

## Article

# Research on the Spatial Distribution Characteristics and Influencing Factors of Central China's Intangible Cultural Heritage

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**Abstract:** In the context of China's rural revitalization strategy, it is of profound significance to explore the spatial distribution characteristics and influencing factors of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in Central China, not only for the inheritance of Chinese traditional culture and the development of ICH, but also for the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy itself. From the perspective of cultural ecology, this study analyzed the spatial distribution and clustering characteristics of 407 national intangible cultural heritages in Henan, Hubei, and Hunan provinces in Central China by using the ArcGIS geographic concentration index, kernel density, and other methods. This study also explored natural and social environmental influencing factors and their interaction on ICH spatial distribution using geographic detectors. The findings revealed that the ICH distribution in Central China has an obvious agglomeration trend, showing a "five cores" distribution structure (dense in the upper and the middle areas but sparse in the lower area). The regions with high kernel density are mostly river-flowing regions and are comparatively developed. In terms of influencing factors, the influence of economic and environmental factors together is stronger than that of natural environmental factors alone, and the interaction force between rivers and economic development is the most influential. Based on the above research findings, we put forward suggestions on the protection and development, as well as "era value" exploration of ICH in Central China, in the hope of promoting regional coordinated advancement.

**Keywords:** intangible cultural heritage; spatial distribution; influencing factors; development and conservation; China



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## 1. Introduction

According to the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, "Intangible cultural heritage" (ICH for short) refers to various social practices, forms of expression, knowledge, skills and related tools, objects, handicrafts, and cultural sites that are considered part of the cultural heritage by various communities and individuals [1]. ICH is a special cultural heritage with historical significance and cultural, aesthetic, and artistic value. It is not only the "living state" continuation of the common human civilization, but also represents the national symbols and identity; therefore, the study of ICH is of great significance to both the country and the nation [2]. As we all know, the survival and development of ICH cannot be separated from the natural and social environment. The former mainly refers to the climate, geological landform, water bodies, vegetation, etc., while the latter mainly refers to the economic level, inheritors, governments, original residents, or cultural circles. However, in the ICH inheritance and development practices, problems such as limited historical cognition, cultural homogeneity, and formal hybridity were merged. These problems arose due to ICH's particularity. Therefore, through the study of ICH spatial distribution, the tangible distribution characteristics of ICH can be found in order to realize the interactive and coordinated development of material and

intangible culture and protect the diversity of human culture. This represents a new way of making the research in this field more real, deeper, and more sustainable.

Many scholars from various countries around the world have carried out research on ICH-related issues. Kennedy proposed the importance of human oral and intangible culture and formed his own understanding of cultural space and other concepts [3]. Thomas Schmitt compared the evolution history of the ICH concept with its emergence hypothesis and discussed the relationship between ICH and cultural geography [4]. The research scope of ICH spatial distribution can be as wide as a whole continent, or as small as a village [5–11]. For example, Lazaro Ortiz critically analyzed the protection of intangible cultural heritage worldwide [10]. Maldonado investigated the ICH of Amazonian Kichwa nationality through identification and documentation of cultural manifestations, as well as proposed conservation measures [11]. The existing studies mainly adopt the theories and methods of anthropology, geography, statistics, and psychology [12–17]. For example, Liu Yuan verified that ICH is the product of interaction between humans and the environment from the perspective of anthropology [14], and Xiaofei Wang used geographic information systems to find that geographical environment is the most basic and important factor affecting ICH spatial distribution in Shanxi Province, China [15]. López-Guzman found that tourism development in Cordoba, Spain, is closely related to its ICH [16]. Yong Chai conducted an empirical study on Chinese intangible cultural heritage opera by using psychological methods and introduced the experience economy into ICH tourism [17]. The research content mainly focuses on ICH excavation, ICH living environment, and its spatial distribution characteristics [18–25]. For example, Maria Katelieva, starting from the status quo of Austrian intangible cultural heritage, conducted a sampling survey of major stakeholders, revealed its ICH sustainable development dilemma, and proposed the theoretical evaluation framework on ICH space [22,23]. Jin Yang used GIS spatial analysis technology to analyze ICH spatial changes along the Grand Canal of China. This served as an important reference for the regeneration and utilization of ICH resources [24]. Eichler Jessica verified that regional cultural identity has a positive impact on purchase intention of ICH products [25].

The above studies provide valuable information for our study. However, the scope of current research on ICH spatial distribution has generally been limited to a single nation or region, and quantitative research on a cross-provincial regional scale has been insufficient. The research has mainly focused on ICH layout characteristics and ICH evolution rules, while there have been few studies on the spatial distribution of ICH inheritors and regional cultural programs. Central China is one of China's seven geographical subregions, in which Henan, Hubei, and Hunan provinces are located from north to south. Central China is the cradle of the Central Plains culture and holds the maternal position in the whole Chinese civilization system. Thus, as the crystallization of Central Plains culture, the ICH in Central China is a very important piece of the cultural heritage of the Chinese nation and even the whole of mankind. At present, there are still many unexcavated ICH materials in central China, while those excavated are still facing severe challenges. Therefore, it is very important to strengthen the research on ICH spatial distribution in Central China.

The main contributions of this review are as follows: (1) in this study, cultural ecology, spatial analysis theory, and sustainable development theory were incorporated into ICH spatial distribution research in Central China, broadening the depth and breadth of the ICH research field; (2) our team has been conducting investigations in representative ecological areas in central China for more than ten years, accumulating rich ICH primary materials, which is of great significance for the formulation of ICH protection planning and related theoretical research; (3) in this study, ICH spatial distribution patterns in Central China and its influencing factors were obtained and analyzed using methods of geographic information science, which can provide a reference for the government and other researchers to make decisions on ICH protection and development.

