesthetic literacy and cultural identity but also stimulates their creativity and innovative thinking, promoting the inheritance and development of culture.

## KEYWORDS

Northeast ethnic dance; Aesthetic education; Innovative application; College students; Cultural inheritance

## 1 Introduction

In the rapid changes of modern society, traditional culture is facing unprecedented challenges. For college students, the fast-changing world has led them to gradually lose their understanding and respect for traditional culture while pursuing trends. Northeast ethnic dance, as a unique form of national cultural expression, embodies deep historical emotions and cultural essence. It is not just dance; it is a transmission of emotions and a vehicle for cultural expression. However, in current aesthetic education, the elements of Northeast ethnic dance are rarely fully explored and innovatively applied. How to revitalize this art form within modern education, and how to help students perceive history and identify with culture through dance, are topics that need to be addressed in educational practice.

## 2 Basic Overview and Cultural Characteristics of Northeast Ethnic Dance

### 2.1 Origins and Development of Northeast Ethnic Dance

Northeast ethnic dance has a long history and rich regional characteristics, deeply rooted in the production and daily life of the various ethnic groups in the Northeast region. Since ancient times, the dances of multiple ethnic groups, including the Manchu, Hezhe, Korean, and Mongolian, have each had their own unique characteristics. Initially, these dances were closely related to activities such as rituals, hunting, and farming, expressing people's reverence and worship for nature, gods, and life. Over time, Northeast ethnic dance gradually integrated external cultures and modern elements, undergoing a transformation from tradition to modernization. Especially in the modern era, with the strengthening of national rejuvenation and cultural identity, Northeast ethnic dance has not only preserved its traditional charm but also infused new vitality through innovation and cross-border artistic collaborations, gradually moving onto the international stage.

### 2.2 Cultural Characteristics of Northeast Ethnic Dance

The deep cultural connotations of Northeast ethnic dance are reflected not only in the uniqueness of its form and techniques but also in the ethnic spirit and natural emotions it carries. Firstly, Northeast ethnic dance is highly influenced by nature. Many dance movements imitate animals, plants, and natural phenomena, reflecting the ethnic groups' reverence and dependence on nature. The "Fish Leap Dance" of the Hezhe ethnic group and the "Horse Step Dance" of the Manchu people are examples where movements convey the concept of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. Secondly, Northeast ethnic dance displays a bold, rugged character. The large movements and strong rhythmic sense in the dances embody the brave, resilient, and uninhibited personality traits of the people of the Northeast. In terms of emotional expression, Northeast ethnic dance is rich in emotional layers. Whether celebrating holidays with joy or expressing deep affection for loved ones and homeland, these emotions are conveyed delicately through dance<sup>[1]</sup>.

### **3 Current Status of Northeast Ethnic Dance Elements in College Aesthetic Education**

#### **3.1 Basic Concept and Goals of Aesthetic Education**

Aesthetic education is not merely the cultivation of artistic skills, but the comprehensive enhancement of students' qualities through the learning of artistic forms. It emphasizes the cultivation of students' aesthetic awareness, creativity, and emotional expression abilities through music, dance, painting, and other art forms, ultimately achieving the full development of their personalities. In college aesthetic education, art education is not only part of cultural literacy but also a key way to cultivate students' innovative thinking and enhance their comprehensive abilities. However, at present, college students' aesthetic education faces a series of challenges, especially in course design and educational concepts. Art education is often neglected, even reduced to mere formality.

With the increasing importance of comprehensive quality in talent cultivation, the significance of aesthetic education has gradually emerged. However, when it comes to dance courses, especially the teaching of ethnic dances, the expected results have not been achieved. In many universities, dance education still focuses on performance skills training, neglecting the transmission of cultural connotations in dance. Many students in dance classes are more focused on mimicking dance movements rather than understanding the cultural background and ideological essence behind the dance, resulting in an incomplete experience and understanding of art in their aesthetic education.

#### **3.2 Introduction of Northeast Ethnic Dance Elements**

Despite the unique artistic charm and cultural value of Northeast ethnic dance, its teaching application is not widespread in many college aesthetic education programs. Most schools have limited the introduction of Northeast ethnic dance elements, focusing more on modern or foreign dance forms and neglecting local ethnic cultures. Even in universities that attempt to incorporate Northeast ethnic dance elements into their curriculum, the inclusion is often limited to festive activities or dance performances, lacking a systematic and professional course design.

