

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TAIJIQUAN DISSEMINATION IN CHINA AND MALAYSIA

**DUAN JIANHUI**

**SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY**

**2025**

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TAIJIQUAN DISSEMINATION  
IN CHINA AND MALAYSIA

DUAN JIANHUI

THESIS PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

FACULTY OF SPORT SCIENCE AND COACHING  
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2025

UFSMPS-3BO 32  
Pind : 00 m/s: 1/1



Please tick (✓)  
Project Paper  
Masters by Research  
Master by Mixed Mode  
PhD

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK**

This declaration is made on the .....17.....day of.....6.....2025.....

**i. Student's Declaration:**

I, DUAN JIANHUI(P20211000054), FACULTY OF SPORT SCIENCE AND COACHING, (PLEASE INDICATE STUDENT'S NAME, MATRIC NO. AND FACULTY) hereby declare that the work entitled A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TAIJIQUAN DISSEMINATION IN CHINA AND MALAYSIA is my original work. I have not copied from any other students' work or from any other sources except where due reference or acknowledgement is made explicitly in the text, nor has any part been written for me by another person.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the student

*Duan Jianhui*

**ii. Supervisor's Declaration:**

I Dr. Thariq Khan Bin Azizuddin Khan (SUPERVISOR'S NAME) hereby certifies that the work entitled A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TAIJIQUAN DISSEMINATION IN CHINA AND MALAYSIA (TITLE) was prepared by the above named student, and was submitted to the Institute of Graduate Studies as a \* partial/full fulfillment for the conferment of Doctor of Philosophy (PLEASE INDICATE THE DEGREE), and the aforementioned work, to the best of my knowledge, is the said student's work

20/07/2025  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
*[Signature]*

Signature of the Supervisor



**INSTITUT PENGAJIAN SISWAZAH /  
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**BORANG PENGESAHAN PENYERAHAN TESIS/DISERTASI/LAPORAN KERTAS PROJEK  
DECLARATION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION/PROJECT PAPER FORM**

Tajuk / Title: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TAIJQUAN DISSEMINATION  
IN CHINA AND MALAYSIA

No. Matrik / Matric's No.: P20211000054

Saya / I: DUAN JIANHUI

(Nama pelajar / Student's Name)

mengaku membenarkan Tesis/Disertasi/Laporan Kertas Projek (Kedoktoran/Sarjana)\* ini disimpan di Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun) dengan syarat-syarat kegunaan seperti berikut:-

*acknowledged that Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Tuanku Bainun Library) reserves the right as follows:-*

1. Tesis/Disertasi/Laporan Kertas Projek ini adalah hak milik UPSI.  
*The thesis is the property of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris*
2. Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun dibenarkan membuat salinan untuk tujuan rujukan dan penyelidikan.  
*Tuanku Bainun Library has the right to make copies for the purpose of reference and research.*
3. Perpustakaan dibenarkan membuat salinan Tesis/Disertasi ini sebagai bahan pertukaran antara Institusi Pengajian Tinggi.  
*The Library has the right to make copies of the thesis for academic exchange.*
4. Sila tandakan (✓) bagi pilihan kategori di bawah / *Please tick (✓) for category below:-*

**SULIT/CONFIDENTIAL**

Mengandungi maklumat yang berdarjah keselamatan atau kepentingan Malaysia seperti yang termaktub dalam Akta Rahsia Rasmi 1972. / *Contains confidential information under the Official Secret Act 1972*

**TERHAD/RESTRICTED**

Mengandungi maklumat terhad yang telah ditentukan oleh organisasi/lembaga di mana penyelidikan ini dijalankan. / *Contains restricted information as specified by the organization where research was done*

**TIDAK TERHAD / OPEN ACCESS**

Duan Jianhui

(Tandatangan Pelajar/ Signature)

Tarikh: 17/07/2025

**Associate Professor Dr. Thariq Khan bin Azizuddin Khan**  
Lecturer  
Faculty of Sports Science & Coaching  
Sultan Azlan Shah Campus,  
Sultan Idris Education University  
35900, Tanjong Malim  
Perak

Catatan: Jika Tesis/Disertasi ini SULIT @ TERHAD, sila lampirkan surat daripada pihak berkuasa/organisasi berkenaan dengan menyatakan sekali sebalah dan tempoh laporan ini perlu dikelaskan sebagai SULIT dan TERHAD.

*Notes: If the thesis is CONFIDENTIAL or RESTRICTED, please attach with the letter from the organization with period and reasons for confidentiality or restriction.*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing my doctoral research has been both challenging and rewarding. I am deeply grateful to every individual and institution that supported me throughout this journey.

First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt thanks to my supervisors, Professor Madya Dr. Thariq Khan Bin Azizuddin Khan and Dr. Mon Redee Sut Txi. Their rigorous academic standards, insightful guidance, and unwavering encouragement at every stage of my research have been invaluable. Their constructive feedback not only enhanced the quality of this dissertation but also fostered my growth as a scholar. I feel truly fortunate to have been mentored by such dedicated and respected academics.

I also wish to thank the members of my thesis committee. Their constructive suggestions and critical perspectives greatly enriched the depth and quality of this study. I sincerely appreciate the time and expertise they invested in my work.

I am profoundly grateful to my family, whose unconditional love, patience, and encouragement sustained me during the most demanding phases of my doctoral journey. Your steadfast support has been my greatest motivation. I especially thank my partner for shouldering the family responsibilities while I pursued my studies abroad.

My sincere thanks go to my doctoral colleagues and friends for their companionship, mutual support, and stimulating discussions. The bonds we formed made this journey far more meaningful.

I extend special appreciation to all the participants who generously devoted their time to this research. Without their cooperation, the empirical work could not have been completed.

To everyone who assisted me in any way, please accept my heartfelt gratitude. Your contributions, whether large or small, have been instrumental in this academic journey.





