



Integrating Industry and Education to Empower District County Intangible Cultural Heritage: An Analysis of Dynamic- inheritance Practices of Sichuan Opera in Xinjin, Chengdu

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Abstract: This study examines the documented inheritance practices of Sichuan Opera in Xinjin District, Chengdu, from the perspective of industry–education integration. Adopting a qualitative single-case study approach, the research conducts documentary analysis of policy documents, institutional records, media reports, and academic literature to explore how local actors organize cultural transmission, educational participation, and institutional collaboration. Drawing on the concept of dynamic inheritance, the study develops an analytical perspective that views ICH continuity as a process involving cultural communication, educational reproduction, and multi-stakeholder coordination. The findings identify three interconnected mechanisms in Xinjin’s documented Sichuan Opera inheritance practices. First, cultural transmission has expanded beyond conventional theatre spaces into communities, public cultural environments, historical venues, and cultural-tourism contexts, creating diversified channels for heritage communication. Second, educational practices have established connections among basic education, cultural learning, and professional talent cultivation, reflecting an attempt to construct long-term pathways for heritage reproduction. Third, industry–education integration functions as an institutional coordination mechanism linking governments, educational institutions, cultural organizations, and cultural-related industries. However, the analysis also reveals limitations, including insufficient evidence regarding audience development, uncertain pathways for talent retention, and the need for more sustainable operational mechanisms for heritage spaces. This study contributes to ICH research by extending the concept of dynamic inheritance from the preservation of cultural forms toward an ecosystem-based understanding that emphasizes institutional relationships and social reproduction. The Xinjin case demonstrates how industry–education integration may provide a potential framework for connecting local heritage resources with education and cultural development, while highlighting that inheritance mechanisms remain context-dependent and require further empirical evaluation.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage; dynamic inheritance; industry–education integration; Sichuan Opera; heritage education; cultural sustainability

I. Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) represents living cultural practices that are continuously reproduced, interpreted, and transformed within specific social contexts. Unlike material heritage, which can often be preserved through physical conservation, ICH depends on the continuation of knowledge, skills, meanings, and social practices among communities and cultural groups. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage emphasizes that safeguarding does not refer to maintaining cultural expressions as fixed historical forms; rather, it involves ensuring their continued viability through transmission, recreation, and adaptation within changing social environments ^[1]. Accordingly, contemporary ICH research has increasingly shifted from preservation-oriented approaches toward perspectives emphasizing participation, cultural negotiation, and institutional support ^[2], ^[3].

Despite increasing policy attention toward ICH protection, many traditional performing arts continue to face difficulties in maintaining long-term social vitality. These challenges include declining audience engagement, aging practitioner groups, limited transmission channels, and insufficient connections between heritage practices and contemporary social development ^[4], ^[5]. Such issues are particularly significant at district-county levels, where cultural resources are often closely embedded within local communities but where professional institutions, financial resources, and talent development mechanisms may be relatively limited. Therefore, understanding how local contexts organize cultural transmission and institutional cooperation has become an important research issue in ICH studies.

Traditional opera provides an important case for examining these challenges because its continuity depends not only on the preservation of artistic techniques but also on the reproduction of audiences, practitioners, performance environments, and cultural meanings. Sichuan Opera integrates performance techniques, historical narratives, local customs, and community identities. However, similar to many traditional performing arts, its contemporary development faces challenges related to audience transformation, practitioner succession, and adaptation to new cultural consumption patterns. Previous research on opera heritage has largely focused on artistic preservation, repertoire inheritance, and authenticity issues, while comparatively less attention has been given to how local governance systems, educational institutions, and cultural industries jointly influence the continuation of performing-art heritage ^[3], ^[6].



