

Construction of the Modern Path for the Ecological System of "Chinese Herbal Medicine Culture" in Anguo City, Hebei Province, China

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Abstract

As one of China's four major traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) hubs, Anguo plays a vital role in preserving and developing herbal culture. Centered on authentic medicinal production, intangible heritage, ethical merchant norms, and folk medicinal beliefs, Anguo achieves a dynamic balance between tradition and modernity. Its herbal culture ecological system integrates traditional medical civilization with natural and social systems, offering both cultural depth and industrial innovation potential. This study adopts a cultural ecology perspective, blending theories from participatory culture, systems thinking, and ecology. It explores Anguo's herbal system construction across three dimensions: cultural value, practical application, and interactive mechanisms. The foundation lies in classical herbal theory, supported by three pillars—heritage activation, industrial innovation, and modern communication. Together, these enable the evolution of Chinese herbal culture from its historical roots to modern relevance.

Findings suggest that building a systematic herbal culture ecology supports cultural confidence and addresses challenges in health, ecology, and livelihood. Anguo's approach—root protection, innovation-driven development, and communication expansion—embodies harmony between culture, society, economy, and the environment. It revitalizes herbal heritage and offers a distinctive Eastern lens and practical model for global health governance.

Anguo's success provides a blueprint for other regions seeking to preserve and adapt cultural heritage in a modern context.

Keywords: Anguo, Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine, Cultural Ecology, Cultural Value, Practical Significance, Interactive Mechanism

Introduction

On December 22, 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasized in his congratulatory letter marking the 60th anniversary of the China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences that "Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is a treasure of China's outstanding traditional culture and a key to unlocking the treasures of Chinese civilization" (Xi, 2015). The repository of Chinese civilization gathers the highest achievements across natural sciences and the humanities throughout China's history, embodying the core concepts and values of traditional Chinese culture. As the "key" to this repository, TCM not only aligns with the logic of China's path to modernization with distinctive national characteristics but also carries the philosophical wisdom and civilizational essence of China. The culture of traditional Chinese herbal medicine serves as the foundation of the TCM enterprise, reflecting the "Chinese way of life." Its preservation and innovation have a direct impact on the broader health sector and public acceptance. In the context of globalization and multicultural integration, the culture of traditional Chinese herbal medicine, as a representative of China's outstanding traditional culture, should be vigorously promoted to enhance national soft power and improve public health and well-being. Since the "13th Five-Year Plan" period (2016–2020), traditional Chinese herbal medicine culture has entered a phase of rapid development. A profound understanding of its connotations and seizing the developmental opportunities of the new era are critical for the realization of the "Healthy China" strategy (National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China, 2019). On February 10, 2023, the General Office of the State Council issued the Notice on the Implementation Plan for the Major Project to Revitalize and Develop Traditional Chinese Medicine (General Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2023), reaffirming the importance of developing TCM and providing clear direction and pathways for its future advancement.

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The culture of traditional Chinese herbal medicine serves as the foundation of the TCM enterprise, reflecting the "Chinese way of life," and its preservation and innovation have a direct impact on the broader health sector and public acceptance. Anguo's traditional Chinese herbal medicine culture is an important component, possessing a dual foundation in rich historical heritage and modern development. In the context of globalization and multicultural integration, the culture of traditional Chinese herbal medicine, as a representative of China's outstanding traditional culture, should be vigorously promoted to enhance national soft power and improve public health and well-being. Since the "13th Five-Year Plan" period (2016–2020), traditional Chinese herbal medicine culture has entered a phase of rapid development. A profound understanding of its connotations and seizing the developmental opportunities of the new era are critical for the realization of the "Healthy China" strategy (National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China, 2019). On February 10, 2023, the General Office of the State Council issued the Notice on the Implementation Plan for the Major Project to Revitalize and Develop Traditional Chinese Medicine (General Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2023), reaffirming the importance of developing TCM and providing clear direction and pathways for its future advancement.

