

Article

A Probe into the Mutual Enhancement between Tertiary Education of Art and Intangible Cultural Heritage in China: A Case Study of Xiamen Bead Embroidery Course by Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University

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Abstract: Higher education has recently become an essential path to inheriting ICH in China. This research shows consideration about the protection of ICH. Using the ICH inheriting Xiamen d embroidery class undertaken at the Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University, as the evidence and example, this study may present the latest status of China's ICH protection from the perspective of higher art education. This research contains two parts, one consisting of a general outline of ICH protection and status, in China and globally. Another part discusses the details of a class teaching the ICH art form of Xiamen bead embroidery. In this part, a questionnaire survey on social awareness, higher education, and basic understanding of ICH was conducted. Meanwhile, a scientific model was developed, and, with it, public sense was examined precisely by data correlation analysis according to the questionnaire's distribution. The R language was used as the technical method for all statistical collation and summary. This research attempts to prove the correctness of the ICH inheriting class, which could be used as a model of an advanced and sustainable educational system featuring the scientific integration of ICH inheritance and higher education in the near future.

Keywords: higher education; intangible cultural heritage; Xiamen bead embroidery; inheriting class



Citation: Li, Z.; Xie, L. A Probe into the Mutual Enhancement between Tertiary Education of Art and Intangible Cultural Heritage in China: A Case Study of Xiamen Bead Embroidery Course by Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University. *Sustainability* **2023**, *15*, 6469. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15086469>

Academic Editors: Ainoa Escribano-Miralles, Raquel Sánchez-Ibáñez and Pedro Miralles-Martínez

Received: 24 February 2023

Revised: 31 March 2023

Accepted: 4 April 2023

Published: 11 April 2023



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1. Introduction

Xiamen bead embroidery is an intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of China that comprises the merits of modern Chinese and Western embroidery skills and art styles superbly. Traditional craftsmanship is a significant component of ICH. Some studies related to handicrafts and ICH had indicated that, *created in 2008 after the French approval of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), the ICH National Inventory is kept by the Ministry of Culture (Heritage Directorate), with almost 25% inventory files regarding traditional craftsmanship* [1]. China acceded to the Convention in 2004. After a 15-year journey, the number of world heritage sites of China has grown to the first place in the world since 2019. In the past, many ICH items might not be protected fully. With the increase of social economy and public awareness, China has entered a new era of inheriting and safeguarding of cultural heritages, especially items of ICH. Nowadays, the research relevant to ICH and higher education has become widespread and mature in many countries. For instance, *in Sweden and Norway, craft research has developed strongly in architectural conservation and cultural heritage, with a focus on traditional craftsmanship and the performative elements of intangible cultural heritage* [2]. It was believed by educational specialists that *the use in art education of a current, ordinary-language definition of aesthetics as visual appearance and effect* [3]. ICH requires educational intervention to preserve and disseminate the ethereal artistic expression [4]. It seems evident that art education would

benefit the general development of ICH [5]. Correspondingly, higher education has become an essential path to inheriting ICH in China recently. This study was based on academic research and practical experiences, and takes the mutual promoted practice of Xiamen bead embroidery at the higher education facility of the Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University, as the example, in order to discuss feasible paths and sustainable educational models of mutual promotion between university art education and handicraft national intangible cultural heritage.

Until January 2023, the number of national intangible cultural heritage items (NICHIP) in China was 3610. To build up the NICHIP list, by classifying protected objects, would help authorities to concentrate limited resources on helping inherit NICHIPs with historical, literary, artistic, and scientific values that embody the traditional culture better. Meanwhile, it would be also helpful for the public to get familiar with local history and social culture. In short, the NICHIP list is not only advantageous to the systematic research of contemporary culture, but also useful to gather, as well as inherit, the gems of human history.

Figure 1 shows the current situation of ICH distribution across different provinces in China. First, even though the sum of Chinese ICH items was large, due to a vast territory, the distribution of ICH shows a disequilibrium situation among provinces. Zhejiang province hold the highest number of ICH items, at 257. However, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region holds the fewest, at 28. Second, the distribution of ICH items generally follows the regular law of economic development in China, which means the south-eastern, relatively prosperous part of China's mainland would play an essential role in the future of ICH protection. Third, from the perspective of the ICH quality, Fujian province ranks above the middle-up levels in China, which means Fujian province has the potential to become a distinct province in the aspect of culture protection in China.

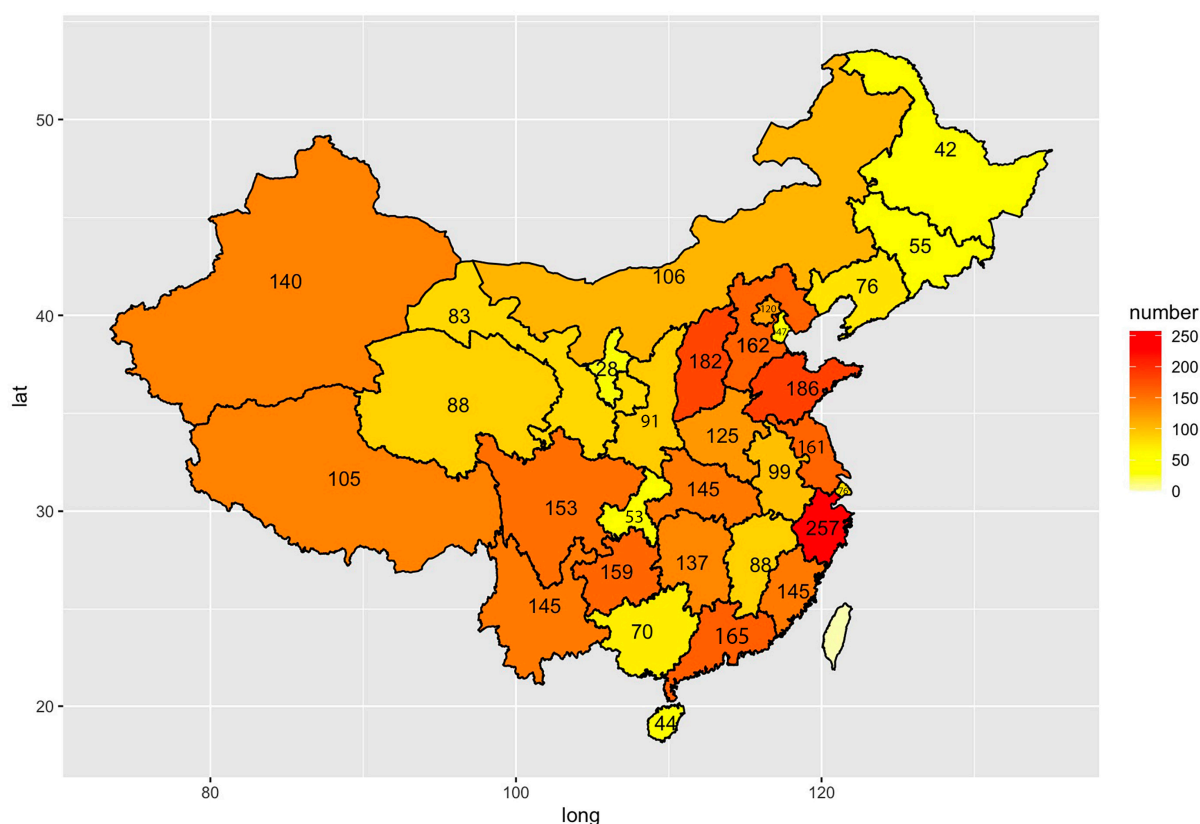


Figure 1. The distribution map of China intangible cultural heritage [6] (by January 2023). Data was collecting from Official website of China ICH (<https://www.ihchina.cn>). (Accessed on 27 January 2023) The figure was summarized and made by Lin Xie. Method: The R language.

Fujian is an economically developed province in China, which means it would have the continuous financial capability to support research toward local cultural heritages. Meanwhile, Fujian province has a relatively rich resource of ICH in China. Among these, Xiamen bead embroidery was so unique in local history and art styles that it became a symbol of Fujian province in the specific studied period of cultural changes. Xiamen bead embroidery first developed in the southeast coast of China with Xiamen as its centre. As shown in Figure 2, the influence of Xiamen bead embroidery was massive and comprehensive, not only in the adjacent provinces but also further, leading to the formation of “Yue embroidery” in Guangdong province.



Figure 2. The general geographic location of Xiamen city in Fujian province. Basic map data was collecting from Apple Maps and highlighted by Lin Xie. Methods: Adobe Illustrator 2021.