Survey data shows that many college students have very limited knowledge of Northeast ethnic dance. Only a few students can accurately recognize the dance characteristics or cultural backgrounds of various ethnic groups from Northeast China. This phenomenon reflects the current shortcomings in ethnic cultural transmission within aesthetic education, indicating that students' cultural identity has not been fully developed. The recognition and interest in Northeast ethnic dance largely depend on personal interests or family background, and this aspect of cultivation in school education remains insufficient.

#### **3.3 Problems and Challenges**

The introduction of Northeast ethnic dance in college aesthetic education faces many challenges. Firstly, the monotony and traditionalism of dance teaching content make it difficult for many students to appreciate the charm of ethnic dance in the classroom. Many courses focus too much on imitating movements and neglect in-depth explanations of the cultural background, historical context, and emotional expression of the dance, which results in a lack of cultural connotation in the teaching process. Secondly, there is a shortage of teaching resources for Northeast ethnic dance, and the lack of professional instructors, especially in the study and teaching of lesser-known ethnic dances, means that these aspects have not been explored deeply. Lastly, the lack of modern teaching methods is also a significant barrier. The traditional methods of teaching dance are outdated, failing to effectively engage modern college students, especially in the incorporation of multimedia technology and modern educational concepts.

### **4 Innovative Application of Northeast Ethnic Dance Elements**

#### **4.1 Theoretical Basis for Innovative Application**

In recent years, aesthetic education theory has made significant progress. Traditional art education models have gradually been replaced by modern educational concepts, with innovative thinking becoming a key direction for educational reform. The innovative application of Northeast ethnic dance elements is based on this theoretical background, combining modern educational ideas with traditional culture to promote the innovative inheritance of ethnic dance. In this process, educators not only focus on teaching dance techniques but also emphasize the cultural connotations of the dance and its integration with modern education. Especially in balancing cultural inheritance and innovation, how to preserve the essence of traditional dance while introducing modern elements to make it more contemporary and attractive has become the core of innovation. Through innovative teaching methods, Northeast ethnic dance can breathe new life within the modern education system.

#### **4.2 Innovative Teaching of Northeast Ethnic Dance Elements**

The innovative application of Northeast ethnic dance first manifests in the innovation of teaching methods. By

incorporating modern dance elements into traditional dance teaching, students' interest can be effectively stimulated, allowing them to blend modern creativity with tradition. By combining modern dance techniques with Northeast ethnic dance movements, students can not only learn the rhythm of traditional dances but also develop their own unique dance language. Moreover, using modern technologies such as video teaching, multimedia, and virtual reality allows students to practice and experience in a virtual environment, improving learning efficiency. This interactive teaching method helps students better perceive the details of dance movements and master emotional expression through dance. Additionally, the integration of dance with interdisciplinary subjects is also an important part of teaching innovation. By combining dance with history, culture, and other subjects, students can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the historical and cultural significance of dance, thereby enhancing their artistic appreciation and creative thinking.

### **4.3 Creative Expression of Northeast Ethnic Dance**

The innovation of Northeast ethnic dance is not limited to teaching methods but also reflected in the dance's expressive forms. As modern art styles evolve, dance choreography has gradually moved toward freer and more personalized directions. Traditional dance forms have been infused with more improvisational and free movements, breaking previous limitations and providing students with a broader creative space. Furthermore, Northeast ethnic dance can also be combined with modern music, film, and other art forms, creating a more diversified expression. Through the fusion of cross-arts, dance is no longer just the expression of body movements but a transmission of emotions and thoughts through multiple artistic forms. This multifaceted expression not only enriches students' artistic vision but also injects new artistic vitality into Northeast ethnic dance. Through these innovative applications, Northeast ethnic dance not only preserves its unique cultural value but also demonstrates broader artistic charm, contributing to global cultural exchange.

## **5 Analysis of the Effects of the Innovative Application of Northeast Ethnic Dance Elements**

### **5.1 Impact of Innovative Application on College Students' Cultural Identity**

As a unique cultural carrier, the innovative application of Northeast ethnic dance elements has a profound impact on college students' cultural identity. In the context of globalization, many young people may face confusion about their cultural identity, especially with the impact of multiple cultures. Traditional culture is often neglected or diluted. By incorporating Northeast ethnic dance into aesthetic education, students not only experience the artistic charm of dance but also gain an in-depth understanding of the ethnic culture and historical significance behind it. This cultural experience helps students recognize the uniqueness and value of their own culture, strengthening their sense of cultural identity and pride. As students engage in Northeast ethnic dance, they gradually develop a deep emotional connection to traditional culture, while also becoming more open to embracing other cultural elements. This, in turn, helps them build cultural confidence in the context of globalization <sup>[2]</sup>.