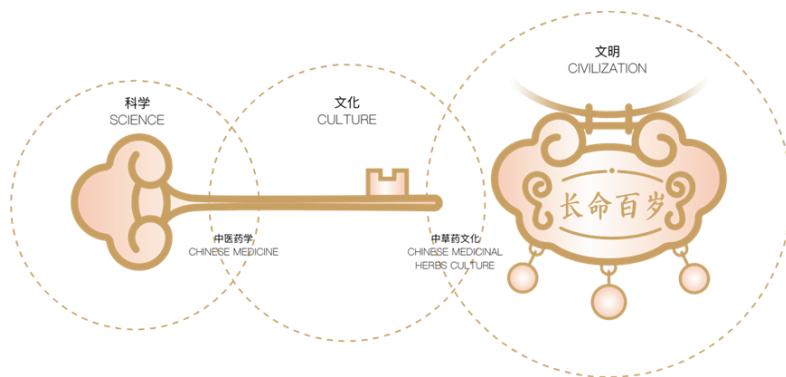


Figure 1: Progressive Development Relationship among Science, Culture, and Civilization (Du,2025)

Anguo is one of the most renowned herbal medicine distribution centers in China's history, famously known as "The Capital of Medicine," "Medicine Prefecture," and "The World's Largest Medicine Market" (Anguo Municipal People's Government

Website, 2023). The historical prominence of Anguo as a large-scale herbal market from the Ming and Qing dynasties to the early Republic of China attracted merchants nationwide and from neighboring regions. This led to extensive interactions, cultural exchanges, influences, and integration, thereby creating a unique local herbal medicine culture. Currently, Anguo's herbal medicine culture possesses a preliminary ecological system that encompasses multiple stages including herbal cultivation, processing, trading, research, education, and tourism. However, the awareness of traditional herbal culture and its international dissemination still require strengthening. In the future, Anguo should enhance cooperation with stronger cities and regions, promote the international dissemination of its herbal medicine culture, and utilize contemporary technological means and innovative methods to enhance Anguo's international cultural influence (Sang, 2023). This study primarily focuses on the construction and development of Anguo's herbal culture ecological system, aiming to explore its cultural value, investigate its practical significance in modern society, and provide new insights into the inheritance and innovation of herbal culture.

Research Objectives

This study has two main objectives:

1. To explore and organize the components and characteristics of the Anguo herbal culture ecological system, aiming to analyze the multidimensional features of this unique cultural phenomenon from the perspective of cultural ecology.
2. To analyze the modern path construction of the Anguo herbal culture ecological system, further understanding how this traditional knowledge system integrates with contemporary society.

Research Methods

The primary research methods used in this study are literature review, field investigation, and interdisciplinary research.

Field Investigation Method

With ethical approval from the Human Subjects Research Ethics Committee of Dongfang College, the researcher personally visited Anguo to conduct field investigations on herbal cultivation bases, processing enterprises, and herbal markets. At the same time, the researcher engaged in in-depth exchanges and interviews with local government personnel, herbal culture scholars, and herbal industry practitioners to collect relevant research materials using standardized research methods.

Interdisciplinary Research Method

This method integrates theories and methodologies from multiple disciplines, including herbal medicine studies, traditional cultural studies, cultural ecology, and cultural industry. It explores the components and characteristics of Anguo's herbal culture ecological system from diverse perspectives. Based on analyzing the interaction between Anguo's herbal culture and local socio-economic development, this method investigates the evolution and cultural inheritance mechanisms of herbal culture and proposes targeted protection and development suggestions for sustainable future development.

Research Findings

1. Components and Characteristics of the Anguo Traditional Herbal Culture Ecological System

As a "Millennium Capital of Medicine," Anguo's herbal culture ecological system represents the deep integration of historical legacy, industrial practice, folk belief, and modern management, displaying distinct multidimensional characteristics. This section comprehensively analyzes the system from two aspects: components and multidimensional features.

1.1 Components of the Anguo Herbal Culture Ecological System

(1) Historical Legacy and Cultural Belief

The prosperity of Anguo's pharmaceutical industry can be traced back to the establishment of the Yaowang Temple (Tong, Eastern Han Dynasty during) the Eastern Han dynasty. Through continuous development during the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, a belief system centered on the worship of King of Medicine, Pi Tong, gradually formed (Kong, 2011). The Yaowang Temple served not only as a site for sacrificial activities but also as a crucial center for herbal trading and cultural dissemination.

