

## A STUDY OF SERVICE DESIGN APPLIED ON TRADITIONAL MARTIAL ARTS

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### ABSTRACT

Traditional Chinese martial arts is one of the index items for the recognition of the Western world towards the Oriental culture. However, among the modern young generations, traditional martial arts are strongly marginalized and become a part of the temple fair culture. Even if the government has started to take such traditional folk sport seriously, the number of inheritors is gradually reduced, and talents are in shortage in the realistic situation. This study discussed traditional martial arts protected by intangible cultural heritage by means of data analysis, integrated the knowledge hierarchy of service design into the inheritance and protection of traditional protection. Whether a new heritage strategy can be built is the purpose of this study. To sum up the heritage mode of traditional Chinese martial arts, the following three suggestions are proposed in the study finding as the directions of thinking on the planning of traditional martial arts inheritance by firstly improving the recognition on traditional martial arts, excellent traditional culture becomes a part of our lives, which can last for long. Secondly, enhancing the capacity of traditional martial arts and combining the features of generations to absorb the input of more young groups is innovative and creative. Thirdly, building a platform and strategic alliances and gathering resources can increase the effect of heritage.

**Keywords:** service design, traditional martial arts, intangible cultural heritage.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Martial arts is a body building method and a cultural symbol which is nourished and developed in Chinese civilization. It is a combination of techniques and arts, as well as a part of entertainment and the lives of common people. Cultivating virtues before learning martial arts, while studying etiquette before learning skills. Chinese martial art is one of the earlier Chinese cultural icons known to the world. The rich connotation of martial arts gives them product creativity meeting spiritual and cultural needs in modern society. For instance, the movie "Yip Man" is a perfect example. Nevertheless, traditional martial arts gradually decline in modern society. It is an issue worthy of exploration on how to convert numerous figures famous for traditional martial arts and materials formed by accumulation of cultural relics into a cultural industry chain through the way of service design to enable propagation and promotion in the scale effect and make them easier to be accepted by young groups.

### **1.1. Study Background**

With its unique charm, traditional martial arts absorb the essence of different genres and integrate traditional cultural cores such as martial arts culture, national spirit, and morality education of martial arts, forming the cultural product with national characteristics. Nonetheless, with the changing times, traditional martial arts have generated an essential value divergence which is the main reason for the contradiction between "criticism and praise" and "inheritance and development" in the inheritance process of traditional martial arts. Functionalism proposed: the existence of a specific cultural trait is due to its performance of a certain important social function. The development of martial arts shall seek a new integrated value to establish a good environment for the evolution of traditional martial arts. In the trend of globalization, cross-border communication have become normal, and Taiwan is no exception. "Local is global". In the key time of global evolution of traditional martial arts, coexistence, and integration are important transition thinking for the modernization of traditional martial arts.

Modern society has entered the age of experience economy. Based on the theoretical process of service design, this study sets up the knowledge hierarchy of traditional martial arts, as well as discuss and analyse the feasibility of utilizing the service design process to inherit and develop traditional Chinese martial arts, which was the motivation of this study.

### **1.2. Purpose of Study**

Traditional martial arts experienced three great social changes in modern China. Growing commercialization had changed people's lifestyle and the cultural spirit of traditional martial arts had been replaced by various leisure and entertainment (Niu Aijun, 2008) since the reform and opening-up in the China mainland. During the civil war in 1949, many martial arts inheritors carried corresponding classics and retreated to Taiwan with Kuomintang. These people gradually decayed in Taiwan, and their classics scattered among the public. "Culture is of non-productivity, and it is impossible to be reconstructed once it is lost" (Hu Liping, Xie Qianmei

and Gao Chengqiang, 2011). Traditional martial arts culture is confronting such dilemma. Whether integrating modern service design knowledge and theory into the management of traditional martial arts is helpful for the inheritance and development of traditional martial arts is the purpose of this study.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The Three Character Classic says "and the genealogical connections should be examined, so that the end of one dynasty, and the beginning of the next may be known". It means that the past must be known first in order to know the future. This study conducted literature review on three orientations, namely traditional martial arts, service design, and intangible cultural heritage to sum up and reorganize the data analysis of the study.