Heritage scholars have argued that heritage should not be understood as a static object transferred unchanged from the past to the present. Instead, heritage is produced through ongoing interpretation, selection, and negotiation among different social actors [2], [7]. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett further suggests that intangible heritage involves processes of cultural production in which traditions are continually reconstructed within contemporary institutional and social environments [3]. From this perspective, dynamic inheritance refers not simply to the survival of traditional forms but to the capacity of heritage practices to maintain cultural continuity while adapting to changing social conditions. For performing arts, this process involves at least three interconnected dimensions: the transmission of cultural knowledge, the reproduction of participants and audiences, and the establishment of institutional environments that support continued practice. Traditionally, industry–education integration has been discussed primarily within vocational education, referring to cooperation between educational institutions and industrial sectors in curriculum development, skills training, and employment preparation [8]. However, when applied to ICH contexts, this concept can be extended beyond workforce training. It may represent a collaborative arrangement among educational institutions, cultural organizations, governments, heritage practitioners, and cultural industries that jointly participate in knowledge transmission, talent cultivation, cultural innovation, and heritage utilization. Such an approach shifts attention from individual inheritors toward broader institutional ecosystems that influence how heritage is reproduced and adapted.

This perspective corresponds with recent discussions of heritage governance, which emphasize that sustainable heritage practices increasingly depend on relationships among multiple actors rather than solely on state protection or individual transmission [7], [9]. Harrison argues that contemporary heritage management requires examining the networks, institutions, and social practices through which heritage values are produced and maintained [9]. Similarly, cultural sustainability research highlights that cultural continuity depends on the interaction between local identity, social participation, and adaptive institutional arrangements rather than preservation alone [10]. Therefore, examining industry–education integration in ICH contexts may provide new insights into how local cultural ecosystems are organized.

However, several research gaps remain. First, existing ICH studies have predominantly examined national-level safeguarding policies, UNESCO heritage designation, or individual inheritor-based transmission, while district-county-level practices remain relatively underexplored. Local governments and communities often serve as key spaces where heritage protection, education systems, and cultural industries intersect, yet the institutional mechanisms operating at this level require further investigation. Second, although education is widely recognized as important for heritage transmission, limited empirical research has examined how different levels of education—from basic education to vocational and higher education—participate in the reproduction of heritage knowledge and cultural professionals. Third, the relationship between heritage protection and cultural industry development remains complex. While cultural tourism and creative industries may provide additional resources for heritage continuation, excessive commercialization may also create tensions regarding cultural meanings and authenticity [7], [9].

Xinjin District of Chengdu provides an informative case for examining these issues. As a district-level area associated with Sichuan Opera traditions, Xinjin has developed a range of documented practices involving public cultural activities, historical cultural spaces, educational initiatives, and cooperation among cultural institutions. These practices include community-based performances, cultural-tourism activities in historical venues, and attempts to connect Sichuan Opera education with professional talent cultivation. Rather than assuming that these initiatives have already produced sustainable outcomes, this study examines how such practices are organized, what institutional mechanisms they represent, and what challenges remain in constructing a dynamic inheritance system.

Accordingly, this study adopts a qualitative single-case study approach to investigate the documented practices of Sichuan Opera inheritance in Xinjin from the perspective of industry–education integration. The study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: How are Sichuan Opera inheritance practices organized through industry–education collaboration in Xinjin District?

RQ2: What mechanisms are documented through which performance practices and educational initiatives support the transmission and reproduction of Sichuan Opera?

RQ3: What institutional constraints affect the further development of Xinjin’s Sichuan Opera inheritance practices?

This study makes three contributions. First, theoretically, it extends discussions of dynamic inheritance by examining ICH continuity through an institutional ecosystem perspective, highlighting the relationships among cultural transmission, educational reproduction, and organizational coordination. Second, empirically, it provides a district-county-level case illustrating how local heritage practices are documented across cultural, educational, and development contexts. Third, practically, it identifies several institutional mechanisms—including diversified transmission spaces, multi-level educational participation, and cross-sector collaboration—that may inform discussions of local ICH governance while recognizing the importance of contextual differences.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section II presents the research methodology, including case selection, documentary sources, and analytical procedures. Section III analyzes Xinjin’s documented practices through three dimensions: cultural transmission, educational reproduction, and institutional coordination. Section IV discusses the theoretical implications and transferability of the Xinjin case. Section V concludes the study and identifies directions for future research.

II. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative single-case study design to examine how industry–education collaboration is organized within district-county-level intangible cultural heritage (ICH) inheritance practices. Case study methodology is appropriate when research aims to explore contemporary social phenomena embedded within specific institutional and

cultural contexts, particularly when boundaries between the phenomenon and its surrounding environment are closely connected. Rather than attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of Xinjin's Sichuan Opera inheritance initiatives through quantitative indicators, this study focuses on identifying the documented mechanisms, institutional relationships, and practical arrangements through which cultural transmission, educational participation, and local development are connected. This approach is consistent with the view that heritage practices should be understood as dynamic processes involving multiple actors, interpretations, and organizational structures rather than as fixed cultural objects.

Xinjin District of Chengdu was selected based on three considerations. First, Xinjin provides a district-level setting in which Sichuan Opera inheritance is closely associated with local cultural resources, public cultural services, and community participation. Compared with large professional opera institutions located in major cultural centers, district-level areas must simultaneously address heritage transmission, audience cultivation, talent development, and resource coordination. Second, publicly available materials indicate that Xinjin has developed cross-sector practices involving local government departments, cultural institutions, schools, universities, and cultural-tourism organizations. These documented practices provide an opportunity to analyze industry-education integration as a broader institutional arrangement rather than merely a vocational training mechanism. Third, Xinjin combines historical foundations of Sichuan Opera culture with contemporary educational and cultural initiatives, allowing examination of how traditional performing arts are reinterpreted within current social and institutional environments.

The study relies on documentary analysis as the primary data collection method. The documentary corpus consists of four categories of publicly available materials. The first category includes government and institutional documents related to cultural heritage protection, public cultural services, education development, and cultural-tourism planning, which provide information about policy frameworks and institutional objectives. The second category includes official records from cultural organizations, schools, and educational institutions documenting Sichuan Opera performances, heritage education activities, and talent cultivation programs. The third category includes reports from established media and cultural information platforms that describe the implementation processes, public participation contexts, and social communication of relevant activities. The fourth category consists of academic publications on ICH safeguarding, heritage governance, cultural sustainability, and vocational education, which provide theoretical foundations for interpreting the case. To enhance analytical reliability, information from different source categories was compared and cross-referenced rather than relying on a single institutional narrative.

Data analysis followed a thematic analysis procedure. The collected documents were examined through iterative coding to identify recurring concepts, institutional relationships, and patterns of practice. Based on the theoretical discussion of dynamic inheritance and industry-education integration, three analytical dimensions were developed. The first dimension, cultural transmission, examines how Sichuan Opera practices are extended into different social spaces, including communities, schools, historical venues, and cultural-tourism contexts. The second dimension, educational reproduction, focuses on how educational institutions participate in cultivating cultural awareness, audiences, practitioners, and heritage-related professionals. The third dimension, institutional coordination, analyzes how governments, cultural organizations, educational institutions, and industry-related actors cooperate in organizing heritage activities and creating application contexts. Through these dimensions, the analysis follows an interpretive pathway from cultural resources to transmission practices, educational participation, institutional collaboration, and dynamic inheritance mechanisms.

Several methodological limitations should be acknowledged. First, because this research is based primarily on documentary materials, it cannot directly measure individual experiences, audience responses, student learning outcomes, employment trajectories, or economic impacts. Therefore, conclusions are limited to the analysis of documented practices and institutional mechanisms rather than claims regarding actual effectiveness or long-term outcomes. Second, as a single-case study, Xinjin's experience reflects specific historical, cultural, educational, and administrative conditions, and its practices should not be assumed to be directly transferable to all district-county-level ICH contexts. Third, publicly available documents may reflect institutional perspectives and may not fully represent the experiences of performers, students, communities, or cultural enterprises. Future research could complement documentary analysis with interviews, participant observation, comparative cases, and longitudinal studies to further examine how industry-education collaboration influences the long-term development of local intangible cultural heritage.