## 2. Materials and Methodology

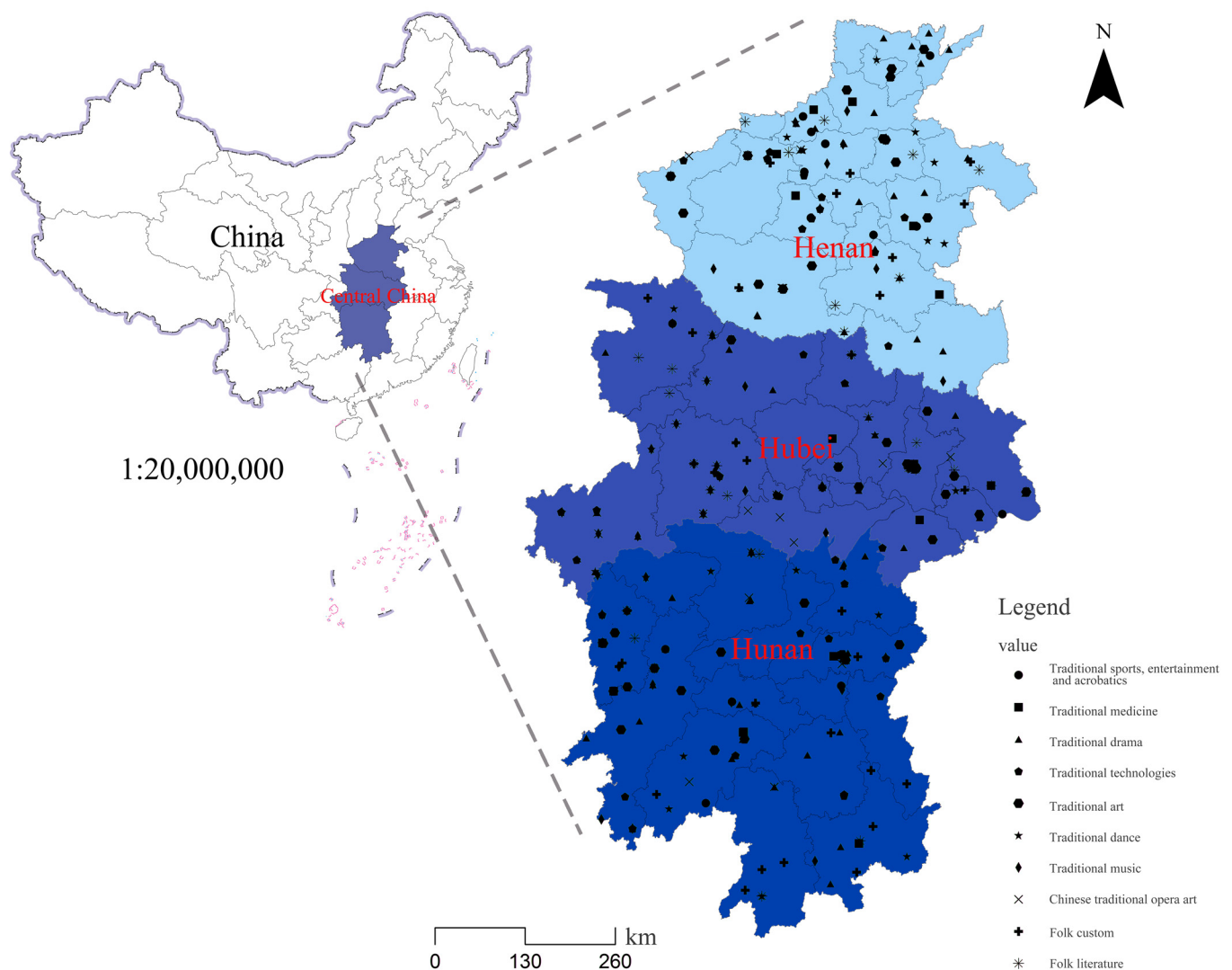
### 2.1. Survey Region and Data Sources

According to public data from the China Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum [26], by 2022, 5 national ICH lists (3610 items in total) had been published by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, in which 407 intangible cultural heritage items came from Central China (including expansion items) after being counted by the application region or unit. These items could be divided into ten categories (Table 1, Figure 1).

**Table 1.** Geographical quantity distribution of different types of national ICH.

Province	Folk Literature	Traditional Music	Traditional Dance	Traditional Drama	Chinese Traditional Opera Art	Traditional Entertainment, Sports and Acrobatics	Traditional Art	Traditional Technologies	Traditional Medicine	Folk Custom	Total (Items)/Proportion *
Henan	10	13	10	29	5	10	14	14	6	14	125/30.7%
Hubei	21	28	12	25	13	4	14	10	6	12	145/35.6%
Hunan	9	16	13	32	6	4	15	19	6	17	137/33.7%
Total	40	57	35	86	24	18	43	43	18	43	407/100%

\* The proportion equals ICH quantity in each province/ICH quantity in Central China.



