

Guideline to Promote Dragon and Lion Dance Sport Activity of Secondary Schools in Guangdong, The People's Republic of China

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Abstract

Background and Aims: Dragon and Lion Dance is an intangible cultural heritage with strong potential for integration into secondary school education in Guangdong Province. Despite its cultural and physical benefits, challenges such as limited resources, insufficient teacher training, and inadequate institutional support have restricted its development. The study aimed to: (1) Examine the current situation and challenges of Dragon and Lion Dance education in secondary schools in Guangdong Province. (2) Identify key factors influencing its implementation, including teacher training, resources, and curriculum integration. (3) Develop a practical guideline to promote Dragon and Lion Dance as part of sustainable school physical education.

Methodology: A mixed-methods approach was used. Quantitative data were collected from 310 eighth-grade students and 30 teachers/coaches across six schools in Shaoguan City, while qualitative data came from 12 expert interviews, a focus group with 12 participants, and a connoisseurship evaluation by 6 professionals. Research tools included questionnaires, interview forms, and evaluation instruments, with validity confirmed by IOC values of 0.86–0.89. Data analysis combined descriptive statistics, Likert-scale evaluations, and content analysis.

Results: The findings showed high student enthusiasm, cultural pride, and perceived benefits in teamwork and physical fitness. However, major barriers included shortages of trained instructors, insufficient equipment, limited professional development, and weak cultural promotion by schools. Teachers recognized student motivation but cited a lack of resources and a need for systematic curriculum integration. The validated guideline addressed these gaps through strategies such as modular teacher training, curriculum embedding, resource-sharing networks, student engagement programs, evaluation mechanisms, community participation, and digital innovation.

Conclusion: The study produced a comprehensive, validated guideline that balances cultural preservation with physical education. It offers feasible strategies for integrating Dragon and Lion Dance into secondary schools, thereby enhancing students' cultural awareness, holistic development, and the sustainability of this heritage sport.

Keywords: Dragon and Lion Dance Sport Activity; Guideline; Secondary Schools

Introduction

Dragon and Lion Dance is a traditional cultural sport that integrates physical training with symbolic meaning, representing teamwork, resilience, and cultural pride. It has been recognized not only as a performance art but also as an element of intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO frameworks, which emphasize the importance of safeguarding and transmitting traditional practices through education. In Guangdong Province, where the Dragon and Lion Dance enjoys deep historical roots, secondary schools are expected to play an essential role in preserving and promoting this tradition as part of quality education (Li & Cheng, 2020; Yuan et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2018; Jiang et al., 2020).

However, the successful integration of Dragon and Lion Dance in secondary schools faces significant challenges that hinder its sustainable development. The main problems include a lack of professionally trained teachers, insufficient resources and equipment, inadequate funding, and limited incorporation into formal school curricula (Li & Liu, 2022). These issues are interrelated: without proper training, teachers cannot deliver effective instruction; without sufficient facilities, student participation is restricted; and without institutional support, the activity remains marginalized compared to mainstream sports. This situation not only weakens the role of physical education but also risks the gradual loss of valuable cultural traditions.

While previous studies have acknowledged the cultural and educational significance of Dragon and Lion Dance (Liu, 2020; Qiu et al., 2020), most remain descriptive, emphasizing its historical value or extracurricular role. Recent works (Zhou et al., 2023; Zhang, 2020) have begun to highlight its potential integration into school curricula, yet there is still a lack of practical, systematic guidelines to support implementation at the school level. This research, therefore, addresses the gap by developing a comprehensive framework that combines teacher training, curriculum integration, resource management, student engagement, and community collaboration.

The purpose of this study is not only to analyze the current situation and challenges but also to propose a structured guideline that schools can apply directly to improve the quality and sustainability of Dragon and Lion Dance education. The findings will benefit teachers by enhancing instructional practices, schools by strengthening cultural and physical education, policymakers by providing decision-making support, and communities by ensuring continuity of intangible cultural heritage. In this way, the study contributes academically and practically, advancing both the understanding and application of Dragon and Lion Dance education in Guangdong's secondary schools.

Objectives

This research aimed:

1. To examine the current situation and challenges of Dragon and Lion Dance education in secondary schools in Guangdong Province.
2. To identify key factors influencing its implementation, including teacher training, resources, and curriculum integration.
3. To develop a practical guideline for promoting Dragon and Lion Dance as part of sustainable school physical education.

