

# **Research on the Uygur Folk Dance Art in Turpan, Xinjiang, The People's Republic of China**

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## **Abstracts**

The Uyghur people are known for their ability to sing and dance, and for generations they have sung and danced to express their feelings about life during festivals, on various happy days and in their spare time for work. The purpose of the study was to study the current state of Uyghur dance in Turpan, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The research methodology was qualitative research. The interview was conducted to collect data from 3 experts.

The research finding was Xinjiang Uyghur people have their own folk dances with unique folk charm, as well as their own folk music, most of which use the form of melodrama. In the art of dance performance, beautiful music can help the dance to express emotions, reflect personality and set off atmosphere in the whole performance process, so as to create a perfect dance image.

**Keywords:** Uyghur dance; Turpan; Xinjiang Uyghur; China

## **Introduction**

Uyghur dance art has enriched the artistic life of all ethnic groups in the motherland and is loved and praised by people at home and abroad. The Uighur dance art is subtle and graceful, with soft and expansive postures for women and spirited and athletic for men. The folk dances specialize in the use of the head and wrist. The dancers make the dance colorful and unique by shifting their necks, shaking their heads and using a rich and varied wrist, together with such gestures as holding their heads high, raising their chests and standing on their hips, as well as the clever coordination of their eyes (Chai, 2017:3). Slight trembling (knees) and spinning are characteristic performance styles in Uyghur folk dance. Uyghur dance is a precious artistic treasure of China, reflecting not only the hardworking and simple life style of the people of Xinjiang, but also the clever and intelligent thinking of the Uyghur people and their skillful means of passing on their culture and art. Inheriting a culture in the form of dance can have a vivid and easy-to-understand effect, and can also prevent the loss and disappearance of culture. As a national treasure of China, Uyghur dance should continue to be developed and passed on, and new cultural features should be added to it as it is learnt, so that it can be better developed.

The reason for choosing to study music and dance in Turpan, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region is firstly because China attaches great importance to the dissemination and development of traditional ethnic culture in its life, and secondly because Uyghur music and dance, as a unique local form of traditional cultural expression, condenses the folklore and humanistic characteristics of the Uyghur people and inherits a certain historical and

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cultural tradition. Finally, in the field of education in the XUAR, the cultural knowledge of traditional local opera needs to be better integrated with teaching (Wang, 2008), so Qiongju is not well known in secondary schools and its dissemination is much less effective. It is particularly important to break down barriers in school teaching and student absorption, and to integrate the culture related to Xinjiang Uyghur dance music into classroom teaching, which plays an important role in the dissemination and development of Xinjiang Uyghur dance music. Based on these views, the researcher investigates the current situation and impact of music and dance entering universities in the Turpan City area of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region by participating in the promotion of campus activities in the Turpan City area of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Using a mixed method of observation and interviews, this thesis explores the implementation of Uyghur music and, dance in Xinjiang and its impact on student learning. By identifying the problems that exist in the current campus outreach activities, constructive suggestions and strategies are put forward. This will lead to a better understanding of Xinjiang Uyghur music and dance and promote the integration of Uyghur dance and music in order to further promote the healthy dissemination and regulation of folk dance. It also provides some suggestions for other folk dance choreographers within the scope of their capabilities.

## Literature Reviews

### **Uyghur Folk Songs**

#### **1. The Origin of Uyghur Folk Songs**

Combined with the local historical and cultural background we can easily see that the general time when Xinjiang Uyghur folk songs were produced can be traced back to about 200 years ago, after the Qing government pacified the Junggar rebellion in the 15th year of the Qianlong era (1760), in order to defend the northwestern frontier, it set up a general government to implement the military system and stationed a large number of troops, in order to solve the problems of food and the development of the stationed troops, immigrants from various cities in the southern frontier to what is historically known as "Hui Tun". These Uyghurs who arrived naturally brought with them the oasis farming culture of their homeland and formed a blend with the local grassland culture here, thus also giving rise to a unique cultural style called Taranchi culture, and it was under the influence of Taranchi culture that Uyghur folk songs were produced. In modern times, Yining has become the largest commercial city in Xinjiang, and this unique condition has provided opportunities for the development of Uyghur folk songs in the Yixing area, and Mr. Jian Qihua believes that "these folk songs that have been handed down to this day have typical characteristics of urban music culture. This folk song is considered to be a traditional historical folk song of the "Steadfast Nahesia". As it is a historical folk song, the lyrics naturally reflect a great deal of information about the politics, economy, culture and people of the Uyghur people" [1]. In the light of the history of the region, we believe that the Uighur folk songs were formed along with the formation of the Tarangi culture, for example, the folk songs "Drain Repair Song", "Street Song" and "Harvest Song".