Figure 3 presents the detail of examples of Xiamen bead embroidery. In addition to that, Figure 4 shows the artworks that made by Liyu Xie, one of current inheritors of “Xiamen bead embroidery”. Due to light refraction, the beads usually have a relief effect [7]. In addition, the difference of colours, materials, and shapes of the beads, as well as the richness of embroidery materials and methods, help give them a more multivariate impression, which provides the artworks of Xiamen bead embroidery with an elegant, magnificent, and delicate visual appearance. Xiamen bead embroidery has an history of over one hundred years [8], which created a pure handmade artwork with high artistic and cultural value, as well as one regarded as “more than worthy to collect”. Meanwhile, Xiamen bead embroidery was a result of humanity and reflects a close connection between Xiamen and Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, and some other southeast Asian countries which have significant Chinese populations. The above grants Xiamen bead embroidery the title of an artistic and cultural fossil of the Chinese Maritime Silk Road, with high research value and potential for development.

1.1. Literature Review

Xiamen bead embroidery was once popular in China. However, with the overwhelming trend of industrialization and consumerism, the number of inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery shrank quickly. In other words, Xiamen bead embroidery is facing the danger of being forgotten. A convincing statement was widely accepted: *in contemporary global era, it is highly important to approach the popular culture and national culture delicately and take essential precautions about the local and native cultures* [9]. This research aims to offer new approaches of inheriting and protecting ICH in the perspective of higher education. According to Faithmah [10], the protection of cultural heritage is considered to be sustained in a connected global view. This means that what could enhance the protection of ICH, being the inevitable result of pursuing a healthy and sustainable progress of ICH, would also strength the soft power of a country and enrich the cultural connotation of mankind.



Figure 3. “Xiamen bead embroidery” artworks. Illustrations are courtesy of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.



Figure 4. The products made by Liyu Xie, one of the inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery. Photographed by Jiamin Zhuang, student from Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University.

1.1.1. The ICH Protection Trend in the Global Level

Raising awareness for the protection of ICH seems common sense on the international level. Article 14, on education, awareness-raising, and capacity-building, of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* [11], announced by UNESCO has emphasized the necessity of using education to protect intangible cultural heritage and solve the reduction in cultural diversity caused by globalization. China became one of the contracting parties of UNESCO in 2004, and thus should endeavour, by all appropriate means, to ensure recognition of, respect for, and enhancement of the intangible cultural heritage in society, in particular through educational, awareness-raising, and informational programmes aimed at the general public, in particular young people, as well as, specific educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned. Chapter IV.1.2 of the 4th chapter of the *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* [12] points at formal and non-formal education at the local and national levels, and suggests that state parties shall endeavour to prioritise heritage in education by all appropriate means, for example: enhancing the capacities of teachers to teach about intangible cultural heritage; involving practitioners and bearers in the development of educational programmes and inviting them to explain their heritage in schools and educational institutions; privileging experience of intangible cultural heritage with practical methods by employing participatory educational methodologies; and making full use, where appropriate, of information and communication technologies, etc. The chapter VI.1.3 “Quality education” proposes enhancing collaboration and complementarity among the diversity of educational practices and systems, along with, in some cases, individuals, as part of their intangible cultural heritage, and assessing their efficacy and suitability for integration into other educational contexts.

1.1.2. The General Situation of ICH Protection in Current China

Since 2003, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has become a priority of China’s cultural heritage safeguarding policies at all levels. However, how to pass this consciousness to the Chinese young generation remains a significant question among ICH safeguarding issues. Article 34 of the *Law of the People’s Republic of China on Intangible Cultural Heritage* [13], promulgated and implemented by China in 2011, clearly states that *school should carry out relevant intangible cultural heritage education in accordance with the provisions of the competent education department of the State council*. Furthermore, the *Opinions of the General Office of the State Council on Strengthening the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage in China* pointed out that *education departments and schools at all levels should gradually incorporate excellent intangible cultural heritage content that embodies national spirit and folk characteristics into teaching materials and carry out teaching activities*. It could be seen that, from the relevant Chinese law’s point of view, colleges and universities, the legal subjects of ICH education, shall also shoulder the responsibility and mission of ICH inheritance through education. Based on this, colleges and universities should fully exploit and utilize the local ICH resources so that they can achieve three steps to improve the academic level in higher education: first, strive to address benefits from the positive traditional culture; second, excavate the contemporary value; third, promote the creative transformation and innovative development of ICH.

1.1.3. Research about Education and ICH Protection

Most of the research studying the potential relationships of ICH shows that education is more than simply teaching and learning; rather, it is a complex mixture of almost infinite possibilities [14]. Merillas believes that *heritage education in raising the awareness of people and guaranteeing unifying processes to ensure that cultural expressions become part of the community’s shared heritage* [15]. Meanwhile, Derya points out that *educational systems should show the young generations the significance of cultural heritages and create awareness to safeguard cultural heritage* [16]. However, one viewpoint states [17] that the methods of innovative education are beneficial to intangible cultural heritage education in the

era of globalization. From an educational point of view, De Santis considers that, *from an educational point of view, it was about promoting social relationships, reciprocity, mutual aid and the awareness of citizens of having power and the ability to be actors in the process of management* [18], and Ansorena believes it helps to build up students' critical thinking, digital and information processing abilities, and other qualities [19]. Additionally, some researchers hold the opinions that it was positive to cultivate a sense of duty and the value of inheritance education [20]. Lovtsova summarizes the above with a solution, as *the problem of preserving the traditions of academic art and folk culture as part of the intangible cultural heritage of the country is becoming more urgent every year. One of the solutions to this problem is the transfer of knowledge and technology using additional general education programs* [21]. Therefore, ICH education in colleges and universities shall be a sustainable method to encourage inheritance of cultural heritage. These studies show the importance of ICH inheritance and higher education has become increasingly evident from the perspective of *cultural sustainability, recontextualization, activism and advocacy* [22]. Kohe believes that universities and colleges are the main platform to share professional knowledge and suggestion, training, and development opportunities of ICH [23]. In addition to this, Ana also suggested that it could improve the abilities of innovation, thinking, and participation in students [24]. Zhou added that it was meaningful to innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education [25]. Nuzzaci explained that *different skills of the stakeholders interact inside a common cultural area pursuing the same goals* [26].

To sum up, higher education is the meaningful supply to the inheritance of ICH. In other words, continuing to develop educational resources from ICH, and a system of integration between them, could form a profitable push to deepen current higher education. The relevant research on art education and ICH shows several agreements currently. Firstly, *contents of education regarding cultural heritage in a current curriculum of arts should be centrally composed with cultural heritage directly related to the arts as a priority matter* [27]. Secondly, *the protection and sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) are being confronted with many problems, among which the difficulty of passing on ICH, particularly traditional handicraft, from masters to apprentices should be given attention* [28]. Thirdly, *the pandemic crisis dramatically highlighted the fragility of culture and, in particular, of our tangible and intangible, artistic and historical heritage. In addition, a fragility determined substantially by the absence of relations, of which the heritage lives on in the historical succession of the societies that preserve and share it.* [29].

In recent research, higher education shows an influence on the inheritance of the intangible cultural heritage of traditional handicrafts. As a result, *the epoch of globalization asks for a review in teaching methods of the combined university level art subjects, not only in terms of the aspect of scientific achievements but also regarding intangible heritage* [30]. Furthermore, the contents of education regarding cultural heritage in a current curriculum of arts should be composed with cultural heritage directly related to the art as a priority matter. In conclusion, it seems sustainable to deeply integrate ICH inheritance with higher education [31].

2. Materials and Methodology

2.1. Study Area: The History of Xiamen Bead Embroidery

This research adopted three study methods, which were field research, documentary study, and questionnaire survey. A field visit to the ICH learning place in Xiamen was conducted, and necessary interviews with the representatives of Xiamen bead embroidery inheritors were made, to record oral materials, as well as the collection of photos. After observation and comparison, we summarized the history of Xiamen bead embroidery into four main stages in Figure 5 as follows.