Literature Review

Dragon and Lion Dance has been increasingly recognized as both a physical and cultural practice in Chinese education, with research highlighting its unique role in promoting health, teamwork, and cultural identity. Jiang et al. (2020) emphasized that Dragon and Lion Dance functions not only as a sport but also as a medium of cultural expression, reflecting collective values and symbolic traditions. More recent studies, such as Li & Cheng (2020), argue that integrating Dragon and Lion Dance into secondary school curricula can enhance both physical education and cultural preservation, aligning with the national agenda for intangible cultural heritage transmission.

Despite its value, several challenges hinder its promotion in schools. Qiu et al. (2020) identified issues such as uneven participation across schools, a lack of professional teachers, and inadequate competition structures. Similarly, Liu (2020) noted that resource shortages and insufficient institutional support restricted the sustainability of Dragon and Lion Dance education. While these studies confirm the cultural and educational potential of the activity, they largely remain descriptive and often overlook the systemic barriers—such as funding allocation and curriculum integration—that determine long-term success. In contrast, Zhou et al. (2023) examined the case of Henan Province, showing that inconsistent policy implementation and weak teacher training pipelines directly undermined school-based Dragon and Lion Dance programs. These findings highlight the need for practical, school-level guidelines to address interconnected institutional and social barriers.

Comparative insights from broader contexts provide additional perspective. For example, Yuan et al. (2021) demonstrated how the internationalization of Dragon and Lion Dance reflects cross-cultural value transmission. Similarly, Li & Liu (2022) illustrated how Southeast Asian countries have incorporated Dragon and Lion Dance culture into school education, showing the potential of traditional physical culture to improve health outcomes while preserving cultural heritage. These cases suggest that with appropriate curriculum design, teacher training, and policy support, traditional activities like Dragon and Lion Dance can be sustained within modern education systems.

In summary, existing literature confirms the educational and cultural significance of Dragon and Lion Dance while pointing to persistent challenges in teacher capacity, resource

availability, and institutional support. However, there remains a gap in providing actionable, comprehensive frameworks for schools, particularly in Guangdong Province, where the Dragon and Lion Dance holds strong cultural roots. By critically engaging with prior research and drawing on international experiences, the present study seeks to contribute a practical guideline that addresses these gaps, thereby advancing both the academic discourse and real-world practice of traditional cultural sports in schools.