## 2. Characteristics of Uyghur folk songs

We concluded from Mr. Jian Qihua's investigation of folk artists back then, combined with the analysis of the sound and music scores of Uyghur folk songs, that Uyghur folk songs were mostly sung at large scale folk events such as Mashreif, and most of them were in the form of joint singing, from which we can conclude that Uyghur folk songs are a typical large scale folk song suite, and that the singing of each suite is closely related to Mashreif folk events, which shows that Mingu activities played an important role in the formation and development of Uyghur folk songs. In addition, based on our understanding of the degree of association between Uyghur folk songs and the way in which the music developed, and based on the singing habits of the folk artists, the folk artists also gradually divided the folk song suites into twelve sets during their long-term singing practice. They believe that although the lyrical content of each set of folk songs is not much related, the music of each set is indeed closely related. For example, in the first set of eight songs, the order of the songs is A-E-E-E-E-E-E-A-A. The melodic transitions between the songs are very natural, with the final tune returning to the one at the beginning. The rhythm is four beats from beginning to end, and the overall tempo is basically medium, which makes each set of folk songs more unified and the songs relatively independent, making them seem large and complete as a whole. It is easy to see that the above technique reflects the collective wisdom of the folk artists, who always "change" and "stay the same". They have always succeeded in developing folk music's music in a "changing" and "unchanging" way. Through a specific analysis of the folk song score examples, another characteristic of I-type Uyghur folk songs is the clear division of phrase passages, the natural combination of word-song relationships and the close relationship between phrases. For example, the sixth song in the first set, 'Lovely Girl', has the following phrase relationship: a-b-a-b-c-d. It is not clear that repetition and variation of repetition is one of the most important development techniques in Uyghur folk songs. In the specific melody of the song, the melody is always ornamented, and the fluttering in the upper line creates a free weaving of the melody under the emphasis on the main notes, giving the folk song a languid and grassland folk quality. In addition, many interludes are added to the phrases, and these interludes bring the mood of the music into focus, while at the same time bringing the melody and accompaniment closer together. In addition, the tuning of the folk songs is distinctive, with do (fifth, sixth and seventh tones), re (sixth and seventh tones), m (seventh tones), sol (both subordinate and upper yu tones) and a (the fourth below the main tone, mi, and the sixth above, fa) being the most common tunings, with s making up the largest proportion of the folk songs, followed by do and mi, then re and la. The rhythmic rhythm is also very distinctive, with the rhythms in the phrases being mostly short and then long inverse rhythms, which emphasise the linguistic nature of the music and add to the narrative nature of the folk songs. According to field research, some of the folk songs are also in loose plates, and the musical style is somewhat like Mongolian long tunes. The Uyghurs in the region where the historical and cultural formation of Taranchi took place were also influenced by the musical style of the Junggar division, one of the Weirat Mongols, and although the loose plates do not account for a large proportion of the whole Uyghur folk songs, the influence of this style is still evident, such as the aforementioned "The use of cadences" etc. all tend to result in free style singing. The metre of the folk song suite is mostly duple-beat, which offers the possibility of a narrative function for folk songs. In addition, the accompanying instruments in folk song singing are also very distinctive, usually the dutal and the bouncing

boll are the 'golden combination', and this combination is mostly common in small family gatherings, where the two instruments are paired in a light and dark way. The use of the violin is not found in Uyghur folk songs and muqams from other regions, but for historical reasons, since the late Qing Dynasty, Uyghur culture has been influenced by Russian culture, so the addition of the violin has greatly enriched the sound of the accompanying instruments. In addition, the instrument accompaniment is generally accompanied by the cadence, and this reverence for timbre is "more" than the familiar "polyphony" of Western musical pitch. In the view of the folk artists, this requirement to maintain a high degree of harmony between the instrument and the singing voice is exactly the kind of harmony and unity they seek (Yu, 1998).