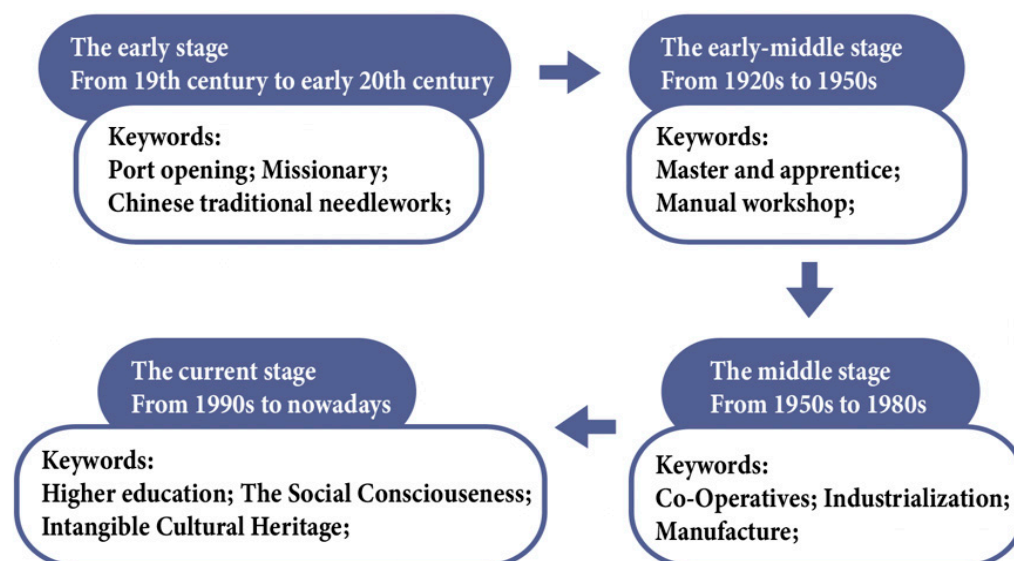


Figure 5. The historical outline of Xiamen bead embroidery. Information collected from documentary study and field research. Figure was summarized by Zhaoqing Li, drawn by Lin Xie. Method: Adobe Illustrator 2022.

2.1.1. The Early Stage (from 19th Century to the Early 20th Century)

The artistic influences of Xiamen bead embroidery can be seen in both western design theory, with elements such as the composition, colours, and the shape, and Chinese traditional embroidery style, such as the content, expression, etc. It has close connection with foreign cultures in modern times.

The concession of Xiamen started in 1844 [32], after which missionaries from Europe and America came in large numbers. Because of this, a number of missionary schools were built, and Western culture was expanded in Xiamen. At that time, a course of manual embroidery was provided to female students by the missionary schools on Gulangyu Island of Xiamen. Therefore, numbers of students from Xiamen were accepted, and learned basic and solid Western style embroidery in a formal educational setting. In addition to this, Chinese traditional needlework was also one of the basic home educational skills taught to females in Xiamen. Due to these reasons, Xiamen bead embroidery can be seen as a result of the historical exchange between Chinese and Western cultures in this specific period.

2.1.2. The Early–Middle Stage (from 1920s to 1950s)

In the 1920s, clothes and slippers decorated with beads were leading the trend of world fashion. The Figure 6 was a poster of Xiamen bead embroidery slippers. After the opening of Chinese cities, for example, Shanghai and Xiamen, these areas followed the new fashion trend rapidly. Under this situation, massive amounts and types of beads were imported to China as materials, which enhanced the education of apprentices of Xiamen bead embroidery. In this case, the model of home industry of females [33], as well as that of the master and apprentice, were gradually found. At that period, Datong Road and Renhe Road in Xiamen were connected with Lujiang Road. They were so close to authorities, for example, the ferry terminal and post office, that they became the two most prosperous commercial streets in Xiamen. Therefore, the most famous workshops of Xiamen bead embroidery naturally gathered there. Ever since that, Xiamen bead embroidery started the trend of home-handicraft, similar to modern home-educational studios. The masters from workshops taught their apprentices, passing on experience in person. Meanwhile, the apprentices usually need to accomplish their own works, assigned by their masters.



Figure 6. The commercial poster of “The Xiamen Bead Slipper Cooperative Society of Producers”. Illustrations by courtesy of Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.

2.1.3. The Middle Stage (from 1950s to 1980s)

In the 1950s, the workshops in Datong Road and Renhe Road in Xiamen were integrated into the Xiamen Bead Slipper Cooperative Society of Producers, and prepared to scale up their production. As Figure 7 had presented, a formal teaching model came into being due to the expansion of production, also formed an extensive education base on the producer’s cooperatives. Later, in the 1960s, the cooperative society of producers was integrated again as a department into Xiamen Leather Shoes and Hat Factory. Later on, it became an independent factory, named Xiamen Bead Embroidery Slipper Factory, and unveiled the brand “crystal” to the market, which received great success and welcome [34].



Figure 7. The production and teaching class undertaken by The Xiamen Bead Slipper Cooperative Society Producers. Illustrations are courtesy of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.

China had adopted an examination method that could be summed up as “public recommend, leader approval, school review” before 1977. This type of university entrance exam provided chances for the skeleton staffs of factories to enter local art schools to enhance themselves in the way of professional skills and theories, which built the talent reserve, allowing for the peak growth of Xiamen bead embroidery in the 1980s.

Among such craftspeople, Liyu Xie, the current representative of Xiamen bead embroidery inheritors, established the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum by herself with her pension. As a noble person, who has contributed herself to Xiamen bead embroidery, she entered the Fujian Art and Craft School, later renamed as the Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University, for one and half years to study sketching, gouache, watercolour, line drawing, and some other courses. According to her, this learning experience strengthened her professional qualities and capacities of working. Furthermore, it provided her with a general overview of bead embroidery art, as well as setting a solid foundation for better understanding, inheriting, teaching, and propagating of Xiamen bead embroidery.

2.1.4. The Current Stage (from 1990s to Nowadays)

The production of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Slipper Factory gradually reduced during the process of the Chinese economic system's transition from planned economy to market economy since the 1990s. After this, the factory closed and staff were laid off. Due to this reason, the once popular Xiamen bead embroidery was fading away from people's daily live, as were the related embroidery skills.

However, Liyu Xie, the former designer of Xiamen Bead Embroidery Slipper Factory, through her passion for Xiamen bead embroidery, found another three colleagues: Shuyuan Yang, Yuli Lin, and Yuqiong Wang, and they gathered together to undertake a responsibility to disseminate the culture of Xiamen bead embroidery. Figure 8 has displayed the four inheritors were working together. In Figure 9, what could be seen was that, one of inheritors Yuqiong Wang was creating a Xiamen bead embroidery artwork. Among which, Liyu Xie has become the main representative and presented a Xiamen bead embroidery artwork "Xiamen Scenery" to the mayor of Wellington, New Zealand as a friendship gift of Xiamen city like Figure 10 has shown. Figure 11 shows Liyu Xie at work in an outdoor activity. Additions to that, the Figure 12 shows the artworks from inheritors. Because of their persistence and faith, Xiamen bead embroidery has had a secondary resurgence to the public as the intangible cultural heritage of Xiamen, after disappearing for nearly twenty years.



Figure 8. Four inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery: Liyu Xie, Shuyuan Yang, Yuli Lin, Yuqiong Wang at work. Illustrations are courtesy of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.

2.1.5. Conclusions

What could be seen from Figure 13 was the four different stages of the Xiamen bead embroidery's development. From the perspective of raw materials, the changes also represent a historical process for Xiamen bead embroidery. In the initial stages of its

appearance, missionaries and businessmen from Europe brought different beads, such as tube and sequin, which were mainly made in Czechia, Hungary, and some other countries, to Xiamen. It promotes the acculturation between Chinese and Western culture, arts, and crafts. With the rapid development of contemporary industrial manufacturing, the materials of Xiamen bead embroidery have changed naturally. The materials available for inheritors and hobbyists to manipulate are much richer than before, as can be seen from Table 1. The variety of materials helps people to seek diverse artistic expression.



Figure 9. Yuqiong Wang, one of the inheritors, working on Xiamen bead embroidery artwork [35].



Figure 10. Liyu Xie, one of the inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery, presented a Xiamen bead embroidery artwork, “Xiamen scenery”, which won the silver medal of China’s first “Hundred Flowers Award” for arts and crafts, as a friendship gift to the mayor of Wellington, New Zealand, on behalf of Xiamen local culture in Jun. 2010. The artwork is now collected and displayed in Wellington City Hall. Illustrations are courtesy of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.



Figure 11. Liyu Xie, one of the inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery at work. Illustrations are courtesy of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.



Figure 12. The artworks made by the Xiamen bead embroidery inheritors Liyu Xie, Shuyuan Yang, Yuli Lin, Yuqiong Wang. Illustrations (from left one to three) were photographed by Zhaoqing Li. Illustration (the right one) is courtesy of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.