III. Findings and Analysis

3.1. Expanding Cultural Transmission through Multi-scenario Heritage Practices

Xinjin has attempted to broaden the transmission contexts of Sichuan Opera by extending performances beyond conventional theatre spaces into communities, public cultural venues, historical sites, and cultural-tourism environments. Traditional performing arts inheritance has often depended on specialized performance institutions and relatively fixed audience groups. However, heritage scholars have noted that the continuity of intangible cultural heritage increasingly depends on whether cultural practices can maintain meaningful connections with contemporary communities and social participation networks ^[11], ^[12]. In the case of Xinjin, documented practices suggest a transition from a venue-centered transmission approach toward a more diversified communication pattern in which Sichuan Opera is presented through multiple social scenarios. The first dimension of this transformation is community-oriented cultural transmission. According to local cultural reports, Xinjin has organized public-benefit Sichuan Opera performances through grassroots cultural activities, bringing professional performances into villages, communities, and public spaces. For example, reported activities included Sichuan Opera performances delivered to rural communities, featuring representative artistic elements such as face-changing and traditional performance techniques ^[13]. Similarly, local cultural programs have incorporated opera performances into public cultural service activities, allowing residents to encounter Sichuan Opera

outside conventional theatre environments ^[14]. These practices demonstrate an institutional attempt to reduce spatial barriers between professional opera performance and everyday community life. From the perspective of dynamic inheritance, the significance of these activities lies not only in the number of performances organized but also in the reconstruction of relationships between heritage practitioners and potential audiences. Traditional inheritance models often assume that cultural continuity depends primarily on transmitting skills from established performers to apprentices. However, contemporary heritage transmission requires broader forms of participation, including audience development, cultural experience, and public engagement ^[11], ^[15]. Therefore, community-based performances may function as cultural contact mechanisms that create conditions for future participation. Nevertheless, existing documents mainly provide information about event organization and institutional arrangements; they do not directly demonstrate changes in audience composition, long-term participation patterns, or increased numbers of heritage practitioners.

A second dimension involves the activation of historical cultural spaces as platforms for Sichuan Opera communication. Xinjin has incorporated opera-related historical resources into cultural-tourism activities, using heritage spaces as environments for cultural experience and public interaction. Historical venues associated with traditional culture provide symbolic resources that connect contemporary performances with collective memory and local identity. Previous heritage studies have emphasized that heritage spaces are not simply physical locations but also social environments where cultural meanings are continuously interpreted and reconstructed ^[12]. In Xinjin, the use of historical sites for opera-related activities represents an attempt to combine cultural memory with contemporary forms of participation.

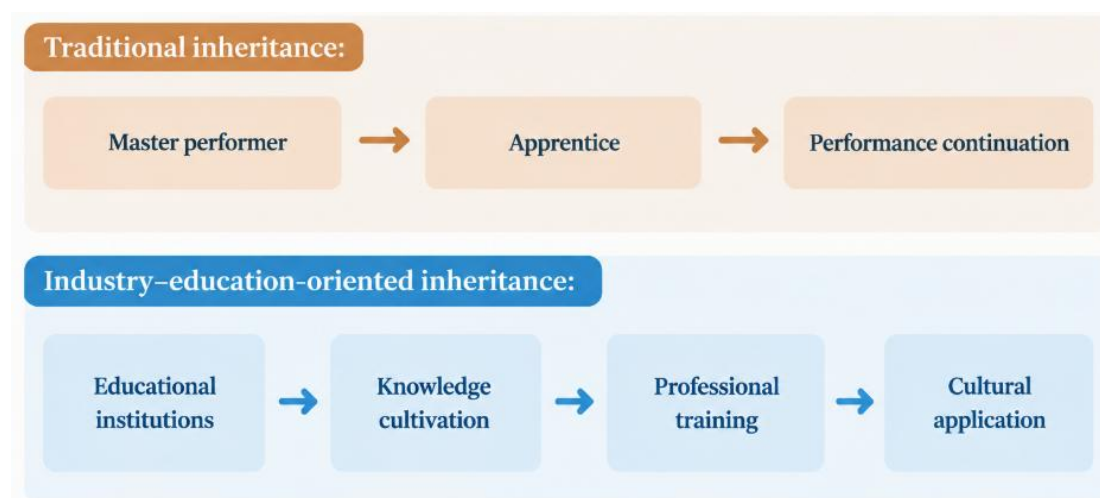
However, the integration of Sichuan Opera with cultural tourism also raises questions regarding operational sustainability and cultural representation. Heritage tourism may provide additional visibility and resources for traditional arts, but scholars have also warned that excessive commercialization may transform living cultural practices into simplified cultural products designed primarily for consumption ^[15], ^[16]. Therefore, the Xinjin case should be understood as an ongoing exploration of balancing cultural communication, public participation, and tourism-oriented development rather than as evidence of an established sustainable model.