### **3. Translation and lyrical features of Uyghur folk songs**

It is well known that the recording and translation of folk song lyrics is a complex issue. Firstly, unlike poetry, the lyrics are a sung text and must not only reflect a certain musicality, but also conform to a certain metre. However, when we listen to these folk songs today, they still feel so natural. The Chinese translation of the lyrics of Uighur folk songs has proved to be very successful, both in terms of the direct translation of the lyrics, the embellishment of the Italian translation and finally the incorporation of the metre into the music. In fact, the question of the meaning of the lyrics is also a thorny issue that we often encounter in the study of new strong minority folk songs. The lyrics of the Uyghur Kashmuqam have been translated into Chinese several times over the past half century, but so far the music and lyrics of the songs have not been synchronised with the lyrics, which is a shortcoming. On the other hand, the synchronisation of the lyrics and music in the Chinese translation of Uyghur folk songs was achieved at that particular time, which naturally facilitated the dissemination of these folk songs. It is worth noting that songs such as 'Peony Khan' from the folk songs have now been selected for inclusion in the People's Music Publishing House's compulsory junior high school 'Music' textbooks. In addition, most of the lyrics of I-type Uyghur folk songs are not related to each other, the lyrics always "frame" different characters, stories and episodes in history within the melody, thus making the songs carry a great deal of cultural information (Zhu, 2007:5). In fact, the development of this suite of folk songs is clearly influenced by the Uighur oral rap literature of Dastan, and it is worth noting that some of the lyrics of the folk songs reflect love songs in which the protagonists are mostly ordinary people in society, expressing a desire of the protagonist and the pain of parting from his lover. For example, "Lover like a flower", "Your pain, lover", etc. In addition, there are also some folk songs that were written in a particular era, reflecting touching stories that have been passed down in various parts of the world and the suffering of the protagonists in their pursuit of free and happy love. Examples include Gulanmukhan, Green Peony, Nazugum and Anar Khan. In this set of folk songs, there are also songs reflecting the historical memory of Taranchi, such as "Song of Drain Repair", "We 26 set off" and "Flowing Backwards". The lyrics of most of these folk songs are short and concise, in line with the rules of oral folk literature, and because they are composed orally and passed on by word of mouth, the folk artists are always "processing" them through countless performances, thus bringing them to a high artistic level. The lyrics of these folk songs are also distinctive in their syntax: in general, they appear to be relatively free in structure, with generally free paragraphs and varying numbers of words in the sentences, but when we look at the lyrics as a whole, we see that a large proportion of the folk songs are in the four-line form. This four-line poetic style is

the result of the artists' conscious and unconscious influence on the traditional Uighur folk poetry of the sambayi. The word "sambayi" is of Arabic origin and means "four", also known as "four-line poetry". It is mostly used to write philosophical poetry, but it is also used to write love poems and hymns, so it seems that folk songs also have some literary value. For example, the seventh love song in the fourth set of I-type Uyghur folk songs, Street Songs, is Slender Girl: I went round into that alley of yours, in search of you, slender girl, my heart was full of sorrow, and my tears flowed away like blood plasma. In addition, the interspersion of liner notes and phrases in the melody reflects another characteristic of folk songs. The distribution of the liner notes shows that they usually appear in the middle or at the end of a line, and less frequently at the beginning of a line. The scholarly definition of a village word: "The words of speech and morphemes that often appear in the lyrics of folk songs are generally called lining words, lining words, and lining sentences according to the number of words used. They are often an integral part of the song, and are especially important in expressing the ideology and feelings of the song. Thus, the village words in Uyghur folk songs play an extremely important role in balancing and harmonising the relationship between the words and the song. The presence of a large number of village words adds to the musicality of the lyrics and expands the phrases and passages, making the words of a short folk song complement each other. For example, 'My Altun River', in the rose bushes (yea wah yea), I saw your figure (yea yea), now I can't stop saying (my Altun), I've fallen in love with you (yea yea enjoined ding yaman). In summary, the folk songs, through their description of the plot and the expression of the characters' emotions, provide us with a concentrated picture of the life of the Uighur people throughout history, and reflect the unique aesthetic ideals of the Uighur people, as well as the literary value of the lyrics refined by countless folk artists at different times and reflected in Uighur literature, and record the historical memory of the Uighur people of the Tarangi culture (Zhang, 2000: 110-113.).