Conceptual Framework

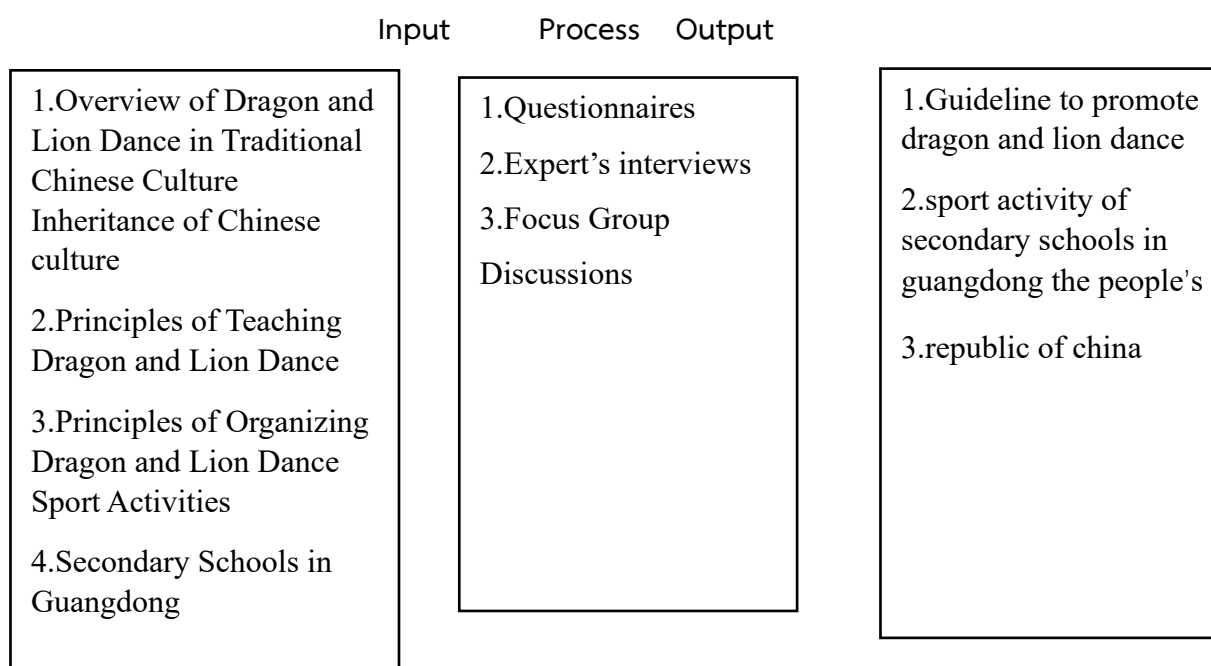


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework is based on the theories of cultural inheritance and physical education development. It is structured into three parts: Input, Process, and Output. The Input consists of the current state and challenges of Dragon and Lion Dance education in Guangdong secondary schools. The Process outlines the research methods used, including questionnaires, expert interviews, and focus group discussions, to collect comprehensive data. The Output is the development of a practical, validated promotion guideline for Dragon and Lion Dance activities. This framework demonstrates how a systematic research process can transform theoretical and empirical data into actionable outcomes that meet the study's objectives.

Methodology

The research utilizes a mixed-method approach, including questionnaire surveys, expert interviews, focus group discussions, and the connoisseurship method, offering a comprehensive understanding of the current situation, challenges, and promotion strategies for Dragon and Lion Dance education in secondary schools in Guangdong Province.

1. Population and Sample

Six secondary schools in Shaoguan City, Guangdong Province, were included because they collectively represent the city's public school system and currently offer (or are initiating) Dragon and

Lion Dance activities: Shaoguan Experimental Middle School, Shaoguan Beijiang Experimental Middle School, Shaozhou Middle School, Beijiang Middle School, Shaoguan No. 1 Middle School, and Tin Ka Ping Middle School.

Population: 1,190 eighth-grade students and 30 physical education teachers/Dragon and Lion Dance coaches.

Student sample: Using the Taro Yamane formula (95% confidence level, $\pm 5\%$ margin of error) to ensure adequate precision for a finite population, 310 students were selected via stratified random sampling proportional to school size (approximate allocation: 138, 35, 34, 42, 33, 29). The student sample comprised 160 males and 150 females (age 13–14). Taro Yamane was chosen because it provides a transparent, widely used rule for determining minimum sample size with known precision when the population size is finite and available.

Teacher sample: Owing to the small frame and the need to capture all available perspectives, all 30 teachers/coaches (21 males, 9 females) were included (census approach). For qualitative phases, purposive sampling was used to recruit domain specialists: 12 experts for individual interviews, 12 participants for a focus group discussion, and 6 professionals for the connoisseurship validation panel.

2. Research Tools

In this research, the research tools are as follows: (1) Questionnaire for students; (2) Questionnaire for teachers; (3) Interview outline for experts; (4) Focus group discussion guide; (5) Evaluation form for connoisseurship.

3. Data Collection

1. Questionnaires were distributed to 310 eighth-grade students and 30 physical education teachers from six secondary schools in Shaoguan City, Guangdong Province, to assess the current status, challenges, and effectiveness of Dragon and Lion Dance education.

2. Twelve experts were consulted through face-to-face interviews to gain in-depth insights into best practices, critical needs, and potential strategies for promoting Dragon and Lion Dance in secondary schools.

3. Drafting the framework of a guideline for promoting Dragon and Lion Dance education in secondary schools in Guangdong Province based on the questionnaire and interview results.

4. A focus group discussion was conducted with 12 experts to further refine and enhance the elements of the guideline, ensuring its practicality and alignment with school realities.

5. Six experts engaged in a connoisseurship process to evaluate, validate, and finalize the adequacy and applicability of the proposed guideline for promoting Dragon and Lion Dance education in secondary schools in Guangdong Province.

4. Data Analysis

This study applied both statistical and qualitative methods to analyze data from questionnaires, expert interviews, and focus group discussions, aiming to evaluate the effectiveness of Dragon and Lion Dance programs and develop practical guidelines for improvement.

Descriptive Statistics: Means and standard deviations were calculated to summarize questionnaire responses from teachers and students.

Content Validity: The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was used to assess content validity, with IOC values of 0.86 for the teacher questionnaire and 0.89 for the interview form, indicating strong alignment with research objectives.