## ABSTRACT

This study provides a comprehensive comparative analysis of the development of Taijiquan in China and Malaysia, with a particular focus on its evolution and current status in Malaysia. By examining the practices, perceptions, and transmission methods of Taijiquan within these two distinct cultural contexts, this study aims to uncover the underlying dynamics that shape its growth and dissemination. The research adopts a qualitative approach, primarily employing semi-structured, in-depth interviews for data collection. To ensure sample representativeness, a stratified purposive sampling method was used, involving five participants from each country, resulting in a total of 10 participants, including experts, coaches, and athletes. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the diverse perspectives of various stakeholders involved in the practice and promotion of Taijiquan. NVivo software was used for coding and thematic analysis, and audio recording devices were used to capture detailed interview data. The analysis identified four main themes, namely culture, technique, dissemination, and future prospects, each of which was further divided into thirteen sub-themes. These themes provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex factors influencing the development of Taijiquan in both China and Malaysia. This study finds that Taijiquan in China integrates philosophy and martial spirit, while in Malaysia, it focuses on fitness and wellness, with less cultural emphasis among non-Chinese communities. China's system is comprehensive, including push hands and internal energy, whereas Malaysia simplifies routines for accessibility. China benefits from government support, while Malaysia relies on communities, limiting reach. Global promotion faces cultural misunderstandings, language barriers, and tradition-modernity conflicts. Sustainable development requires cross-cultural exchange, optimized teaching, and innovative dissemination. This study provides theoretical and practical insights for Taijiquan's global expansion and sustainability.



## KAJIAN PERBANDINGAN PENYEBARAN TAIJIQUAN DI CHINA DAN MALAYSIA

### ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menganalisis perkembangan Taijiquan di China dan Malaysia, dengan memberi tumpuan kepada evolusi dan status semasanya di Malaysia. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui temu bual separa berstruktur dengan 10 peserta, termasuk pakar, jurulatih, dan atlet, untuk meneroka amalan, persepsi, dan kaedah penyebaran Taijiquan dalam dua konteks budaya yang berbeza. Analisis tematik menggunakan perisian NVivo mengenal pasti empat tema utama: budaya, teknik, penyebaran, dan prospek masa depan. Kajian mendapati bahawa di China, Taijiquan bukan sahaja satu bentuk senaman tetapi juga mengandungi nilai falsafah dan semangat seni mempertahankan diri, manakala di Malaysia, ia lebih tertumpu kepada aspek kesihatan dan kesejahteraan, dengan kurang penekanan budaya dalam kalangan bukan Cina. Dari segi teknik, sistem latihan di China lebih lengkap, termasuk tolak tangan dan tenaga dalaman, manakala di Malaysia, rutin yang dipermudahkan lebih dominan bagi meningkatkan kebolehcapaian kepada masyarakat umum. Dari segi penyebaran, China mendapat sokongan kerajaan dan promosi sistematik, manakala di Malaysia, penyebarannya bergantung kepada komuniti tempatan dan organisasi bukan kerajaan, menyebabkan pengaruhnya lebih terhad. Walaupun Taijiquan semakin diterima secara global, ia masih menghadapi cabaran seperti salah faham budaya, halangan bahasa, dan konflik antara tradisi dan modeniti. Untuk memastikan pembangunan lestari dan pengantarabangsaan Taijiquan, perlu ada pertukaran silang budaya yang lebih mendalam, strategi pengajaran yang lebih efektif, serta inovasi dalam kaedah penyebaran. Kajian ini menyediakan sokongan teori dan panduan praktikal untuk pemerksaan Taijiquan di peringkat global.

**CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK</b>	ii
<b>DECLARATION OF THESIS</b>	iii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	iv
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	v
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	vi
<b>CONTENTS</b>	vii
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	xvi
<b>LIST OF FIGURE</b>	xix
<b>LIST OF APPENDIX LIST</b>	xxii
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</b>	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of Study	2
1.2.1 Based on the Development Background of The Times	2
1.2.2 Based on the Needs of the Sports Power	3



1.2.3 The Need for the Development of Taijiquan Itself	5
1.3 Problem Statement	6
1.4 Research Objectives	9
1.5 Research Questions	9
1.6 Theoretical Framework of Research	10
1.6.1 Cultural Communication Theory	10
1.6.2 Belt and Road Initiative	12
1.6.3 Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage	13
1.6.4 Intercultural Communication and Challenges	14
1.7 Operational Definitions	17
1.8 Study Limitations	19
1.9 Importance of Research	20
1.10 Summary	21
<b>CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>22</b>
2.1 Introduction	22
2.2 Theoretical Framework	23
2.2.1 Cultural Communication Theory	23
2.2.2 Selection of Cross-Cultural Communication Theory	24
2.2.3 Application in Taijiquan Research	25

2.3 The Development of Taijiquan in China	26
2.3.1 Cultural development of Taijiquan	27
2.3.1.1 Development History of Taijiquan with Time Focus	28
2.3.1.2 Industrial Development of Taijiquan	32
2.3.2 Technical Characteristics of Taijiquan	34
2.3.2.1 Technical analysis of Chen's Taijiquan	35
2.3.2.2 Technical Analysis of Yang's Taijiquan	35
2.3.2.3 Technical Analysis of Sun's Taijiquan	36
2.3.2.4 Technical Analysis of Wu's Taijiquan	36
2.3.2.5 Technical Analysis of Wu's Taijiquan	37
2.3.3 Transmission of Taijiquan	38
2.3.3.1 Taijiquan Dissemination Model	38
2.3.3.2 Research on the Fitness and Health Preservation Value of Taijiquan	39
2.4 The Development of Taijiquan in Malaysia	41
2.4.1 Cultural Development of Taijiquan	42
2.4.1.1 Development History of Taijiquan with Time Focus	42
2.4.1.2 Industrial Development of Taijiquan	45

2.4.2 Technical Characteristics of Taijiquan	47
2.4.2.1 Technical Analysis of Chen Style Taijiquan	47
2.4.2.2 Technical Analysis of Yang's Taijiquan	47
2.4.2.3 Technical Analysis of Sun's Taijiquan	48
2.4.2.4 Technical Analysis of Wu's Taijiquan	48
2.4.2.5 Technical Analysis of Wu's Taijiquan	50
2.4.3 The Spread of Taijiquan	50
2.4.3.1 Taijiquan Dissemination Model	51
2.4.3.2 Research on the Fitness and Health Preservation Value of Taijiquan	53
2.5 Comparative Studies Between China and Malaysia on Taijiquan	54
2.5.1 Differences in Cultural Understanding	54
2.5.2 Differences in Teaching and Practice	55
2.5.3 Differences in Promotion and Communication Media	56
2.5.4 Differences in Policy Support and Social Acceptance	57
2.6 Research Gaps and Future Directions	57
2.6.1 Lack of Systematic Cross-Cultural Comparative Studies	58
2.6.2 Insufficient Research on Taijiquan's Role in Multicultural Societies	58