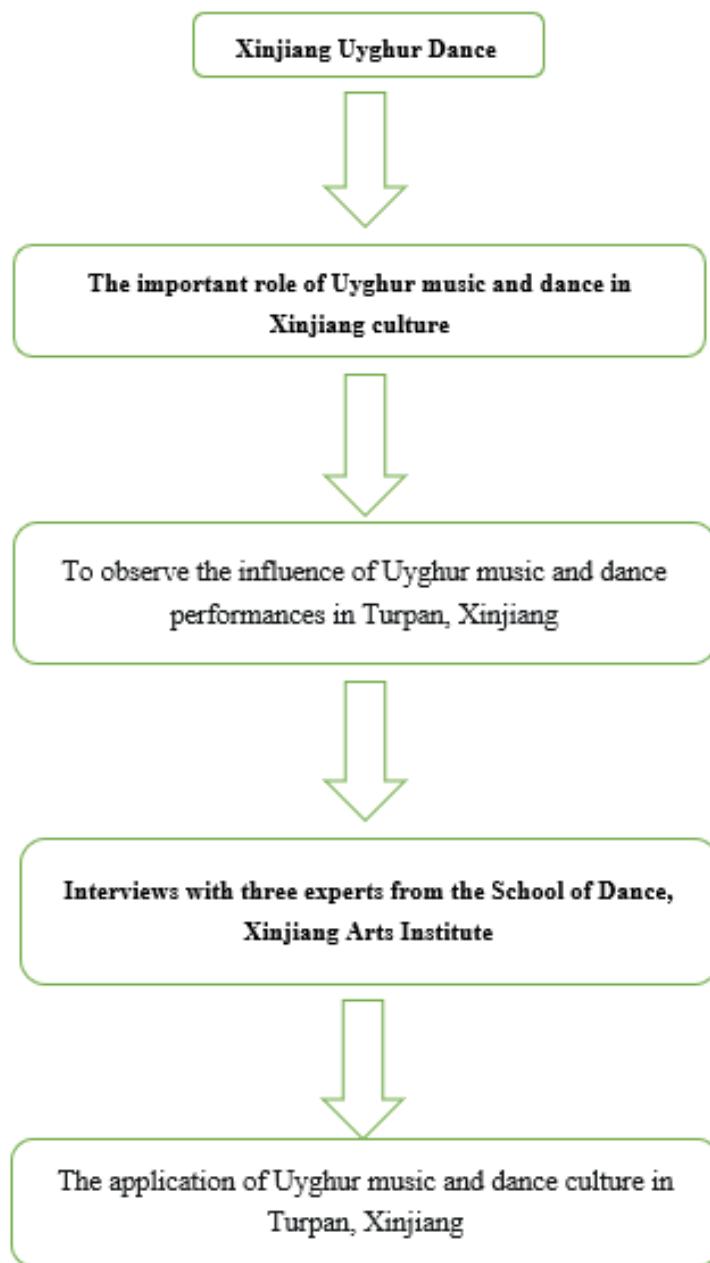
## **Research Objectives**

To study the teaching vocal music based on Bloom's taxonomy from the experts.

## **Research Methodology**

The research methodology was qualitative research. The interview was conducted to collect data from 3 experts.

## Research Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1** Research Conceptual Framework

## Research Results

Through observing the folk-dance performance in Turpan region of Xinjiang Uygur and interviewing three experts, we can understand the geographical location of Xinjiang Uygur, the cultural characteristics of Xinjiang Uygur music, folk songs, Musical Instruments, costumes and other cultural characteristics of local dance and religious beliefs. Uyghur dance can be divided into three categories: performance dance, entertainment dance and style dance. Up to now, the main folk dances in Xinjiang are: Senam, Nazirkum, Dolang, Samapurshatiana, plate dance, hand dance and other performance dances. The Uyghur dance style is religious and performative. Through the dance shape, dynamic, dynamic rhythm, rhythm, verve to express. Its main feature is the movement of all parts of the body with the eyes to match the expression of emotion. Head held high, chest raised, waist straight are the basic characteristics of posture. Through the embellishments of the decorative actions such as moving the neck, turning the wrist and flicking the fingers, it forms a passionate, bold, stable and delicate style. Xinjiang Uygur dance, with only simple props and points can perform infectious dance moves

Through the observation of the classroom situation of the Dance School of Xinjiang University of the Arts, it is understood that the learning content and teaching purpose of the four grades are not only southern Xinjiang style and eastern Xinjiang style dance, but also learn Xinjiang dance culture and various types of prop dances. After learning, students can basically come into contact with various styles and types of Uygur regional dances. Through the mastery of regional style, students' learning goes from technical to cultural level.