Xiamen bead embroidery is a precious symbol of a specific historical period of Xiamen and China. From our research on Xiamen bead embroidery, we can recognize not only the continuous growth of exquisite embroidery techniques of local culture, but the outstanding outcome of culture exchanges between Chinese and Western cultures as well. However, Xiamen bead embroidery may still face the danger of vanishing, after the current inheritors pass away in coming decades, as society and people offer little support to it currently. To sum up, there were three notable points in the development of Xiamen bead embroidery. Firstly, *the viability of intangible cultural heritage depends on the potentials of adopting to new contexts and revitalization* [36]. ICH items shall renew themselves positively through the perspectives of skills, materials, usages, art-styles, etc., in order to follow social development and better meet the art tastes of the consumer market. Secondly, the traditional apprenticeship system is far too limited to enable ICH items such as Xiamen bead embroidery to further mature. Thirdly, more methods should be considered to expand the popularity of Xiamen bead embroidery. From this point, a database of Xiamen bead embroidery skills should be established with digital and internet technology, perhaps even attempting to incorporate VR (Virtual Reality) technology to create an invented learning

environment. The process of inheritance of Xiamen bead embroidery could draw public attention towards improving ICH protection. Therefore, this research on Xiamen bead embroidery is meaningful, and would also be beneficial to other ICH items and other areas of knowledge and research.

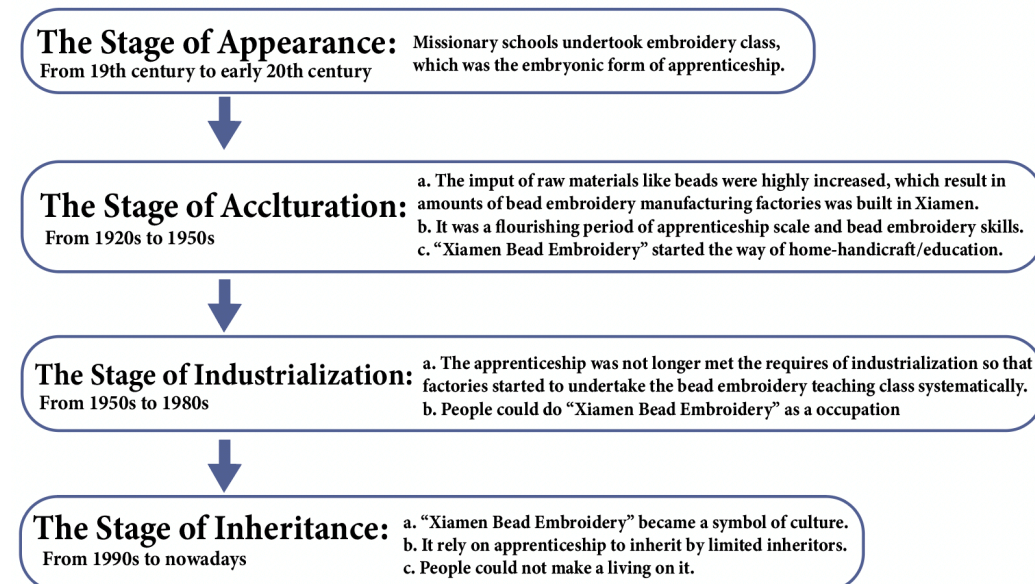


Figure 13. The different stage outline of “Xiamen bead embroidery” and apprenticeship development. Information collected from documentary study and field research. Figure was summarized and drawn by Lin Xie. Method: Adobe Illustrator 2022.

Table 1. The Summary of Design Features of Xiamen bead embroidery.

The Summary of Design Features of Xiamen Bead Embroidery	
Types of artworks	Classic garments and accessories: slippers, dresses, skirts, bags, scarves, jewellery; home decoration: hanging pictures, etc.
Colour-use principle	The use of colours is exquisite, emphasizing the colour in the same level of gradients, however presented by different lightness and purity.
Artwork materials	Industrial materials: glass beads, plastic sequins, etc.; natural materials: pearls, gemstones, etc.
Surface and bottom material	Surface material: velvet, velveteen, corduroy, brocade, osmanthus nylon cloth, golden onion nylon cloth, etc. Bottom material: leather, artificial leather, flocking, imitation leather sole, light fat sheet, linen, etc.
Regular skills	Handmade full embroidery; Handmade half embroidery: grain embroidery, beaded embroidery, convex embroidery, concave embroidery, flat embroidery, random needle embroidery, vertical bead embroidery, laminated embroidery, etc.
Regular patterns	Traditional folk themes: auspicious beasts, ladies, flowers and birds, vases, bronzes, etc. Jade dragon eight treasures theme: gourd, lion horn, banana leaf, treasure fan, etc. Xiamen’s distinctives theme: Gulangyu island, herons, geometric patterns, etc.
General styles	Classical and ethnic style

Information collected from documentary study and field research. Table was summarized by Zhaoqing Li, drawn and checked by Lin Xie.

2.2. Questionnaire Survey on General Perception of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Quality questionnaires gather various actual perspectives from specific people, which is the key factor of a reliable field research. This questionnaire survey was designed to determine the actual attitudes held towards ICH protection, cultural education, and inheri-

tance approaches by members of the public of various backgrounds, who are divided into Group Ages, Group Income levels, Group Qualifications, and Group Genders; characteristics that could particularly reflect the awareness of change in current Chinese society. In order to increase the reliability and rationality of the formal questionnaire, two pre-test questionnaires, from total of 59, were released to students of the Xiamen Academy of Art and Design, Fuzhou University, through internet and paper in 2022, which could be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Questionnaire Distribution and Recovery. The Topic of Questionnaire: “Discuss the relationship between National intangible cultural heritage projects and the higher art education in China”.

No.	Release Date	Type of Questionnaire	Distribution Channels	Number of Releases	Total Answers	Accepted Answers
1	26 January 2023	Formal questionnaire	Wjx.cn	222	222	222
2	27 January 2023	Formal questionnaire	Credamo Data Mart	80	92	80
3	2 February 2023	Formal questionnaire	Credamo Data Mart	200	229	200
4	21 September 2022	Pre-test questionnaire	Wjx.cn/Paper	32	32	/
5	22 July 2022	Pre-test questionnaire	Wjx.cn/Paper	27	27	/

The pre-test questionnaires, choosing college students from the same specific school, would result in a lack of diversity. Based on this, the scope of the questionnaire was been expanded, and 502 questionnaires was released through two internet platforms at three points in time. At the same time, some corrections were made to the formal questionnaire’s content. Tables 3 and 4 have displayed a final revised questionnaire, which was made up of 18 single-choice questions and 7 multiple-choice questions, for a total sum of 25 questions. The relevant data was collected from targeted groups: college student and the public audience. In this study, the questionnaire reflects a general perception of the targeted groups, and provides primary research data with different perspectives, which could be roughly divided into six modules: cultural protection, cultural acquaintance, further protection, ICH education, extensions and ICH marketization.

Table 3. Formal questionnaire’s general goal and principle.

No.	Type	Quality	General Goal
1	Simple choice	18	a. To gather attitudes from people of different gender, age, income level, and qualifications towards to ICH’s inheritance.
			b. Take it as data resource, to make the correlation analysis with ICH protection as main factor.
2	Muti-choice	7	To gather general information about protections, education, purchase promotions of ICH from targeted people.

Principle: Questionnaire was sent to muti-background persons and checked by stable standards.

Table 4. Summary of questionnaire.

No.	Content Summary of Questionnaire Items	Number of Items	Item Code
1	Personal information: gender, age, average income, educational background, residence	5	1,2,3,4,5
2	Understanding of China and Fujian ICH	4	8,10,18,19

Table 4. *Cont.*

No.	Content Summary of Questionnaire Items	Number of Items	Item Code
3	Attitude and opinions about necessity of protection	3	7,23,25
4	Willingness of acquaintance	3	13,14,22
5	Enthusiasm of protection	3	6,9,20,
6	Recognition and opinions of ICH and art education	4	15,16,17,24
7	Attitude on ICH purchase	3	11,12,21
In total		25	

From the research before the final revised questionnaire, we gathered a basic understanding and data resources of modern bead embroidery that could benefit the identification, method, and practice of the education of ICH protection [37]. Refer to Table 3 for the content summary of the questionnaire with seven modules, and Table 4 for the brief questionnaire goal and principle.

2.2.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Questionnaire

This formal questionnaire has been adjusted according to feedback from the pre-test questionnaires, and was adjusted to 11 counting items for the heatmap's data. From Tables 5 and 6, Cronbach's Alpha was 0.753, which was higher than the limited 0.7. Meanwhile, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value of sampling groups (from X_1 to X_{11}) adequacy was 0.836, and the significance index (sig.) was 0.000, while df. was 55. As the sig. was far less than 0.05 and the df. was greater than 30, the questionnaire design was reliable with validity, and could also show some effective and referable means of ICH protection from the perspective of public sense.