2.6.3 Limited Research on Digital Taijiquan Teaching	59
--	----

2.7 Summary	59
-------------	----

<b>CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY</b>	61
------------------------------	----

3.1 Introduction	61
------------------	----

3.2 Qualitative Research Approach in Taijiquan Studies	62
--	----

3.3 Qualitative research Design	64
---------------------------------	----

3.4 Population and Sample	66
---------------------------	----

3.5 Procedures	72
----------------	----

3.6 Data Collection Methods	73
-----------------------------	----

3.6.1 Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews for Data Collection	73
---	----

3.6.2 Methods for Questionnaire Customization	75
---	----

3.7 Methods and Techniques for Analysing the Data	80
---	----

3.7.1 Create consolidation Node	80
---------------------------------	----

3.7.2 Data Code	81
-----------------	----

3.7.3 Establishing Themes and Patterns	81
--	----

3.7.4 Cross-comparison and Pattern Recognition	82
--	----

3.7.5 Construction of A Theory or Model	82
---	----

3.8 Reliability and Validity Assessment	83
3.8.1 Reliability Analysis	83
3.8.1.1 Steps for Reliability Testing	84
3.8.1.2 Reliability Results	85
3.8.2 Validity Analysis	86
3.8.2.1 Steps for Validity Testing	86
3.8.2.2 Participating Experts	88
3.8.2.3 Validity Results	88
3.9 Summary	90

**CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS**

4.1 Introduction	91
4.2 Interview Process Overview	93
4.3 Data Analysis	94
4.3.1 Cultural	94
4.3.1.1 Cultural Background and Characteristics	101
4.3.1.2 Cultural Inheritance and Promotion	110
4.3.1.3 Cultural Phenomena and Cross-cultural Communication	118
4.3.2 Technology	126

4.3.2.1 Teaching Techniques	133
4.3.2.2 Traditional and Competitive Taijiquan	144
4.3.2.3 Technical Schools	153
4.3.2.4 Physical and Mental Development	160
4.3.3 Communication	169
4.3.3.1 Communication Status	177
4.3.3.2 Communication Methods	185
4.3.3.3 Communication Impact	196
4.3.3.4 Communication Barriers	203
4.3.3.5 Scientific Research	212
4.3.4 Development Strategies	219
4.3.5 Comparative Analysis	232
4.3.5.1 Cultural Comparison	234
4.3.5.2 Technology Comparison	239
4.3.5.3 Propagation comparison	247
4.3.5.4 Development Strategy	255
4.4 Summary	258

**CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION 260**

5.1 Introduction 260

5.2 Research Limitations 262

5.2.1 Limitations of Sample Representativeness and Coverage 263

5.2.2 Subjectivity in Interviews and Limitations in Data Interpretation 264

5.2.3 The Impact of Cultural Differences on Interview Outcomes 266

5.2.4 Language Barrier Issues 268

5.2.5 Limitations of Time Span and Dynamic Changes 269

5.2.6 Lack of Quantitative Data Support 271

5.3 Discussion and Conclusion 272

5.3.1 Differences in Cultural Inheritance and Perception 272

5.3.2 Adaptation and Innovation in Teaching Methods 274

5.3.3 Comparison of Dissemination Strategies and Insights 276

5.3.4 Insights for Future Development Strategies 279

5.4 Future Development 282

5.4.1 Expanding Research Samples and Scope 282

5.4.2 Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods 283

5.4.3 Deepening Cultural and Philosophical Research on Taijiquan	284
5.4.4 Innovating Taijiquan Promotion and Teaching Methods	285
5.4.5 Strengthening International Exchange and Cooperation	287
5.4.6 Developing Diverse Application Scenarios for Taijiquan	288
5.5 Recommendations	290
5.5.1 Recommendations for Future Research	290
5.5.2 Recommendations for the Researcher's Own Future Studies	292
5.5.3 Recommendations for the Taijiquan Industry	293
5.6 Final Conclusion	295
5.6.1 Current Status of Taijiquan in China and Malaysia	295
5.6.2 Challenges and Opportunities for Taijiquan in the Context of Globalization	296
5.6.3 Key Directions for Future Development	297
5.6.4 Conclusion	299
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>301</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table No.</b>	<b>Page</b>
3.1 List of Interviewees	70
3.2 Interview Theme Questions	78
3.3 Reliability Test Results of Interviews	86
4.1 Themes and Sub-themes	92
4.2 Cultural Theme Node Count	95
4.3 Cultural Background and Characteristics Node Count(expert)	102
4.4 Cultural Background and Characteristics Node Count (coach)	105
4.5 Cultural Background and Characteristics Node Count (athlete)	108
4.6 Cultural Background and Characteristics Node Count (expert)	110
4.7 Cultural Inheritance and Promotion Node Count (coach)	113
4.8 Cultural Inheritance and Promotion Node Count (athlete)	116
4.9 Cultural Phenomena and Cross-cultural Communication Node Count(expert)	119
4.10 Cultural Phenomena and Cross-cultural Communication Node Count (coach)	122

4.11 Cultural Phenomena and Cross-cultural Communication Node Count(athlete)	124
4.12 Technology theme node count	127
4.13 Teaching Techniques Node Count (expert)	133
4.14 Teaching Techniques Node Count (coach)	138
4.15 Teaching Techniques Node Count (athlete)	141
4.16 Traditional and Competitive Taijiquan Node Count (expert)	145
4.17 Traditional and Competitive Taijiquan Node Count (coach)	148
4.18 Traditional and Competitive Taijiquan Node Count (coach)	151
4.19 Technical Schools Node Count (expert)	153
4.20 Technical Schools Node Count (coach)	156
4.21 Technical Schools Node Count (athlete)	158
4.22 Physical and Mental Development Node Count (expert)	160
4.23 Physical and Mental Development Node Count (coach)	163
4.24 Physical and Mental Development Node Count (coach)	167
4.25 Communication Node Count	170
4.26 Communication Status Node Count (expert)	177
4.27 Communication Status Node Count (coach)	181
4.28 Communication Status Node Count (athlete)	183
4.29 Communication Methods Node Count (expert)	186