**Figure 1.** ICH Spatial distribution map in Central China.

## 2.2. Methods

### (1) Concentration Index

The Lorenz curve was used to characterize the degree of centralization and structural characteristics among various types of national ICH in Central China. The formula for the centralization index is as follows:

$$I = \frac{C - K}{M - K}. \quad (1)$$

In the above formula,  $C$  represents the sum of the cumulative percentage of all types of intangible heritage;  $M$  represents the sum of the cumulative percentages of those with complete centralized distribution; and  $K$  represents the sum of the cumulative percentages of those with perfectly even distribution.

### (2) Kernel Density

Kernel density can directly reflect the specific agglomeration place and agglomeration degree of resources, so the spatial agglomeration characteristics of national ICH sites in Central China were measured using the kernel density estimation method as follows:

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{nh} \sum_{i=1}^n k\left(\frac{x - x_i}{h}\right). \quad (2)$$

In the above formula,  $k(\cdot)$  represents the kernel function;  $h > 0$  represents bandwidth; and  $(x - x_i)$  represents the distance from valuation point  $x$  to intangible heritage site  $x_i$ .

### (3) Geographic Detector

Geographic detector is a new statistical method for detecting spatial differentiation and reveal the driving factors behind it, through which the influencing factors and their interactive results on ICH spatial distribution can be analyzed.

$$q = \left( N\sigma^2 - \sum_{h=1}^L N_h\sigma_h^2 \right) / N\sigma^2 \quad (3)$$

In the above formula,  $N$  and  $\sigma^2$  represent the ICH sample capacity and ICH variance, respectively;  $N_h$  and  $\sigma_h^2$  represent the sample capacity and the variance of the type  $h$  influencing factors, respectively; and  $L$  represents the number of classes of the type  $h$  influencing factors. The value of  $q$  is between 0 and 1. The larger the value, the stronger the explanatory power of the index to ICH spatial distribution.