The integration of music and dance in the classroom, music and dance are inseparable in the art of dance, music can enhance the sense of rhythm and beauty of dance, so that dance movements show different emotional ups and downs. Through the current basic situation of college dance teaching and the necessity of integrating music into college dance teaching, the strategy of integrating music and dance in college dance teaching is improved, so that they can penetrate each other, optimize the teaching content and reform the teaching method. In order to improve the quality and effectiveness of dance teaching in colleges and universities, we should strengthen the integration of music and dance and adopt teaching reform and innovation measures.

Through observing the folk-dance performance in Turpan Region of Xinjiang Uygur and interviewing three experts, the relationship between Xinjiang Uygur music culture and dance is understood. Xinjiang Uygur people have their own folk dances with unique folk charm, as well as their own folk music, most of which use the form of melodrama. In the art of dance performance, beautiful music can help the dance to express emotions, reflect personality and set off atmosphere in the whole performance process, so as to create a perfect dance image. Music in dance is an integral part of completing the artistic image in the dance work and revealing its theme ideas. The resonance of dance and music makes the audience have a strong emotional impact and spiritual feeling in both visual and auditory aspects.

Uygur folk dances in Turpan region of Xinjiang mainly include Sanam dance, Samar dance, Shadiyana dance, Dolang dance, goose dance, Nazirkum dance, plate dance, hand drum dance and so on. Xinjiang Uygur ethnic dance is an art that has the earliest history, the longest history, the widest spread and the most direct expression of emotion. It is also the most representative art in the historical development of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, with the most national characteristics, and the most reflective of national traditional culture. In the process of rapid social and economic development in Xinjiang, the development and

utilization of ethnic dance resources has attracted increasing attention from all parties. Combined with the development of tourism industry, the development and utilization of ethnic song and dance resources in Xinjiang has enabled the rapid promotion and development of Xinjiang Uygur music culture and dance in the local tourism industry, which not only inherits ethnic culture but also develops the economy. With the rapid development of dance in Turpan City, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, there is also a serious shortage of dance theory and criticism talents. Due to the development of local economy, the number of dance works is too large and the quality is not high, many works lack vitality, there is no audience, there is no market, and there is "inflation" of dance works. Strive to develop the overall physical skills of dance students and the coordination of dance styles, so that students can adapt to the performance of different regional dance styles. Respect and inherit the traditional culture of Turpan, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

## Discussion

Uyghur people mainly live in Kashgar, Hotan and Korla in the south of the Tianshan Mountains in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region; the rest are scattered in Urumqi and Yizheng in the north of the Tianshan Mountains; a small number of Uyghur people live in Taoyuan and Changde in Hunan Province and Kaifeng and Zhengzhou in Henan Province. Uygur folk songs in different regions of Xinjiang have a very long history, and it is a very rich cultural heritage of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang. Kashgar folk songs, Kuqa folk songs, Atushi folk songs and Turpan folk songs with different styles and characteristics have been formed according to different regions. Uyghur muqam, known as the "mother of Uyghur music", originates from the folk and is a large-scale song and dance form integrating Uyghur folk songs, instrumental music, rap and dance. Uyghur muqam has the largest number and complete art form compared with muqam of other countries, attracting worldwide attention (Luo, 2004:2). Uygur traditional music has a wide variety of instruments, such as: wood flute, reed flute, suona, Satar, Aichai, Danbur, Datal, Rewaf, kalong, tabla, etc., can be said to be blowing, pulling, playing, playing, playing, playing, everything (Lei, 2011: 47-57.).

The Uyghur costume has many patterns, which are very beautiful and distinctive. Uyghur male - pay attention to black and white effect, so rough and unrestrained. Uyghur women - prefer to use contrasting colors to make red brighter and green more green. Uyghur is a people who love flowers. People wear embroidered hats, embroidered clothes, embroidered shoes, embroidered scarves, and embroidered bags. Their clothing is closely related to flowers. Uyghur women like to wear skirts, prefer to choose bright silk or wool cut skirts, common red, green, golden and other colors of material, wear light color skirt. Uyghur women are very fond of wearing earrings, rings, necklaces, brooches, bracelets, etc. Men's wear is relatively simple, mainly Actec (long coat), Tony (robe), row met (short jacket), Nimucha (blouse), Kuinak (shirt), waist towel and so on. Uyghur people call outerwear Yue ansa. These clothes are often made of black and white fabrics, blue, gray, white, black and other natural colors. There are many kinds of hats and headwear in the Uyghur clothing, the most distinctive Uyghur men and women like to wear hats, because wearing hats not only has the function of cold or heat prevention, but more importantly, as the needs of life etiquette, social, visiting relatives, visiting friends and festival parties and other occasions need to be worn. The traditional hats of the Uyghur people mainly fall into two categories: fur hats and flower hats. Uyghur people wear shoes and boots is a traditional habit with a long history,