Table 5. Reliability Statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
0.753	0.759	11

Table 6. KMO and Bartlett's Test.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin of Sampling Adequacy: 0.836		
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-square	917.338
	df.	55
	Sig.	0.000

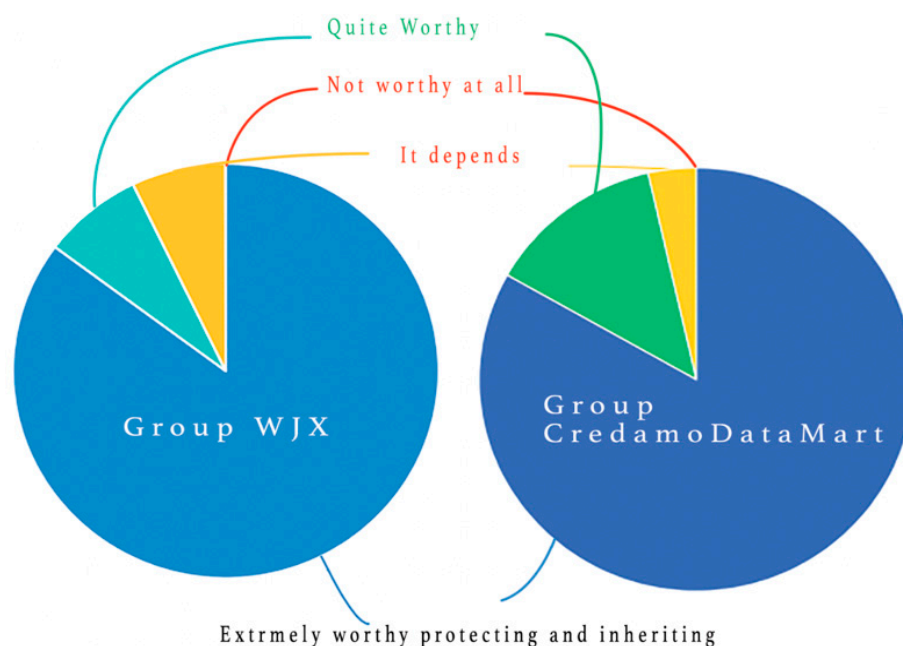
2.2.2. Analysis and Countermeasures According to the Result

In accordance with the formal questionnaire, 11 counting items were designed to fit the standard of selection distribution from score +1 to score +4, standing for negative to positive selection. As Table 7 has presented, the major content from X_1 to X_{11} could be considered as the attitude data of the questionnaire, which has research significance in understanding the relevance between people of different qualifications, ages, genders, income levels, and their selection towards to specific content about ICH protection and education. Meanwhile, Table 7 is also useful for gathering information for the design of the heatmap. The Figure 14 displayed that the majority of targeted people believe that the inheritance and protection of ICH items are worthy and significant.

Table 7. Description of targeted groups from X_1 – X_{11} .

No.	Major Content of Targeted Group	Selection Distribution
X_1	Four attitudes on China ICH protection and inheritance	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_2	Four levels of understand towards China ICH	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_3	Four levels of the willingness to know China ICH	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_4	Four levels of the acquaintance of China ICH item Xiamen bead embroidery	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_5	Four levels towards ICH purchase	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_6	Four preferences towards traveling	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_7	Three attitudes on the necessity of art common education in higher education	+1, +2, +3
X_8	Four attitudes on art education to the public	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_9	Four attitudes of art and culture to the daily life	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_{10}	Four attitudes of willingness to join ICH	+1, +2, +3, +4
X_{11}	Four attitudes of inheritance class of ICH	+1, +2, +3, +4

Score counting: Excel 2021.

**Figure 14.** The X_1 explanation (four attitudes on China ICH protection and inheritance). Information collected from formal questionnaire. Figure was summarized and drawn by Lin Xie, Method: Adobe Illustrator 2022.

Meanwhile, in order to figure out the relationship regardless of genders, age, income levels, educational levels, and the general perception of ICH protection and education, a heatmap, containing 5 groups (distribution channels, age, genders, income levels, educational levels) and 11 sets of opinion, was produced as Figure 15. In addition to that, the options of certain question were counted from negative (+1) to positive (+4), which could be seen in Table 7 as well. The scores directly related to the degree, so that the desired relationship could be quantified and concretized, which could help visualize the invisible attitudes of the targeted groups.

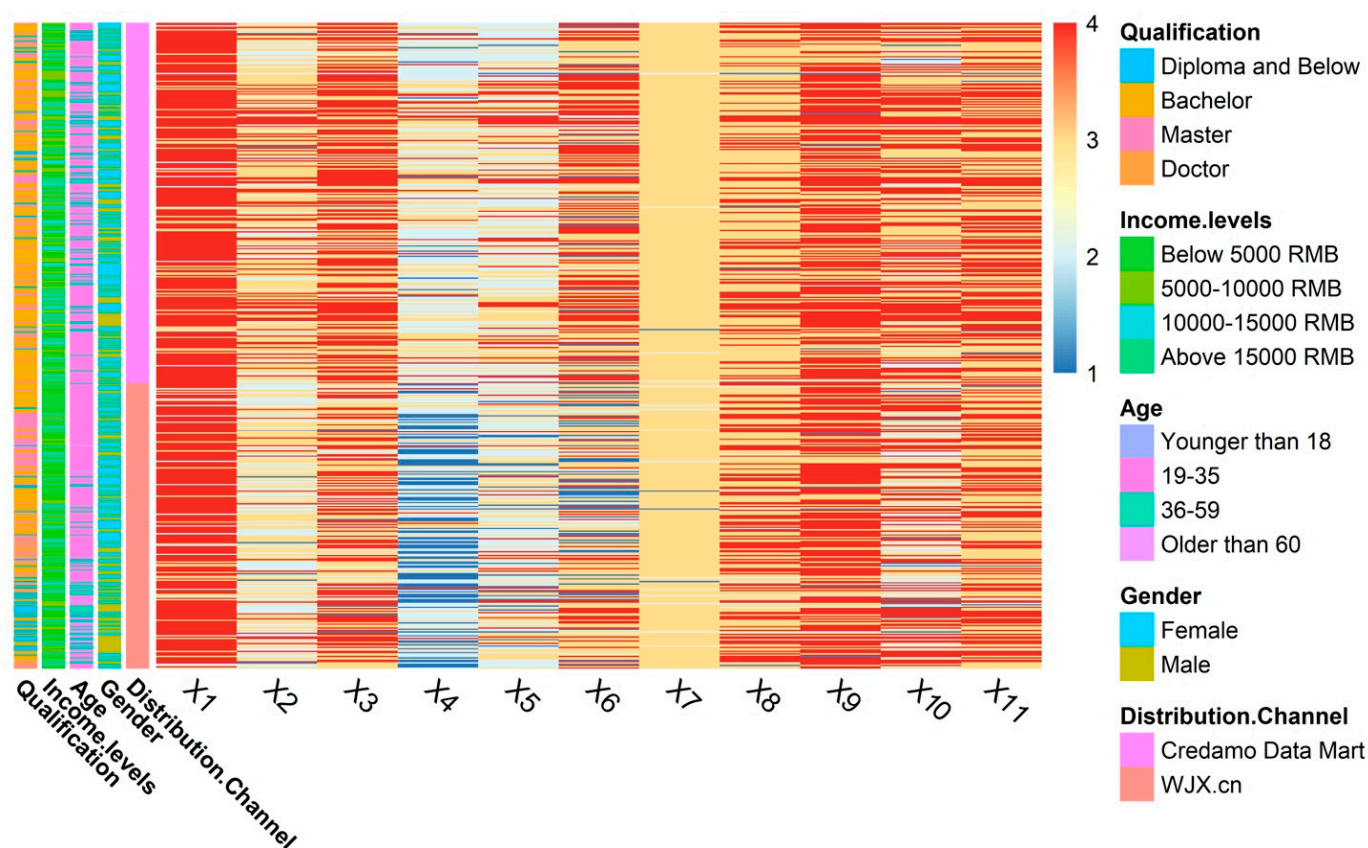


Figure 15. The Correlations Analysis Heatmap from the Range of X_1 to X_{11} . Extraction method: Principal component analysis. Table made by Lin Xie. Method: The R language.