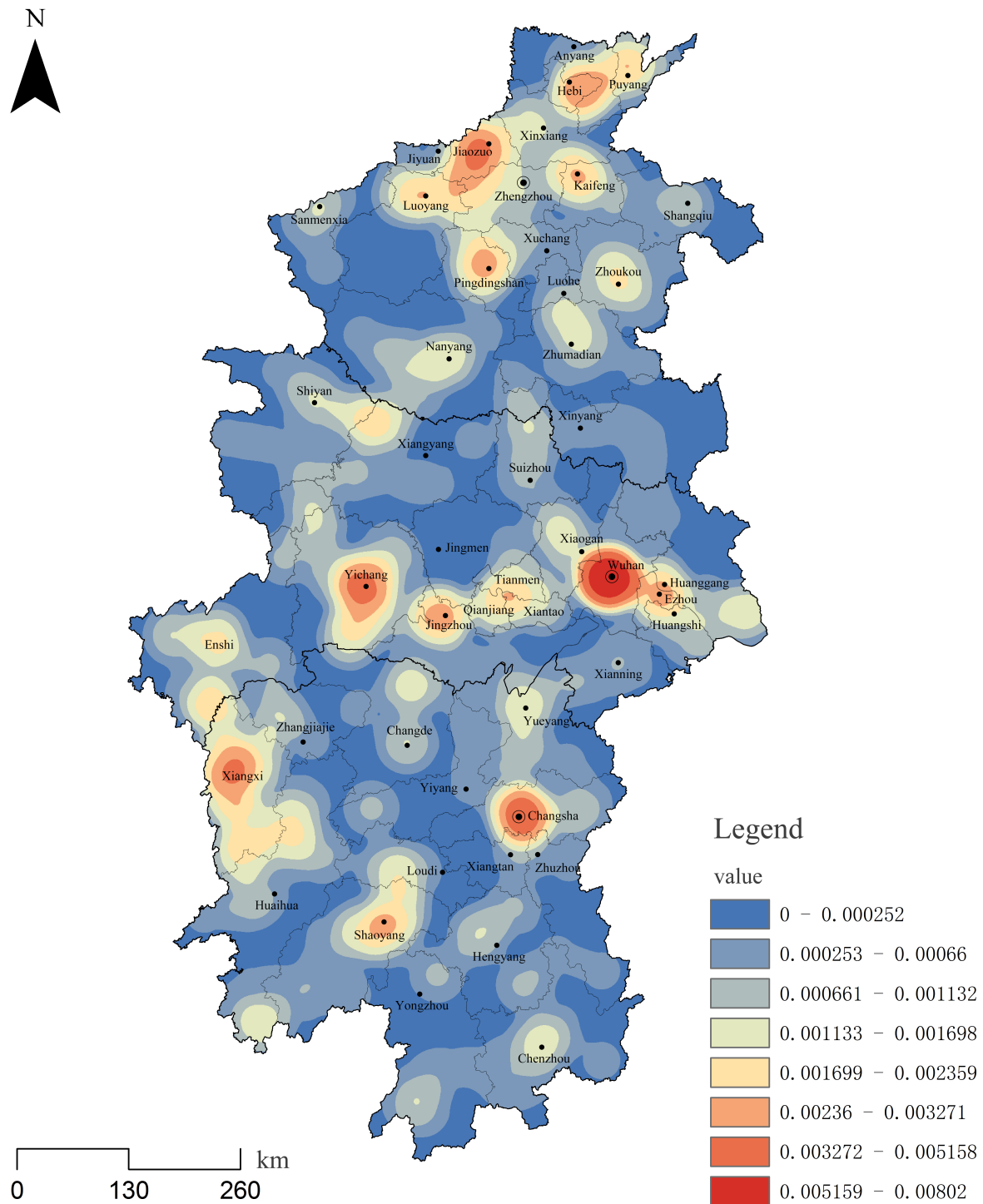
## 3. Distribution Characteristics

### 3.1. Overall Distribution Characteristics

The overall ICH kernel density map in Central China was obtained using the kernel density analysis method (Figure 2). It can be seen that the ICH distribution in Central China has an obvious agglomeration trend; it is dense in the upper and middle areas while sparse in the lower area, showing a “five-core” distribution structure. The “five cores” are ICH densely distributed regions, including one high-density region and four sub-density regions. The former includes Wuhan city and its surrounding areas, and the latter contains Zhengzhou city, Jiaozuo city, Yichang city, Changsha–Zhuzhou–Xiangtan city group, and the Big Xiangxi area. Among them, the Yellow River basin connects Zhengzhou city and Jiaozuo city, and the Yangtze River basin connects Zhengzhou city and Jiaozuo city. The Xiangjiang River flows through the Changsha–Zhuzhou–Xiangtan city group, and the Yuanshui River and Lishui River run through the Big Xiangxi area. The capital cities of the three provinces are densely distributed regions, which are also important water and land transportation hubs facilitating multi-cultural exchanges. At the same time, provincial capitals are also political and economic centers, and local residents have relatively high demand for spiritual culture, which to a certain extent is beneficial to the emergence and



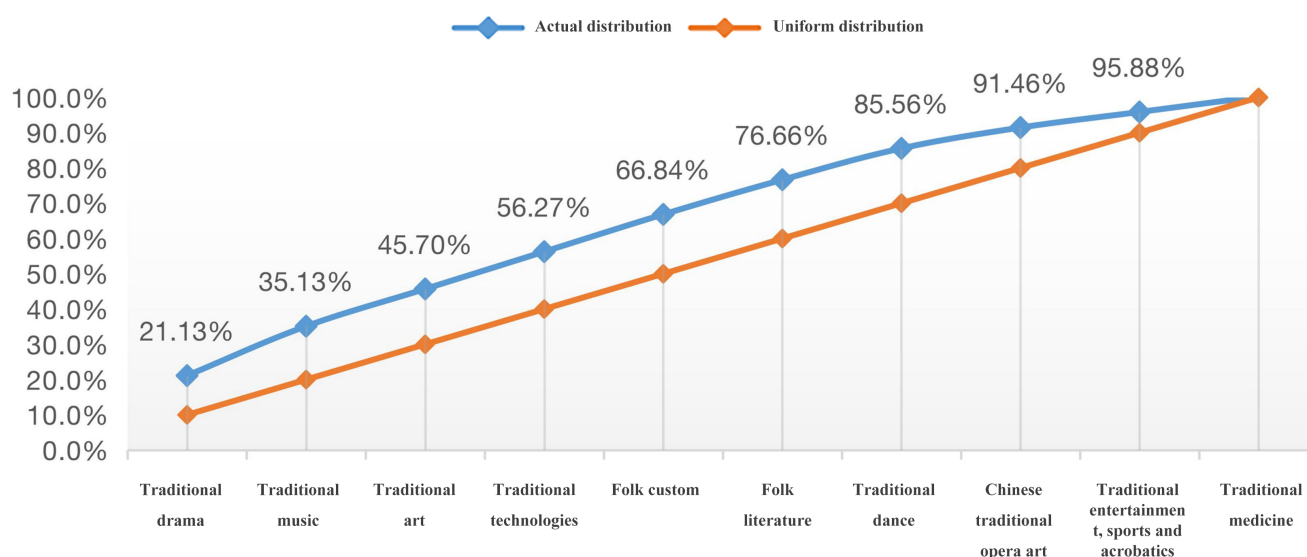
development of ICH. In addition, relatively closed areas and border areas of provinces (such as Jiaozuo city and the Big Xiangxi area) are also conducive to ICH formation. The barrier formed by terrain and administrative management avoids the impact of foreign culture and perfectly maintains the local culture's nature. In addition, the spatial distribution shows an obvious plain directivity. The East Henan Plain in Henan Province, Jiangnan Plain in Hubei Province, and Dongting Lake Plain in Hunan Province are all densely distributed regions, possibly due to the flat terrain which allows the population to gather, while the culture also continuously integrates with each other, thus easily forming a large ICH gathering area.



**Figure 2.** The overall kernel density map of ICH spatial distribution in Central China.

### 3.2. Category Distribution Characteristics

The Lorenz curve concentration index of different ICH categories in Central China is 0.3 ( $0 \leq I \leq 1$ ). The concentration index is relatively small, indicating that the distribution of different types of ICH shows a weak and uneven structure (Figure 3). In Central China, the dominating intangible cultural heritage is traditional drama with a total of 86 items, accounting for 21.13% of the total intangible cultural heritage. Traditional music comes in second with 57 items, accounting for 14%. Traditional art, traditional technologies, and folk customs represent 43 items, accounting for 10.57%. Folk literature, traditional dance, and Chinese traditional opera art represent 40, 35, and 24 items, accounting for 9.82%, 8.9%, and 5.9%, respectively. Traditional entertainment, sports, and acrobatics, as well as traditional medicine, are the least represented, with 18 items total, accounting for 4.42% (Table 1). In general, Central China has formed an ICH structure type mainly characterized by traditional drama and music, while traditional sports, entertainment, acrobatics, and traditional medicine are scarce.