3.2. Constructing Educational Pathways for Cultural Reproduction and Talent Development

A second major finding concerns the role of education in extending Sichuan Opera inheritance beyond professional performance communities. Documentary evidence suggests that Xinjin has developed educational practices involving different levels of schooling, creating connections among basic education, cultural learning, and professional talent cultivation. This approach corresponds with broader discussions of heritage education, which argue that schools can function not only as places for knowledge transmission but also as important environments for cultivating cultural awareness and future participation ^[17].

At the basic education level, Sichuan Opera has been introduced through school-based cultural activities and aesthetic education programs. Available reports describe activities involving opera appreciation, mask painting, traditional performance demonstrations, and interactions with professional practitioners ^[18]. These practices represent a shift from viewing heritage transmission solely as professional training toward introducing cultural knowledge to broader groups of young people. From the perspective of dynamic inheritance, such educational exposure may contribute to the reproduction of future audiences and cultural participants by increasing familiarity with traditional arts. At the secondary and higher education levels, Xinjin has attempted to strengthen connections between cultural institutions and professional education. Reports indicate that local schools and cultural organizations have collaborated in providing students with opportunities to learn about Sichuan Opera performance techniques, artistic traditions, and cultural meanings ^[19]. More significantly, the establishment of Sichuan Opera-related higher vocational education initiatives reflects an effort to connect heritage transmission with contemporary professional development. Unlike traditional apprenticeship systems that primarily emphasize performance skills, contemporary heritage development requires individuals who can engage in performance, cultural communication, digital dissemination, project management, and cultural industry operations.

This educational arrangement illustrates a broader transformation in the logic of heritage reproduction:



Such transformation does not replace traditional artistic transmission but creates additional institutional pathways through which heritage knowledge can circulate. Similar approaches have been discussed in vocational education research, where cooperation between educational institutions and practical sectors is considered important for aligning knowledge development with social needs ^[20].

3.3. Developing Institutional Coordination among Heritage, Education, and Cultural Industries

Beyond individual performance activities and educational programs, the Xinjin case demonstrates the emergence of a broader institutional coordination mechanism involving government departments, educational institutions, cultural organizations, and cultural-tourism actors. Previous heritage research has increasingly emphasized that sustainable heritage practices depend on networks of cooperation rather than isolated preservation actions ^[12], ^[16]. In this sense, industry–education integration provides an analytical framework for understanding how different actors participate in organizing heritage transmission.

Government agencies appear to function as coordinators by providing policy support, cultural service platforms, and organizational resources. Educational institutions contribute through curriculum development, student training, and cultural dissemination. Cultural organizations and professional performers maintain artistic knowledge and provide practical learning opportunities, while cultural-tourism sectors create public contexts where heritage resources can be experienced and transformed. These relationships indicate that Sichuan Opera inheritance in Xinjin is not organized around a single institution but through interactions among multiple actors.

From this perspective, industry–education integration extends beyond its conventional vocational education meaning. Rather than simply connecting schools with enterprises for employment purposes, it represents a broader cultural governance arrangement in which education becomes connected with heritage preservation, cultural production, and local development. This interpretation expands existing discussions of industry–education cooperation by highlighting its potential role in cultural sustainability.

However, institutional coordination also faces structural limitations. First, cooperation among different actors may depend heavily on government-led initiatives and project-based activities, raising questions regarding long-term operational stability. Second, educational development does not automatically ensure local talent retention if employment opportunities and cultural entrepreneurship environments remain insufficient. Third, although Sichuan Opera has been connected with tourism and cultural activities, deeper integration with other local cultural resources and creative industries remains limited.