The biannual temple fairs, held in spring and autumn (with the spring fair lasting five months and the autumn fair lasting seven months), attracted herbal merchants from across the country. During these fairs, merchants not only conducted medicinal trades but also exchanged herbal knowledge, shared pharmaceutical experiences, and promoted the spread and development of herbal culture. Additionally, the fairs incorporated a variety of folk activities, such as ceremonial market openings honoring the King of Medicine, herbal opera performances, herbal cuisine tasting, and herbal garden tours. These activities enriched the cultural life of the populace and deepened the public's recognition and respect for herbal culture (Li,

2021). The worship of Pi Tong (Pi Tong, Eastern Han Dynasty) transcended religious belief, embodying the inheritance and promotion of the spirit of traditional herbal culture (Liu, 2005).



Figure 3. Ritual Ceremony for Pi Tong, the Medicine King (Pi Tong, Eastern Han Dynasty)
(Yu, 2025)



Figure 4. Ritual Ceremony for Pi Tong, the Medicine King (Pi Tong, Eastern Han Dynasty)
(Yu, 2025)



Figure 5. Traditional Herbal Culture Activities at the 27th Anguo International Herbal Medicine Festival (Yu, 2025)

(2) Industrial Support and Full-Chain Coordination

As the core hub of traditional Chinese medicinal material trade in northern China, Anguo is renowned as the “Capital of Medicine.” The traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) industry has long been a key pillar of the city’s economic development. In recent years, the city has accelerated the transformation and upgrading of the TCM industry. At present, Anguo has built a relatively complete industrial chain covering planting, processing, trade, healthcare, and tourism, forming a coordinated development model across the “three sectors (agriculture, industry, and services).” This comprehensive structure has significantly enhanced the quality and efficiency of the TCM industry. From herb cultivation, preparation, purchase, and sales to consumption, Anguo has promoted the integration of various TCM-related segments and functions. Local policies emphasize the importance of innovation, strengthening technical training, ensuring the standardization of processing techniques, and optimizing the quality of medicinal materials. These efforts have improved the professionalism of practitioners and boosted the efficiency of production and distribution networks. In addition, Anguo has made full use of modern logistics systems to connect different stages of the industrial chain, building a highly collaborative and efficient market ecosystem. Moreover, Anguo has developed a complete TCM industry chain encompassing cultivation, preparation, procurement, and usage, anchored by a comprehensive industrial service system. It has also leveraged cultural tourism resources to develop immersive herbal culture experiences, allowing visitors to explore herbal gardens,

wellness resorts, and heritage towns, thus enhancing the public's engagement with TCM culture and expanding its cultural influence. These efforts have not only reinforced Anguo's position in the domestic TCM market but also contributed to the city's brand image and cultural identity. The fusion of industry and culture has laid a solid foundation for the sustainable development of the TCM sector, playing a vital role in promoting local social cohesion and driving steady economic growth.

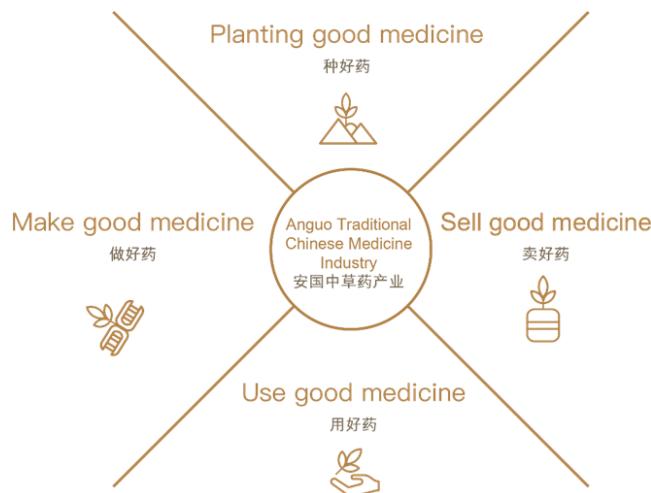


Figure 6. Industrial Structure of Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine in Anguo (Du, 2025)

