

Analysis of the Development and Current Situation of Traditional Chinese Medicine

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Abstract Traditional Chinese medicine is an important part of Traditional medicine in China. It has a long history and profound cultural heritage, and is widely used in disease treatment, health preservation, epidemic prevention, disaster relief and other aspects. The application of traditional Chinese medicine covers many fields, such as internal medicine, surgery, gynecology, pediatrics, etc. It is an important tool in History of China to cure diseases and save people. With the development of society and the increasing demand of people for health, Chinese medicine, as a kind of Traditional medicine, plays an increasingly important role in modern medicine. However, the development of traditional Chinese medicine also faces some difficulties and challenges. This review will analyze and explore the future of traditional Chinese medicine from the perspective of its development and current situation.

Keywords Traditional Chinese medicine; Development history; Current situation analysis

In contemporary society, with the improvement of people's living standards and the increasing attention to health, traditional Chinese medicine is gradually receiving people's attention. As a unique Traditional medicine system in China, traditional Chinese medicine has a long history and rich cultural heritage, and has been widely spread and applied worldwide.

The development of traditional Chinese medicine has a long history, which can be traced back to the Shang and Zhou dynasties over 2 000 BC. In the long river of history, traditional Chinese medicine has undergone thousands of years of development and evolution, forming a unique theoretical system and rich clinical experience. Traditional Chinese medicine, with its unique theoretical system and treatment methods, has made important contributions to the cause of human health. In the context of modern medicine, the status and role of traditional Chinese medicine have also been further affirmed and recognized. Traditional Chinese medicine, as an important medical system, has been included in the medical system of the National Health and Family Planning Commission. At the same time, traditional Chinese medicine has gradually gained recognition and application internationally, becoming one of the important ways for Chinese culture to go global. Traditional Chinese medicine is an important component of Chinese culture and an indispensable part of human health. Through research and exploration of traditional Chinese medicine, we can not only gain a deeper understanding of its history and inheritance, but also promote the integration and internationalization of traditional Chinese medicine and modern medicine, and promote the inheritance and development of Chinese culture.

However, with the rapid development of the social economy and changes in human lifestyles, traditional Chinese medicine is also facing new challenges and opportunities. How to protect and inherit the culture of traditional Chinese medicine, how to promote the integration of traditional Chinese medicine and modern medicine, and how to promote the development and dissemination of traditional Chinese medicine internationally are all major issues before us. This review aims to explore the development and current situation of traditional Chinese medicine, analyze the development status and trends of traditional Chinese medicine, explore the integration and internationalization of traditional Chinese medicine and modern medicine, and also focus on the protection and inheritance of traditional Chinese medicine. It also explores the social value and role of traditional Chinese

medicine in contemporary society, in order to provide some useful thinking and suggestions for the development and inheritance of traditional Chinese medicine.

1 A Brief History of the Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Traditional Chinese medicine is a unique medical system in China, with a long history and rich cultural heritage. After thousands of years of development and evolution, it has formed a unique theoretical system and rich clinical experience (Tang et al., 2008).

The early development of traditional Chinese medicine can be traced back to the Shang and Zhou dynasties, when medicine mainly used methods such as exorcism of ghosts and gods and treatment by witchcraft doctors, but there were also some known herbs and formulas (Figure 1; Figure 2). During the Shang Dynasty, there were records of some herbal medicines, such as the *Shénnóng Běncǎo Jīng* (*Shennong's Herbal*), which recorded many herbal medicines and their effects at that time. *Huángdì Nèijīng* is one of the classics of ancient Chinese medicine, which focuses on the important ideas of ancient medicine and is an important basis for the theory of traditional Chinese medicine. *Huángdì Nèijīng* puts forward the core concept of traditional Chinese medicine, which is to prevent disease before it happens. This concept has important significance in the history of traditional Chinese medicine.