### **5.2 Impact on the Physical and Mental Development of College Students**

The innovative application of Northeast ethnic dance also plays a vital role in promoting the physical and mental health of college students. Dance, as a comprehensive artistic activity, helps students enhance their body coordination, flexibility, and endurance. Particularly, the movements in Northeast ethnic dance are full of power, which effectively contributes to students' physical fitness. Additionally, the emotional release and expression facilitated by dance help students alleviate stress and regulate their emotions. Through dance, students are able to enjoy artistic expression while releasing inner tension, achieving harmony between mind and body. In the fast-paced modern life, college students face multiple pressures related to academics and employment. The emotional catharsis offered by dance serves as an essential means to maintain mental well-being.

### **5.3 Cultivation of College Students' Creative Thinking and Innovation Abilities**

The innovative application of Northeast ethnic dance also positively impacts the cultivation of college students' creative thinking and innovation abilities. Modern education emphasizes the development of innovative abilities, and dance, as an art form, can greatly foster students' creativity. Through the innovative interpretation of Northeast ethnic dance, students not only learn the techniques of traditional dance but also develop their creative thinking by understanding and adapting the dance movements. Improvisation and choreography in dance education not only enhance students' artistic expression but also stimulate their imagination and independent thinking abilities. In particular, the integration of dance with other disciplines, such as music, literature, and drama, enables students to approach problems from multiple perspectives, fostering diversified innovative thinking <sup>[3]</sup>.

## 6 Case Analysis of the Application of Northeast Ethnic Dance Elements in Aesthetic Education

### 6.1 Successful Case Analysis

In some universities, the innovative application of Northeast ethnic dance elements has already achieved remarkable results. For example, in an art university, the school integrated Northeast ethnic dance elements with modern dance techniques and established a "Northeast Ethnic Dance Creativity Course." The course content not only covers learning traditional dance movements but also encourages students to engage in choreography and improvisation, sparking their artistic creativity. In the classroom, students learn both traditional dance movements and rhythms while blending modern dance elements to create unique dance works. This innovative course setup not only deepens students' understanding of the cultural connotations of Northeast ethnic dance but also significantly enhances their artistic expression and creativity.

### 6.2 Failure and Challenge Analysis

However, in some universities, the application of Northeast ethnic dance elements still faces difficulties and challenges. First, the lack of teaching resources and insufficient teaching staff limit the widespread application of Northeast ethnic dance elements in aesthetic education. Many universities lack teachers with professional dance backgrounds, resulting in low teaching quality and students not receiving adequate guidance in the classroom. Second, the traditional dance teaching content and methods are relatively monotonous and lack innovation and interactivity, leading to low student interest and an inactive classroom atmosphere. Traditional teaching methods focus heavily on imitation and technique training, neglecting the students' understanding of the cultural background of the dance and their creative expression. As a result, students often feel a lack of involvement and accomplishment during their learning process.

### 6.3 How to Overcome Difficulties and Challenges

To overcome these problems and improve the effectiveness of Northeast ethnic dance in aesthetic education, several measures should be taken. Firstly, the construction of teaching staff should be strengthened by cultivating more teachers with experience in ethnic dance education and innovative thinking. Universities can collaborate with professional dance troupes, inviting professional dancers to offer courses or lectures, improving the quality of teaching. Secondly, the curriculum should be more flexible and diversified. In addition to traditional dance technique training, more dance creation and cultural exploration content should be added to encourage students to think from multiple perspectives and improve their innovative abilities and cultural cognition. Finally, greater efforts should be made to enhance students' recognition and emotional connection to the culture of Northeast ethnic dance. By organizing cultural exchange activities, dance performances, and other practical activities, students can experience the charm of ethnic dance firsthand, strengthening their cultural confidence and ethnic identity<sup>[4]</sup>.

Conclusion: Northeast ethnic dance, as a cultural treasure, contains rich historical and spiritual connotations. In modern aesthetic education, the innovative integration of Northeast ethnic dance elements not only helps students recognize and take pride in traditional culture, but also provides a unique opportunity for enhancing their creativity and artistic expression. Through the combination of modern educational methods and innovative teaching models, Northeast ethnic dance not only demonstrates the continuity of its cultural heritage but also infuses new life into the dance through fusion with modern art forms. This innovative application not only facilitates the regeneration and development of ethnic culture but also deepens students' cultural identity, mental well-being, and innovative capabilities. Faced with the cultural challenges of globalization, Northeast ethnic dance plays an increasingly significant role in aesthetic education. It is not only a part of art education but also an important force for enhancing cultural confidence and promoting social harmony.

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