4.30 Communication Methods Node Count (coach)	189
4.31 Communication Methods Node Count (athlete)	194
4.32 Communication Impact Node Count (expert)	197
4.33 Communication Impact Node Count (coach)	199
4.34 Communication Impact Node Count (athlete)	202
4.35 Communication Barriers Node Count (expert)	204
4.36 Communication Barriers Node Count (coach)	207
4.37 Communication Barriers Node Count (athlete)	210
4.38 Scientific Research Node Count (expert)	212
4.39 Scientific Research Node Count (coach)	216
4.40 Scientific Research Node Count (athlete)	217
4.41 Development Strategies Node Count	220
4.42 Vision for the Development of Taijiquan Node Count (expert)	225
4.43 Vision for the Development of Taijiquan Node Count (coach)	228
4.44 Vision for the Development of Taijiquan Node Count (athlete)	231
4.45 Comparison of Taijiquan Culture between China and Malaysia	236
4.46 Comparison of Taijiquan Technology between China and Malaysia	241
4.47 Comparison of Taijiquan Propagation between China and Malaysia	249
4.48 Comparison of Taijiquan Development Strategies between China and Malaysia	257



## LIST OF FIGURE

<b>No. Figures</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.1 Taijiquan Historical and Cultural Research Mind Map	15
1.2 A mind map for the study of taijiquan techniques	16
1.3 A Mind Map for Taijiquan Dissemination Research	17
2.1 Taijiquan Historical Flow Chart (Zhou, Huixin., 2020)	32
3.1 The Research Framework	64
4.1 Histogram of the number of cultural thematic nodes	95
4.2 Histogram of the number of nodes with cultural background and characteristics (expert)	101
4.3 Histogram of Cultural Background and Characteristics Node (coach)	104
4.4 Histogram of Cultural Background and Characteristics Node (athlete)	107
4.5 Histogram of Cultural Inheritance and Promotion Node (expert)	110
4.6 Histogram of Cultural Inheritance and Promotion Node (coach)	113
4.7 Histogram of Cultural Inheritance and Promotion Node (athlete)	116
4.8 Histogram of Cultural Phenomena and Cross-cultural Communication Node Statistics (expert)	118

4.9 Histogram of Cultural Phenomena and Cross-cultural Communication Node Statistics (coach)	122
4.10 Histogram of Cultural Phenomena and Cross-cultural Communication Node Statistics (athlete)	124
4.11 Histogram of Technology Node Statistics	127
4.12 Histogram of Teaching Techniques Node Statistics (expert)	133
4.13 Histogram of Teaching Techniques Node Statistics (coach)	137
4.14 Histogram of Teaching Techniques Node Statistics (athlete)	141
4.15 Histogram of Traditional and Competitive Taijiquan Node Statistics (expert)	144
4.16 Histogram of Traditional and Competitive Taijiquan Node Statistics (coach)	147
4.17 Histogram of Traditional and Competitive Taijiquan Node Statistics (athlete)	150
4.18 Histogram of Technical Schools Node Statistics (expert)	153
4.19 Histogram of Technical Schools Node Statistics (coach)	155
4.20 Histogram of Technical Schools Node Statistics (athlete)	158
4.21 Histogram of Physical and mental development Node Statistics (expert)	160
4.22 Physical and mental development Node Count (expert)	160
4.22 Histogram of Physical and mental development Node Statistics (coach)	163
4.23 Histogram of Physical and mental development Node Statistics (athlete)	167
4.24 Histogram of Communication Node Statistics	170
4.25 Histogram of Communication Status Node Statistics (expert)	177
4.26 Histogram of Communication Status Node Statistics (coach)	180



4.27 Histogram of Communication Status Node Statistics (athlete)	183
4.28 Histogram of Communication Methods Node Statistics (expert)	185
4.29 Histogram of Communication Methods Node Statistics (coach)	189
4.30 Histogram of Communication Methods Node Statistics (athlete)	193
4.31 Histogram of Communication Impact Node Statistics (expert)	196
4.32 Histogram of Communication Impact Node Statistics (coach)	199
4.33 Histogram of Communication Impact Node Statistics (athlete)	201
4.34 Histogram of Communication Barriers Node Statistics (expert)	203
4.35 Histogram of Communication Barriers Node Statistics (coach)	207
4.36 Histogram of Communication Barriers Node Statistics (athlete)	210
4.37 Histogram of Scientific Research Node Statistics (expert)	212
4.38 Histogram of Scientific Research Node Statistics (coach)	215
4.39 Histogram of Scientific Research Node Statistics (athlete)	217
4.40 Histogram of Development Strategies Node Statistics	219
4.41 Histogram of the number of nodes in the development vision of Taijiquan (expert)	224
4.42 Histogram of the number of nodes in the development vision of Taijiquan (coach)	227
4.43 Histogram of the number of nodes in the development vision of Taijiquan (athlete)	230
4.44 Comparison process of Chinese and Malaysian Taijiquan	233



## LIST OF APPENDIX LIST

- A Outline of an Interview
- B Reliability and Validity Testing
- C Approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Sultan Idris Education University
- D Interview Photos
- E Interview Content
  - Interview with Chinese Expert A1
  - Interview with Malaysia Coach B3
  - Interview with Chinese athlete A5
- F Data Analysis Tool: NVivo
- G Framework matrix generated by NVivo
- H Published Paper



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction



Taijiquan has a rich history and deep-rooted cultural significance in China. It serves as an exemplary representation of Chinese culture, embodying a cultural paradigm that emphasises harmony (UNESCO - Taijiquan, n.d.). Its distinctive style and profound cultural heritage have significantly influenced daily life and promoted health across different ethnic groups worldwide. According to Li, X. (2011) and others, Malaysia has achieved substantial progress in both popularising and advancing Taijiquan, characterised by a high level of organisation and institutionalisation.