The R language was used to analyze Table 7, in order to do the correlations analysis. As a result, the Figure 15 has shown the general attitudes and distributions among five groups (Group Ages, Group Genders, Group Income levels, Group Qualification) towards different topics, such as sense and protection, and educational feasibility of ICH inheritance. An individual's opinion on X_1 to X_{11} could be collected and observed. For example, as told by X_4 , the negative blue stayed wide, which means the audience know little about "Xiamen bead embroidery". As for X_7 , nearly the whole group believe in the necessity of art common education, which presented a good foundation for sustainable heritage and cultural education, etc. According to what the heatmap has shown, there were three meaningful suggestions. First, the sense of ICH protection remains extensive, which could be regarded as a common sense in current society in China. Second, the vast majority of targeted people, from different ages, genders, qualifications, and income levels, believe that ICH protection, combined with local higher education, is necessary and feasible. Third, most of the targeted people were happy and willing to join ICH protection and educational practices.

To sum up, China has a solid foundation for optimizing ICH protection and higher education. However, it also shows a provocative issue, namely that items of ICH, for example, Xiamen bead embroidery, have a low popularity and a small audience. Many ICH items are still at risk of disappearing due to lack of well-trained inheritors or stable capitals, as well as marketing and generalization problems, even though there are plenty of supporting policies formulated by the relevant authorities of China. In other words, it is necessary for ICH items to achieve "self-support, self-hematopoietic, self-advancement", rather than depending on policy and societal support. We can summarize the results of questionnaire test as follows: higher education would be one beneficial approach of sustainable ICH inheritance and protection.

3. Result: Higher Education Would Benefit ICH in Different Aspects

What the questionnaire analysis has shown is that gender, income levels, age, and qualifications would rarely affect people's acknowledgements of and attitudes towards the protection and inheritance of ICH items. Furthermore, higher education was regarded as an affective and reliable method of promoting ICH by the vast majority. However, *the ICH inheritors and their young apprentices were concerned that many young people are not interested or willing to learn because ICH practices are not considered as economically worthwhile careers* [38]. Some opinions also supported the idea that *the defects that the patrimonial education has had in its insertion in the educational system, extending its treatment in the classroom, as well as its disposition within the school curriculum* [39]. From the experience provided by the inheritance class of Xiamen bead embroidery at the Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University, the conclusion drawn was that higher education could benefit ICH in four aspects: making up the shortage in the base quantity of inheritors, reducing the cost of teaching and learning, expanding the place of working and teaching, and promoting the extension to the public, all of which will be discussed fully in below.

3.1. To Make Up the Shortage of Inheritor's Base Quantity

For abundant ICH items, the lack of young learner results in the risk of the number of inheritors sinking. *Through the tool of education that supports knowledge for the population* [40]. For example, the inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery that were officially recognized by Chinese authorities were only six, among which, four were over 60 years old. Furthermore, the relevant policies for identifying ICH inheritors were strict and comprehensive. For instance, young learners of ICH items, including Xiamen bead embroidery, would occasionally face disadvantages such as training time and educational degree in the process of professional identification. The requirements would cause the current number of inheritors to dip significantly, making them hard to increase in a short time.

(1) Proposed Solution

Colleges and universities usually have substantial amounts of teachers and students, who could, in a way, supply and relieve the talent reserves of ICH. On one hand, teachers with open minds usually have solid professional foundations; on the other hand, students normally come from various places and cultural backgrounds. In addition to that, teachers and students were active, have strong will, and are capable of learn. Therefore, providing a chance for ICH to enter higher education in China would not only assist in finding more potential inheritors, but also bring compound culture to ICH.

3.2. Reduce the Cost of Teaching and Learning

The learners could not earn a sustainable income by doing ICH-relevant work, which has a negative influence on the development and inheritance of ICH. For instance, although the four Fujian inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery are still working on the front line, they have to live on their pension. Meanwhile, the younger inheritors need to have a full-time employment, as teachers, lawyers, etc. The production cost of Xiamen bead embroidery was tremendous. Yet, the product income was very limited, due to the negative circle of ICH inheritance.

(2) Proposed Solution

Higher education is part of the Chinese long-term development plan. For this reason, colleges and universities can usually get support from local authorities. They not only have modern practice plans, as well as well-arranged research allowance system, but also offer mature infrastructure, equipment, and environments. Through the platform of higher education, the sampling and production cost would be significantly lowered. From this point of view, the operational pressure could be partly changed into concentrations of skill-develop and artwork-design.

3.3. *Expand the Place of Working and Teaching*

Plenty of ICH items are facing the problem of tight space. For example, the working and teaching place of Xiamen bead embroidery was located in Hubin South Road, which was the centre of Xiamen city. According to the inheritors, they pay the rent of 20,000 RMB monthly, totalling over 1,500,000 RMB so far. For continuous inheritance of ICH, a stable space is the base. The rent of a space is a consistent fee, which is difficult for an individual to handle. Fujian province has increased the subsidy for each provincial ICH inheritor who has reached the age of 60 from 3000 RMB per person to 6000 RMB. The four inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery met this condition and benefited from it. However, the rising rent and the pressure from COVID-19 have made it more difficult to subsist for Xiamen bead embroidery and other ICH items.

(3) Proposed Solution

Colleges and universities get their land from local government at a reasonable price. Therefore, they could provide studios, classrooms, workshops, or even the laboratory as a fixed base to inheritors for ICH use. In this way, ICH could save significant portions of its running cost for some other urgent demand.

3.4. *Promote the Extension to the Public*

According to field research, the inheritors were good at skills, yet weak at various administrative tasks, such as self-promotion, project application, and subsidy application. Nowadays, large quantities of relevant information related to ICH is available on the internet. In addition to that, many applications and projects were submitted through internet platforms as well. Due to these situations, the elder inheritors could possibly miss some relevant and latest news and resources.

(4) Proposed Solution

Colleges and universities have high-quality and high-yield staff, who are younger and good at paperwork. They could make full use of the internet, compared to inheritors. At the same time, Yalcinkaya believes that teachers who actively promote ICH were the most important resource of heritage research and promotion [41]. For instance, teachers from Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design consistently interview the inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery, to ascertain the inheritors' needs, so that they could provide solutions pertinently. Teachers actively promoted and publicized Xiamen bead embroidery to promote and produce quality achievements from the perspective of educational reform, the Maritime Silk Road, art exchange and intellectual property protection, etc.

4. The Details of "Xiamen Bead Embroidery" Inheritance Class That Undertaken by Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University

Currently, education about Xiamen bead embroidery has been introduced into four colleges worldwide, which were Nanyang College of Singapore, Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University, Xiamen Institute of Technology, and Xiamen Jimei University of Technology. From the educational practice, what was discovered was that the ICH education, combined with higher art education, could develop the awareness of students better. In addition to that, it is necessary for teachers to enrich the content of the course. Due to this reason, teachers should actively participate in the construction of high-quality courses on ICH in higher education, and create a virtuous circle of integration of production, teaching, and research. In the process of which, inheritors could be employed as visiting professors and practical tutors. As for Xiamen Academy of Art and Design, the inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery and its teachers compose into several tutor groups to guide students from art and design to participate in relevant competitions, which had gained positive results.

A viewpoint was widely accepted, which suggests it was essential to ensure the framework of knowledge and cognitive processes through formal interdisciplinary teaching [42]. The mutual promotion, between the inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery, and teachers

and students from higher education, is a positive practice to help to integrate ICH into higher education. Currently, the Xiamen Academy of Art and Design has achieved plenty of accomplishments in the practice of ICH and higher art education, and has also become the model of mutual promotion education of ICH inheritance and higher education. Figure 16 is the circulation system of ICH integrated with higher education, as concluded by Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design; the main topic could be summed up as: a combination between ICH and professional majors, art tours and innovative practices, local campus culture, and campus media resources. The details are shown below:

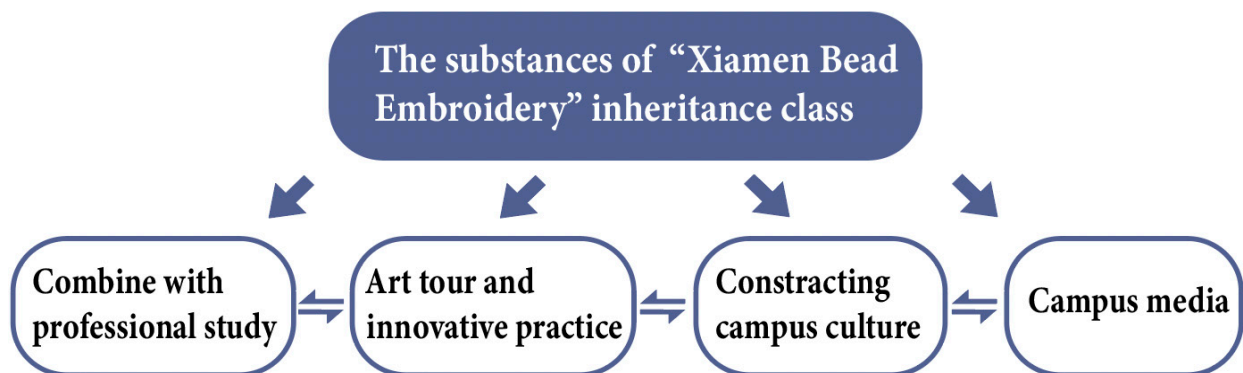


Figure 16. The substances of Xiamen bead embroidery inheritance class undertaken by Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design. Information collected from documentary study and field research. Using Adobe Illustrator 2022. Figure was designed and drawn by Lin Xie.