**Figure 3.** The Lorenz curve of different ICH categories in Central China.

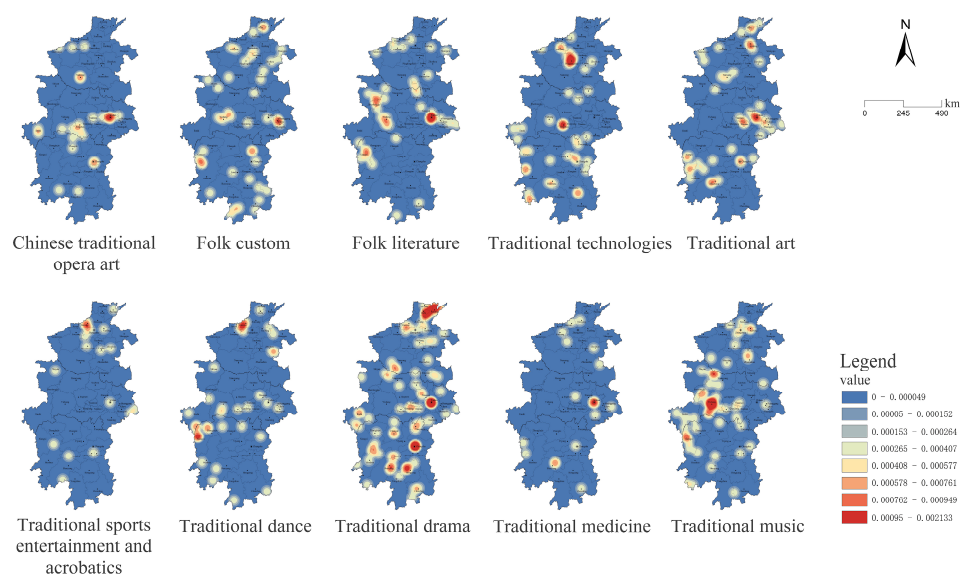
Traditional drama is most densely distributed in Puyang, Wuhan, and Changsha cities, but compared with other types, it has the widest dispersion range (Figure 4).

Traditional music is the most concentrated and is mostly distributed in Yichang city. Yichang city is a gathering area of ethnic minorities, which is very rich in national traditional music. Meanwhile, due to its mountainous geographical environment and proximity to the Yangtze River basin, people often compose songs to express their yearning for a better life in the face of harsh living conditions, which provides favorable conditions for the creation of labor songs and custom songs [27].

Traditional art is concentrated in Kaifeng city, Wuhan city, and the Big Xiangxi area. These areas have long histories and large populations. For example, Kaifeng city is an ancient capital city with a history spanning 4000 years [28], known as the “Ancient Capital of Eight Dynasties”, and was the world’s largest city during the Song Dynasty. In this prosperous cultural and economic context, local residents are especially fond of traditional art projects such as carving, painting, and embroidery. However, in the feudal period, some art projects were subject to the local rulers and nobles, which resulted in some projects only spreading in a small range [29].

The traditional technologies are most concentrated in Zhengzhou city. Traditional technologies are skills that can only be mastered after a certain amount of in-depth study. Each skill is branded with the mark of the Chinese nation. Zhengzhou city is an important birthplace of the Central Plains culture. Some handicraft techniques have strong family

inheritance traditions and are often kept secret; therefore, traditional skills are preserved in the profound history and culture [30].



**Figure 4.** The kernel density map of different kinds of ICH in Central China.

Folk custom is concentrated in central and northern Henan, central Hubei, and western Hunan. Chinese folk custom has a strong regional nature, and the projects forming such gatherings are mainly festivals, such as temple fair culture or ethnic minority weddings and sacrifices. Because of its uniqueness, it mostly affects the local area and cannot spread far, making it hard to create large clusters in space.

Folk literature is mainly concentrated in Hubei province. Folk literature is the language art transmitted orally in people's daily lives. Hubei was the land of Chu in history, where there was a saying that "Chu people were good wizards". The ancients attributed everything to the forces of nature and were keen on worship and sacrifice [31]. However, oral language is unstable, and the works were often changed or even lost due to changes in nationality, time, space, communicator ability, war, and politics. Fortunately, the spatial layout of Hubei has been relatively stable, which has created a favorable greenhouse for fairy tales, legends, and other folk literature to be preserved in abundance.

Traditional dance is collected in Jiaozuo city and Xiangxi ethnic minority areas. Traditional dance is usually a folk-dance art reflecting the life of farming, praying for good luck, and celebrating the harvest. The traditional dances of the Han nationality remain in Jiaozuo, while those of the Tujia, Miao, and other ethnic minorities are found in Xiangxi.

Chinese traditional opera art is usually gathered in economically developed areas and is most abundant in central and southern Hubei. These areas are located in the middle reaches of the Yangtze River Economic Belt, so a large range of gathering areas is formed.

Traditional sports, entertainment, and acrobatics are primarily concentrated in Henan Province, with Jiaozuo city as the core from which they spread. The most representative of this category is Chinese martial arts. Jiaozuo, where Tai Chi originated, is the hometown of Chinese martial arts and the local residents have a tradition of martial learning.

Traditional medicine in central China is relatively small in quantity and relatively independent among gathering points. In ancient times, most traditional medicine was in the hands of rulers, so it was mainly gathered in Jingzhou, Wuhan, Jiaozuo, Kaifeng, and other ancient cities. In addition, Miao medicine and other traditional medicines are circulated among ethnic minorities. Therefore, the spatial distribution of traditional medicine is spotty, and since most traditional medicine has not been recognized by modern medicine, the amount that can be preserved is small.