### **2.1. Traditional Martial Arts**

Chinese martial art is the product under Chinese traditional civilization featured by extensive contents. In the China mainland, it is often known as "Wushu", manifesting the connotation of Chinese culture and the background of the revolution of the Communist party of China; while it is called "Kuoshu" by the government of the Republic of China", manifesting the background of the government of Taiwan. Since the end of the Qing Dynasty, "martial skill" had been used together with "martial art" (Sports Commission, Executive Yuan, 2011). Adam Chi Hsu, the famous martial artist interpreted in this way: "In my opinion, Chinese martial arts need to be modernized at both domestic and international stages. However, modernization does not equal to westernization. It must not be westernized, because we would automatically turn into Westerners and lose our oriental traditions if martial arts are westernized. It is absolutely not a racist comment. What I mean is that you would fundamentally change such thing. I heard China mainland often said martial art belonged to people of the world. Therefore, we should reserve it as our gift and enable people of the world to enjoy it. If it is westernized, it means that we discard this gift. We might have the heart to dedicate, but it is void, so we strongly advocate the modernization of martial arts; but I absolutely object to its westernization". (Adam Chi Hsu, 2002)

Since the retrocession of Taiwan, martial arts have developed roughly in several orientations:

1. Famous martial artists have emerged in a large number since they retreated to Taiwan from China mainland, spreading plenty of traditional martial arts genres to Taiwan. The temporal and spatial barriers enabled traditional martial arts in Taiwan to preserve many original varieties, sub-varieties, and even new derived varieties, which was of great significance to the inheritance of Chinese culture.
2. All kinds of organizations related to traditional martial arts were successively founded. Among these organizations, "Chinese Martial Arts Training Institution" founded by Chen

Pan-Ling in 1950 was the earliest one. A good many people with lofty ideals participated in such organizations. The government not only regarded traditional martial arts as sports and culture, but also a part of public security and political mobilization.

3. The spread of martial arts at school could be divided into the promotion conducted by official Ministry of Education and student societies. Particularly Chinese martial arts clubs established in universities and colleges cultivated countless senior elite martial arts inheritors whose passion for martial arts lasted a lifetime. They were truly the mainstay in the development of Taiwan's traditional martial arts.
4. Martial art in the troop was founded by Lee Won-Chi, the former teacher of Central Kuoshu Institution and the son-in-law of a martial art master named Tung Chung-Yi in modern times. After that, Chiang Ching-Kuo who acted as the vice president of the Executive Yuan at that time visited South Korea and saw the strong power of its fighting skill, so he introduced Taekwondo and otherwise set up Chikwondo for popularization.
5. One of the academic developments of martial arts was the Wu Tan Magazine established by a civil group named Wu Tan Magazine. The key man of this magazine was Adam Chi Hsu, the veteran of Wu Tan Magazine. Moreover, with the support of Kuoshu Wushu Federation of the Republic of China, Chinese Culture University created the Kuoshu Group of the physical education department, which was the only academic department cultivating Kuoshu talents in Taiwan.

The main reasons were the essence of traditional Chinese culture and the prosperity of temple fair cultural activities. Being impacted by the ideological trend of leisure and health, the public increasingly pay attention to regimen by martial arts, thus the development of martial arts is integrated into enterprise-oriented operation, which is an inevitable tendency. (Sports Commission, Executive Yuan, 2011)

## **2.2. Service Design**

Nowadays, "design" specialty is rapidly developing and changing. In addition to its inseparability with economic activities, the correlation between design, value and service is more important. In *The Experience Economy, Updated Edition*, Pine II and Gilmore presented "The evolution of human economic activities has changed from pure product sales to experience of emotional life" (Pine II & James H. Gilmore, 2013). In the recommendation preface of this book, Sun Jui-Sui presented "experience economy is a kind of creative market, driving the new NOHAS movement". In the experience economic times, people want to buy a feeling, a story or even a sense of identity, and new experience economy changes the service process and enables the element of culture to act as an unprecedented key role, restructuring opportunities of emerging culture."