Content Analysis: Interview and focus group data were analyzed to identify key themes, challenges, and strategies for enhancing Dragon and Lion Dance education.

For quantitative evaluation, a 5-point Likert scale was employed. The interpretation of score ranges is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Interpretation of the 5-point Likert scale

Average score range	Meaning
1.00 - 1.79	Very Poor
1.80 - 2.59	Poor
2.60 - 3.39	Moderate
3.40 - 4.19	High
4.20 - 5.00	Highest

5. Statistics used in data analysis

The study employed descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, to summarize student and teacher questionnaire responses. Content validity of the instruments was tested using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), with values of 0.86 for the teacher questionnaire and 0.89 for the interview form. A 5-point Likert scale (1 = Very Poor to

5 = Highest) was used for evaluation, with score ranges interpreted as follows: 1.00–1.79 = Very Poor, 1.80–2.59 = Poor, 2.60–3.39 = Moderate, 3.40–4.19 = High, and 4.20–5.00 = Highest. In addition, content analysis was applied to qualitative data from interviews and focus groups to identify key themes and strategies.

6. Note on the Connoisseurship Method

In this study, connoisseurship refers to a structured expert appraisal of the draft guideline by seasoned professionals (Dragon and Lion Dance coaches, PE teachers, and educational experts). Experts applied the evaluation form to judge clarity, feasibility, cultural appropriateness, and sufficiency, and provided narrative justifications. Consolidated feedback guided the final adjustments, yielding a validated, context-ready guideline for Guangdong secondary schools.

Results

Investigate the current status and problems of the promotion of Dragon and Lion Dance in secondary schools in Guangdong Province, the People's Republic of China

1. Students' questionnaire survey

After sending the questionnaire to 310 students from six secondary schools, they completed the survey. The results of the questionnaire responses can be analyzed as follows:

Table 2 presents the results of the students' questionnaire survey on the current status and problems of promoting Dragon and Lion Dance in secondary schools in Guangdong Province. The table shows the mean ($\bar{x}$), standard deviation (S.D.), and result level for each item. Overall, students expressed strong enthusiasm for Dragon and Lion Dance, especially regarding cultural value and continued participation, but they also identified limitations in facilities, equipment, and cultural promotion.

Table 2 Students' questionnaire survey results on the current status and problems of the promotion of Dragon and Lion Dance in secondary schools in Guangdong Province, the People's Republic of China.

Questionnaire Items	Total Score		Result
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	
1. I am aware that our school offers Dragon and Lion Dance-related courses or activities.	3.75	0.50	High
2. I have participated in Dragon and Lion Dance training or performances organized by the school.	3.52	0.61	High
3. I am interested in Dragon and Lion Dance activities and willing to participate actively.	3.84	0.56	High
4. I believe Dragon and Lion Dance is a fun and	3.93	0.47	High

Questionnaire Items	Total Score		Result
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	
challenging physical activity.			
5. Participating in Dragon and Lion Dance has enhanced my pride in Chinese traditional culture.	4.12	0.42	Highest
6. Through participating in Dragon and Lion Dance, my teamwork and coordination have improved.	3.67	0.53	High
7. I am willing to continue participating in Dragon and Lion Dance training or club activities.	3.58	0.57	High
8. I think the teachers explain and instruct well during Dragon and Lion Dance lessons.	3.34	0.65	Moderate
9. The school provides enough opportunities to showcase Dragon and Lion Dance skills.	3.26	0.69	Moderate
10. The school provides adequate equipment and space for Dragon and Lion Dance training.	2.95	0.74	Poor
11. My family supports me in participating in Dragon and Lion Dance activities.	3.09	0.71	Moderate
12. The school promotes the culture of Dragon and Lion Dance effectively.	2.88	0.66	Poor
13. I can learn traditional culture from Dragon and Lion Dance classes.	3.22	0.60	Moderate
14. Dragon and Lion Dance makes me feel a sense of achievement and belonging in school.	3.47	0.52	High
15. I hope the school will continue to develop and strengthen Dragon and Lion Dance programs.	4.03	0.49	Highest

Table 1 presents the students' questionnaire survey results. Overall, students reported a strong interest in Dragon and Lion Dance, particularly regarding cultural pride and willingness to continue participation. For example, the item "Participating in Dragon and Lion Dance has enhanced my pride in Chinese traditional culture" received the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.12, S.D. = 0.42), indicating strong recognition of its cultural value. Similarly, students hoped schools would further develop Dragon and Lion Dance programs ($\bar{x}$ = 4.03, S.D. = 0.49).