(3) Institutional Regulation and Industrial Ecosystem

Anguo's traditional Chinese herbal medicine (TCHM) culture has achieved an organic integration of traditional value systems and modern technical standards at the institutional level. This fusion not only inherits historical practices but also embraces modern scientific advancements. Through the construction of a standardized system and the improvement of regulatory mechanisms, the modernization of TCHM has entered a new stage characterized by more structured, transparent, and technology-driven governance. In recent years, to enhance its role as a "Thousand-Year Medicinal City," Anguo has advanced quality management and technological application across various segments. The establishment of a quality traceability system has strengthened industry oversight and accountability. Meanwhile, by introducing modern evaluation tools and digital management platforms, Anguo has improved operational efficiency and industrial credibility, contributing to a more robust and standardized herbal medicine ecosystem.

Anchored in its deep cultural roots, Anguo has developed a complete and highly referential set of institutional frameworks and industrial practices that effectively

integrate traditional medical ethics with modern governance standards. This system not only emphasizes the protection and cultivation of authentic medicinal materials but also pays attention to the cultural transmission and education of traditional Chinese medicine. With the support of major national policies, Anguo has actively explored institutional innovation in fields such as herbal medicine standardization, healthcare service integration, cultural tourism development, and market regulation. It has formed a distinct industrial ecosystem that combines traditional and modern elements, balancing efficiency with cultural integrity. These innovations have provided a solid foundation for the sustainable development of the herbal medicine industry and offer valuable reference models for other regions seeking to deepen the integration of culture and industry, and to enhance governance in the field of traditional medicine.

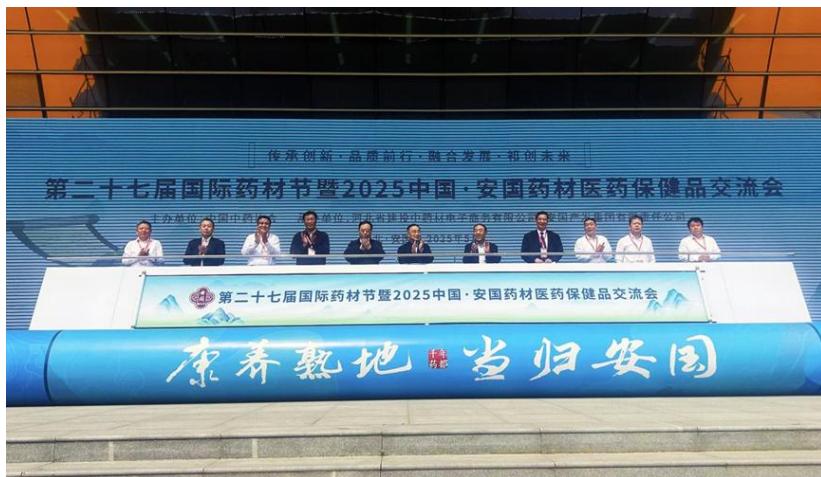


Figure 7. Opening Ceremony of the 27th Anguo International Herbal Medicine Festival
(Yu, 2025)

1.2 Multidimensional Characteristics of the Anguo Herbal Culture Ecological System (1) Dual Nature of Historical Inheritance and Contemporary Innovation

As a treasure of traditional Chinese medicine, Anguo's herbal culture embodies a millennium of accumulation and refinement, demonstrating profound historical depth and unique cultural value. In terms of historical inheritance, Anguo's herbal culture encapsulates the ancient reverence for nature and wisdom, forming a distinct theoretical and practical system through generations of transmitted cultivation techniques, processing craftsmanship, and documented pharmacopoeias. This traditional knowledge has played a significant role in every stage of herbal cultivation, harvesting, and processing, providing valuable references and insights for the modern

development of the herbal industry. Meanwhile, Anguo's herbal culture exhibits a strong spirit of contemporary innovation. While preserving the traditional essence, Anguo actively incorporates modern technological methods, such as gene sequencing and big data analysis, to conduct in-depth research and development of herbal medicine, continuously improving the quality and efficacy of herbal products. Furthermore, Anguo promotes and innovates herbal culture through organizing herbal culture festivals and establishing herbal culture learning centers, enabling wider public engagement and appreciation of traditional culture, thereby advancing the modernization and internationalization of herbal culture.