This proposal is situated within the strategic context of China's Belt and Road Initiative and focuses on the development of Taijiquan as a part of the world's intangible cultural heritage. It examined the similarities and differences in the dissemination of Taijiquan between China and Malaysia. Additionally, the proposal





aims to identify and analyze the challenges associated with the internationalization of Taijiquan, and to provide a reference framework to further promote the development of Taijiquan in both Malaysia and China (Li et al., 2020).

## 1.2 Background of Study

In recent years, the cultural significance and international influence of Taijiquan have expanded markedly, driven by China's efforts to promote its cultural heritage on a global scale. Concurrently, international cooperation has deepened the understanding and appreciation of this traditional practice, establishing it as a symbol of cultural exchange and mutual respect.



### 1.2.1 Based on the Development Background of The Times

The development of the Belt and Road Initiative in China provides a significant international platform for the global dissemination of Taijiquan. Initiated in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (B&R) aims to foster economic development and enhance inter-regional connectivity.

The Belt and Road Initiative not only promotes international connectivity in economy and infrastructure but also establishes a robust platform for the global dissemination of traditional Chinese culture. As a representative of Chinese martial arts and wellness traditions, Taijiquan has gained widespread recognition and





transmission in countries along the Belt and Road, thanks to its profound philosophical foundations and unique health benefits. Through international cultural exchanges and cooperation, Taijiquan has become a bridge for Sino-foreign cultural interactions, helping the world better understand and experience the allure of traditional Chinese culture. With the continuous deepening of the Belt and Road Initiative, this ancient yet vibrant cultural treasure continues to exert its unique influence globally, promoting the integration and mutual development of diverse cultures.

On December 17, 2021, the term "Taijiquan" was officially recognized by the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and was included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This successful inscription marks a critical milestone in the global promotion of Taijiquan culture, further facilitating its spread to various parts of the world. Its recognition underscores Taijiquan's cultural significance in China, contributing to cultural confidence while strengthening international cultural exchange and communication (Ge, 2024). Furthermore, it has become a vital bridge and conduit for China's deeper integration into the global community. In Malaysia, Taijiquan also plays an essential role in promoting cultural exchanges.

### **1.2.2 Based on the Needs of the Sports Power**

In August 2016, the "Healthy China 2030" planning outline was established, focusing on the implementation of a national fitness program, the popularization of scientific





knowledge, and the promotion of fitness methods to cultivate a healthy lifestyle nationwide (World Health Organization, n.d.). This plan also emphasizes the promotion of Taijiquan, health Qigong, and other traditional folk sports, adhering to the principle of serving public health as a key development objective.

In the same year, the Wushu Sports Management Center under the General Administration of Sport of China proposed enhancing cooperation with the Confucius Institute Headquarters to integrate Wushu into Confucius Institutes globally and to extend martial arts teaching activities to over 50 percent of the world. This is being facilitated through platforms such as Confucius Institutes and overseas Chinese cultural centers. In a study on the development of taijiquan, also points out the role of the Confucius Institute as a “stepping stone” for the international dissemination of taijiquan (Yang J., 2018). On August 10, 2019, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued the "Outline for Building a Strong Sports Nation," which explicitly emphasized the implementation of the "going global" strategy for Chinese Wushu, along with the improvement of its rules and standards. In a study of Taijiquan's "health communication" strategy, the background of Taijiquan's further development is highlighted (Zhang, 2024).

Furthermore, on January 8, 2020, Taijiquan was officially included in the program of the fourth Youth Olympic Games, as decided at the executive meeting of the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne, Switzerland. This inclusion represents a significant step towards the strategic objective of incorporating martial arts into the Olympic Games at the earliest opportunity (Han, Theeboom, & Zhu, 2020).





### 1.2.3 The Need for the Development of Taijiquan Itself

Zhou, L. (2019) noted in their study that Taijiquan, a traditional Chinese cultural practice with a long history originating from China, has now crossed national borders and gradually appeared in various corners of the globe. Even in foreign countries, it is common to see local people practicing Taijiquan. Among these practitioners, there are not only overseas Chinese immigrants but also a large number of local foreign friends. Li, X. (2018) study states according to incomplete statistics, there are over 300 million Taijiquan enthusiasts across more than 150 countries. A study by Tang M.H. (2019) on Chinese martial arts revealed that the Chinese population in Malaysia is approximately 6 million, making it the largest Chinese community in Southeast Asia outside of China, with the exception of Indonesia. Chinese “kung fu” is also widely popular in Malaysia.



Yang, J. (2018) stated under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative and following the successful inclusion of Wushu Taijiquan in the World Heritage list, the international dissemination and development of Chinese Wushu face both opportunities and challenges. Thus, an in-depth study on the dissemination and development of Chinese Wushu in Malaysia holds both theoretical and practical significance for advancing the "going global" strategy of Chinese Wushu.





### 1.3 Problem Statement

In recent years, research on the cultural connotations and perception of Taijiquan has deepened. Xiao et al. (2021) pointed out that Taijiquan is not only a martial art but also embodies profound philosophical ideas and health cultivation principles, making its international dissemination multi-dimensional (Xiao et al., 2021). However, the understanding of Taijiquan varies significantly across different cultural backgrounds. In Western countries, Taijiquan is often simplified as a fitness and relaxation tool, neglecting its deep cultural heritage (Zhang, 2021). In contrast, in China and some Southeast Asian countries, this cultural depth is more emphasized (Li, 2023). Moreover, the conflict between cultural heritage and innovation has caused a loss of the original meaning of Taijiquan in its international transmission (Wang, 2022). How can we systematically understand and compare the differences in perception of Taijiquan's cultural connotations and philosophical ideas between audiences in China and Malaysia?

With the advancement of modern information technology, the methods of disseminating Taijiquan techniques have become increasingly diverse. Xiao et al. (2021) emphasized that digital platforms, online video tutorials, and virtual reality technologies have provided unprecedented opportunities for the popularization of Taijiquan, but these innovations have also led to contradictions between technological advancement and the preservation of traditional Taijiquan essence (Xiao et al., 2021). Some studies indicate that excessive reliance on modern technology may weaken the technical details and practical combat functions of Taijiquan (Wang, 2022). In Malaysia, although Taijiquan has adopted some level of technological application in



its promotion, how to balance technological advantages with traditional inheritance remains an urgent issue (Zheng & Lee, 2023). How can we evaluate and compare the differences in Taijiquan's technical applications and their effectiveness between China and Malaysia, ensuring that modern technology enhances dissemination without compromising traditional martial arts skills?