IV. Discussion

4.1. Dynamic Inheritance as an Institutional and Cultural Ecosystem

Existing heritage studies have increasingly challenged preservation-oriented approaches that treat heritage as a fixed cultural object requiring protection from external change. Instead, heritage is understood as a social process through which meanings, practices, and identities are continuously reconstructed by different actors within changing environments ^[21], ^[22]. The Xinjin case supports this perspective by showing that Sichuan Opera inheritance is organized through interactions among performance practices, educational activities, cultural spaces, and institutional cooperation. From this perspective, dynamic inheritance can be understood as an ecosystem-based process involving three interconnected transformations. First, there is a transformation of transmission spaces. Traditional opera inheritance has historically depended on specialized theatres and professional performance groups. Xinjin’s documented practices indicate an attempt to expand transmission contexts into communities, schools, and cultural-tourism environments. Such spatial expansion does not necessarily replace traditional performance systems; rather, it creates additional opportunities for cultural contact and participation.

Second, there is a transformation of inheritance subjects. Conventional understandings of ICH transmission often emphasize master performers and individual inheritors as the central carriers of cultural knowledge. However, contemporary heritage continuity increasingly depends on broader groups, including students, audiences, educators, cultural institutions, and community participants. As heritage scholars have argued, the vitality of living heritage depends not only on preserving expert knowledge but also on maintaining social relationships through which cultural practices remain meaningful ^[21]. The Xinjin case therefore illustrates a shift from inheritance centered on individual transmission toward a more distributed process involving multiple participants.

Third, there is a transformation of value generation mechanisms. Sichuan Opera is positioned not only as a performing art requiring preservation but also as a cultural resource connected with education, public services, tourism experiences, and local cultural development. This reflects broader changes in heritage governance, where cultural sustainability increasingly requires balancing historical continuity with contemporary social relevance ^[23]. However, this transformation also requires caution. The integration of heritage with tourism and cultural industries may provide new resources, but excessive market orientation may simplify cultural meanings or prioritize consumption value over cultural continuity ^[22], ^[24]. Therefore, dynamic inheritance should be understood as a process of adaptation and negotiation rather than commercialization alone.

4.2. Industry–Education Integration as a Heritage Governance Mechanism

Traditionally, industry–education integration has been primarily discussed within vocational education, emphasizing cooperation between educational institutions and industrial sectors for skills development, curriculum alignment, and employment preparation ^[25]. The Xinjin case suggests that in the context of cultural heritage, the concept can be expanded

to include a wider network of actors involved in cultural transmission and social reproduction. In this expanded interpretation, industry–education integration functions as a form of heritage governance mechanism. Educational institutions provide structured environments for cultural learning and talent development; cultural organizations contribute professional knowledge and practical training; governments coordinate resources and policy support; and cultural industries create application scenarios for heritage practices. The interaction among these actors forms an institutional environment in which heritage knowledge can be transmitted, adapted, and connected with contemporary social needs.

This perspective contributes to existing ICH research in two ways. First, it shifts analytical attention from individual inheritors toward organizational relationships and institutional arrangements. Although individual practitioners remain essential carriers of traditional knowledge, their ability to sustain heritage practices is influenced by broader educational, economic, and social conditions. Second, it highlights the role of education as not merely a tool for preserving cultural knowledge but as an institutional space where future audiences, practitioners, and cultural professionals can be cultivated. Nevertheless, the Xinjin case also demonstrates that institutional cooperation alone does not guarantee long-term sustainability. Educational programs may produce trained individuals, but retaining these individuals within local cultural systems requires employment opportunities, professional development pathways, and supportive cultural industries. Therefore, industry–education integration should be viewed as a necessary but insufficient condition for dynamic inheritance. Its effectiveness depends on whether educational outcomes can be connected with sustainable social and professional environments.

4.3. Transferability and Contextual Boundaries of the Xinjin Experience

The Xinjin case provides implications for other district-county-level ICH contexts, but its value lies primarily in the institutional mechanisms it reveals rather than in the replication of specific projects. Different regions possess different cultural resources, administrative capacities, educational structures, and economic conditions. Therefore, a direct transplantation of Xinjin’s practices may not be feasible.