Dansk Design Centre defined "service design" as a design of systems and process around the idea of rendering a service to the user (Bedford & Lee, 2008); Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design defined service design as (Design, 2008):

- It is an emerging academic sector, aiming at setting up complete and deliberate service experience through integrating tangible or intangible media.
- Its purpose is to provide users with full service and plan a system and process design.
- It is interdisciplinary knowledge that must combine many design skills, management, and working procedure.
- Service is the thing that has already existed in different forms since ancient times, but the truly designed service must be brought into the new business model that knows the demands of users and creates new social values in society.
- It is an indispensable element in knowledge economy.

Therefore, the main purpose of service design is to make the service you deliver useful, usable, efficient, effective, and desirable so as to meet the expectation of customers (Design Council, 2010). The output of service design might be tangible or intangible, including product, communication, environment, or behaviour. As a whole, the outcome of service design can be manifested in multiple forms. In this is Service Design Thinking: Basics, Tools, Cases, Stickdorn, Marc Schneider & Jakob (2012) proposed five principles for thinking on service design:

1. User-centred
2. Co-creative
3. Sequencing
4. Evidencing
5. Holistic

Service design is of diverse functions, which not only emphasizes the connection between customer feeling and service, but highlights their personal involvement in servicescape. Here, servicescape refers to the sum of service delivery and physical environment for interaction between enterprise and customer. Service design is a more macroscopic design activity planning and procedure. If service brings customers an experience, service design shall stress its capability of delivering customers a series of desirable unique experience designs.

### **2.3. Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is also known as non-material cultural heritage. According to the definition in Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage drafted by UNESCO, it refers to "the practices, representations, expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills (including instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural spaces), that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage". Intangible cultural heritage is the crystal of people's living culture and the accumulation of wisdom from past generations. Mr. Feng Jicai, the chairman of Chinese Folk Literature and Art Association commented intangible cultural heritage like this, "Like human material heritage, human

intangible cultural heritage is the crystal of human civilization and common precious wealth, which is the cultural lifeline for continuity of human society. Intangible culture is often more important than tangible culture. Intangible cultural heritage contains unlimited human emotion as well as profound significance and value" (Feng Jicai, 2002).

Xiang Zhaolun, the deputy minister of culture of China proposed five orientations to correctly understand intangible cultural heritage.

1. Intangible cultural heritage passes on from generation to generation, which is of cultural significance and social function to provide related communities and groups with sense of identity and continuity. Such cultural heritage is vivid instead of static. Intangible cultural heritage is inherited in practice which is dynamic and creative, hence the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage is dynamic rather than negative. Intangible cultural heritage is not cultural relic or living cultural relic that could not be recreated. Recreated cultural relics can be deemed as "counterfeits".
2. The owner of intangible cultural heritage is a community or group or even an individual. Typical inheritors at different levels are the representatives of extensive groups of inheritors and practitioners. Most intangible cultural heritage items are heritages shared among group members, which can survive and develop by means of collective inheritance and continuous recreation. The maintenance and expansion of inheriting groups is the foundation for extending historical context, preserving ethnic characteristics, and flourishing in contemporary life.
3. The communities, groups or individuals holding intangible cultural heritage are inheritors, practitioners, and creators who shall enjoy and acquire rights for benefits, creative expressions as well as learning and training. Respecting the dominant status and rights of inheriting groups is an important principle in the work about intangible cultural heritage.
4. Effective protection measures are those that can guarantee the vitality of intangible cultural heritage, including explicit affirmation, record, filing, preservation, research, and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage law and convention, particularly the concrete measures that ensure the inheritance of representative works of intangible cultural heritage by means of formal and informal education, namely social education and school education.
5. Due to the changes in production and life style, young people are unwilling to learn or inherit, which is the reality that must be taken seriously. The significant goals in the works about intangible cultural heritage is to constantly enhance the vitality and aftereffect of inheritance of intangible cultural heritage as well as spread outstanding Chinese traditional culture by inheriting intangible cultural heritage to improve related people's lives and promoting the young generation's

understanding about intangible cultural heritage and their enthusiasm for participation (Xinhua News Agency, 2016).