At the same time, students highlighted several challenges. The lowest scores were related to insufficient school facilities and equipment ($\bar{x}$ = 2.95, S.D. = 0.74) and weak cultural promotion efforts by schools ($\bar{x}$ = 2.88, S.D. = 0.66). In addition, items concerning teaching quality ($\bar{x}$ = 3.34, S.D. = 0.65) and opportunities to showcase skills ($\bar{x}$ = 3.26, S.D. = 0.69) were only moderate. These results suggest that while students are highly motivated and value

Dragon and Lion Dance as meaningful and enjoyable, institutional support remains inadequate, limiting their learning experiences and opportunities for cultural expression.

2. Teachers' questionnaire survey

After sending the questionnaire to all 30 teachers from six secondary schools, they completed the survey. The results of the questionnaire responses can be analyzed as follows:

Table 3 presents the results of the teachers' questionnaire survey regarding the current status and challenges of promoting Dragon and Lion Dance in secondary schools in Guangdong Province. The table includes the mean ($\bar{X}$), standard deviation (S.D.), and result level for each item. Overall, the results indicate that teachers generally recognize students' enthusiasm and cultural pride in Dragon and Lion Dance, but they consistently reported insufficient training, inadequate resources, and limited institutional support as major barriers.

Table 3 Teachers' questionnaire survey results on the current status and problems of the promotion of Dragon and Lion Dance in secondary schools in Guangdong Province, the People's Republic of China.

Questionnaire Items	Total Score		Result
	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	
1. Teachers in our school have received sufficient training to teach Dragon and Lion Dance activities.	2.80	0.56	Poor
2. There are enough experienced teachers in our school to lead Dragon and Lion Dance programs effectively.	3.02	0.63	Moderate
3. Professional development opportunities are available to improve teachers' Dragon and Lion Dance teaching skills.	2.53	0.65	Poor
4. External experts or coaches are regularly invited to guide our teachers in Dragon and Lion Dance.	3.22	0.7	Moderate
5. Our school has sufficient equipment and props for Dragon and Lion Dance activities.	2.71	0.58	Poor
6. The available space and facilities in our school are adequate for organizing Dragon and Lion Dance training.	3.12	0.52	Moderate
7. Funding for Dragon and Lion Dance activities is sufficient to meet the program's needs.	2.63	0.68	Poor
8. Our school receives support from local organizations or sponsors for Dragon and Lion Dance activities.	2.98	0.60	Moderate
9. Students in our school are enthusiastic about participating in Dragon and Lion Dance activities.	3.47	0.59	High



Questionnaire Items	Total Score		Result
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	
10. Dragon and Lion Dance activities are popular among students in our school.	3.79	0.51	High
11. Our school provides enough opportunities for students to showcase their Dragon and Lion Dance skills (e.g., performances, competitions).	3.42	0.64	High
12. Students feel a sense of cultural pride when participating in Dragon and Lion Dance activities.	3.98	0.46	Highest
13. Dragon and Lion Dance has been successfully integrated into the school's physical education curriculum.	2.92	0.54	Poor
14. Our school combines Dragon and Lion Dance with cultural education to enhance students' understanding of traditional heritage.	3.24	0.59	Moderate
15. Teachers incorporate interdisciplinary approaches (e.g., history, arts) when teaching Dragon and Lion Dance.	2.97	0.61	Moderate
16. Dragon and Lion Dance programs align with the overall educational objectives of our school.	3.39	0.55	High
17. Effective mechanisms are in place to evaluate the success of Dragon and Lion Dance programs in our school.	2.82	0.61	Poor
18. Feedback from students and parents is regularly collected to improve Dragon and Lion Dance activities.	3.09	0.65	Moderate
19. The school administration actively supports and monitors the development of Dragon and Lion Dance programs.	3.32	0.52	High
20. Challenges in organizing Dragon and Lion Dance activities are promptly addressed by the school administration.	3.18	0.54	Moderate

From Table 3, the lowest mean scores were found in professional development opportunities ($\bar{x}$ = 2.53, S.D. = 0.65) and funding for Dragon and Lion Dance programs ($\bar{x}$ = 2.63, S.D. = 0.68), both rated in the “Poor” range. Similarly, the adequacy of equipment ($\bar{x}$ = 2.71, S.D. = 0.58) and the integration of Dragon and Lion Dance into the formal curriculum ($\bar{x}$

= 2.92, S.D. = 0.54) were also rated poorly. These results indicate that although schools recognize the importance of the activity, institutional and financial support remains insufficient.