(2) Symbiosis between Economic Value and Cultural Identity

This symbiosis is reflected on multiple levels. First, economic value provides a solid material foundation for cultural identity (Liu, 2011). The prosperity of Anguo's herbal industry not only drives local economic growth but also offers the financial support necessary for the dissemination and promotion of herbal culture. Through the expansion of the industrial chain encompassing cultivation, processing, and sales, Anguo's herbal culture becomes recognized and accepted on a broader scale, thereby strengthening public identification with and pride in herbal culture.

Second, cultural identity endows economic value with deeper significance. The unique ideas and values embodied in Anguo's herbal culture, such as respect for nature and harmonious coexistence, provide spiritual guidance and moral support for the development of the herbal industry (Shen-Wei et al., 2013). These concepts not only promote the sustainable development of the herbal industry but also enhance the cultural connotation and added value of herbal products, increasing their market competitiveness. Moreover, the symbiosis between economic value and cultural identity is further manifested in external cultural exchanges and cooperation. By hosting herbal culture festivals and establishing herbal museums, Anguo showcases the unique charm of herbal culture to domestic and international audiences, attracting tourists and investors. This not only promotes the global dissemination of Anguo's herbal culture but also generates substantial economic benefits, further solidifying the symbiotic relationship between cultural identity and economic value.

(3) Synergy between Natural Ecology and Human Ecology

b) Coordination Between Natural and Humanistic Ecologies

Anguo's natural environment provides ideal conditions for developing into a central hub for medicinal herb cultivation, primarily due to its unique geographical location and soil composition. Situated in the central-northern part of Hebei Province within the North China Plain, Anguo falls within a typical warm temperate monsoon

climate zone. It has an average annual temperature of 12.4°C and an average annual precipitation of 555.3 mm, with a long frost-free period. These climatic features create a favorable environment for the growth of medicinal plants. In addition, Anguo's soil types are diverse, ranging from loamy to clay soils with varied moisture and nutrient levels, which are well-suited to the ecological needs of a wide range of medicinal herbs. These natural ecological advantages form the foundational support for the sustainable development of Anguo's herbal medicine sector. Anguo also possesses a long-standing tradition of herbal cultivation and a wealth of experience, aligning closely with the main distribution areas of key medicinal materials across China. Its clearly defined functional zoning and effective land-use planning have enabled the formation of a specialized production system. The region's multivariate cultivation techniques and services, especially in planting, processing, and market integration, have further consolidated its role in the national herbal medicine network. Anguo's production covers a wide variety of medicinal plant species, and the maturity of its herbal cultivation and distribution system has allowed it to produce high-quality raw materials at scale. Some of these are distributed nationwide, making Anguo one of China's most important medicinal plant production bases. The mutual reinforcement of natural and humanistic ecologies not only enables the harmonious development of herbal medicine with its surrounding environment but also enhances the integration of TCM culture into the daily life and practices of the local community. The natural geography of Anguo supports a localized lifestyle and identity, where herb-related customs and knowledge are passed down through generations. In this context, ecological practices are not limited to environmental concerns but are embedded in cultural life and local values. This interdependence between nature and culture offers a fertile ground for the preservation and transmission of traditional Chinese medicine and provides strong support for the ongoing revitalization and innovation of TCM in the region.

(4) Balance between Institutional Regulation and Grassroots Autonomy

Within Anguo's herbal culture ecological system, a subtle balance exists between institutional regulation and grassroots autonomy (Zhang, 2015). On one hand, the government has established a series of regulations to ensure the standardization and regulation of all aspects of herbal cultivation, processing, and sales, effectively preventing the emergence of counterfeit and inferior products and protecting consumer rights. These regulations not only enhance the overall quality of Anguo's herbal products but also provide institutional guarantees for the inheritance and development of herbal culture. On the other hand, grassroots communities in Anguo have, through long-term production practices, accumulated rich experience and knowledge, forming a

unique system of grassroots autonomy. This includes the transmission of herbal cultivation techniques, the oral dissemination of therapeutic efficacy, and the development of an integrity-based trading system. These mechanisms complement potential deficiencies in formal regulation, enhancing the vitality and resilience of herbal culture. Simultaneously, grassroots autonomy promotes the diversification of herbal cultural development, making Anguo's herbal culture more vibrant, diverse, and distinctive.