Wang Wenzhang, the director of China Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Centre pointed out "As a living culture, intangible cultural heritage has been affected by human society structure and environmental changes as well as restricted by its own existence pattern, so its social existence foundation will inevitably narrowed down. It is the influence of social development necessity. In consequence, such influence will accelerate the extinction of traditional culture and weak culture. The Cultural spirit and the human feeling of a specific nation or group embodied by those cultures will be decomposed or replaced by unstable cultural concepts generated in modern industrial society. The decomposition of those cultural expression forms in which cultural traditions are condense among the groups is difficult to be measured by any external scales, which will certainly bring confused values" (Wang Wenzhang, 2009). To sum up, rescuing and protecting those intangible cultural heritages in living predicament have become a very urgent historic task given by the era.

### **3. STUDY METHOD**

This study applied data analysis to discuss the theoretical connotation of service design as well as inheritance and development of traditional martial arts. It utilized the five service design processes to analyse the feasibility of service design in the construction of inheritance and development process of traditional martial arts among intangible culture heritages.

### **4. STUDY & ANALYSIS**

Cultural form is in a close relationship with social development. In 2003, UNESCO announced the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, which explicitly pointed out "intangible cultural heritage passes on from generation to generation. It is continuously recreated in the adaption of communities and groups towards surroundings and the interaction between human and nature and history, which provides senses of identity and continuity to enhance the respect for cultural diversity and human creativity". Under the five thinking principles for service design, service design is a process in which four stages, namely exploration, creation, reflection, and implementation are continuously repeated. (Design Council, 2007).

Service design refers to that a service enterprise makes planning and design for its service and operational management based on its characteristics and operative goals. Its core significance is the integral design of service package and service delivery system. Traditional martial art exists in specific groups, which is unable to blend into the daily lives of the social mass. Fei Hsiao-tung, the famous ethnologist said, "culture is so fragile that it will decline once it breaks away from its dependent cultural circle; but culture is so strong that it can go out and

come back, which need collective reflection and awareness of an ethnic group. In the end, it will turn into a collective exodus or collective regression" (Han, 2007).

The inheritance of martial arts has their rites and identification. Regarding the process of martial arts inheritance, this study constructed and analysed a flow chart, shown in Figure 1:

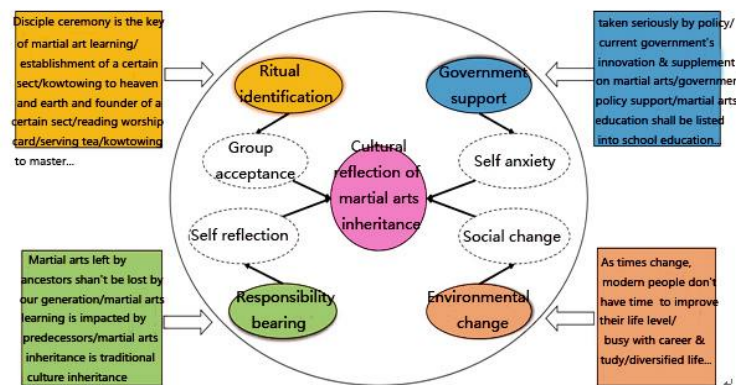


Figure 1: Reflection Process of Traditional Martial Arts Inheritance  
Data source: drawn in this study