4.1. Combine ICH with Art and Design Major Study

College teachers could systematically plan teaching activities about ICH and regular class. In the class of fashion design majors of the Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, the instructors learn production skills from the inheritors of Xiamen bead embroidery, from time to time. *Through classroom lectures and discussions, participants are introduced to both the practical and theoretical aspects of sustaining intangible cultural heritage [43].* After which, the specific skills are incorporated into the main content of art and design theory, making it a complete ICH education methodology. As Figure 17 could tell, the colors in Xiamen bead embroidery were abundant. In addition, the practice was also attached, which integrates field survey, sampling method, and other specific paths into a new teaching experience, innovatively.



Figure 17. (a,b): part of Xiamen bead embroidery accessories; (c): Liyu Xie, the inheritor of Xiamen bead embroidery was matching accessories. Illustration (a,b) was photographed by Zhaoqing Li. Illustration (c) is courtesy of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.

Sa, JD, who was the expert in higher education research, believes that higher education, combined with cultural inheritance, would rescue some normative topics, giving contemporary prominence to the theme, and projecting discussions about the role of university extension projects that promote heritage education based on the inseparability between teaching, researching, and extension [44]. In the class of dress colours, Xiamen bead embroidery has become an excellent teaching material for various colour elements. According to relevant research [45], the various colours, from red to black, in the accessories of Xiamen bead embroidery, as well as the differences in brightness, purity, shape, size, and polish level, give the beads a range of thousands of colours, which was meaningful and useful to train student's aesthetic sense. The Figure 18, along with the Figure 19 was two sets of student artwork, also presented a unique art-style and became supplements to higher education in inheritance class.

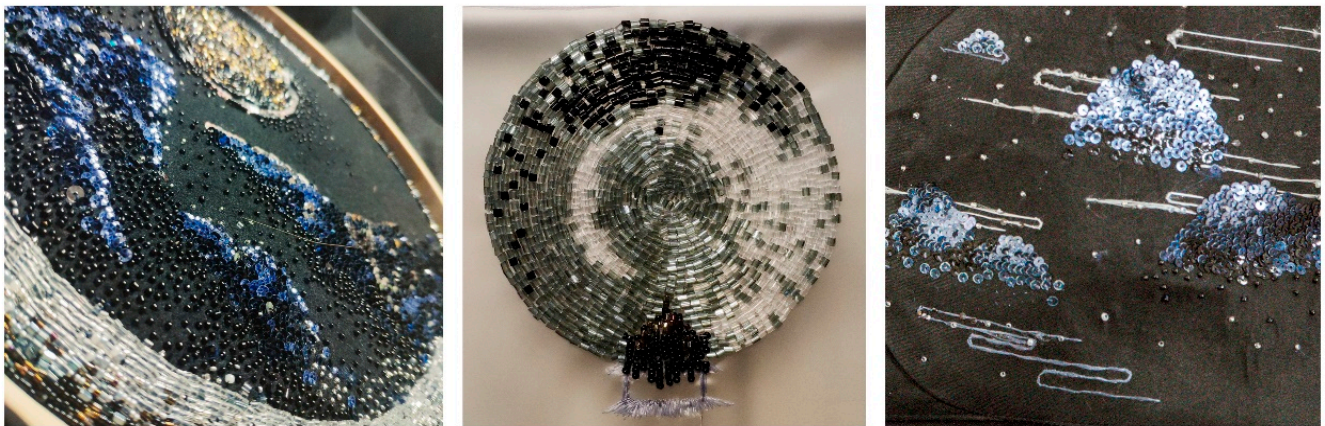


Figure 18. Practice artworks accomplished by Yusong Sun, student from Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University. Tutor: Zhaoqing, Li, the professor of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University.



Figure 19. Practice artworks by student Yusong Sun from Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University. Tutor: Zhaoqing, Li, the professor of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University.

4.2. Combination with Art Tour and Innovative Practice

Xiamen bead embroidery is a local ICH item of Xiamen. This aside, nearly one third of students from Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University, come from nearby regions. Naturally, they would feel close to Xiamen bead embroidery as a part of their local culture. From this perspective, two points can be highlighted for the ICH inheritance class. First of all, schools should acclimate the trend of the general world, for example, the emphasis on cultural inheritance. Secondly, investigate and introduce local cultural projects with emotional significance for students to stimulate learning passions. Thirdly, subtly integrate local culture into higher education. These above points are exemplified in the Xiamen bead embroidery inheritance class. Figure 20 was the inheritance class that undertaken by Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University.



Figure 20. Liyu Xie (the one with grey hair) was teaching Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University's students in the inheritance class. Illustrations are courtesy of the Xiamen Bead Embroidery Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum.

Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design has made full use of self-expertise as a professional art school, to not only narrow the distance between students and local culture through the inheritance class, but also deepen the recognition of local identity, as well as provide support and evidences to the academic theory. Following this path, higher education would achieve the effect of theory guiding practice and practice supporting theory.

In the Xiamen bead embroidery inheritance class of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, teachers organize art tours regularly, which including museums, art galleries, workshop of inheritors, and even some fashion exhibition of famous fashion brands. Aside from this, in order to external communication with society, Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design actively encourage students to participate in art or design competitions or exhibitions. Punja thought *this program had offered them their first, real experience in understanding the cultural context in which they live* [46]. For instance, Figure 21 has presented the detail of student artworks that demonstrative by Liyu Xie, one of the inheritors, as well as, as the Figure 22 has shown, the fashion design artworks decorated with Xiamen bead embroidery, representing Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University, won the bronze medal in the 2018 Global Chinese Fashion Design Competition.

According to Felices-De la Fuente, the inheriting class of ICH would not only expand the educational content, but also promote students to be the constructor of self-learning [47]. Undertaking the inheritance class has progressive advantages. On one side, this type of program could stimulate students' interest in joining and learning from ICH, while on the other side it could enhance students' manual dexterity and artistic accomplishment. During this process, the culture of ICH items such as Xiamen bead embroidery could get a greater chance to gain popularity.



Figure 21. Demonstrative artworks by Liyu Xie, the inheritor of Xiamen bead embroidery and the practical tutor of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University. Tutor: Shuoying Hong, the lecturer from Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University.



Figure 22. Fashion design artworks decorated with “Xiamen bead embroidery”. Collection made by Junshan Xu, the student of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University. Tutor: Shuoying Hong, the lecturer of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Liyu Xie, the inheritor of “Xiamen bead embroidery” and the practical tutor of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University.

4.3. Constructing Campus Culture with Local Feature

Xiamen bead embroidery has a strong participatory character; Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design took it as a chance to structure their multi-cultural campus in order to enable positive circulation of propaganda. To this end they gathered students with the capacities of design, art, digital media, and traditional handicrafts to conduct Xiamen’s regular cultural activities, like Figure 23, which then were able to build up an advanced campus with a distinct local cultural atmosphere.