(5) Digital Technology as a Driving Force for the Development of Anguo's Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine Industry

Digital technology has provided comprehensive support for the development of Anguo's traditional Chinese herbal medicine (TCHM) industry. It has enhanced production efficiency and product quality, promoted industrial standardization and branding, and accelerated the process of internationalization. Through the construction of digital herbal medicine platforms, Anguo has successfully cultivated a new digital development model for the TCHM industry, creating new momentum for the industry's high-quality growth. In the cultivation stage, Anguo has adopted intelligent tools for real-time monitoring and management. By collecting data on soil conditions, climate, and plant growth cycles, smart sensors are used to identify and trace abnormalities, assess disease risks, and issue early warnings, significantly improving the scientific accuracy of production decisions. In the processing stage, Anguo has introduced multiple advanced processing and testing devices, which have improved efficiency, product consistency, and overall safety. These technologies support the standardization and refinement of the production process, ensuring high-quality outputs. In logistics and distribution, Anguo has established an integrated traceability platform that tracks the entire lifecycle of herbal products—from raw materials to final products—ensuring transparency and trust across the supply chain. Meanwhile, Anguo has developed a 'Digital Chinese Herbal Medicine City' system. The platform covers functions such as online trading, data integration, scientific research collaboration, and intelligent supervision. It supports seamless interactions between local enterprises, hospitals, research institutions, and government agencies. By linking digital infrastructure with traditional herbal markets, Anguo has bridged the gap between heritage and modernity, creating a new type of smart herbal economy. This transformation has attracted the attention of national policymakers, researchers, and business leaders, providing an exemplary case for the application of digital technology in the TCHM sector. Today, Anguo not only leads in cultivating and processing herbs but also stands at the forefront of digital innovation in the field, helping to streamline transactions, reduce

costs, and enhance brand recognition. In doing so, it continues to drive the digital transformation of China's traditional medicine industry.

2. Modern Pathways for Constructing the Anguo Herbal Culture Ecological System

The Anguo herbal culture ecological system not only embodies a profound historical and cultural legacy but also holds significant contemporary relevance. It serves as an essential vehicle for promoting the inheritance and innovation of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), stimulating local economic development, and enhancing international cultural exchanges.

The modern construction of Anguo's herbal culture ecological system is rooted in historical beliefs, structured around a complete industrial chain, safeguarded by institutional innovations, and characterized by multidimensional integration. It exemplifies both the transmission of TCM civilization and the modernization of traditional industries. Its uniqueness lies in the seamless integration of the "material attributes" of medicinal herbs with the "spiritual attributes" of culture, forming an integrated ecological loop encompassing production, education, research, culture, and tourism. This model provides a valuable framework for the protection of herbal culture and the advancement of related industries. Moreover, in the context of modern civilizational exchanges, the construction of the Anguo herbal culture ecological system offers a window for showcasing the achievements of Chinese traditional culture and modern medicine. Through cultural exchange and cooperation, it promotes the use of traditional herbal medicine, enhances global understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture, and contributes to the advancement of cultural diversity and global health initiatives. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to establish effective interaction mechanisms within the Anguo herbal culture ecological system. This includes strengthening cooperation between herbal cultivation bases and research institutions, promoting the standardization and branding of herbal products, and applying modern cultural management concepts to develop both online and offline experiential and educational platforms. These measures will help disseminate herbal knowledge widely and ensure the sustainable development of the herbal culture ecological system, thereby making a greater contribution to the global health sector.