#### 4. Influencing Factors

By sorting out relevant studies on ICH spatial distribution and its influencing factors, it was determined that ICH spatial distribution is mainly affected by the combination of natural environmental factors and social and economic factors, such as topography and landform, rivers, the economy, population, and culture. Therefore, the geographical detector method (Equation (3)) was used to analyze the influencing factors on ICH spatial distribution in Central China from the above seven factor indicators [19–24]. The results showed the following order of influence: tertiary industry level ( $q: 0.252$ ) > economic development level ( $q: 0.246$ ) > urbanization ( $q: 0.218$ ) > population ( $q: 0.194$ ) > rivers ( $q: 0.147$ ) > culture ( $q: 0.113$ ) > topography and landform ( $q: 0.041$ ).

##### 4.1. Physical Geography

Located in the middle of China, passed by the reaches of the Yellow River and the Yangtze River, Central China is an important hub region in the nation. It bears a crucial duty of connecting the east to the west and the south to the north, giving it a pronounced overall regional advantage. However, it can be seen from Table 2 that topography and landform ( $q: 0.041$ ) has a weak influence on ICH spatial distribution in Central China. In addition, Hunan and Hubei are rich in water systems, while Henan is relatively scarce. Although there is a certain coupling reaction between the distribution of ICH and water systems, and the influence of water systems ( $q: 0.147$ ) is slightly higher than that of topography and landform, it is still weak. To sum up, physical geographical factors are not the main factors that affect ICH spatial distribution in Central China.

**Table 2.** ICH distribution influencing factors and their explanatory power.

Index	Evaluation Index	q
Topography and landform	Elevation	0.041
Rivers	The length of the river system	0.147
Economic development level	Regional GDP	0.246
Tertiary industry level	Tertiary industry production valuer	0.252
Urbanization	Urbanization rate	0.218
Population	Population size	0.194
Culture	The sum of “One village, one product” national model villages, China traditional villages, beautiful leisure countrysides, national rural-tourism folk villages, and famous historical and cultural cities and villages	0.113

##### 4.2. Social and Economic Factors

Zhang Zhongwu proposed that ICH spatial distribution is obviously coupled with the level of economic development [11]. Therefore, we adopted the regional GDP, tertiary industrial GDP, and urbanization rate of the three provinces in Central China from 2017 to 2021 as indicators for analysis.

###### 1. Regional GDP Comparative Analysis

Regional gross domestic product (hereinafter referred to as “GDP”) is one of important index to measure the economic development level of a region. Therefore, regional GDP should be taken as the primary factor in the study of the social and economic impact of ICH in Central China. The influence of regional GDP on ICH spatial distribution in Central China is 0.246, making it the second most important factor. Compared using data from the last five years, the GDP of Henan province has been the first among the three provinces in Central China, Hubei comes in second, while Hunan comes in last. There is no obvious coupling relationship between the ICH distribution and the economic development level at the inter-provincial scale in Central China. Among the three provinces, Henan, with the best economy, has the least amount of ICH, while Hubei, with the mid-level economy, has the largest.

## 2. Industrial Structure Comparative Analysis

According to China's Classification of Industries of National Economy (GB/T 4754-2011), intangible cultural heritage belongs to the tertiary industry; that is, all kinds of service or commerce [32]. Measuring the industrial structure of a region can better explain its development degree and mode of economy. The GDP of the tertiary industry has an influence of 0.252 on ICH spatial distribution in Central China, making it the most important factor. The data of the past five years show that the proportion of tertiary industry has been increasing day by day, and ICH is regarded as an important economic resource in the three provinces. In general, although the proportion of tertiary industry structure in Henan province is lower than that in the other two provinces, it can be seen from the growth of its proportion that Henan has fully realized the importance of ICH. Hubei has always maintained its own advantages and paid attention to the development of the ICH economy. However, the industrial structure of Hunan still needs to be adjusted, and the structure of ICH industry and other industries needs to be coordinated and optimized constantly.

## 3. Urbanization Rate Comparative Analysis

Urbanization rate is a relatively comprehensive index, which can not only measure the economic development of a region, but also reflect its infrastructure construction level and people's living standard. According to the yearbook statistics for the three provinces, the urbanization rate of Henan Province is 55.42% and for Hubei and Hunan Provinces the rates are 62.88% and 58.77%, respectively. There is a certain coincidence between urbanization rate and the ICH distribution in Central China. The influence of the former on the latter is 0.218, which makes it a relatively important influencing factor.

In general, there is no doubt that social and economic development levels shall have an important impact on ICH distribution. Regional GDP, tertiary industries' GDP, and urbanization rate are highly coincident with ICH spatial distribution. It can be concluded from the regional GDP and tertiary industries' GDP that ICH can produce certain economic benefits, which provide a solid economic backing in return for its self-development, so that residents can put more energy into ICH creation. From the level of urbanization, it can be predicted that as a region's economy continues to thrive, more attention will be paid to the construction of spiritual civilization to meet the people's increasing spiritual and cultural needs.

