

Research on Propagation Mode of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand

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Abstract: Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a traditional treatment which is widely accepted by Thai people. It has a long history of dissemination time in Thailand honored by Thai people. The author analyzes the international propagation mode of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand in the past two hundred years, and suggestions are put forward on how to better promote the spread of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand even in Southeast Asian under the background of the "Belt and Road " initiative.

Keywords: Traditional Chinese medicine; The belt and road initiative; Thailand; Propagation mode

1. Introduction

Traditional Chinese medicine is a treasure of splendid and prosperous Chinese culture, and it is the essence and pearl of traditional Chinese culture. The spread of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand shares a long history. Thailand, working as an important passageway between China and other Southeast Asian countries, is also an important node country in the "Belt and Road" initiative. The Transmission mode of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand could generally be divided into two stages, which is marked by the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Thailand.

2. The Spread of TCM in Thailand Before the Formal Establishment of Diplomatic Relations With China Mainly Depends on the Chinese Immigration and Commercial Behaviors

The transmission path of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand mainly came from Chinese immigration and trade commerce before the 19th century. The history of Chinese immigration to Thailand can be traced back to the Sukhotai Kingdom in more than 700 years ago. Later, in order to avoid the civil war, many Chinese immigrated to Thailand which leads to the spreading and circulation of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand. Commercial behaviors mainly includes tributary trade and private trade. During the Eastern Han Dynasty, Sui and Tang Dynasties and Yuan Dynasty, Panpan Kingdom and Sukhotai Kingdom paid tribute to China by all kinds of precious fragrance medicine. In the early Ming Dynasty, Zheng He was commanded to make seven voyages to the West to engage not only in frequent foreign affairs, economic and cultural exchanges with many countries and regions, but also in the international dissemination of

Chinese medicine culture [1]. In the Qing Dynasty period, many kingdoms of Thailand had frequent exchanges with the Qing Dynasty. Through the way in which a tribute was offered to China, the Chinese medicine culture of China and Thailand was spread and developed growth to a certain extent. During the Ming Dynasty, private trade began to develop after the government lifted up part of the previous ban on the sea. In the Qing Dynasty, businessmen exported a large number of ginsengs, Astragalus, licorice and other Chinese medicinal materials to Thailand, the trade of Traditional Chinese Medicine began to get a preliminary development in Thailand.

At the beginning of the 19th century, many overseas Chinese set up private hospitals based on Traditional Chinese Medicine theory in Thailand. These include Taijing Tianhua hospital and Guangzhao Medical Bureau founded by Liu Jibin et al in 1906, a charity founded by Huang Qizhang, Zheng Hongkui et al in 1922, and the Thai Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine (a Chinese medicine organization) founded by overseas Chinese businessmen in Thailand in 1927. From the 19th century to the 20th century, the transmission path of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand was mainly spread through the establishment of Traditional Chinese Medicine hospitals and General Associations of Traditional Chinese Medicine, and the enactment of laws was promulgated to legalize Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand. The institutions set up by Chinese people are free of charge for local people, to a certain extent, which has promoted the spread of Chinese medicine among Thai people. However, the legalization of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand has gone through a lengthy process. In 1958, the Thai government changed its regime and promulgated the "prohibition of trade with China", which seriously affected the development of Chinese medicine in Thailand [2].

2.1. The propagation of TCM mainly turns into diplomatic activities between two countries. With the support of bilateral governments, the spread of TCM has been greatly promoted

The Culture exchange between China and Thailand is a significant part of bilateral relations, which has long history. After China and Thailand established relationship in 1975, the culture exchange between two countries has exchanged broadly [3]. Traditional Chinese Medicine was allowed to be sold in Thailand with the support of both governments. During the end of the 20th century, the main transmission modes of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand are the establishment of Traditional Chinese Medicine education, the development of academic exchanges of Traditional Chinese Medicine and the opening of the market of Traditional Chinese Medicine. In 1983, Professor Zhang Chao, China National Native Produce and Animal By-Products Import & Export Corporation, and Professor Wang Yuchuan, Beijing College of Traditional Chinese Medicine participated in the "Chinese Medicine Exhibition of the People's Republic of China Today" held in Thailand. In 1995, the "China Medical and Health Achievement and Practical Technology Exhibition" was held in Bangkok. In 1997, the health ministers of China and Thailand jointly signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Health Medical Science and Pharmaceuticals between the two countries. Both sides agreed to promote cooperation in health and medical science between the two countries on the basis of mutual benefit. In 1999, the ministers of health of the two countries signed the Agreement on Medical Cooperation between the two countries, which laid the foundation for the legal status of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand. At the beginning of the 21st century, Traditional Chinese Medicine education began to develop gradually in Thailand. In 2000, the Ministry of Health of Thailand promulgated the Regulations on Approving the Use of Traditional Chinese Medicine to the Treatment of Diseases. Thailand formally recognized the legal status of Traditional Chinese Medicine and became one of the first ASEAN countries to legislate on Traditional Chinese Medicine. The first Sino-Thai forum on the development of Traditional Medicine and Asian Health Industry was held in Bangkok in 2013.