The dissemination pathways of Taijiquan have continuously expanded with globalization and the development of digital media technologies. Jennings (2020) and Brown (2022) noted that Taijiquan is promoted in Western and Asian countries through various channels, including social media, community events, and cultural festivals. This diversity of communication methods has led to broad audience engagement but has also resulted in inconsistencies in dissemination mechanisms (Jennings, 2020). In Malaysia, due to differences in educational background and cultural traditions, Taijiquan dissemination relies primarily on Chinese community-based institutions and cultural events, lacking a systematic cross-cultural communication platform (Li & Wong, 2021). Additionally, studies have found that the choice and utilization of communication mediums significantly impact the promotion of Taijiquan in the UK (Chen & Zhao, 2023). How can we compare and analyze the differences in Taijiquan communication mediums and dissemination channels between China and Malaysia, and how do these differences influence its global dissemination effectiveness?

The development of Taijiquan depends not only on cultural and technical transmission but is also significantly influenced by government policies and institutional support. Cui (2020) pointed out that under the framework of the Belt and



Road Initiative, Malaysia, as an important Southeast Asian country, faces both opportunities and challenges in promoting Chinese martial arts. Challenges include competition from local martial arts such as Silat and the marginalization of Taijiquan in school curricula (Cui, 2020). Additionally, differences in government support, cross-national cultural exchange policies, and local promotional strategies directly impact the sustainable development of Taijiquan in different countries (Zhou et al., 2023). How can we compare and analyze the differences in Taijiquan development strategies and policy support between China and Malaysia, and how do these policies impact the effectiveness of Taijiquan promotion?

Although scholars have explored various aspects of Taijiquan's international dissemination and application, there is currently a lack of systematic comparative studies focusing on China and Malaysia. Cui (2020) pointed out that the transmission, technical practice, communication channels, and development strategies of Taijiquan vary significantly across different cultural contexts, providing a theoretical foundation for comparative studies (Cui, 2020). However, existing research on how to comprehensively compare Taijiquan practices in China and Malaysia across multiple dimensions including cultural perception, technical application, communication mediums, and development strategies remains fragmented, lacking a unified theoretical framework and empirical data support. Moreover, studies have found that cultural barriers in cross-cultural communication have negatively impacted the dissemination of Taijiquan in the UK (Lin et al., 2023). How can we construct a systematic comparative framework for Taijiquan between China and Malaysia, analyzing its cultural perception, technical applications, communication channels, and





development strategies to comprehensively evaluate their current practices and future trajectories?

#### 1.4 Research Objectives

1. To explore the understanding and perception of the culture of Taijiquan in China and Malaysia.
2. To examine the Taijiquan technology effect in China and Malaysia.
3. To investigate the Taijiquan communication medium in China and Malaysia.
4. To examine the Taijiquan development strategy in China and Malaysia.



5. To compare the cultural, technic, communication and development strategy of Taijiquan between China and Malaysia.

#### 1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the understanding and perceptions of Taijiquan culture between China and Malaysia?
2. What are the effects of the Taijiquan technology involved in China and Malaysia?
3. What are the Taijiquan communication differences between China and Malaysia?
4. How the Taijiquan strategies development in China and Malaysia?



5. What the comparison in the aspects of Taijiquan cultural, technical, communication, and development strategies between China and Malaysia?

## **1.6 Theoretical Framework of Research**

This research is grounded in several key theoretical frameworks that collectively provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the development and dissemination of Taijiquan in both China and Malaysia. These frameworks, including cultural transmission theory (Hall, s., 1997), social identity theory (Tajfel, H. & Turner, J.C., 1979), not only offer insights into the cultural, social, and political dimensions of Taijiquan but also illuminate the mechanisms through which it is communicated, preserved, and adapted across different cultural contexts (Wang, L., 2019; Li, X., et al., 2021).

### **1.6.1 Cultural Communication Theory**

Cultural communication theory provides a key framework for understanding the diffusion of culture, information, and ideas across societies and borders. Hall and Bradford (1992) examine and compare three perspectives on culture, communication, and the relationship between them: the traditional view (neo-positivism), the Meaningful Coordination Management view, and the communication ethnographic view. Each of these perspectives discusses the form, function, and positioning of the concepts of culture and communication. The three perspectives respectively view the



relationship between culture and communication as tautological, ironic, and metaphorical. The implications of each perspective for cultural adaptation research and theory are also discussed.

Zhou, H. (2020), in the cross-cultural study of taijiquan, pointed out that taijiquan to the development of the concept of soft communication, the interpretation of the cultural connotation of taijiquan, in order to help the community of human destiny as the direction of the dissemination of taijiquan's concept of health, in order to build a strong sports country as its own responsibility to show the cultural self-improvement. Ma, Z.C. et al. (2024), exploring the cross-cultural communication effect of taijiquan through YouTube new media platform as an example, the study shows that the cross-cultural communication of taijiquan in the field of new media has achieved good positive feedback, but there is still some room for improvement.



In examining the spread and development of Taijiquan in China and Malaysia, cultural communication theory can help analyze how cultural elements, media, social networks, and other factors influence its dissemination. Taijiquan embodies rich cultural connotations, philosophical ideas, and Taoist principles, which are reflected in its movements, concepts, and exercises. As Jiang, N. et al. (2016) study pointed out, the emergence of taijiquan can be regarded as a miracle, which requires a nation to have a philosophical thought that can bring everything in the universe into one, a mature medical science, systematic martial arts thought and martial arts techniques, in addition to perfectly integrating them together and using physical movement to realize these capabilities. Through cultural communication theory, researchers can explore the differences and commonalities of these elements in the transmission processes in





China and Malaysia and how they affect the understanding and acceptance of local communities.

### 1.6.2 Belt and Road Initiative

Xi, J.P. (2013) first proposed the initiative of building the Silk Road Economic Belt during a speech at Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan in 2013. The ‘One Belt, One Road’ initiative is regarded as a major strategic plan for a new phase of China's opening up to the outside world. In March 2015, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) jointly released the “Vision and Action for Promoting the Construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road” .Yang, Z. et al. (2022), it is found that Taijiqun plays an important role and responsibility in the process of international communication in the context of “Belt and Road”, and Taijiqun culture plays a role in providing spiritual nourishment for the construction and development of the “Belt and Road” project in the process of communication in the countries along the “Belt and Road”, as well as providing moral support and cultural value support for the construction of the “Belt and Road”.