Figure 1 Herbal medicine



Figure 2 Witch doctor

With the development of society, traditional Chinese medicine was further developed and promoted during the Sui, Tang, and Song dynasties. The stable and prosperous politics and economy during the Sui and Tang dynasties, as well as the developed internal and external transportation, provided a good foundation for the development of medical pharmacy. Chao Yuanfang and others in the Sui Dynasty collectively wrote the *Zhūbìng Yuánhòu Lùn* (*Theories of the Origin of Various Diseases*), which is the earliest extant monograph on etiology and syndrome in China. It discusses the etiology, pathology and symptoms of various diseases respectively. Sun Simiao, a medical

expert in the Tang Dynasty, compiled *Qiānjīn Yàofāng* (*Important Prescriptions Worth a Thousand Gold for Emergency*) and *Qiānjīn Yīfāng* (*A Supplement to Recipes Worth A Thousand Gold*) in decades of clinical practice, which are important medical classics.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, traditional Chinese medicine had significant development in both theory and practice. Li Shizhen, a famous pharmacologist in the Ming Dynasty, referred to many books on medicine in previous dynasties and completed the great book *Běncǎo Gāngmù* (*Compendium of Materia Medica*), which had a profound impact on the development of traditional Chinese medicine theory. In addition, some new treatment methods and technologies have emerged. For example, acupuncture and moxibustion therapy reached its peak in the Ming Dynasty, the use of acupuncture methods and acupoints was more refined, and the needles were also improved and perfected (Figure 3).



Figure 3 Acupuncture therapy

At the beginning of the 20th century, China's modernization process accelerated, and traditional Chinese medicine also received attention. In 1912, the Government of the Qing Dynasty established the Central Medical College, which laid the foundation for the modernization of traditional Chinese medicine. In 1929, China Association of Chinese Medicine was established, marking the beginning of modernization of traditional Chinese medicine. Afterwards, the development of traditional Chinese medicine in China continued to grow, and it also began to receive attention and recognition internationally. In 1954, the Ministry of Health of the People's Republic of China established the Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which provided a strong guarantee for the development and promotion of traditional Chinese medicine.

With the strengthening of international economic, cultural, and medical exchanges and cooperation, the status and influence of traditional Chinese medicine in the international community are gradually increasing. In 1979, the World Health Organization released the ninth edition of *International Classification of Disease*, officially including traditional Chinese medicine, which was an important milestone in international medicine (Roger and Chen, 2020). Afterwards, traditional Chinese medicine received increasing attention and recognition worldwide, becoming one of the important ways for Chinese culture to go global.

In short, traditional Chinese medicine has undergone thousands of years of development and evolution, forming a unique theoretical system and clinical experience, making important contributions to the cause of human health. Traditional Chinese medicine has received varying degrees of attention and development in different historical periods, including the inheritance and development of traditional theories, as well as the integration and innovation of modern knowledge. With the acceleration of modernization and the increasing attention to health, the status and role of traditional Chinese medicine have also been further recognized and recognized, becoming a hot topic of attention and one of the research focuses.

2 Analysis of the Current Situation of the Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine

2.1 The current situation of the development of traditional Chinese medicine

Traditional Chinese medicine has a long history in History of China and is an important part of Chinese traditional culture and medical heritage. In modern China, traditional Chinese medicine remains a widely used medical system for clinical treatment, and is also an important field of medical education and research in China.

At present, the development status of traditional Chinese medicine in China has four manifestations. Traditional Chinese medicine is widely used in China, not only for the treatment of traditional diseases, but also in modern medicine in many fields such as chronic diseases, tumors, cardio cerebral Vascular disease (Zhao et al., 2020). The characteristic of traditional Chinese medicine is individualized treatment, emphasizing a holistic approach, and has unique advantages in the treatment of some chronic and complex diseases. The academic research of traditional Chinese medicine in China is gradually deepening, involving many fields such as traditional Chinese medicine theory, pharmacology, clinical research, etc. There are numerous traditional Chinese medicine research institutions and professional research teams in China that have conducted extensive research and practice on the quality control, efficacy research, and new drug development of traditional Chinese medicine. Traditional Chinese medicine has received support and attention in national policies. The country has introduced a series of policies and measures, such as *Law of the People's Republic of China on Traditional Chinese Medicine* and *Outline of Strategic Planning for the Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine (2016-2030)*, providing legal and policy guarantees for the development of traditional Chinese medicine. At the same time, the country also strongly supports the modernization and internationalization of traditional Chinese medicine, promoting its global dissemination and application (Feng et al., 2023). There are numerous Chinese medicine universities and vocational schools in China, which have trained a large number of Chinese medicine talents. At the same time, the country also vigorously promotes the application of traditional Chinese medicine in community healthcare, grassroots healthcare, and other fields, improving the status and role of traditional Chinese medicine in grassroots healthcare.