The TCM department in Thailand Universities are important places for the overseas communication and development of TCM. Nowadays, eight universities in Thailand have offered undergraduate courses of TCM [4]. They are Huachiew Chalermprakiet University, Thammasat University, Chandrakasem Rajabhat University, Nakhon Ratchasima College, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, University of Phayao, Mae Fah Luang University, Rangsit University and Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. In addition to academic meetings and exchanges, Thai government also disseminated Traditional Chinese

Medicine culture through publications related to Traditional Chinese Medicine context, such as Siam Weekly Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Thai editions of History of TCM, Basic Science of TCM, Practical Herbal Medicine, Handbook of Acupuncture and Moxibustion and other books. Since the legalization of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand in 2000, the trade varieties and trade volume of Chinese medicinal materials between China and Thailand have shown an increasing growth year after year. Thailand is progressively opening up the market of Chinese medicinal materials to China.

3. Constructive Suggestions to Promote the Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand Based on Progress of "Belt and Road" Initiative

3.1. Taking advantage of the "belt and road" initiative to strengthen the communication between the people and trade, and promote the in-depth development of traditional Chinese medicine in thailand

Firstly, give full play to the advantages of Thai traditional Chinese medicine resources, medical education resources and traditional Chinese medicine industry resources. Also, bound up the relevant linkage between neighboring ASEAN countries, focusing on the role of Chinese medicine in the "People-to-People Bond" and "Unimpeded Trade" in the "Belt and Road" initiative. Develop and reform overseas cooperation to operate medical factories, international education standard of Traditional Chinese Medicine, health care wellness management, Traditional Chinese Medicine cultural exchange conference, large-scale colossal cultural trade exhibition and other activities. Thus, to form a multi-dimensional cooperation model, it needs to promote the construction of cross-border and cross-regional cooperation framework, as a result of achieving the establishment of a long-term foreign exchange and cooperation mechanism.

Secondly, under the progress of "Belt and Road" initiative Sino-Thai institutions of higher learning should set up more majors about Chinese medicine, and expand the enrollment scale to attractive and encourage more Thai students to study Traditional Chinese Medicine knowledge in China. We can also promote the development of Traditional Chinese Medicine education in Thailand through cooperation in running medicine and academic exchanges education to reserve more outstanding students with passion for TCM to spread of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Finally, entirely mobilize the participation of Thai civil society, enterprise finance, scientific research and teaching institutions at home and abroad in Thailand, to integrate resources, especially to give full play to the advan-

tages for overseas students to returned students in the field of medical science and technology, and to accelerate the exchange and cooperation of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand.

3.2. According to the national conditions, regions and folk characteristics of thailand, we should strength the training of talents and further promote the spread of traditional Chinese medicine culture in thailand-centered southeast asia

Thailand is a tropical country with the characteristics of high temperature, heavy rain, humidity and so on. Therefore rheumatism, asthma and dermatosis are more common. Thai people love sweets delicacies, so diabetes and heart disease are more common, AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases are also the frequently encountered disease of Thai people. Thus, there is a vast market in Thailand for Chinese pattern medicine for cooling and detoxification, treatment of skin diseases, anti-inflammatory and treatment of chronic diseases. Besides, we should reinforce numerous Chinese people in Thailand to spread and promote the beneficial effects of Traditional Chinese Medicine in the manner of promote the concept of Traditional Chinese Medicine and publicize the curative effects of Traditional Chinese Medicine through press media, lectures, goods descriptions and so on. Exploration of new supply channels of Chinese medicine, improving services, expanding the existing business and cooperating with government authorities, Chinese communities as well as education institutions, can accelerate steady development of overseas TCM hospitals. Expansion of overseas TCM hospitals will enhance Chinese culture overseas communication [5]. Doing so could expand the impacts of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand. Besides, the packaging of Traditional Chinese Medicine should also be adjusted to accommodate the different geographical environment of Thailand. Packaging must be taken into account for waterproof, moisture-proof, preventing exposure to high temperature. The demand for Traditional Chinese Medicine services varies with national conditions of countries along "Belt and Road" Initiative. Therefore, research on the demand of Traditional Chinese Medicine service in those countries should be strengthened and given different policies according to different situations and circumstances of each country.

As the relevant legal provisions on the recognition of traditional Chinese medicine approved by Thailand are inconsistent with those in China, the entry of traditional Chinese medicine into the Thai market is vulnerable to technical barriers to trade. Therefore, China should train a group of high-quality talents who understand Thailand drug management control law, the system of importing Traditional Chinese Medicine, procedures and quality requirements. These all have a comprehensive under-

standing of the relevant legal provisions, import and export regulations of the two countries, which are conducive to the trade of medicinal materials between the two countries. At present, there is a shortage of talents in the development of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand and as well, which also affects the spread of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand. Thailand should strengthen up the education of Traditional Chinese Medicine with the help of Chinese advantages by strengthening the cooperation between Chinese College of Traditional Chinese Medicine with Thailand Higher Education College, especially in Traditional Chinese Medicine field. The development of Chinese medicine graduate education, the establishment of Confucius Institute of traditional Chinese medicine could expand the influence of acupuncture in northern Thailand [6]. In addition, high efforts should be made to train high-quality compound talents, who deeply understand both Traditional Chinese Medicine and foreign languages as high-quality complex. These are conducive to the further development of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand-centered Southeast Asia. To sum up, we fully realized that Traditional Chinese Medicine has a great potential for development in Thailand through analyzing the transmission mode of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand. Thai government could get the most out of these rich medical resources and educational resources to promote the spread of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand through the policy advantages of "People-to-People Bond" and "Unimpeded Trade" in "Belt and Road" initiative in terms of multi-dimensional cooperation and training of Chinese and Thai medical talents. China, on the other hand, should take advantage of the "Belt and Road" initiative and promote the spread of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Thailand-centered Southeast Asian countries based on different national conditions.

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