In this study, the researcher explore the impact of the Belt and Road Initiative on the dissemination and development of Taijiqun in China and Malaysia, as well as whether specific policies exist to support the promotion and growth of Taijiqun.





### 1.6.3 Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Li, L. (2021) indicates that Taijiquan is included in the Representative Name of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Taijiquan, a significant aspect of traditional Chinese martial arts, has been inscribed on the Representative List of the World Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), highlighting its global cultural significance. The safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage is a critical strategy for the preservation and transmission of cultural traditions, contributing to the international recognition and protection of Taijiquan. In a study on the inheritance, preservation, and development of Yang's Taijiquan from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, In the study, Taijiquan is described as a crucial component of traditional Chinese national sports, highlighting its role in health, self-defense, and therapeutic benefits (UNESCO, 2024). Yang's Taijiquan was among the first to be included in the "Intangible Cultural Heritage" protection list for martial arts. However, challenges remain regarding the effective transmission and preservation of Yang-style Taijiquan.

This research examines the impact of intangible cultural heritage protection on the development of Taijiquan in both China and Malaysia. It explores how safeguarding measures support the transmission and educational systems of Taijiquan and how its designation as intangible cultural heritage has bolstered its international reputation.





### 1.6.4 Intercultural Communication and Challenges

With the accelerated pace of globalization, the frequency of communication among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds has increased, thereby highlighting the challenges of intercultural communication. These challenges extend beyond language barriers to encompass cultural misunderstandings, stereotypes, and value conflicts (Liu, S., Volcic, Z. & Gallois, C., 2020). Consequently, recent research underscores the importance of enhancing cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication competence to foster deeper mutual understanding and more effective communication (Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2019).

According to Liu, Z. (2021) it was concluded in the study that the international promotion of Taijiquan has encountered several cross-cultural obstacles, such as cultural differences, language barriers, and misunderstandings. In this study, the researcher has investigated how these issues affect the transmission of Taijiquan in China and Malaysia. The focus is on how the technical aspects and philosophical principles of Taijiquan are interpreted and understood across various cultural contexts. Additionally, the researcher offers strategies to overcome these challenges and promote greater international recognition and cross-cultural understanding of Taijiquan.

Based on this theoretical framework, the researcher further examines the dissemination and development of Taijiquan in both China and Malaysia, presenting an in-depth analysis of the findings in subsequent chapters. This approach is designed



to address the research questions and achieve the study's objectives. The following sections outline the relevant research content and objectives.

**Figure 1.1**

*Taijiquan Historical and Cultural Research Mind Map*

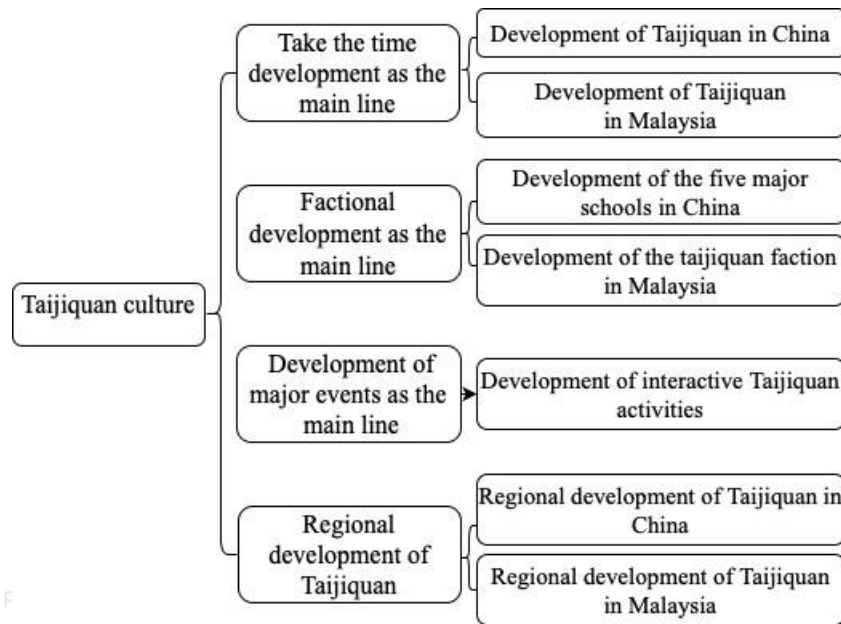


Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the development trajectory of Taijiquan culture, emphasizing four key dimensions: the timeline, factions, major events, and regional development. In his study, Huang, J. (2019) outlined the historical evolution of Taijiquan in China and Malaysia from the timeline dimension. In the study, the factions dimension encompasses the development of the five major schools in China as well as the various Taijiquan factions in Malaysia ("Taijiquan Basics," 2019). This research also points out the five major classifications of Chinese Taijiquan. The major events dimension highlights significant interactive activities related to Taijiquan; and the regional development dimension illustrates the spread and growth of Taijiquan across different regions in China and Malaysia (Li, X., et al. 2011). Analyzing these

four dimensions offers a comprehensive understanding of the overall development of Taijiquan culture.

### Figure 1.2

*A mind map for the study of taijiquan techniques*

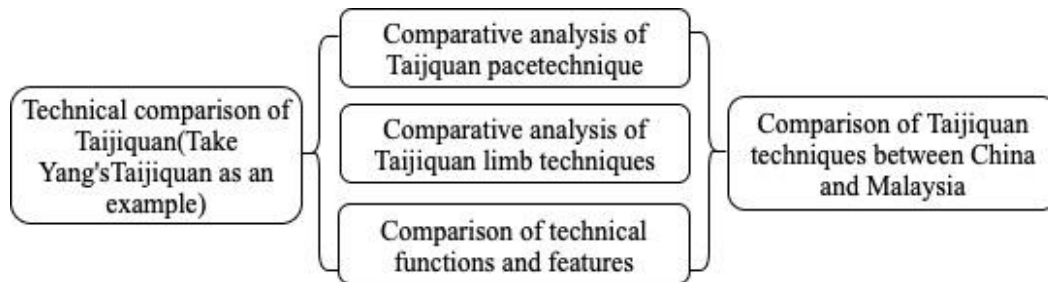


Figure 1.2 provides a comparative analysis of Taijiquan, with a focus on Yang's Taijiquan as a case study. It explores four key dimensions: the fundamental techniques, the specific movements involving the limbs, the functions and distinctive

China and Malaysia. Moreover, Zhang, D. (2020) exploring the development and changes of Yang's Taijiquan technical movements using Yang's Taijiquan as a case study. This examination offers a deeper insight into the unique technical characteristics and variations of Taijiquan across different styles and geographic contexts.