By contrast, teachers acknowledged that students show high enthusiasm ($\bar{x} = 3.47$, S.D. = 0.59) and cultural pride ($\bar{x} = 3.98$, S.D. = 0.46, the highest-rated item). This aligns with the student survey results, where cultural pride was also the strongest dimension ($\bar{x} = 4.12$). Together, these findings highlight a clear gap: students' interest and motivation are high, but schools lack the necessary resources, trained staff, and systematic support to sustain and expand programs.

3. Focus group discussions

A focus group discussion was conducted with 12 experts, including six Dragon and Lion Dance instructors and six physical education teachers, to refine the promotion guideline. Using content analysis, the experts emphasized that while the guideline provided a strong starting point, further refinement was needed to ensure its practicality and alignment with school contexts.

The experts structured their recommendations around three levels of indicators. The first-level indicators included curriculum design, teacher training, resource allocation, cultural integration, student engagement, evaluation mechanisms, community collaboration, and technical innovation. Each of these dimensions was elaborated into second-level indicators, such as resource-sharing networks, interdisciplinary projects, or multi-dimensional assessments. Finally, third-level indicators provided measurable actions, such as the number of workshops per semester, the creation of safety manuals, or the establishment of parent-child activity days.

Table 4 presents the final framework of the guideline for promoting Dragon and Lion Dance education in Guangdong secondary schools.

Table 3 presents the final framework of the guideline for promoting Dragon and Lion Dance education in Guangdong secondary schools. The framework is organized into three hierarchical levels: first-level indicators (e.g., Teacher Training, Resource Allocation), second-level indicators (e.g., Modular Training Programs, Fundraising), and third-level indicators (specific strategies and actions). This structure provides clarity by linking broad strategic areas with practical measures, ensuring the guideline is both systematic and actionable.

Table 4 Guidelines for Promoting Dragon and Lion Dance Education in Secondary Schools in Guangdong Province

Guideline for Promoting Dragon and Lion Dance Education in Secondary Schools in Guangdong Province

Teacher Training and Professional Development

Modular Training Programs	1. Design modular training courses covering technical skills (e.g., footwork, coordination) and cultural education (e.g., history, symbolism). 2. Organize at least two teacher workshops per semester, inviting professional Dragon and Lion Dance coaches and cultural scholars to teach.
Continuous Professional Development	1. Establish a mentorship program where experienced Dragon and Lion Dance coaches guide new teachers. 2. Provide annual certification courses to ensure teachers are updated on the latest teaching methods and cultural knowledge.

Resource Allocation and Management

Resource-Sharing Networks	1. Create an inter-school resource-sharing platform (e.g., props, costumes, venues) to reduce the resource burden on individual schools. 2. Collaborate with local cultural organizations (e.g., Dragon and Lion Dance associations, intangible cultural heritage centers) to borrow or donate equipment.
Fundraising	1. Apply for local government cultural education grants to purchase basic equipment and train teachers. 2. Seek corporate sponsorships by offering naming rights for competitions or community performances.

Curriculum Integration and Instructional Design

Curriculum Embedding	1. Dedicate two physical education classes per week to Dragon and Lion Dance training, including warm-ups, technical drills, and group practices. 2. Integrate Dragon and Lion Dance culture into history and art classes, such as storytelling about its significance in festivals.
Interdisciplinary Projects	Design interdisciplinary tasks (e.g., writing Dragon and Lion Dance performance scripts in language classes, designing costumes in art classes).