The broader lesson is that local ICH sustainability requires the construction of adaptive connections among heritage resources, education systems, and social participation. Regions with different types of heritage—such as traditional crafts, folk practices, or other performing arts—may develop their own forms of cooperation among schools, communities, cultural institutions, and industries. In this sense, the transferable element is not the specific form of Sichuan Opera education or performance activities, but the principle of building institutional networks that support cultural continuity.

At the same time, the Xinjin experience is strongly shaped by its local conditions. Its proximity to Chengdu provides access to broader cultural resources and tourism networks. Its historical relationship with Sichuan Opera provides symbolic legitimacy for contemporary inheritance practices. Furthermore, the availability of specialized educational initiatives creates institutional opportunities that may not exist in all districts and counties. These contextual factors indicate that dynamic inheritance requires both general mechanisms and locally adapted strategies.

Therefore, the contribution of the Xinjin case is not to present a universal inheritance formula but to demonstrate how district-level cultural governance can connect heritage transmission with education and local development. Future comparative studies involving different regions and heritage categories would help clarify which mechanisms are widely applicable and which remain dependent on local conditions.

4.4. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to ICH research by conceptualizing dynamic inheritance as an interaction among cultural transmission, educational reproduction, and institutional coordination. Rather than viewing heritage sustainability only through preservation or individual inheritance, the study highlights the importance of examining the ecosystems within which heritage practices are maintained and transformed.

Practically, the findings suggest that district-county-level heritage governance should move beyond short-term cultural events and develop longer-term institutional arrangements. These may include continuous heritage education programs, stable cooperation between cultural organizations and educational institutions, diversified operation mechanisms for heritage spaces, and policies supporting young cultural professionals. However, such approaches should remain sensitive to the balance between cultural continuity and economic utilization.

V. Conclusion

This study explored how cultural transmission, educational participation, and institutional collaboration are organized within a district-county-level intangible cultural heritage (ICH) context. Rather than evaluating the effectiveness of specific inheritance initiatives, the study focused on identifying the mechanisms through which local actors attempt to connect heritage practices with contemporary social and institutional environments. The findings indicate that Xinjin has developed a set of interconnected practices that reflect three dimensions of dynamic inheritance. First, Sichuan Opera transmission has expanded beyond conventional theatre spaces into communities, public cultural environments, historical venues, and cultural-tourism contexts, suggesting an effort to broaden opportunities for cultural participation. Second, educational initiatives at different levels have created pathways linking heritage awareness, audience cultivation, and professional talent development. Third, cooperation among government agencies, educational institutions, cultural organizations, and related industries demonstrates an emerging form of institutional coordination in which heritage transmission is connected with broader local development processes.

The study contributes theoretically by extending the discussion of dynamic inheritance from a preservation-oriented perspective toward an ecosystem-based understanding. In this framework, the continuity of intangible cultural heritage does not depend solely on maintaining traditional skills or protecting historical forms; rather, it is shaped by interactions

among cultural practitioners, educational systems, communities, and institutional networks. The Xinjin case further suggests that industry–education integration can be interpreted as a heritage governance mechanism that connects cultural learning, talent cultivation, and social application contexts. This perspective expands existing discussions of both ICH sustainability and industry–education cooperation by emphasizing their potential intersection.

Local heritage initiatives may benefit from establishing long-term cooperation among cultural organizations, schools, universities, and community actors rather than relying primarily on short-term cultural events. Educational participation should extend beyond cultural appreciation toward systematic pathways for developing future practitioners and heritage-related professionals. At the same time, cultural tourism and industry integration require careful balancing so that economic utilization supports rather than replaces cultural meanings and community connections.

Future research could further investigate district-county-level ICH inheritance through comparative case studies, stakeholder interviews, participant observation, and longitudinal analysis. Such research could examine how educational pathways influence practitioner development, how audiences are reproduced over time, and how cultural industries contribute to the long-term viability of heritage practices. By combining institutional analysis with empirical investigation of social participation and cultural outcomes, future studies may provide a more comprehensive understanding of how living heritage can adapt within rapidly changing social environments.

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