As shown in the above figure, in the process of inheritance and reflective learning, traditional martial arts has its own specific ritual process. It can be seen from the process that the orientation of inheritance is so limited that not all people can easily access, which makes its inheritance scope smaller and smaller. Intangible cultural heritage such as traditional martial arts must be safeguarded and rescued, but its rational use and inheritance and developments should not be denied. In consequence, current management knowledge is introduced to assist the utilization and inheritance and development of traditional martial arts, which is worth thinking deeply. This study converted the five service design processes into the traditional martial arts inheritance and development strategy, as shown in Figure 2:

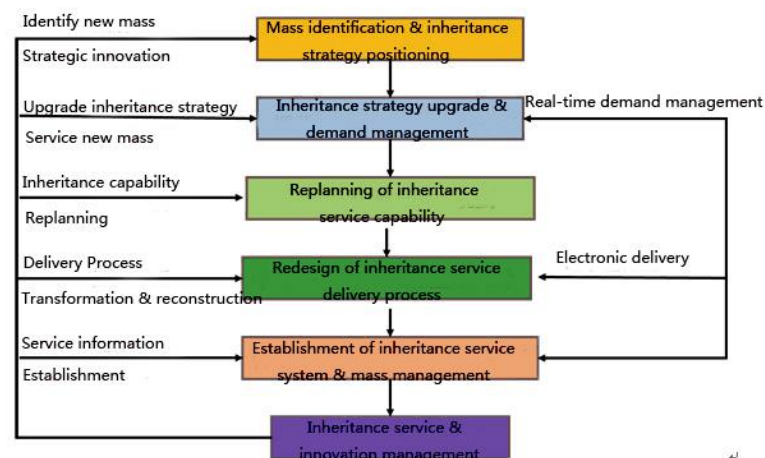


Figure 2: Application of Service Design to Traditional Martial Arts Inheritance Process Setting  
Data source: drawn in this study



The theory of service design is applied to the traditional martial arts inheritance process transformation. Promoting martial arts is not equal to denying traditional martial arts by using "development", "transformation", or "innovation". The mental culture of martial arts was the long-established concept of value and aesthetics and the thinking manner by Chinese people in their social practice and conscious activities, which was the core of martial arts culture. However, social need determines social existence, so martial arts must be developed in society. We shall reflect how to continue the traditions by introducing new concepts.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Oriental Culture has a long history. Intangible cultural heritage items have become buzzwords, e.g. "intangible cultural heritage + cultural creativity", "intangible cultural heritage + tourism", and so forth. Intangible cultural heritage was given an important mission. Qiu Zhijie, the dean of CAFA School of Experimental Art made public statements for several times: "Intangible cultural heritage is not an intact solid preservation, and it must be integrated into our lives. Innovative development shall be understood, consumed, and appreciated by the public. The reconstruction of Chinese aesthetic consciousness is the best way for dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage". With its historic, artistic, medical, and scientific values, Chinese martial arts are the concrete contents dynamically presented by excellent traditional culture in modern days. Rapidly developing cultural and creative industries have integrated intangible cultural heritage into modern designs. Unlike cultural relics, martial arts shall be blended into contemporary lives to meet contemporary aesthetics and rhythm, without losing its foundation. In this way, Chinese martial arts can be inherited in daily lives of common people. The inheritance of traditional Chinese martial arts is not only the inheritance of skills, but more importantly, a shaping path and method representing contemporary Chinese culture shall be found to mould and guide the strategy and orientation which can promote traditional martial arts inheritance through the service design process.

To sum up the heritage mode of traditional Chinese martial arts, the following three suggestions are proposed as the directions of thinking on planning:

1. By improving the recognition on traditional martial arts, excellent traditional culture becomes a part of our lives, which can last for long.
2. Enhancing the capacity of traditional martial arts and combining the features of generations to absorb the input of more young groups is innovative and creative.
3. Building a platform and strategic alliances and gathering resources can increase the effect of heritage.

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