Student Engagement and Incentives



Guideline for Promoting Dragon and Lion Dance Education in Secondary Schools in Guangdong Province

Interactive Activities	1. Organize intra-school Dragon and Lion Dance competitions each semester, with awards such as "Best Team" and "Cultural Creativity Award." 2. Arrange community performances (e.g., Spring Festival fairs, school anniversary celebrations) to provide students with opportunities to showcase their skills.
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Reward Mechanisms	Issue certificates of honor to students who consistently participate in Dragon and Lion Dance activities and include their achievements in comprehensive evaluations.
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Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms

Multi-Dimensional Assessment	1. Physical Fitness Assessment: Regularly test students' strength, flexibility, and coordination. 2. Cultural Understanding Assessment: Measure learning outcomes through cultural knowledge quizzes (e.g., symbolism of Dragon and Lion Dance).
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Feedback Loop	Collect feedback from students, parents, and teachers each semester to adjust teaching plans and activity arrangements.
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Community and Parental Involvement

Parental Engagement	1. Host "Dragon and Lion Dance Open Days" where parents can observe training sessions and participate in parent-child activities. 2. Promote the educational value of Dragon and Lion Dance culture during parent-teacher meetings to gain family support.
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Community Collaboration	1. Partner with local Dragon and Lion Dance teams to invite professional performers for school demonstrations. 2. Participate in regional cultural festivals to enhance the visibility and social impact of the school's Dragon and Lion Dance program.
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Technical Support and Innovation

Digital Tools	1. Develop an online video library of Dragon and Lion Dance movements for teachers and students to access. 2. Use virtual reality (VR) technology to simulate performance scenarios, enhancing student immersion.
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Safety Protocols	Create a safety manual for Dragon and Lion Dance training, specifying rules for using props and emergency procedures.
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The guideline promotes Dragon and Lion Dance in Guangdong secondary schools through teacher training, resource sharing, curriculum integration, student engagement, evaluation, community involvement, and technology use. It calls for skill and cultural training, partnerships for resources, integration into classes, competitions, and performances, multi-dimensional assessments, parent and community participation, and the use of digital tools and safety measures to enhance learning and cultural impact.

4. Confirmation of the Guideline (Connoisseurship Method)

To validate the practicality and quality of the developed guideline, the connoisseurship method was applied. A panel of six experts—comprising experienced Dragon and Lion Dance teachers and cultural education specialists—evaluated the framework through structured discussions.

The experts unanimously agreed that the guideline is comprehensive, culturally grounded, and suitable for implementation in secondary schools. They confirmed that it balances technical training with cultural education, addresses resource and policy challenges, and provides feasible strategies for schools with varying capacities. Minor refinements were suggested regarding clearer labeling of first-, second, and third-level indicators in future applications.

This confirmation step ensured that the developed guideline is not only theoretically grounded but also endorsed by practitioners, thereby enhancing its academic credibility and practical relevance.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate both the achievements and challenges in promoting Dragon and Lion Dance education in secondary schools in Guangdong Province. Results from student and teacher questionnaires revealed strong student interest, high willingness to participate, and a strong sense of cultural pride, affirming the cultural and educational value of Dragon and Lion Dance. However, both students and teachers consistently identified limitations, including insufficient training equipment, inadequate facilities, limited professional development opportunities for teachers, and a lack of systematic integration into school curricula. Expert interviews and focus group discussions further emphasized the need for comprehensive teacher training, resource-sharing mechanisms, and community involvement. The final guideline, confirmed through connoisseurship, provides a structured framework to address these gaps.

These findings align with previous studies (Liu, 2020; Qiu et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2023), which emphasized the cultural and educational value of Dragon and Lion Dance but noted structural barriers such as a lack of qualified teachers and resources. Similarly, Zhou & Lei (2017) highlighted the need for sustainable development strategies, while Li & Cheng (2020)

discussed challenges in the modernization of Lion Dance. Furthermore, Wang (2021) stressed the necessity of integrating traditional ethnic sports into primary and secondary school curricula, and Zhang & Huang (2018) proposed talent cultivation models to address shortages of specialized teachers. Liu et al. (2024). These insights support the validated guideline in this study, which addresses such issues by proposing modular teacher training, improved resource allocation, curriculum integration, and the use of digital tools, showing its feasibility in the Guangdong context.

Recommendation

Recommendation for current research

1. Expand the research to include more secondary schools from different cities and regions in Guangdong Province to improve the representativeness of the findings.
2. Conduct longitudinal tracking of schools implementing the guideline to assess its long-term impact on students' physical fitness, cultural awareness, and engagement.
3. Strengthen collaboration with educational authorities and local cultural organizations to test and refine the guidelines in real school settings.

Recommendation for further research

1. Explore the applicability of the guideline to other traditional sports education programs to evaluate its adaptability.
2. Investigate the role of modern technology, such as VR and online platforms, in enhancing the teaching and learning of Dragon and Lion Dance.
3. Examine the influence of parental and community involvement on sustaining and promoting cultural sports programs.

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