The current situation of traditional Chinese medicine in China has shown diversity and complexity, with positive aspects such as its wide application range, gradual deepening of academic research, national policy support, talent cultivation, and clinical practice, as well as some problems and challenges, such as quality control of traditional Chinese medicine, standardization construction, and clinical evidence. Therefore, the future development of traditional Chinese medicine needs to strengthen exploration and innovation in policies, research, practice, and other aspects, further promoting the modernization and internationalization of traditional Chinese medicine.

2.2 Challenges faced by the development of traditional Chinese medicine

Traditional Chinese medicine has a long history in China and is an important part of Chinese traditional culture and medical heritage. But with the development and changes of society, traditional Chinese medicine also faces some problems and challenges.

Due to various factors such as the growth environment, picking, processing, and preservation of traditional Chinese medicine, the quality of traditional Chinese medicine is highly unstable, resulting in issues such as quality differences and unstable efficacy. The quality of traditional Chinese medicine is the foundation of its therapeutic effect, and unstable quality can affect the efficacy and safety of traditional Chinese medicine. The standardization construction needs to be strengthened, and the standardization construction of traditional Chinese medicine is an important part of the modernization of traditional Chinese medicine. However, there are still some problems in the current standardization construction of traditional Chinese medicine, such as a lack of standards and lax implementation of standards. These issues will affect the standardized application and quality control of traditional Chinese medicine. The efficacy and safety of traditional Chinese medicine have always been a focus of attention, but due to its complex therapeutic effects and mechanisms, it is difficult to conduct quantitative research through modern medical research methods, resulting in a lack of clinical evidence of traditional Chinese medicine (Normie, 2003). This is also an important difficulty in the modernization and internationalization process of

traditional Chinese medicine. The cultivation of traditional Chinese medicine talents is the foundation of the development of traditional Chinese medicine, but there are still some problems in the current cultivation of traditional Chinese medicine talents, such as the decline of the teacher inheritance system, the lag of the education system and teaching methods, etc. These issues will affect the quality and ability level of traditional Chinese medicine talents. At present, the internationalization process of traditional Chinese medicine has faced some challenges, such as language barriers, cultural differences, differences in scientific research methods, and limitations of some international standards and regulations. These issues will affect the international dissemination and application of traditional Chinese medicine (Xu et al., 2013).

Traditional Chinese medicine still faces some problems and challenges. It is necessary to strengthen exploration and innovation in quality control, standardization construction, clinical evidence, talent cultivation, and internationalization process of traditional Chinese medicine, promote the modernization and internationalization of traditional Chinese medicine, further improve the quality and efficacy of traditional Chinese medicine, and better serve the cause of human health.

3 Strategies and Recommendations

Traditional Chinese medicine, as an important component of China's traditional culture and medical heritage, has broad development prospects and huge market potential. The development of traditional Chinese medicine in the future should be carried out from the following three aspects. We need to improve the quality and safety of traditional Chinese medicine. The quality and safety of traditional Chinese medicine are important issues in the development of traditional Chinese medicine. At present, there are many low-quality and counterfeit Chinese medicine products in the Chinese medicine market, which seriously affects the image and reputation of Chinese medicine. Therefore, we should strengthen the quality control of traditional Chinese medicine, establish a sound system for quality testing and supervision of traditional Chinese medicine, strengthen supervision and management of production and sales of traditional Chinese medicine, and ensure the safety and effectiveness of traditional Chinese medicine. Traditional Chinese medicine culture is a precious asset of the Chinese nation, and traditional knowledge is the foundation for the research and development of traditional Chinese medicine. We should strengthen the inheritance and promotion of traditional Chinese medicine culture and knowledge, enhance people's awareness and understanding of traditional Chinese medicine, let more people understand the value and role of traditional Chinese medicine, promote the combination of traditional and modern Chinese medicine, and promote the development of the Chinese medicine industry. The integration of traditional Chinese and Western medicine is one of the important directions for the development of traditional Chinese medicine, and we need to strengthen the research and application of the integration of traditional Chinese and Western medicine. With the continuous progress of modern medicine and in-depth research on traditional Chinese medicine theory, the combination of traditional Chinese and Western medicine can better leverage their respective advantages, improve treatment effectiveness and disease prevention capabilities. Therefore, we should strengthen the research and application of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, promote the theory and technology of traditional Chinese medicine, promote the development of integrated traditional Chinese and Western medicine, and better meet the health needs of the people.