2.1 Implementation Pathways from the Perspective of Cultural Value

When exploring the modern pathways for constructing the Anguo herbal culture ecological system, it is critical to recognize its cultural value. As a treasure of the Chinese nation's traditional medical heritage, herbal medicine encompasses rich cultural connotations, spanning philosophy, natural sciences, and the humanities. Constructing a modern ecological system in Anguo helps preserve and transmit this

precious cultural legacy, ensuring it remains a vibrant cultural practice rather than merely a historical artifact recorded in literature and legends. Firstly, construction requires historical inheritance and theoretical system innovation. As a historic hub for herbal trading, Anguo possesses a deeply rooted herbal culture. The primary task in constructing a modern ecological system is to thoroughly excavate and systematically organize this valuable historical and cultural heritage through methods such as documentary research and oral history recording. This process involves comprehensively tracing the development and unique values of herbal culture. Meanwhile, integrating modern scientific concepts and technological advancements to innovate upon traditional herbal theoretical systems is essential. This dual approach will establish a new theoretical framework that respects traditional wisdom while meeting contemporary demands, thereby providing theoretical support for the sustainable development of TCM culture. Secondly, emphasis must be placed on cultural identity and the refinement of spiritual core values. As an important component of traditional Chinese culture, the construction of a modern Anguo herbal culture ecological system fosters greater cultural confidence and identity. By distilling core spiritual values embedded in herbal culture—such as the philosophical notion of "harmony between humans and nature," the health principle of "the medicinal and edible origin," the moral standard of "integrity and righteousness," and the core values of "benevolence, harmony, precision, and sincerity" it is possible to inspire public affection and respect for TCM culture. This, in turn, fosters a unique sense of cultural belonging and identity, helping to maintain cultural diversity while promoting the global dissemination and exchange of herbal culture.

2.2 Practical Pathways from the Perspective of Realistic Significance

(1) Economic Significance and Industrial Transformation

The construction of the modern Anguo herbal culture ecological system holds significant economic value for contemporary society. By integrating various segments of the industrial chain—including herbal cultivation, processing, sales, scientific research, and educational complete industrial ecosystem can be established, driving the development of related industries, creating employment opportunities for local residents, increasing income, and promoting regional economic prosperity.

First, constructing the modern Anguo herbal culture ecological system can drive industrial upgrading and transformation. It facilitates the integration and optimization of the herbal cultivation, processing, and sales industries, thereby promoting the transformation and modernization of the herbal industry. Measures such as introducing advanced cultivation technologies, improving the quality of medicinal

herbs, and expanding international markets can effectively enhance the added value and competitiveness of the herbal industry, injecting new vitality into local economic development.

Second, the construction of the ecological system can promote technological innovation and the establishment of industry standards. In the process of constructing a modern Anguo herbal culture ecological system, emphasis should be placed on technological innovation and standardization. Through the development of new medicines, improvement of production techniques, and formulation of industry standards, the technological content and standardization level of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) products can be significantly enhanced. Furthermore, active participation in the formulation and promotion of international TCM standards can help transform the essence of Anguo's herbal culture into internationally recognized frameworks, contributing to the global advancement of herbal culture.

Finally, as one of the treasures of Chinese culture, Anguo's herbal culture possesses unique charm and widespread influence. By promoting cultural diplomacy through the construction of a modern herbal culture ecological system, Anguo can build a bridge for cultural exchanges between China and the international community, facilitating the global dissemination of herbal culture. This approach not only fosters greater international understanding and recognition of traditional Chinese culture but also adds new highlights and distinct characteristics to China's cultural diplomacy.

(2) Synergistic Logic of the Interactive Mechanism

The construction of the Anguo herbal culture ecological system requires strong endogenous momentum as its foundation. This includes the high-level attention and policy support of local governments, the active participation and innovation drive of TCM enterprises, and the attraction and cultivation of talents specializing in herbal medicine. By forming an endogenous momentum system led by government guidance, driven by enterprises, and supported by talent, the sustainable and healthy development of the herbal culture ecological system can be effectively promoted. In addition to the endogenous momentum system, it is also necessary to establish a comprehensive external support network to ensure the successful construction of the modern Anguo herbal culture ecological system. This includes strengthening cooperation and exchanges with international herbal organizations, expanding international trade channels for medicinal materials, and promoting the dissemination and education of herbal culture. By building a diversified external support network, strong external guarantees and support for the construction of the modern ecological system can be secured (Wen, 2014).

The construction of the modern Anguo herbal culture ecological system possesses not only significant cultural value but also profound practical significance. Through measures such as deeply excavating historical cultural heritage, refining cultural identity and spiritual core values, promoting industrial upgrading and transformation, enhancing technological innovation and standardization, expanding channels for cultural dissemination and education, and building a system of internal and external synergy, the sustainable and healthy development of the Anguo herbal culture ecological system can be continuously advanced. These efforts will actively contribute to the inheritance and innovation of herbal culture, local economic development, and international cultural exchange.