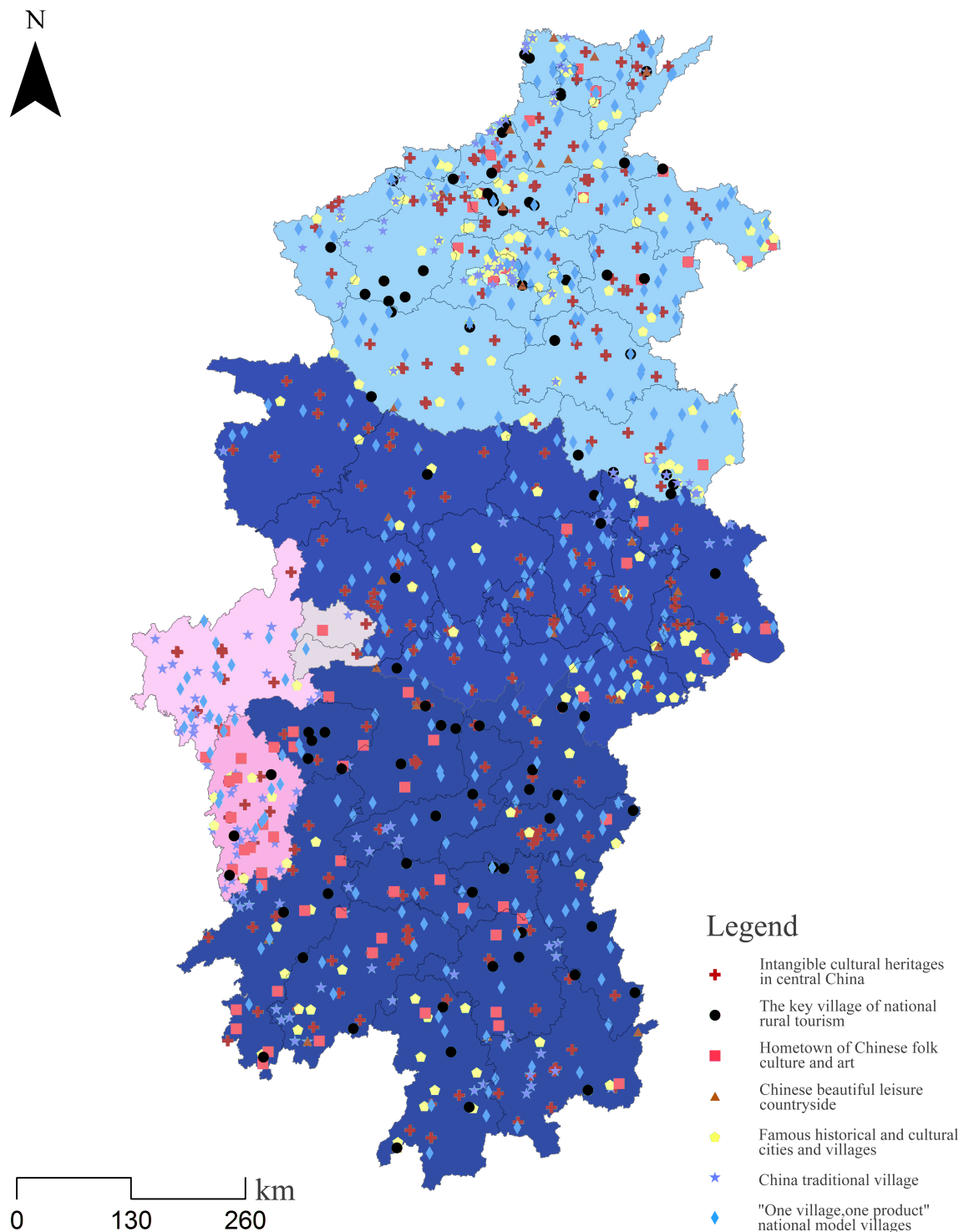
## 4. Population Structure

The ICH distribution is positively affected by economic growth, while the economic growth and population structure are interrelated. Although the population structure's influence is moderate ( $q: 0.194$ ), it still has certain effects. Among them, the "demographic dividend" effect produced by the change in population age structure has an important impact on the economic growth of a country or region. Therefore, whether the "demographic dividend" effect can promote ICH development has become a major concern.

## 5. Cultural Environment

Culture is the essential attribute of intangible cultural heritage. As a result, regional culture has a significant impact on ICH spatial distribution. A long history and a rich culture provide fertile ground for development. Cultural development and the formation of ICH are mutually beneficial, so cultural enrichment areas are more likely to form ICH cluster areas. Judging from the experimental results, although there is a certain degree of overlap between cultural development and ICH spatial distribution (Figure 5), its influence is weak ( $q: 0.113$ ). To some extent, this proves that the historical and cultural level in Central China is higher than the average for the entire region, so no obvious effect can be seen in the experiment. However, there is no doubt that central China has created 11.2% of the national ICH projects with only 5.9% of the country's land area.





**Figure 5.** Distribution of cultural influencing factors in Central China.

#### 4.3. Interaction Analysis

A geographical detector was used to determine the interactive effects of various influencing factors on ICH spatial distribution in Central China (Table 3). There are two types of interactions: two-factor enhancement and nonlinear enhancement. The interaction of different influencing factors has a certain effect on ICH spatial distribution, but the explanatory power of the two-factor interaction is stronger than that of the single factor. The types of interaction are dominated by nonlinear enhancement between the tertiary industry level and economic development level, as well as between the tertiary industry

level and urbanization, while the others are dominated by two-factor enhancement. Among them, the interaction between the economic development level and rivers is the strongest ( $q: 0.604$ ). The region through which a river passes is likely to form a plain, and the population migrates along with the river, thus effectively spreading culture. Meanwhile, ICH has a better chance of surviving and developing in countries with higher economic levels. The influence of the topography and landform factor in central China is weak, but as an ICH spatial carrier, it is still a factor that cannot be ignored in its formation and development process.