With the development and changes of society, traditional Chinese medicine must constantly adapt to the trend of modernization and internationalization, promote the modernization and internationalization process of traditional Chinese medicine, and enhance its international influence and competitiveness (Xu et al., 2009). The standardization construction and quality control of traditional Chinese medicine are an important part of the modernization of traditional Chinese medicine. It is necessary to strengthen the standardization construction of quality control of traditional Chinese medicine, preparation standards of traditional Chinese medicine preparations, and diagnostic and treatment standards of traditional Chinese medicine, in order to improve the quality and safety of traditional Chinese medicine (Jiang et al., 2012). The technological innovation and research and development of traditional Chinese medicine are important guarantees for the modernization of traditional Chinese medicine. It

is necessary to strengthen the basic and applied research of traditional Chinese medicine, especially in the analysis and efficacy evaluation of ingredients in traditional Chinese medicine, as well as the research and development of new drugs in traditional Chinese medicine formulations (Figure 4). The talent cultivation and educational reform of traditional Chinese medicine are important supports for the modernization of traditional Chinese medicine. It is necessary to strengthen the practicality and innovation of traditional Chinese medicine education, promote the internationalization and diversification of traditional Chinese medicine education, and cultivate more high-quality traditional Chinese medicine talents. Traditional Chinese medicine has a wide range of applications and development prospects on a global scale, and it is necessary to strengthen cooperation and exchange with international organizations and peers, promote the dissemination and application of traditional Chinese medicine on a global scale, and enhance its competitiveness and influence internationally (Xu et al., 2019).



Figure 4 Research and development of new drugs for traditional Chinese medicine preparations

The development of traditional Chinese medicine in the future needs to continuously promote modernization and internationalization, strengthen standardization construction and quality control, promote technological innovation and research and development, promote talent cultivation and educational reform, strengthen international cooperation and exchange, further improve the quality and efficacy of traditional Chinese medicine, and better serve the cause of human health (Fang, 2003).

4 Summary and Outlook

Chinese medicine is one of the core contents of Chinese Traditional medicine, with a long history and profound cultural heritage. The theoretical system of traditional Chinese medicine includes the theory of Yin Yang and Five Elements, Meridian Theory, the Theory of Qi, Blood and Body Fluids, and the Theory of Viscera and Meridians. These theoretical systems constitute the unique characteristics and charm of traditional Chinese medicine. The therapeutic effect of traditional Chinese medicine mainly plays a role in regulating the balance of yin and yang in the body, promoting the circulation of qi and blood, and improving the function of the organs. The treatment methods of traditional Chinese medicine include traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture and moxibustion, massage, Qigong and so on. Among them, traditional Chinese medicine treatment is one of the core contents of traditional Chinese medicine, which has the characteristics of extensive sources of medicinal materials, unique preparation methods, and stable efficacy.

Traditional Chinese medicine has a wide range of applications and influences in both China and the world, widely used in the treatment of various diseases and health preservation. Traditional Chinese medicine has unique advantages and value in disease prevention and treatment. Some diseases are difficult to cure in modern medicine, but have achieved good therapeutic effects under the treatment of traditional Chinese medicine.

At the same time, traditional Chinese medicine also faces some problems and challenges, such as unstable quality of traditional Chinese medicine, lack of clinical evidence, and challenges in the internationalization process. In order to promote the modernization and internationalization of traditional Chinese medicine, it is necessary to

strengthen standardization construction and quality control, promote technological innovation and research and development, promote talent cultivation and educational reform, and strengthen international cooperation and exchange. Overall, traditional Chinese medicine is an important component of China's traditional culture and medical heritage, with a unique theoretical system and treatment methods, widely used in the treatment of various diseases and health preservation. The development of traditional Chinese medicine faces some problems and challenges, but with the development and changes of society, traditional Chinese medicine has broad development prospects and huge market potential.

Authors' contributions

HQK was responsible for the relevant literature and material researching, organizing, and the writing for the first draft of this review; ZD participated in discussions and paper revisions; ZD was the person in charge of this review, guiding the writing and revision of the paper. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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