dating back to more than 1,000 years. The religious atmosphere in Xinjiang is very strong, and there are many kinds of religions, mainly shamanism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam, among which there are many different schools and branches (Fan, 2006).

Uyghur dance is an important part of Chinese folk dance, and its unique cultural implication represents the industrious and simple life style of the Uyghur people in China, which is preserved and inherited in the form of dance. Its distinctive regional and national characteristics make it a precious culture, which not only expresses the cultural background under the economic conditions of a certain historical period (Wang, 2004), but also infuses new elements with the development of social life. Due to the influence of many factors such as region, culture, religion and geographical environment, Chinese folk dances have their own characteristics, but they are all the representation of the soul of the nation. Because of the natural connection between religion and dance, there are many kinds of dances that coexist with religion. Among the many Uyghur dances, Sama dance is the most representative one. Uyghur dance can be divided into three categories: performance dance, entertainment dance and style dance. Up to now, the main folk dances in Xinjiang are: Senam, Nazirkum, Dolang, Samapurshatiana, plate dance, hand dance and other performance dances.

## **Recommendation**

### **1. Practical Recommendations**

The inheritance and protection of Xinjiang ethnic dances, the cultivation of the young generation's interest in Xinjiang ethnic dances, and the recognition and love of Xinjiang ethnic dances among young people are the important goals of the inheritance and protection of ethnic dances. The external world faced by modern young people is complex and rich, and they are easily attracted by new things in the ocean of information, and their enthusiasm for folk dance is gradually decreasing. However, in the local vocational education system, Xinjiang ethnic dance is taught as a kind of dance skill, but the teaching goal and system deviate from cultural inheritance and protection, and the teaching activities and learning are relatively shallow. In essence, Xinjiang folk dance is a folk dance combining art and skills, and it also requires hard study and practice to get the essence of dance. More and more young people in modern times are difficult to insist on years of study and training, so the existing experts in Xinjiang dance circle are mostly the older generation of performing artists, and young dancers are rare.

### **2. Recommendation for future research**

Vigorously develop Xinjiang ethnic dance vocational education, expand the scope of recognition of Xinjiang ethnic dance, and strengthen the integration of Xinjiang ethnic dance resources. Secondary school graduates, high school graduates, these students are the country's future, but also the best cultural inheritors, they are young and energetic, dance learning also has a strong plasticity. More importantly, at present, these groups have not formed concepts for the inheritance and protection of local culture, nor have they taken practical and effective actions, and some even lack the cognition of Xinjiang ethnic dances. In Xinjiang, no matter whether they are ethnic minority teenagers, they do not have much contact with Xinjiang folk dance, and even if they do, they are only superficial. The vocational education of ethnic dance makes the teaching and learning of Xinjiang ethnic dance show the characteristics of specialization, and makes the breadth of dance better present in front of contemporary young people, so that they can have a more detailed understanding of Xinjiang ethnic dance and

form a new, objective and comprehensive cognition of the dance. Compared with the traditional professional dance education, the vocational education of ethnic dance in Xinjiang has an independent professional education system, so the teaching activities also show more professional and detailed characteristics, and the local teaching in Xinjiang will make this vocational education more wings. Xinjiang folk dance contains Xinjiang local culture is relatively rich, leaving the land of Xinjiang, it is likely that it is difficult to experience its cultural characteristics. Relying on ethnic cultural resources, excellent teacher resources and unique cultural inheritance atmosphere in Xinjiang, it will provide valuable educational and teaching resources for the teaching of ethnic dance in many aspects. The development of vocational education activities can make the local deposit of national dance resources better stimulated, education and resources complement each other, and effectively stimulate the vitality of local dance and inheritors. Excavate the profound connotation of Xinjiang ethnic dance and ensure the integrity of ethnic dance. To promote the level of ethnic dance in Xinjiang

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