**Table 3.** ICH distribution influencing factors and their interactive effect.

Influencing Factors	Topography and Landform	Rivers	Economic Development Level	Tertiary Industry Level	Urbanization	Population	Culture
Topography and landform	0.041						
Rivers	0.279 (NE)	0.147					
Economic development level	0.329 (NE)	0.6049 (NE)	0.247				
Tertiary industry level	0.3059 (NE)	0.536 (NE)	0.434 (BE)	0.252			
Urbanization	0.325 (NE)	0.446 (NE)	0.469 (NE)	0.394 (BE)	0.218		
Population	0.297 (NE)	0.563 (NE)	0.486 (NE)	0.513 (NE)	0.446 (NE)	0.194	
Culture	0.232 (NE)	0.449 (NE)	0.377 (NE)	0.459 (NE)	0.455 (NE)	0.519 (NE)	0.113

Note: NE denotes nonlinear enhancement; BE denotes double-factor enhancement.

## 5. Field Survey

Bamboo weaving is a part of the national intangible cultural heritage. After a long historical evolution, bamboo weaving has evolved from use in daily necessities to handicrafts and then to collections, with both daily use and artistic features [33]. Our project team conducted a field survey of bamboo woven ICH projects in Furong Town, Xiangxi, Hunan Province, to further understand its survival status through micro-investigation. Furong Town is located in a dense ICH distributed area in Central China. There are five shops mainly engaged in bamboo weaving and seven to ten full-time bamboo craftsmen. Due to various reasons such as the research period, the willingness of the research subjects, and the time conflict, only four bamboo knitting artisans were interviewed. Two hundred undredminutes of recorded conversations and more than 20,000 words of related text materials were collected. This research mainly involved three aspects: identity of the inheritor, livelihood of the inheritor's craft, and inheritance environment.

1. Among the four bamboo artisans interviewed in Furong Town, only one was a county-level inheritor, while the other three were uncertified "natural inheritors". At present, China has formed a complete ICH inheritor certification system. On the one hand, the system encourages the enthusiasm of the certified inheritors and guarantees their basic life and cultural practices, but on the other hand, the system has discouraged the enthusiasm of natural inheritors who have not received much attention. Due to the lack of official certification and partial rights protection, natural inheritors lack a special sense of identity, which undoubtedly pushes them into a vicious spiral of "lack of identity–reduced market–reduced income–lack of cultural consciousness–give up the bamboo weaving industry", making natural inheritors unable to enter into good productive protection. It can be seen that current Chinese laws and regulations cannot keep up with the needs of ICH protection;
2. According to the oral interviews, the bamboo artisans in Furong Town are facing the practical problems of unstable income and rising production costs, while Furong Town's bamboo weaving industry is facing the problems of a sudden decrease in employees and confusion about the direction of industrial development. "Only when there is a market there will be a way to live". However, in the process of conducting the interviews and research, the gloomy retail situation of bamboo woven

products was verified by many parties. The average number of daily retail items does not exceed 10 pieces in the peak season of tourism, and it is more bleak in the off-season. Despite many attempts made by the craftsmen, most products have not been accepted by consumers. It can be seen that the current means of promotion and development are too simple, leading to the destruction of the reasonable cycle of ICH productive protection;

3. Furong Town failed to provide a good, productive cultural environment for bamboo weaving. ICH artifacts inherited by craftsmen have become extremely common tourism products, which has not only failed to draw the attention of the government, but also failed to attract tourists to pay for their cultural value. In addition to selling woven bamboo articles, all workshops also need to sell other industrial souvenirs to make a living. Combined with the previous field investigation, it was found that the current stage of ICH protection awareness is weak, and it is common to emphasize the ICH project application and development but put little effort into ICH protection and management.

## 6. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

### 6.1. Conclusions

1. The ICH distribution in Central China has an obvious agglomeration trend, being dense in the upper and the middle areas while sparse in the lower area, and shows a “five-core” distribution structure. Different ICH categories show uneven distribution: traditional drama has the most extensive distribution; Chinese traditional opera art, folk literature, and traditional music cluster over a wide area; and traditional sports, entertainment, acrobatics, traditional music, and traditional dance are dispersed in dots;
2. Among all the factors influencing ICH spatial distribution, tertiary industry level is the strongest, while topography and landform is the weakest. However, from the perspective of the interactive effects, the interaction influence of natural factors combined with any other factors is greater than that of a single factor.

### 6.2. Policy Recommendations

Understanding ICH spatial distribution characteristics in Central China is not only an important basis for regional cultural statistics, protection, and development, but also an important force for regional economic promotion. Based on the above research, from the view of sustainable development, this review puts forward suggestions on coordinating ICH spatial layout, protection, and development in Central China:

1. ICH is rooted in the environment where it is grown. Different regional environments create different types of culture. As a result, the principles of classification guidance and diversified protection should be reflected in ICH protection at all times. For example, when it comes to endangered ICH rescue, a regional coverage protection mode is preferred. When it comes to ICH with poor anti-interference and insufficient inclusiveness, a growth protection mode should be adopted to combat interference and implement independent ICH inheritance among the regular people. Finally, the construction base mode is promoted for the overall development of different levels and types of ICH, such as the establishment of cultural inheritance bases, folk villages, folk culture tourist attractions, and so on;
2. ICH is in the process of eternal change and development. We should attach importance to the interactive symbiotic relationship between ICH and the economy, make full use of its spatial distribution characteristics, appropriately combine market operations, gradually realize regional linkage from point to surface as well as from line to piece, and further serve the coordinated development of China’s rural revitalization policy and ICH protection.

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