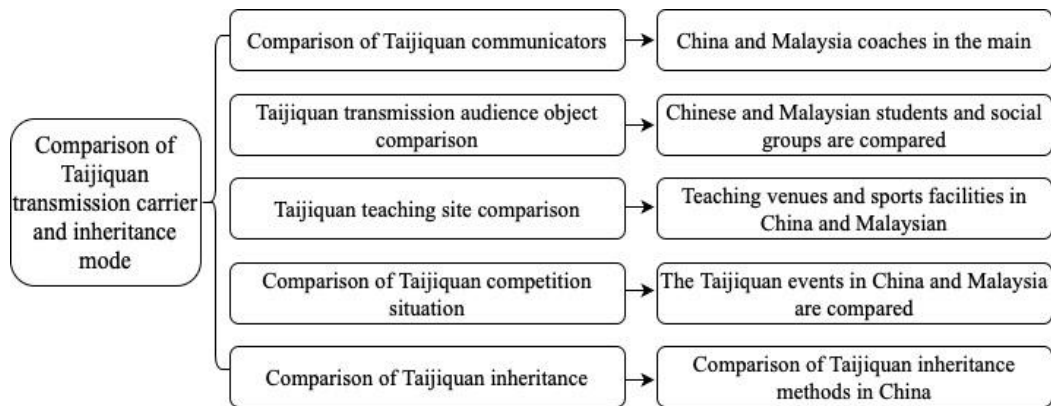
**Figure1.3***A Mind Map for Taijiquan Dissemination Research*

Figure 1.3 outlines the differences in the communication mediums and transmission methods of Taijiquan between China and Malaysia. It compares Taijiquan disseminators, primarily coaches from both countries, and examines the audiences, including students and various social groups, in each context. Additionally, the figure analyzes Taijiquan competitions in both nations to identify key distinctions. The transmission methods of Taijiquan are also compared, with particular emphasis on the approaches used in China.

## 1.7 Operational Definitions

### Belt and Road

The "Belt and Road" initiative, an abbreviation for the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road," leverages existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms and effective regional cooperation platforms between China and participating countries. It seeks to invoke the historical legacy of the ancient Silk

Road by promoting peaceful development and fostering positive growth (China Belt and Road Network Official Website, 2013).

### **Intangible Cultural Heritage**

In October 2003, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was successfully adopted at the 32nd UNESCO General Conference. The Convention defines intangible cultural heritage as encompassing various practices, expressions, representations, knowledge, skills, as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts, and cultural spaces associated with them, which communities or individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.

### **Cultural communication**

Cultural communication, also known as cultural diffusion, refers to the process by which human culture spreads from its source to other areas or from one social group to another. This process can be categorized into direct and indirect transmission (Ma, Z. et al., 2024).

### **Taijiquan**

Taijiquan is a form of traditional Chinese martial art that centers around the principles of Taiji and the dialectical concept of Yin and Yang (Xing, Q.L., 2022). It integrates both internal and external training methods, characterized by movements that are soft, slow, and light, yet also embody a balance of rigidity and softness. Taijiquan serves multiple purposes, including self-cultivation and the enhancement of physical fitness.



## 1.8 Study Limitations

### Time Span

While Taijiquan has a long-established history in China, its transmission in Malaysia is relatively recent, which may influence the depth and breadth of existing research (Karim & Noor, 2015).

### Cultural Differences

The distinct cultural backgrounds and social environments of China and Malaysia may affect the modes of transmission and the acceptance of Taijiquan in each country (Temple & Young, 2004).

### Resource Constraints

There may be limitations on access to research resources and data channels, potentially affecting the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the study (Marshall,

1996)

### Language Barriers

Comparative studies between China and Malaysia require overcoming linguistic and cultural differences, which may impact the precision of the research findings (Lopez & Figueroa, 2013).





## 1.9 Importance of Research

Taijiquan is a significant component of Chinese traditional culture and a key representative of its traditional sports heritage. Within the context of Chinese history and culture, Taijiquan is not only viewed as a practice for health and self-cultivation but also as a reflection of the concept of "the unity of man and nature" in Chinese philosophy.

With the growing exchanges and cooperation between China and Malaysia, the practice of Taijiquan in Malaysia has garnered considerable attention and support. Its spread contributes to enhancing cultural exchanges and fostering friendship between the two countries, deepening understanding of Chinese culture, and promoting closer ties between Chinese and Malaysian communities. As a discipline focused on health and wellness, Taijiquan aids in improving both physical and psychological well-being, boosting immunity, and supporting the overall health of the Malaysian people.

The introduction of Taijiquan in Malaysia also supports the development of local sports initiatives. It brings new elements and vitality to the Malaysian sports scene, enriching the cultural life of its people and fostering growth in the country's sports sector.

In conclusion, the dissemination of Taijiquan in both China and Malaysia holds significant value. It not only promotes cultural understanding and strengthens bilateral relations but also contributes to the physical and mental health of the Malaysian population and the advancement of sports activities.





### 1.10 Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the study on the dissemination and development of Chinese Taijiquan and its practice in Malaysia. The research aims to compare the historical development and technical characteristics of Taijiquan in both contexts, as well as to explore its modes of international communication. The significance of this study lies in its potential to promote cultural exchange and strengthen ties between China and Malaysia, while also enhancing the understanding of Chinese culture. Additionally, it contributes to the advancement of physical health and the development of sports initiatives. The research takes into account various factors, including time span, cultural differences, resource limitations, and language barriers.