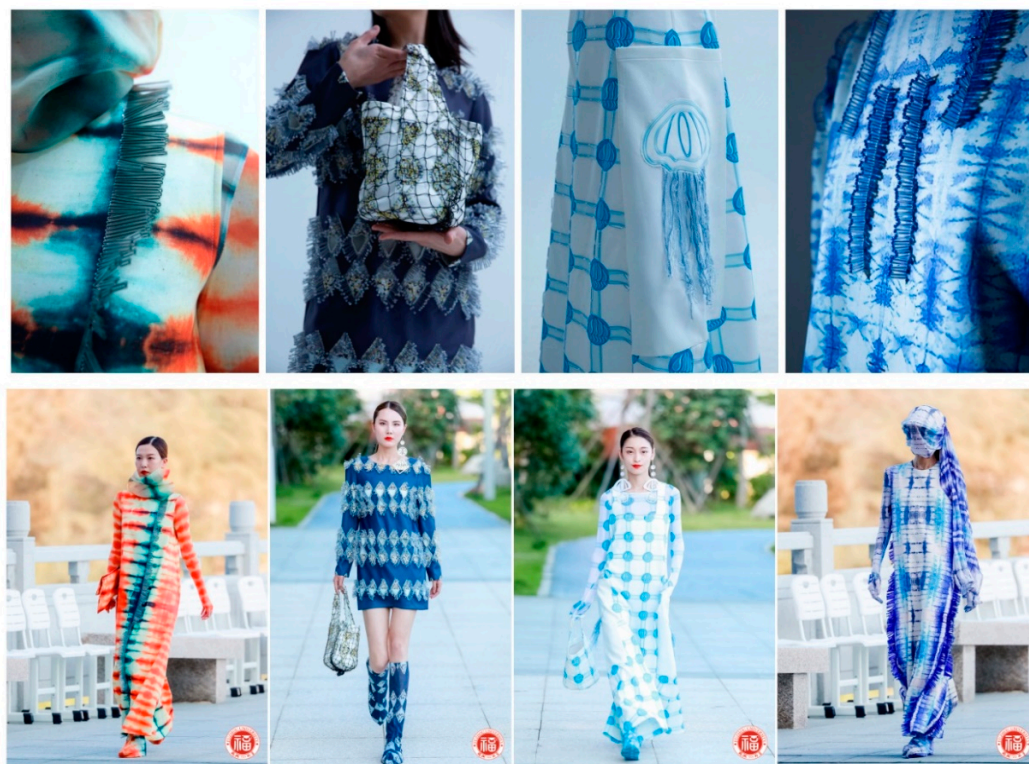


Figure 23. The fashion design artworks with “Xiamen bead embroidery”. Collection made by Lujia Liu, the student of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University. Tutor: Zhaoqing Li, the professor of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University.

Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University make full use of the capacities of the student unit by encouraging them to set up handmade associations, combined with Xiamen bead embroidery. From the practical experience of these, the associations founded and managed by students could gather students who were interested in Xiamen bead embroidery easier. Therefore, conducting campus activities about Xiamen bead embroidery could not only improve the cultural environment to build a characteristic campus, but also increase the acceptance of ICH items such as Xiamen bead embroidery among students.

4.4. Promoting with Campus Media

College journals, magazines, libraries, radio, campus networks, and some other paths are the unique resources of colleges and universities, which were regarded as essential parts of social networks. Therefore, the inheritance class of “Xiamen bead embroidery” undertaken by Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design has exceptional advantages in taking full advantage of campus media to build a positive circle of “propagate–display–communicate”.

With the help of current technology, campus media could accomplish a better job in disseminating Xiamen bead embroidery. From the graduation design of undergraduate students from Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University, it can be seen that the number of artworks made by students keeps increasing. As a result, Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design has a unique database about bead embroidery in the nation. Figure 24 was the collections from the database in Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University. Taking the internet conference as an example, a flexible communications platform would be beneficial to ICH items in practice. Therefore, students would be able to learn and absorb more about ICH history and skills from the database at any time. With the help of technology, campus media are getting more and more powerful, which could not be ignored as regards the process of inheritance of ICH.

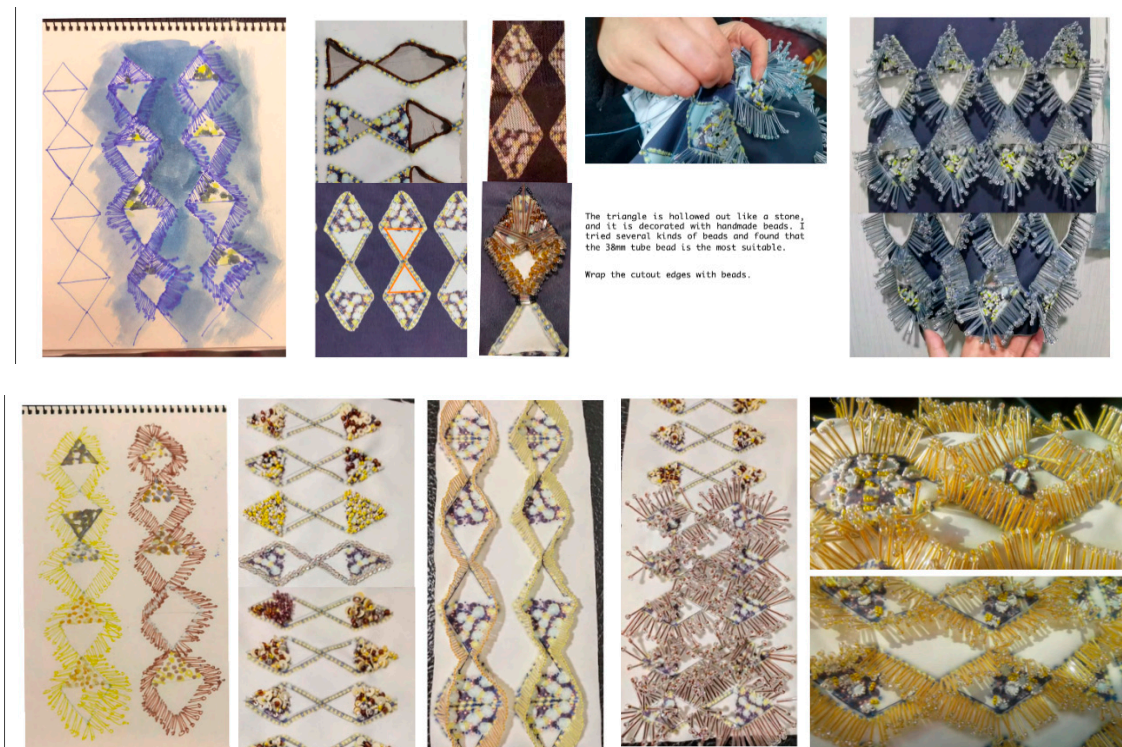


Figure 24. The bead embroidery topic artworks from the data base of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University. Made by Lujia, Liu, the student of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University. Tutor: Zhaoqing Li, the professor of Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design, Fuzhou University.

5. Conclusions

Heritage has never been solid, but rather flow, meanwhile, always related to the entire society [48]. It was common to all that processes of globalization and cross-cultural hybridization often revive rather than endanger cultural heritage and make it more relevant to contemporary multifaceted social and cultural environments [49]. Higher education was a stage, not only connect Chinese to Western culture, but combine history with reality as well. It would require differing disciplines and interests to see resources as a collective benefit that society must conserve and develop together [50]. Therefore, education plays an essential role in the protection of ICH, which can contribute to the development of students' critical thinking, manual dexterity, digital and informational competences and multimodal literacy. What Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University did was integrate the ICH education into higher art education, which has created an educational sample for the purposes of enriching the content of higher art education and inheriting the ICH items. From the case of mutual promotion between Xiamen bead embroidery and the Xiamen Academy of Arts and Design of Fuzhou University, the valuable insight that could be taken was that the number of potential learners would expand, which could reduce the vulnerability of the apprenticeship model contrapuntally.

To sum up, *modern devices are important to maintain the current form of the intangible cultural heritage* [51]. Insistence on excavating and protecting local culture should be the integral path to enhancing cultural development worldwide. The Xiamen bead embroidery inheritance class is a meaningful attempt to form an advanced and subjective protection awareness in a specific society. However, it was inadequate. For the protection and inheritance of local culture, regional colleges and universities have an inescapable historical responsibility. Therefore, as for the sustainable inheritance of ICH, colleges and universities shall create reasonable timelines and plans to promote ICH inheritance into a scalable and sustainable situation, by using comprehensive resources, for example, the advanced

technical methods, composite teaching models, etc, to explore more possibilities about the local culture, after which they must renew teaching methods and content regularly to disseminate cultural information more effectively.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, Z.L.; methodology, L.X. and Z.L.; software, L.X.; validation, L.X.; formal analysis, L.X.; investigation, Z.L.; data curation and analysis, L.X.; writing—original draft preparation, Z.L.; writing—review and editing, L.X.; visualization, L.X. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was funded by “The research of design aesthetic” the Major Program of National Philosophy and Social Science Fund of China (Arts), grant number 19ZD23; and was funded by “clothes color” the Fuzhou University curriculum demonstration project, Teaching Document No. 16 2022, grant number 28.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Ethical review and approval were waived for this study, due to all the interviewees being older than 18 years old and the questionnaires being anonymous.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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