Discussion

1. Cultural Inheritance and Innovation

Integrating modern technology with market demand is essential for innovating and enhancing the appeal and influence of Anguo's traditional herbal culture. By utilizing digital and intelligent technologies to systematically excavate and organize herbal culture, a comprehensive database and knowledge graph can be established. Developing herbal health products and cultural tourism projects that merge traditional culture with contemporary lifestyles can significantly enhance the practicality and attractiveness of the heritage. Additionally, organizing cultural festivals, seminars, and similar activities can strengthen promotion and exchange, thereby expand the cultural influence and accelerating internationalization. Liu (2024) emphasizes that promoting the inheritance and innovative development of TCM culture contributes to enhancing cultural confidence, constructing a system of Chinese civilizational symbols, and supporting both the modernization of national governance and global health governance.

2. Collaborative Industrial Development

The key to constructing a modern Anguo herbal culture ecological system lies in strengthening coordination across cultivation, processing, and sales sectors to achieve efficient industrial development. Establishing standardized cultivation bases and promoting advanced technologies and management practices are critical to ensuring the quality and stable supply of raw materials. Simultaneously, upgrading the technological capabilities and equipment of processing enterprises can enhance product quality and processing efficiency, while promoting the development of deep-processing products. In the sales sector, comprehensive channel development and strong brand building are necessary to consolidate the cultural foundation and enhance

market competitiveness. Li and Liu (2020) propose that optimizing the primary industry, expanding the secondary industry, and strengthening the tertiary industry are essential strategies for achieving integrated and interactive industrial development, thus promoting industrial upgrading, enhancing industrial strength, and cultivating new economic growth drivers. Policy and financial support play a vital role in facilitating information sharing and resource integration, ensuring the efficient and cohesive operation of the industrial chain.

3. Synergistic Logic of the Interactive Mechanism

Under the framework "Historical Root Preservation + Industrial Innovation Drive + Modern Communication Expansion," exploring how the modern Anguo herbal culture ecological system can achieve multidimensional development from historical depth to contemporary modernization is key to reinforcing cultural confidence and enhancing cultural soft power. This framework highlights the importance of cultural inheritance while emphasizing the pivotal role of industrial innovation and modern communication strategies in the modernization of herbal culture. Historical root preservation ensures cultural continuity and authenticity, providing cultural foundations for industrial innovation (Zhou, 2013). Industrial innovation, through technological advancement and market expansion, transforms cultural assets into competitive products and services. Modern communication strategies broaden dissemination channels through the application of new technologies, enhancing global cultural influence.

The integration of these three elements constitutes the core of the modern herbal culture ecological system, providing strong support for reinforcing cultural confidence and boosting cultural soft power. Liu (2020) notes that herbal culture, as an outstanding representative of Chinese traditional culture, plays a significant role in strengthening China's overall cultural soft power and advancing the construction of a culturally strong nation.

Research Recommendations

Promote cultural transmission and innovation: Strengthen the promotion of Anguo's traditional Chinese herbal medicine (TCHM) culture by leveraging modern media and digital platforms to disseminate knowledge about TCM culture and practices. Integrate tourism and education sectors to develop distinctive TCHM cultural products and immersive experience programs.

Promote coordinated industrial development: Establish a comprehensive collaborative mechanism across all stages of the industry chain, enhancing cooperation in cultivation, processing, sales, and distribution. Encourage information sharing and joint efforts between different segments of the supply chain and support enterprise-academia

cooperation to enhance the technological capacity and competitiveness of the industry. Build interactive mechanisms: In the future, we will explore the establishment of an integrated research framework for ‘Heritage Protection Rooted in History and Innovation-Driven Modern Transmission Strategies,’ with the goal of deeply examining the modern ecological system of Anguo’s TCHM culture from multiple levels and dimensions. By aligning cultural preservation with the demands of modern development, we aim to construct a multi-layered and systematic cultural structure. This will be essential in strengthening cultural confidence and enhancing the practical value of TCHM culture in the contemporary era.

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